

Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Supplementary Budget Estimates October 2009
Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government

Question No.: NB-II 01

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Status of the Australian Government's Election Commitments within the Infrastructure Portfolio

Hansard Page: 10 (20/10/09)

Senator Abetz asked:

Senator ABETZ—I am sure you are not interrupting a question, Minister. What is the status of each election commitment within the infrastructure portfolio? Minister, what website should I be looking at?

Senator Conroy—The point I was making was that it is not Infrastructure Australia's job to answer such a question, as Mr Deegan has correctly pointed out. If there is any further information or a relevant source that I can refer you to, I will take that on notice and refer you to it.

Senator ABETZ—Minister, are you aware of each election commitment that was made?

Senator Conroy—As you know, this is not my portfolio. I am sure we are pretty close to achieving all of our election commitments and are looking forward to a new batch we will be making when the next election comes around and then delivering them as well in full.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Mr Mrdak, on notice, can we get a list of the website—

Senator Conroy—I just took it on notice.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—and a short comment on where each one is at being delivered—that is the question.

Senator Conroy—We will take that on notice and any information we are able to give you on that question we will forward to the committee.

Answer:

Refer to NB-II 06.

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Question No.: NB-II 02

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Roe Highway Stage 8 Project

Hansard Page: 23 (20/10/09)

Senator Ludlam asked:

Senator LUDLAM—All right. Can you tell us whether there have been any propositions to you from the Western Australian government for funding of the Roe Highway extension in the southern suburbs of Perth?

Mr Deegan—There have been a range of discussions with the Western Australian government about road linkages in and out of the airport.

Senator LUDLAM—No. This is a different part of the city.

Mr Deegan—Primarily our focus has been about transport issues in and around the airport—public transport and roads. There may be applications through other processes for some of those roads to which you refer, but I will double-check.

Senator LUDLAM—If you can. The road link that I am specifically interested in is the Roe Highway stage 8 extension. Can you tell us the status of negotiations—whether there have been any formal or informal requests or sounding out for Commonwealth funding—for that proposal?

Mr Deegan—I can report to you on whether there has been any material to Infrastructure Australia but, again, the department may be better placed to respond to that.

Senator LUDLAM—That is all right; I will put it to them also.

Answer:

The Roe Highway Stage 8 project is not part of the Nation Building Program agreed between the Australian and the Western Australian Government.

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Question No.: NB-II 03

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: WA Grain Lines

Hansard Page: 24 (20/10/09)

Senator Ludlam asked:

Senator LUDLAM—I might be able to provide you with some material as well. It seems that you are in discussions with some of those groups, and I realise that it is quite a politically charged issue. Moving across the country to Western Australia, can you tell us the status of your thinking on the grain line? Again, there is a proposal to basically eliminate quite a bit of the rail track in WA.

Mr Deegan—There is a separate review that the department is engaged in on grain issues in Western Australia. The department may be better able to respond. Certainly, as part of our ports and freight work, we have an overview of grain issues across the country. But the detailed report on grain rail in Western Australia is a matter for the department to respond to.

Mr Mrdak—The first report in relation to the WA grain lines, which was a commitment the government gave in the election to undertake, has been completed. Discussions are now taking place between the Australian government, the WA government and rail operators and users in WA in relation to how we take that forward, particularly in the development of an investment program. I might ask my colleague, Ms O’Connell, to give you an update on where that work is at.

Ms O’Connell—As my colleague said, that study has been undertaken and the government is considering a response to that study and the work that will be undertaken that follows from that.

Senator LUDLAM—Can you tell us what the approximate timetable for a response might be?

Ms O’Connell—Certainly. I will find out and then come back to these hearings and let you know.

Answer:

The Western Australian (WA) Minister for Transport, the Hon Simon O’Brien MLC has publically released the report he commissioned the Strategic Grain Network Committee to undertake on Monday 17 January 2010.

The WA Government has submitted a copy of this report to the Australian Government for consideration.

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Question No.: NB-II 04

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Status of Major Infrastructure Projects

Hansard Page: 30 (20/10/09)

Senator Abetz asked:

Senator ABETZ—I asked whether Infrastructure Australia could detail the status of infrastructure projects identified as priorities in its report to COAG. I understand that that is more departmental rather than Infrastructure Australia specific.

Mr Mrdak—I would be happy to give you a summary of where we are at on each of those projects, if that would assist you.

Senator ABETZ—I know you would be happy to, but would the minister? He will not be referring me to a website of numerous pages, will he? We will keep our fingers crossed!

Mr Mrdak—I was going to give you a brief summary now, if that would help.

Senator ABETZ—Even better.

Mr Mrdak—I am happy to give you more detailed information. They are essentially the projects which were announced in the federal budget arising from the Building Australia Fund funding. There were three projects in South Australia: the Gawler rail modernisation and electrification project—

Senator ABETZ—How many projects are we going to be talking about?

Mr Mrdak—There are 15.

Senator ABETZ—In that case, I invite you to take that on notice or, if that is a handy summary that could potentially be photocopied without divulging information that we opposition senators are not entitled to—

Mr Mrdak—My summary unfortunately contains some cash flow projections which are ours and not in the public arena.

Senator ABETZ—Could you delete those?

Mr Mrdak—I will provide you with a short summary document of where we are at with each of those 15.

Answer:

Details on major infrastructure projects are available on the department's website.

A summary of the status of these major infrastructure projects is attached.

[NB-II 04 Attachment]

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Attachment A

Major Infrastructure Projects

Project	Status (as at October 2009)
South Australia	
Gawler rail line modernisation	Major construction scheduled to commence in 2010.
Noarlunga Rail Extension	Major construction scheduled to commence in 2010.
O-Bahn Track Extension	Major construction scheduled to commence in 2010.
New South Wales	
West Metro—Preconstruction Work	Geotech investigations underway.
Hunter Expressway	Major construction scheduled to commence in 2010.
Kempsey Bypass	Major construction scheduled to commence in 2010.
Victoria	
Regional Rail Express	Major construction scheduled to commence in 2010.
East-West Rail Tunnel—Preconstruction Work	Request for Tender for technical advisers currently being considered.
Queensland	
Gold Coast Light Rail	Major construction scheduled to commence in 2011.
Ipswich Motorway—Additional Works	Under construction.
Bruce Highway—Cooroy to Curra	Under construction.
Brisbane Inner City Rail Feasibility Study	Underway.
Western Australia	
Northbridge Rail Link (The Hub)	Major construction scheduled to commence in 2010.
Oakajee Port	Awaiting submission from Western Australian Government to Infrastructure Australia for assessment.
Northern Territory	
Darwin Port Expansion	Awaiting submission from Northern Territory Government to Infrastructure Australia for assessment.

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Question No.: NB-II 05

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Meekatharra to Wiluna Road, Western Australia

Hansard Page: 33 (20/10/09)

Senator Ludlam asked:

Senator LUDLUM—To Meekatharra, Central Western Australia. As I say, it is the only strip between Kalgoorlie and the north-west towns that is unsealed, so a lot of road freight transport has to come through Kalgoorlie into Perth and then back out, taking the long way around. It has been under discussion for funding for 20 years, perhaps longer. I am just wondering whether anything at all has crossed either of your desks from the state government or from the local shires concerned about funding that stretch of road.

Mr Mrdak—I am not aware of anything. I would have to check whether that actually is part of the national network.

Senator LUDLAM—I believe it is.

Mr Mrdak—If I may, I will take that on notice and just check what the status of any such proposal, and whether we have considered any such proposal, and I will come back to you if I can.

Answer:

No funding proposal has been submitted to the Australian Government for a project on this section of road.

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Question No.: NB-II 06

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Finalisation of schedules of projects under MOUs with states and territories

Hansard Page/s: 46 (20/10/09)

Senator Abetz asked:

Senator ABETZ—Of course, but there was ultimately a final list, was there not, that was included in the MOU? When did you finalise the list, please?

Ms McNally—The list was finalised when the MOUs were provided to the states and territories.

Senator ABETZ—And what date was that?

Ms McNally—I would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

The Nation Building Program projects can be found on the Nation Building Program website.

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Question No.: NB-II 07

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment
Topic: The Australian Government’s Election Commitments
Hansard Page: 46 (20/10/09)

Senator Abetz asked:

Senator ABETZ—Thank you very much. Can I then move on to NB II No. 15 in the same estimates.

I asked: I just want to know which is which because, looking at the website, I am not informed as to which one is a specific election promise and which one is not.

That was in relation to projects that are on the website. We were told in relation to election promises, ‘Look at the website’, that the website contains election promises and projects that were not election promises. We wanted to sort those out, separate them out, so I asked:

I just want to know which is which because, looking at the website, I am not informed as to which one is a specific election promise and which one is not.

The minister said: As I said, we will take it on notice and see what information the Minister can make available to you. Do you know what I was told: The Nation Building Program projects can be found on the Nation Building Program website.

Well, duh! I know that. I wanted the separation as to which ones were election promises and which ones were developed after the election.

Senator Conroy—We will take that on notice and see if there is any further information the minister is able to provide.

Answer:

Refer to NB-II 06.

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Question No.: NB-II 08

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Allocation of land transport funding to projects in regional areas of Tasmania.

Hansard Page: 47 (20/10/09)

Senator Abetz asked:

Senator ABETZ—NBII 16, I asked: Is Tasmania considered to be regional in that definition? I was provided with the answer, ‘No’. Unfortunately, I note that in the way this question has been provided the answer ‘No’ may in fact relate to something else, so I just want clarification on this one. It was a good, specific answer, and I appreciate that for a change, but just to ensure that there is no confusion, if you have NBII 16 in front of you—**Ms McNally**—It is.

Senator ABETZ—you will see the question about halfway down the page:

Senator ABETZ—Right. Is Tasmania considered to be regional in that definition? Is it that question that is being answered as ‘No’ at the bottom of the page?

Ms McNally—The question relates to Tasmania being regional, Senator.

Senator ABETZ—It does.

Ms McNally—Basically, Tasmania is not of itself considered to be regional, but there would be things in Tasmania that are regional.

Senator ABETZ—All right. Thank you for that. Further on, Mr Tongue said:

I do not have that information to hand, but I will endeavour to get it for you.

That was in relation to: Out of the larger figure, is Tasmania, for example, considered to be regional, and so its \$800 million is included in that regional figure?

Ms McNally—Some of the \$800 million for Tasmania would be considered to be regional, Senator. The \$800 million itself is not all for regional activity. For example, you would not include the Kingston bypass in a regional figure.

Senator ABETZ—A great local one that I have been campaigning on for quite some time. Thank you very much. I said: If it is not too difficult an exercise, if you could disaggregate and provide it to us on notice, we would appreciate that. Thank you for that.

But there has been no disaggregation provided, has there?

Ms McNally—No, Senator.

Senator ABETZ—Could you please provide that disaggregation?

Ms McNally—I will take that on notice, Senator.

Senator ABETZ—Could you please provide that disaggregation?

Ms McNally—I will take that on notice, Senator.

Answer:

Under the *AusLink Interpretation Instrument (2005)* which defines Australia into urban and non-urban, Tasmania is classified as non-urban. Applying the Australian Bureau of Statistics Statistical Subdivision boundary definitions, around \$534 million of the \$796.8 million allocated for Tasmania over the six years from 2008-09 to 2013-14 is committed to projects in regional areas.

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Question No.: NB-II 09

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment
Topic: Boom Gates for Rail Crossings Program delivery in NSW
Hansard Page/s: 48 (20/10/09)

Senator Williams asked:

Senator WILLIAMS—Just on Nation Building—Infrastructure Investment, in New South Wales \$42.7 million has been set aside for boom gates and other safety measures at 55 level crossings. That works out to around \$776,000 per level crossing, which seems very expensive. Were tenders called to carry out the installation of these boom gates?

Ms McNally—The boom gates work in New South Wales I think is being overseen and managed by the ARTC. I would have to check with them.

Senator WILLIAMS—Oh dear, we are a bit late on that! Are you sure that is the case?

Ms McNally—We would have to check with the ARTC.

Answer:

See answer to NB-II 50.

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Question No.: NB-II 10

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Black Spot Urban Rural Split

Hansard Page: 49 (20/10/09)

Senator Williams asked:

Senator WILLIAMS—I am interested to know how many projects were funded in regional Australia compared to the cities. Do you have any idea of that?

Ms McNally—I could take that on notice.

Answer:

The number and value of Black Spot projects in urban and rural areas in 2008-09 and 2009-10 are set out in the table below. The figures are as at 23 October 2009.

URBAN	AMOUNT	RURAL	AMOUNT
558	\$115,134,006	609	\$144,646,773

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Question No.: NB-II 11

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Heavy Vehicles – All Weather Road Rest Areas

Hansard Page: 51 (20/10/09)

Senator Williams asked:

Senator WILLIAMS—Are there any all-weather road rest areas or have they all been put on bitumen roads?

Ms McNally—I would have to take that on notice.

Answer:

All submissions received under Round One of the Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity Program were for projects on sealed roads.

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Question No.: NB-II 12

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Schedule of projects in Queensland

Hansard Page: 53- 54 (20/10/09)

Senator Ian Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Is there any way we can find out when the bulldozers are going to start?

Ms O’Connell—In terms of the overall program’s commitment to funding this project within the nation building program, we consult with the state government about commencement dates, which are dependent on the timing of studies and other works that are going on within the state. We will take the question on notice and go and talk with the state government about the commencement of this specific project.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—The money is allocated. Is there anything you can do to ensure that your money, which you have allocated, is actually used to actually do what it was allocated for—that is, to build a road?

Senator Conroy—I look forward to hearing those announcements, as I am sure you will.

Ms McNally—Yes.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Ms McNally said, ‘Yes.’ Could you tell me what you can do?

Ms McNally—The specific project is identified in the MOU with the Queensland government as an Australian government commitment within the forward estimates period.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—I do have a lot of questions to go through but the same answer is going to be given—that is, ‘Yes, the money is allocated if you live long enough.’ My life span is looking to be about 20 years from here, and I may not be alive when it is spent.

Senator Conroy—That is completely inaccurate Senator Macdonald, as you know. Ms McNally has indicated it will be in the forward the estimates period.

Ms McNally—That is right.

Senator Conroy—That is quite a defined period. I am planning on living longer than the forward estimates; I am not sure about you. Maybe you have other arrangements.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—Anyhow, you are not going to be able to tell me—

CHAIR—Sorry. Senator Macdonald. Mr Mrdak was answering you as well.

Mr Mrdak—As Ms McNally did undertake to do, we will seek advice from the Queensland Department of Main Roads in relation to what their current project schedule is. We will come back to you in relation to that.

Answer:

A commencement date will be determined in consultation with the Queensland Government.

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Question No.: NB-II 13

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Location of Gairloch Floodway on MOU

Hansard Page: 56 (20/10/09)

Senator Ian Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—You were going to get me details about the Gairloch Floodway. I do not want to give you a huge amount of paperwork to do, but would it be too much trouble to do that for the whole of Queensland?

Ms McNally—No, Senator. I can provide you with a copy of the MOU that is on our website, where it is listed.

Answer:

MOU Schedule is available on the Nation Building Program website.

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Question No.: NB-II 14

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Commencement of Queensland Nation Building Program projects in 2009-10

Hansard Page: 56 (20/10/09)

Senator Ian Macdonald asked:

Senator IAN MACDONALD—I am just wondering: can you extend that to all of the Queensland projects?

Ms McNally—That have not commenced? It would be unlikely that there would be fixed dates for a number of the projects.

Senator IAN MACDONALD—As many as you can.

Ms McNally—We will take that—

Senator IAN MACDONALD—We are hoping that Gairloch is going to happen and I think I mentioned a couple of others. Anyhow, what is programmed to actually start soil turning and bulldozers working in the next year? I am not sure whether it is the financial year or the calendar year. I assume they would have a couple of years out. What I am really after is this. Over the next, say, two years—if that is reasonable—where are the bulldozers going to start? I appreciate the funding that you have for me, and thank you for getting that. I think we probably got it before, but thank you anyhow. What I want to know is not when the allocations are being made—that is good; that is great—but when they start, if that is possible.

Ms McNally—Yes.

Answer:

Projects scheduled to commence construction in Queensland in 2009-10 are outlined on the Nation Building Program website.

Projects scheduled to commence in 2010-11 will be agreed with the Queensland Government as part of the Australian Government's 2010-11 Budget process.

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Question No.: NB-II 15

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: South Road Upgrade – 15 October Media Release

Hansard Page: 59 (20/10/09)

Senator Fisher asked:

Senator FISHER—Can you tell me those two exchanges again?

Ms McNally—The Port River Expressway to Regency Road, and the second one was the interchange works at Darlington. In terms of the Port River Expressway to Regency Road, much of the planning works have actually been undertaken and they are expected to be completed early in 2010, but the first phase of that particular planning has been completed and a preferred scheme has been announced. That was announced on 15 October.

Senator FISHER—Can you provide the committee with a copy of that?

Ms McNally—I can.

Answer:

Available on the Department's website.

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Question No.: NB-II 16

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: South Road Upgrade – Australian Government Commitment

Hansard Page: 60 (20/10/09)

Senator Fisher asked:

Senator FISHER—Depending upon the study, on which part or parts of South Road will the balance of the \$500 million be spent—in other words, some \$460 million?

Ms McNally—It will be spent on those particular aspects of the road that the study has been undertaken for, so the Port River Expressway to Regency Road and the interchange works at Darlington.

Senator FISHER—Anything else?

Ms McNally—I have not really got any other information with me, Senator. I would have to take that on notice.

Senator FISHER—Can you, please?

Ms McNally—Yes, Senator.

Answer:

The Australian Government has committed \$500 million to South Road Upgrade comprising \$70 million for planning studies and \$430 million for construction.

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Question No.: NB-II 17

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: South Road Upgrade Planning Studies – Consultants and Consultations

Hansard Page: 61 (20/10/09)

Senator Fisher asked:

Senator FISHER—I have not got specifically who it is. Basically they will be contracts that are let by the South Australian government but I can take that on notice.

Senator FISHER—Can you, please.

Ms McNally—They are certainly required to undertake consultation, particularly as part of their environmental assessment work.

Senator FISHER—Can you provide some detail on notice around the consultations as well?

Ms McNally—I am happy to do that, Senator.

Answer:

There are two studies underway on South Road:

1. The South Road Upgrade planning study between Port River Expressway and Regency Road is being conducted by Connell Wagner, QED and GHD. Extensive consultations have already been undertaken as part of this study and were completed on 19 November 2009.
2. The South Road Upgrade planning study at Darlington commenced in June 2009 and is being conducted by the AECOM consortium. Consultation is expected to commence in early 2010.

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Question No.: NB-II 18

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: South Road Upgrade Cost Estimates

Hansard Page: 62 (20/10/09)

Senator Fisher asked:

Senator FISHER—So, of that, what is the cost estimate for the pre-October 2009 announced total cost, pre- October 2009 announced grade separations?

Ms McNally—I would have to take that on notice. I do not have that information with me. I have only got the current information. Basically it would not be a lot different.

Senator FISHER—You see, it begs the question: what about the Sturt Road grade separation alone? The state government suggested in 2006 that would cost about \$140 million; is that right?

Ms McNally—I have not got that information with me.

Senator FISHER—Can you answer that on notice, please?

Ms McNally—Yes, sure.

Answer:

No.

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Question No.: NB-II 19

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment
Topic: South Road Upgrade – Timing, Funding and Scope
Hansard Page: 62 (20/10/09)

Senator Fisher asked:

Senator FISHER—So, speaking of timetable, when will the grade separation bits of the project start?

Ms McNally—Until the planning is completed I cannot answer that definitively, but I would be happy to look into that and take that on notice.

Senator FISHER—Thank you, and likewise when will they be completed.

Ms McNally—Yes, Senator.

Senator FISHER—How much money then is available for the grade separations as announced in September 2008, February 2009 and July 2009? How much money is left out of \$500 million from the federal government's contribution to fund those grade separations, where will the grade separations be, how much will each one cost and from where will those bits and pieces of the \$500 million come?

Ms McNally—So you are just really trying to understand how the \$500 million has been spread across the package of works?

Senator FISHER—It may well be that that is what I am struggling to understand, but if you answer those questions on notice, thank you, plus say whatever you want to say now.

Answer:

The first construction project identified for the South Road Upgrade is the South Road Superway. All other construction works on South Road are yet to be determined and are the subject of current and future planning studies.

The Australian Government has committed \$500 million to the upgrade of South Road, with \$70 million allocated to planning studies and \$430 million to construction works.

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Question No.: NB-II 20

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Northern Expressway – opening of bridges at Penfield Road and Heaslip Road.

Hansard Page: 64 (20/10/09)

Senator Abetz asked:

Senator ABETZ—Could you take it on notice so that we can have it in anticipation for next time who was invited from the South Australian federal representatives?

Ms McNeill—Sorry, but I should clarify that, Senator. That was just for two bridges. The main project in total will not be opened until late next year.

Senator ABETZ—But I am sure there will be three separate openings with three separate photo opportunities. So if you can tell us about all three, Ms McNeill. Thank you very much for that. I would like to know about all three.

Answer:

Details of the attendees will be advised once the bridge openings have taken place.

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Question No.: NB-II 21

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Adelaide Northern Expressway Project: Indigenous Employment

Hansard Page: 64 (20/10/09)

Senator Adams asked:

Senator ADAMS—It is a really good project and I am very interested, because I am on another committee that is involved with Indigenous communities and that is the reason I am asking the question. Who would evaluate whether these people have been successful or they need more help or what government policy could be utilised to perhaps extend their occupations?

Ms McNally—It is certainly something we could look into, Senator.

Answer:

The construction contract for the Northern Expressway project has a key performance indicator of 10 per cent employment for young and indigenous people. The South Australian Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure is currently undertaking an analysis of the procurement and supply chain for the Northern Expressway project to analyse employment and job creation undertaken during the planning phases of this project. This includes developing an understanding of the youth and aboriginal employment on the project.

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Question No.: NB-II 22

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Chester Pass Road

Hansard Page: 65 (20/10/09)

Senator Adams asked:

Senator ADAMS—I do have a question regarding the Chester Pass Road which is in the great southern area of Western Australia. It carries at the moment 15 per cent of our grain to Albany, but it will be increasing. Has any funding been applied for?

Ms McNally—What was the name of the road, Senator? I missed it.

Senator ADAMS—Chester Pass Road.

Ms McNally—I do not think I have got information on that one with me. I will have to take that on notice, Senator.

Answer:

No funding proposal has been submitted to the Australian Government for a project on this section of road.

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Question No.: NB-II 23

Division/Agency: Nation Building - Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Barton Highway Safety Works Package

Hansard Page: 66 (20/10/09)

Senator Nash asked:

Senator NASH—Would you mind taking on notice for the committee a detailed breakdown of the \$36 million and where it is going with respect to the road?

Ms McNally—Sure.

Answer:

The proposed road safety improvements on the Barton Highway are as detailed below:

- Capricorn Corner Realignment
- Gounyan Curves Realignment
- Mass action safety improvements including:
 - line-marking;
 - improved warning signs;
 - shoulder widening; and
 - tree removal.

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Question No.: NB-II 24

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Correspondence from Minister Albanese to Tasmania in relation to its submission to Infrastructure Australia

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Bushby asked:

1. Was there any correspondence sent to the Tasmanian Government by Minister Albanese prior to the closing date for submissions for funding through the \$22 billion infrastructure stimulus package in relation to that funding application?
2. If so, what date was that correspondence sent?

Answer:

1. and 2. No.

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Question No.: NB-II 25

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Midland Highway Duplication, Advice to PM, PM Office or PM&C

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Bushby asked:

1. Has Infrastructure Australia or the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government provided any advice to the Prime Minister, his office or his department on the issues of upgrading the Midlands Highway in Tasmania to a dual carriageway?
2. Is the Department aware of the basis on which the Prime Minister ruled out the provision of funding for upgrading the Midlands Highway in Tasmania to a dual carriageway?
3. Is the Department aware whether the Prime Minister has actually travelled on that highway?

Answer:

1. Yes.
2. Refer to Minister's comments in the House on 20 October 2009.
3. That is a matter for the Prime Minister.

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Question No.: NB-II 26

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Midland Highway Duplication, work done by the Department

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Bushby asked:

1. Has there been any work done within the Department on the cost of, route for, or other preparation work in respect to the upgrading the Midlands Highway in Tasmania to a dual carriageway, other than in respect of the already announced Brighton and Bagdad bypasses?
2. If so, what is the nature of the work undertaken?

Answer:

1. No.
2. N/A.

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Question No.: NB-II 27

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Brighton Bypass

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Bushby asked:

1. When will work actually start on the Brighton bypass?
2. Why has construction of the Brighton Bypass been delayed?
3. How long will it be delayed for?
4. Will the issues leading to the delay cause a route diversion or a cost blow out?

Answer:

1-4. The construction contractors have been on site since April 2009.

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Question No.: NB-II 28

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Midland Highway funding commitments

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Bushby asked:

What proportion of the \$190m committed to being spent now on the Midlands Highway projects was first committed by the previous Government prior to December 2007?

Answer:

None.

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Question No.: NB-II 29

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment
Topic: National Public Private Partnership Policy Guidelines
Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

National Public Private Partnerships Policy

1. What were the costs of developing the National Public Private Partnership Policy?
2. What is the status of the National Public Private Partnership Policy procurement strategy?
3. How much has been spent on consultancies in regard to the development of the National Public Private Partnership Policy?

Answer:

The National PPP Policy and Guidelines were jointly prepared by the Commonwealth and State government agencies with some private sector involvement.

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Question No.: NB-II 30

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment Division

Topic: Nation Building Program – General Project Delivery

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

Nation Building Program - General Project Delivery

1. Can the Department outline the number, cost, description and projected timeframes of infrastructure projects initiated since the Council of Australian Governments' Agreement of 5 February 2009 on the Nation Building program?
 - a. If so, is the Department aware of any projects that have exceeded original cost estimates?
 - b. If not, then how is the Department accounting for projects, particularly project expenditure, under the Nation Building program?
2. Can the Department outline the number, type, and cost of infrastructure projects that have been completed since the Council of Australian Governments' Agreement of 5 February 2009?
3. Can the Department provide:
 - a. A complete list of projects that have been initiated under the Nation Building Program?
 - b. A breakdown of the cost estimates and budget allocations of these projects for the financial years 2008-09 to 2013-14
4. For all of the infrastructure projects under the Nation Building Program, can the Department outline all of the projects in the pipeline list require further demonstration of their strategic fit, economic benefits or deliverability before they could be considered as a priority by Infrastructure Australia?
 - a. If not, can the Department explain why this assessment has not been made?
5. Has the Department made recommendations to COAG or PM&C concerning possible project interventions under the Nation Building program intended to address concerns with project slippages, cost overruns and project delivery?
 - a. If so, what were the nature of these project slippages, cost overruns and project delivery issues?
 - b. If not, does the Department believe that all the projects under the Nation Building program are being delivered on schedule and within budget?
 - i. If so, how has the Department arrived at this conclusion?
 - ii. If not, then what steps will the Department take to correct project slippages, cost overruns and project delivery issues?

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- iii. If not, what are the additional costs to the tax payer of the project slippages, cost overruns and any other project delivery issues?
6. What advice, including financial costings, has the Department provided to, or received from, the Oversight Group charged with supporting and monitoring the implementation of key infrastructure and stimulus measures? [Note: the Oversight Group was established by the Council of Australian Governments' Agreement of 5 February 2009 under the Nation Building program]
- a. When will this advice and any financial costings be made publicly available?
- b. What is the frequency of any advice and financial costings provided?
7. Is the Department aware of any interventions or advice that the Oversight Group has made to prevent and address concerns with project slippages, cost overruns and project delivery of the Nation Building program?
8. Is the Department aware if the Heads of Treasuries for the states have reported to the Ministerial Council for Federal Financial Relations in regard to the expenditure and output benchmarks for additional Commonwealth funding?
- a. If so, to what extent have the benchmarks reported at B3 of the Council of Australian Governments' Agreement of 5 February 2009 been met by each state and territory?
- b. If so, how has the Ministerial Council made the assessment that the benchmarks have been met?
- c. If not, to what extent has the Commonwealth imposed sanctions as detailed in B8 of the Council of Australian Governments' Agreement of 5 February 2009?
9. Can the Department outline if any, and if so how many, issues are yet to be resolved before COAG that may impact on the delivery of the Nation Building program?
- a. How many of these issues have been resolved and how many are pending?

Answer:

Question 1 – *Can the Department outline the number, cost, description and projected timeframes of infrastructure projects initiated since the Council of Australian Governments' Agreement of 5 February 2009 on the Nation Building Program?*

The Department has set out the projects that have commenced since February 2009 on its Nation Building Program website.

- b. *How is the Department accounting for projects, particularly project expenditure, under the Nation Building program?*
-

The Department makes payments to the States based on the progress of their projects. No payment can be made for a project unless it has been formally approved under the *Nation Building Program (National Land Transport) Act 2009*.

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Question 2 – *Can the Department outline the number, type and cost of infrastructure projects that have been completed since the COAG Agreement of 5 February 2009?*

The Department has set out the projects that have been completed since February 2009 on its Nation Building Program website.

Question 3 – *Can the Department provide:*

- a. *A complete list of projects that have been initiated under the Nation Building Program?*
 - b. *A breakdown of the cost estimates and budget allocations of these projects for the financial years 2008-09 to 2013-14*
-

The Nation Building Program consists of the following items:

- Investment Program
- Off-network Program (formerly Strategic Regional Program)
- Black Spot Projects
- Boom gates for rail crossings
- Heavy vehicle safety and productivity
- Roads to Recovery

Investment Program

Investment program provides funding for continuing and new road and rail construction projects and maintenance on roads on the National Network.

Further information on the Investment Program can be found at <http://www.nationbuildingprogram.gov.au/funding/projects/index.aspx>

Off-Network Projects (formerly Strategic Regional projects)

At <http://www.nationbuildingprogram.gov.au/funding/projects/index.aspx> is a list of Off-network projects and the Australian Government contribution for each.

The Department is not able to provide a breakdown of the Budget by project over each of the forward estimate years as future payments are based on the projects current year progress.

Black Spot Program

The Australian Government has budgeted \$502 million under the program over 6 years, 2008-09 to 2013-14 for Black Spot projects.

The funding for Black Spot projects are approved on an annual basis. The link <http://www.nationbuildingprogram.gov.au/funding/blackspots/index.aspx> provides a list of the approved projects announced to date under the program.

Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity program:

The Australian Government has budgeted \$70 million over four years from 2008-09 to 2011-12 to the States and Territories towards heavy vehicle safety and productivity projects.

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The Heavy Vehicle Safety and Productivity program consists of two Rounds of funding.

The first round, worth \$30 million over 2008-09 and 2009-10, is now fully allocated with the approved projects listed under the following link:

<http://www.nationbuildingprogram.gov.au/funding/Heavyvehicles/Index.aspx>.

Projects for the second round of funding, worth \$40 million over 2010-11 and 2011-12 are currently being considered by the Government and the approved projects are expected to be announced shortly.

Boom Gates for Rail Crossing Program

The Australian Government is providing \$150 million over two years from 2008-09 to 2009-10 under the program.

The <http://www.nationbuildingprogram.gov.au/funding/boomgates/Index.aspx> provides details of the projects approved under the program.

Roads to Recovery Program

A new program commenced on 1 July 2009. The amount each council, state and territory government is entitled to over the 5 year period 2009-10 to 2013-14 is listed at

<http://www.nationbuildingprogram.gov.au/funding/r2r/index.aspx>.

Question 4 – *For all of the infrastructure projects under the Nation Building Program, can the Department outline all of the projects in the pipeline list require further demonstration of their strategic fit, economic benefits or deliverability before they could be considered as a priority by Infrastructure Australia?*

- a. *If not, can the Department explain why this assessment has not been made?*
-

The Infrastructure projects funded under the Nation Building program are approved projects and are outlined in the National Partnership Agreements (also referred to as MOUs) between the Commonwealth and the States and Territories.

The project proponents must submit a Project Proposal Report (PPR), which provides sufficient information on the planned approach and project scope, to the Department for assessment. The assessment will enable the Minister to approve the project under the *Nation Building Program (National Land Transport) Act 2009*.

Question 5 – *Has the Department made recommendations to COAG or PM&C concerning possible project interventions under the Nation Building program intended to address concerns with project slippages, cost overruns and project delivery?*

- a. *If so, what were the nature of these project slippages, cost overruns and project delivery issues?*
b. *If not, does the Department believe that all the projects under the Nation Building program are being delivered on schedule and within budget?*
i. *If so, how has the Department arrived at this conclusion?*

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- ii. *If not, then what steps will the Department take to correct project slippages, cost overruns and project delivery issues?*
 - iii. *If not, what are the additional costs to the tax payer of the project slippages, cost overruns and any other project delivery issues?*
-

The Department closely monitors these programs and is in regular contact with the relevant States and Territories to ensure these programs meet their required completion dates.

Question 6 – *What advice, including financial costings, has the Department provided to, or received from, the Oversight Group charged with supporting and monitoring the implementation of key infrastructure and stimulus measures? [Note: the Oversight Group was established by the Council of Australian Governments' Agreement of 5 February 2009 under the Nation Building program]*

- a. *When will this advice and any financial costings be made publicly available?*
 - b. *What is the frequency of any advice and financial costings provided?*
-

The Commonwealth Coordinator-General's Progress Report (3 February – 30 June 2009) covers the first quarter of the Australian Government's \$42 billion Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan (the Plan). The Progress Report includes the implementing the Plan, the impact of the Government's Economic Stimulus Strategy, snapshot of results for 2008-09 and managing the implementation risks. The Progress Report is available on the Government's Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan website:

http://www.economicstimulusplan.gov.au/documents/pdf/ESP_Project_Report_August.pdf

The Department provides a weekly report to the Oversight Group on the progress of the programs it administers under the Nation Building – Economic Stimulus Plan. The report includes progress, achieved/expected milestones, payment outcomes/allocations and any issues/risks.

Question 7 – *Is the Department aware of any interventions or advice that the Oversight Group has made to prevent and address concerns with project slippages, cost overruns and project delivery of the Nation Building program?*

Given the size, complexity and short timeframes for delivery of the Plan it is essential that robust mechanisms are in place to identify and manage risk, to ensure that the Plan meets the Government's timing for supporting the Australian economy and the expectations of the Australian community.

Commonwealth and State and Territory Coordinators-General play a key leadership role in monitoring the Plan's implementation and this includes identifying and working through cross Plan strategic risks. Strategic risks identified include:

- Capacity in the construction sector;
- Making sure the Plan stays on track and within budget; and
- Ensuring probity and dealing with fraud risks.

An important safeguard is the use, by Commonwealth and State and Territory government agencies, of existing or modified risk management strategies and procurement practices to implement and manage the risks associated with the delivery of individual projects.

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In September 2009, the Office of Coordinator General organised for PricewaterhouseCoopers to conduct a national Business Assurance Review on the Nation Building - Economic Stimulus Plan.

Question 8 – *Is the Department aware if the Heads of Treasuries for the States have reported to the Ministerial Council for Federal Financial Relations in regard to the expenditure and output benchmarks for additional Commonwealth funding?*

c. If not, to what extent has the Commonwealth imposed sanctions as detailed in B8 of the Council of Australian Governments' Agreement of 5 February 2009?

Refer to NB-II 30. Question 1 (b).

Question 9 – *Can the Department outline if any, and if so how many, issues are yet to be resolved before COAG that may impact on the delivery of the Nation Building Program?*

d. How many of these issues have been resolved and how many are pending?

Refer to NB-II 30. Question 5.

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Question No.: NB-II 31

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Hunter Valley Liverpool Ranges Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Hunter Valley Liverpool Range New Rail Alignment project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

- 1 & 2. The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) is currently discussing with Hunter Valley coal industry stakeholders funding and track alignment options.
3. The \$1.1889 billion equity investment in the ARTC under the Nation Building - Economic Stimulus Package includes funding of \$580 million for projects in the Hunter Valley coal region, including the Hunter Valley Liverpool Range New Rail Alignment project.
- 4 & 5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 32

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Regional Rail Express project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Regional Rail Express in Victoria project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. The project is in planning, with early piling works on Southern Cross Station Platforms 15 and 16 undertaken and completed in October 2009.
2. Appropriate detailed planning is essential prior to construction.
3. \$3.225 billion has been allocated to this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 33

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Noarlunga to Seaford Rail Extension project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Noarlunga to Seaford Rail Extension project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. The project is currently in the planning and design phase.
2. Appropriate detailed planning is essential prior to construction.
3. \$291 million has been allocated to this project.
- 4&5. Yes

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Question No.: NB-II 34

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: East-West Rail Tunnel Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the East-West Rail Tunnel project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. The project is in planning.
2. Planning of major infrastructure projects is currently on schedule and will inform the detailed project design required for construction.
3. \$40 million has been allocated to this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 35

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Northbridge Rail Link Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Northbridge Rail Link project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. The project is in planning.
2. Planning of major infrastructure projects is currently on schedule and will inform the detailed project design required for construction.
3. \$236 million has been allocated to this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 36

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: West Metro Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the West Metro project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. The project is in planning.
2. Funding was allocated to planning and preconstruction.
3. \$91 million has been allocated to this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 37

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Oakajee Port Common User Facilities Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

Specific Project Delivery – Port Projects

1. What is the status of the Oakajee Port Common User Facilities project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. The project requires a detailed scoping study and is subject to a business case assessment by Infrastructure Australia.
2. Please refer to question 1.
3. \$339 million has been allocated to this project in the form of a provision for an equity injection.
4. Please refer to question 1.
5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 38

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Pacific Highway

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Pacific Highway – Bulahdelah Bypass project?
2. Why is the project still at the planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. Works have commenced on the Bulahdelah Bypass including earthworks and clearing for the relocation of utilities.
2. It isn't.
3. \$310 million has been allocated to this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 39

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Darwin Port Expansion Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Darwin Port Expansion project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. The project requires a detailed scoping study and is subject to a business case assessment by Infrastructure Australia.
2. Please refer to question 1.
3. \$50 million has been allocated as an equity injection into this project.
4. Please refer to question 1.
5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 40

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Hume Highway

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Hume Highway – Tarcutta Bypass project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. Alliance partners for the project were engaged in April 2009.
2. It isn't.
3. \$225 million has been allocated towards this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 41

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Hume Highway

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Hume Highway – Woomargama Bypass project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. Alliance partners for the project were engaged in April 2009.
2. It isn't.
3. \$265 million has been allocated towards this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 42

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Pacific Motorway Upgrade – Springwood South to Daisy Hill project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Pacific Motorway – Springwood South to Daisy Hill project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. Construction is underway.
2. It isn't.
3. \$210 million has been allocated towards this project.
4. The completion date for this project is late 2011.
5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 43

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment
Topic: Goulburn Valley Highway – Nagambie Bypass Project
Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senators Macdonald and Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Goulburn Valley Highway – Nagambie Bypass project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. Construction is underway.
2. It isn't.
3. \$216 million has been allocated towards this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 44

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Princes Highway – Traralgon to Sale

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Princes Highway – Traralgon to Sale project?
2. Why is the project still in the planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. Construction is expected to commence in early 2010.
2. Planning and preconstruction works for the duplication between Traralgon and Sale commenced in early 2009. These works are progressing as scheduled and must be completed before construction can commence.
3. \$140 million has been allocated towards this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 45

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment
Topic: Western Highway – Anthony’s Cutting Realignment
Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Western Highway – Anthony’s Cutting Realignment project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. Planning and pre-construction works are well underway.
2. Planning and preconstruction works for the Anthony’s Cutting Realignment project commenced early 2009. These works are progressing as scheduled and must be completed before construction can commence.
3. \$160 million has been allocated towards this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 46

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Hunter Expressway Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Hunter Expressway project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. An alliance partner has been selected. Preliminary works are underway, including major utility adjustments, energy relocation works, property boundary fencing and railway adjustment works.
2. N/A.
3. \$1.45 billion has been allocated towards this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 47

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Pacific Highway – Kempsey Bypass Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Pacific Highway – Kempsey Bypass project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. The detailed ground survey has been completed. The alliance contractor has been appointed.
2. N/A.
3. \$618 million has been allocated towards this project.
- 4&5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 48

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Canberra Airport Road Upgrade

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald/Nash asked:

1. What is the status of the Canberra Airport Road Upgrade project?
2. Why is the project still at a planning stage?
3. How much has the Commonwealth expended to date on this project?
4. Is the project running to schedule and within budget?
5. Has the Department and Minister been provided with any advice as to the status and progress of this project?

Answer:

1. In planning.
2. Planning will need to be completed before further construction gets underway.
3. \$30 million has been committed to this project.
- 4-5. Yes.

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Question No.: NB-II 49

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment Division

Topic: Infrastructure Related Issues

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Macdonald asked:

1. Does the department believe that projected volumes of rail traffic make the inland railway a commercially or economically viable project?
2. What current work is the Department undertaking in regard to infrastructure?
3. What, if any, involvement has the department had with Infrastructure Australia?
4. What are the department's current projections of the costs of road, rail and port congestion on the Australian economy?
5. What are the infrastructure cost projections for the needs of regional and local governments over the next five years?

Answer:

1. A study into the viability of an inland railway is being undertaken by the Australian Rail Track Corporation on behalf of the Australian Government.
2. The Australian Government will invest a total of \$35.8 billion on land transport infrastructure in the next six year period from 2008-09 to 2013-14.
3. The Office of the Infrastructure Coordinator is a part of the Department.
4. BITRE's most recent estimate of the avoidable cost of road congestion for Australian cities is \$9.4 billion for 2005 with base case projections estimated to rise to \$20.4 billion by 2020 if no action is taken.
5. Projections of infrastructure costs for the needs of regional and local governments are the primary responsibility of individual local governments and state and territory governments.

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Question No.: NB-II 50

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment
Topic: Boom Gates for Rail Crossings Program delivery in NSW
Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Williams asked:

1. Were tenders called for construction of boom gates and other safety measures at 55 level crossings as part of the \$42.7 million?
2. What was the range of tender prices?
3. How many of the 5 projects have been completed?
4. Will the remainders be finished mid next year as promised?
5. What sort of education campaign will be run to alert road users to the boom gates?

Answer:

1. The Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) is delivering the construction of boom gates and other safety measures at 55 level crossings across New South Wales through alliance arrangements.
2. The cost estimates per site in New South Wales vary from site to site.
3. As at 31 October 2009, two of the 55 projects had been completed, with 10 projects under construction.
4. They are on track for completion as scheduled.
5. Education and awareness campaigns are being implemented at the local and community level and state wide.

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Question No.: NB-II 51

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Tasmanian Reprioritised Rail Investment

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Parry asked:

With regard to Tasmanian railways, the Minister would be aware funding committed by the Government to upgrade certain lines was redirected at the request of the State Government given its take over of the network.

1. Can the Minister advise on what basis funding was committed to upgrading the Wiltshire line?
2. Further, can the Minister advise on what basis funding was committed to extend the Burnie to Melba Flats line into Zeehan?
3. What were the amounts of funding committed to each project?
4. What proportion of the funds was redirected to other projects?
5. Why did the Government agree to redirect this funding?
6. What approaches were made by the federal member for Braddon concerning the reallocation of this funding?

Answer:

- 1-6. Refer to the Minister's media release issued July 2009.

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Question No.: NB-II 52

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Costing for Midland Highway Duplication

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Parry asked:

1. With regard to the Midland Hwy in Tasmania, is it correct the Department has undertaken work in costing the upgrading of this road to a divided, four-lane standard?
2. If so, what was the figure arrived at and can we have detailed the basis on which this was determined?
3. Has the Tasmanian Government generally, and its Infrastructure Minister Graeme Sturges in particular, made any approaches to the Government concerning funding for the Midland Hwy?
4. If so, can we have detailed what approaches have been made and the responses given to date?

Answer:

1. and 2. Refer to NB-II 26.
3. and 4. The Government has committed close to \$190 million in funding for the Midland Highway.

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Question No.: NB-II 53

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Bass Highway West of Burnie

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Parry asked:

While the Bass Hwy, west of Burnie is a state highway, there has long been an argument that it should be part of the national roads network given its critical importance to the economically productive Circular Head and Waratah-Wynyard municipalities.

1. Can we have detailed what approaches have been made concerning the inclusion of this road in the national network by federal parliamentarians over the past 12 months?
2. Have any costings been prepared on what expenditure would be required to bring this road to a national highway standard?

Answer:

1. The Department has no record of such approaches.
2. No.

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Question No.: NB-II 54

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Cam River Bridge

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Parry asked:

1. Has the Tasmanian Government generally, or its Infrastructure Minister Graeme Sturges in particular, made any approaches to the Government concerning funding for a duplication of the Cam River Bridge on the Bass Hwy west of Burnie?
2. Similarly, can you detail what correspondence the Member for Braddon, Sid Sidebottom, has had with the Minister or Department concerning this issue?

Answer:

1. The Department has no record of any approaches.
2. The Department has no record of such correspondence.

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Question No.: NB-II 55

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Great Eastern Highway, Kooyong Road to Tonkin Highway

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Back asked:

1. When will construction works start on the Great Eastern Highway Kooyong Road to Tonkin Highway section in accordance with the Labor Party's 2007 election promise?
2. Will work start before a general election is due?
3. What are the reasons for the delays?
4. Is the Federal Government still to contribute \$56.9m to the project in the next financial year?
5. Where can I find this expenditure listed in the budget?

Answer:

- 1, 2 & 3. The project is being delivered through the Nation Building Program. Planning and preconstruction works for the project commenced in early 2009 and are progressing as scheduled.
4. The Australian Government allocated \$56.9 million in the 2009-10 Budget for this project.
5. Funds are generally only identified in the budget papers at the program level.

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Question No.: NB-II 56

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment Division

Topic: Infrastructure Related Issues

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

Does the department believe that projected volumes of rail traffic make the inland railway a commercially or economically viable project?

Answer:

Refer to NB-II 49.

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Question No.: NB-II 57

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: What current work is the Department undertaking in regard to infrastructure?

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

What current work is the Department undertaking in regard to infrastructure?

Answer:

Refer to NB-II 49.

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Question No.: NB-II 58

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Involvement with Infrastructure Australia

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

What, if any, involvement has the department had with Infrastructure Australia?

Answer:

Refer to NB-II 49.

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Question No.: NB-II 59

Division/Agency: Nation Building- Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Current projections of costs of road, rail and port congestions on the Australian economy

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

What are the department's current projections of the cost of road, rail and port congestion on the Australian economy?

Answer:

Refer to NB-II 49.

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Question No.: NB-II 60

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: The Regional Rail Express Project - Victoria

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

I notice a number of projects have a significant shortfall of investment. I refer to the Regional Rail Express – the construction of a rail link from Werribee to Sunshine in Melbourne. The Federal Government has committed \$3.2 billion over the next six years to this project. Given that this project will cost around \$4.3 billion – where will the remaining \$1.1 billion come from?

1. I notice that the Victorian Brumby Government in its Victorian Transport Plan has included the Regional Express as a priority. The State Government of Victoria is silent on its funding commitment. That is, at present it has allocated no State funds to the project.
2. What agreements have been established between the Commonwealth and Victorian regarding Victoria's contribution?
3. Has infrastructure Australia pursued a private sector contribution?
4. With whom?
5. How are those negotiations proceeding?

Answer:

1. The Victorian Government.
2. n/a.
3. A National Partnership Agreement which specifies the Victorian Government's contribution as \$1.1 billion.
4. No.
5. n/a.

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Question No.: NB-II 61

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Gold Coast Light Rail Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. I also notice with interest that the Federal Government's commitment to the Gold Coast Light Rail in fact only involves, and I quote from page 415 of Budget Paper No.2, a possible equity contribution of \$365 million in 2009-10.
Does that mean if no possible equity contribution is forthcoming by 1 July 2010 the offer is removed?
2. What progress is being made to secure this equity contribution?
3. What business analysis has been undertaken by Infrastructure Australia to justify this offer by the Federal Government?
4. What will happen to the project if 'no possible equity contribution is forthcoming'?
5. Will the Federal Government fund all of it?
6. I refer to the non-answer this Committee received to a Question on Notice IA 33 asked at the last May's Budget Estimate. The question related to the Gold Coast Light Rail and asked:
What progress is being made to secure this equity contribution?
Typically, the answer was unhelpful. It reads: Discussions continue. Well how are those discussions going?
7. With whom are the discussions occurring?
8. What decisions have been made?
9. Has the private sector been approached for equity contributions?
10. What financial commitment has the Government of Queensland made?
11. What about local government?
12. What will be the total cost of the project?
13. When will it be built?

Answer:

1. No.
2. Senior officers from key Commonwealth and State agencies are working to settle this agreement.
3. Infrastructure Australia assessed the economic costs and benefits of all projects submitted to it using its Reform and Investment Framework, as published on the Infrastructure Australia website. This process used, as a key element of analysis, comprehensive economic cost benefit analysis. Infrastructure Australia considered the financial prudence of projects in relation to its strategic priorities, its strategic themes for investment and jurisdictions' own infrastructure plans.
4. The Government is committed to providing funding through an equity injection.
5. No. The Australian Government has committed to providing \$365 million as an equity injection.
6. Please refer to question 2.

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7. Please refer to question 2.
8. The Australian Government has committed \$365 million towards an equity injection.
9. The private sector will be approached via an expression of interest process with shortlisted proposals being invited to submit detailed proposals.
10. \$464 million.
11. \$120 million.
12. The current cost estimate is \$894 million.
13. The current project timetable is scheduled for completion in 2013.

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Question No.: NB-II 62

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: West Metro Rail Project and Brisbane Inner City Rail Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. I notice that the West Metro rail project in Sydney will cost around \$8 billion and the Brisbane Inner City Rail around \$14 billion. For the West Metro the Government has provided \$91 million for a study and for the Brisbane Inner City Rail \$20 million for a study. Will the Federal Government commit to funding the full cost of these projects?
2. What about some of the cost? How much?
3. What assurance can the Government give that these projects will ever be built?
4. What modelling and business analysis has been undertaken by Infrastructure Australia to give the taxpayer any confidence they will be built?
5. I refer to the non-answer given by the Minister to a Question on Notice IA 35 in the last May Budget Estimates. The question asked: *The West Metro rail project in Sydney will cost \$8 billion, the Brisbane Inner City Rail \$14 billion; the Government has provided \$91 million for a study (for the West Metro rail project), and for the Brisbane Inner City \$20 million for a study. Will the Government commit to funding the full cost of these projects?* I notice the non-answer is: *The Government has provided funds for additional work to be undertaken on both projects.* What does that answer mean?
6. Is the Government funding a series of studies for projects that will never see the light of day?
7. What discussions have taken place between the Federal Government and Queensland and New South Wales regarding these projects?
8. Have any discussions occurred with the private sector?
9. Is the Government seeking a private equity contribution?
10. Can the Government guarantee these projects will be built or are these studies just a few million dollars for media spin – to give the impression of activity?

Answer:

- 1-3, 5-6, 8-10. Future funding for the projects is a policy decision for the government.
4. The projects were subject to the assessment process adopted by Infrastructure Australia.
7. Australian Government representatives are included in the government arrangements for the project components for which Australian Government funding has been provided.

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Question No.: NB-II 63

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Infrastructure Projects

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

Does Infrastructure Australia consider that infrastructure projects are proceeding at an adequate pace?

Answer:

Monitoring the progress of projects funded in the budget is primarily the responsibility of the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government.

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Question No.: NB-II 64

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Oakajee Port

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. What is the latest update on the Oakajee Port “equity injection” funding provided in the May Budget?
2. What will the ‘equity injection’ be spent on?
3. What specific conditions (if any) has the Department put on the funds?

Answer:

1. The project requires a detailed scoping study and is subject to a business case assessment by Infrastructure Australia.
2. The equity injection is for the development of common use water, power and road infrastructure.
3. Funding is subject to the completion of a scoping study, assessment by Infrastructure Australia.

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Question No.: NB-II 65

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Oakajee Port

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. With construction to start in 2011, has the money been given to the WA State Government or the Geraldton Port Authority? If not, when will it be?
2. Is the Department considering a further allocation of funds after the completion of the feasibility study in 2010?

Answer:

1. No. The Australian Government has made provision for an equity injection pending recommendation of the project by Infrastructure Australia.
2. The Australian Government's contribution is capped at \$339 million.

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Question No.: NB-II 66

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Darwin Port Expansion Project

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. What is the latest update on the Darwin Port Expansion project?
2. What exactly will this money be spent on?
3. What specific conditions (if any) has the Department put on the funds?
4. I understand that the funding is subject to the outcome of further work currently underway, has the when is it anticipated this work will be finished?

Answer:

- 1-4. The project requires a detailed scoping study and is subject to a business case assessment by Infrastructure Australia.

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Question No.: NB-II 67

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment Division

Topic: Nation Building Program Off Network Projects

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. I refer to the Nation Building Program (National Land Transport) Amendment Bill 2009 that, now it is passed, has given the Minister the power to approve AusLink Strategic Regional Projects (now called termed National Building Program Off Network Projects) for projects which are off the National Land Transport Network and which are not in regional areas of Australia. I understand that the budget for the Off Network Projects program is \$680 million. Is that correct?
2. Is this between 2008-09 and 2013-14?
3. Is that correct?
4. Is it correct that of the total number of projects under the Off Network Projects is 41?
5. Is the Minister aware that 31 out of the 41 projects are going to Labor seats?
6. Is the Minister aware that only 9 projects are going to Coalition seats?
7. Is the Minister aware that of the total project value of \$680 million for the Off Network Projects program, \$556 million, or 82 percent by value, is going to Labor seats?
8. Is the Minister aware that the Off Network Projects program is a Labor Party election slush-fund?

Answer:

(1, 2, 3 & 4) Yes. There is a \$680.2 million commitment for 41 Off Network Projects under the Nation Building Program from 2008-09 – 2013-14.

(5, 6, 7 & 8) All project proposals are assessed by the Department in accordance with the mandatory requirements of Sections 54 and 55 of the *Nation Building Program (National Land Transport) Act 2009* prior to a recommendation being made to the Minister.

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Question No.: NB-II 68

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment Division

Topic: Infrastructure Related Issues – Northern Sydney Freight Corridor

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. I refer to the Government's promise made on 19 November 2007 that it would provide \$840 million towards a dedicated freight rail track from North Strathfield to Gosford. I notice on the departmental website for Minister Albanese, that the Federal Government is providing \$15 million to undertake planning for the Northern Sydney Rail Freight Corridor. This planning involves developing a concept design, environmental assessment and development approval for infrastructure improvements along the rail corridor between North Strathfield and Broadmeadow (a suburb of Newcastle). Apparently the focus of the planning will be on providing additional capacity for freight rail services; segregating passenger and freight services; and reducing peak-period restrictions on freight services. The planning work will be undertaken by the Transport Infrastructure Development Corporation (TIDC), a NSW Government corporation. You mentioned in the last Budget Estimates in May that this planning study is a 'full concept design and planning study' under part 3A of the New South Wales Environmental Planning and Assessment Act. How is the study going?
2. When will it be finished?
3. Is the \$15 million for the full cost of the study?
4. Does it involve officials of the Federal department?
5. How much will the cost be to build a dedicated freight rail track out to Gosford?
6. Will \$840 million be enough?
7. Does that money include land acquisitions?
8. Is that required?
9. Have they occurred?
10. When will the freight route be built?

Answer:

- 1-2. The planning project commenced in September 2008 and is expected to be completed in 2010.
3. Yes.
4. Yes.
- 5-9. Scoping of a dedicated freight rail track to Gosford and a calculation of the cost to build it, including land acquisitions, are being considered as part of the planning phase.
10. The project will be delivered through the Nation Building Program.

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Question No.: NB-II 69

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment Division

Topic: Intermodal Freight Terminal at Moorebank

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. The Labor Party, in the 2007 election campaign promised to provide \$300 million for a state-of-the-art intermodal freight terminal at Moorebank. Obviously this is an important project, since it could go a long way to taking trucks off Sydney's roads. Now I understand this site has been the home of the Defence Department's School of Military Engineering. This Committee was advised during the Budget Estimates hearings in last May that the project is being taken forward by Infrastructure Australia Coordinator Mr Michael Deegan. Apparently, according to Hansard, he 'is working closely with the Department of Defence in developing options in relations to this facility'. So how is this work going?
2. What options are being considered?
3. Why, after nearly two years since Labor promised to develop this site into a 'state of the art intermodal facility' has apparently nothing been done?
4. When will this facility see the light of day?

Answer:

- 1&2. The Department is working closely with the Department of Defence to deliver this important project.
- 3&4. The terminal will be delivered as part of the Nation Building Program.

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Question No.: NB-II 70

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Cooroy to Curra Section B

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

In the recent budget the Labor Government has committed to spend a further \$488 million over four years towards the duplication of a twelve kilometre section of the Bruce Highway between Cooroy to Curra to provide a four land divided highway. This is on top of the \$200 million the Labor has already promised to the Cooroy to Curra section.

I wish to clarify the dispersal of these funds.

1. According to page 347 of Budget Paper No.2 2009-10, the Government has allocated \$176 million of the promised \$488 million in the financial year 2008-09. Is that correct?
2. Now that financial year is now over. How much of this \$176 million allocation was actually spent in last financial year?
3. If there is some unspent money, where is it. Is it a Queensland Government account? Can an official make clear to me this process?
4. How much money will be spent on the duplication of this section in the 2009-10 financial year?
5. What decisions have been made?

Answer:

1. Yes.
- 2-4. All funding allocated to this project will be spent on this road.
5. The question does not contain sufficient detail to be able to provide an answer.

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Question No.: NB-II 71

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Cooroy to Curra

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. Does the Government still stand by the answer it gave in an answer to a Question on Notice lodged in the February 2009 Additional Budget Estimates that the cost of the Cooroy to Curra upgrade to be \$6.3 billion?
2. Can any official explain to me the nature of this cost estimate?
3. Can I please have some details regarding that figure?

Answer:

- 1, 2, & 3. Yes. \$6.3 billion is the cost estimate provided by the Queensland Government in a submission to Infrastructure Australia to fully duplicate the 65kms of road between Cooroy to Curra.

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Question No.: NB-II 72

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Cooroy to Curra Section B

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. Just to confirm, the Federal Government has accepted the eastern route for the Bruce Highway between Federal and Traveston Road – that is to build the Bruce Highway around the dam’s potential inundation area. Is this correct?
2. The final version of the Federal Government’s Bruce Highway (Cooroy to Curra) Strategic Planning Study was released to the public in November 2008. With regard to that report, I refer to the map contained on page seven in its introduction. This map an explanation of the proposed routes of the Bruce Highway in the area potentially affected by the proposed Traveston Dam. This explanation reads: *Should the dam not proceed then the location of the highway may change to an alignment close to the existing Bruce Highway as originally favoured by the community.* So does the Government still stand by the incorrect answer to NB11 44 asked during the May 2009 Budget Estimates that the community prefers the eastern alignment, even though the Strategic Planning Study states that is not the case? [sic]

Answer:

1. Yes.
2. The Government’s response to NB11 44 asked during the May 2009 Budget Estimates is not incorrect. Construction has commenced on the Cooroy to Curra Section B project along an alignment consistent with the corridor recommended in the *Bruce Highway (Cooroy - Curra) Strategic Planning Study Recommended Corridor Report, July 2008* (Strategic Planning Study).

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Question No.: NB-II 73

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Proposed Traveston Crossing Dam

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. I understand the Queensland Government has asked for the approval of the Federal Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts for the Traveston Crossing Dam.
2. Is this correct? When did the Queensland Government request Minister Garrett's approval?
3. When must Minister Garrett give his approval?
4. Should Minister Garrett not given his approval for the Traveston Crossing Dam, where what route will the duplicated section of the Bruce Highway between that would have been affected by the inundation take?
5. Will the highway still take the unpopular eastern deviation?

Answer:

- 1, 2, & 3. These questions should be referred to the Minister for Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, the Hon Peter Garrett MP.
- 4 & 5. Construction has commenced on the Cooroy to Curra Section B project.

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Question No.: NB-II 74

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Cooroy to Curra Section B - Funding

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. Is it still correct that the \$488 million announced in the 2009-10 Budget for the Bruce Highway is to be spent to fund the eastern alignment?
2. Is Queensland still contributing \$125 million on top of the \$488 million?
3. When will the eastern deviation be built?
4. How much extra is the taxpayer picking up as a result of the decision to build the Traveston Crossing dam?
5. I understand that the Queensland Government will contribute \$125 million to the duplication of the Bruce Highway from Cooroy to Curra. Is that correct?
6. How was that contribution calculated?

Answer:

1. Yes.
2. Yes.
3. Construction on the Cooroy to Curra Section B project is underway.
4. The estimated cost for the construction of the Cooroy to Curra Section B project is the same whether or not the proposed Traveston Crossing Dam proceeds.
5. Yes.
6. The Australian Government commitment is the result of the 2009-10 budget process.

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Question No.: NB-II 75

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Cooroy to Curra Section B

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. I notice that even though the eastern route around the area of potential inundation is longer – the Government claims that cost between this route and the shorter route along the existing site of the Bruce Highway – are the same. I refer to your answer to a Question on Notice lodged by this Committee after the February hearings. I quote Question No. NBII 58: *Indicative estimates provided by the Queensland Department of Main Roads show that the costs would be similar, subject to delivery and construction schedules.* Can anyone explain to me how a longer route can be the same cost as a shorter route? Is the topography that different?
2. Do you have the respective cost estimates provided by the Queensland Government?
3. Will you provide them to this committee?
4. What is the basis for the answer to Question On Notice NBII 58?

Answer:

1. Indicative comparative estimates provided by the Queensland Government indicate the costs are similar, not the same.
 - the bulk earthworks that are currently underway on the Cooroy to Curra Section B project are able to utilise a “cut and fill” method that re-uses soil cut from higher ground to fill low lying areas in order to achieve the key design feature of Q100 flood immunity;
 - there are cost differences in construction of a road undertaken while subject “to traffic” along an existing route and road construction through a greenfields site such as the Cooroy to Curra Section B project;
 - the Cooroy to Curra Section B project alignment requires fewer bridges to be constructed; and
 - there are some differences in the topography.
2. Yes.
3. The documentation can be released to the committee once tendering has been completed, as the documentation contains information that could impact on the ability of the governments to achieve value for money procurement.
4. The indicative comparative estimates provided by the Queensland Government.

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Question No.: NB-II 76

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Cooroy to Curra

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. Given that the Government has confirmed that this duplication will cost over six billion dollars and given Labor has promised slightly over two billion dollars, has the Queensland Government agreed to make up the four billion dollar shortfall?
2. How are negotiations proceeding with the Queensland Government to make up for this funding gap?
3. What funding arrangements regarding the upgrade of the Bruce Highway have been established between the Commonwealth and the Queensland Government?
4. What is the expected completion date of duplicating the Bruce Highway around the expected site of the Traveston Crossing dam?

Answer:

1. The Australian Government has committed \$488 million for Section B (12 km) of the Cooroy to Curra section of the Highway and an additional \$200 million towards further planning.
2. N/A.
3. The Australian Government has committed \$488 million to the Cooroy to Curra Section B upgrade. The Queensland Government has committed \$125 million. In addition the Australian Government has committed \$200 million towards further planning.
4. The Cooroy to Curra Section B project is scheduled for completion in 2012.

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Question No.: NB-II 77

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Western Highway

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. During the election campaign, according to its media release of 21 November 2007, Labor made a commitment to provide \$604 million to upgrade the Western Highway from Bacchus Marsh to the South Australian border. Now this is a perfectly worthwhile aim. I also understand that the \$604 million will go on to the Anthony's cutting upgrade, the duplication of the highway between Ballarat and Stawell and finally to upgrade the highway from Stawell to the South Australian Border. Is this correct?
2. What is the allocation of the \$604 million?
3. Is it correct that the \$404 million will go to the duplication?
4. Where will the remainder of the \$200 million go?

Answer:

1. Yes.
- 2, 3 and 4. There are three Australian Government commitments to National Network projects on the Western Highway with a combined total commitment of \$604 million. These are:
 - Western Highway – Realignment of Anthony's Cutting between Melton and Bacchus Marsh- \$160 million.
 - Western Highway - Duplication from Ballarat and Stawell - \$404 million.
 - Western Highway – Upgrade between Stawell and the South Australian border - \$40 million.

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Question No.: NB-II 78

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Western Highway – Duplication from Ballarat to Stawell

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. With regards to the Western Highway duplication project involving the construction of a four-lane carriageway along the existing Western Highway from Ballarat to Stawell – I note that the Federal Government provided five million in the 2008-09 Budget to advance project planning for this project.
So in November 2007 Labor promised to duplicate the Western Highway, but at the moment has only provided \$5 million for a planning project to duplicate the highway between Ballarat and Stawell – a distance of 121 kilometres. Is that correct?
2. How is the planning study going?
3. Has it started?
4. Is it finished?
5. When will it be finished?
6. When will the Government fulfil its election promise and duplicate the Western Highway between Ballarat and Stawell?
7. When will planning commence to duplicate the remainder of the highway? That is, the remaining 181 kilometres?

Answer:

1. A total of \$404 million has been allocated to this project.
2. Planning for the Ballarat to Burrumbeet stages is finalised and planning for the Burrumbeet to Beaufort stage is in progress.
- 3, 4 & 5. As noted above, planning has started and will continue throughout the project as it moves from one stage to the next.
- 6 & 7. The Australian Government has committed \$404 million to duplicate the Western Highway between Ballarat and Stawell under the Nation Building Program.

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Question No.: NB-II 79

Division/Agency: Nation Building – Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Western Highway – Upgrade between Stawell and the South Australian border

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

When will Labor duplicate the Western Highway to the South Australian border?

Answer:

The Australian Government has committed \$40 million to upgrade the Western Highway between Stawell and the South Australian border under the Nation Building Program.

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Question No.: NB-II 80

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Pacific Highway

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. When will the Government duplicate the Pacific Highway?
2. Does the Government stand by its election commitment to complete a dual carriageway on the Pacific Highway between Sydney to Brisbane by 2016?

Answer:

1. & 2. The government remains committed to the target to duplicate the Pacific Highway by 2016.

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Question No.: NB-II 81

Division/Agency: Nation Building Infrastructure Investment

Topic: Pacific Highway

Hansard Page/s: Written Question

Senator Nash asked:

1. I understand the Government has committed \$3.1 billion towards the upgrade of the Pacific Highway from 2008-09 to 2013-14. I also understand the New South Wales Government has committed \$500 million towards the upgrade over the same period. Is this correct?
2. I refer to the media release by the Federal Labor Party dated 21 November 2007. This media release states and I quote:
Under AusLink 2 duplicate the Pacific Highway by 2016.
Does the Government stand by its election commitment that it will duplicate the Pacific Highway by 2016?
3. How much will it cost to meet the Government's election commitment – that is – how much will it cost to duplicate the Pacific Highway?
4. Does the Government accept the figure offered by the National Roads and Motorists Association in its January 2009 budget submission to the Australian Government, that it will cost \$6.7 billion to duplicate the Pacific Highway?
5. Does that mean the Government is going to have to tip in another three to four billion after 30 June 2014 to provide the funds to meet its election commitment?
6. Will the Pacific Highway be duplicated by 2016 as promised by Labor in the 2007 election?

Answer:

1. Yes.
- 2&6. The government remains committed to the target to duplicate the Pacific Highway by 2016.
- 3,4&5. The detailed cost for duplicating the remaining sections of the Pacific Highway will be determined by the NSW Roads and Traffic Authority as part of the detailed design and preconstruction stages of individual projects.