

**THE PARLIAMENTARY STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS MET
ON THURSDAY, 28 OCTOBER 2010 AT THE FEDERATION ROOM,
DEVONPORT ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE, DEVONPORT.**

CONSTRUCTION OF POLICE DIVISIONAL HEADQUARTERS DEVONPORT

Mr PHIL WILKINSON, ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER OF POLICE, POLICY AND DEVELOPMENT, **Mr SCOTT WILSON-HAFFENDEN**, DIRECTOR CORPORATE SERVICES, **Mr LAUCHLAND AVERY**, COMMANDER, WESTERN DISTRICT, **Mr ADRIAN SHADBOLT**, INSPECTOR, TASMANIA POLICE, **Mr IAN LATHAM**, MANAGER, ASSET MANAGEMENT SERVICES, AND **Mr PETER GAGGIN**, CONSULTANT, PHILP LIGHTON ARCHITECTS, WERE CALLED, MADE THE STATUTORY DECLARATION AND WERE EXAMINED.

CHAIR (Mr Harriss) - Thank you very much, gentlemen. You would be aware that all the proceedings of a committee such as this are recorded and subsequently transcribed. We will hear the evidence in whichever way your group wishes to present it. If it is a reasonable suggestion to you, we will interact as you go along rather than banking up the questions to the end.

Mr WILSON-HAFFENDEN - Thank you for the opportunity to present to the committee. We have forwarded you a copy of the documentation, most of which is reasonably self-explanatory, and we will work through some remarks in regards to the proposal and if you want to interact, good.

The Department of Police and Emergency Management is presenting this submission to the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works for approval to construct a police divisional headquarters at a site which is to be acquired via a land exchange with the Devonport City Council at 19-23 McPhee Street and 24 Wenvoe Street. Subject to the approval of this committee, we are in the process of negotiation with Crown Land Services which would see a recommendation for transfer of ownership of the current police station with that proposed site.

Mr BOOTH - Are they equal in valuation or is there an allowance made?

Mr WILSON-HAFFENDEN - No, the basis of the swap is on exchange of the government valuation, and that results in a \$300 000 transfer to the Department of Police and Emergency Management. The basis for proceedings has to be on that equal valuation transfer.

The project will comprise the construction of the new police station building, construction of new preliminary outbuildings, refurbishment of the eastern warehouse store and the associated landscaping works. Philp Lighton Architects, of which Mr Gaggin is a representative, has been commissioned to provide the professional building services. Philp Lighton Architects have also provided similar services to the Bellerive police station and have been engaged to also provide the same services for the proposed Glenorchy police station.

The planning is a result of discussions which commenced in 2007. It has been undertaken in close consultation with staff of the Glenorchy division, the commander of Western District and the Devonport City Council. The existing police station was constructed in 1964. It was the Devonport police headquarters with the functions contained within that being general duties, uniform, CIB and western drug services.

As you would noticed this morning when we walked through, the existing facilities are pretty cramped. It is about an 800-square metre building. We currently house a number of the units at Ulverstone and there is a desire to accommodate some of those within the new building. In addition, we have offices from traffic services, public order response teams, western prosecution services and the victims' support response team utilising the station when operating in the area, and these can't be accommodated within the existing facilities.

You would have noticed that the station itself is structurally sound and the level of maintenance I guess you could say is generally satisfactory, but the facilities do not meet current demands. To highlight some of the issues, there is a lack of gross floor area; small office spaces with narrow corridors; poor utilisation of floor space; inadequate security in the public interface; inadequate toilet, shower and locker room facilities; unsatisfactory charge room and cells; lack of storage space; interview rooms which need sufficient upgrading; and there are obsolete cell blocks which are not able to be effectively used for other purposes. A common complaint from officers is about the standard of heating and cooling, and there is insufficient provision for, I guess, cross-team interaction. Another issue is the secure offender delivery site in police vehicles. From a disability access requirements point of view, it is a long way behind what we would expect of a current environment, and there is no suitable area for training or major incident management conferences.

I guess it was the recognition of these issues that brought us to the proposal to refurbish or essentially rebuild the existing police station on the current site. As a result of a number of issues from that proposal and discussions with the Devonport City Council it was highlighted that some title issues from the proposals the council was putting forward in relation to the whole block and their master plan would be extremely difficult to accommodate the needs of a modern policing station within the existing site. Hence the discussion about an alternative site was undertaken with quite a deal of collaboration between the council and us and subsequently the proposal was made to move to a new site.

We have had funding approved, as noted, of \$6.235 million through the budget process. This funding flows from 2009-10 through to 2011-12. Pre-tender estimates suggest that there may be a shortfall of approximately \$600 000 in relation to that, however, we are confident that the department will be able to meet those. We are looking at the actual tender estimates that have come back in.

I guess the advantages that we expect from the project are: the work flow and functionality required for the demands of a modern policing environment; the interface and interaction with the public and persons visiting this station for business, and that is about equal access for all, which can't be accommodated in the existing site; disability access throughout; safety and security, particularly in custody and charging areas; and enhancing introduced ecologically-sustainable design initiatives. We think there is

capacity for the potential future relocation of the Mersey SES unit if needed and facilities for future expansion of the police services. Essentially, the footprint is roughly four times the existing footprint.

The community benefits we see are the maintenance of the police station; presence in the Devonport CBD - that was one of the major sticking points when we started negotiations with the council as to what an alternative site would be; and increasing service provisions within the city. From the site there is proximity to the perceived trouble spots around the King Street nightclub area. It will see a substantial State government investment within the Devonport region and, as I identified earlier, it will assist the Devonport City Council with the required property and opportunity to develop the master plan for the CBD and surrounding areas.

If we were to proceed with works on the existing site, there would be considerable disruption to our services. Essentially, it is not possible to house the services within the site while any works are undertaken. The opportunity to move to a greenfield site alleviates those issues. In summary, the proposed redevelopment will make available accommodation for Tasmania Police to deliver significantly improved policing services for Devonport and the surrounding districts and it will provide a better value-for-money outcome in the redevelopment of the existing site. That is the basis for our proposal and we are happy to take any questions.

Mr HALL - I notice on the district profile that the population in the division is about 12.5 per cent, yet you only have about 7 per cent in terms of police officers. There seems to be an inequality there. Why is that so? In future, will that ratio change to better reflect the average throughout the State and, if so, will the new premises be adequate?

Mr AVERY - The answer to the first question is that we can't house some of the other support services that are available to us in the western district such as the public order response team and traffic services. Some of them are housed in Ulverstone to get them closer or they are housed over in Burnie and we commute them to the areas.

Mr HALL - So they will all come in here?

Mr AVERY - There will be the potential of doing that. If this building goes ahead we'll be able to reassess where we're at and have a discussion as to where we're going to place traffic services, our public order response teams, prosecutions and those sorts of things. It gives us the flexibility to move some of the resources over here where the issues can arise.

Mr HALL - If that happens, that would bring the ratio up pretty well close to the State average.

Mr AVERY - Yes.

Mr BOOTH - I have a question to follow on from Greg's with regard to future planning. I think he was talking about standard ratios, but what's the design life of the building physically and in terms of its redundancy for future expansion? Is this building going to provide the first-class modern facilities that a modern police force needs at an adequate level into the future and, if so, for how long?

Mr AVERY - With the planning we included at least a 10 per cent increase in all the areas, so the plan has a lot of scope for increase of personnel into all areas. It also has a potential left there to bring into the area support teams, traffic teams - it is all designed for a growth into the future and that was part of our planning brief.

Mr BOOTH - So you've basically conglomerated everything into one building, and this area is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in the State, I understand. Have you factored that into the design capacity of the building to cater for an increase in population?

Mr LATHAM - The building itself, in respect of some of the larger areas such as the muster rooms, are very generous at this stage, and the design allows us to shrink the walls back to a size which allows us to do the future expansion and still be comfortable with the alterations as we go into the future. Because we have a reasonable size footprint for both the ground floor and upstairs, we have utilised the space that is there at the moment to suit our current needs, but it can be reconfigured to provide for that future growth.

Mr BOOTH - So we would not expect you to be coming back in 20 years' time saying that this station is too small?

Mr LATHAM - Twenty years is a long time but -

Mr BOOTH - I know it is but you can get demographic trends from the Bureau of Statistics and so forth. I am just making sure that, given it is a fair bit of public money, you are getting, first of all, good value for it and, secondly, that it is going to meet the needs of the future.

Mr WILSON-HAFFENDEN - In terms of raw numbers what we are looking at is about double the existing building space. Over the past 10 years we have seen about a 25 per cent growth in operational police numbers, so that gives an indication that we are more than allowing for the growth we have had over the past 10 years. We think there is capacity within there. As Mr Latham said, it is quite often hard to predict over 10 years, but our best guess is that there will be no need to expand the building space in the foreseeable future.

Mr BOOTH - Does the building design itself meet contemporary best practice with regard to energy use et cetera?

Mr GAGGIN - There is a green star rating tool, which you would know about, basically a commercial rating tool which you pay to get the building assessed. We are not going along that line but we are aiming for a 4.5- to 5-star rating. A 4-star is best practice in environmentally sustainable design and/or construction and 5-star is Australian excellence in environmentally sustainable design and construction, so we are aiming for 4.5. It fits between the two. We will not actually have the building assessed for green star because it is currently \$22 000 to have it assessed and we are trying to maximise our bang for a buck. There are nine criteria on which they assess those two standards. We will basically self-assess it and will be aiming for a minimum 4.5-star.

Mr BOOTH - Those ratings are switching in most jurisdictions to 6-star for residential.

Mr GAGGIN - Six-star for residential, but 6-star has an ongoing maintenance regime and there is no budget allocation for it at the moment. Six-star is hard to achieve in current terms. It is almost impossible in Tasmania because most of the materials have to be imported. It then also rates for product miles, where it comes from and all that stuff. In real estate people are asking for 6-star but they do not fully appreciate what 6-star means. We are going for a best practice-Australian excellence standard rather than 6-star, which is world's best practise. It would be nice to get but it is almost physically impossible in Tasmania to achieve at the moment.

Mr BOOTH - Has there been a focus on that, particularly given that energy prices are travelling north at a rapid rate?

Mr GAGGIN - Yes, there has. We have a services engineers team involved with the project and they look at things such as lighting, mechanical services, air-conditioning and those sorts of things and basically we are trying to pull out as much air-conditioning and energy usage need as possible. There are really simple things like zoning areas, so that if the CIB are working late at night the whole station is not powered up. There are things like time clocks on all heating units. You hit a button and the heater comes on for three hours, rather than hit a button and walk out and forget about it and it is still going all through Sunday until Monday morning. There are basic things like heavy insulation, and standard items built into the building are all included. So 4.5- to 5-star is best practice-Australian excellence and that is what we are aiming for.

Mr BOOTH - Are there any double-glazed windows in it?

Mr GAGGIN - Yes, there are double-glazed windows. Bellerive, which is under construction at the moment, is a similar sort of brief and similar size. It is heading towards the 4.5- to 5-star rating at the moment and it is a well-operating police station. We are trying to change it from turning the whole building on and then turning the whole building off. As you might have noticed when you were in there today, most of today's policing is done outside the station in cars. You want the coppers out on the street. With the technology that has been put into the cars, a lot of the stuff that was done back at the station is now done in cars. They obviously want people out on the street. It is mainly to do with zoning control of the building. We want to get as much natural daylight as possible into the place. We will harvest the water and reuse it. One of the big issues we had at Bellerive was that the public wanted to see clean police cars but they didn't want to see people using water to wash them, so we will be harvesting the water into tanks for washing the cars, so the cars can stay clean and the building can stay clean.

One of the biggest pushes in my company at the moment is low VOC, volatile organics, so getting rid of gases through more natural fibres and natural materials. We are using recycled timbers, external sun-shading, and things like showers for bike-riders. A lot of people are riding their bikes to work now. Devonport is a beautiful flat city for riding bikes, so we should encourage it. So we have change-rooms and showers. That sort of stuff is being built into the building design.

Mr BOOTH - In terms of the ultimate design cost, were there areas of energy efficiency that you would have put in had you not been constrained by budget and that would have added significantly to lowering its carbon footprint?

Mr GAGGIN - Some of the things like importing building materials is very hard in Tasmania. There are also very few places that make commercial double-glazed windows, for example, so if we got a factory that did that then it would be a lot better. There are obviously things like geothermal tapping and that sort of stuff which usually outweighs the cost benefit over the life of the building. You usually can't get the building to last as long as the cost benefit before something comes along to replace it that is better. The actual design is mainly based on the passive side of things, clever environmental design rather than super whiz-bang technology. The other side of that is to create clear floor plates throughout with good access to services throughout for when technology moves on. Who would have thought 20 years ago we would be doing what we do now technology-wise? The current station in 1964 was probably considered state of the art, but of course it comprised tiny little boxes with brick walls. Trying to get wireless through there now is hard because of the density of the building, and trying to get cabling through there is hard because it is all brick. So what we are trying to do is future-proof it, having clear floor plates and lightweight walls, and rather than using double-brick walls for, say, insulation we will use more clever ways so that, down the track, you can remove easily them as needs change.

Mr BOOTH - So what is the design life of the structure?

Mr GAGGIN - We tend to think 40 to 50 years is almost the commercial life of most buildings now. We haven't got to the stage of some states of America where you have to build in the demolition plan with your building application, but it is probably not far away.

Mr BOOTH - Are these services like electrical, component, plumbing and all that sort of stuff accessible and replaceable so that you don't have to demolish the building?

Mr GAGGIN - Yes, once again, part of the main aim is to make everything accessible rather than bury pipes under the slab and then run it into ceiling spaces - that sort of stuff.

Ms WHITE - I have some questions, Chair, about the land exchange. Just looking at the time line that you are working to, you're hoping to have preparation tender contracts by December this year without a clear indication from the council as to whether that exchange is going to progress over the Imaginarium. That is a big concern, I think. What is the latest stage with the council and the Imaginarium?

Mr LATHAM - The terms and the conditions of the land exchange have been agreed between the agency and the council. The only reason we had to sign the job verification was that we were waiting for the formal approval from this committee. Once we have that, Crown Land will do all the paperwork and the submission is prepared for the minister who will sign off on the land exchange. Following on from there, the Devonport City Council advised me last night that the Imaginarium plan has been put in place for that and they will be relocating the Imaginarium prior to Christmas. So our original plan with the Imaginarium was that the Devonport City Council would continue to operate that at the present site and we would stage our building program, but the refurbishment of the Imaginarium would be the last stage. That has been eliminated now by a recent council decision to relocate the Imaginarium to a different site.

So everything is lined up, all the paperwork is done and we are just waiting for the last of the approvals from this committee for the project to be approved. Once we have that approval, we will sign the paperwork and process it with the council. We have done a lot of work in preparing the documentation etcetera, and are ready to roll. The planning application is being submitted to the Devonport City Council and that closes this evening for comments from the council, so hopefully tomorrow morning when I ring the council, I will be able to get an answer to say we have a fantastic new site.

CHAIR - Can I just interrupt, please? We have a bit of a problem with our recording gear so to make sure you are being precise, we might adjourn for a moment and make a phone to our IT people in Hobart. Sorry about that, Ian; you were in mid-stream.

Laughter.

(Later):

CHAIR - How are you tracking there?

Mr LATHAM - I think we were talking about the land exchange. Basically the Devonport City Council and the agency have agreed the terms and conditions of the land exchange. The paperwork has been prepared and is awaiting signature, subject to the outcome of this committee hearing. The Devonport City Council have informed us that they now have a plan which will relocate the Imaginarium somewhere else in the Devonport area, and it is their intention it be relocated by the end of this calendar year. The original proposition was that the refurbishment of the Imaginarium would be the last stage of the building program, so that is a bonus for us. We may be able to make up some time on the construction side by being able to access the Imaginarium sooner than intended. So if the outcome of this hearing is positive we will then advise Crown Land to process the paperwork to be signed off by the appropriate minister for the land exchange to go ahead. The only thing that will then need to be put in place will be a leasing agreement between ourselves and the council for the agency to lease the current Devonport Police Station. It will be a peppercorn rental for the period that we are there and we will pay all the outgoings for that period.

Mr HALL - I just have a couple of questions on behalf of Mr Brooks, who has sent an apology for today. One is about the tri-code facility. He says:

'One of my concerns is that with the continued spread of the Devonport area, the fire and ambulance services are not near a highway and are taking up prime riverfront real estate. Given the current economic outlook and limited private investment, is this the best place to have these emergency services located?'

That is not altogether to do with this particular project, but he is asking whether they ought to be co-located. Has this been looked at?

Mr WILSON-HAFFENDEN - The one thing we are mindful of is that we have funding within our budget for this project and we are keen to progress with that. In terms of the co-location, some of those issues are outside the control of this department - in areas such as ambulance. What we have considered is the possibility of State Emergency

Services co-locating within the building. Again there is some scope, and in our initial discussions with council it was around potential. We are taking up a substantial amount of the existing site but there was a third title with the car park next door. Any of those other agencies might be prepared to look at potential relocation, but that is probably outside our bailiwick. It is a potential option there for those agencies.

Mr HALL - So have there been any discussions with those other services at this stage?

Mr WILSON-HAFFENDEN - There were preliminary discussions, but the issue they face is that they have no funding to relocate; whether there is actually a desire to relocate, I am not sure. It is outside our bailiwick at the moment but there is potential for them to look at that in the future. We cannot make commitments on their behalf.

Mr LATHAM - There is another large car park area where we are proposing to build. Initially we were very keen to obtain that third title. It would have been almost a straight land swap without any dollar value involved, but council was not prepared to surrender the third area because they considered there was a shortage of car parking spaces in the Devonport area. So that lost the opportunity for any potential relocation at that site with fire and ambulance services.

Mr AVERY - There is a plan of that car park on page 13 of the report.

Mr HALL - Mr Brooks also asks why can't there be a tri-code service outside the CBD, maybe near the bridge, which would be close to, if not still in, the CBD and then a remote or kiosk-type police presence in the CBD, perhaps in the mall. Was that an option?

Mr WILKINSON - That sort of model has a significant impact on the resources required to staff it; that is the reality. As we said earlier, it was the council's preference and ours to maintain a presence in the CBD. Staffing the station and the shop-front simply requires more people and they are not here.

Mr HALL - Yes, okay. You do not have significant issues in the mall in the daytime, perhaps, like they do in Launceston or Hobart, so it is not really an issue that you see as being a problem?

Mr WILKINSON - No.

Mr HALL - Another question concerns resources and a remand centre. What we looked at this morning was not a remand centre, and you have to deploy significant resources to move people to Launceston, being the closest remand centre. Was that considered in the scope of this project and, if not, why not?

Mr WILKINSON - Yes, it was considered. You would be aware that there is an ongoing commitment to have police removed from courts in the north of the State. As part of that process we have been meeting regularly with Justice, who will take over that process which was done by police. As part of those discussions it was identified that we will be building a significant number of cells as part of the new station - there is a requirement to do so. There was some discussion with Justice about their level of interest in expanding the number of cells and attaching a remand centre - a reception prison - to the current

location. However, that is a matter that would require them to progress it with their minister; it gets back again to funding issues. We have funding to build what we have funding to build. So we did alert them to the possibility that we are going to have a certain number of cells and, with a few more, it would meet the standards that exist in Launceston. It would be better but it would have that sort of size. They have not come back to us to advance that proposal.

Mr AVERY - Our first draft plan did include additional cells to cater for a remand facility, but, as Mr Wilkinson said, no funding came through from Justice so we scaled it back to meet our own requirements.

Mr BOOTH - Did you get an articulate or intelligent response from them or no response?

Mr WILKINSON - It was a side-discussion, if you like, to the discussions we were having around other issues. As Mr Hall said, there is an overlap in the custody of prisoners after hours which impacts on the issue of police taking prisoners to court. It arose as a result of that discussion when we were talking about how we would manage the prisoners in the north-west and what sort of presence Justice would have. We said, 'We're building a new station and we're going to have x number of cells and there's a potential for you to expand and put a reception prison there and then take over the management of prisoners' - the same as exists in Launceston and Hobart, but clearly it would increase the cost of the station by a significant amount. It was factored into the early discussions but Justice didn't come back to us with any sort of formal proposal. It would require a Cabinet process and they just haven't come back to us.

Mr BOOTH - Does the way the design is now drawn up provide for that as a staged development if in fact you needed to create a remand or transition prison?

Mr WILKINSON - If it was added on?

Mr BOOTH - Yes. Is that incorporated into the design, would you be easily able to add those cells?

Mr GAGGIN - Not really, Mr Booth. We did look at it but a remand centre has a whole pile of additional requirements to normal holding cells - things like exercise yards, dining facilities, kitchens, visitor areas. It added considerably to the size of the facility. Originally we had it near where the cells are, but in the current set-up it wouldn't be able to be easily put back in.

Mr LATHAM - We utilised the space that we originally had planned for the custodial officers and visitors area for families with increasing the sizes of some interview rooms, a conference room at the front of the station and also increasing the public entry into the police station, so we have reused that area for our own purposes.

Mr BOOTH - So notwithstanding the discussion earlier about the platforms and the ability to move walls et cetera, from what you're saying, am I right in -

Mr LATHAM - The cells are an expensive item. The cost per cell is almost \$80 000 to meet the various national guidelines for construction of cells.

Mr BOOTH - With self-opening doors and those sorts of things?

Mr LATHAM - I don't think ours have got those in there at the moment. That's an oversight.

Laughter.

Mr HALL - What is the maximum time that anybody can be held or incarcerated in the cells before they have to be sent to the remand centre in Launceston?

Mr AVERY - Up until about eight or nine o'clock there is an accepted requirement that we will convene a court and put it before the court. After about nine o'clock it's not acceptable that we would try to convene a court so we would probably keep them from nine o'clock at night through until 10 o'clock the next morning when the next court sitting is on. Either that or we would make a decision to transfer them to Launceston, but normally we would keep them for 12-14 hours maximum in those cells.

Mr BOOTH - So in those cells or the new ones nobody would generally spend more than 12-14 hours?

Mr AVERY - It depends on the court sitting workload, but we would want to be trying to get them to court at 9.45 or 10'clock. Sometimes the court is such that they won't take them until 1.30 p.m. or even four o'clock, so they may have to sit in there for part of the next day as well.

Mr BOOTH - But for a serious charge that you thought would become custodial, you would transfer them to another holding area or remand centre rather than keeping them here for days or weeks?

Mr WILKINSON - Once the court remanded them they'd be taken through to Launceston.

Mr BOOTH - Right. What if you couldn't get into court but it was something that you wouldn't bail them for, for example?

Mr AVERY - They are the circumstances where we will keep them for 12 or 14 hours until we can get them into the next court.

Mr BOOTH - So you'd always get a court within that period of time?

Mr AVERY - There are legal obligations on us to get them before the court as soon as practicable, and it has not been practicable after about 9 o'clock at night. It is practicable at 10 o'clock the next morning but then we are governed by what the court sittings are, so the court will govern us from about 10 o'clock as to what time they can fit them into the court. Sometimes in the extreme we could go into the early afternoon before we can get a court sitting, but it would never be in excess of 20-odd hours.

Mr BOOTH - So the new facility, when it is built, you wouldn't use it for housing prisoners as in Launceston and in Hobart, where I believe some prisoners stay in remand for some considerable time?

Mr WILKINSON - But they are all in the custody of the Tasmanian Prison Service, so we do not have prisoners in custody beyond the time it takes for us to get them to court. That is the longest we ever have them, and the worst-case scenario is that it might take us from 8 or 9 o'clock at night until the first available sitting of the court the next day. That is the longest we would ever hold them, and then from that point on they would either be bailed or transferred to the prison service.

Mr BOOTH - But if Justice got involved in putting them in their own cells, then it may be that -

Mr WILKINSON - In Launceston, for example, the scenario is that if a prisoner is remanded they literally go from the courts through an underground passage into the remand centre and then they're in the prison system from that moment onwards. Whether they stay in Launceston or whether the prison service chooses to move them through to Hobart depends on a range of factors that they take into account, but certainly people can stay in Launceston when they are on bail for a period of time to have access to their families.

Mr BOOTH - Are you able to comment then with regard to the usefulness, if you like, in terms of recidivism or treating people who have committed some sort of offence who have been sentenced to a very short period of time, whether there would be a benefit in having some short-term or actual prison facility here in Devonport rather than those prisoners ending up going to Hobart and being away from their families et cetera?

Mr WILKINSON - I don't know if any of us could comment on the usefulness of it. I guess in a practical sense the reality is that if you're from the north-west coast and are remanded in custody you will be at best in Launceston and at worst in Risdon, so you will be a long way from family support.

Mr AVERY - I have sat on a couple of committees in relation to that aspect involving some of the defence solicitors and one of their main claims is that people don't get adequate legal representation because they can't access their clients. They have to access their clients by travelling either to Launceston or Hobart because we've obviously had to send them that way so they can't get the access to their clients to prepare their defence. That is one of their main claims.

Mr BOOTH - Does it raise issues of resourcing and costs for you in both time and money? Do you have to take prisoners through to Launceston?

Mr WILKINSON - It is a significant impost. As we discussed earlier around the staffing for this division, the shifts are not large, so if two officers have to be found to escort a prisoner to Launceston they have to come off their shift or be recalled on overtime. That means either a potentially significant impost in terms of the reduction in operational police availability or alternatively a significant cost in overtime to cover their absence.

Mr BOOTH - Is it possible to quantify that at all? I don't expect you to have to go back but if you have some figure in your minds.

Mr AVERY - It has been quantified but I haven't got the figures at hand. We have put submissions in relation to that for the committee when it was looking at the cost of taking police out of the courts.

Mr BOOTH - Maybe, Chair, we could have that detail if you have it already. Would that be possible for you to provide that?

Mr WILKINSON - Yes.

Mr HALL - Following on the same line of questioning, should I accept the evidence that has been provided to us? I raise it as a concern and I think that is something that I will raise in deliberations - that there is not a remand centre being built here at this stage.

Ms WHITE - Would you see that as being the most viable solution in terms hours per staff, given you are talking about your staff needing to be on the road transporting those people? Would it be better as the ultimate solution to have a remand centre here? What would you view as the best outcome?

Mr WILKINSON - It is problematic question because it is not our agency or our jurisdiction. Prisoners, once they are prisoners, are the responsibility of the Justice department, not ours. Our primary concern is that we do not think it is a function we should undertake. We think that we could make better use of our highly trained and relatively scarce officers in duties other than transporting prisoners or escorting prisoners to court. Our view is that we do not think we should do it. We do not think it is particularly cost effective and there is a fair bit of community support for the view that police probably are not the best people to undertake those sorts of duties. I do know it would be fair to suggest that is the best solution for Justice to take on because clearly that has significant cost and staffing implications for them because a reception prison has to be staffed 24 hours a day. None of us can really comment on their circumstances or what would be best for them but we would prefer not to escort prisoners or take prisoners to court.

Ms WHITE - Who does escort prisoners to court?

Mr WILKINSON - It varies in different parts of the State. In Launceston and in Hobart all prisoners, once they are taken into our custody, are transferred over to the prison service. There is a reception prison in Hobart and a reception prison in Launceston. Once we take prisoners into custody we quite literally put them through our charge-room process and then hand them over. On the north-west coast those facilities do not exist. If, for example, somebody in Devonport does arrest somebody after hours, either on warrant or for whatever reason, they are kept here. We have to retain control of them until such time as we can put them before the court and then have them formally transferred into the custody of the prison service.

The different agencies do operate differently. To give you an example, if there is a prisoner here after hours to go to Launceston or anywhere on the coast, they will be taken in the back of a divisional van to Launceston. The prison service would not use a divisional van and would say that it doesn't comply with the standards that are required for transportation of prisoners. So if they take over that service they will need a prison van, which is a very expensive piece of equipment.

Mr BOOTH - So if someone has to be transferred to a reception prison, whether it is because you decide they are not going to be bailed or whatever, or I presume a magistrate refuses bail in those circumstances, or somebody gets a sentence, are you then responsible as police to cart those people to the nearest prison or wherever you are directed, like Risdon or Launceston?

Mr WILKINSON - The prison service from Launceston will send a van up here five days a week.

Mr AVERY - Up until 3 o'clock, if the courts remand someone in custody we can ring the remand centre in Launceston and they will send two prison officers and a van along to collect them. Any time after that, the memorandum of understanding is that they are not resourced to do it so we will take them through in a divvy van.

Mr BOOTH - So do they give you a payment for that? Is there some quid pro quo or some budgetary provision for you to do that?

Mr WILKINSON - No, there is not. The quid pro quo is that in Launceston the reception prison is in the Launceston station. It is physically within the station and they take care of our prisoners, if you like, so if we arrest somebody we then pass them over to the prison service and they take them into custody and they care for them.

Mr BOOTH - All the cells in Launceston are run by the prison service?

Mr WILKINSON - Yes; there are no police cells in Launceston or Hobart. That is a reasonable offset for us in that part of the State, but of course those benefits do not flow through to the western district.

Mr AVERY - It is repeated again in Burnie because they have the same issues. They have to hold them in Burnie in the cells there, too, and obviously it is an extra three-quarters of an hour to do that transport from Burnie. If they bring someone up from the west coast it normally comes to either Burnie or Devonport, and we arrange for transport again.

Mr BOOTH - So you could end up with potentially two or three remands in a day, which would be potentially six officers and separate vehicles going to Launceston or even Risdon?

Mr AVERY - No, we very seldom go to Risdon. Most of the prisoners do operate around the court times because they are remanded from the court process, so the prison officers are coming here and doing the majority of it through the daytime. Those that we lock up, say, from a family violence incident or where we really cannot give police bail and they have to be held in custody, or we lock them up on a warrant of commitment so they have got to go straight to prison, those sorts of issues are the ones where we have to make a decision either to hold them until the morning for the prison van or transport them through. Normally it is anything after about three o'clock and obviously on weekends as well; we have the 24-hour problem across the weekends as well.

Mr WILKINSON - If they are not taken through, of course, an officer has to sit there with them.

Mr BOOTH - Has that caused a problem in terms of resourcing of officers on the street and service level to a standard that would be acceptable to the community?

Mr WILKINSON - I think it is fair to say that it has. It has probably received the most focus in Launceston, where of course the police actually escort the prisoners from the reception prison. So any of those prisoners who come down and then subsequently go to court in Launceston are physically escorted from the prison to the courts by police officers. It can require anything up to eight officers to do those escorts, and it is through the day when the public would like to see people in the mall in Launceston, which is somewhat problematic. Certainly the community there are very much aware that police are being diverted from perhaps their core responsibility to do this in-court function. The Government has given a strong commitment to say that they will stop the practice. We are still in the process waiting to see developments that will enable that to happen.

CHAIR - With regard to budget, it was noted that you were about \$650 000 short. The contingencies estimate is about the same figure. Do you anticipate any particular difficulties or challenges on the new site which might eat up that contingency allowance?

Mr GAGGIN - Not really, Mr Harriss. It is a vacant site, well serviced and there are not a lot of problems that we know of. I think the budget shortfall comes from the original budget that was done a long time ago, based on refurbishing the existing station and then moving the building to a new site. A new building is sometimes more expensive than refurbishing existing buildings. We also have the benefit, which is one of the main pluses of that site, of the 1 000 square metres of Imaginarium, which obviously had never been factored in because it is a huge storeroom that will be well and truly utilised for storage. Since the budget has been set we have had the BER stimulus package which has cranked up prices significantly, and we have noted the supply of trades and materials at the moment. We are hopeful; having worked on 27 BER projects throughout the State they are starting to finish up and the builders are starting to sharpen their pencils again. We are hopeful but the bar has been raised over the last 18 months because of the BER stuff. We are hopeful that the budget is on the money and that the contingency allowances cover everything. We cannot see any issue with what we are building on site.

Mr BOOTH - In siting the building, and given that third title that you spoke about as being perhaps useful in the future, have you got the building envelope in a position so that you can take advantage of it?

Mr GAGGIN - Yes. The reason the cells on the site are on this end is that originally the remand centre was about there and there was a possibility of using next door as the remand centre and building a secure passage to hold whatever through there, because it is within the secure compound. So there is the possibility of building something on there and it would be quite easy for transfer of prisoners. Part of the planning scheme requires commercial buildings to be on the street frontage. We like to think that it is an important civic building so it should have a good street frontage and that is why a lot of detail has gone into the look of the thing. We put the cells as far away from the residential stuff as possible because it can get noisy at night when you get drunk or whatever people carrying on. Basically we have done a lot of work on the traffic flows. Council required to know how many cars would be coming in and out. Inspector Shadbolt and his men have done a lot of work on numbers of cars entering and exiting the site. A lot of

policing is now done in the cars. It is not like a fire station where they slide down the poles with all the bells and whistles and charge out. They are already out there. The other reason it is sited that way is that this is the closer walk from town and obviously is closer to the Imaginarium. We wanted that big back corner as there are a lot of vehicles associated with policing.

Mr BOOTH - So you have sited the building so you can take advantage of the third site if it became necessary.

Mr GAGGIN - Yes.

Mr BOOTH - You are an independent company with your own professional indemnity insurance?

Mr LATHAM - When we were originally advised that the Government had provided some \$19 million for three divisional headquarters at Bellerive, Devonport and Glenorchy, we put a tender out to all Tasmanian-based architectural services to tender for one or two or all three sites. Philp Lighton were awarded the professional services contract for all three sites.

Ms WHITE - Mr Harriss noted that the budget was \$600 000 short; where do you expect to draw those funds from if it is required? I understand that it is only an estimation.

Mr WILSON-HAFFENDEN - Some \$300 000 is available from the transfer of the land titles and that is not built into the budget at the moment. With the extra \$300 000 we are hopeful, and with the slow-down in the economic stimulus, that a few of our estimates might come in under budget, otherwise we will have to go back to Government in terms of seeking RAP funding or we will draw from our own capital appropriations.

Mr HALL - On the geotechnical aspect, some of the ground is prone to slip although the risk is minimal, but you also comment that a geotechnical test and report will be required prior to design.

Mr GAGGIN - Yes, prior to the footings design. Prior to the structural design, the construction engineers will want to know what the footings are so we need to do a soil test. I took advice from our geotech engineer, rather than getting him to go in and do a test and pay him thousands of dollars. He said he had done one a few doors down the road and it should be all right, but closer to the river, down near the silos, it is more prone to slip. He was of the opinion, and this will be backed up by his test no doubt, that it should be fine where the site is. There is no history of anything there.

CHAIR - Gentlemen, thank you for your time to facilitate the process.

THE WITNESSES WITHDREW.

