

Second Session – Forty-Second Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba
Standing Committee
on
Public Accounts

Chairperson
Mr. Jim Maloway
Constituency of Elmwood

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Forty-Second Legislature

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**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS**

Wednesday, June 10, 2020

TIME – 7 p.m.

LOCATION – Winnipeg, Manitoba

CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood)

VICE-CHAIRPERSON – Mr. Andrew Smith (Lagimodière)

ATTENDANCE – 11 QUORUM – 6

Members of the Committee present:

Messrs. Johnston, Lamont, Lindsey, Maloway, Michaleski, Mses. Morley-Lecomte, Naylor, Messrs. Smith, Teitsma, Wasyliw, Wishart

Substitutions:

Ms. Naylor for Mrs. Smith

APPEARING:

Mr. Tyson Shtykalo, Deputy Auditor General

WITNESSES:

Hon. Ron Schuler, Minister of Infrastructure

Mr. Tareq Al-Zabet, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure

Ms. Ruth Eden, Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Water Management and Structures, Department of Infrastructure (by leave)

MATTERS UNDER CONSIDERATION:

Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2017

Waiving of Competitive Bids

Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2018,

Waiving of Competitive Bids

Management of Provincial Bridges

Manitoba East Side Road Authority

Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2019

Management of Provincial Bridges

Manitoba East Side Road Authority

Auditor General's Report–Department of Infrastructure: Oversight of Commercial Vehicle Safety, dated December 2019

Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2020

Management of Provincial Bridges

Manitoba East Side Road Authority

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Mr. Chairperson: Good evening. Will the Standing Committee on Public Accounts please come to order.

For the information of all members, due to the necessary closure of the public galleries for standing committee meetings, we've arranged for today's meeting and subsequent meetings to be video-broadcast on our website and YouTube channel.

This meeting has been called to consider the following reports: (1) Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2017, Waiving of Competitive Bids; (2) auditors general–Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2018, Waiving of Competitive Bids, Management of Provincial Bridges, Manitoba East Side Road Authority; Auditor General's Report–this is the third one–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2019, Management of Provincial Bridges, Manitoba East Side Road Authority; (4) Auditor General's Report–Department of Infrastructure: Oversight of Commercial Vehicle Safety, dated December 2019; (5) Auditor General's Report–Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March, two thou–2020, Management of Provincial Bridges, Manitoba East Side Road Authority.

Committee Substitution

Mr. Chairperson: I would like to inform the committee that under rule 104(2), the following membership substitution has been made for this meeting: Ms. Naylor for Ms. Smith, Point Douglas.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: Before we get started, are there any suggestions from the committee as to how long we should sit this evening?

Mr. Tom Lindsey (Flin Flon): I would suggest two hours and then revisit.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you, Mr. Lindsey.

The suggestion has been that we sit for two hours and revisit at that time. Agreed? *[Agreed]*

Are there any suggestions as to the order in which we should consider the reports?

Mr. Lindsey: I would suggest that we look at the oversight of commercial vehicles reports first, then the management of provincial bridges reports, followed by the East Side Road Authority report and then, finally, the waiving of competitive bid reports.

Mr. Chairperson: So is it agreed that we follow the reports in the order suggested by Mr. Lindsey? Agreed? *[Agreed]*

[interjection] That was a yes.

Now, does the Deputy Auditor General wish to make an opening statement?

I'd like to recognize the Deputy Auditor General.

Mr. Tyson Shtykalo (Deputy Auditor General): First off, I would just like to introduce the staff I have with me today.

I have Stacey Wowchuk, assistant auditor general for performance audit area, as well as the audit principals for these reports under consideration today, Dallas Muir and Erika Thomas.

Mr. Chair, heavy commercial vehicles, such as semi-trucks and straight trucks greater than 4,500 kilograms, are important to Manitoba's economy. They transport goods to customers, contribute to Manitoba's gross domestic product and create Manitoba jobs. However, while they provide many benefits, their size and loads present unique safety risks. As they share the road with others, everyone's safety is affected.

Heavy commercial vehicles account for about one in 10 of all Manitoba licensed vehicles; however, between 2014 and 2018, they were involved in 16 to 27 per cent of Manitoba traffic collision fatalities. Manitoba's 2018 traffic collision report showed that collisions involving commercial vehicles resulted in 11 deaths, 533 injuries, property damage and significant financial costs.

The Motor Carrier Branch of the Department of Infrastructure regulates Manitoba's motor carriers to enhance road safety, protect infrastructure and promote economic development. In our audit, we

examined the adequacy of the department's oversight of commercial vehicle safety. This included examining processes related to its motor carrier safety fitness program, on-road commercial vehicle inspections and strategic planning and performance management.

Mr. Chair, at the time of our audit, the department had issued about 7,500 safety fitness certificates, allowing operation of about 45,000 heavy commercial vehicles. When the department first issues a safety fitness certificate to an operator, we noted it does not check the operator's safety knowledge or safety practices. The department forms—performs some vetting, but does not consider past compliance with highway safety rules as strictly as applicable legislation requires.

Better practices found in other jurisdictions include administering safety knowledge tests, reviewing applicant safety plans and performing site reviews. Further, we found the department's ongoing monitoring and management of operator safety performance to be inadequate. The method the department uses to grade and assess operator safety performance needs to be more rigorous.

Mr. Chair, on-road inspections play a vital role in ensuring commercial vehicle safety, as they can detect when a vehicle poses added risk to the general public. However, the department was unable to demonstrate that its staffing 'patterns' maximize the percentage of commercial vehicle traffic subject to inspection and minimize the risk of predictability. This is important, because too little coverage and too much predictability will allow unscrupulous operators to work around the department's staffing patterns.

The department was also unable to demonstrate that it is using existing inspection capacity fully and effectively. For example, almost 90 per cent of level 1 inspections occurred during just five months, from May to September. The number of less rigorous level 2 inspections did not increase when level 1 inspections decreased. We identified a number of opportunities to further enhance the effectiveness of the department's on-road inspection efforts.

* (19:10)

Mr. Chair, I also want to highlight that the department has an ambitious objective for the Motor Carrier Branch, but as we have seen in many other audits, the department's strategic planning processes need to be strengthened to help ensure that this objective is achieved. For example, the department

has no performance measures to assess the effectiveness of its efforts to improve commercial vehicle safety. Current performance measures focus on outputs, like number of vehicles inspected, as opposed to outcomes, which would include the percentage of operators with fully satisfactory safety fitness readings or the percentage of commercial vehicles involved in fatal collisions.

Our report identified a number of activities that would enhance the department's existing planning efforts.

Overall, we concluded that the department needs to do more to ensure commercial vehicle safety. I'm pleased that the department has accepted our recommendations. We will follow up on the status of these recommendations as at September 30, 2021.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: I would like to thank the Deputy Auditor General for his opening statement.

I'd now like to ask the deputy minister if he wishes to make an opening statement.

Mr. Tareq Al-Zabet (Deputy Minister of Infrastructure): The motor care branch is responsible for the safety of Manitoba motor carriers. Through their programs, Motor Carrier's goal is to reduce the number of commercial vehicle collisions, injuries and fatalities, and minimize damage to Manitoba highways infrastructure resulting from commercial vehicle operations.

Commercial vehicle safety and permits staff strive to ensure the safe operation of motor carriers through the administration of National Safety Code and other safety related regulations and policy.

Motor care enforcement programs staff promote safe and sustainable surface transportation by ensuring trucking industry compliance with the legislation and standards through the efforts of the motor care enforcement officers deployed across the province.

In ninety—in 2018-19, 261,581 vehicles were processed through roadside enforcement. Again, I'm repeating the number: 261,581 vehicles were processed through roadside enforcement. There were 6,413 Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance roadside mechanical inspections performed.

The efforts of MI staff removed more than 1,700 unsafe vehicle and/or drivers from Manitoba roadways. The department worked closely with the

auditors over the 34-month audit, and Manitoba Infrastructure has accepted all 17 of the audit recommendations, which it—views as an opportunity to improve motor carrier safety.

We anticipate that we will be able to report partial completion on all recommendations with several of the recommendations prioritized for completion by the first report back, which is due in September 2021. It's worth noting that the OAG acknowledged our previous success to increase the number of truck inspections, and the measures introduced last year resulted in further 14 per cent increase per officer in the number of roadside mechanical inspections performed.

A curriculum of—for the commercial vehicle operators' compliance course is being developed to improve Manitoba's safety fitness certificate program. We have also taken steps to improve on-road 'scrutiny' and continue to adjust inspection targets.

The department has initiated planning and performance measurement discussions with MPI to develop a comprehensive strategy for commercial vehicle safety in Manitoba. We have begun exploratory work on the development of a new carrier profile system to help identify operators that pose increased safety risk. Collaboration with our external stakeholders is also extremely important. We will continue to consult with industry partners on how to best implement the recommendation made by the OAG as a regular part of departmental annual stakeholder consultative meetings with the commercial trucking industry.

As fiscal year 2019-2020 came to a close in March, we worked closely with our industry partners and Department of Crown Services and Manitoba Public Insurance to do a rapid analysis of COVID-19 pandemic impacts. As these restrictions evolved and different—across all North America, we strived temporary to lift, limit or delay regulatory requirements on the trucking industry and for our critical front line of professional truck drivers. I would like to acknowledge that co-operation from the economic sector leaders in Manitoba, our provincial, federal and state and international government counterparts as well for keeping our supply chain reliable under extraordinary difficult circumstances.

Most importantly, I want to thank the front line, the men and women who are professional truck drivers that continue to abide the needs for precaution, but who are taking the risk to cross jurisdiction and bring in the critical supplies, protective and medical

equipment, food and medicine that support every Manitoban. We appreciate what you continue to do for us and we thank you.

Although it has been only six months since the report was released, so we are only in the first six months, Manitoba Infrastructure is confident that we will meet or exceed the goals set out in the Auditor General's report over the next few years.

Thank you.

Mr. Chairperson: I'd like to thank the deputy minister for his opening statement.

Before we proceed further, I'd like to inform those who are new to this committee of the process that is undertaken with regard to outstanding questions.

At the end of every meeting the research officer reviews the Hansard for any outstanding questions that the witness commits to provide and answer and will draft a questions-pending-response document to send to the deputy minister; on receipt of the answers to those questions the research officer then forwards the responses to every PAC member and to every other member recorded as attending the meeting.

Before we get into questions, I would like to remind members that questions of an administrative nature are placed to the deputy minister, and that policy questions will not be entertained and are better left for another forum. However, if there is a question that borders on policy and the minister would like to answer the question, or the deputy wants to defer to the minister to respond to, that is something that we would consider.

The floor is now open for questions.

Mr. Lindsey: Thank everyone who has joined us here this evening.

I guess my first question would be around staffing. As a result of the Auditor General's work, the department conducted what it calls a safety framework review whose goal was to ensure its safety regime was meeting its objective, and the Auditor General cites this as a work in progress on a number of occasions in his report. Can the Auditor General give us his understanding of the work of this safety framework review, and I guess the question is to the Deputy Auditor General.

Mr. Shtykalo: Sure, I just—could I just get a clarification on the question? Could you give us a page reference in the—from the report?

Mr. Lindsey: Not off the top of my head I can't, no. Just give me a second. I'll have to get back to you on that. It—it's cited several times throughout the report as being a work in progress, right? I'll come back to that question once I find the correct page rather than taking a lot of time looking for the page.

Mr. Chairperson: Another question? Any other questions?

* (19:20)

Mr. Lindsey: Yes. So the—through the freedom of information act we received a redacted copy of the safety framework review. This was completed on September 13th, 2019. In it, the Motor Carrier Branch identified a number of increasing pressures that presented challenges to the branch's ability to deliver safety programs.

Can the Deputy Auditor General give us his understanding of what these challenges are?

Mr. Shtykalo: Again, if you could direct me to our report, I can get you—of where we make reference to that, I can provide the information.

Mr. Lindsey: The page numbers are page 7, 45, 48 and 51.

Mr. Shtykalo: Okay, so we did identify that the department was undertaking work on the safety framework review, and we note that in section 3.1 of our report on page 45, at the time of our audit, we weren't—we didn't do an evaluation of the safety framework, but we did note that the intent of that review was in itself to identify issues and challenges and propose solutions.

Mr. Lindsey: So in the freedom of information request that we got from the government, they've heavily redacted what any of those challenges may have been, so I was wondering if you could shed light on what you thought some of those issues may have been that presented—prevented them from completing them.

Mr. Shtykalo: So in my responses today, I'm going to limit my responses to what we've reported on in the report, and as I stated, our audit didn't involve doing any sort of assessment on the framework review that was underway, merely noted that it was something that they were undertaking to identify the issues and challenges. So I wouldn't speak to something that we may or may not have seen but did not include in our report.

Mr. Lindsey: So I would ask, then, deputy minister, if he could explain what some of those challenges were that were redacted in that report that we got?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So the purpose of the safety meeting framework was really to undertake a proactive, comprehensive review of the motor carrier safety-related programs and activities to ensure they are meeting the needs of the commercial vehicle industry and the general public. The review of the existing framework included mapping the existing safety framework and staff and stakeholder consultations, and we looked at all those issues. Department staff prioritized the potential projects; work on several high-priority projects that has begun, including addressing the issue of chameleon carriers through their yearly changes and an online knowledge test requirements for the safety witness application process.

Mr. Lindsey: So you've identified for us what some of the things you were planning to look at, but what were the challenges that prevented you from looking at those issues that you just talked about?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So, really, the challenges were not something that is acute in nature. This was part of our review and consultation with stakeholders, also part of our discussion with the Auditor General's office about some of the areas and, in particular, again, the chameleon carriers was one of the issues. So this is the natural review the department and natural review of issues where we hear from other stakeholders about issues and then we look into that. So this is really just based on consultation and feedback from our stakeholders and discussions with the Auditor General staff.

Mr. Lindsey: So I understand that it's an ongoing thing that you're trying to complete this review. But I guess I'm still struggling to understand, in the freedom of information request why the challenges were redacted. And I'm looking for some sort of, I guess, explanation as to what those challenges were that were presented to you.

Mr. Al-Zabet: I think that the point was if—I can't see the redacted piece or the FIPPA piece that you are referring to. But I can probably, in good faith, assume that this—probably some of the challenges were not really, again, operational. It's just more of a feedback and maybe the redaction—redacted pieces were because of the discussion we had in confidence with different stakeholders and maybe the Auditor General staff. So that's probably the reason for the redacting,

but I don't have that FIPPA in front of me so I can exactly identify what piece are you talking about.

Mr. Lindsey: Okay, well, maybe you could attempt to get that information for us and give it to us at some point in the future.

Mr. Al-Zabet: Again, thank you for the question.

I would just say that right now the straight answer is, really, we don't think there were any specific challenges that we—beyond what I've just mentioned. And if it's about FIPPA and what was redacted, I would think this is probably outside the scope of that—of today's discussion and I would probably suggest that we keep it for a different forum.

Mr. Lindsey: Thank you.

So some of the things that we want to touch on—so one of the things the Auditor General identifies are a number of problems at the time of the audit, including the fact that many inspection locations are under serviced, closed at night and far too predictably staffed. So could the Deputy AG comment on whether they feel a reduction in the number of inspectors would help resolve some of these shortcomings or would it create a bigger problem?

Mr. Shtykalo: I'm sorry, I missed the last part of the question. If—I feel that in reducing the number of inspectors?

* (19:30)

Mr. Lindsey: Yes. The question is, when reducing the number of inspectors that are out there, is that going to help us get the inspections, more inspections done, and all the issues that you identified in the report about locations being understaffed, locations closed at night, predictability of when somebody was going to be there and when somebody wasn't. Is less inspectors going to help that situation?

Mr. Shtykalo: So our recommendation was to—we really didn't touch on the number of inspectors. Our recommendations are based on the current staffing levels and our—and the suggestions are to, you know, make staffing allocations that would maximize inspections and make sure that the inspectors are allocated to areas of high traffic where more inspections could be done.

As to whether less inspectors would help that, I couldn't comment on that.

Mr. Lindsey: So we know that the number of vacant positions has increased quite a bit. Initially, I think it was—I'll find the right number here, there's too many

papers in front of me—that there was one opening or one unfilled position at the time of that audit, and now there's, I believe, 10 openings. So do you think that that is going to help the situation, or would a full complement of inspectors allow a better use of their abilities to man some of these inspection places that are clearly undermanned?

Mr. Shtykalo: So I would suggest that that would depend on a number of factors, and I think that question probably would be better directed at the department. They would certainly be in a better position to speculate or articulate on the actions that they're taking since there's been a change in staffing levels.

Mr. Lindsey: So my question, then, is to the deputy minister.

In January 2017 there were 44 positions and one vacancy; December 2017, still 44 positions and now four vacancies; January 2018, 44 positions, four vacancies; December 2018, 43 positions—one position has been done away with—four vacancies; and now, October 2019, there's 43 positions, but there's 10 vacancies; November 2019, 43 positions and 10 vacancies. So is all those positions being vacant, is that going to hamper the ability for the department to properly man those stations and get the right amount of inspections done?

Mr. Al-Zabet: Pleased to advise that we actually have nine positions now that have been approved for hiring and they are ready for posting and—just due to the COVID-19 situation there was some delay on that hiring. But those nine positions are actually now fully approved and ready to go post on the hiring portal there.

Mr. Lindsey: So does the deputy minister have any idea when those positions will be filled? Because I'm going to assume there's training involved and a bunch of other issues that will go along with it. Any timeline on when we can expect to see nine of the 10 vacant positions filled?

Mr. Al-Zabet: As I mentioned, they're already approved. Everything is done. They are just waiting to be posted. So I'm looking, probably a couple of weeks when we see those positions there. Also, you're right, they will need to be trained and, you know, to be—from safety perspective to be there. So we are conscious of that. So those nine positions will be hired very, very soon.

Mr. Lindsey: So is there an intention to fill the 10th vacant position or is that position going to be eliminated?

Mr. Al-Zabet: There is no direction in any shape or form to reduce the number of safety officers on the roads. This is—there is 10. There is 10 there. It just might be some reason—human resources issue. But there is no direction to reduce the number of boots on the ground from whatever current capacity we have today.

Mr. Lindsey: So it's the department's full intention to have 43 positions filled, not go down to 42 positions, and could you explain why you went from 44 positions down to 43 positions?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So we've seen this, you know, continuously. It happens: iteration staff, retirements, people leave. It's really hard to bring expertise in that area due to the high safety risk of that position and the necessary training that we need to bring someone up to speed. So, really, it's an area that we need to keep an eye on. So, really, trying back—to bring back to the full capacity of that division is paramount. So we are conscious of that and therefore we will go there as soon as possible.

Mr. Lindsey: I just want to ensure that the full complement of positions is at least the 43, and preferably 44 and potentially more than that, as we've identified through the Auditor General's report that there was shortcomings in the ability to staff positions. Certainly, shortcomings in having a lot of the inspection location staffed around the clock, that doesn't happen. I'm not sure how many inspectors go to the North and inspect outside of inspection stations, but I would imagine that getting the required number of inspections will be more of a challenge with less inspectors. So I just want to make sure it's the department's intention to fulfill the 43 positions that are there and look at, do they need to actually have more inspectors?

Mr. Al-Zabet: Again, I want to assure you that we are looking to full hiring the full cohort of that workforce. Again, I just wanted to allude that just the nature of the system, we are facing an aging workforce in that sector specifically, and as we continue and commit to fully hire that we cannot always guarantee that the next iteration or batch of staff that—will be reaching retirement age. So we are aiming to make sure we have the full complement, but when people retire, they retire. And, again, they're—when they retire they are at the senior-most level in that area of compliance and enforcement. So to bring him back—bring people,

junior staff and then bringing him up this chain of training and all of that, it takes a while.

But there is no intention whatsoever to reduce that workforce, especially in this sensitive area.

Mr. Lindsey: So can you tell me what you think an acceptable vacancy rate in those positions would be?

* (19:40)

Mr. Al-Zabet: So there is—we don't—any vacancy is a risk. We see that in any shape or form, and it's just the nature, as again, of the workforce that we are having here in Manitoba, aging workforce, but also I think the Auditor General alluded to the fact it's not just the number of staff that would make things better. Also we're looking at other approaches. You mentioned targeted intervention and other ways, so Manitoba is a very big province and you could add as many workforces there and you will not be able to cover every piece of the land.

So we're not just using the conventional compliance and enforcement. We're shifting to also a new kind of targeted inspection as per the Auditor General report recommendation, so to complement for that issue of staff workforce. Whatever we put there, there is not a number that would cover every piece of the road, so we would have other ways to deal with that kind of risk.

Mr. Lindsey: So if we look at the government job bank, for example, it shows that there hasn't been a job posting for enforcement officers or inspectors for the last three years. So, you're saying that they're planning to fully staff up, but if there was no job postings for the last three years, where are you getting these people from that you are saying are going to be hired sometime?

Mr. Al-Zabet: I can't speak for the last three years. I'm just going to say right now that these positions are—were actually ready to get posted and we were just put on hold because of the COVID-19 pandemic situation that we were in since February there. But we are honestly just a matter of weeks that those positions will be there.

Mr. Lindsey: Does the deputy minister agree that hiring and replacing 10 inspectors all at once is probably not the best way to go, when you're talking about some of your senior people retiring and being the ones that are likely to leave and you're going to be introducing a whole whack of new people and they won't have the benefit of working with the more senior

people. So would the deputy minister agree that that's probably not the best way to go about staffing?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So, in the Public Service Commission system, we've seen it all. It always comes in batches, sometimes that certain age groups retire at a certain point. Again, we—this is a natural evolution in any workforce. It's not perfect; it happens. But, again, the philosophy that we're following now is not just to rely on the boots on the ground to achieve compliance and enforcement, and rely through other systems, technology and all of that to maintain—to improve our way of doing the business. It's not perfect, but we are working hard, and those nine positions will be posted very soon.

Mr. Lindsey: So, you say—and I'm not doubting you, don't get me wrong—you say that nine positions out of the 10 that are presently vacant will be filled, that the applicants are already in the process, but if one looked at the job bank, there was no posting for those, so where did these people—where are they coming from? Have they already been offered the jobs? Are we just waiting to get through the COVID thing to get them hired and get them trained, or what—just explain a little better that process, if you would.

Mr. Al-Zabet: So the way the system works is that when we refer to application is that those positions are ready to be posted on the website for candidates and interested individuals to apply. So we have not yet posted those positions for the public or for anyone to apply yet.

So—but normally you just don't go and post them, you go through a process of approvals and those approvals are all fully met and they are ready to be posted on our HR website and on our public website and other venues to attract those tenants to these kind of jobs.

Mr. Lindsey: So that kind of changes my understanding of what you've said, that really there aren't nine people that are just waiting to get hired. There's nine positions that will get posted on the website at some point in time, but there's still going to be that long gap before those positions, nine out of the 10 empty positions get filled. We haven't even got to the point yet of posting it to determine the eligible candidates. So I'm going to assume that there's a process that takes time to weed through who all applies to find the most suitable candidate. So, really, we're almost to the point of putting the 'applica'—or putting the word out there, but we're nowhere close to actually filling those positions. Is that closer to reality, I guess?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So a posting process is—normally takes a month to close and in a month we do the screening. We hopefully get the right people there, they get into the right training and support that they need. They go through a very stringent process of—to bring them to make sure they're working in a safe environment.

But, again, I just want allude to the fact that we are not relying on staff only to ensure compliance and enforcement. We are actually aligning with the Auditor General report to move to an outcome-based compliance and enforcement, and this is not just simply by number of inspections, although that actually is still important for us. We're moving to an outcome base that relying on technology other means, education awareness and not every aspect of that kind of enforcement or compliance regime requires boots on the ground; there's other tools, communication working with our partners.

So we are moving to a smart way of compliance and enforcement that—I'm not going to say more with less. We are still going to hire and we've committed to that, but we are also looking to do things smarter than before and focusing on more in changing the culture and awareness and education versus just the early the enforcement.

So, yes, we—as we try to mitigate the risk we are also changing our philosophy on how we improve compliance and enforcement.

Mr. Lindsey: And I appreciate that at some point in time there'll be technological changes that will allow you to do some things differently. But we're not at the stage where those changes are going to be implemented any time soon. So then it seems to me that it becomes in the short term, at least, even more critical that we have the appropriate number of inspectors out doing the boots on the ground, as you say, inspections to ensure compliance.

Is that a fair statement, that we don't know when all these technological changes are going to get implemented so we really need to make sure that we're hiring up to cover off the inspections in the meantime?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So, again, that issue on the technology is not that it's going to take a long time. We're actually in it. We're implementing a lot of changes in the technology world and a lot of things that he needs—that used to be manual and needed a lot of man-intervention on the road are now with the technology. We can actually detect a lot of that issues without having to do a human being sitting there doing that, so

we are focusing our even human side of this to be more on the complicated pieces.

I just want to allude to the other fact, what the other areas that we're trying to complement to address the issues, not just the staff but also that the department is currently in negotiation with the MGEU to provide creative flexibility in its operating hours at fixed waystations to provide for more weekend and night coverage. When implemented it will provide the ability to assist outcome data to determine if more or less shifts are required than daytime hours. So we're not—again, we're also looking at data and trying to do some data analytics to see where we need to intervene in a more productive and more meaningful way.

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We're also doing—have been—we have 'deen' performing highway patrol duties, have been directed to incorporate a 20 to 30 per cent evening weekend shifts into their monthly patrol plans. That will provide the ability to assess outcome data, determine if more or less shifts are required.

So the moral of the story of what I'm trying say is, as we, again, continue to complement our workforce to continue to do what's necessary there, we are looking—relying on intelligence and data analytics to focus on where we need to go, in alignment with the Auditor General's idea of not just doing more inspections but also the—in the right place and the right time.

And that's also—would also help us with improving our way of improving the safety of the roads in Manitoba.

Mr. Lindsey: And I certainly appreciate that and actually look forward to seeing some of the technological changes that you're talking about that will actually enhance vehicle safety and on-the-road safety. It—but I'm assuming that even as you introduce these changes, that it will take industry a certain period of time to have their fleets up to that standard so that all these technological changes will work.

I mean, obviously, some of the bigger operators will be able to do that quicker but some of these—I think you've used the term chameleon operators—are going to take longer to get to that stage, so there still is a need for the actual physical inspections.

Could you maybe just shed some light on the number of inspections that take place in a designated inspection spot where you've got the system all set up on the side of the road, as opposed to the number of

inspections that take place just with an inspector on the side of the road?

Like, for example, I come from the North and I know there's no actual inspection stations up there. So how many inspections are done in that manner versus ones that take place on some of the major routes where the sheds or stations are?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So I just want to say that the number of inspections from one region to other differs. Again, it bears on the traffic, congestions, areas and also outside Winnipeg versus in the remote areas. But I'm just going to give you some metrics around the numbers that we have right now.

The department now actually successfully increased the mean output per what you call the— a compliance enforcement officer from 228 to 216 inspections which is an—it's almost 14 per cent increase in the number of inspections by—per officer. Now, again, this is an average number depending on the location and the area we're in. Areas that have high traffic, areas we would see more enforcement and more inspections versus an area that has less traffic.

Mr. Lindsey: So just before I leave the staffing issue, you've talked about the number of inspections per inspector going up, but does that not get offset by there being less inspectors doing the inspections?

It seems to me that you'd have something to really be proud of if the same number of inspectors were out there and the number of inspections they had done had increased dramatically, but if the number of inspectors is less but they're doing somewhat more inspections, it still may not add up to the positive outcome that we're looking for.

Mr. Al-Zabet: Again, I want to acknowledge one more important thing, that when we say more with the same level of staff this is not more workload; this is just doing it differently and a smarter way of doing it. We again acknowledge that we want need—we need boots on the ground. We're not saying we need less and we just going to do more with existing staff, because we knew these—we know these jobs are critical. It is a high safety requirement and we are—we strongly believe in the commitment to be having more boots on the ground.

I don't think we are looking at reducing any number of inspections. Again, we will continue to do that. We would—we—also other thing is, as I mentioned earlier, improving the culture of safety among our partners is also another level of improving safety. So there is no intention of reducing staff or doing—or

asking the existing staff to do more with less. This is not the intention; it is just the natural evolution of the expertise we have today and we are trying to do things smarter. It covers more because some of the issues that they used to take more time to do now are more rely—have technology, reliable and heavy. So you see the numbers rise, but, again, the goal is—again, to align with the Auditor General report is not show numbers, is to show efficacy of our compliance and enforcement.

Mr. Lindsey: And perhaps my next question is—well, I'll ask the deputy minister first, and then, depending on the answer, I may have to ask the minister the question.

Do you believe that this no new jobs being posted on the government website, is that something that's government-wide or is that just something that's been very specific to your department?

Mr. Al-Zabet: I'm sorry. I didn't understand that question. If you can—

An Honourable Member: So we identified earlier—

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Lindsey

Mr. Lindsey: We identified earlier that there's been no job postings to date to fill these inspector positions. So my question is: Is that something that is government-wide that there's been no job postings, or is that very specific to these inspector positions or your department?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So I won't speak on behalf of the public civil commission on their overall policy, but this is really purely a logistical issue with COVID-19. As you know, we were in a situation where we had to maintain physical distancing and making sure that our own staff are safe, and hiring new people there without having someone to train them and sit with them and explain to them and actually interview them, especially for those jobs, is probably—was very hard thing to do. There wasn't any intention; we did not have any direction to—not to hire for any safety position or any essential services positions that we felt we needed to do. So there was no direction; we just couldn't have done that under the situation that we're in right now.

Mr. Lindsey: So I'll ask my question to the minister, then: Is it the intention that some of these positions that we've clearly seen haven't been posted for this department, is that the government's intention across government positions to leave positions unposted and

unfilled, or is that something that's very specific to these inspector positions.

Hon. Ron Schuler (Minister of Infrastructure): Well, I'd like to thank the critic for that question, and the deputy's been very clear. We do have an aging cohort within our public service not just within our department, not just within the Province, but, in fact, across the country. So in this case we had a substantive amount of retirees; probably, they were hired at approximately the same time and they came to that point in time where they could retire. All the groundwork was done; it is work that's done through the department and through the various agencies. The minister's office has nothing to do with any of it. There evidently was a time once, way back when when ministers would hire staff, that's long gone.

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So ministers' offices and the government itself has actually no say on these; it's done through the Public Service Commission. The work was done on identifying what the needs were, what kind of a position this would then be, what it would look like, and we were ready to go, the department was ready to go with posting them and the COVID-19 situation hit us. For many, there—we weren't sure how we should proceed. I would say we've come out of this with all new understanding of the way technology works—like, for instance, today—and so we are prepared now to go forward with those positions, nine of them. And that's a learning position. We've all gone through understanding when a pandemic hits, how do you go about hiring individuals. So we're prepared to proceed with them. We'll pick the best candidates, as we always do as a government, and they will be fully trained and they will be in place and ready to go.

However, you know, none of us saw this situation happening probably as late as December. Who would have known that we would shut down the entire economy?

So we're ready to proceed with these positions. They're important. They have a very important function, not just for the department, for—but for the public, and we know they are necessary and we want them in those positions and we will proceed. And that will be done through the Public Service Commission, again, with—hand-in-hand with officials in the department. But to be very clear, the minister's office nor the government on the side of the minister's office has any jurisdiction or any direction insofar as these positions are concerned.

Mr. Lindsey: I thank the minister for that, and I look forward to these positions being posted and filled sooner rather than later.

But perhaps maybe the deputy minister could just tell us what some of the technological changes are that he envisions, and maybe just briefly touch on where they are in the process.

Mr. Al-Zabet: So thank you for the question.

I just want to give some examples of the technology and other data analytics that we're using right now or we're implementing.

So the department has submitted IT business case to replace our carrier profile system; it's called CPS. This will be a multi-year project to change how we capture the carrier profile system, which is going to be changing a lot of issues and help us with the chameleon problem that we're dealing with. So that's one of the technology issues that we're addressing now.

The other piece is now we are developing a new process of being—implementing a tracking officer efforts time. So also that technology will show us where the officers are, they're time spent in which area to make sure we're actually having the right resource in the right place. And as a result, it's going to be shift specific, and it will enable managers to assess work daily as required. So that's also a tracking piece.

We are working with Manitoba Infrastructure and MPI on—we are on—to share commercial truck information—their part of the information with our information to—on the care profile system to identify specific data on performance measures and formal planning.

So now, again, it's all about intelligence and information. Rather than just going blindly and not knowing what we're looking for, the data is becoming for us is the North Star where we are actually working with MPI, with their numbers and our numbers, to understand where we need to go. So the IT systems is there.

Also, I just want to also add that we are moving with the—also, government balanced scorecards now, so we're actually moving to a performance-based approach rather than quantitative as per the Auditor General report.

And I want to just allude to the idea—I don't have the full details, but I'm looking for some information here. We're also deploying technology to hopefully scan some of those trucks when they drive by to read

their driving record and history so we don't have to stop every one and all that. So the automation of all that system is going to be, I could say, a revolutionary system in how we capture that data internally and centrally rather than doing it by the old way stopping someone and, you know, by just driving through a scanner there you can get that information. So that's another piece that we're working on—and I just don't have all the technology information to explain those issues. But they're really big-ticket items that would reduce their reliance on manual way of doing business to a more efficient and data-evidenced based system.

Mr. Mark Wasyliv (Fort Garry): I was—this is for a question for the deputy minister. You had indicated that it's going to be several weeks before we even post these nine positions. Obviously, there's a hiring process that takes time; then there's a training process. Can the deputy minister give us an estimate of at what point and how long will it take these nine enforcement officers to actually be in the field doing the enforcement job on their own?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So, if everything goes well and we have the right people who are interested and the right tenants that we're looking for, bringing in them in and hiring them and training them to be ready to go and do the field work and other now more advanced level of compliance, you know, we're by maybe end of the year, early January, mid-January. We could say that—rough estimate that we would have that completed.

Mr. Wasyliv: Given your estimate means that you're down nine officers for almost an entire year. Can you give an estimate of how many fewer inspections will occur as a result of the 25 per cent vacancy rate for an entire year?

Mr. Al-Zabet: I could probably answer that quickly because we've just said we've increased our number of inspections by 14 per cent already. So, again, we're conscious of the issue. We're not—we're aware of it. We're trying to improve that. But as we, over there, we're not relying on the old way of doing things. So more boots on the ground does not mean only more inspections. We're trying to complement this with other ways. So the existing right now level of workforce is actually doing 14 per cent by doing it smartly in another way and we're using technology and other techniques. So we're not doing less inspections; we're actually doing more inspections with the existing number of staff.

Mr. Wasyliv: Now, there's two types of inspections: level 1 and level 2. Are you saying that you're doing

more of both, or are you doing more of one as opposed to another?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So what I could say to you right now that level 1 inspections, as they normally decrease in other provinces in winter as they do in Manitoba, am I still compiling best practices in order to ensure the safest method, first of all, are used. A pilot project will be undertaken in winter of 2021 to involving insulated winter coveralls and face shields. So what that means is we're going to equip our officers with extra PPE equipment to be able to deal with the harsh winter conditions, especially with trucks—under the trucks—which is really an area that we have been identified that we need to do more focus. So that will be done, and piloting in this winter as recommended by the AG; also, that if mechanical components cannot be examined because of the snow, ice buildup, a level 1 inspection would stop and become a level 2. This is a standard policy across North America.

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The number of level 2 inspection targets which do not involve getting under a vehicle will be increased next winter by 40 per cent to offset level 1 degrees.

Mr. Wasyliv: The question to the deputy minister was whether or not the increase in inspections were one level or both levels. I'm wondering if he can give us a breakdown of how many he—inspections he's doing of level 1. How many inspections of level 2?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So the reference that I have right now is we had done almost 6,000 last year on level 1, and when I mentioned earlier that we want to increase that by 40 per cent by improving the PP equipment given to the officers—level 2, sorry. Level 2.

Mr. Wasyliv: Now, my understanding from the Auditor General's report is that there are 16 enforcement areas in the province, and they are staffed by one enforcement officer per enforcement area.

Given that you have a 25 per cent vacancy rate, how many of those regions currently do not have a dedicated enforcement officer to patrol them?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So we do—I do have confirmation that we have coverage in all areas through rotation of staff and, as soon as we have complementary staff, that we will have a full coverage everywhere. So we do a rotational process to cover all those areas.

Mr. Wasyliv: How many of these enforcement areas do not have a full-time dedicated enforcement officer patrolling that unique territory?

Mr. Al-Zabet: What I understand, this is that with the current system that we operate is actually a rotational model, that it's not a dedicated person per a spare location, per se. It's more of a rotational process right now.

Mr. Wasyliw: Under your rotation model, can you give us an average number of days that you actually have an enforcement officer in each region?

Mr. Al-Zabet: I don't have that data right now in-hand.

Mr. Wasyliw: Will you be in a position to provide it in the future?

Floor Comment: We will look into it.

Mr. Wasyliw: I want to talk now about chameleon carriers, and I'm going to put a question to the Deputy Auditor General. The Auditor General raised concerns about chameleon carriers and I'm wondering if you can explain to this committee what are they and how do they bypass safety regulations.

Mr. Shtykalo: Sure. In our report we had identified the fact that the department—we were able to find new evidence that the department did checking for chameleon character—or chameleon carriers other than asking applicants to self-declare any past associations.

A chameleon carrier is an operator who has been shut down for safety violations, but then opens up a new operation under another name or identity. We note in our report that in the US the general accounting office has estimated that chameleon carriers have a severe crash risk, three times higher than other new carriers. It's for that reason we'd recommended that the department strengthen its checks for chameleon carriers by collecting more information from applicants and developing processes to flag anomalies in the database.

Mr. Wasyliw: I have a message for the deputy minister: Is he able to tell us the extent of the problem in Manitoba, how many chameleon carriers are currently operating in our jurisdiction?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So we recognize the issue of the chameleon drivers and truckers, and right now it's—by the way, it's not just in Manitoba. It's actually across many Canadian jurisdictions and internationally. So what we are doing now is we're actually—the best—the only way we can fix this piece is to deploy a new IT system that would track those chameleon carriers not just through their address, other means of figuring out who's going—you know, the frequent flyers and detecting those ones. We don't have a number right

now. We know it exists, but we're working on a new IT system that will create a repository and I—and information for all the carriers in Manitoba so we can address this issue that is across not just Manitoba, other jurisdictions.

Mr. Wasyliw: Again, for the deputy minister: So was this not an issue on the radar of the department until the Attorney General flagged it? This was not something that was tracked or monitored?

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Mr. Al-Zabet: We were aware of it. We were working on it. It's just that there is—the technology that we need to address is not a—it's not an off-the-shelf software that we buy; it takes a lot of work, regularity changes, in order for us to make sure that what we do is actually making sense. We are not isolated. Those carriers, they just don't work all in Manitoba; they have also other provincial registrations and the federal process that we have to address. We have our federal umbrella that we need to talk to. So the issue is not, again, a Manitoba issue; it's a countrywide issue and, therefore, to go to a technology that address and capture information that is across Canada and internationally is not an easy thing to do.

So we are aware of it. We're working on it, and the technology, hopefully, will give us some kind of—us—a way to address the problem of repeated offenders.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now, my understanding is part of the issue is legal in the sense that these chameleon carriers will reincorporate under a new company name but they have the same beneficial ownership structure, they have the same officers and directors. So I take it, one method of tracking them is simply requiring these operators to provide detailed information of beneficial ownership of their companies. Is that not correct?

Mr. Al-Zabet: That's correct, and that's why we're actually creating a new form now and changing the regulation to capture that information now in anticipation of a system that can—we can upload that information to it. So we're conscious of that piece.

Mr. Wasyliw: So the technology was always there; it just—there was no will to collect that information. So when is that information going to be started to be collected in Manitoba?

Mr. Al-Zabet: We started actually collecting the data. As I mentioned, the forms are already there to collect that information, and we are making the regularity changes to collect that information.

So, yes, the technology could be there. I can't specifically say that. Again, it's not off-the-shelf software that we just buy; it's—it needs to be speaking to the other technology and IT systems, federally and other provinces and internationally. So we're—it's—the system—the technology is good as the information we collect now. So we are changing the way we collect information, and we're working on that piece right now.

Mr. Wasyliw: Is there going to be any co-operation with other Canadian jurisdictions and American jurisdictions to trade that information in order to further enhance your ability to enforce this?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So the member—you raised the right questions. This is, again, talking about information that could be provincially or interprovincially or internationally, for example, with our US partners there. So there is a lot of areas that we need to address about information sharing and confidentiality of that information and how the systems talk to each other. This is a very complicated side of the business that we're trying to address, and I—we would like to have a very coherent, consistent and systems that talk to each other. But we are not there yet, and we need to ensure that our partners, whether they're across the provinces or south of the border, are going to be part of this system because we are going to be as strong as our weakest link.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now, the Province requires carriers to hold safety fitness certificates, but the Attorney General says that the—or, sorry, the Auditor General says that the department is not appropriately checking operator safety knowledge and safety practices before issuing these certificates. I'm wondering if the Deputy Auditor General can explain the Auditor General's concerns in this regard.

Mr. Shtykalo: Okay, so when we looked at the process surrounding the issuance and the renewals of safety fitness certificates, we noted that there was minimal information or checks that were being performed on the applicants. We then looked at—across other jurisdictions to see what some other practices are, and we noted that some practices, such as administering safety knowledge tests or asking to review the applicant's safety plans or other safety-related documents, such as inspection reports, vehicle inspection reports, et cetera, or, actually, in some jurisdictions we saw where they actually would perform site reviews or audits.

So, you know, implementing those types of practices we feel would, you know, better ensure or promote that the new entrants have safety fitness.

Mr. Wasyliw: This is for the deputy minister. What is the sort of strategy going forward to address these concerns? I understand that you agree with the Auditor General's concerns in this area.

Mr. Al-Zabet: Thank you for the question.

I just want to sure that MI now is currently developing an online compliance course to test an operator knowledge of Manitoba safety regulations. My understanding that course is around hundred thousand. But we're working on a training course that's \$100,000 worth of, you know, cost to develop that training course.

Also, the department is promoting its guide to transportation safety on its website, audit appearing appointment letters, safety fitness certificates, application renewals and performance review letters. So we're working on a safety—a safety training course, online course that they would do, and we're also promoting the idea of safety regulation on our website through letters and communication to our stakeholders and partners.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now, wondering if the deputy minister can advise how many all-weather inspection sheds are currently in operation.

Mr. Al-Zabet: Two.

Mr. Wasyliw: Is there any plans to expand and build more inspection sheds throughout the province?

Mr. Al-Zabet: We can definitely to always look into what's the need and the need for that kind of—of those all-weather check stations. But right now we have not contemplated having more at this point.

Mr. Wasyliw: I'm wondering if the deputy minister can tell this committee how many inspections are taking place in those sheds between October and April.

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Mr. Al-Zabet: So it's 30 per month, 30—three zero—per month—per shed. So 60 per two sheds.

Mr. Wasyliw: How many inspections per month—level 1s—are taking place between October and April with your mobile units?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So the information is not readily available. We will provide that information.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now, the Auditor General noted that Manitoba carriers that operate in the United States must register and comply with safety regulations for the US Department of Transportation. American carriers operating in Manitoba do not have to register in Manitoba. That's not the practice in Ontario and Quebec, which requires American carriers to register in that jurisdiction.

It's my understanding, from the Auditor General's report, that this does not comply with federal legislation, and I'm interested to hear from the deputy minister whether or not you agree with the current practice, whether you believe that we have to become in compliance with federal legislation.

Mr. Al-Zabet: Okay, so the Manitoba—although the—Manitoba does monitor the safety performance of the US carriers to—due to limitations of the carrier profile system, which means we—the access of IT technology information talking to each other on both sides of the borders. It does monitor their on-road performance using enforcement officers at roadside stops and waystations.

So we did not—we do not recognize between a US carrier or a Canadian carrier. We treat them all equally, and we would—if we need to inspect, we would inspect any carrier there. MI also is exploring a better use of data and information sharing opportunities with other agencies with a role in commercial vehicle safety. A new performance measurement process are being tied to the balanced scorecard system, as we mentioned earlier.

Mr. Wasyliw: The Auditor General had noted that this discrepancy, if you want to call it that, creates an administrative and economic disadvantage for Manitoba carriers and that making US carriers register in Manitoba if they operate here would level the playing field.

Do you disagree with the Auditor General, and do you believe this is something that needs to change?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So we do agree with the Auditor General views on this piece and we are working with other—we're in consultation with other jurisdictions to see how we can move in that direction, except for Ontario and Quebec, as you mentioned. So we are aware of that. So we're trying to make sure that when we shift, we shift that in a way that maintains that—the flow of carriers in all directions. So we do agree with the Auditor General views on that issue.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now, there is an exception for farm vehicles that are—although they get stopped and

inspected, they're not required to get safety certificates. Are you going to move them to include them into the safety certificate program?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So, currently, MI does not require farm trucks to obtain safety fitness certificates. But based on the recommendation from the Auditor General, we are examining this practice and we will be developing options to ensure the safety of our roads in Manitoba.

Mr. Wasyliw: It's my understanding that according to federal legislation, if a Manitoba farm truck crosses the border into another jurisdiction they are required to have one of these safety certificates. Is there going to be some type of enforcement of federal law to make sure that we're in compliance with that?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So we are in consultation and we will continue dialogue with agricultural sector on that matter to make sure if we are going into that kind of approach, is that we do it in the least disruptive way and the way that everyone is—there is no surprise policy there and that we are doing this in full collaboration with impacted sectors.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now, operators are currently not required to provide proof that they have repaired deficiencies found during inspection. I'm wondering, the—directed to the deputy minister—do you intend to remedy this in the future, and in what way.

Mr. Al-Zabet: So, currently, all inspection forms with a defect require the signature of the person that—making the repairs as well as the name of their employer. There is no requirement for receipts. MI is canvassing the other provinces to determine if receipts are required elsewhere to determine the ability of OAG recommendation on this item. MI does not want to impose regulatory burden if it's not warranted.

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Mr. Wasyliw: A question for the Deputy Auditor General: The Auditor General's report shows that the department has not been focused on output. Well, they've been more focused on outputs than actual safety outcomes like the number of operators with a good safety rating.

I'm wondering if the Deputy Auditor General would elaborate what the concerns are there.

Mr. Shtykalo: Sure. We think for, you know, performance management practices focusing on outputs will, you know, put the emphasis on the action without verifying that the actual intended outcomes have been achieved. So coming up with performance

measures that are measuring the actual outcomes, it helps ensure that you are indeed achieving your objective or goals.

Mr. Wasyliv: I'm wondering if the deputy minister can address what plans you have in place to address the Auditor General's concerns.

Mr. Al-Zabet: So the whole Manitoba government actually recently released its initial scorecard: Manitoba Measuring Progress. The department in alignment has developed performance measures for the commercial vehicle safety programs under its mandate, and it's currently working to update and align these measures to the provincial balance scorecard, which means we are putting performance measures to measure, and we would report on that on an annual basis.

I just want to also allude to the information I mentioned earlier: We are actually working with MPI now to share information about their data and our data to focus on where the areas of focus that we should be doing rather than to the Auditor General reviews. We should not just count how many inspections is where those inspections should be in order for us to know where they should be and what kind of issues we need to know that data. So we're actually looking at that to focus on the outcome versus the process itself that we are looking at.

I want to also say that the CPS is—so, we are also examining the replacement of our CPS which is safety-carrier profile system and the methodology used to assess carrier safety performance. So what I'm trying to say is that we are looking at data, we are looking at KPI indicators to shift from what we're doing today to a more smart and more meaningful way of doing compliance and enforcement.

Mr. Wasyliv: I'm wondering if you can—the deputy minister can advise what greater variability in waystation hours are you planning.

Mr. Al-Zabet: So this is, again, based on evidence and data and intelligence. We—I don't—there is no one-size-fits-all for this. It depends on the issues that we're facing. Hopefully, the information we can get from traffic, from MPI, from other sources will give us the right level of intervention we need at all those locations rather than just say here's what we need based on a very ambiguous knowledge. So there is no one-size-fits-all for that and it's going to be depending on the data that we would have and then we can figure out what we're going to do with it.

Mr. Wasyliv: Is the department going to commit to having these stations operating potentially 24 hours a day, seven days a week?

Mr. Al-Zabet: I can't commit to that. Again, the idea of 24 hours, 24-7 in this day and age, based on technology and information is—again, is—we are working—what we always have a finite resources that we want to optimize and if we see there is a value for us to increase our presence in certain locations we will do that to maintain the safety. But, if we feel there is areas that we can work for—in another area that needs our intervention, we will do that.

So we cannot commit to 24-7 all the time everywhere. There is no magic number that we can keep everywhere to keel that level of presence.

Mr. Wasyliv: Will the deputy minister commit to doing weekend openings for weigh stations and evening openings for weigh stations?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So, again, we will rely on evidence and information to decide where we need to be. Having affixed staff in a certain location would, actually, sometimes might be counterproductive because this would actually provide predictability for the offenders that they know when we are there and when we are not there. The way we're doing it right now on a rotational basis or in a blitz-approach inspection, random inspections give us more, you know, give us more influence on behaviour of offenders rather than having them all the time.

But, again, we will rely on evidence. If we need to increase our presence we will do that based on the information we have. We are shifting from, again, one-size-fits-all staff everywhere trying to admit—to buoy the ocean, we are going to be whenever we need to be based on our information and intelligence.

Mr. Wasyliv: I'm wondering if the deputy minister can explain that if you have an enforcement officer in a weigh station they obviously have to monitor the weigh scales. Does that prevent them also from doing inspections during the same time period?

Mr. Al-Zabet: Again, we are assuming that—and I'm not the expert in an inspection per se, but we're not—inspection is a process, has a protocol of doing that. I am not sure if we are going to either how to dedicate a work—the work protocols of a professional compliance officer, winter inspector carrier or not, versus doing another job on the side of that. So we really—it's not as simple as is—as that, and we—again, we are trying to rely heavily on technology to compliment some of the manual work that needs to be

done. Like, if you drive through one of those locations and you could capture all the data that you need about the carrier, the driver information, you might not need the conventional way of doing things.

So there is a way—many way—many things we can do to improve enforcement without having to stop someone physically there are have a physical presence all the time 24-7.

Mr. Wasyliw: One of the observations of the Auditor General was that the Headingley weigh station has two scales but often only has one employee operating that station, meaning they are using only one scale and one scale is laying dormant. Is that a concern of yours? Are you going to remedy it? Will there always be two staff to operate both scales?

* (20:50)

Mr. Al-Zabet: Actually, we addressed that issue now, and there are two officers in that location.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now—and you'll have to clear this up for me—I remember that either—I can't remember if it's level 1 or level 2, but one of the inspection levels required two officers to participate and one of them only required one officer to participate. Do I have that correct?

Mr. Chairperson: Mr. Wasyliw.

Mr. Wasyliw: So, again, the Auditor General had observed that most of the time your enforcement officers work alone. So if they're working alone, how are they able to conduct level 1 inspections?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So most of the time, yes, level 1, most of the time there is one individual, but this is not all the time. When we still do level 1 that requires two, if we have to go level 1, then we would need two officers at that location.

Mr. Wasyliw: Is there any plans for the department to hire more inspectors so that you can do more level 1 inspections?

Mr. Al-Zabet: We've answered that. We are hiring another nine officers in the very close—in the next couple of weeks, starting this week.

Mr. Wasyliw: I'm wondering if you can advise the committee if you are going to change how patrol operating hours currently operate.

Mr. Al-Zabet: So our compliance officers performing highway patrol duties have been directed to incorporate 20 to 30 per cent evening-weekend shifts into their monthly patrol plan. This will provide the

ability to assess outcome data to determine if more or less shifts are required than daytime hours.

Mr. Wasyliw: You had indicated that they're currently on a rotation system. Once you return to close to a full complement of officers, will there be dedicated enforcement officers in each of the 16 regions?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So we've addressed that issue before—is that we will rely on evidence and science and intelligence data to decide what's the best compliance model we will use. Again, conventionally, compliance and enforcement is not—the more they increase productivity, the less you will probably actually change behaviour. So we will find what evidence is telling us, where the issues are and then we will address that issue if needs more intervention or less, and where and how.

Mr. Wasyliw: Okay. Whether or not there's a full-time enforcement officer of each 16 regions has nothing to do with an enforcement model. It has to do with staffing. So I'm wondering, are you going to return to the old way of having one dedicated officer per region or you're going to maintain the new system that you have in place where there'll be rotation throughout the 16 regions?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So I will confirm again we will look at evidence, but we will maintain a one person per location.

Mr. Wasyliw: Now, the collision data that's in the Auditor General's report about heavy commercial vehicles excludes personal vehicles and farm vehicles. I'm wondering if the deputy minister can update this committee: What would those fatality statistics look like if we included farm vehicles and personal vehicles that would otherwise meet the commercial vehicle criteria?

Mr. Al-Zabet: So, currently, those data on collision for farming and personal vehicles are collected by MPI, not by us. So that information does not exist with MI at this stage.

Mr. Chairperson: Are there any other members who have questions on this particular report? If not, we'll move on to the next one.

Hearing none, the next report is—[interjection]

So, before we move on to the next report which is dealing with the bridges, management of provincial bridges issue, I'd like to get an idea of how much more time we might need on this particular report.

I have a few questions, but I'll guarantee they're not going to be long.

Is it the will of the committee to continue for an extra five minutes or 10 minutes so that we can deal with this report?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

An Honourable Member: Five minutes.

Mr. Chairperson: Agreed?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Chairperson: Ten?

An Honourable Member: Ten it is.

Mr. Chairperson: It'll be less than 10.

* (21:00)

Okay, so now we are dealing with the report regarding management of provincial bridges, and I'm glad the minister is here because he could probably as easily answer the question as the deputy, although the question could be to both of them.

As the members know, this particular report was done in 2015, I guess it was, and it was presented in July of 2016. We had a PAC committee meeting on this report in, I guess, September of 2016, and at the time, it was my understanding that the two programs that were going to be used to inventory the bridges, which was the BIS and the BMS, which is bridge management system, it was my understanding that those were going to be modules from SAP. That was what I thought they were going to be, but my understanding is now that neither one are modules of SAP.

So I'd like to get an update from the minister or the deputy, either one, as to just where we're at with both of those programs because there was a follow-up in 2017, and you were only partially along the way to getting the system running.

So I'd like to know where it is, where each one of the programs is at right now, why you did not proceed with an SAP module and do—does the information on the inventory, does it include any City of Winnipeg bridges because I understood too that whether we're responsible for them or not, we were going to at least inventory them.

Ms. Ruth Eden (Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Water Management and Structures, Department of Infrastructure): Good evening.

Mr. Chairperson: Do we have the leave of the committee to allow the assistant deputy minister to respond to the question? *[Agreed]*

Ms. Eden: Good evening, everyone. The SAP system does not have the capability to do either a bridge inventory system or a bridge management system. Both of those systems are very complex, specialized and rely on a lot of the technical information that is specific to asset management of bridges. So we do not have an SAP module that could be used to do that.

We are working towards a bridge management system. There are really only two or three that are used worldwide. In the interim, until we get a bridge management system that suits our needs and we can work in our computer environment, our software environment, we have—we currently are using what—a BIS system that we have that's fully functioning, as well as a database system to be able to do provide the information on an interim solution—as an interim solution until we can get a BMS fully implemented.

Mr. Chairperson: Now, as far as the inventory is concerned, when did you get all of the inventory onto the system? At what year, roughly, did you do that?

Ms. Eden: So that data, really, we couldn't put into our—fully into our BIS in 2017, and I do apologize. I need to answer your other question too. We do not have the city of Winnipeg bridges within our inventory system.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, so my follow-up question, then, would be, why not? Because I—*[interjection]* Yes.

Ms. Eden: So, currently, the bridges and the large-size culverts that we do have in our system are those structures that are under provincial jurisdiction. So those would be the bridges that are in our current inventory system.

Mr. Chairperson: Thank you.

Now, I'd like to ask you what the City uses for their management system or inventory system. Like, do they actually have—like, I know they have their ERP, I believe, is Oracle with the City of Winnipeg. Do they have any kind of bridge management system or bridge inventory system that is computerized over there at the City?

Ms. Eden: We believe that they do have something, but we don't know exactly what they—what system they do have.

Mr. Chairperson: I see. Okay. So if I was asked to ask you a question about could you get me information as to what the inspections systems—inspections have been done regarding the Louise Bridge, for example. Could you endeavour to get me that information? And I think I've run out of questions.

Ms. Edén: So we can ask the City for the information on their specific system for the committee in regards to any specific information related to inspections or condition of information on a City bridge. We would recommend that you go through the FIPPA process to the City.

Mr. Chairperson: Okay, well, thank you very much for your answer.

I think that concludes the questions on this matter.

Hearing no other questions—*[interjection]* Oh, yes. So we have more.

Are there any questions on East Side Road Authority?

Hearing none—what was the other one? *[interjection]* We're going to dig it up for you. Waiving of competitive bids, any questions on that report?

Hearing none, I think we're done and now we'll put the question on the reports.

* (21:10)

So does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of Waiving of Competitive Bids of the Auditor General report, follow-up of recommendations, dated May 2017? *[Agreed]*

Does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of Waiving of Competitive Bids of the Auditor General's report—follow-up of recommendations, dated May 2018? *[Agreed]*

Does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of Management of Provincial Bridges—oh, I don't know about this—of the Auditor General's report—follow-up of recommendations, dated May 2018? *[Agreed]* Good.

Does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of Manitoba East Side Road Authority of the Auditor General's Report—Follow-up of Recommendations, dated May—*[interjection]*—oh, okay—March 2018. Just reading it as it reads. Okay. Agreed? *[Agreed]* Good.

Does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of Management of Provincial Bridges of the Auditor General's Report—Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2019? *[Agreed]* Good.

Does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of the Manitoba East Side Road Authority of the Auditor General's Report—Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2019? *[Agreed]* Good.

Does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of Management of Provincial Bridges of the Auditor General report, Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2020? *[Agreed]*

And then does the committee agree that we have completed consideration of Manitoba East Side Road Authority of the Auditor General report, Follow-up of Recommendations, dated March 2020? *[Agreed]*

How many more of these—one more.

The Auditor General's report titled: Oversight of Commercial Vehicle Safety, dated December 2019—pass

As agreed by the committee, all reports before us have completed consideration.

Before we rise, it would be appreciated if members would leave behind any unused copies of reports so that they can be collected and reused at the next meeting.

The hour being 9:13, what is the will of the committee?

Some Honourable Members: Rise.

Mr. Chairperson: Committee rise.

COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 9:13 p.m.

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