

**THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT
ADMINISTRATION B MET IN COMMITTEE ROOM 1, PARLIAMENT HOUSE,
HOBART ON WEDNESDAY 18 JULY 2012.**

INTEGRATED TRANSPORT OPTIONS

Ms HEATHER HASELGROVE, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, METRO, WAS CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WAS EXAMINED.

CHAIR (Ms Taylor) - Welcome to the first public hearing of this Legislative Council committee on integrated transport options for southern Tasmania. All evidence taken at this meeting is protected by parliamentary privilege but any comments you make outside of this hearing are not protected. Have you received and read the information for witnesses?

Ms HASELGROVE - No, all I got was a copy of the letter to the minister and then there was a media release yesterday. The minister's office sent it to me.

CHAIR - The evidence that you give today is being recorded and the *Hansard* version will be published on the committee's website when it becomes available. If there is anything that you think you would like to say to us in camera that you do not want recorded and published, ask us and we will see whether we can take your evidence in camera. For the record, will you please advise the committee of your field of expertise and interest and why we have asked you to come?

Ms HASELGROVE - I am the chief executive officer of Metro Tasmania. Whether it is my field of expertise, I will leave that to others to determine.

CHAIR - I am sure it is. You know what this committee is about. I know that the terms of reference are very broad but certainly your bit is the public bus transport system currently operated by Metro. I would like to ask you first of all to make a submission or presentation to us about how you see Metro's role in public transport in southern Tasmania.

Ms HASELGROVE - I would like to put on record that, as you know, Metro Tasmania is a state-owned corporation. The shareholders are the Minister for Sustainable Transport and the Treasurer. We have an independent board whose members are appointed according to the normal appointment rules for all public corporations in this state.

Metro has a contract to deliver passenger transport services with the Transport Commission. We have several contracts with them. We have one contract which covers the metropolitan areas of Hobart, Launceston and Burnie and then we have several what we call non-urban contracts which are route-specific, and we have several around Hobart and one in Burnie. There is none of those type of contracts in Launceston. We get a payment from the government under those contracts to deliver services. The services are not route-specific, they have a series of conditions that we have to meet. For instance, on Main Road, we have to provide services at a specific level, and it is determined by things

like the socioeconomic status of the area and population, so some areas get a much higher level of service than others. There are terms and conditions in there that relate to how far from any residence we have to operate. I don't have those details with me but I'm sure the Transport Commission can provide that later.

There are reporting requirements, like if there is an accident on the bus where a person is injured, we have to report within 24 hours. There are all those normal terms and conditions of any contract. We deliver our services under those contracts. We are able to retain all fare revenue. What we can charge for tickets is determined by the Economic Regulator. He or she does a review once every five years where they come in and look at Metro's costs and determine a maximum fare that we can charge. That is gazetted and we can offer a charge at full adult fares up to that level.

In the last two years we have only increased fares equivalent to CPI rather than going right up to the maximum that we can. That is a decision the board makes and it is well within the realms of the board to do so. Once the board has made that decision, we have to seek approval from the transport commissioner and the Economic Regulator to increase our fares. We do that. Metro just cannot willy-nilly decide what it wants to do. It has some very basic parameters around which we operate. We can make service changes and we just write and notify the commission. If it is a major change, and that is defined in the contract, we have to seek the commissioner's prior approval before we do that, but we operate, to all intents and purposes, as any other bus company in Tasmania, our shareholders just happen to be the government.

Dr GOODWIN - Heather, you mentioned in the introduction the point that you have a series of conditions to be met, one of which is around the socioeconomic status of an area, and I just wanted to pick up on something. We had a bit of a review of various reports into urban transport done for us and one was a review of passenger travel demand measures - greater Hobart final stage 3 report - back in November 2009, and it talks about residents of New Norfolk and developed parts of Bridgewater and Gagebrook experiencing high levels of transport disadvantage and the consequences for those areas, particularly when they need to be able to access employment opportunities and also being more socially inclusive in those communities. I just wondered to what extent the matters that were raised in that 2009 report have been addressed in recent times in terms of the level of service to those particular areas that have been mentioned?

Ms HASELGROVE - We don't provide any services to New Norfolk. Before I took over as CEO that service was sold to O'Driscolls and Peter O'Driscoll provides all the New Norfolk services. Bridgewater has a very high level of service in our contract. It is higher than other areas. I can provide that specific information and the comparisons but I do recall there was some issue shortly after I started about public transport and I remember looking it up and thinking, 'Yes, they get a much higher service'. They have a good service on weekends and a lot of our areas don't have such a high service, but I am happy to provide that information.

Dr GOODWIN - It might be useful to clarify that concern that was raised in that report.

Ms HASELGROVE - Would it be useful if I just provided a summary of the level of services that are provided? It is just a specific attachment to the contract so it's not a lot of work.

Dr GOODWIN - Yes, if you don't mind. That would be useful, thank you.

CHAIR - When you say the Derwent Valley service was sold, by whom?

Ms HASELGROVE - I would need to clarify this but my understanding is that it was a contract that Metro held and Metro then onsold that, but I can double-check that and get back to you.

CHAIR - It would be interesting to know because I know that O'Driscolls run that service but I didn't know whether it was a separate arrangement with the Transport Commission.

Ms HASELGROVE - It is a separate arrangement, so they have a contract with the Transport Commission and under that there will be a series of terms and conditions they have to comply with.

CHAIR - When you say you sold it to them, does that mean that Metro would have made some money from it?

Ms HASELGROVE - We might have transferred it to them but my understanding - and I will clarify this - is that we sold it to them. When we handed back to government the Bothwell contract - we had a contract to run services to Bothwell which we were losing money on and the board made the decision to hand that back to government - it went to government tender and O'Driscolls bid and won that contract to run that service.

CHAIR - So Metro is not obliged to take on any particular service, you can choose whether you do or not? As you say, you had a contract for the Bothwell service and decided to hand that back.

Ms HASELGROVE - I would suggest that Metro is probably a provider of last resort, so if the government couldn't get anyone else to do it they would ask Metro and Metro would then put a price in. I really don't know exactly what the politics around that would be and the board probably still has a right to say no if we can't negotiate an appropriate price, but before I started they did a whole review of all the contracting arrangements and a lot of contractors elected to hand their contracts back and Metro picked up some of those because no-one else wanted to do them.

CHAIR - You make the decision, obviously, on routes and frequency and whatever on need or on cost or on both? How do you make the decision?

Ms HASELGROVE - The Bothwell decision was made not on need but on the patronage. We got a payment from government and we got the revenue and there was no way it was covering our costs. We elected to hand that back to government and the government tendered it and -

CHAIR - And found someone else to run it?

Ms HASELGROVE - Someone else provided that.

CHAIR - You didn't tender for it?

Ms HASELGROVE - No.

Ms RATTRAY - How many of the services that Metro provides actually make money? What areas are the money-making areas?

Ms HASELGROVE - We don't go down to that level. The Bothwell service was a stand-alone contract, so we looked at that one on its own and we knew, because the patronage was quite low, that our contract for the urban area of Hobart is the whole contract. Just roughly, 75 per cent of our funding comes from the government contract and 25 per cent comes from fare revenue and advertising on buses and from charters. So 75 per cent - it is not a commercial business. We don't make a profit. We are currently making losses.

Ms RATTRAY - Even with the CSO, which, just remind me, is it something like \$34 million?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, in the thirties.

Ms RATTRAY - That was my understanding. There are none of those -

Ms HASELGROVE - If you say it quickly it is not a lot of money.

CHAIR - No. It sounds like it has gone up because last time I checked this it was \$30 million.

Ms RATTRAY - My recall was \$34 million and that is what I had in my mind.

CHAIR - It sounds like it might be more if it is in the thirties.

Ms HASELGROVE - No. It is in the early thirties.

Ms RATTRAY - Obviously there is Bridgewater, that as you just said, has very good services, probably more than any other area around the Hobart central part. As an organisation, do you have a look at and work out the cost per head of person using the service?

Ms HASELGROVE - No, we don't.

Ms RATTRAY - Is that information something that would be easily worked out, easily sourced,?

Ms HASELGROVE - We could do it. How complicated it could be, I am not sure. But the issue is, there are separate charges for students. We carry students, they have one fare, concessions have another fare and we carry some students for free; they are people who apply to government and if they meet the criteria they are given a Greencard which enables them to get two trips a day, one to school and one home from school. Then we have full-fare-paying passengers and then for full-fare-paying passengers there are three zones. If it is a short trip it is one fare, for a medium trip it is another and for a long trip it is another fare. It is further complicated if you use Greencard, you get a 20 per cent

discount on your fares and if you travel a lot during the day, what you have to pay is capped. We are encouraging people to get a Greencard because if you are a frequent user, it is the best way.

Ms RATTRAY - Hence the advertisements on the local media at the moment.

Ms HASELGROVE - If you want me to, we could work out what it costs to carry a person, not recognising that it is not - and then the other complicating factor is that you can transfer within 90 minutes without an extra fare. You could have someone coming in from Glenorchy travelling to Sandy Bay, they transfer in the CBD and that is recorded as part of their journey and it is recorded as a trip but we get no revenue for it. We can work out the average cost per boarding and then you can do with that what you want.

CHAIR - It is not going to reflect necessarily how many.

Ms HASELGROVE - It might be worth looking at. If you want it for just Hobart, because the costs in Hobart are different to the costs in Launceston and the costs in Burnie, but we do keep costs around each of the cost centres, so yes we can do that. Will someone write to me and tell me what they want or am I to keep notes of this?

CHAIR - No, it will be in *Hansard* anyway.

Ms RATTRAY - It will be your bedtime reading, Heather, after you have been here.

Ms HASELGROVE - That will be good, I won't be singing anymore.

CHAIR - Is the subsidy related to the different classes of fares?

Ms HASELGROVE - No.

CHAIR - How do they decide? How do you then ask for what you think or does somebody decide that?

Ms HASELGROVE - It was historic and Metro was receiving a payment and we entered into this last round of contracts and my understanding is that what we got previously was rolled over into the new contract and we have had some negotiations since then, principally around the non-urban contracts, but the urban contract has been basically, 'This is what you get.' It is indexed each year, so the index is a multiple index, so it covers things like movement in wages. It is not our wage movements, it is a general index. There is fuel movement. The wages happen annually, the fuel happens each month, because fuel can be quite volatile and there are a couple of other things that build up the index, and that is to cover that.

CHAIR - You don't actually apply for a certain amount?

Ms HASELGROVE - It is under the contract. It is designated under there and we get a monthly -

CHAIR - Did you say a five-year contract?

Ms HASELGROVE - It was five plus five.

CHAIR - And the dates for that?

Ms HASELGROVE - I think it is to 2013, the first five years? Yes, thank you. Then the roll-over is at the discretion of the Transport Commission provided we have met certain criteria. At the end of the next five years no-one knows what is happening.

Mr MULDER - I will have to declare an interest here, I am on the welfare, middle-class welfare - on a subsidised transport system, which is of course the point I am making, that it seems to me that public transport in Tasmania has too low a patronage to be commercially viable for a private operator, therefore Metro is the operator of last resort. Is that how you would describe it?

Ms HASELGROVE - I come from Adelaide and in Adelaide I worked with the government and I managed the contracts with the operators and the ratio was about the same. The government in South Australia retained all the fare revenue, so they had gross contracts and it was about 75:25. It is not unusual, public transport in any urban area is heavily subsidised.

Mr MULDER - I was thinking more what Melbourne and Sydney have gone through.

Ms HASELGROVE - They would still be heavily subsidised. I cannot think of any commercially operated services - there may be, I do not want to mislead the committee. Some of the airport services might be commercial, but the urban-type services that we are talking about like Metro operates in Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane, they are all heavily subsidised.

Mr MULDER - There are other contractors like the run to Bothwell, or the ones that the private ones operate and I do not think you have or there are very few Metro services going into my electorate of Rumney, which is Sorell, Richmond, Tasman Peninsula and those areas.

Ms HASELGROVE - We don't do Sorell at all, that is done by another operator.

Mr MULDER - They are done by another operator; is that subsidised as well or are they commercial?

Ms HASELGROVE - You have the Transport Commission talking to you on Friday. My understanding is they operate under very similar arrangements as Metro.

Mr MULDER - Subsidised arrangements.

Ms HASELGROVE - The non-urban areas are slightly different, whereas you get top-ups on the fare box, so the fares are topped up to the adult fare. If you are carrying a pre-student it is topped up to the adult fare, if you are carrying a concession it is topped up to the adult fare.

Mr MULDER - So the subsidy works just by topping up fares or by paying the operator upfront?

Ms HASELGROVE - It is a combination. I think with regard to other operators you would be best to ask the secretary of DIER rather than me because I am not privy to their arrangements. I can tell you how we receive our subsidies. For our urban areas it is a flat contract fee which is designated in the contract and we retain the revenue. For our non-urban areas, which is places such as down to Opossum Bay or to the Channel, we keep the revenue we receive, the top-ups to the adult fares and in some cases we get another payment to ensure that it is a viable contract.

Mr MULDER - It sounds like a complex thing to be trying to work out how a government fulfils a community service obligation by subcontracting it out. The other thing is that Metro is simply a bus operator.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, we provide bus services.

CHAIR - I think the act actually says 'road transport'.

Ms HASELGROVE - It just says that we are land-based.

CHAIR - Yes, but it doesn't necessarily say 'buses'.

Mr VALENTINE - It says 'land-based' - okay.

Ms HASELGROVE - I think it says 'land-based'. I haven't the act with me.

CHAIR - I might just check that, I actually thought it said 'road transport' but you could be right. No, it is 'road' because I don't think you can run trains.

Ms HASELGROVE - I know I can't run a ferry, but I think it is 'land'. I wish I had my iPad with me, I could have looked it up.

Mr MULDER - Water flows over land.

Mr VALENTINE - Yes, that is right. It is a type of land really.

Ms HASELGROVE - But there are a few degrees of separation there.

CHAIR - Yes, that is true.

Ms HASELGROVE - We have the deepest harbour.

Mr MULDER - Basically as a provider of bus-based land transport, the point I was going to get to was, within your charter, is there any capacity to look at modes of transport other than buses, and I am asking this in the sense that buses are a very inefficient means of transport compared to, say, rail, I would suggest, just based on cost. We have been to public meetings where people have expressed the view that, for example, a train takes one-seventh less to run in terms of operating costs. It only requires one or two drivers as transport operators yet it can provide the service that it takes 40 or 50 buses to do, so in that terms of efficiency I am just exploring what options Metro has of branching into more efficient subsidised forms of public transport?

CHAIR - I can tell you what it says in the act. It says: 'The principal objective of the company is to provide road passenger transport services for Tasmania'.

Ms HASELGROVE - Under the act we are not able to.

Mr MULDER - Thank you for that. Has there been any thought given to branching into other things?

Ms HASELGROVE - No. As I said, we have a contract with government and we operate within that contract.

Mr MULDER - We have guessed that if there is any branching out to do that is really a government policy position and not an issue for Metro to take up under their existing charter.

Ms HASELGROVE - There could be - I mean, it talks about operating commercially and there is a whole series of words that the board could investigate other matters and then refer that to its shareholders and the Transport Commission with suggestions but we haven't done that to date.

Mr MULDER - Principally to branch out like that would require a government policy position. It is a question we would have to put to the minister.

CHAIR - Our shareholders.

Mr MULDER - That is where I am going.

CHAIR - That is where you are going, it is a question we would have to put to the minister. You have investigated at some time taxis, though, haven't you, or you have talked about taxis as an addition?

Ms HASELGROVE - We have looked at and we do use taxis from time to time, especially when someone in a wheelchair has rung and said, 'When is the next accessible bus?' and we have told them and then if for some operational reasons that bus hasn't turned up we do provide them with a taxi service so they can get where they are going. We are looking at whether there is some way late at night that we could use taxis but often late at night, especially on weekends, that is when the taxis are busy anyway. It is something that we have had in the back of our mind that it is possibly something we could do but at this stage we haven't taken it any further.

Mr VALENTINE - In relation to what we were just talking about there about other types of services, do you see any reason why Metro could not, for instance, provide the ticketing mechanism for other services? It would seem to me to be sensible that whatever other services that you integrate with - you are land-based at the moment and maybe if we could put the idea to the minister that your charter be extended, we might be able to look at other forms of transport. But there would be no reason why Metro's ticketing system, the Greencard and whatever, could not be extended to take on other forms of transport, that you are aware of?

Ms HASELGROVE - O'Driscoll currently use Greencard on the Bothwell service. We have made that available to them. We have made that work. We are currently investigating how we can make it available to the other bus operators, people like Tassielink, O'Driscoll's other services, Phoenix up on the north-west coast. Any public transport that runs into our major areas and, indeed, if Merseylink in Devonport wanted to pick it up, Metro has invested in a ticketing system. It is a world-class ticketing system and what we are investigating is: can we use the core of that system so that other bus operators do not have to invest in the internal mechanism of that system and we just put the onboard equipment on the buses. There would need to be something at their depots and then we provide them with a service on some sort of fee-for-service basis because part of our corporate plan is that we want to grow the industry and we want to work with the other bus companies in Tasmania to grow the use of public transport. That is one way we can.

Mr VALENTINE - But you also get statistics out of that, don't you, on a much broader -

Ms HASELGROVE - We do, yes, at the moment and you could -

Mr VALENTINE - Which would give the government statistics to be able to make intelligent decisions about where the demands are and all those things.

Ms HASELGROVE - I think that is one of the issues that the private operators may have. We would make the information available to the private operators. They would want fairly tight confidentiality because this is their commercial information. We would make it available to them and then they would make it available. If they agree that we could provide it to government, yes we would, but until they agree - if they thought we would be going, they just would not come near us. In a lot of cases the government actually provides the ticketing system. In Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, the government provides the ticketing system across all of them. Metro, seeing we are owned by the government, it is not such a different model but it is -

Mr VALENTINE - But do they get the statistics in those other places?

Ms HASELGROVE - The government actually operates it so they would get the statistics. But I think the government paid for it too, whereas we are saying to the private operators that they have to buy the on-bus infrastructure and the infrastructure they need in there. If the government wanted to offer to buy it, that would be nothing to do with Metro. We are just trying to make this work and we are trying to make this a good deal for the bus operators so they do not have to have such a big upfront cost.

We have a good system and we will be doing similar things - we are currently investigating a journey planner. That will be on the web, eventually on a smart phone. Once we have the Metro data on it, there is no reason why the other operators cannot just plug into it. Someone who is wanting to travel from, say, Burnie to Launceston, should be able to plan their trip. It will not all be on Metro because there will be other operators but it will show them where they have to transfer, how long the wait is and those things.

Dr GOODWIN - That will be great. That will help even just people who want to travel from Howrah to New Town or something or whatever it happens to be.

Ms HASELGROVE - That is right, it certainly will.

Dr GOODWIN - Is that far away?

Ms HASELGROVE - Burnie and Launceston, we are using Google Transit to do it because a lot of governments have invested in a purpose-built journey planner, which are quite expensive. Google Transit provide a facility at no cost, except you have to get your data in a very rigorous form to be able to transfer and they have a very high quality assurance on all the data and we're currently trying to meet all those things. So Burnie is nearly ready, Launceston is nearly ready and Hobart will be the difficult one because of all the myriad routes we have, but we'll roll it out in the other two cities and see how it goes, and continue to work on the back end. Once we have it up and running there is nothing to stop the other operators. We give them the format and they then provide the information and it all gets uploaded at once. It will be good, but it all takes time.

CHAIR - So it is still costing you even though you don't have to buy a system. It is the resourcing of it at the moment.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, the labour getting it in.

Dr GOODWIN - That links into another point. In terms of the attractiveness of public transport, the easier it is in theory, the more people are likely to jump on board. In relation to the Greencard and Rob was talking about statistics, I am wondering if you can give us an idea of the usage of public transport or Metro services in Tasmania and whether that has grown or is on the decline? How are things tracking in that regard?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, I can. I am happy to leave this data here so that you have it, rather than *Hansard* trying to capture it all. Regarding total boarding numbers, we separate first boardings and that is where we actually get revenue. For example, if Mr Mulder was using his Greencard, for his first trip it would take money off and then if he made a second trip out to Sandy Bay and it was within 90 minutes, it wouldn't take any money out, so that would be called a transfer, but total boardings is how we measure it. For 2011-12 in Hobart we carried 8 029 000 and a few more, and that was a 1.2 per cent decrease from the previous year. The 2010-11 year was 8.13 million. If you look at what happened in the year prior to that, in Hobart in 2009-10 it was 7.837 million and as I said in 2010-11 it was 8.13 million, so there was 3.7 per cent growth the previous year.

We have done some analysis and we think people are just travelling less. There is more part-time employment than full-time employment, so that affects the journey to work. It is really interesting that the number of students went up, but full fare-paying and concessions went down. The decrease in Launceston last year was 2.1 per cent and in Burnie 1.5 per cent, so across the state there was a 1.4 per cent decrease. Across the state we carried last year just under 10.4 million and the previous year it was 10.545 million.

Mr VALENTINE - In your analysis did you look at birth rate? If people are single, they might have no kids, they are going to be using the transport system, but as soon as they have kids they might -

Ms HASELGROVE - That's one thing we didn't actually look at. We looked at employment.

Mr VALENTINE - take them to childcare centres and therefore need their car, so have you looked at that at all?

Ms HASELGROVE - No, we didn't look at birth rates.

Mr VALENTINE - That could be a reason because I know there has been a spike -

Ms HASELGROVE - We looked at immigration, we looked at employment, we looked at tourists because tourists were down last year -

Mr VALENTINE - I reckon there is a spike in births in earlier years and they're simply not catching the bus because they're taking the car to drop their kids off.

Ms HASELGROVE - That's possible.

CHAIR - Have you surveyed people at all and asked why they are travelling less?

Ms HASELGROVE - They did actually say they are travelling less. We do a customer satisfaction survey once a year and the most recent one only came in on Monday and it is not even final yet but I did bring some stats with me. In this last survey 35 per cent claimed they travelled at least three times a week whereas in 2011, 42 per cent they travelled at least three times a week. It is a statistically valid survey. We surveyed 600 people and I haven't got the stats but it is 95 per cent correlation and -

Mr MULDER - Off your own data.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes.

CHAIR - Did you ask them why?

Ms HASELGROVE - No, I'm not sure if we asked them why because we ask the same questions. The main reasons are shopping, 49 per cent; go to work, 35 per cent; business, 27 per cent. We don't survey students, we only survey adults.

Mr MULDER - Is this survey done by telephone?

Ms HASELGROVE - I'm not sure if it is by telephone or actually at the bus stop. I think it is by telephone but I will clarify that.

Mr MULDER - Then you're hitting a certain demographic, you see, and you're missing others and that's what you have to watch with these surveys.

Ms HASELGROVE - The survey methodology hasn't changed and we don't survey students. University students yes, but not high school and under.

Mr MULDER - You wouldn't get, for example, the young professionals who run around on mobile phones and don't have landlines in the telephone book for surveys.

Ms HASELGROVE - I don't know whether we would or not. We did get 39 per cent who said they used it to go to work, so it's quite a high percentage.

Dr GOODWIN - Can I go back to this point about the popularity of public transport and your take on why it may not be an attractive option for some people, because that's certainly the perception out there. I don't know why because it is a pretty easy way to travel, particularly if you happen to live on a high frequency corridor, but there is that perception out there and I'm just wondering why you think that is and how it is possible to try to address it.

Ms HASELGROVE - We did some really detailed market research a couple of years ago where we had some focus groups and then followed it up with a telephone survey based on the findings. The one thing I still remember was that a woman at one of the focus groups said, 'You have to remember Tasmanians would drive to the toilet if they could'.

Laughter.

Ms HASELGROVE - This survey covered people who currently use Metro services, people who used to use it but now don't and people who had never used it, because we were interested in just what their perceptions were. One of the questions that was asked was: what would make you use a bus service or, if you already use it, use it more? The things they identified that they wanted was a reliable service, a service that takes them from A to B quickly so they don't wind around picking everyone up. They also wanted a frequent service so that if they miss the bus they don't have to wait two hours to catch the next one, and they wanted a service that operated over a greater span of hours, so earlier in the morning and later at night. We have some services that finish at 7 o'clock or 6.30ish, but some services don't operate on weekends or if they do, it's a very spasmodic service. They were the things they wanted. Interestingly, fares didn't come up. You would think they'd say fares were too expensive but it didn't come up or if it did, it was way down low.

People like to feel safe, but now that we have cameras on every bus I think it is almost a given that people do feel safe. In the customer satisfaction survey 80 per cent of people felt that they were very satisfied or satisfied with their personal safety on the bus and that is really good.

CHAIR - That would be an improvement, wouldn't it, from previously?

Ms HASELGROVE - It was 77 per cent the previous year, so I think it has slowly been going up. They are the sorts of things - what the board has done is commissioned me, asked me to have a network plan done for greater Hobart. We went to the market and Parsons Brinckerhoff were engaged, a world-class transport planning firm, and they came and did a piece of work. Their brief was: what would Metro have to provide in the way of public transport for it to be a world-class passenger transport network, and we kept it at bus. We didn't broaden it because our remit is to provide bus services. It was interesting that they came back and we now have a network plan. It is not funded, but it will be our framework for any changes we make to the system.

We will bid for the budget to increase our services and all the things I listed before were what has actually come out. To have some really high frequency routes on Main Road,

Clarence Street, the Outlet, to some extent Sandy Bay Road - they would be really high frequency. Get bus priority, so if you get a bus coming up to a traffic light and it is running behind schedule the light either stays green or returns green and goes through; bus lanes - we have very few of those here in Hobart. We have one out at Glenorchy, a B light as they come along Main Road, and that is about it, I think. We have some bus priority on the Outlet and that is sensational in the mornings. If you are coming in from Kingston and you are just about to pull up behind all the traffic and the bus zips into the bus lane and off it goes. That is a real incentive for people sitting in their cars to see this bus zipping by and think, 'What am I -

CHAIR - So has patronage increased as a result since you introduced that a couple of years ago?

Ms HASELGROVE - It did, but I haven't done that level - or do I have that here -

CHAIR - That is the issue, isn't it, you are doing these things to try to increase the patronage.

Ms HASELGROVE - There are all those things. Information has to be easy for people to understand, so if we get a journey planner up - I know when I first started it was really difficult to try to work out how do I get from A to B, and I didn't know Hobart. So you look at the timetables and if you know Hobart, you know that if you are living in Rose Bay, a Risdon Vale bus might come past, but I had no idea where Risdon Vale was, so how do I catch a bus into Hobart?

Mr MULDER - You live in Rose Bay and you still don't know where Risdon Vale is.

Ms HASELGROVE - I do! I now live at Geilston Bay and I almost overlook it. People need to know how to use it. When people are on holidays you bumble along, you do not mind looking like an idiot because you are on holidays. If you are in London and you have your Oyster Card and where do I get it, I have to get one of these things, and so you ask people and you are get it and you are happy. When you are at home and you might have Rob Valentine in the bus behind you and you think he is intimidating me, I do not know how to use this and whatever, you do not like looking like an idiot, so it is really important that we provide information for people on how to use our system. We have just been doing a round of consultation with the councils in greater Hobart on our network plan and one of the aldermen at Glenorchy said, 'Do we provide any information in other languages?'. We don't. He suggested and it is a really good idea, that we do not have it in hard copy but we have it on the website, so we work out which languages - and it will not be everything, but it will be how to use the Greencard, it will be an application form for Greencard, but we have to work out which languages we need. There are all those sorts of things because often immigrants to our city may not have any alternative. If you can capture them - university students are good users, especially from the Asian countries because that is their culture. People do not have cars over there, so they come here and it is their second nature to catch the bus.

Dr GOODWIN - Do you think that is the key, that we just do not have a culture of using public transport? I wonder at times whether there might, in fact, also be some stigma attached to using public transport as well and I am not quite sure whether that is historical or what it is but that is the feeling I get, that there may be that lingering in the background.

Ms HASELGROVE - I think there has been a period - and this is not just in Hobart, this is so in other areas in Australia - where public transport has been almost a service for people who have no alternatives: for concession holders and for students; that is what it has been. But with the emphasis now on sustainable transport and making sure people know there is an alternative option, it is now moving that other way. What we are trying to do is to give people a taste of our services, with things like the North Melbourne Football Club. We worked fairly closely with the North Melbourne Football Club and they have come from the mainland and using public transport to get to sporting events over there is the way to go because getting a park[ing spot] is just impossible. In fact, in Brisbane, round the Gabba, you are not allowed to park. Parking is banned within three kilometres and you get a huge fine. It is \$100 or something. Don't quote me on that but it is a very large fine. We worked really closely with them on how we can provide a really good service.

The first match they said, 'We think that is a bit overkill' and then we had some issues because there was not enough capacity. The second game they said, 'Tell us what we need, we are going to' and they bought the services off us. They chartered the services and we carried over 20 per cent of the crowd, which is absolutely huge and it was such a buzz. I came out of the game and there was, on Church Street, the whole paddock was packed with people and we still had to get the traffic management plan right because the police were not giving priority to the buses, they were letting cars with two people in and my buses, with 100 people in them, were being held up.

Mr MULDER - I am sure a word in the ear of the commander will fix that.

Ms HASELGROVE - We know someone?

CHAIR - But you are saying there, you are responding to Vanessa's question, in actual fact. If it is attractive enough and if there is a good reason for doing it, then people will opt -

Ms HASELGROVE - You do not have to worry about parking. We had park and ride set up at the DEC, at the Regatta Grounds, out at Kingborough and people were just told where the routes were, they hopped on the buses, they came in and were dropped at the door. After game, you came out.

CHAIR - Was it all free?

Ms HASELGROVE - It was free.

Mr MULDER - There is a social atmosphere too, about being packed onto a bus or a train with -

Mr VALENTINE - Common purpose as well.

Ms HASELGROVE - And people can have a few drinks; they are not on the roads after they have had a few drinks.

Mr MULDER - Not on the bus of course.

Ms HASELGROVE - They are on the bus but our drivers are trained to deal with -

Mr MULDER - A few drinks on the bus?

Ms HASELGROVE - You are not allowed to drink on the bus.

Dr GOODWIN - You did the same for the Twenty20 match as well and that went down really well and there were big crowds too for all those events. So it is great way to get people to and from the event.

Ms HASELGROVE - The Motor Accident Insurance Board sponsors the after-midnight services on New Year's Eve. Last year, I think they were \$2 and \$1. You get a good crowd on those and it is just part of the trip.

CHAIR - Tony, just before you ask a question. Can I ask you, Heather, can we have a copy of that report you had done?

Ms HASELGROVE - Which one?

CHAIR - The last one that you said that you had.

Ms HASELGROVE - The market research?

CHAIR - No, the network plan.

Dr GOODWIN - Maybe both would be good, the market research as well would probably give us the background to the network plan.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes.

Mr MULDER - My question comes onto that: we all talk about what incentives people need to get on the bus transport and I think we sometimes forget, which is highlighted in things like Brisbane's approach to a match at the Gabba, that the disincentives work just as well.

Ms HASELGROVE - Often better.

Mr MULDER - It seems to me - and you can comment on this if you like - that you have a couple of major incentives for people not to use buses that has to be dealt with. In all these years of living in Hobart - it hasn't been all my life but a long time - and as a frequent user of public transport, it seems to me that one of the biggest disincentives to using public transport is the fact that you can virtually drive anywhere in Hobart within 20 minutes, and in our terrible peak-hour crushes that extends to 30 or, god forbid, 35 minutes -

Ms HASELGROVE - It's all relative.

Mr MULDER - No, but that extends to 30 to 35 minutes, and most of the traffic is trying to come into the City of Hobart and then we basically have free parking at the Domain. It seems to me that if we were to look at some disincentives to push this commuter traffic

onto public transport and off their private cars - and not just because we like fiddling with the market and people's freedom but because of the social advantages of using public transport - and it seems to me that maybe if we approached this issue, be it a rail service or a ferry service or something else, and said that 'You have to jump on this service because you can't park your car all day for nothing up on the Domain', which is actually shielding the true cost of using private transport. In any other city you would have to pay \$10 or \$20 for a day's parking.

Ms HASELGROVE - If you look at the cost of owning a car, cars are coming down in price - you used to never be able to get a car under \$20 000 and now you can get a car for almost under \$10 000.

Mr MULDER - But very few of us do that. We don't actually think of the cost of the means we are using and this is where public transport is at a disadvantage because every time you jump on the bus you have to fork some hard-earned and you are reminded then of the cost, whereas if you spread your petrol usage over a week you don't have that impact.

Ms HASELGROVE - No.

Mr MULDER - It is the convenience issues that I think are the real ones. The social costs are things that we get collectively but it seems to me that if we actually imposed some of the legitimate cost instead of - I mean, you can't ride on the bus for nothing, so why the hell should you be able to park your car on the Domain for nothing?

CHAIR - Is that a question?

Mr MULDER - I am just asking for a comment.

Ms HASELGROVE - No, I have to agree. The cost of owning a car is not terribly high. When you see a spike in petrol prices when it goes up, and we had a situation not too long ago when it was looking like it might get to \$2 a litre, people then thought, 'Hang on, I'll use the bus'. Even when you pay for parking in Hobart it is so cheap. If you go to Sydney you cannot park anywhere for under \$60 a day and here if it costs \$10 people complain it is too expensive.

Mr MULDER - They just want it for nothing.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, and the other thing is, even the Hobart City Council - with respect, but you're not there anymore -

Mr VALENTINE - That's okay - I might be able to give you some answers.

Ms HASELGROVE - They have two hours free parking. We have capacity in the middle of the day on most of our routes, but people comes into town - it might be for a doctor's appointment or just to pop into Myer to get something - and they'll park in one of the council car parks and there'll be two hours free, and they don't look at the petrol use or the wear and tear on their car. But often, especially if it is a young married couple, if they used public transport so they only need one car, that is a huge saving. There are a lot of older couples where neither are working who still have two cars and they could get

away with one car and catch public transport to do those trips, but if there is free parking they just think, 'Well, I'll just take the car rather than catch the bus'.

Dr GOODWIN - It is actually more stressful to take your car and go round and round the car park trying to find a space than getting on a bus, which probably gets you to your point faster.

Ms HASELGROVE - It is - you can read, you can check your emails on the bus -

Dr GOODWIN - It is nice and warm.

Mr MULDER - I lived in Melbourne for a long time and had a company car to travel around with and I used to leave it at the office because of the convenience of being able to ride your bike to the train station 10 minutes away, jump on the train and do all your prep and plan the entire day and do essential reading for a 20 to 30 minute ride into town which, given Melbourne's peak hour, would have taken you three-quarters of an hour to an hour or more to drive in if you didn't leave early. That is what I am getting at with the disincentives there, when people think it costs them nothing to drive because they park on the Domain. If we make that cost, that will make them redo their sums.

Mr VALENTINE - If I might comment on the 90 minutes free parking - which it is -

Ms HASELGROVE - Sorry.

Mr VALENTINE - That's okay. The reason for that is obviously to provide an incentive for people to come in and shop in the city; if you do not have the 90 minutes then they will go somewhere else. But I have a question on your surveying. I have always been of the impression that the reason people don't get out of their cars comes back to the children. If they're taking them to a childcare centre before going to work, they're going to stay in their car and go to work. If the childcare centres were at, say, the nodes, where there is parking -like you talk about with the football in Kingborough and wherever else where you have this parking arrangement - if you had childcare centre there for community purposes, does your survey information show any aspects of people saying, 'Because I drop my kids off at the childcare centre or school, I don't catch public transport.'?

Ms HASELGROVE - I don't know about that, but I do know that park-and-ride is very popular. I worked for 15 months in Auckland and they opened probably the best piece of infrastructure I have ever seen, a northern busway. There was no rail on the north shore in Auckland. They were regenerating all of their rail services, but they were all south of Waitemata Harbour. They built a northern busway and it was a separate lane on the northern highway because they had congestion issues on their bridge. They had already put wings on it, so they could not put on any more. They desperately needed to get more people into buses, so they built this northern busway, just separate lanes. It was only for buses and emergency services and they had three or four park-and-ride services. At the very first meeting I attended they were really worried that no-one was going to use their park-and-rides, and I looked them in the eye - these were the councillors from Devonport and the North Shore councils - and I said, 'Trust me, within two months you're going to be asking how we can make these park-and-rides bigger' - and they were.

I distinctly remember there was one photo in the *New Zealand Herald* of the Albany park-and-ride and there was a Porsche there and a black hummer and these guys had parked their cars there and caught the bus in because it was quicker. It just works, and people like having the convenience of the car. They can drop the child off, drop their dry cleaning off, park the car, go to work, come back, pick the kid up, pick up the takeaway and then go home.

Mr VALENTINE - Did they have childcare centres near there?

Ms HASELGROVE - No, they didn't but they were in the area where they could drop them off if they wanted to.

Mr MULDER - Do you see that translating, the park-and-ride, to somewhere like Hobart, where you have to persuade them not to get back in their car and drive that extra 10 minutes into Hobart but instead catch a bus?

Ms HASELGROVE - I think this is a question you can ask the secretary of DIER because they are doing studies on where park-and-rides can be located. We have one in Kingborough at Kingston; it is only a small one and we are looking at other areas around the CBD. Ideally we would have one out near the Shoreline, so people could drive in there and we could have that, but it is about identifying the site.

Mr MULDER - Good luck finding sites out that way.

Ms HASELGROVE - But that's it, we have to find the sites.

Mr MULDER - I live just up the road from there and I can't get out of my driveway half the time.

Mr VALENTINE - Mornington?

Mr MULDER - That is my point, though. The Shoreline is fine because people can do some shopping and other ancillaries and there is a reason for them to get out of their car there. If you had a childcare centre there, that would be another reason to get out of your car. But if you stick it at somewhere like Mornington or even under the bridge, as someone suggested, what incentive is there for the person there to get out of their car and walk across to catch a bus when they're only 10 minutes from their destination at best anyway?

Mr VALENTINE - Back of Eastlands, I am thinking, so that you get to that shopping centre.

Mr MULDER - It has been suggested that we dig a big hole underneath the golf course and put a big underground carpark there, but, once again, there is a bit of park-and-ride going on there at the moment and it is causing Clarence a bit of grief because they don't have parking meters - they have the timed spaces - to the point where you are now running around through all the car parks around Eastlands trying to detect the all-day commuters when the thing is designed for short-term shoppers. There are issues about that but it is finding the location because the one that is often mentioned is that one out at north Warrane and the oval there. Lots of ground and all the rest of it but what on earth would induce you to get out of your car when you are only 10 minutes from your destination?

Ms HASELGROVE - The issue you will find is people don't like going backwards - you hop in your car and if you have to go that way - it has to be on the way. You have to make sure you have a frequent service from it because people don't like waiting, so they want to get there and they want to get out and know when they want to come home. What you are trying to replicate is how can you make it as near as possible to the private car.

CHAIR - Or better.

Ms HASELGROVE - Or better, yes.

Mr MULDER - The convenience of it.

Mr VALENTINE - The flexibility.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, so if you are at work and you get a phone call saying, 'So and so is sick, I have to get the bus back to the car', there has to be a reasonable frequency throughout the day to get people there. It is not an easy issue but we are working really closely with DIER on how we can improve the network. With the park and ride stuff, if you talk to the secretary of DIER I am sure they will be able to tell you what the current status of that is.

Mr MULDER - With the Shoreline shopping centre what we look forward to is the construction of a multi-storey car park.

Ms HASELGROVE - We are talking to people like the Showgrounds. They come and talk to us because they are busy very few times a year. There is a really high frequency bus service on the main road and they have said that if we charge people \$1 they are not fussed about getting a lot of money from it but at least if they have some money, so we are progressing discussions with them. There are the people who camp there and they use our buses.

Mr VALENTINE - Especially on Saturdays when they want to go to the Salamanca market.

Mr MULDER - You have tapped into an interesting thing there, though. I think what they have found in all the big cities is that if you have multiple modes of transport like park and ride, for example, where you have to get it all wrapped up into a single fare price so that you are not paying an entry fee and a parking fee to park at the showgrounds, for example, and then walking out of there and have to fumble around for your Greencard to pay the thing, whereas if it was somehow built into the fare -

Ms HASELGROVE - That is something we could look at or -

Mr MULDER - For them it would be free parking.

Ms HASELGROVE - Or they pay using their Greencard. They just have to swipe to get in and it takes whatever off.

Mr MULDER - And the bus calls in and picks up people there without having to reswipe their card because it is assumed that if you are in there you have already done it.

CHAIR - You are right about the frequency needed and park and ride is one solution to that. We hear frequently, 'I don't catch a bus because it's too far and Hobart's hilly and so I get off the main road and then I have to walk even if it's only half a kilometre or a kilometre but you nearly always have to walk uphill'. People going home choose not to do that. How do we address that issue? Park and ride is one way, or cycle. When you are talking about park and ride have you thought at all about cycle -

Ms HASELGROVE - They have cycle lockers at Kingston.

CHAIR - Are they used?

Ms HASELGROVE - I don't know. They have been there. I can find out.

CHAIR - That would be interesting because if you only live a kilometre or two away you could actually cycle if you had secure cycle parking.

Mr MULDER - That is exactly how I used to get to work in Melbourne. I found a local resident, I knocked on his door one day and said, 'Do you mind if I park my bike here occasionally'. People have to take some responsibility for their own actions; you can't carry them from cradle to grave.

Mr VALENTINE - I did see the other day someone taking a bike out of the back of their station wagon. They had parked their station wagon out in the suburbs and they were taking a bike out of that so they could ride into town, so regarding integrating cycling with public transport, especially on the hilly areas, do you remember the situation where there was a Fern Tree trial?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes.

Mr VALENTINE - How did that go?

Ms HASELGROVE - That was well before my time but I am told it was not very well patronised. It was for surfboards and I think bikes. We are currently working with our union to trial bike racks on buses. The bike racks on the front of the bus and it folds down to get two bikes on it. The unions are saying the issue with that is that if the bike comes loose the driver is responsible, so we are currently working through that issue. It is not an easy issue.

Mr MULDER - We used to do the same things with prams at one stage until the lights came on - remember?

Ms HASELGROVE - They used to hook the prams on the back of the bus.

Mr VALENTINE - Can you hang them vertically in the bus?

Ms HASELGROVE - The issue I have with having any bikes inside the bus is that if they got loose they could cause a huge amount of damage. If people can fold their bikes up and put them in a canvas cover, we allow them to carry them on. They can carry on the

fold-up razor scooters. My preference would be to get the union over the line with regard to this but it is not an easy issue at the moment.

Mr VALENTINE - They do it elsewhere.

Ms HASELGROVE - They do it in Action buses in Canberra but Canberra is very flat. I am trying to say to the unions that this is a trial. If for some reason the topography of Hobart causes these bikes to come off, we would stop the trial. They either don't want to listen to me or -

Mr MULDER - There is the thing about trains, of course, in big cities. Bikes are coming on and off the trains all the time but because of the nature of trains, they just stick an extra carriage on.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes.

CHAIR - Can we look at the bigger picture of this. I go back to your own experience, because you have come to us from Adelaide. I understand that in Adelaide, Perth and I think in Sydney and certainly in Brisbane, most big cities in Australia, and probably internationally as well, the public transport, certainly in those cities I have named, is, as you have said, owned by the government and services contracted out. Tell me what you were doing in Adelaide?

Ms HASELGROVE - There were two different models. In Adelaide the government owns most of the buses and most of the depots, and it owns the ticketing infrastructure and the radio network infrastructure. They competitively tendered the provision of the bus services using the government assets, so companies like Torrens Transit, Serco. The government operate a bid, and there was company called Australian Transit Enterprises, and in a recent one, Transfield. People bid and there are very detailed specifications around which they have to bid. It is a value-for-money selection - at least it was when I was there, I can't comment on the last round because I wasn't there. They used to be five-plus-five contracts. I think the South Australian government has now gone to seven-plus-seven, so there are very long-term contracts. They are given the timetables they have to run, and the number of buses. So when they were bidding they would have bid, based on the timetables and the use of the depots, how many buses would be needed and what prices are going to be charged to government.

So it was contracting out. The government wasn't selling the bus services; it was just competitively tendering the provision of that service. They always owned the asset. They had step-in rights, so if a contractor was a really bad contractor and wasn't providing services, the government could step in and the contractor would have to pay the government. The money would still flow and then they would pay, but that never ever had to be exercised but was always there if they needed it.

Ms RATTRAY - A big stick really.

Ms HASELGROVE - It was a big stick but the other big stick was that if they weren't providing satisfactory service at the time of renewal - the five-plus-five at the five-year frame - there was no automatic rollover if they had not been providing services. It had to be demonstrated and the KPIs in the contract were very clear about what had to be done,

and provided people were prepared to renew at the same price, it was basically automatic if they had been performing and they were happy to renew at that price. The framework is very similar in Perth.

CHAIR - But they have buses and trains in Perth.

Ms HASELGROVE - No, trains are operated by government in Perth, trains are operated by government in Adelaide and the trams are operated - light and heavy rail in Adelaide are operated by the government or the government contractor.

CHAIR - Is there ticketing across it, too?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, integrated ticketing across all of them, so it is a one-ticketing system. In Adelaide they have had integrated ticketing for many years. When MTT bought their old multi-stripe ticket, Adelaide bought theirs at exactly the same time, so they had exactly the same system.

Mr VALENTINE - In 1989.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, it was very old.

Mr VALENTINE - I helped put it in.

Laughter.

Ms HASELGROVE - A very reliable service - it was an integrated service. The same in Perth, they have integrated ticketing. Government provides the rail service. They don't have light rail but they have a very small ferry across the Swan River, but it is only one service. They have extensive north-south rail which is provided by government but then all the buses are provided by private operators but, again, government owns all the infrastructure - the depots, buses, the radio network and the ticketing system, which is the main piece of the infrastructure that you need.

Melbourne is different. In Melbourne all the private operators own their buses and depots and they have contracts with government. Sydney is different. Sydney Buses is the government-owned operator and that is a big bus company. Then there is a myriad of smaller, privately owned companies but, again, they own their own buses and depots and the prices the governments pay for these contracts reflect that. In Adelaide you don't get any money for owning the bus. The contractor gets money to provide the service - there is labour and maintenance of the buses and so on.

In Brisbane the government doesn't have a bus company but Brisbane council owns a very big bus company, and they operate Brisbane ferries as well.

CHAIR - That is contracted out, Brisbane ferries and CityCats are not run by -

Ms HASELGROVE - No, they have the contract with government. Brisbane council has the contract with government to provide the ferry service and they have subcontracted it out to Transdev. They provide that service for the council but the council holds the contract with government and there is no relationship between Transdev and the government.

CHAIR - They have a very strange financial system - all the fares actually go to government.

Ms HASELGROVE - That happens in Perth and Adelaide too.

CHAIR - For trains and buses?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes. In Adelaide they are what are called gross contracts, so you would bid to provide the service. There is a small component which is an incentive to grow the business - for every extra boarding you would get a small payment and likewise if it goes down, the payment gets reduced. It sort of mirrors a net contract where you keep the revenue.

In Sydney there is a whole series of contracts with private operators as well as the big contract with Sydney Buses, which is owned by government. I think in the Northern Territory they just have private operators who own their own depots.

CHAIR - There appears to be no incentive here for government to look beyond buses. Apart from the fact that the public would love to have ferries and there are certainly parts of the public who would like to see light rail back - certainly along the rail corridor that still exists - and I don't quite understand that reluctance except that the government owns it, if you like. Does Metro own the infrastructure in Tasmania - do you own the buses?

Ms HASELGROVE - We own the buses and the depots. We lease some of our depots; we have satellite yards at Kingston, on the eastern shore and Bridgewater - we don't own those, we lease them and that's to cut down the -

CHAIR - And you own the ticketing system?

Ms HASELGROVE - We own the ticketing system, we own the radio system. We own Springfield, Launceston and Burnie depots and we own 220-odd buses.

CHAIR - In discussions I have had with government ministers, I think one of their fears is that if you were to extend the type of public transport, if it was more than buses, then they would have to spend more money on subsidies because they are worried that the percentage of people catching public transport would not grow. If you still have the same number of people catching public transport but you provide two or three different types of transport then obviously you spread it thinner. That doesn't seem to be the outcome in other places that have put on, say, ferries or light rail.

Ms HASELGROVE - The business case government did for the northern light rail considered what they called a spark effect, which was observed in Perth. When they put a rail system on more people used it, rather than there just being a transfer from buses. In Adelaide, when they upgraded the light rail to Glenelg, there was a spark effect - the same number of people were still catching the parallel bus.

CHAIR - And certainly that's been the case in Brisbane -

Ms HASELGROVE - I think that was taken into account with the business case and the spark effect was included.

CHAIR - I think a number of the northern light rail people would think that that wasn't a reasonable - for instance, they said there would be nine people catching the train from Austins Ferry or Granton, which seemed to the northern suburbs light rail people to be totally ridiculous.

Ms HASELGROVE - I can't really comment on that. I think they took that into account. Whether the spark effect was applied before - if you remember it was a staged approach, and the first part was where should we provide it to, and at that stage the decision was made to stop it at Claremont, and then they applied the spark effect after that, when they were doing the costs and benefits. That is my recollection. You should have a copy.

CHAIR - The northern suburbs people will be putting in a submission in.

Mr MULDER - Was the modelling based on the fact that rail would be added to existing Metro bus services or as a replacement for bus services? It seems feasible.

Ms HASELGROVE - No, it was a mixture. Metro was asked that if there was a rail system, how would we redesign the services so that they fed the rail system. People still had to get from A to B and a lot of people don't like transferring. So you would still have to provide a service down Main Road, for instance.

CHAIR - I think that was what they found in Perth, that the bus services changed dramatically - instead of being long route, they started to become shorter services into the rail spine.

Mr MULDER - That was my question, because in the end it is: how many people are travelling down, be it the road or the rail corridor, on public transport? It seems to me that you should immediately add all the people who are currently using the bus services plus any others. That should be the foundation point if you withdraw the long route bus service.

Ms HASELGROVE - You have to be really careful if you do that because -

Mr MULDER - I think that was in the model.

Ms HASELGROVE - I don't know exactly what was modelled but you can't pull out all the long route services because there will be people who will just not walk from the rail because the rail goes along the corridor and not mirroring -

CHAIR - Not Main Road.

Ms HASELGROVE - So if somebody wanted to get out at North Hobart, it is a fair walk from the rail to the State Cinema.

Mr MULDER - But likewise, for someone living on the rail corridor, it's a long walk for them to get to the main road.

CHAIR - So hopefully you would increase patronage?

Ms HASELGROVE - I think it showed there would be an increase in patronage but it wasn't a huge increase. One of the determinants of the use of public transport is: am I going to save time? If you can show that you're going to save travel time, that is something someone would -

Mr MULDER - Which as we have previously discussed, is a big issue in Hobart. It is difficult to improve on the current travel time provided by the private companies.

Ms HASELGROVE - That's right.

CHAIR - But as you said in the beginning, your survey shows that people want frequency -

Ms HASELGROVE - Direct, fast, and a broad span of hours.

Dr GOODWIN - On the travel time issue, do your timetables build in the variation that occurs during peak times?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes.

Dr GOODWIN - They do, so we could get a feel for that.

Mr MULDER - On timetables, my experience with big cities is that when you ask what time the train comes, the locals would say, 'Don't worry, just go there, there'll be a train in 20 minutes', so it's the frequency rather than the actual timing.

Ms HASELGROVE - The Greater Hobart passenger transport network plan says on these high-frequency corridors, a 15-minutes service. Across so many hours of the day and at night it becomes half an hour, or whatever. When you look at what is happening in Perth, they are getting huge increases in patronage, but the government is putting a lot more money into their services. They are getting a lot of increase that way.

CHAIR - So is it still a balance of 75:25?

Ms HASELGROVE - No, because they'd still be getting the revenue. It would be similar.

CHAIR - Heather, you have worked in one system in Adelaide where you were the government person who was looking after contracting out, and now you are here, in a sense in a very different position -

Ms HASELGROVE - I'm on the other side of the fence.

CHAIR - Well, you're not quite on the other side of the fence because -

Ms HASELGROVE - I'm still owned by government.

CHAIR - Yes, you're still owned by government, but the service is different because there you were contracting out, I presume by tender, and that doesn't happen here; Metro just has it. Which system do you think is more efficient or more cost-effective or any of those things?

Ms HASELGROVE - I would suggest that if you are wanting to delve into that side of it, you probably should write to Adelaide and Perth and ask for examples of what has been achieved. I am just not sure what my confidentiality arrangements are from my previous job because I do know what savings were made, but -

CHAIR - I suppose that's my question - are there savings to be made if we were to go to that sort of system?

Ms HASELGROVE - There could be, but the thing you need to be taking into account is that when I first did contracting out in Adelaide, the what is called transmission of business - and Vanessa is probably aware of this - was really not on the horizon then. People were offered jobs, 'Here's your terms and conditions, do you want a job with *x*, *y*, or *z* bus company?'. Now with transmission of business, when you sell, or a government or another entity contract is out of service, the terms and conditions of the employees have to go across, so Metro's terms and conditions would have to go across to another contractor.

CHAIR - What would happen to the infrastructure? Metro owns it but is that government?

Ms HASELGROVE - We own it on behalf of the government.

CHAIR - So it is still government owned.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes. There are two different models. Government could say, 'We want to sell Metro'. There are companies like Stagecoach, a big company in the UK, where that is all they do; they never tender, they just buy companies. So government could look at selling Metro, government could say, 'We want to keep the assets and we're just going to contract out' -

CHAIR - And contract the services out?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, and say, 'We will make the assets available to whoever is successful' - I would hope that Metro would be allowed to bid - or they could say, 'Metro has a relatively old fleet, we want you to provide buses'. They could say, 'We'll buy whatever from you', but that is going to cost government more. I have no feel for whether there would be savings or not, I don't know.

Mr VALENTINE - A lot of people say to use smaller buses but we all know the human resource factor is one of the reasons for not using smaller buses. Have you done any sums in regard to that, where the edge lies on that, at what point smaller buses versus more drivers works?

Ms HASELGROVE - We haven't. I did some work in Adelaide but I can't recollect what the answer was. At peak, a lot of our services are full.

CHAIR - The big buses?

Ms HASELGROVE - The large buses and even the articulated buses are full, so to get a 30-seat seater, just for the 12.5 you'd have to have two buses and for the articulated you'd

have to have at least three buses. Fifty per cent of Metro's costs is labour. It is a piece of work we could look at -

Mr MULDER - Which is what they argue with trains. If you take 10 buses off the route, lose 10 people and put on three.

Ms HASELGROVE - That also might be a question you could ask Adelaide, the comparative cost per passenger for the different modes, for light rail and rail, because I can't tell you what that is here. They could tell you - Rod Hook is the secretary of the department; I don't know what they call them now.

Mr MULDER - I think you have come to the nub of the issue, which is that public transport will cost. The question is which is the most efficient mode and therefore requires the least subsidy, that's the business case you put.

Mr VALENTINE - It's the cost of providing the service. Over the years people always said, 'Metro runs at a loss', but it doesn't, it's the cost of providing that service.

Mr MULDER - It's a community service obligation.

Ms HASELGROVE - That's right.

CHAIR - But it goes broader than that, too. There has been talk over the last year or so of putting an extra lane on the Brooker Highway either so that you can have a bus lane or so that there are three lanes for cars instead of two. When you look at the cost of that, that has to be factored into the provision of public transport instead, which might stop you having to spend that extra money.

Mr MULDER - Do you build a new rail or do you put some iron back down on the old corridor? That's the issue, I guess.

CHAIR - It's not just the cost of providing a service.

Mr MULDER - From Metro, what's the cost per passenger? I think that was something you were going to supply us with and I think that would be interesting. What does it cost Metro to supply per passenger to run - more on the infrastructure for a moment, the roads - the total cost divided by the number of passengers?

Ms HASELGROVE - Roughly, and I can come back to you with more definitive figures, we get \$30 million from government, we collect \$10 million in fares - that is \$40 million. We carry about 10 million people, so it is \$4 million less a dollar, on average, that they contribute. So the net cost to Metro is about \$3 per person - but that's really rough.

CHAIR - That is per trip per person?

Ms HASELGROVE - That is per boarding.

Mr MULDER - Exclusive of road costs.

Ms HASELGROVE - No, we pay our registration.

Mr MULDER - Not to the council, to fix the roads.

Laughter.

Mr MULDER - But that's another issue.

CHAIR - It is another issue but they are all things to take into consideration.

Ms HASELGROVE - If they built things properly in the first place -

Laughter.

CHAIR - Heather, have you got anything on the current rail corridor, because the issue for you, as Metro, has been how you get priority for buses?

Ms HASELGROVE - My view - and this is my view, not a Metro view, and I want to clearly put that on the table - is that the rail corridor needs to be preserved. I don't think the time is right for light rail but there will come a time when Hobart has grown, and the population and the density of the population along with that. Probably once all the industries move north. You can see it happening in Glenorchy, young families moving in, so that whole corridor could be low- to medium-density housing. It will be right around that corridor so to preserve the corridor has to be a high priority. If there was some way you could keep the rails in and just put pavement around and run buses up and down it, it would have to be just a peak flow - so in the mornings they go in and then afternoons out. They would do half their service, then run in.

Mr MULDER - You would be pleased to know that the minister, when this was put to him during estimates, confirmed that the corridor would be kept open. What use would be made of it had not been determined but the corridor would remain.

Ms HASELGROVE - It has to be; it is an asset that the state owns and we can't lose it.

Mr MULDER - It has to be but it doesn't mean it will.

Ms HASELGROVE - Imagine if you were trying to buy it back in 10 or 20 years time, you just couldn't. The cost would be so -

Mr MULDER - Even trying to create corridors - as local government tries from time to time - in the current environment on greenfield sites where there is no development now, you can't even get the corridor created so why would you be giving away the ones you have?

Ms HASELGROVE - I don't know whether you are planning on looking at other public transport infrastructure.

CHAIR - It's possible, where would you recommend?

Ms HASELGROVE - Adelaide, and make sure you travel on the O-Bahn. In the 1980s, when the government - and I don't know which persuasion - was planning on putting rail out there, they came up with the O-Bahn, which is a guided busway. The footprint is

very narrow, it is quite expensive, but it carries more people on that 12 kilometres of busway than the north-south railway of 70-odd km.

CHAIR - Why is that?

Ms HASELGROVE - Because it is a fantastic service. They have a frequency of about 90 seconds headway, it is smooth because it is concrete, and the driver just sits there and doesn't have to drive because it is guided. It is well worth having a look at.

Adelaide is starting to invest heavily in light rail. They have just refurbished the Glenelg rail, they have put the rail out to the entertainment centre, and they are doing a transit-oriented development at Bowden, around that light rail. Brisbane is always worth a look because Brisbane has the ferries, the busways - which are amazing - and the frequency of the buses on those. Sydney and Melbourne are just too big. If you could get to Auckland and look at the northern busway, it is sensational.

Mr VALENTINE - Do you think the O-Bahn is successful because it is more flexible?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, it is.

Mr VALENTINE - Buses can get off the O-Bahn and go to other locations.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, and if something happens on the O-Bahn or they need to do maintenance or whatever, the buses just go around, whereas if you have rail and something happens, everything stops; you can't do anything and you have to run a bus substitute. So there are those good pieces of infrastructure that are worth looking at.

Dr GOODWIN - What is so good about the Brisbane busways?

Ms HASELGROVE - They have dedicated roads, busways - I think emergency services go on them as well.

CHAIR - Do they run alongside or is it one lane?

Ms HASELGROVE - Sometimes it is one lane but often it is completely separate.

CHAIR - But you have to have room to do that; that's our problem.

Ms HASELGROVE - They have made room; they've bought stuff.

Mr VALENTINE - I think the suggestion you were making earlier is that with that corridor we have, we could actually pave it and use it for O-Bahn until the rail became viable, which is something I have thought of in the past. If you keep the rail corridor, and you have people building houses in that corridor, all of a sudden it builds a demand and then light rail would possibly work.

Ms HASELGROVE - The work was done with the light rail study, and where you would have the station, so you would develop park-and-ride at those sites. I am learning to be a rail service but at the moment it is a bus. Once the patronage gets to a certain level, all of a sudden it becomes a rail service. The government might have money by then.

CHAIR - The major infrastructure, whatever it is, is always going to be paid for by Infrastructure Australia; it is not going to be the state government. The government will need to take on the service and maintain it, subsidise and run it.

Ms HASELGROVE - Even if we are gifted in some way you still have to depreciate the cost of that.

CHAIR - Absolutely.

Ms HASELGROVE - So that will be included in your operating costs, and that is a huge amount. It will still be there.

Mr VALENTINE - The advantage of that light rail situation is that adding a carriage doesn't mean adding a driver.

Ms HASELGROVE - But the carriages are really expensive. A bus costs \$600 000, or \$800 000 if it is articulated.

Mr VALENTINE - And a carriage - \$1.5 million, or something?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes.

CHAIR - It depends whether you buy new or used.

Dr GOODWIN - You mentioned the age of the bus fleet, and presumably that is a bit of an issue -

Ms HASELGROVE - It is an issue for Metro. The average age of their buses is about 14.3 years.

Dr GOODWIN - How long do they live?

Ms HASELGROVE - They live as long as you love them. Our articulated buses are now over 25 years old but they are well maintained; we refurbish them from time to time. The financial year before last we bought four new articulated buses and we will buy some more this year. We are meeting the DDA requirements, but that is based on the services you provide. Our low-floor buses get used all the time because we have to meet our DDA.

Mr VALENTINE - The kneeling buses are working alright?

Ms HASELGROVE - They are fantastic. I don't know that we carry a lot of people in wheelchairs but they are great for older people; they don't have to step up. They are great for people with pushers or shopping trolleys; they are just really nice buses to use. They are light and airy; they are really nice buses.

Dr GOODWIN - So you have a program of replacing the buses and everything is okay at the moment. That has all been factored into your forward costing and estimates?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes. We have a program, whether it is fully funded or not at this stage it becomes available.

Ms RATTRAY - Do you have a timeframe, Heather, of when you want to see the age of the fleet be reduced by?

Ms HASELGROVE - The Disability Discrimination Act is really driving it. By 2022 all our services have to be delivered using accessible buses. The next measure is on 31 December, and it has to be 55 per cent. I think we are exceeding that, but I am not sure what we are at. It excludes dedicated school services because the education department provides an alternative service for students with wheelchairs.

CHAIR - We have had some interesting feedback already from people wanting to contribute to this inquiry and some have been from bicycle people. I have had several inquiries from community transport people who say that, for instance, if you live at Ranelagh, the bus service from Huonville - which is not yours - is terrific but they can't get to the bus from Ranelagh to Huonville. So they are saying can community transport somehow be integrated. This is one of the reasons we are looking at this, to see if we can't integrate services a bit better because a person could use community transport from Ranelagh to Huonville and then they could catch the bus and it would be fine, but not at the moment.

Ms HASELGROVE - If you were to ask Stuart Davies from Community Transport Services.

CHAIR - Stuart was one of the people who contacted me.

Ms HASELGROVE - He is currently working with a series of bus companies. A lot of his services are HACC funded - home and community care - and provide services for young disabled and elderly people. If you meet with him there may be some options you could explore.

CHAIR - He is certainly intending to put a submission in, but one of the questions he asked me was, 'Are you really talking about public transport?', because in reality, is the service he provides public transport or not? It is to the public but only if you fit into 65+ or people with disabilities, so is that public transport or not?

Ms HASELGROVE - I thought he said to me at one stage that he had approval, subject to availability, to take other people on his services. When you are looking at some of the more remote areas of Tasmania and there is no other service apart from his, and there is capacity, why not? But his funders would have to agree to that.

CHAIR - I think that is mostly federal funding.

Ms HASELGROVE - I think HACC is 50:50, the state makes a contribution. It is a long time since I worked in Health so I don't know.

CHAIR - I am just trying to work out in my head what percentage of people catch public transport in Greater Hobart, in southern Tasmania? You say there are 10 million trips a year.

Ms HASELGROVE - I will send you the journey to work data from the Greater Hobart Network Plan. In some areas the journey to work by public transport is up to 10 per cent, not very many.

CHAIR - Ten per cent is pretty high.

Ms HASELGROVE - In some areas it is 2 per cent and 1 per cent. The journey to work centres in Greater Hobart are the Hobart CBD and Glenorchy, the rest are quite small. Those two account for 86 per cent of the journey to work. This is going back to the 2006 census.

CHAIR - It might be slightly changed with new census data.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, it might, but it should be fairly easy to get. If you have a research officer they could get you that data.

Mr MULDER - That is a really interesting point, given the population on the eastern shore, the bottleneck of the Tasman Bridge, the Southern Outlet bottlenecks, and all those issues which you would think would drive you to public transport, but they are not. The four-lane Brooker Highway and the two-lane main road are still happy to carry that.

Dr GOODWIN - To some extent with the bottleneck of the Tasman Bridge, because we don't have dedicated bus lanes it doesn't solve the problem. If we had a dedicated bus lane it might solve that bottleneck.

Mr MULDER - What I am saying, though, is because we have bottlenecks there, you would think that would be driving people onto public transport but it's not.

Ms HASELGROVE - But if you're stuck in traffic, you're stuck in traffic. I saw a vision - I was really bold when I first started here and said I really wanted to see the fifth lane of the Tasman Bridge become a bus lane. I said that to you at one stage -

Mr VALENTINE - Counterflowed -

Ms HASELGROVE - It would be counterflowed.

CHAIR - So why didn't it happen?

Ms HASELGROVE - Because I haven't got the influence that you guys have.

CHAIR - We've got influence?

Laughter.

Ms HASELGROVE - If you made it a T3 lane - in a T3 lane a car has to have three people in it. It could be for taxis, public transport and emergency vehicles, and it is counterflow and -

CHAIR - And we have that spare lane, as you say.

Dr GOODWIN - We could trial it, at the very least, to see what impact it would have.

Mr MULDER - You'd get all the mothers running their kids from Acton to Hutchins School because they have three kids in the car.

Ms HASELGROVE - They would be car-pooling. This is about getting the private car off the roads.

CHAIR - With one person in it.

Ms HASELGROVE - If you guys all came to work in one car, that's two less cars off the road. It is about trying to get the private car off the road. If people car pool, walk, use their bike or catch public transport, the environment and Hobart is the winner.

Mr MULDER - But the focus really has to be on getting the people who come into the city to work onto public transport.

CHAIR - Which is I suppose why the ferry option is also of interest to us.

Mr VALENTINE - It's a highway that doesn't wear out but it still costs money to buy ferries.

Ms HASELGROVE - About \$6 million each.

Mr VALENTINE - But you're not paying for the pavement.

CHAIR - And there are plenty of ferries for sale at the moment; the northern hemisphere is afloat with cheap ferries.

Ms RATTRAY - Mr Clifford is happy for the government to buy something.

CHAIR - If you wanted to have Incat build them it would be fantastic, but you would have to look at the economics.

Mr MULDER - So the northern hemisphere's ferry system has sunk, has it?

Laughter.

Ms HASELGROVE - Are there any issues about degradation of the riverbanks in Hobart?

Mr MULDER - No.

Ms HASELGROVE - I know it was an issue in some parts of New Zealand with their ferries.

Mr MULDER - It's not yet but it will be the moment you put one in.

CHAIR - Again, I think those things have been addressed already in various other places.

Ms HASELGROVE - The propulsion you use has to be a special size.

CHAIR - That has been what they have done in Brisbane as well.

Mr MULDER - The bulk of the shore is rock.

Ms HASELGROVE - So that should be all right.

Mr VALENTINE - It is not the Gordon River.

CHAIR - No, but they had to do that in Brisbane, Rob; the CityCats have a particular propulsion system that doesn't cause wash to the riverbanks.

Mr MULDER - But the Derwent is basically rocky shore all the way through.

Ms HASELGROVE - And someone was telling me it was very deep, the second deepest port in the world.

Mr VALENTINE - That's exactly right.

Ms HASELGROVE - I remember some things.

CHAIR - Any further questions?

Ms HASELGROVE - I am happy if you come up with any issues that you want me to get information for, and if you can, once *Hansard* comes out, highlight the bits where I have promised -

Mr VALENTINE - Regarding community partnership, is it within your remit if communities came to you and said, 'We want a service at South Arm that provides' -

Ms HASELGROVE - They've got one.

Mr VALENTINE - Do they?

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, we run services down there. We already have an agreement with Launceston City Council. They fund the Tiger Bus. They wanted to have a park-and-ride at the football at Inveresk. I told them, a bit like you, that it's not going to work because you are five minutes from it so why are people going to hop on the bus. That part of it isn't working too well. In the morning it runs in and out and during the day it still runs in and out but it also does a loop, which gets lots of passengers. It is free, because the council funds it, it is a badged bus -

Mr MULDER - More a touristy thing, is it?

Ms HASELGROVE - No, it's not just tourists, it's for working people who need to get from here to there who catch the bus rather than taking a car, walking, or whatever. That is a community partnership that we have entered.

Mr VALENTINE - How well is the doorstopper service patronised?

Ms HASELGROVE - It is very poorly patronised, and part of the Greater Hobart network plan is that they will probably go, but we will have to consult really widely and let people know what their alternatives are.

CHAIR - That is where a taxi service might work.

Ms HASELGROVE - We wouldn't fund it.

CHAIR - Why is it poorly patronised? It seemed like such a great idea.

Ms HASELGROVE - I caught one the other day and there were only four or five people on it, and it is really costly to run. While I say it is \$3 a person, if you looked at some of those services -

Mr VALENTINE - It would be \$20.

Ms HASELGROVE - It would be.

Mr MULDER - That's why the airlines run between Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne, because it's where the bulk of the people are travelling.

Mr VALENTINE - Critical mass.

Ms HASELGROVE - Our contract with government says that we have to provide a service within 500 metres or a kilometre, depending on the time of day, of most houses. We are over-providing at the moment and we need to say where people have a service somewhere close by, where can we find money to invest in improving frequency and the span of hours. That's our commitment. The network plan is our template; it is not funded. We will use it to bid for funding in budget rounds but, more importantly, whenever we do anything, we ask: 'Is this in line with the network plan?'. Metro has been really good over many years saying, 'Yes'. The bus driver would be driving a bus and little Mrs Smith is sitting in it and she will say, 'Driver, can you go that way today because I don't walk very well'. So the driver will radio in, 'Yes'. So on Tuesdays the bus goes that way and then on Thursdays it might be old Mr Jones, who wants to go that way, so on Thursdays the bus go there. Despite the fact that Mrs Smith and Mr Jones died five years ago, the buses still do this, and if you look at any of our timetables you will have all these variations.

Mr MULDER - It's most remiss of the Smiths and Jones not to keep you informed.

Laughter.

Ms HASELGROVE - They didn't let us know before they died.

We will be simplifying our network. If you pick up a timetable, they will have an 'A' or 'B', 'G', 'C' or something, and that is just a variation. Most days it will go this way, but then, there is an 'A' and that means it goes that way. It is just too hard. We have to give people certainty and there could be some angst when we start doing this so we have to make sure we get out and consult with people, let them know what we're doing and let them know what the big picture is.

This is their aim: in the longer term you will have a world-class passenger transport network. One of the councils said to me, 'Why do we want a world-class passenger transport network?' I looked at them and said, 'People who live and work in and visit Hobart are entitled to a world-class passenger transport service. It will be implemented over time and it might not be to the Londons or the Singapores, but we don't have their population'.

Ms RATTRAY - I heard today they're not going so well either.

Ms HASELGROVE - No, I heard that too, four hours or something.

It is aspirational but it provides that framework for everything we do, 'Does this line up?' When someone says, 'We want to do this squiggly', well why would we do that, it is not in line with our map as to where we want to go.

Dr GOODWIN - I suspect perhaps that the people who ask for those variations might be in the older demographic -

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes, they are.

Dr GOODWIN - It is the reality of Tasmania that we have an ageing demographic. I am wondering, when we talk about integrated transport options in the community, and transport has already been mentioned, do we need to start looking at that in a bigger picture way? Some communities have benefited from the Cars for Communities program, which is about providing a tailored service to help people get to their shopping or appointments. Do you think we need to start having more of a focus on that sort of option as well?

Ms HASELGROVE - The issue I have with providing buses with cars is, it would be much better to fund services. To look at a community and say - and I think to some extent this is what DIER has done when they did the passenger transport review: this is the community, it has this demographic, this is what the population is, this is the spatial [layout], this is what should be provided. Then they get a contractor in to deliver that.

There are other forms of transport - you talked about community transport. The secretary of DIER will have more knowledge of this, but government provides subsidised taxi vouchers for people who have mobility issues, and if you are in a wheelchair it is a higher subsidy. There are other forms, and I don't know what they are here - I used to know what they were in Adelaide - where government is putting money into moving people around. So if you looked at that and how we better integrate all of these different bits of the pie to come up with a model that works better for people.

Mr MULDER - But the mass public transport system is where I think the focus should be, with these things as add-ons in special cases, not trying to build a mass public system to meet every need.

Ms HASELGROVE - We are mass transit. In our corporate plan we are mass transit, and that was a big shift for the board to recognise that we are not providing door-to-door service. It is about moving the most people as efficiently as we possibly can.

CHAIR - I think it is also probably a problem the psyche of the public has, is that the buses ought to be a public transport system, not a mass transport system and that is why they should go up Springfield Avenue and out to -

Ms HASELGROVE - Springfield Avenue is not too bad but some of the really tiny streets that you can't get a bus up -

Mr VALENTINE - Do you have enough resources to do the analysis from the data that you currently collect?

Ms HASELGROVE - Staffing?

Mr VALENTINE - Yes.

Ms HASELGROVE - I'm really skinny - not me personally - but my staff is.

Laughter.

CHAIR - Heather catches the buses whereas she makes them run.

Ms HASELGROVE - I live about 1.2 kilometres away from a bus route and there is no way a bus could get up my road. I have not tried it - it would get up there but it wouldn't be able to turn around.

We have very few resources. My work force is predominately bus operators, mechanics and office staff. My business development unit, which would do a lot of analysis work, has three planners, and we have just employed a graduate to start doing the analysis, and whatever. I have two people in the marketing area, customer service people who man the Metro shop, the telephones, people who run the depots, finance, HR and the IT areas - but it is not very big.

Mr VALENTINE - If you had extra resources to do further analysis would you get some benefit from that in terms of structuring your services?

Ms HASELGROVE - We buy that resource in. We bought the greater Hobart network plan in because they had the expertise. We probably need to get more efficient at how we do our rostering, and we now have two graduates in that area. I have been very clear about making sure that we employ graduates where we possibly can in the specialised areas, so we now have a marketing graduate, an HR graduate and a couple of finance graduates and then in the service planning. My bus drivers think it is a bit weird that we have all these graduates but that's all right, I deal with that every day.

The systems we now have in place make it easier to analyse so every day we can look at how many people we have -

Mr VALENTINE - Origin, destination, and all that.

Ms HASELGROVE - Yes. Origin and destination, because we don't have a tag on and a tag off, is very difficult. But with Greencard you make an assumption that where people get

off in the morning is where they get on at night, and there is about a 95 per cent correlation with that.

Mr VALENTINE - They would be better stats than the old system, wouldn't they?

Ms HASELGROVE - Definitely. The data is uploaded overnight so you can look at how many people boarded at a bus stop and make more informed decisions about which bus stops deserve a shelter or whether we need that many bus stops on Sandy Bay Road. The buses don't get out of second gear because they are always stopping, so which ones would you take out? Let's look at the data, let's look at where the old people's homes are and work with Hobart City council and ask what they think.

Mr VALENTINE - Is electronic notification of bus stops out of the question?

Ms HASELGROVE - No, it's not out of the question but the issue we have is that we don't have real-time information at the moment. The ticketing system is a static system, it only uploads and downloads when the bus is at the depot. For us to put in real time is probably a couple of million dollars because we have to have the communication with the bus and it would have to pulse back every 30 seconds, or whatever.

With the advent of smart phones you wouldn't have it at every stop anymore. You would have it in the bus malls, because that makes sense. Have a big display in a bus mall that says when the next bus to Taroona is going and which stop it is at. But out on the system you would have those queue archives and click and it would come up with it straightaway.

Mr MULDER - I would like to see what percentage of your passengers would have that.

CHAIR - But if we increased the number of young commuters, they would.

Mr VALENTINE - That is why I ask the question, a lot of people won't catch the buses because they don't know when the next one is coming and all that sort of stuff.

Ms HASELGROVE - Or you are sitting at work and you want to know when the next bus is coming.

Technology is becoming more and more used in passenger transport and we need to make sure that we are monitoring it; we don't want to be on the bleeding edge. I think people underestimate how successful Metro implementing the Greencard was, if you look at the problems they have had in Sydney and Melbourne. We put it in, no problems, and we have a world-class ticketing system. It doesn't have tag on, tag off, we kept it simple, but it is still a really good system when we roll it out to the other operators. At least people, initially, will have one card, it will be a first and when we integrate the fares that will be something that the department will have to manage, but it will be great.

Every student across Tasmania will shortly have a Greencard. They have what they call a black-box system on the buses in the country and they just swipe it to verify that they are boarding and if they happen to travel in any of our areas they can use it, so eventually their parents will be able to put money on those cards so the kids won't have to worry

about money. The advantage of having a Greencard with money on it is that the kids can't spend their bus money at the tuck shop.

Mr MULDER - A bully can't demand their bus fare.

Ms HASELGROVE - No.

Mr MULDER - They can but 'Here's the Greencard'.

Ms HASELGROVE - But all students have to have their cards registered so if Mum rings up and says, 'Johnny lost his card', we cancel that card and give him a new one.

Mr MULDER - What you have missed is the real villain in this one, and that's me pinching my kids' Greencards.

Laughter.

Ms HASELGROVE - If you're caught - I don't know what the penalty is - we'll 'out' you.

Laughter.

Mr MULDER - I'm not going to admit that I lost mine to my wife.

Laughter.

Ms HASELGROVE - The current promotion is to get a Greencard free with \$5 on it, and it's going really well.

CHAIR - Thank you very much, Heather. Thank you for all the information but also for your openness to the questions, which has been very helpful. This is the start of the inquiry so we need all the information and leads that we can get.

Ms HASELGROVE - It was a pleasure.

THE WITNESS WITHDREW.