

# TRANSCRIPT

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

### Subcommittee

### Inquiry into infrastructure projects

Melbourne — 19 October 2016

#### Members

Mr Joshua Morris — Chair

Mr Khalil Eideh — Deputy Chair

Mr Jeff Bourman

Mr Nazih Elasmr

Mr Bernie Finn

Ms Colleen Hartland

Mr Shaun Leane

Mr Craig Ondarchie

#### Participating member

Ms Samantha Dunn

#### Staff

Secretary: Lilian Topic

#### Witness

Mr Peter Gleeson, director, projects and planning, Metro Trains Melbourne.

**The CHAIR** — I declare open the Standing Committee on the Economy and Infrastructure public hearing. Thank you, Mr Gleeson, for your attendance today. Today the committee is hearing evidence in relation to our infrastructure inquiry. Today's evidence is being recorded. This hearing is to inform the third of at least six reports into infrastructure projects. Witnesses present may well be invited to attend future hearings as the inquiry continues. All evidence taken today is protected by parliamentary privilege, so you are protected for what you say here today. But if you go outside and repeat those same things, those comments may not be protected by the same privilege. Once again, I welcome Mr Gleeson. Thank you for your attendance today. You may like to state your name and title, and then move into your presentation. We will then follow with some questions from the committee. Over to you.

**Mr GLEESON** — Thank you. My name is Peter Gleeson. I am the director of projects and planning, Metro Trains Melbourne. I report to the CEO, Mike Houghton. I run a division of approximately 400 people that are a mix of specialists, engineers, estimators, procurement and whatnot to support mostly the major projects portfolio that is currently underway in the government. I refer you to the presentation in front of you, and if you are comfortable I will run you through that.

We have a dual role in major projects as it currently stands. The primary role is an obligation under the Rail Safety Act to ensure that any change on the railway, and in this case major projects, is facilitated in a safe manner and does not compromise our accreditation. They are our mandatory obligations as a rail transport operator. As I said, that just ensures that, as we change the railway conditions, we maintain and demonstrate to the regulator that we have an effective level of control. That is our key role.

With the depth of experience in our organisation, we also support the authorities and PTV and the principal contractors associated with performing some of those works with them or for them.

As I have mentioned, our role is as an RTO, a rail transport operator. Most of that is around the management of change, managing that our accreditation stays whole and intact. We have a robust engineering division to ensure that the engineering management system of our accreditation is not compromised — that is, that everything the state builds on the current network while it is under our operational control does not pose a risk to our passengers and to our operations.

We facilitate occupations. That is one of our key roles, so we actually provide safe and unencumbered access to people who need to access the corridor — that is, major projects, smaller projects or indeed utility companies that might need to access the corridor to work on their own assets. We have a system in place to ensure that is safe. We give them safe and unencumbered access.

We have a strong customer experience focus, obviously to support our passengers and the local communities and what we do again — manage the disruption. We also take a keen interest in how we manage our passengers.

Obviously under our requirements we also decommission assets to allow new assets to be built, and we commission the assets at the end, again ensuring they meet the requirements of our standards and specifications et cetera such that we do not compromise on system requirements.

I talk about the enhanced role, which is the term commonly used to refer to other works that we would do in partnership with PTV, LXRA and MMRA, things such as procurement and managing some contracts such as signalling contracts. Particularly with procurement across the entire portfolio of projects, we have quite a high purchasing power, given that we obviously purchase a lot of things for our maintenance renewal programs as well as, for example, new rail. In most cases we provide the best value in a procurement sense so there are a number of things that we do in more of a delivery role on behalf of the authorities and/or Public Transport Victoria on their projects.

As I said, all of our works are associated with either the level crossing removal project, Melbourne Metro removal and, governed under the PTV portfolio, access of third-party people onto the network so they can work on their own assets.

I just want to touch quickly one of the key things and changes that I have seen in my nine years with the operator. We probably had the biggest shut of the railway line recently, on the Frankston line — a 37-day shut, now completed. Our role on that was obviously again to facilitate access to the corridor, but also ensure that we

managed the bus replacements and the movements of our passengers and disruptions and minimised disruptions to the community around those stations. The PTV survey results actually show quite a good rating of satisfaction, with 85 per cent of our users satisfied with their experience of the bus replacements, and around 9 in 10 passengers surveyed generally satisfied with the communications. Please stop me if you want any more detail on any of this.

In terms of a snapshot, currently we have a shut in the western suburbs. We have completed Burke Road and the Glen Waverley line. We are working on Blackburn Road and Heatherdale Road out in the east.

Currently we are supporting the tendering with LXRA on the Hurstbridge line with two grade seps there on the South Morang line. Works on the Sunbury line out in the west are currently underway in a 26-day occupation, and there is a myriad of other projects obviously in the LXRA pipeline that we are supporting the development of. We engage early with LXRA and certainly with MMRA, recognising that the design of a lot of this work can impact the maintainability and serviceability of our assets, so we try to advise both authorities early on to make sure their requirements are met from the early conceptual stages.

That is the high overview, so I hope that has painted a bit of a picture.

**The CHAIR** — Indeed, thank you. I was hoping to begin with some questions about what we saw happen to V/Line with wheel wear. I am just wondering whether or not you have been examining the wheels on your trains and looking at whether or not you are experiencing similar issues to those V/Line trains have suffered of late?

**Mr GLEESON** — After the incident on Progress Road in January we had a review of what we were undertaking. We are satisfied that we are meeting all the requirements of the regulator. We currently have two programs that I could touch on. One is that we manually grease our curves. That program was reviewed to ensure that it was robust. Minor tweaks were made, but ultimately we were satisfied from an engineering level and under our engineering management system that we were compliant and not at risk in terms of dry flanges and rail edges.

What we have also done in terms of reviewing the manual lubricating system is to review the locations of our fixed lubrication systems. Another thing we did was review and adjust the heights of our lubricators to ensure that the appropriate amount of grease was distributed from the actual automatic greasers.

**The CHAIR** — So the fixed grease points, are they the automatic flange lubricators?

**Mr GLEESON** — Correct.

**The CHAIR** — I was just hoping to explore that a little bit further. I have received some correspondence that details up to about a dozen of these automatic flange lubricators that appear to have been disconnected in some way from their appropriate places on the tracks per se. They are off to the side of the tracks and obviously not doing the job that they were intended to do. I am wondering: is this something that is planned? Is this work that has been done on the line for a reason or is it vandalism? Any idea why this may have occurred?

**Mr GLEESON** — I am not certain it was vandalism without knowing the full information. But I think in terms of what we have done at the moment, we have moved — if I can just refer to my notes — — We have certainly reviewed the manual lubrication. The actual fixed lubrications in addition — and I would need to check; either one or two, but I will confirm — — We have added a few lubricators, but certainly the numbers you speak of I am not familiar with in terms of what we have done, so I would have to take that on notice to find out more information.

**The CHAIR** — I would be happy to provide you with the information that has been provided to me —

**Mr GLEESON** — That is fine.

**The CHAIR** — and then have a look at why it is that these automatic flange lubricators may have been disconnected from their appropriate places.

**Mr GLEESON** — Certainly it is not common practice to leave unused equipment by the railway, particularly things like that that have a high tendency to be thieved — —

**The CHAIR** — Of course.

**Mr LEANE** — Half of them would be very much sought after: the Ls, I would imagine.

**Mr GLEESON** — I am not sure. Certainly copper is well sought after.

**Mr LEANE** — Everyone would want one.

**The CHAIR** — I can imagine everybody wants one in their backyard for their model train set, I am sure.

I was hoping to move on. You spoke earlier about the Frankston line, and I note that the government has made commitments in the past about the introduction of seven or eight X'trapolis train sets to commence on the Frankston line. I am wondering when this is going to happen.

**Mr GLEESON** — I think it is probably a matter for PTV in terms of actually defined dates. But certainly in supporting PTV we commenced the trial of the first X'trap late last year — I cannot be too accurate on dates. But certainly late last year we undertook minor modifications to allow the safe operation of the first X'trap on the Frankston line. It has been running for quite a while. In terms of issues that would be associated with the timetabling of an exact start date of those services, it is a matter for PTV.

**The CHAIR** — Boom gate operations. I am wondering: is that Metro's responsibility or PTV's? Who is responsible for boom gate operation?

**Mr GLEESON** — I think in terms of boom gate operation, most of our boom gates are operated automatically under the signalling system. As part of our accreditation, like all the assets on the railway, their effective and safe operation is the rail operator's responsibility. In terms of their operating as they should on Metro services, that would be covered under our accreditation.

**The CHAIR** — If there were to be faults to boom gates, that would be your responsibility to fix?

**Mr GLEESON** — If we were aware of faults, then under our accreditation we would be obligated to fix faults. But there are certain grades of faults that have certain time frames associated with them, and I am not familiar with the detailed categories. But certainly, as you would appreciate, urgent faults have a more urgent time frame to rectify, whereas other faults with less risk to the running of the railway are quite detailed in terms of what times we have to rectify those faults.

**The CHAIR** — Could you provide to the committee details of the different gradings of faults — how they are graded in terms of their severity — and the number of faults that we have seen, say, over the last 12 months?

**Mr GLEESON** — As they pertain to boom gates?

**The CHAIR** — Boom gates, yes.

**Mr GLEESON** — I am pretty sure that we would have that information back in our fault management system. We can provide that.

**The CHAIR** — That would be great if you could provide that to the committee. It would be very helpful.

**Mr GLEESON** — I think we probably just need to double-check with PTV, but I think that information is ours to have. I will just double-check with PTV that we can provide that, but I do not think that will be an issue.

**The CHAIR** — That would be very helpful. I am assuming that Metro Trains is moving towards the use of concrete sleepers rather than wooden sleepers?

**Mr GLEESON** — It is best practice certainly, and for new standards of track, we would install for new sections of track. If you were to visit some of the grade seps in other projects, we would use low-profile concrete sleepers — that is correct.

**The CHAIR** — I am hoping you might be able to provide to the committee — this is obviously something that you will need to take on notice — the number of kilometres of track that will receive new concrete sleepers

in, say, the 2016–17 financial year, and perhaps even also the number of concrete sleepers that might be needed to replace the whole of the wooden network as you go forward.

**Mr GLEESON** — I think the first one is a fairly easy answer. I think we would have to do some work on the second, but I am happy to refer that back to Metro.

**The CHAIR** — If you do have that information, it would be great if you could provide that to the committee. At this juncture I might see if Mr Leane might like to follow with some questions.

**Mr LEANE** — You mentioned the bus replacement program that you have to implement during an occupation of your rail — obviously the recent level crossings and the current level crossing removals that you have ongoing in the west. There are huge logistics to that, so could you expand on the amount of work and the amount of time and planning that had to go into, say, the 37-day shut for the Bentleigh level crossings, and the logistics around moving so many people in buses compared to the trains?

**Mr GLEESON** — Yes, of course. I think probably from the early set, as I refer back to the early stages and designs, we generally engage with the alliance partners and mostly the designer to actually do some modelling around what we think the passenger numbers are. PTV have detailed passenger counts on the current use of stations. Based on the parameters of the occupation — where we sever the railway and where we bus from A to B — we would look at those passenger numbers. We then also look at previous events, where we know, for example, people migrate from one line to the other, so we make an assessment of where people would migrate to other lines. Basically we look backwards.

We also do some modelling to ascertain the numbers we are dealing with in the first instance, if there is a quantum that defines over the period the number of buses we require to maintain a level of service. The level of services is generally set for us by PTV. We then calculate the most opportune bus route, particularly in the level crossings program, because we usually close a road associated with those works and we have changed traffic conditions.

We look at the local bus routes. We look, obviously, at the traffic and model traffic conditions under the scenario where we close a road or roads. We then do a dry bus run, so we calculate the best bus run. We actually get multiple buses and we do dry runs without passengers pre-shut but in similar conditions. If we plan to do a shut in a school holiday, we would do a dry bus run in a school holiday to match the conditions, so by the time we come to that shut we know what the bus run looks like. We are then able to take a detailed risk assessment of every bus stop.

As you would appreciate we are usually not right beside the station. We might be one or two streets away from the station, depending on the bus route. We look at the bus stops we provide. We look at weather, just making sure it is safe and the area is well lit et cetera. Then obviously we look at our staff and the approximate loadings at each of those bus points. When we have our own staff or we hire in staff we make sure that there is attendance at those bus stops through our normal train operating times, and obviously it is just customer referencing them and way finding to our customers.

That is how we generally, at a very high level, set it up. We then monitor every afternoon and in the mornings these days with a call to see how the morning peak loads go, if we have to adjust any bussing more or less, if we have had any passenger injuries or anything of the like that we need to learn from or put things in place to mitigate any risks to our passengers. So there is a constant, continuous learning, and in the case of a 37-day shut, probably by about day two or three we would optimise the run. It is difficult to determine what people will do in a shut like that, so what we discovered was that a lot more people migrated to other adjacent lines, so our numbers were down originally. Does that give you a feel for it?

**Mr LEANE** — It is good. I suppose when you say people migrate to other lines, say, the Bentleigh people might have driven to Oakleigh station —

**Mr GLEESON** — Correct.

**Mr LEANE** — or Hughesdale or something like that.

**Mr GLEESON** — We were looking at car park numbers, so in the lead-up to that, anticipating that migration and having a good feel for really where people would go. We did monitoring of the car parks and

how full the car parks were pre-shut, and obviously naturally some of the car parks were filling up pretty quickly during the shut. So we got a good sense of where people were migrating to — again with the continuous improvement lens, just to make sure we can take those learnings on with the amount of shuts we have got coming up across the network.

**Mr LEANE** — I know just from personal experience with the Bayswater–Blackburn weekend shutdowns, there was actually a nine-day shut, was there not?

**Mr GLEESON** — Correct.

**Mr LEANE** — Yes, during the nine-day shut, about speaking to Metro and about Metro speaking to some people — a couple of them may have been wheelchair bound, a couple may have been frail. It was about Metro getting in contact, getting them a maxicab, and treating them as completely separate — —

**Mr GLEESON** — Yes, we have individual and designated services for any passengers that require help, and depending on — it could be a minibus, it could be a taxi or it could be small buses. What we tend to do also is, for example, coming up to the current shut that is out in west, in Sunbury, we do a lot of lead-up surveys of our customers to ensure that there is a high level of awareness of the shuts. So we undertake surveys in conjunction with the PTV to ensure there is a high and appropriate level of awareness of the changing conditions to the network. Again that comes back to our requirements as an operator to ensure that we are managing our customers.

So we have found that there is a high level of awareness. Obviously we tend to survey, again with PTV and/or the authorities, during the shut, particularly in a 37-day shut, what is not working with our passengers — and we usually get that feedback through positive feedback and/or customer complaints — to make any adjustments to the current service.

**Mr LEANE** — I would imagine it is a long time for the heavy rail not to be operating.

**Mr GLEESON** — Correct.

**Mr LEANE** — Even 9 days is a long time, let alone 37, and I imagine Metro want people to come back when the heavy rail is open, and that is why you sling the odd toasted egg and bacon sandwich and a coffee during that period.

**Mr GLEESON** — Yes. I think certainly from our experience — I am speaking on behalf of Metro Trains Melbourne — and good world practice will show, that people generally do not like more than one change, so potentially a car ride, train, bus, train ride, and even perhaps a tram ride when you get to the city, generally would make the most patient of customers fairly uncomfortable. So I think, like all these things, we make very conscious decisions and have been for many years with our customers, sort of compensating them from a view of the coffee in the morning or the muffin on the bus.

I think, with the authority, we have some really good measures we have taken this time, recognising that it was the longest shut that we have done, certainly recently, of a corridor. Thirty-seven days is a fairly long time. Again, I think the positive feedback that we have collectively, which PTV has collated, is probably a testament that we have, hopefully, got that fairly right.

**Mr LEANE** — I have got nothing but actual praise for the process of the bus shutdown. Actually, for Hansard, I will point to the photograph in one of your slides. I cannot remember this guy's name — I think it is Matt — but whatever you are paying him, he is worth it.

**Mr GLEESON** — Matt Nager?

**Mr LEANE** — Yes, and the woman that works with him as well; I apologise, I cannot remember her name.

**Mr GLEESON** — From the customer coms team, yes.

**Mr LEANE** — But whatever you are paying them — —

**Mr GLEESON** — Thank you very much.

**The CHAIR** — High praise, Mr Leane.

**Ms HARTLAND** — I can follow on from that. I have found this really fascinating because as someone who actually uses the train system quite a lot from West Footscray and Middle Footscray, I know it is actually not related to the infrastructure, but that is not my experience of the way customers are dealt with when trains have just skipped the station, or announcements have not been made, or when I have made complaints for myself or other passengers and then have been completely ignored. Can I make a suggestion that maybe you should treat all customers the way you are dealing with these, because certainly that is not my experience when the service fails, and it fails fairly regularly on the lines that I take.

Can I also ask about the PTV survey that shows that 85 per cent users were satisfied with their experience. How many people were surveyed?

**Mr GLEESON** — I do not think I have that here. I think that is probably a matter for the PTV. It was their survey, so I would have to refer you to PTV.

**Ms HARTLAND** — Could you get that information?

**Mr GLEESON** — On behalf, I think, yes, I can probably source that via PTV.

**Ms HARTLAND** — And also the questions that were actually asked, because often survey questions can skew the result.

Also in terms of the projects that are currently in tender in terms of the crossings, obviously the St Albans one, which is not in tender, is going great guns and is going to make a fantastic difference, and it is just fabulous that it is happening, but a number of others are in tender. I was particularly looking at the Altona Loop, Kororoit Creek Road. There have been a number of meetings in regard to that. I thought the work on that had actually started rather than it being in tender. Have I got that wrong?

**Mr GLEESON** — Again, probably a matter for PTV, but I do understand that, certainly for PTV, we have undertaken some minor works on the platform to increase station amenity — so, some small canopies and the like. We have done similar on the Bayside line, so certainly there is a small program that I am familiar with that has developed, as I said, some minor customer amenity improvements. But broadly speaking my understanding — and you can maybe confirm with the LXRA — is that that would be coming, if not into RFP stage, as part of a broader package of works.

**Ms HARTLAND** — I also understand it was around about 138th on the list in terms of danger or need, so that quite surprised us as well.

**Mr GLEESON** — Of level crossings, sorry?

**Ms HARTLAND** — That needed to be dealt with.

**Mr GLEESON** — Again, probably a matter for LXRA.

**Ms HARTLAND** — In terms of your work, then, there are lists of crossings that are the most dangerous, and that does not appear to have, I suppose, connected to this. There are some obvious ones, like St Albans et cetera, that were incredibly dangerous. Yarraville, where there has been a number of deaths, used to have an underpass until Mr Kennett filled it in, and the booms can be down for anything up to about 23 or 24 minutes. Do you have any understanding of which crossings were actually decided to be done?

**Mr GLEESON** — I think it certainly was a government decision in terms of the priority of the first 50, but what I am familiar with is certainly there are a number of state-based and federally based systems, which I will not comment on too much detail about, that assess the danger or perceived danger or risk of level crossings. ALCAM is one that I am familiar with. If you were to look at the ALCAM ratings, and then the RACV have their own rating system, those ratings do not match. I am familiar with one other, but again I am just going to the extent of my knowledge. Certainly I think there are conflicting evidence and conflicting lists given by whichever body. Of course those priorities I would imagine to have been assessed under different criteria. Whether it was fatalities or whether it was actually a risk-based approach, I could not comment further, but I

think in terms of the first 50 — I am unsure if the rail authority have any more of the 138 that you mentioned, but certainly I think it is a matter to refer to them.

**Ms HARTLAND** — In terms of the ICAM in comparison to RACV — you may not be able to answer — RACV do not run any rail systems, so I have always found it quite interesting that they only list of the most dangerous rail crossings. I do not quite understand what authority they have, whereas the ICAM is around rail safety, so I have never understood why the RACV, who do not run rail services, would have a say in which ones need to be dealt with. I always found that quite confusing.

**Mr GLEESON** — I think with the level crossings, most of the risk is actually posed to road users and/or pedestrians, so in actual fact under a risk-based approach there is minimal risk to our passengers in terms of a train-to-car collision or a train-to-person collision. As you would imagine, the train usually comes off a bit better, so the risk to our passengers is actually minimal compared to roads. That is why certainly Brian at RACV has an interest, given that the risk of our railway assets at grade with these roads poses a risk to road users. How they assess that — I imagine they have their own criteria, and I imagine it would probably involve number of incidents or severity of incidents, but I would imagine that is what would inform them. I think that would be my way of explanation in terms of why they have an interest in the level crossings.

**The CHAIR** — I am interested in terms of the impact that level crossing removals and the Melbourne Metro rail project are having on your operations and indeed the involvement you have had in planning both of the projects. Can you give us an idea of what role Metro has played in the planning of those two projects?

**Mr GLEESON** — Yes. I think right from the outset, in fact even before the authorities were formed, in detailed conversation with Evan — although I think Kevin was appointed after Evan, but I cannot recall — and certainly with Allen Garner, at the very, very outset from a capability perspective and what we would need to do to be able to gear up for support, even prior to any packages being awarded or transferred over to VicRoads, we were obviously involved with the VicRoads program prior to the authority being established. So we were present in the very concept designs and also in the establishment of the teams of jobs that were live and had been doing that for nearly nine years. Members of my team have been involved in every grade separation that has occurred in Victoria up until Middleborough Road, which was about 9 or 10 years ago. So certainly we have been at the table from the very early stages, and again, the cross-section of our people — we have people that are in what we call the development team that sit beside both LXRA and MMRA. We have about 45 people working in the Melbourne Metro team at the minute and about 170 working in the LXRA team across the work packages.

Part of those teams is the development team, where we are working actively on the current level crossings coming through the pipeline. The role of my people is to look back within the business. My business is to ensure that we engage our operations arm, customer arms and our maintenance arms to ensure that the scoping of those projects is considerate to the needs and our requirements and specifications. In earnest it starts very early on. Conversely we have got our delivery managers and construction managers embedded into the principal contractor teams out there delivering to ensure, again, that what we said we would do in a design sense and what we are actually doing are compliant.

**The CHAIR** — We hear the government often refer to the 50 worst level crossings, and there has been some conjecture about how it is that the level crossings are actually being prioritised by the government. Is it for electoral reasons rather than safety reasons and the like? Obviously Metro has been in the planning and process from the beginning. Can you shed any light in terms of the prioritisation of which level crossings are being removed and when?

**Mr GLEESON** — No. We were not involved with the prioritisation and have not been party to any conversations around the prioritisation of the 50. Whether they have used various types of rating systems to inform that 50 I really could not comment.

**The CHAIR** — Sure. Thank you. I am interested in your signalling systems, which I am assuming, much like any railway system, are going to need upgrading over time. With the two projects — the level crossing removals and the Melbourne Metro project — are there particular concerns about the type of signalling that is currently on the network and what is going to be required as a result of those two projects?

**Mr GLEESON** — I will speak to the LXRA first. It is probably more simplistic. Usually most of the grade separations, in very crude terms, is digging a hole over a section of railway. In the vast majority of cases we just replace the current signalling, whether it be what we call a computer-based interlocking — so a computer-based control — or whether there are auto signals, which are a bit more standalone and not necessarily computer controlled. We would just lift and shift what was there. Traditionally in most of the grade separations, as you would be aware, we tend to try to build most of them with LXRA offline — so beside the current railway. We usually have most things ready to go, and we connect the ends, again in simple terms. Ultimately it is largely like-for-like replacement. There are some anomalies to that, but largely speaking that is the system.

That is budgeted for, and that is a good example of where we bring our skills and expertise in the front end to ensure that that design does not compromise our accreditation requirements. Melbourne Metro are much more complex in terms of the change they are bringing to the railways with the introduction of high-capacity signalling and computer-based train control. In simple terms that basically has the reds, greens and yellows on board the train. It is a different way of working. Again we have engaged with Melbourne Metro very early on in terms of what that means for the change of operations and the training around our people, namely our drivers and our maintainers of the set kit. Again they are in procurement at the moment for the Rail Systems Alliance, which will deliver on that signalling system. We form part of that alliance in an advisory capacity. So whilst we do not actually feature in the evaluation of the tenders, we advise in terms of the technology and its suitability to our environment. Does that answer your question?

**The CHAIR** — It certainly does. I am just interested in terms of the fact that there is obviously going to be some crossover in costs that are incurred due to the two projects. There are going to be costs that I am assuming the LXRA and the MMRA are going to incur and others that may be incurred by yourselves as a result of the two projects. How is that reconciled? Metro as a private company is not necessarily involved directly in these two projects, but there may be increased costs that you incur as a result of those projects going ahead. How is it that you reconcile that with the government? Do you put in an invoice for costs that you have incurred and the government pays it? How does that work?

**Mr GLEESON** — We do not necessarily incur any costs as a result of the change to the project. If I understand your question correctly, in terms of the additional people I would require in my team to be able to deliver the scope or to define the scope from the development perspective and then in turn the labour that would be required to help build it, that is recoverable. I basically provide an estimate, in simple terms, to Public Transport Victoria or LXRA and MMRA to that end indicating the scope of works that they have asked me to price on ultimately. The assets that are then upgraded are usually provided by their contractor that they have with their contract. We oversee or support installation of that, and then from an operating sense, for example, if we had a job where we had four signals and then we built a job that had six signals, there is a mechanism under our contract with PTV where we are entitled to the extra operating costs and maintenance costs associated with those signals. In that case they would be quite minimal, but there is a mechanism under our current franchise contract where we are compensated for any additional infrastructure. A good example is where we build a new station — perhaps Mernda, looking forward. We would be entitled to be able to, in partnership with PTV, recoup those operating costs in the future. Does that answer your question?

**The CHAIR** — It certainly does. Would you be able to provide details of the costs that have been recouped by yourselves from government and government organisations for, say, the last 12 months?

**Mr GLEESON** — I would be happy to, but could you be more specific in terms of what you mean?

**The CHAIR** — Specifically with regard to the LXRA and the Melbourne Metro tunnel and the costs associated with those two projects.

**Mr GLEESON** — So our Metro costs associated with facilitating those projects?

**The CHAIR** — Yes.

**Mr GLEESON** — We can provide that information.

**The CHAIR** — That would be great. Thank you.

**Mr LEANE** — The Melbourne Metro has not even gone to tender.

**The CHAIR** — If there is additional staffing and the like that have been required during the planning phase, I am assuming — —

**Mr GLEESON** — Which is the case. They are actually in market now for a couple of them. In simple terms our efforts so far have been basically labour in terms of supporting the development.

**The CHAIR** — Thank you very much. Mr Leane, any further questions from you?

**Mr LEANE** — No, I am fine. Just to clarify for Ms Hartland, that was a survey about the bus replacement. It was not a general survey about all of that — —

**Ms HARTLAND** — No, that is what I was I asking.

**Mr LEANE** — That is all right.

**Ms HARTLAND** — As someone who uses the services a lot, I find them often fairly inadequate, especially the timetable. You are never quite sure whether your train is actually going to show up. Clearly this is not entirely Metro's fault, because there have been decades of neglect of rail infrastructure by all governments. What are the things that need to happen to make the service better for customers?

**Mr GLEESON** — I certainly express my disappointment in terms of the cancellations that you have obviously encountered, but I think as a franchise over the last eight years we have driven our performance from 88 per cent or 85 per cent to 92 per cent on-time delivery, so there has certainly been a dramatic increase in terms of probably the highest — —

**Ms HARTLAND** — One of the ways were going through as express when they were not supposed to. Those trains were not being counted as missed services, because you actually got them to the other end of the line. So some of your numbers are somewhat deceptive.

**Mr GLEESON** — I take that on notice, but I think certainly in terms of when we do skip trains, it is around recovering a service as opposed to maintaining targets — —

**Ms HARTLAND** — And leaving passengers on the station or not allowing passengers to get off the train at their station.

**Mr GLEESON** — As I said, we only do that when we are trying to recover the service.

**Ms HARTLAND** — It has happened to me maybe a dozen times, so it is not an infrequent occurrence. I know Metro continually makes excuses about it, but it is not an infrequent thing. What are the things that Metro and the government need to do in terms of infrastructure to make the service reliable?

**Mr GLEESON** — Currently you would probably be aware that we have earned the right to negotiate the next new franchise agreement. As part of that we are working with PTV and the government about what level of upgrades are required in the future. Not being party to those conversations, which are obviously quite sensitive, I am unaware of what level of investment the government would be seeking to invest in the next franchise.

**Ms HARTLAND** — Things like copper wire theft have been a real problem in causing major problems with services, so can you talk to what Metro could do to stop people being able to — because as I understand it, it is pretty easy to access, it is quite valuable and people can get onto the line and take it, so what are the kinds of things that Metro are doing to protect the copper wire?

**Mr GLEESON** — Metro has invested fairly substantially in increasing the security of our network. We have now a dedicated security team. We are investing in looking at modern technology. One of the other concerns and issues we have is graffiti, so we are looking at new technology and have installed some technology around trying to detect untoward behaviours and unfamiliar behaviours around our train sets. Certainly we work very closely with VicPol in surveillance of areas and certainly known areas, because some of our areas are known hotspots. So we do constant surveillance.

One of the challenges we have is obviously it is an open network. There is no fencing. It is one of the few railways in the world that has no fencing. So that is probably our biggest challenge in terms of actually being

able to prevent people accessing the corridor in the first instance, but certainly there has been quite a considerable increase. Certainly in the amount of copper theft and graffiti, and I have not got the numbers, but there has been a decrease since our time here as ARO.

**Ms HARTLAND** — I know you have already said that these things are in negotiation, but can you think of five things off the top of your head that would make the service run much better, because clearly there have been decades of neglect of system?

**Mr GLEESON** — Probably not five things, but I would be happy to comment, I think, in terms of the complexities of running a railway. Whilst you comment on the state of the assets of the current railway, there are lots of challenges that we face on a daily basis — things that are difficult for us to control. Certainly passenger suicides, passenger incidents, passenger illness, obviously adverse weather conditions — there are obviously a number of contributing factors that can alter how our planned service is changed. In terms of the top five things, I would expect that, again, it is a matter for government in terms of where they see the prioritisation of their funding.

**Ms HARTLAND** — I have always found it quite interesting how the service often fails on very hot days. Considering we are a hot country, this is not a new kind of ‘Suddenly it’s got hot in Australia’. So as a service or as a government, what do we need to do to make sure that adverse weather conditions do not affect the rail service?

**Mr GLEESON** — Certainly we have been working with PTV. In the last two years we have invested in trackside technology that monitors — it is called rail condition monitoring. It basically measures the temperature at the head of the rail. About three or four years ago we would rely on the ambient temperature conditions to basically ascertain whether or not we would put speed restrictions in place to slow down our trains.

The risk is, obviously under heat, that the rail can buckle. It is a common occurrence around the world where it is obviously hot and under varying conditions. Obviously it is also dependent on the quality of the asset. Certainly from a Metro perspective since we have introduced this technology where we can actually rely on the temperature of the rail, which informs the actual risk of rail buckling, we have certainly significantly reduced the amount of time in the last two summers where we have had to enact any network-wide speed restrictions. So we have had a vast improvement in terms of the level of disruption on account of that.

**Ms HARTLAND** — So is that happening on all lines?

**Mr GLEESON** — I could not comment where we have got the rail monitoring, but certainly in the design, through our engineering team, we did an analysis of the entire network and put these points at the appropriate locations. So certainly, as I said, we did not have any line-specific cancellations. There have been — sorry, we have had a decrease in the number of disruptions across all our lines.

**Ms HARTLAND** — Where you are continuing to have grievances — with the Altona Loop section of the line, which gets cancelled an extraordinary number of times, or on the Sandringham line, as I understand it — what are the things that need to be done there in terms of infrastructure that will improve the service? Obviously for the Altona Loop the problem was, too, that the previous government changed the timetable, but it also gets cancelled really regularly, so what are the things that need to be done to fix those services?

**Mr GLEESON** — To be honest, again that is a matter for PTV in terms of their asset strategies and what they would be looking to seek to invest. To try to make a salient point, in the projects division we deliver on either PTV’s, LXRA’s or MMRA’s requests in terms of certainly capital upgrades.

**Ms HARTLAND** — In that case then, probably the Melton line upgrade is going to make a massive difference. It is a duplication and an electrification for that, I believe.

**Mr GLEESON** — I am not familiar. I think that sounds right, but I am not entirely sure.

**Ms HARTLAND** — Yes, so that will clearly make quite a large impact for Melton but further down the line as well. So it feels to me like there is a need — an absolute need — for these major expensive infrastructure projects to happen or else the system it just going to grind to a halt.

**Mr GLEESON** — Again I think PTV's transport planning department is probably best suited to answer that with accuracy.

**The CHAIR** — I just have one final question, and that is: what steps is Metro taking to minimise diversions of trains away from the city loop on the Belgrave, Lilydale, Cranbourne, Frankston and Pakenham lines on weekdays?

**Mr GLEESON** — So in planning as part of the major projects — but I think you are inferring in terms of the driver training that we need to do — obviously our priority is to minimise the disruption to our customers. At the moment I could not confirm in terms of what our detailed plans are around the major shuts, but I obviously work very closely with PTV about any planned cancellations that we do make. But I am yet to be able to tell you with certainty what those plans are.

**The CHAIR** — Okay. I am also wondering: is there a minimum number of minutes late that a train must be at Richmond or coming out of the city at Flinders Street station before the train controllers divert the train to run direct?

**Mr GLEESON** — That is a very specific question. I am happy to take that on notice.

**The CHAIR** — That would be fabulous if you could. I would very much appreciate that. That would be wonderful. At this juncture then, Mr Gleeson, thank you very much for attending today. You will be provided with a copy of the transcript of today's evidence for proofreading, and that will ultimately make its way onto the committee's website. Once again, thank you for providing evidence to the committee today.

**Mr GLEESON** — No problems. Thank you.

**Witness withdrew.**