

## Questions on Notice: Supplementary Budget Estimates 2008-2009

Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government  
**Tuesday 21 October 2008**

QON No.	Date Asked	Hansard Page Reference/ Written	Senator	Question
AA 01	21/10/08	77	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Tender for Fire Rescue Services – Townsville Airport – Delta as Alternate Provider]</b>  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—That is what I thought it was, but I am assured that the real estate has been excised off for the facilities that service the civil side. I understand that Delta have won the tender to provide services for the civil side; in fact, I think you would realise that Delta is now the owner of the civil side.  <b>Mr Russell</b>—Yes. I do not think there was a tender for the civil side. In a sense, that just further complicates the issue.  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I understood that the tender went out on an open tender basis. At that time Delta was not owned by the owner, but it is now.  <b>Mr Russell</b>—I certainly agree that it is owned by Queensland Airports.  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Yes, but I think initially there was an open tender process. You do not think that is the case?  <b>Mr Russell</b>—I do not believe so, no.  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Could you just check that for me?  <b>Mr Russell</b>—Yes, of course.</p>
AA 02	21/10/08	84	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Air Traffic Controllers – Absenteeism]</b>  <b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Across the country in 2007-08, there was an average of 15.57 unplanned absent days per controller—I realise that it is a stressful and very important job and they do a fantastic job et cetera— Melbourne and Brisbane airports, however, had 17 and 20 respectively. Why do Melbourne and Brisbane have significantly higher levels of absenteeism with their controllers? Is it the weather or the grog?  <b>CHAIR</b>—It is on notice, Senator Heffernan.  <b>Mr Russell</b>—I think I will take that, if you would not mind, Chairman.  <b>CHAIR</b>—Senator Heffernan, do you have any more questions?  <b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Yes, I have a couple on carbon footprints. With reference to question on notice No. 8 from 28 May and the Energetics audit on Airservices Australia’s carbon footprint, to which it referred, what was the cost of the audit?  <b>Mr Russell</b>—I will ask Mr Dudley, who is the—  <b>CHAIR</b>—That is on notice.  <b>Mr Russell</b>—Thank you.  <b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—I did not put it on notice, did I?</p>

				<p><b>CHAIR</b>—Senator Williams has some questions. You did say that you would put some questions on notice.</p> <p><b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—I do not mind Senator Heffernan having a go.</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—So they are not on notice now, Senator Heffernan?</p> <p><b>Mr Russell</b>—I am happy to take questions on notice.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Yes, take that on notice.</p> <p><b>Mr Russell</b>—I am quite happy to do that.</p>
AA 03	21/10/08	85/86	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Tender for Fire Rescue Services – Townsville Airport]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I will digress slightly and finish on the matter that I was talking to you about before. I understand that the Townsville airport asked for Airservices to put in a quote, a tender or an expression of interest for the work and that Airservices did not respond or did not respond positively. I just ask that on notice in view of what you said before. Could you just check whether that is right?</p> <p><b>Mr Russell</b>—I am happy to do that. There were some discussions with the Townsville airport operators going back some years, and I am very happy to take that on notice.</p>
AA 04	21/10/08	87	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Energetics Audit Report – Recommendations]</b></p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—If Airservices Australia plans to go carbon-neutral, how will it fund the alleged cost of half a million dollars? Where is that half a million dollars coming from?</p> <p><b>Mr Russell</b>—I might ask Richard Dudley, who is responsible for this area, to comment.</p> <p><b>Mr Dudley</b>—We are not only investigating the recommendations coming out of the Energetics Report but also keeping a close monitor on decisions of Government, particularly those pertaining to the Garnaut Review and also the <i>Climate Change White Paper</i> coming through. There are also implications for the organisation potentially from the Inter-departmental Committee on sustainability. So those three, in concert with the Energetics findings, we will wrap up and present to our Board towards the end of this year in relation to a program moving forward to achieve those sorts of goals.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Best of luck with that. But will you give an assurance that that will not divert funds from your core functions, however you are funded?</p> <p><b>Mr Dudley</b>—In terms of our core operations?</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Yes.</p> <p><b>Mr Dudley</b>—No, it will not impact on our core operations.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—So you will report back on how you will—</p> <p><b>Mr Dudley</b>—I will be happy to.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Does the Government plan to increase the budget to cover the cost? I will give you these Questions On Notice.</p> <p><b>Mr Dudley</b>—I am happy to take them on notice.</p>

AA 05	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Airservices Australia – Staff Absenteeism]</b>  Airservices Australia (AA) has had significant problems with staff absenteeism.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is this trend increasing or decreasing?</li> <li>2. Has AA reviewed its leave policies?</li> <li>3. Does AA believe that this problem is caused by, and may be resolved by addressing, staffing issues?</li> </ol>
AA 06	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Monitoring of International Airspace]</b>  I understand from an interview that I heard with Minister Anthony Albanese that AA monitors international airspace from the ICAO.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How much international airspace does AA monitor?</li> <li>2. How many Air Traffic Controllers are allocated to such roles?</li> <li>3. Does this detract from the amount of airspace monitored within Australia?</li> </ol>
AA 07	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Air and Airservices Australia Dispute]</b>  The substance of the dispute between Civil Air and AA appear to be, at least from Civil Air’s perspective, a matter of excessive overtime.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Could AA provide a breakdown of how many hours of overtime has been worked in total, and per controller, over a period of the last 6 months?</li> <li>2. Have the Parties made progress towards a resolution of this dispute?</li> <li>3. Has any agreement to mediation been made?</li> </ol>
AA 08	N/A	Written	BARNETT	<p><b>[Airservices Australia – Staffing Issues]</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How many staff (full-time and part-time) have been employed as Air Traffic Controllers at Launceston airport over the last 3 years? (Average figures please or as at a set date in each year, as appropriate).</li> <li>2. How many sick days / absentee days have these staff taken over the last 3 years, up to the present time. (Annual average figures and/or cumulative to current time)?</li> <li>3. What effect have staff absenteeism levels had on operations?</li> <li>4. What is the optimum number of ATC staff at the Launceston airport?</li> <li>5. What are the current hours of operation for the control tower at the Launceston airport?</li> <li>6. Have there been any incidents of concern relating to ATC operations at Launceston airport over the last 3 years? (By the word 'incidents', the intended meaning is events that were considered to be unsafe or a breach of normal operations or outside normal safety parameters)?</li> <li>7. If so, how many incidents have there been?</li> <li>8. If there have been incidents, what inquiries have there been into these incidents and what have been the results of those enquiries? Who conducted the enquiries?</li> <li>9. Were recommendations made, and if so, were they implemented?</li> <li>10. Who considered the inquiries / recommendations and who made the decisions on what action should be taken?</li> <li>11. Has there been any evidence to suggest that staffing levels, hours of operation or staff absentee</li> </ol>

				levels have contributed to the safety of ATC operations at the Launceston airport?
AAA 01	21/10/08	67	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Airport Rescue and Fire Fighting Services]</b>  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—The airport is a dual operational airport, as you rightly say, but I think the civil side is actually owned by Queensland Airports Limited now—the buildings and all that—and I think they share the runway. Is there some provision that you are aware of that restricts who can do the fire and rescue services, apart from it being mentioned in regulations that they are eligible? Is there some other requirement?  If I own an airport and want an eligible person to do it, is there anything to stop me doing that, subject to CASA approval of operational plans?  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—I would have to refresh my memory on the way the regulations work and whether it relates to a list of airports or to airports generally. There are regulations that basically provide Airservices Australia with the role of rescue and fire-fighting services at airports and regulations that in effect give them a monopoly of that exercise except to the extent that it is lifted by the—  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I understand that is the case in Townsville.  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—That has been lifted in Townsville, yes. The economic regulatory control has been lifted in that case. It would then become a matter of commercial agreement with those in charge and obtaining the necessary safety approval.  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—How long would it take you to get your office to check whether in February or early this year your branch or someone in the Department wrote to both Airservices and Defence about this particular issue?  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—That should not take long.  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Perhaps some of your people are watching this back in the department. Perhaps they could find that letter for me. My understanding is that it is a letter signed by either you or the Departmental Secretary indicating that the Minister had a view on things that occurred at Townsville airport and had written to both Airservices and Defence making those views known.  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—I will certainly check that.  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Thank you very much for that.</p>
AAA 02	21/10/08	70	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[National Aviation Policy Statement]</b>  <b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—In relation to the response to Question On Notice No. 6 from 28 May—and you are better than me if you can remember what that was—which dealt with representations made to the minister as part of the development of a green paper, how many submissions or representations have been so far received and how many of those are subject to confidentiality requests?  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—I do not have the exact numbers. The final number of submissions to the issues paper was 291, I believe. Of those, the vast majority were indicated as being suitable for publication and are in fact displayed on our website. A small number—and I can take the number on notice—were confidential.</p>

				<p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Are they subject to confidentiality requests?</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—Yes. We advised when we invited submissions that people should indicate whether they objected to their submission being made public, and a number did that.</p>
AAA 03	21/10/08	71	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Bankstown Airport – Renewal of Lease]</b></p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Are you aware of the dispute between Air King New South Wales Pty Ltd and Bankstown Airport in relation to the renewal of a lease?</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—What was the first name?</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Air King New South Wales.</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—I am not personally across that.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—They are all a bit unhappy out there.</p> <p><b>Ms Gosling</b>—That has come to my attention, that Air King does have some issues with Bankstown Airport Corporation in relation to a lease on a site that they have.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—It would be fair to say that for some years the Bankstown owners have been wanting to clean the place out, as it were, of some of the lower grade, as they see it, operators there. The tool that they have been using is a huge increase in rent. Will the Minister consider establishing a formal mediation process to deal with this and other similar disputes as recommended by the General Aviation Industry Action Agenda?</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—We will need to take that one on notice.</p>
AAA 04	21/10/08	74	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Karumba Airport – Gulf of Carpentaria – Airstrip Upgrade]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I know you have received over the years requests from the Karumba airport in the Gulf of Carpentaria for assistance in (a) relocating but (b) upgrading the existing airport.</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—I am not aware of that specific example.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Could you check that for me on notice and let me know if there is any merit in me encouraging the owners of the airport, which is the local shire council, to again approach the Department for assistance in the provision of an upgraded airstrip which is very essential for so many reasons—health, Indigenous matters and tourism—into that remote Gulf airport at Karumba?</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—We will provide you with the details of the program that we have and if the particular case meets the guidelines there may be a—</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Could you check your records to make sure that you are not currently dealing with something in relation to the Karumba airport?</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—Certainly.</p>
AAA 05	21/10/08	74	WILLIAMS	<p><b>[Sydney Airport – Landing Fee Charges]</b></p> <p><b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—Are you over the top of all the landing fee charges at Sydney airport?</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—At Sydney airport there would be a charge component for the air traffic control service and there would be a charge imposed by the airport. The charge imposed by the airport is negotiated between the airport and the airport operator, and the government’s involvement is limited to a light-touch price-monitoring program so that there is an annual reporting of charges at that</p>

			<p>airport generally.</p> <p><b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—There are some regulations in those landing fees to cover regional airlines of New South Wales so that the cost of landing fees do not go up by more than price of CPI. Is that correct? Are you familiar with that?</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—I would need to check the details. I am aware that there have been some specific arrangements set in train for regional operators at Sydney, but I am not able to pull the details to mind.</p> <p><b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—Would you know how much these landing fees have gone up over the last couple of years? Could we access them anywhere? Are they all private knowledge now that the airport has been privatised?</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—I do not want to speculate. I can take that on notice and get the information about the arrangements for charges to the regional services of Sydney.</p> <p><b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—The reason for my question is I recall—and I certainly was not a politician in those days—that when the Sydney airport was privatised to Macquarie Bank, the then Deputy Prime Minister or he could have been the Transport Minister, John Anderson, put regulations in so that regional airlines could not have their landing fees increased by more than the rate of inflation to protect some of the small airlines. I just wanted to ensure that it was still in place and still being monitored? That was my main reason for raising the question.</p> <p><b>Mr Doherty</b>—I understand. We will take that on notice.</p>
OTS 01	21/10/08	109	<p><b>MCGAURAN</b></p> <p><b>[Waterfront Security System]</b></p> <p><b>Senator McGAURAN</b>—I would like a status report on the waterfront security system and the introduction of photo ID cards and vetting of those who work on the waterfront. I raised this in the last estimates and, just as I am getting now from the minister, a mock and a shrug of the shoulders, he did not even know it existed. It does exist. In the first estimates I started to doubt myself. I thought, ‘I do remember this going through Parliament.’ And it did. We have a very extensive security-checking system on the waterfront. Can someone give me a status report with regard to that?</p> <p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—The issue that you raise is the responsibility of the Office of Transport Security, which were on earlier this morning. Those officers are no longer available, obviously. I am happy to take the issue on notice and provide an answer to the committee, but unfortunately nobody is here to answer that question.</p> <p><b>Senator McGAURAN</b>—My questions are: have there been any changes, how many rejections have there been and are there any recommendations for changes to the system? I would just like a health check on it, if you do not mind. It does not have to be elaborate. I do not appreciate the minister at the table mocking such a serious issue—</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—It is a very serious issue. It is just that it is patently obvious from this that the officers at the table do not cover the area you are referring to.</p>

AMSA 01	21/10/08	110	ADAMS	<p><b>[Port State Control Inspection Program]</b>  <b>Senator ADAMS</b>—Yes, I have the brief. The response to question on notice No.2 on 29 May indicated that 64 per cent of ships in regional harbours were inspected. Can you break down inspection rates on a port-by-port basis as to how many ships rather than percentages, please?  <b>Mr Peachey</b>—Yes, we can do that. I do not have the data with us, but we are happy to provide it.</p>
AMSA 02	21/10/08	111	WILLIAMS	<p><b>[AMSA Search and Rescue – Australian Custom Service CoastWatch]</b>  <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—They have about five aircraft. Perhaps someone else at the front may like to help me out. Meanwhile CoastWatch is under the Customs service and it has 10 Dash 8 aircrafts. Do you think it would be a good idea under a <i>Whole-Of-Government Approach</i> to have those two combined under the one banner?  <b>Senator Conroy</b>—That is a policy question. I am happy to take that on notice and see how the Minister would like to respond.  <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—Thank you for a detailed answer.</p>
BITRE 01	21/10/08	69	LUDLAM	<p><b>[Modelling of Anticipated Growth in Passenger Numbers]</b>  <b>Senator LUDLAM</b>—That is a big portfolio area. What I am interested in specifically is how they are modelling or how they are incorporating estimated oil price rises into those models. I am not expecting you to have an answer to hand, but that is the area that I am interested in. When we are predicting passenger growth in and out of Australian airports, what is the input for the future oil price going into those models?  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—I understand. We will take that on notice.</p>
BITRE 02	21/10/08	69	LUDLAM	<p><b>[Modelling of Anticipated Growth in Passenger Numbers]</b>  <b>Senator LUDLAM</b>—Do you perform or undertake modelling of anticipated growth in passenger numbers over time?  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—There is a certain amount of work done in the department through the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics.  <b>Senator LUDLAM</b>—Do you import that work into your agency or do you undertake that?  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—BITRE is part of this agency. They were giving evidence previously. We could certainly take on notice any specific questions about work that they have done in that area. In relation to the broader question about planning for that expansion, the main work in relation to prompting that investment is done by the airports themselves. The 20-odd major airports are leased under a scheme, and the airports come forward with their expansion proposals. Subject to measuring against statutory criteria, we make a regulatory decision rather than actually proposing the investment.  <b>Senator LUDLAM</b>—I was out of the room when the agency appeared before, so I would not mind if you could take on notice whether they undertake modelling into the estimated rate of growth of passenger numbers in and out of Australia or between airports and so on. I presume the airports use that to base their expansion proposals on?  <b>Mr Doherty</b>—That would be one amongst a range of sources that the airports would look to. We can certainly identify for you the work that has been done in that area.</p>

CORP 01	N/A	Written	BOSWELL	<p><b>[Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme]</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What if any steps have been taken to estimate the costs of the Government’s response to climate change including the Carbon Pollution Reduction Scheme for every Department, Agency and program within this Portfolio?</li> <li>2. What are the costs and estimated costs identified (reported separately)?</li> <li>3. Have any costs been included in forward estimates and if so where?</li> </ol>
CASA 01	21/10/08	90/91	ABETZ	<p><b>[Atomising Mixture Nozzles]</b></p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—Thank you very much. I have three brackets of questions, the first of which involves two technical areas. Has there been an increase in aircraft safety incidents that have been associated with the use of atomising mixture nozzles?</p> <p><b>Mr Byron</b>—I will have to get some technical advice on that one?</p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—And that would be Mr Quinn.</p> <p><b>Mr Quinn</b>—I am not aware of any particular operational area. I am not aware of any increase in this particular phenomenon that you are talking about. I am happy to take that on notice and go away and do some discovery work, but it is certainly not something that has come to my attention during our recent browsing of air safety incidents. It may be a question you may wish to pose to the ATSB.</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—They will be on later today.</p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—If you could be so kind as to take these questions on notice and hopefully they could be fed through me to the ATSB. That would be helpful. I understand that in 1979, the atomising mixture nozzle was removed from the list of parts that met the airworthiness standards and therefore were prohibited from use in aircraft engines. But then back in 1999, that directive was overturned. Could you possibly confirm for me whether in 1979 or thereabouts the atomising mixture nozzle was removed from the list of parts that met airworthiness standards? Then, that directive was overturned 20 years later in 1999. Has there been an increase in aircraft safety incidents associated with the use of the atomising mixture nozzle? For those of us who cannot get to sleep at night we read the <i>Australian Pilot Extra</i>. In the October edition on page 11 this matter is referred to: “Leading up to 2005, Ralph’s Warriors Suffered a Series of Crashes”. The cause was found to be a carburettor mixture nozzle of the ‘atomising’ type. I will leave that with you and simply ask whether any testing has been undertaken to suggest that the atomiser nozzle is any safer than any other type of nozzle that has been specified in the past.</p>
CASA 02	21/10/08	91/92	ABETZ	<p><b>[Aileron Control Stainless Steel Fitting – Number of Incidents]</b></p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—I do not pretend to be a Biggles so the chances are it would be wasted postage on me. In relation to this specific issue with the atomiser nozzle that would be very helpful. I have similar questions and you might be able to help me, Mr Quinn; is it the aileron?</p> <p><b>Mr Byron</b>—A flight control, yes, aileron.</p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—The aileron control stainless steel fitting. Senator Adams is up with this as well. Have there been any reports of specific failures with this particular fitting on aircraft?</p> <p><b>Mr Quinn</b>—Are we talking about a particular type of aircraft here? Can you be a bit more specific?</p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—I understand it is fitted on smaller aircraft. As to shapes and sizes, are they fitted</p>



				<p>to all aircraft?  <b>Mr Quinn</b>—Generally, yes.  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—What is our definition of smaller aircraft? That is what my constituent has referred me to.  <b>Mr Quinn</b>—I would say below 5,700 kilos is probably what they are interested in, which are single-engine, piston aircraft and small, twin-engine, piston aircraft.  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—That sounds right to me, knowing my constituent. In relation to those smaller type aircraft, have there been any reports of specific failures with these fittings?  <b>Mr Quinn</b>—I am aware of the issue of control flutter. It is a known phenomenon in the industry, but there is certainly no spike in incidents that I am aware of at the moment. I do have an aeronautical engineer here with me who would be able to provide some more detail if that would help. But certainly from an incident point of view I am not aware of anything significant.  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—Chances are it might even be lost on me, and given the time constraints the Committee has what I would ask you to do is let me know what number of incidents there have been in relation to this particular fitting and when reports of this problem were first received and then what action, if any, CASA has taken. Could you take that on notice?  <b>Mr Quinn</b>—We will take that on notice.</p>
CASA 03	21/10/08	92/93	ABETZ	<p><b>[Violations of Controlled Airspace]</b>  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—I personally would, yes, but having regard to other Senators around the table I would have to decline that kind offer, but I am appreciative. In relation to violations of controlled airspace, are you able to tell us how many cases of violations of controlled airspace are known to have occurred between 2005 and June 2008?  <b>Mr Byron</b>—I do not have those specifics in front of me.  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—But would it be in the thousands?  <b>Mr Byron</b>—That was a three-year period?  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—Yes, between June 2005 and June 2008, so three years.  <b>Mr Byron</b>—Are we talking about Australia wide?  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—Yes.  <b>Mr Byron</b>—I do not think it would be in the thousands, but I would need to check.  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—A figure has been provided to me that is very specific. I am not sure from where it is sourced, but it is 4,468.  <b>Mr Byron</b>—I stand to be corrected, but we track violations of controlled airspace as one of our safety outcome parameters. We are sitting down on, I think, 5 November to look at the last quarter's figures. But going back to the last quarterly safety review that we, as a full senior management team, did, we know that in terms of the incidents that occur, which are reported through the Airservices electronic information reporting system, violations of controlled airspace are one of the highest problems that we have. We certainly have worked education wise with the industry and also with Airservices—  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—I am sorry to interrupt, but I think time is at a premium—</p>

			<p><b>CHAIR</b>—We do have until 6.30 pm, but I know that Senator Heffernan will have questions. I can come back to you if you want to. Do you want to put them on notice?</p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—What we might do is truncate this now. We can let the other Senators have a go and if we have time left then we might revisit this, and I might even ask the engineer to assist us as well if we have the time. Can you take on notice for me how many cases are known to have occurred and then how many cases were pursued by legal action? Do you know how many there have been?</p> <p><b>Mr Byron</b>—Not off the top of my head, no.</p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—I understand there has only been one and I would be interested in you either confirming or denying that. All I can say is that I have this constituent who has been giving me this information and, if that is wrong, then please tell me why it is wrong as to the actual number.</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—That constituent probably reads <i>Hansard</i> as well and can get the answer.</p> <p><b>Senator ABETZ</b>—Yes, but these will be on notice so I doubt that he will get them unless I pass them on. If it was only the one case, what were the particular circumstances that warranted it being prosecuted? I refer to page 21 of this great, well read magazine. This is the October 2008 edition. I think I referred to that previously. It asserts: It's strange that this went to court after a CASA FOI had decided no further action in 2005. But the real strangeness is CASA confirms that from 2005 to June 2008 there has been only one prosecution for a VCA (this case) against our estimate of around 4,468 VCA during that period, some of which (not this one) required aircraft avoidance action. I would be interested to find out whether this article is correct. It may well be that the article is not. I do not seek to make any allegations. All I am seeking to do is ascertain the proof about the figures. If the figures are correct, it would beg the question why only this one out of the 4,000 has been pursued. I know in my home state of Tasmania the police are given certain quotas for speeding tickets, et cetera, to fulfil. I would assume CASA officials do not have such quotas.</p> <p><b>Mr Byron</b>—Our objective is the safety outcome. If we think we can fix a problem through enforcement that is the only way we will do that. If we think it is an error that was made unintentionally, we will probably take a more educational approach, particularly if it is a learning pilot. A lot of the VCAs we get are with student pilots. But we will provide those figures.</p>
CASA 04	21/10/08	95/96	<p>HEFFERNAN</p> <p><b>[Coronial Recommendations]</b></p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—This is from 28 May. I take it these are the incidents Lockhart River, Thargomindah, Kununurra, Mackay and Jandakot?</p> <p><b>Mr Carmody</b>—I am sorry, what was the question again? Now that I have the question on notice, I just want to hear your question, I am sorry.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—What action has CASA taken in relation to each of the incidents in which it was adversely reflected upon?</p> <p><b>Mr Carmody</b>—It depends on the incident. What we normally do is take the recommendations of the Coroner or the ATSB—</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—I will make it a bit easier for you. If no action was taken, please explain why? We will take the Lockhart River accident. 'Expedite the introduction of mandatory crew resource management training' was a recommendation to the Coroner, was it?</p>

			<p><b>Mr Byron</b>—All the recommendations from the Coroner in that particular tragic accident CASA is implementing. We are certainly implementing mandatory—</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—In relation to the accident at Thargomindah on 13 October 2004 with a commercial aerial mustering gyroplane—a gyroplane is a great way to get killed, I might say—it states CASA should fund an investigation into gyroplane manufacture and maintenance procedures, facilitate regular industry forums, fund the production of an industry code of practice for aerial mustering et cetera.</p> <p><b>Mr Byron</b>—On that particular one I will ask Mr Vaughan, who heads our General Aviation Operations Group, to give you some specifics.</p> <p><b>Mr Vaughan</b>—I understand your question is relating to an accident with a gyroplane involved in mustering operations?</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Yes.</p> <p><b>Mr Vaughan</b>—We have re-engaged with the Australian Sport Rotorcraft Association to drive some safety initiatives. That is ongoing right now. There was a period probably where it was not as robust as it should be, given that these aircraft were operated in what was a commercial environment. Next month the first instructor seminar takes place in Brisbane for gyroplane instructors, which is an initiative to improve the safety standards of these types of aircraft. We are currently working through this re-engagement with the Australian Sport Rotorcraft Association. We will actually be working through implementing these coronial suggestions.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Is CASA providing \$250,000 to ASRA likely to happen?</p> <p><b>Mr Vaughan</b>—What happening right now is that we are re-defining the deeds. There are 10 sport and recreational organisations approved by us to administer that portion of the civil aviation regulations that apply to that sector of activity. We are sitting down with them to renegotiate these deeds of agreement by which we carry out our business. In that Deed of Agreement is a financial model. It probably does not adequately reflect what contribution they make; that is, what they take off us and administer on our behalf. It is unlikely that it would be a figure that significant. As we speak we are currently working to apply a logical model to how much these organisations get.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Do you have to have a licence to fly a gyrocopter?</p> <p><b>Mr Vaughan</b>—There is a licence for it; that is correct.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—You have to do so many hours?</p> <p><b>Mr Vaughan</b>—That is correct. There is a syllabus—</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—It used to be a great way to get killed, and ultra-lights were the same. Do you have to have a licence these days for an ultra-light?</p> <p><b>Mr Vaughan</b>—You do.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—They are probably out-of-date, are they?</p> <p><b>Mr Vaughan</b>—It depends which type of ultra-light we are talking about. There is a VH registered-type ultra-light which takes a CASA pilots licence. For the majority of the ultra-lights as they are known, which are aircraft that are below 544 kilograms gross weight, a licence is issued by Recreational Aviation Australia in accordance with the syllabus.</p>
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			<p><b>Mr Byron</b>—You are obviously going to be interested in the specifics for the coronial recommendations. Activity has been going on in CASA for probably about six to eight months now following a directive that I issued to our senior management. Our Deputy CEO of Operations actually runs an activity that covers a lot of this double-checking of recommendations that are made to CASA. I will ask him to give you some detail.</p> <p><b>Mr Quinn</b>—It is important to speak about the process. I probably cannot give you the detailed specifics here.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—That is all right. I think that is what we want to find out.</p> <p><b>Mr Quinn</b>—It is an important initiative that was taken by two bodies. The first one was actually set up before the Miller report was published into the relationship between the ATSB and CASA. That is a body called the Accident Investigation Report Review Board, which I currently chair. It is a Committee based upon all of the operational members and also some of the headquarters members of CASA, including our legal staff. We review in detail the specific incidents and the specific accident reports from the ATSB and also those recommendations that come from coronials. The basis of this report and review board was to streamline the CASA involvement in the accident investigation process, an important process, and support the outcomes of aviation safety by providing a technical viewpoint from the regulator’s perspective into safety recommendations made by either coroners or the ATSB. As Mr Byron said, that has been up and running now for approximately a year, maybe more. It was chaired by Mr Carmody prior to my joining the organisation. Another Body that has recently been established gives us the capability to engage even further with the ATSB, the Accident Liaison and Investigation Unit. This is comprised of specialists who are trained in aircraft accident investigation within the regulator, who can focus on providing technical assistance in the actual accident investigation process and also specialise in this area and work closely with the ATSB. I am pleased to say that the relationship certainly between the two organisations has improved significantly since the formation of these two Bodies. I am sure my colleagues from the ATSB will back me up on that.</p> <p><b>Mr Byron</b>—One thing this is designed to do is to make sure recommendations do not slip between the cracks and that there is clear accountability for us to address its recommendations.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—The same applies to Kununurra, Mackay and Jandakot. What would it cost to take the actions recommended by the Coroners in all of those cases? How would implementing these recommendations impact on the aviation industry? Take those questions on notice.</p>
CASA 05	21/10/08	96	<p>HEFFERNAN</p> <p><b>[Percentage of Breach of Regulations]</b></p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—In relation to the response to Question On Notice No. 14 on 28 May, which indicated that CASA may decline to initiate enforcement action in the event of a breach of regulations, what percentage of breaches attract enforcement regulations?</p> <p><b>Mr Carmody</b>—I am not sure I would know the percentage. I would like to get the Acting Head of our Legal Services to take that up.</p> <p><b>Senator HEFFERNAN</b>—Yes, you can take that on notice. You have not got a calculator there?</p>

CASA 06	21/10/08	99	ABETZ	<p><b>[Violations of Controlled Airspace]</b>  <b>Mr Byron</b>—Through the acting Chair, if I may, a question was asked by one of the Senators earlier about violations of controlled airspace. I have some figures; they may be of use, that the VCAs were talking about. The one figure I have for you is that I have been advised that we have had approximately 1,400 over the past three years.  <b>Senator ABETZ</b>—How many of those have been prosecuted?  <b>Mr Byron</b>—We will need to give you that information on notice.</p>
CASA 07	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Airline Industry Maintenance Processes]</b>  Recently a Senate Committee Inquiry (18 Sept 2008) criticised CASA for its close relationship with industry.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What steps does CASA intend to take to ensure that it is better informed of industry maintenance processes?</li> <li>2. How might these steps affect the way in which CASA scrutinises overseas maintenance?</li> </ol>
CASA 08	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Staffing Issues]</b>  The integrity of CASA’s officers has been called into question.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What steps, if any, has CASA taken to deal with staff misconduct?</li> <li>2. How are CASA staff in rural areas supervised?</li> </ol>
CASA 09	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Audit of Airline Passenger Carriers]</b>  I understand that CASA is only required to perform an audit of Qantas once per year. I presume that a similar practice is adopted for other passenger carriers.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has CASA reviewed this policy?</li> <li>2. If not, when was it last reviewed?</li> <li>3. How frequently does CASA believe audits of this kind are necessary?</li> <li>4. Does CASA have the capacity to increase the number of these audits?</li> </ol>
CASA 10	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Audit of Major Airlines Safety Systems]</b>  CASA is required to perform both safety systems audit and specific operational surveillance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What has CASA’s approach been to balancing these requirements?</li> <li>2. Is one given priority over the other?</li> <li>3. How frequently are the safety systems of major airlines audited?</li> </ol>
CASA 11	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Passenger Airlines Self-Checking Safety Systems]</b>  Qantas, and other airlines, have been entrusted by CASA to rely on self-checking safety systems.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Were these systems largely different between different passenger carriers?</li> <li>2. How did CASA monitor these (presumably different) systems across the industry?</li> </ol>

CASA 12	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Audit of All Qantas Fleet]</b>  Following a series of incidents aboard Qantas planes this year, I assume CASA has performed an audit all planes in the Qantas fleet.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is this correct?</li> <li>2. If not, why not?</li> </ol>
CASA 13	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Audits of Australian and Overseas Maintenance Operations]</b>  One Qantas plane that returned from overseas maintenance in Malaysia came back with 95 defects (July 2008)?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. When a plane returns from an overseas maintenance trip, how long is it before another full maintenance check is required on that aircraft?</li> <li>2. Are there any discrepancies between reporting requirements when checks are performed in Australia and when checks are performed overseas?</li> <li>3. Does CASA perform audits of Australian maintenance operations?</li> <li>4. If so, are the same audits performed on overseas maintenance operations?</li> </ol>
CASA 14	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Levels of Maintenance Checks]</b>  I understand that there are different levels of maintenance checks. “C” is a heavy check where most of the airplanes parts are checked.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How often are these “C” checks performed and are more, less, or the same amount of these checks performed domestically than abroad?</li> </ol>
CASA 15	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Qantas Maintenance Procedures]</b>  On 13 August 2008, Qantas admitted to not performing maintenance procedures relating to fatigue cracking. These maintenance procedures were ordered 8 years ago.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What procedures does CASA have in place to ensure that such directives are complied with?</li> <li>2. What has CASA’s follow up with Qantas been on this issue?</li> </ol>
CASA 16	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Relationship with Overseas Safety Authorities]</b>  I understand that Qantas has increasingly relied on overseas maintenance.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is this a trend across the industry and to what extent?</li> <li>2. What kind of relationship does CASA maintain with overseas safety authorities?</li> <li>3. Is CASA advised by these authorities of their domestic maintenance issues or problems?</li> </ol>

CASA 17	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Release of Aircraft Maintenance Audit]</b>  On 21 July 2008, in an article in <i>The Age</i>, it was reported that CASA refused to release audits of maintenance facilities in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines and New Zealand during 2006 – 2007. The Aircraft Engineers Association has said that CASA's refusal to disclose these audits make it difficult for engineers to certify the safety of aircraft.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is this true, if so, why the secrecy?</li> <li>2. How does CASA ensure that engineers are provided with relevant and up-to-date information about aircraft maintenance?</li> <li>3. When will these audits be released?</li> </ol>
CASA 18	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Flight Operations Inspectors]</b>  Concern has been expressed that CASA Flight Operations Inspectors (FOI) do not have sufficient knowledge of the CASA regulations and how they apply.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Could CASA detail how frequently FOI's are updated with respect to the CASA regulations review process? Particularly those that are operating in regional and rural areas.</li> </ol>
CASA 19	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Risk Assessment Practice]</b>  A shortage of Air Traffic Controllers has meant that passenger flights are often travelling through uncontrolled airspace. CASA has approved of the procedure whereby pilots 'self-separate.'</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Has CASA undertaken a risk assessment of this practice and of unmonitored airspace?</li> <li>2. If so, what was its outcome?</li> </ol> <p>Furthermore, concerns have been raised that international pilots may not be fully aware of self separating procedures and there have been reports of international pilots being briefed mid-flight. CASA (on the 11 July 2008) began quizzing foreign pilots about these procedures.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Prior to this undertaking had CASA assessed international pilots' understanding of these procedures?</li> <li>4. If so, were all international airlines subject to the testing?</li> <li>5. What was the outcome of these most recent tests?</li> <li>6. What steps did CASA take, or intend to take, against pilots who did not pass the test?</li> </ol>
CASA 20	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Changing Regulations]</b>  Concerns have been expressed that CASA does not adequately inform industry of their obligations under changing CASA regulations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Could CASA advise as to how industry is kept informed about changing CASA regulations?</li> </ol>

CASA 21	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Safety Procedures for Passenger Jets]</b>  CASA has rejected calls from the Air Controllers Union to perform a review of the safety procedures for passenger jets in unsupervised areas.</p> <p>1. Why is this seen not to be necessary?</p>
CASA 22	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Civil Aviation Safety Authority – Unmonitored Aircraft and Airspace]</b>  In August 2008, CASA undertook to restrict the number of passenger planes flying through unmonitored airspace.</p> <p>1. Does, or did, CASA hold concerns about the number of unmonitored aircraft passing through unmonitored airspace?</p>
IA 01	21/10/08	19/20	WILLIAMS	<p><b>[National Transport Planning Framework – Committee Composition]</b>  <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—You have got 12 on your Board, have you?  <b>Mr Deegan</b>—Yes.  <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—How many of these 12 are from rural areas, or do they all live in the cities?  <b>Mr Deegan</b>—I will just check the names. Sir Rod Eddington, who is Chairman, is based in Melbourne but is originally from Perth; the Hon. Mark Birrell is from Victoria; Jim Hallion is from South Australia; Phil Hennessy is from Queensland—  <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—Are they from rural areas or just cities?  <b>Mr Deegan</b>—I am not aware of any particular regional focus, but no doubt a number of them have regional interests.  <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Sorry, who is from Queensland? You just mentioned him, but I did not catch it.  <b>Mr Deegan</b>—Phil Hennessy, the Chair of KPMG.  <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—Will you take on notice and get back to me, please, as to whether any of these 12 on the Committee who are obviously making decisions to recommend to the Government about Infrastructure Australia actually live in a rural or regional area?  <b>Mr Deegan</b>—Yes.  <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—The reason I ask that question is that these people have been called experts, highly regarded and highly intelligent people et cetera, and I question the relationship they have to rural and regional areas if they do not live there. Surely, if you live out in those areas, you are in touch with the issues in those areas far more than if you live in a city; that is the point I am making.  <b>CHAIR</b>—I think Mr Deegan has agreed to take that on board for you, Senator Williams, and come back to the Committee with that advice. Senator McGauran?</p>
IA 02	N/A	Written	ADAMS Also asked by Senator Williams at Hansard page 64	<p><b>[Major Cities Unit – Government Objectives]</b>  Can you outline the goals and objectives that the Government has set for the Major Cities Unit, announced by the Minister, Mr Albanese in April 2008, and how progress is to be evaluated?</p>



IA 03	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Funding for the Establishment of the Major Cities Unit]</b> How much funding has been made available from within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government for the establishment of the Major Cities Unit?
IA 04	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Interaction between Infrastructure Australia and Major Cities Unit]</b> Minister Albanese has emphasised that Infrastructure Australia and the Major Cities Unit are co-located in Sydney but quite separate. Can you describe the interactions between IA and the Major Cities Unit and the departmental reporting arrangements?
IA 05	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Staffing Issues]</b> How many staff from the Department are currently involved in the day-to-day running of the unit and what is the approved staffing level? Have staff been seconded from other areas of the department or have new appointments been pursued and if so, what kind of skills-set has the Department been seeking?
IA 06	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Funding Programs]</b> With the establishment of the Major Cities Unit, what specific funding programs does it administer, how are these promoted and managed and what has been done to promote the existence, role and functions of the unit to stakeholders?
IA 07	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Purpose]</b> The unit was created to <i>'identify opportunities where Federal leadership can make a difference to the prosperity of our cities and the wellbeing of their residents'</i> . How has the unit pursued this purpose and what has been delivered (to date) in making a <i>'difference to the prosperity of our cities and the wellbeing of their residents'?</i> - (quote taken from Mr Albanese's press release dated April 30 2008)
IA 08	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Funding Programs Guidelines]</b> What cities will be eligible for assistance from the Major Cities Unit and how were the guidelines developed as to which cities are included in the Unit's considerations, can apply for assistance or be included in its work?
IA 09	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Representations]</b> How many representations from local and State Governments has this unit received to date?

IA 10	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Future Plans]</b> Is the Major Cities Unit planning any significant research into the plans, performance and effectiveness of State/Territory and local governments in promoting the ' <i>prosperity of our cities and wellbeing of their residents</i> '?
IA 11	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Evaluation Process]</b> Is the Major Cities Unit intending to evaluate the success, identify lessons and propose future actions of state governments in relation to the various urban containment and development consolidation strategies being implemented for our major cities?
IA 12	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Development Strategies]</b> Is the Major Cities Unit considering involving itself in land-use planning and development approval strategies as part of its ' <i>Federal leadership</i> ' role?
IA 13	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Regulatory Frameworks]</b> To what extent will the Major Cities Unit suggest regulatory reforms or template regulatory frameworks to State/Territory and local governments in promoting the ' <i>prosperity of our cities and wellbeing of their residents</i> '?
IA 14	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Reforms Strategies]</b> Will the Major Cities unit be providing ' <i>Federal leadership</i> ' by recommending reforms to pricing, markets, incentives, regulation, smart systems and behaviour/consumer modifications into promoting the efficient use of existing and new urban infrastructure
IA 15	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Urban Infrastructure Projects]</b> Will the Major Cities Unit have any role in evaluating any urban infrastructure project proposals being considered by Infrastructure Australia and if so, what kind of role? Will any input from the Major Cities Unit to IA be made public?
IA 16	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Local Government Infrastructure Projects]</b> Will the Major Cities Unit have any role in recommending local government infrastructure projects that can be brought forward quickly to assist the Government's stimulus package as reported in the media?
IA 17	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Environmental Assessment of Projects]</b> Will Infrastructure Australia's assessment of the environmental benefits of proposed projects be limited to greenhouse considerations as reported following the Prime Minister's announcement of the project selection criteria or will a broader sustainability assessment be undertaken?

IA 18	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Assessment Methodologies – Sustainability Costs]</b> What methodologies will IA employ to assess the broader sustainability costs and benefits of proposed infrastructure projects?
IA 19	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Assessment Methodologies – Broader Social Costs]</b> What methodologies will IA employ to assess the broader social costs and benefits of proposed infrastructure projects?
IA 20	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Building Australia Fund]</b> Will 'natural infrastructure' projects be considered by IA for funding from the <i>Building Australia Fund</i> as was proposed at the Australian Davos Connection workshop which included addresses by the Prime Minister and Minister Albanese?
IA 21	N/A	Written	LUDLAM	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Infrastructure Australia Board]</b> What was the selection criteria used for the selection of the National Board of Infrastructure Australia?
IA 22	N/A	Written	LUDLAM	<b>[Major Cities Unit – Role and Functions]</b> Can you outline the role, functions and expected outputs of the Major Cities Unit announced by Minister Albanese?
II 01	21/10/08	25	ABETZ	<b>[Bridgewater Bridge, Tasmania – Funding]</b> <b>Senator ABETZ</b> —Can we move to the Bridgewater bridge? Last time around, on a question on notice, I was advised that the State Government asked Mr Vaile for extra money to fix the lift operation on the existing Bridgewater bridge. When was that letter received or when was it dated? <b>Mr Rokvic</b> —I do not have that information. <b>Senator ABETZ</b> —Could you take that on notice please. Is there any hope at all that the lift mechanism will be fixed this year, which is the bi-centennial year of New Norfolk?
II 02	21/10/08	26/27	BUSHBY	<b>[Brighton Bypass, Tasmania – Funding]</b> <b>Senator BUSHBY</b> —Yes, I do have some further questions. What consultation has taken place with the State Government in respect of the planning for and the building of the Brighton bypass in southern Tasmania? <b>Mr Rokvic</b> —The Tasmanian Government has recently submitted a project proposal request in terms of the Brighton Bypass. The Australian Government has provided funding for an early start on that project of some \$3 million. <b>Senator BUSHBY</b> —Did that project proposal have any indication of current costing?

				<p><b>Mr Rokvic</b>—The project estimated costs are \$164 million.</p> <p><b>Senator BUSHBY</b>—That has not changed?</p> <p><b>Mr Rokvic</b>—That has not changed.</p> <p><b>Senator BUSHBY</b>—That is good. The Australian Government is committed to delivering \$131 million of that total?</p> <p><b>Mr Rokvic</b>—Yes.</p> <p><b>Senator BUSHBY</b>—What about proposed time lines for the building of the bypass?</p> <p><b>Mr Rokvic</b>—In terms of indicative timelines at the present moment, we expect that the state will be undertaking some pre-construction soil works later in the first quarter of next year. At this stage, I do not have a proposed completion date.</p> <p><b>Senator BUSHBY</b>—You have no further indication of time lines beyond that?</p> <p><b>Mr Rokvic</b>—I will take that on notice.</p>
II 03	21/10/08	29	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Outback Highway from Laverton (WA) to Winton (QLD) - Perth to Townsville Link]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Obviously, you do not have much more on that, but if you could take it on notice that would be good. I am conscious of what has been committed by previous Governments. There was some money provided this year—if you could just confirm that. What I am really looking at is what the Government’s long-term approach is towards this highway that is of strategic national—not to mention economic—for Australia.</p> <p><b>Mr Maher</b>—That would be a policy decision for the Minister.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I still want you to take it on notice. Although the Minister is not here, I would appreciate his answer. Perhaps there is something in the system that the Government has already said that you could look for, and if not I would like the Minister’s response to that. Who is familiar with the western metro line in Sydney? It is the railway line through Minister Albanese’s electorate. Is anyone familiar with that? Is it true that a feasibility study of this line was conducted at the Commonwealth’s expense?</p>
II 04	21/10/08	30	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Public Transport for North-West Sydney Commuters]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Does the Commonwealth have a view on whether northwest Sydney is well served by public transport? Is that something anyone in your Department would have?</p> <p><b>Mr Williams</b>—I could not comment on that.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—You could comment on whether it is something your department would have a view on.</p> <p><b>Mr Tongue</b>—From discussions with colleagues in New South Wales, I know Sydney has a range of public transport challenges to cope with growth on the metropolitan fringe. There has been a modal shift from motor vehicles to public transport. The heavy rail network in Sydney is, if you like, like spokes.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—No. My question was: does the Department have a view on whether northwest Sydney is well served by public transport? You may not have it with you, but is that the sort of thing the Department would have a view on? I am sorry to cut you off but we are</p>

				<p>under time pressure and I would rather you answered my questions and did not run a line.</p> <p><b>Mr Tongue</b>—It has not traditionally been an area where we have done a lot of work.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Could you get me some figures on how many people in north-west Sydney commute to work using public transport and how many people in Sydney’s inner west commute to work using public transport, if those things are available?</p> <p><b>Mr Tongue</b>—I would have to seek that from the New South Wales Government.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Could you do that?</p> <p><b>Mr Tongue</b>—I am happy to ask.</p>
II 05	21/10/08	32	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Burdekin Road-Rail Bridge, Queensland]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Let me ask the question anyhow—you do not really need the answer. The answer was blaming another Government for not dealing with bypasses. Is anyone doing any work on the fact that between the rest of Australia and the north of Queensland and the north of Australia—which is where Australia’s future will be in the next 10, 20, 30 years—on the coast there is one dual lane road bridge that is the only source of travel from there? Is anyone doing any work about a duplication of that quite critical road and rail bridge? It has national defence implications; it has a lot of economic implications. The reference is, if it helps, question looks like QII-12 or something.</p> <p><b>Mr Crombie</b>—Yes, that is correct, Senator. The answer provided to the question on notice is effectively a summary of the situation as it exists at the moment. We are not doing any work on this matter and I could not tell you whether the Queensland Government is doing any additional works. If they are, it is not being funded under the AusLink program.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—It is part of the national highway. People do not understand that it is a crucial part of the highway. The current bridge is 50 years old and it really has become dangerous and it has become a bottleneck. If something happens on that, the economic cost to that part of the world is high. All the mineral processors are in Townsville, a lot of the wealth of the country comes from that area and it relies on one single road bridge on the coastal route. Does the Minister appreciate the importance of the Burdekin road-rail bridge and are there any plans in place as part of the national highway to look at a duplication of it?</p> <p><b>Mr Crombie</b>—Senator, I cannot answer that question.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—We are happy to take that on notice.</p>
II 06	21/10/08	32/33	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Lynd Highway Project – Funding]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—The Lynd Highway, which for the uninitiated—I know Senator Conroy will know immediately where this is—runs down the back from Cairns to Melbourne if you went all the way, but it is really the area from Mount Surprise through to Hughenden and then on further south joining up with the main inland highway. Some money was provided in the Budget before last. I think there might have been a little bit in this Budget. Can you just confirm what has been made available and what the future holds for that project?</p> <p><b>Mr Crombie</b>—Yes, Senator. The total Australian government funding for that project is \$3.85 million. The total estimated cost on the project is \$7.7 million. Construction commenced on 18</p>

			<p>August and is scheduled at this stage for completion in late 2009. That is for sealing of a 40-kilometre section north of Hughenden to the Lynd junction.</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—Senator Macdonald, there are still a couple more senators who wish to ask questions, me being one of them.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Sure, as I indicated, I have another two issues I want to quickly raise. That is funding for one year only though, is it?</p> <p><b>Mr Crombie</b>—No, I do not believe that is the case.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—Just while the official is looking for it, I have an update on the Burdekin bypass and the new Burdekin River bridge. I understand that the former Government stopped work on the Burdekin bypass and the new Burdekin River bridge in 2001, Senator Macdonald. You may even have been a minister at that stage. Nothing was done on the project, because of the former Government's decision, between 2001 and 2007. Minister Albanese recently wrote to, I think you, and also answered your question on notice and asked what the Coalition's position is on the issue: has it changed? Are you now in favour of a bypass and a new bridge?</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Perhaps I would not have expected from Minister Albanese a little bit more sense on a very serious question. Minister, as I prefaced my question before, I have that answer from last time which was nothing about the issue but all about the blame game which I thought was supposed to stop. And, quite frankly, I am not interested in what former Governments may or may not have done; I am interested in what is happening in the future and it is becoming more and more critical by the day. Obviously, Mr Albanese with that stupid response to me, quite unbecoming of a senior Minister, is writing back to me asking what my proposal is. Well, sorry, if I were in Government and if I were the Minister, yes, we would be doing something. But regrettably, he is the Minister and I would expect a little bit more maturity from one of the senior Ministers of Government. I am not interested in a political argument; I am interested in what—</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—I appreciate your desire to not talk about the past. Yesterday, you agreed that after 11½ years in Government you were not able to get Townsville a decent radio. Again today, you have acknowledged that, despite being a Minister in the Government, work on the Burdekin bridge ceased under your Government. I can understand you do not want to actually acknowledge the past and airbrush it out of existence but unfortunately with the marvels of digital technology now it is not possible.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I and the people of northern Australia are interested in addressing what is becoming day by day an increasingly critical transport issue.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—That would have been good if you could have addressed it while you were in Government.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—What I get from the senior Minister and from his representative here, are some games about politics. I am not interested in that, Senator; I am interested in getting a result.</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—Senator Macdonald, do you have one more question?</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—The officers are looking up my question. The Minister intervened</p>
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				<p>to run the answer I had already received. So if you are talking about wasting time, perhaps you could direct your attention to the Minister.</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—I was just alerting everyone to our tight timetable.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Yes, I am very conscious of that, Mr Chairman, I am doing my best in a wider sense to make sure that everyone gets a fair go.</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—And that you are, thank you.</p> <p><b>Mr Crombie</b>—The answer is that I do not have over what financial years that money covers. I have to take that on notice.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Please take that on notice. Is it going to be worth asking my next two questions if you do not have this material? I thought I might have indicated, but when is the work on the new southern section approach to Cairns going to start? I have a press release from the Minister saying that it is going to start soon. I would like some more precision about that, like who has got the contract, who is doing it, when it is likely to start, when it is intended to be finished and if you do not have that information could you take that on notice?</p>
II 07	21/10/08	34	MACDONALD	<p><b>[MOU – \$220 Million Projects]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Is that the completion of the Tully flood-plain area? Will that now provide the flood-proof road from Cairns to at least Ingham?</p> <p><b>Mr Crombie</b>—I do not think it will because you might be aware that there are a series of other projects under the \$220 million package of works signed under an MOU for other works between Cairns and Townsville. I think there are bits that are actually funded under that. The Tully project is specifically for the \$128 million—the 15-kilometre section between Corduroy Creek. I do not think it actually will provide all of the works between Cairns and Ingham; that is tied up with the broader package of works.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Can you give me the details of all of those and where they are at, what their timing is, what the estimated completion is?</p> <p><b>Mr Crombie</b>—I can do that now.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Well, I do not think—</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—We will just take it on notice. We really are running out of time. Senator Ludlam has some questions.</p>
II 08	21/10/08	34	LUDLAM	<p><b>[Road and Rail – Breakdown of Funding]</b></p> <p><b>Senator LUDLAM</b>—I am just trying to get a sense, I suppose, of the budget allocations in your agency that is for road funding as opposed to rail funding, regional or metro.</p> <p><b>Ms McNally</b>—We would have to take that kind of a split on notice.</p> <p><b>Senator LUDLAM</b>—I am not looking for too many decimal places, but just a rough idea. You mainly do road infrastructure or is there a lot of expertise and funding towards rail? What is the rough split? Is your work across the agency 80 per cent road, 20 per cent rail, 90-10, 50-50? How does it break down in terms of the funds that you administer?</p> <p><b>Ms McNally</b>—It is not that clear-cut, Senator. Projects have different sizes and different complexity. Some projects involve feasibility studies, some projects involve construction and some projects have</p>

				multiple stages. So we would probably be best to take that on notice. <b>Senator LUDLAM</b> —I would appreciate that just to get a rough breakdown. Do you fund cycle-ways as part of your transport budget?
II 09	21/10/08	35	LUDLAM	<b>[Metropolitan Public Transport – Breakdown of Funding]</b> <b>Senator LUDLAM</b> —I wonder how much of your work is in metropolitan public transport? <b>Ms McNally</b> —In terms of quantifying that I would have to take that on notice, but there has been a significant growth under this government. <b>Senator LUDLAM</b> —Would it be possible perhaps just to break down some funding over the last two or three years? <b>Ms McNally</b> —We could make an attempt. We will have a look at that, Senator. <b>Senator LUDLAM</b> —Not to just be creating work for you, but I am just interested to see how that changing pattern of mobility around the country is being reflected in the work that your agency does. <b>Ms McNally</b> —Yes, Senator. <b>Senator LUDLAM</b> —I would appreciate that.
II 10	21/10/08	38	WILLIAMS	<b>[Port Macquarie – AusLink Funding]</b> <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b> —I have a question for Minister Conroy. On 18 August this year, Minister Albanese announced a \$1.3 million program to fix dangerous black spots and local roads in the Port Macquarie area. The announcement included \$230,000 to fix a dangerous black spot at Rawdon Island, but just three days later his media release had not mentioned anything of the \$1.3 million as to Port Macquarie except for that Rawdon Island black spot. Why did the Minister choose to announce this expenditure in Port Macquarie and Taree in person during a Federal by-election? Is that normal procedure? <b>Senator Conroy</b> —Sorry, but were you asking whether it was normal procedure to release funding during a by-election? <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b> —The Minister went to Port Macquarie to announce the special funding for the <i>Black Spots</i> program and some funding for the <i>Roads to Recovery</i> program in Port Macquarie during the time of the by-election. Is that normal procedure? <b>Senator Conroy</b> —I would have to take that on notice and ask the Minister about that timing subject to the constraints of his diary, I am sure. But I will happily take that on notice and seek further information from the Minister. <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b> —Because three days later he put his media release out announcing all these <i>Black Spot</i> funding programs and only \$230,000 of that announcement at Port Macquarie is in the program three days later. So I am just a bit curious on that one, Minister. Can you confirm that, while Minister Albanese was up at Port Macquarie announcing these, he met with Robert Oakeshott, the then independent candidate for the seat of Lyne? <b>Senator Conroy</b> —I am happy to take that on notice and get you the information. <b>Senator WILLIAMS</b> —Yes, if you could you get me the information on that. I was wondering if the Minister met with any of the other local representatives such as John Turner, the MP for Myall Lakes, while he was there. Would you have to take that on notice as well?



				<p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—I will take that on notice.</p> <p><b>Senator WILLIAMS</b>—Yes. And, did the Minister personally announce any black spot funding in any of the other electorates? For example, just down the road at South West Rocks there was a \$465,000 program. I wonder if you would take on notice whether he went and announced that personally.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—I am happy to get that information for you, Senator Williams.</p>
II 11	N/A	Written	BUSHBY	<p><b>[Kingston By-pass]</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What consultation has taken place between officers of the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government on the planning for and building of the Kingston bypass in southern Tasmania?</li> <li>2. Is the Australian Government aware of current costing for the bypass?</li> <li>3. What are the current estimates for the total cost of the bypass?</li> <li>4. Has the Australian Government been asked to contribute anything over and above the \$25m promised as an election commitment?</li> <li>5. Has the Australian Government been advised of proposed timelines for the building of the Kingston bypass?</li> <li>6. What are those timelines?</li> <li>7. Will the Australian Government place any performance conditions on the payment of the funds towards the cost of the bypass?</li> </ol>
II 12	N/A	Written	BUSHBY	<p><b>[Bridgewater Bridge/Granton Junction]</b></p> <p><i>\$14m allocated – to cover refurbish of bridge and upgrade of intersection</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What consultation has taken place between officers of the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government on the planning for and implementation of the upgrade of the Bridgewater bridge in Tasmania?</li> <li>2. Is the Australian Government aware of current costing for the upgrade?</li> <li>3. What are the current estimates for the total cost of the upgrade?</li> <li>4. Has the Australian Government been asked to contribute anything over and above the \$11m promised as an election commitment?</li> <li>5. Has the Australian Government been advised of proposed timelines for the construction of the upgrade?</li> <li>6. What are those timelines?</li> <li>7. Will the Australian Government place any performance conditions on the payment of the funds towards the cost of the upgrade?</li> </ol>

II 13	N/A	Written	BUSHBY	<p><b>[Brighton By-pass]</b>  <i>Estimated cost \$164m (promised \$131m) – status: not started</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What consultation has taken place between officers of the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government on the planning for and building of the Brighton bypass in southern Tasmania?</li> <li>2. Is the Australian Government aware of current costing for the by-pass?</li> <li>3. What are the current estimates for the total cost of the bypass?</li> <li>4. Has the Australian Government been asked to contribute anything over and above the \$131m promised as an election commitment?</li> <li>5. Has the Australian Government been advised of proposed timelines for the building of the Brighton bypass?</li> <li>6. What are those timelines?</li> </ol> <p>Will the Australian Government place any performance conditions on the payment of the funds towards the cost of the bypass?</p>
II 14	N/A	Written	BUSHBY	<p><b>[Brighton Transport Hub]</b>  <i>\$56m towards \$79m cost</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What consultation has taken place between officers of the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government on the planning for and building of the Brighton transport hub in southern Tasmania?</li> <li>2. Is the Aust Govt aware of current costing for the matters promised to be funded last year?</li> <li>3. What are the current estimates for the total cost of the Transport hub?</li> <li>4. Has the Australian Government been asked to contribute anything over and above the \$56m promised as an election commitment?</li> <li>5. Has the Australian Government been advised of proposed timelines for the building of the Brighton transport hub?</li> <li>6. What are those timelines?</li> <li>7. Will the Australian Government place any performance conditions on the payment of the funds towards the cost of the transport hub?</li> </ol>
II 15	N/A	Written	BUSHBY	<p><b>[Rhyndaston Rail Capacity Improvements]</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What consultation has taken place between officers of the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government on the planning for and implementation of the rail capacity improvements at Rhyndaston in Tasmania?</li> <li>2. Is the Australian Government aware of current costing for the improvements?</li> <li>3. What are the current estimates for the total cost of the improvements?</li> <li>4. Has the Australian Government been asked to contribute anything over and above the \$24m promised as an election commitment?</li> <li>5. Has the Australian Government been advised of proposed timelines for the construction of the improvements?</li> <li>6. What are those timelines?</li> </ol>

				7. Will the Australian Government place any performance conditions on the payment of the funds towards the cost of the improvements?
II 16	N/A	Written	BUSHBY	<p><b>[Derwent Valley Rail Line]</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What consultation has taken place between officers of the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government on the planning for and implementation of the Derwent Valley railway upgrade in Tasmania?</li> <li>2. Is the Australian Government aware of current costing for the upgrade?</li> <li>3. What are the current estimates for the total cost of the upgrade?</li> <li>4. Has the Australian Government been asked to contribute anything over and above the \$30m promised as an election commitment?</li> <li>5. Has the Aust Govt been advised of proposed timelines for the construction of the upgrade?</li> <li>6. What are those timelines?</li> <li>7. Will the Australian Government place any performance conditions on the payment of the funds towards the cost of the upgrade?</li> </ol>
II 17	N/A	Written	BUSHBY	<p><b>[Pontville-Bagdad Bypass &amp; Bridgewater Bridge Planning]</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What consultation has taken place between officers of the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government on the planning for the Pontville-Bagdad bypass and the new Bridgewater bridge in southern Tasmania?</li> <li>2. Is the Australian Government aware of current costing for the bypass?</li> <li>3. What are the current estimates for the total cost of the bypass?</li> <li>4. Has the Aust Govt been asked to contribute anything over and above the \$5m promised as an election commitment?</li> </ol>
II 18	N/A	Written	BUSHBY	<p><b>[Increased AusLink II Road Maintenance]</b></p> <p><i>Increased commitment of \$31m to national network road maintenance over AusLink II period</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What consultation has taken place between officers of the Tasmanian Government and the Australian Government on maintenance requirements for that part of the national road network in Tasmania?</li> <li>2. How much of the \$31m has been requested?</li> <li>3. How much committed?</li> <li>4. What sections of the network do these commitments apply to?</li> </ol>

II 19	N/A	Written	LUDLAM	<p><b>[Building Australia Fund (BAF) - Commonwealth Contributions]</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Can you provide a characterisation of the cost-benefit model used to assess the various proposals made in the first round of bids for Commonwealth contributions from the BAF?</li> <li>2. Can you describe how you've incorporated 'agglomeration economies' into your cost-benefit model?</li> </ol>
II 20	N/A	Written	LUDLAM	<p><b>[Auslink Funding]</b></p> <p>I refer to the criteria by which Commonwealth funding under the Auslink programme is made available for road projects.</p> <p>Recognising that proposed road projects are subject to compliance with local, State and Commonwealth heritage, Indigenous heritage, environmental and planning legislation, I ask:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Does the Government ever place additional heritage, Aboriginal heritage, environmental or other conditions on road projects to which it has made a contribution under the Auslink scheme or any other road funding scheme?</li> <li>2. Can the Minister detail the form in which such conditions appear?</li> <li>3. Do such conditions take the form of standard conditions and/or conditions specific to the project in question?</li> <li>4. If standard conditions apply to all road projects funded, can the Minister provide a copy of such conditions?</li> <li>5. Is Auslink funding for road transport conditional on the project in question complying with all relevant heritage, Aboriginal heritage, environmental and planning legislation?</li> <li>6. If such conditions exist and are breached by state and local governments, what course of action is taken by the Commonwealth Government?</li> </ol>
II 21	N/A	Written	WILLIAMS	<p><b>[Newell Highway By-pass, New South Wales]</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is the funding for the Newell highway bypass at Moree fully committed for the entire project?</li> <li>2. Is there a fuel contamination issue in the Gosport street area?</li> <li>3. If so, how much is this adding to the cost and delay in construction?</li> <li>4. Will a temporary bypass be installed during construction of the main by-pass?</li> <li>5. Will Moree Plains Shire Council be asked to pay for any associated drainage works?</li> <li>6. When is completion date for the project?</li> <li>7. What is the estimated cost of the project?</li> </ol>
II 22	N/A	Written	WILLIAMS	<p><b>[Princess Highway Upgrade – AusLnk Funding]</b></p> <p>On 24 Oct 2007 the Prime Minister announced an election promise of \$140 million to upgrade the Princess Highway east from Traralgon to Sale, yet in the May Budget a figure of only \$500,000 was allocated. What is the current status of this project or, was it in fact an example of the would-be Prime Minister lying to the Australian people in the lead-up to the election?</p>

II 23	N/A	Written	WILLIAMS	<p><b>[Rail Network Upgrades]</b>  What plans does the Government/Department have to build on the work of former Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson in relation to upgrading the nation's faltering rail network and assisting and encouraging States in relation to upgrading and re-commissioning branch lines?</p>
II 24	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN / WILLIAMS	<p><b>[Grain Rail Task Force - Funding]</b>  I refer to the Budget announcement by the Rudd Government regarding the \$3 million for a Grain Rail Task Force that will (and I quote from the media release from the Minister for Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government, dated Tuesday 13 May 2008):  .....see industry and governments work together to develop viable long-term solutions to grain transport in NSW.  From what programme will this Task force be funded?</p>
II 25	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN / WILLIAMS	<p><b>[Grain Rail Task Force – Composition, etc.]</b>  I see, from Minister's media release of 12 November 2007 that you propose to invite growers, handlers, the National Farmers' Federation, the Australian Rail Track Corporation and the NSW Government to participate in this task force. I also note from media release dated 20 October 2008 that the Government has decided on the make up of the review task force.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Who will make up the task force?</li> <li>2. What organisations will be represented?</li> <li>3. What are the Review's terms of reference?</li> <li>4. Will the National Farmers Federation be on the task force?</li> <li>5. Why or why not?</li> <li>6. What about the Australian Rail Track Corporation?</li> </ol> <p>Will representatives from the NSW Government be on the task force?</p>
II 26	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN / WILLIAMS	<p><b>[Grain Rail Task Force – Review Report]</b>  The Taskforce will complete its review by May 2009</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is that correct?</li> <li>2. Will that report be publicly-available?</li> <li>3. Will it be tabled?</li> <li>4. Will it go to the Federal Minister first?</li> <li>5. Will the Review be making recommendations regarding the viability of grain rail routes?</li> <li>6. What are the funding implications upon the Commonwealth and the State of NSW arising from this review?</li> <li>7. Will the review provide its conclusions to Infrastructure Australia?</li> <li>8. Will its findings inform the considerations of the <i>Building Australia Fund</i>?</li> <li>9. Is the Federal Government considering assuming funding responsibility for the upkeep of the thousands of kilometres of grain rail infrastructure in rural NSW?</li> </ol>

				<p>10. What is the model of management and maintenance being considered by the Rudd Government when it comes to the grain-carrying rail system of NSW? What plans does the Government have to provide support to the grain carrying rail infrastructure in other States?</p>
II 27	N/A	Written	HEFFERNAN	<p><b>[Grain Rail Services in New South Wales]</b> I refer to media reports earlier this year that Pacific National, the main grain rail operator in NSW, had decided to suspend its rail operations. I also notice that according to more recent media reports; that Pacific National has decided, after all, to cart grain on NSW branch lines until 30 June 2009.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is this correct?</li> <li>2. What contractual arrangements are now underway to secure the transport of grain into the future?</li> <li>3. Obviously grain producers need to have long-term planning horizons in order to conduct their business. What arrangements will be in place to ensure that an operator is available after 30 June next year, to provide grain rail services in NSW?</li> </ol> <p>Under this deal, what arrangements are in place to ensure that growers have fair and equitable access to rail, up-country storages and port facilities?</p>
ISTP 01	21/10/08	45/46	COLBECK	<p><b>[Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme]</b> <b>CHAIR</b>—We now move to infrastructure and surface transport policy. <b>Senator COLBECK</b>—Mr Sutton, it is good to see you here. I last saw you in Tassie, when you were doing your regional consultations. Can you provide an update of where things are at? We have heard from BITRE that you have a draft report from them. Can you give an update on where you are at with the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme parameter review? <b>Mr Wilson</b>—Senator, if I may, I will start in terms of the overall process and then Mr Sutton can provide any additional information that you may require. As you are well aware, we undertook consultations with the community with regard to the findings of the Productivity Commission and how those would play out in administering the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme through March of this year. We have also received a report from the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics with regard to the parameters that underpin those schemes. We have provided advice to the government on the findings of the consultation process and the findings of the BITRE review, and the Government is considering the next steps in terms of the process for implementing any changes that may occur out of those consultations, out of the PC review and out of the BITRE parameter adjustment work. <b>Senator COLBECK</b>—We learned before that it is a draft report from BITRE. What further interaction are you proposing with BITRE on the draft report? <b>Mr Wilson</b>—The issue associated with the next steps in terms of the overall work for the scheme is currently being considered by the Government.</p>

				<p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—Is there any proposition to go back to the major users of the scheme?</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—The issues are being considered by the Government. I mentioned that in your last line of questioning, so this—</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—All right, Senator Conroy; this is not political and this is completely bipartisan.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—No, this just goes to advice to Government. You are actually into the advice to Government area. The report is being passed up to us for us to consider.</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—If you want to shut it down, that is fine.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—I am not shutting it down.</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—I just want to find out where it is at, and the users want to know—</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—You are well aware that you are not allowed to ask departmental officials about the content of advice to governments and what they are considering—</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—Well, I will ask you, Senator Conroy, because the Tasmanian Labor Government would like to know as well. In fact, there is a forum in Tasmania today for which the operations of the Tasmanian Freight Equalisation Scheme is one of the major issues, because they want to know what is happening as well. The Tasmanian Government wants to know what is going on as well. So, can you tell me: is there any plan for the Government to go back to the stakeholders in consultation with respect to where this is at?</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—The governments are considering a range of matters, and when we have made a decision we will announce it.</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—The Tasmanian Government made a submission to the review process but, because of the information and the process, it has reserved the right to make another submission. Is it going to get the opportunity to do that?</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—I will take that on notice and come back to you with any relevant information.</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—Likewise, two of the major users of the scheme and major employers in northern and southern Tasmania have held back from making proposals because of the concerns that we talked about earlier. Will they get the opportunity to undertake consultations with government?</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—As I said, the Government is considering a number of matters at the moment. If we have anything further to announce, we will keep you informed.</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—I am just telling you that you are making decisions without the full data, because industry is not comfortable in providing it at this stage. I am only trying to help. Are you interested in that information?</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—We are always interested—</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—I am not trying to be difficult.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—We are always interested in relevant information. We are considering a range of matters at the moment. I have taken on notice the question around consultation and will come back to you.</p>
ISTP 02	21/10/08	46	COLBECK	<p><b>[Productivity Commission Review]</b></p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—Has a report been provided to the Minister?</p>

				<p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—We have provided advice to the Minister, as I indicated before, with regard to the outcomes of the consultation, the findings of the Productivity Commission review and the work that was undertaken by BITRE.</p> <p><b>Senator COLBECK</b>—When was that submission made to the Minister?</p> <p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—I would have to take that on notice. I do not have that information with me.</p>
ISTP 03	21/10/08	49/50	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Maritime Industry – Skills Training]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—It is interesting what a group of politicians have said in the House of Representatives but I am really asking if the Government or your Department has any plans to deal with what is a critical shortage of training for people in the maritime industry.</p> <p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—I do not know that I can add anything extra to Mr Sutton’s answer other than the fact that we will be working with the Government in terms of developing a government response that will go across the breadth of the maritime industry.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I take it from that that the answer to my question is, no, you are not doing anything now, the government has no plans, but you will look at it following this House of Representatives report.</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—It is one o’clock, so could you answer that, Mr Wilson.</p> <p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—I will not comment on the Government having no plans but we will be looking at it in terms of—</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—It is not a trick question. If you have, all I am doing is seeking information about it.</p> <p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—But, in terms of the specifics in regards to the training of maritime officers, maritime crew, we will be looking at it in terms of the review.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—That is excellent. Thank you for that. As I say, it is not a trick question; the answer may be yes and it may be no, but whatever it is, could you just say if the government has any plans or strategies for this at the present time?</p> <p><b>CHAIR</b>—You may want to take that on notice and come back after the lunch break.</p> <p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—In terms of the specifics of the question, I will give you an answer after lunch.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Okay, that is fine.</p>
ISTP 04	21/10/08	50/51	ADAMS	<p><b>[Vehicle Driver-Fatigue Reforms]</b></p> <p><b>Senator ADAMS</b>—The heavy vehicle driver fatigue reform rollout commenced on 29 September this year. Given that the reforms were based on a national template, are you aware of any State-based differences in the implementation of these changes?</p> <p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—There are differences between the ways in which a number of the jurisdictions are rolling out the heavy vehicle fatigue laws. At this stage I believe New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and South Australia have brought the new laws into effect on 29 September. The Northern Territory and Tasmania are expected to implement their laws at a later date. The Western Australian Government indicated—at least prior to the change in government—that it would continue to regulate fatigue management under its occupational health and safety laws. The ACT has indicated it will retain its existing regulations. There are differences between the jurisdictions in regard to it, but</p>



				<p>I do not have the specifics in terms of precise differences between the jurisdictions. There are some differences in regard to the higher levels of fatigue management arrangements, as far as I am aware.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—We are happy to take specific questions because they are complex—</p> <p><b>Senator ADAMS</b>—I know they are complex. I am fully aware of that, because as soon as one goes across a border you have all these different problems and logbooks. We do not have logbooks in WA but you have logbooks in South Australia. If you do not know that you have to get one, where do you go? There are all these sorts of complications.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—We are happy to take specific questions on those and we will get you the information.</p> <p><b>Senator ADAMS</b>—I would like to be kept up-to-date with the differences. If they are going to cause problems, what is going to be done about them?</p> <p><b>Mr Wilson</b>—We will provide you with an answer on notice in terms of the major differences between what the jurisdictions have implemented. In terms of what is to be done about them, as I indicated, we are pursuing the establishment of a single jurisdiction which would, over time, eliminate many of the differences between the jurisdictions if it were to be implemented.</p>
ISTP 05	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<p><b>[Mass Limits for Trucks – COAG Decision 1999]</b> What progress is being made to implement the decision by COAG in 1999, to develop common higher mass limits for trucks with road-friendly suspension?</p>
ISTP 06	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<p><b>[Mass Limits for Trucks – COAG Decision 1999]</b> What progress has been made to roll out an approved national higher mass limit network for trucks with road-friendly suspension?</p>
ISTP 07	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<p><b>[National B-Triple Network – COAG Decision 2006]</b> What progress is being made to implement the 2006 COAG decision to establish a national B-triple network?</p>
ISTP 08	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<p><b>[Heavy Truck Regulations – Harmonised Treatment]</b> 1. Are you aware that States have failed to implement harmonised treatment of heavy truck regulations with regard to weights, heights and width of loads? 2. Can you give examples?</p>
ISTP 09	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<p><b>[Inconsistencies – Trucks Height of Loads]</b> 1. Is it true that in New South Wales, rigid, semi-trailers and B-doubles may be loaded to a width of 2.83 metres only, but in Victoria, these trucks can be loaded to three metres? 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? 3. Are you aware of similar inconsistencies with regard to the height of loads? 4. What is your department doing about these bizarre and counter-intuitive regulations that impede the development of a national road freight system?</p>
ISTP 10	N/A	Written	WILLIAMS	<p><b>[National Heavy Vehicle Fatigue Law]</b> At the moment, the heavy vehicle fatigue law in Western Australia is markedly different to the fatigue laws now implemented in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.</p>

				How will the Government ensure that any national law does not unfairly penalise Western Australian road transport businesses?
NTS 01	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Heavy Vehicle Licensing Regulations]</b> I refer to the decision by the Australian Transport Ministers on 25 July 2007 to build a single national system of heavy vehicle regulation and adopt a consistent approach to licensing. In the nearly three months that has passed since that decision, what progress has been made in its implementation?
NTS 02	N/A	Written	WILLIAMS	<b>[Single National Regulator for Heavy Vehicles]</b> I understand that the Australian Governments have agreed to create a single national regulator for heavy vehicles by July 2009. Please give the Committee an update on how this agreement is being progressed.
LGRD 01	21/10/08	9	MCGAURAN	<b>[Barcaldine Tree of Knowledge Project]</b> <b>Senator McGAURAN</b> —I would like to tick you off in regard to answering of questions. I put a very serious series of questions in regard to Labor's dead stump at Barcaldine. I got some answers and others just dropped out, such as the state of the tree at the moment. Remember, I held up a picture of it being pulled out of the ground? One of the questions was: is it still there? So could you go back and look at the actual questions that I asked in relation to the dead stump and attend to it, please? <b>Senator Conroy</b> —I am happy, if there has not been an answer provided, to raise that with the Minister's office. If you have received an answer, you may or may not like the answer, and that is unfortunately the nature of questions and answers, but if you have not received an answer to questions, I am happy to take that up on your behalf.
LGRD 02	21/10/08	54	MACDONALD	<b>[2008-09 Budget for Regional Offices in Townsville and Darwin]</b> <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b> —And budgets of \$580 million and \$260 million respectively? <b>Mr Angley</b> —Yes. There has been no change. <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b> —That was for the 2007-08 year. What budgets have you allocated for them internally for the 2008-09 year? <b>Mr Angley</b> —I will take that on notice, but it would be about the same as last year, because we have not changed their responsibilities.
LGRD 03	21/10/08	55	MACDONALD	<b>[Northern Land and Water Task Force – Members Biography]</b> <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b> —Is it for secretarial support? <b>Mr Angley</b> —Yes. We have allocated 1½ staff to the taskforce. <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b> —Do you have their names? <b>Mr Angley</b> —One is the secretary of the taskforce, Andrew Dixon, who followed the function, and another staffer inside his section. <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b> —I think the Minister has announced the composition of the taskforce. <b>Mr Angley</b> —Yes, he has. <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b> —Have all the people who were previously on it, apart from the

				<p>politicians, been re-appointed?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—They were all invited to join the reformed Committee or stay on the Committee. One of them said no because they were too busy.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Who was that?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—I will just check my notes. Noel Pearson said he was too busy with his other work in his community, so he did not accept a new appointment.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Is he the only one?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—Yes.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Can you tell me who the new people are?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—Yes. I will just read them off the press release. There are Richard Ah Matt, David Baffsky, Dr Stuart Blanch, David Crombie, Ms Elaine Gardiner, Dr Rosemary Hill, Dr Andrew Johnson, Ms Shirley McPherson, Mr Lachlan Murdoch, Mr Michael Roche, Mrs Terry Underwood, Mr Walynbuma Wunungmurra and Professor Bob Wasson.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I am familiar with those who used to be on it. Can you give me, perhaps on notice, a short biography, or was it in the Minister’s press release?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—No, it was not in the press release. There is some commentary on the members, but we can certainly provide that.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I would like a bio on who and what they are and where they hail from.</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—We will provide it for all the members.</p>
LGRD 04	21/10/08	55/56	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Northern Land and Water Task Force – Members Credentials]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I understand the Chairman is Mr Ross.</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—Joe Ross, yes.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Can you enlighten me on the qualities that Mr Ross has? I presume these are ministerial appointments, are they?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—Yes, they are.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—What qualifications were the Minister looking for that led to that appointment? Is that a fair question?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—Perhaps I should consult directly with the Minister on that. I would just make two points. One is that he is from northern Western Australia and the other is that he was on the original taskforce. I think they were two of the main attractions.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I would appreciate it if you could consult with the Minister. Has the taskforce met?</p>
LGRD 05	21/10/08	56	MACDONALD	<p><b>[Office of Northern Australia – Budget Allocation]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—You are confirming that \$2 million will be \$800,000 for the two offices, plus the accommodation and travel for the taskforce and other support. Is that basically what it will be doing?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—No. It is a bit broader than that. Those things that you have named do not take up the whole budget. There will be other material and the Minister will decide.</p>

				<p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Is it possible to take on notice the Department’s internal budget allocation for the Office of Northern Australia?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—I will take that on notice. It is departmental funding.</p>
LGRD 06	21/10/08	58	ADAMS	<p><b>[Regional Development Australia (RDA) – Appointments Process]</b></p> <p><b>Senator ADAMS</b>—Could you tell me when the new Chairs for the RDA will be appointed and how the appointments will be made?</p> <p><b>Mr Angley</b>—No. That process is still being considered by the Parliamentary Secretary and the Minister.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—That is a matter for the Minister.</p> <p><b>Senator ADAMS</b>—We will leave that. Will these appointments be made from recommendations received from a local level or from recommendations from existing consulting Committee Boards?</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—They are matters under consideration at the moment and I am not sure that there is any more information I can give you than that.</p> <p><b>Senator ADAMS</b>—How will the Minister make sure that the new Chairs have the skills and capacity to undertake the role?</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—I am confident that the Minister will take into account all the necessary factors, but I am happy to take that question on notice and come back to you if there is any further information the minister would like to give you.</p> <p><b>Senator ADAMS</b>—There is an example in Western Australia, but our head office in Perth is gone. I think if these RDAs are going to be successful, the Chairs are an absolutely essential component and they must understand the regions. They must understand the geographical differences if the regions are amalgamated and the way these regions work, because what was there before was a very good set-up for all Federal Members of Parliament. To lose the information that flowed between the members of Parliament and the Chairs and their boards is a retro-grade step. Also, for Western Australia especially, with no-one in Perth at all and the decisions being made in the eastern States, that is a retro-grade step. This is the reason that I am so keen that these chairs are fully up to speed with the areas that they are representing. It is very important.</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—I will take that on board and I will pass those sentiments on to the Minister.</p>
LGRD 07	21/10/08	64	MACDONALD	<p><b>[List of Approved Regional Projects]</b></p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—Senator McGauran is always welcome in Queensland. At last Estimates we were trying to get a list of projects that had been funded by the Government. The department and the minister at the time said, ‘We cannot get them.’ Do you remember that we had the farce of running around? And then we found that Mr Jim Turner from Cairns, the Labor Member for Capricornia, came out whilst we were trying to get them here with a whole list of them. I asked you—</p> <p><b>Senator Conroy</b>—I think that is not an accurate statement.</p> <p><b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b>—I asked you on notice whether you could find out how he knew when we could not find out. You offered to get me the information. The answer I got on notice was: the Department does not hold this information. Of course I knew the Department would not. The</p>

				question was to you, Minister, and you undertook to get an answer from the Minister. Could I put on notice now the same question so that you can find out all those months ago now how Mr Turner could get something that the Committee of the Parliament could not? Could you take that on notice? <b>Senator Conroy</b> —I appreciate that. I want to assure you that when the <i>Tree of Knowledge</i> at Barcaldine next comes up I will have your quotes there listed in with Bruce Scott's, Greg Hunt's, Ian Campbell's and Vaughan Johnson's in supporting the project.
LGRD 08	21/10/08	64/65	MACDONALD	<b>[Dysart Sports Centre Project]</b> <b>Senator IAN MACDONALD</b> —The Dysart Sports Centre was a <i>Better Regions</i> election commitment. I did ask last time whether the Department had received an application for it and had rejected it. Again, I do not want to put the Department in a difficult position. They did not answer the question on whether the Department had previously dealt with the application for the Dysart Sports Centre and had rejected it. The answer I got was: the Dysart Sports Centre was a <i>Better Regions</i> election commitment. This means that whilst the Department could not favourably fund it, because it is a Labor Party commitment, it goes ahead. Could you double-check the question and the answer and come back to me on whether or not the Department did previously reject an application for the Dysart Sports Centre? I will put that on notice? At the last Estimates back in May, just after the Budget, it was said that the Government had taken no decision involving the Foundation for Rural and Regional Renewal past the current commitment, which expires on 30 June 2009. Does the Government have any intention of supporting that philanthropic unit which has done so much for rural and regional Australia?
LGRD 09	21/10/08	65	ADAMS	<b>[Regional Partnership Funding Program – Applications Process]</b> <b>Senator ADAMS</b> —How does the Government justify that it accepted applications for <i>Regional Partnership</i> funding right up to Budget night given the fact that it was clear that the program was going to be axed? I would just like you to note that the Perth office was processing these applications. <b>Senator Conroy</b> —I think we covered that extensively at the last Estimates— <b>Senator ADAMS</b> —I did not actually ask that question. <b>Senator Conroy</b> —The general issue of decisions and processing was covered extensively. I can only refer you back to <i>Hansard</i> from the last Estimates. It really was canvassed at length. <b>Senator ADAMS</b> —That question was not asked. <b>Senator Conroy</b> —I am happy to take that on notice. If there is anything new you would like to know we would be happy to add to it, but we did cover that generic issue.
LGRD 10	21/10/08	66	MCGAURAN	<b>[Barcaldine Tree of Knowledge Project]</b> <b>Senator McGAURAN</b> —Could the officers please take on notice and certainly let me know if the Labor Party at any time made a suggestion to pay any amount to this museum? <b>Senator Conroy</b> —That is not a question—that is for the officers. <b>Senator McGAURAN</b> —Just do the plaque.
LGRD 11	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Business Enterprise Centres]</b> Bearing in mind that Government criticised that RP funding was given out 'without proper

				guidelines, how does Government/Department justify that Minister Emerson delivered his election promise to give every one of the 30 Business Enterprise Centres (BEC) members \$30,000 over three years – without any questions, guidelines or assessment?
LGRD 12	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Approved Regional Partnerships Projects]</b> 1. Prior to the axing of the RP program, the Government received 494 applications for funding. Government/Department please explain and give out a chart, showing in detail at which stage of assessment every single project had been at the eve of Budget night? How many projects in total were fully assessed before Budget night?
LGRD 13	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Regional Partnerships Program – Application Process]</b> 1. There are rumours that RP applications were accepted and processed in Perth right up to Budget night. Government/Department please confirm this information? 2. If so, how does Government/Department justify that it accepted applications for RP funding right up to Budget night, given the fact it was clear this program would be axed? How does Government/Department justify that the list of the approved 86 RP projects first went to the ABC, then to local ACCs and only then, hours later, to the Senators involved in the Estimates Hearing? 3. How does Government/Department justify the exclusion of some projects with ‘business focus’? If Government/Department does not like business focus, why does it then give money to BECs without any review?
LGRD 14	N/A	Written	ADAMS	<b>[Closure of the Perth Office]</b> How does Government justify this loss of corporate knowledge?
LGRD 15	N/A	Written	WILLIAMS	<b>[Better Regions Program – Projects Approval Process]</b> Has there been any attempt by the Government to influence the approval of projects under the <i>Better Regions</i> programme based on what electorate the project is situated as suggested in the media recently by the Member for Longman?
LGRD 16	N/A	Written	WILLIAMS	<b>[Golden City Support Services – Bendigo, Victoria – Carer Respite House Project]</b> What is the current status of an application for funding made by Golden City Support Services Bendigo, Victoria to construct a carer respite house for families?  <i>Their application was to be assessed during the June - October 2008 period. Currently, there are no respite beds available in the area. (On 29 May 2008, during Senate Estimates, Senator Conroy gave Senator Nash an undertaking that he would approach Minister Albanese regarding alternative funding opportunities for this project.)</i>
LGRD 17	N/A	Written	MINCHIN	<b>[National Broadband Network]</b> The Government has previously stated that it will spend up to \$4.7 billion of taxpayer money on a National Broadband Network. Does this figure still represent the Government's absolute maximum contribution?

LGRD 18 (transfer from PM&C on 17/11/08)	N/A	Written	FIFIELD	<b>[Australian Council of Local Governments]</b> In relation to the first meeting of the Australian Council of Local Governments: Is there a budget for the meeting?
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