

Read the text about how Sydney is monitored for various problems. Parts of the text have been removed. Choose the correct part (A-L) for each gap (1-9). There are two extra parts that you should not use. Write your answers in the spaces provided on the answer sheet. The first one (0) has been done for you.

When Big Brother is watching Sydney

All around the city, tucked away in soundproof, blast-proof, high-security rooms, teams of men and women (but mostly men) (0) ____, monitoring, correcting, fixing, tweaking and handling crises large and small. Day and night they each play their vital role in a real-world, high-stakes version of *The Truman Show*.

These are Sydney's control centres. From water, traffic, buses and trains to planes, electricity, bushfires and security, these rooms (1) ____ and most of us don't even know they are there.

If Sydney were a living creature, they'd be the organs (2) ____ that keep it alive.

At the Sydney Transport Management Centre (TMC) in Eveleigh, about 18 specialists sit at desks staring at horseshoe arrays of four or five computer screens. Most of the wall at one end of the room is taken up by a vast video screen split into 20 or more smaller screens showing camera footage of rush-hour traffic around the city, (3) ____.

Bus, rail and ferry specialists sit alongside operators monitoring traffic lights and congestion, each concentrating on their little piece of the transport jigsaw and working together to solve problems that (4) ____.

At any moment they are ready to deal with anything from a car (5) ____ to a collapsing crane, as happened in Broadway in November.

"You never know what you're going to get in this place," spokesman Dave Wright says. "You've got to keep your cool. Everyone knows their job and everyone is an expert in their field. I've been here for three years and I've never seen anyone lose it. We just do the best with what we've got. There is a lot of pressure and assertiveness and after a major incident, we all go home pretty exhausted."

The minute level of control the operators have is astonishing. From manually tweaking the phasing of a particular set of traffic lights to ease traffic flow to shifting the median strips on the Harbour Bridge with the flick of a joystick, they are truly masters of all they (6) ____.

But regardless of how much the technology puts them in control, they are still at the mercy of natural events – particularly the weather – which can (7) ____ throughout the whole complex system.

While it's not quite the flapping of a butterfly's wing in the Amazon causing a tornado in China, rain can cause traffic problems right around the city simply because (8) ___ passengers take that much longer to get on and off buses.

The TransGrid control centre in Eastern Creek is a smaller version of the TMC with the video of streams of traffic replaced by a huge diagram of the state's electricity network, rendered in pleasing tones of white, green and purple. And here the weather is also a major preoccupation for the three operators sitting at their terminals, (9) ___ in the right places to meet demand.

"If nothing is going on, it can be a deadly boring job because they are sitting there, waiting for something to happen," says Lionel Smyth, the manager in charge of the network. "They are constantly looking at what happens next. What's the weather doing? Are there storms or wind? And they are looking at the load [demand], which is dependent on the weather."

And what happens when everyone switches on the kettle at half-time during the grand final? Smyth says it barely registers. It's the weather – particularly all those air conditioners – that drives demand above everything else.

A	controlling all the vital processes
B	inconsiderately left in a clearway
C	fiddling with umbrellas means
D	have enormous knock-on effects
E	pop up minute to minute
F	providing the right amount of power
G	stare intently into banks of computer screens
H	checking the computer systems
I	interspersed with maps and bar charts
J	survey on their screens
K	find an appropriate solution
L	touch almost every aspect of our daily lives

When Big Brother is watching Sydney

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Von der Lehrperson auszufüllen

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