

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 4 October 1983

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
The Hon. Jennifer Adamson
The Hon. H. Allison
Mr D. M. Ferguson
Mr J. H. C. Klunder
Ms S. M. Lenehan
Mr E. J. Meier
Mr J. P. Trainer
The Hon. Michael Wilson

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I believe that I have failed to some degree in the past four days of proceedings, but we will continue along the lines that have been adopted. First, the Chair would appreciate from the Opposition, not immediately but soon, some idea of the time schedule so that the officers of the Minister are not kept unnecessarily waiting to be called. The Chair intends to proceed along the lines it has been following over the past four days: that is, the lead member of the Opposition will ask three questions of the Minister and then the Government will be given three questions, and we will alternate between questions from Government and Opposition members, if necessary.

Again, I warn members that the Chair has no intention of allowing members to enter into a second reading debate or a grievance debate. I have said that before, with some degree of failure, but I will say it again, and I warn members that I will be strict on that point. I would appreciate questions being directed to the Minister: if the Minister wishes his officers to reply, that is up to the Minister. Members outside of the Committee will be recognised by the Chair only when it seems that the in-depth examination of the vote is coming to a conclusion, and then it will be done only with the consent of the Opposition. Would the Minister like to say anything in general about his portfolio before I call on the vote?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I have identified a few errors in the Budget and in the yellow book that need to be corrected. First, on page 96 of the Estimates of Payments, the replacement of school furniture appears for 1982-83 and for actual payments there is a dash, and \$347 000 is shown for 1983-84. There should be an asterisk beside that line identifying that that previously had been shown under the Public Buildings Department. It seems as if it is a new fund with no fund like it before, whereas there has been a fund like it. The last sentence on page 7 of the yellow book should be altered to read:

However, the actual 1982-83 and proposed 1983-84 in the 1983-84 papers have all been prepared on a consistent basis.

Education, \$507 446 000

Witness:

The Hon. L. M. F. Arnold, Minister of Education.

Departmental Advisors:

Mr J. R. Steinle, Director-General of Education, Education Department.

Dr P. I. Tillett, Assistant Director-General of Education, Education Department.

Mr T. M. Starr, Chief Management Accountant, Education Department.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I do not intend to make an opening statement, as I think we should move to the asking of questions straight away. I hope that we can get to the technology and further education lines by about 3 o'clock. I understand that there is some sort of an agreement that the technology vote will be examined from 7.30 tonight. I hope that we could keep to that programme. Certainly, the Minister can be assured that we will not require his officers from the Department of Technology until after dinner. Whether we can keep to that time is problematical, because today we are dealing with the largest expenditure in the whole of the Government. It is a pity that we do not have the entire day available for education matters and matters pertaining to associated departments. However, I am not criticising anyone for that, and simply make mention of it.

My first question (and the Minister will not be at all surprised about this) concerns the numbers of teachers. The Opposition does not contest the fact that the Minister has provided extra teachers over and above formula, but it wants information about the exact number. Will the Minister provide the Committee with the following information: how many teachers are required by formula in primary, secondary, special, and general areas (although I do not necessarily want those categories split) as at 30 June 1983 and 30 June 1982? Further, what is the proposed number for 30 June 1984? Also, can he provide details about the actual numbers over and above formula as at 30 June 1983, 30 June 1982, and an assessment of what the numbers will be as at 30 June 1984?

The Auditor-General's Report at page 81 states that the staff employed as at June, expressed as full-time equivalents as at 30 June 1982, were 14 583 teachers for primary, junior primary and special, secondary, and other. As at June 1983 there were 14 574. Those separate categories are listed in the Auditor-General's Report. A footnote is given below those figures stating that teacher numbers do not include 381 and 382 people employed as replacements for those on long service leave. Figures given in the programme papers from major non-Public Service Act employees (and I assume that means that same category of teachers) from 30 June 1982 are 15 102; for 30 June 1983, 15 105.5; and for 30 June 1984 (proposed), 15 121.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I will ask my officers to give some outline of those various figures, but I point out that it is Government policy to maintain teacher numbers, and that was spelt out before the election. Figures quoted by the honourable member from the yellow book in fact really reflect that situation. The meeting of needs in the education system was intended at all stages to be financed by maintaining numbers, despite declining enrolments. The other point that I make about the minor variations that appear (and they are very minor) both in the Auditor-General's Report and in the yellow book are incidental personnel variations that take place from one time of the year to the next, and they will always occur even if formulas, all sorts of entitlements, and future enrolments were to remain the same.

The other point that needs to be made is that there is a slight difficulty in giving a comparison for 1984 that is directly translatable to 1983, given the fact that discussions have recently taken place to lead up to a new staffing formula, and I will give more advice on that later. One could say that next year all schools will be staffed to formula.

but it is a different formula. That formula will take into account the retained positions that have been liberated by declining primary enrolments on the present formula. The situation this year, with the sudden increase in secondary enrolments earlier this year, is that we are understaffed by about 25 positions in secondary schools.

Out of some 6 500 secondary teacher positions there should have been, according to formula entitlements, about another 25 positions. Under the previous Government an allocation had been made late last year to provide an extra 40 salaries on a full-year basis, I think, that was to take into account all the declining enrolment effects whereby they did not decline evenly, and that was to avoid unnecessarily harsh displacement effects. That in a sense would have been regarded as being above formula. That was built into the staffing situation, and it recurs.

Dr Tillett: The figures from the Auditor-General's Report and in the yellow book are not comparable figures, and the reason for that relates to different decisions regarding inclusions and exclusions of categories of teachers in the one case and the other. Reference has been made in the question to teachers who are engaged on a contract basis to replace teachers who are absent on long-service leave. There are also considerations relating to teachers who are engaged not on a contract but on a relieving basis as temporary relieving teachers.

Those numbers are able to be expressed in full-time equivalent terms and added into the yellow book information as a statement of the complete extent of resources attributed to education in the teaching area. There are also considerations of where teachers who are engaged in non-teaching duties on secondment are included in one case and the other. I do not have a complete analysis of what the rules of inclusion and exclusion are in the various cases, but the information could be provided, and reconciliation between the two sets of figures arrived at.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We will undertake to have that provided later and incorporated in *Hansard*.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I would be grateful if we could get those figures and in answer to the specific questions that I asked, because there is much confusion as to which set of figures we should use. If we do nothing else in this Estimates Committee, we should arrive at a set of figures that we can use from here on, because we do not want one group referring to Auditor-General's figures and another group referring to programme papers. Let us get ourselves on to a comparative basis where in future we can use one set of figures to debate the issue. I want to press on with this matter, because the Minister has claimed (and he can correct me if I am wrong) that the present Government has retained 300 more teachers above formula (I think that was his expression) as at 30 June 1983 compared to 30 June 1982. He has also said that he has provided or retained 231 more teachers than what would have been supplied under a Liberal Government.

I wish to canvass the issue and get the exact figures. It is well known by everybody that the Minister had to transfer primary teachers into the secondary area. The Minister has just admitted that the secondary sector is under enrolled by about 25 salaries. I have received a letter from the South Australian Institute of Teachers, admittedly, during the time of the controversy over the transfer of primary salaries to secondary areas, which states, in part:

The enrolment change means that the effective number has now been reduced to 141 more than would have been the case under a Liberal Government.

The letter goes on at great length. In the *Advertiser* on 5 March the Minister is reported as follows:

Mr Arnold said the transfer of about 25 salaries out of the primary area still left 167 extra primary positions than otherwise would have been the case under a Liberal Government.

Is the figure 231, is it 141 or, as the Minister stated in his press statement of 5 March, is it 167? The Minister also mentioned that the previous Government, when the member for Mount Gambier was Minister, did provide an extra \$1 million for additional salaries post Budget. I understand that that \$1 million was for expenditure for the half year—1 January to 30 June—which, under my calculations, means \$2 million a year or 100 teachers. The Minister has put that figure at 40 full-time salaries.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I take the shadow Minister's point that we need to have comparability in staffing figures, but it will be difficult to totally reconcile because of the points mentioned by Dr Tillett and also because one is a static reflection and the other is a dynamic reflection. The yellow book reflects averages over a full year, whereas the other figures are for teachers receiving pay as at 30 June and therefore may not reflect what has been happening in other months. However, there is relativity between the two. If one set of figures improves then the other set also improves, and vice versa.

If one looks at the figures quoted by the shadow Minister, one finds that the variation is very minuscule between the actual amount for last June, the amount for this June and the projected amount for next June. It is less than one-tenth of 1 per cent variation. This Government retained 231 positions that were to have been dispensed with and those are built into the 30 June figure for this year. The 300 teachers would be built into the figures for 30 June next year, because those 300 positions could have been dispensed with had the primary enrolment decline at the beginning of 1984 been reflected in the teacher numbers decline.

We are not attempting to suggest that at 30 June this year we retained 531 teachers: that is not the case. We retained 231. It will be by 30 June 1984 that we can claim that we have retained 531. I suppose that in fairness the point must be made that it is likely that not all of those 300 would have been dispensed with in any event. Past practice seems to show that about 50 of those 300 per year roughly have in fact been retained, and that probably would have happened again this year. However, the effect is still with declining enrolments that 300 positions have been liberated for use in other ways.

It is true that there were 251 positions under formula in secondary. That represents about .3 per cent of the total secondary teaching component. Of course, it was reflected in the very minor worsening in the pupil-teacher ratio in the secondary area. The figure worsened by about .2 pupils per teacher. With regard to the 231 positions, the 231 is not identical with the money that was put back in by the previous Government. That 231 is in addition to that, so that the money retained by the then Minister and the then Government is part of the base that we are talking about. The 231 as proposed in December last year suggested that 151 would go to primary and 30 would go to secondary.

I must make the point that there was no provision at all in the previous Budget for any secondary staff to meet the increased secondary enrolments, even though the previous Government was aware that enrolments would have increased by more than 300. There had been no provision for that. We put aside 30 salaries for that. Of the 231, the remaining 50 were disposed as follows: special education, 20; Aboriginal education, 20 (that is, the education of Aborigines in non-Aboriginal schools); and an advisory staff of 10. That was modified in the first part of this year to the following: primary went down from 151 by 25; secondary went up by 25; special education stayed the same; Aboriginal

education stayed the same; and the advisory positions were not followed through: those 10 disappeared.

In trying to work out how many of those were retained in the primary sector, it is important to remember that the special education teachers and the Aboriginal education teachers were attached to schools, either primary or secondary; the bulk of them were attached to primary schools. That is where the figure of 167 comes from. If one goes through the list of where those teachers went, one finds that the total number of teachers, even after the relocation, attached to primary schools is 167. The rest went to secondary schools. I made the other point about the money put in by the previous Government. That was built into the figure upon which we then added, so that is not duplicating that.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I would be very keen to have the adjusted teacher numbers for 30 June 1982, taking into account the additional teachers that were to have been provided by the previous Government, because once again it is very hard to get this comparison. It is a fact that the previous Government supplied \$1 million extra post Budget, which would have been in September of last year. That \$1 million was for expenditure in the year beginning 1 January, or the beginning of the school year. On my calculations, \$1 million in a half year is 100 extra teachers. I have some trouble in understanding what the Minister says when comparing that. He obviously is saying that, if there are 231 additional teachers retained at 30 June this year, then there were in fact 331 additional teachers over and above the figure in June 1982, if he is accepting the fact that the Liberal Government's initiatives post Budget have been taken into account. That is really what I am trying to get at, and I think that it is very important that we do get to that figure.

The CHAIRMAN: Is the honourable member for Torrens actually seeking additional information?

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I just want to make sure that, when the Minister's officers provide me with this additional information (I do not expect it today), it is accurate.

The CHAIRMAN: If that is the case, I would ask the Minister, as I have asked other Ministers, to ensure that, when additional information is to be provided, it is provided in a form suitable for inclusion in *Hansard* for the record.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The shadow Minister has recognised part of what I said. The decline in enrolments estimated for 1983 would have meant that more than 300 positions could have been dispensed with. The previous Government, in fact, agreed not to do that for a portion of those. It is not quite so simple as taking a half and using a factor of two to determine what those salaries are because we are talking about five-month components and not six-month components, so that will have to be reconciled in the statement we will prepare. That is why 231 positions had to be put back in when we came to Government and not the full enrolment decline element.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: The Minister is talking about 531 additional positions as at June 1984; that is 531 positions over and above what would have been provided under the formula. I make the point, of course, that the Minister (and he has admitted this to some extent) cannot foretell what a Liberal Government would have done in 1983-84.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I think it would have been very generous, actually.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It is nice to know that there is now concurrence on the Opposition benches that they would have been generous. All we can say is that we were going on what happened in the Budgets under the control of the previous Government. The facts are that we were 600 teach-

ers down and would have been 831 down had the 231 been put into place. I am giving the benefit of the doubt that some of them would have been retained because the tradition seems to have been that some of them were retained but they were by no means the majority.

Mr KLUNDER: I understand that quite a large number of temporary relieving teachers were employed last year: can the Minister indicate if that is true and, if so, why is it true?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The situation you are probably referring to is the over expenditure on t.r.t.s that took place in the past 12 months. I know that that was of some concern to people in schools, and it was of concern to me. The Budget allocation for t.r.t.s for 1982-83 was insufficient and did not take account of what could well have been expected to be the rate of absenteeism requiring t.r.t. relief. In this Budget we have increased the allocation by \$709 000 to help solve some of that problem that took place in the last financial year.

Dr Tillett: The available t.r.t. days are allocated to schools in accordance with a formula, but it is recognised that the actual level of use in any one school might fluctuate because of peculiar circumstances that arise in that school, and that the formula allocation may therefore prove to be insufficient. For that reason a reserve is held back which is available to Regional Directors to allocate out to individual schools on application if they get into particular difficulties. That feature of the scheme is to be retained in 1983-84, but the increased financial provision in the 1983-84 Budget for temporary relieving teachers will allow the formulae for allocations to individual schools to be improved by about 10 per cent. Circulars advising schools of that increase in the formula are going out at the moment.

Mr KLUNDER: I notice that illness, in-service training and 'other' are the three main reasons for teachers being absent from schools. Can you indicate whether the number of t.r.t. days made available during a year are in fact calculated on the basis of just illness, illness and in-service training, or a percentage of illness and in-service training? It is quite clear that the number of t.r.t. days does not in any way cover the total absences from schools.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It is really done on the basis of how much money has been allocated and how far that will go. If one were to take the view that every teacher absence were to be replaced by a t.r.t., then there would need to be a significant increase in the amount of money allocated. Of course, the facts are that that situation historically has never happened. We expect schools to cope with a significant number of the absences that take place, and indeed schools do cope with that and have established systems for doing that.

What we were concerned about was that they were being asked to take even heavier burdens as a result of what happened in the 1982-83 Budget, and we have made that up in the 1983-84 Budget. We have been able to increase the allocation by 10 per cent accordingly. It would still require schools to bear burdens of a large number of absences, which historically they have done.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The response to the shadow Minister's question does not seem to gel. This year there are 1 181 more students enrolled than last year. Can the Minister say when he is going to reduce the class sizes as he promised?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I have been very conscious of monitoring the class size situation during my term as Minister and will continue to do that, because I believe it is useful data for the education community to have. Early in term 3 I asked the Department to send out a survey to all schools in the State asking them to provide data on class sizes for this year and, if the records were available, for the

same time last year. Members might recall that I did a similar exercise in March this year when I asked for a comparison between March this year and March last year. At the time I said that that survey indicated an improvement in class sizes; a number of large classes had been reduced in size. I am happy to say that the improvement in the September figures has been greater over last September's figures than was the improvement in last March's figures over the previous March figures.

I would have to say, however, that only three regions have yet reported back, although the closing date has not yet occurred. We will be receiving more data, and I will update the House about that later. Of the three regions, two are metropolitan and one is country. In all schools that have R through 7 classes (primary, junior primary, rural, special rural, primary component, and area school primary component) the situation is this: of the number of classes over 30 in 1982, there were 95 classes in the sample, which is a significant one, involving 1 255 classes; so 95 (or 7.56 per cent) of classes in September last year were over 30. There were 384 (or 30.6 per cent) classes with 28 or more. In other words, 38.16 per cent of classes in that significant sample were 28 or more. In regard to classes less than or equal to 25, the number was 472 or 37.61 per cent.

The situation for those same schools this year is this: for classes over 30 the figure has gone down from 7.56 per cent to 3.25 per cent, namely, 41 classes. The situation with classes of 28 or more has gone down from 30 per cent to 24.05 per cent, namely, 303 classes. In other words, whereas last year 38.16 per cent were 27 or greater, this year it is 27.3 per cent. As for classes less than 25, the figure this year is 550 or 43.65 per cent. Already there have been significant achievements in reducing class sizes. As shadow Minister I made the point that the programme of the Government was a three-year programme. I contend that again. There was no contention that we would have got to the full staging of promises of class sizes in one 12-month period. Given the difficulties that the State has had, we think that what we have achieved already is a creditable effort.

In regard to secondary schools, there are no comparable figures available for last year. However, I can give the same figures for the same group of regions that I have already referred to. Those three regions contain a significant number of students of this State. The situation is that 3.38 per cent of classes in that group were over 30, or 185 of them; 757 or 13.83 per cent were 26 or greater, while 3 572 or 65.27 per cent of all classes were equal to or less than 20 in size (years 8 to 12, that is, the secondary component). As I said, unfortunately I do not have comparable data for 1982. When we have data for all classes in South Australia, I will be happy to update those figures. There may be minor variations, but I believe that they will be roughly on line.

The survey we did earlier this year was a two-part one: first, a survey of 25 schools, and it was followed up by a survey of all schools. The data between the two surveys is remarkably similar. We intend to keep on with this idea of surveying twice a year so that we can give the education community the advice of those figures for its benefit.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The Minister has mentioned already a number of 531 additional staff to June 1984. Will the Minister give the Committee some accurate assessment of the cost of retaining those additional staff on today's prices?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I think we work on a figure of \$22 000 a year for a salary, so, effectively, it would be \$22 000 times 531. I think we would have to recognise that there are ancillary staff attachments to those 531 that must be taken into account as well, because they have an ancillary staff loading attached to them. There would be certain other similar costs that would be attached.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: It seems fairly obvious that the costing of the original promises and commitments made in October and November 1982 are considerably understated, and that the estimates which I made, which would have been somewhere over \$20 million for the three-year programme, were substantially more accurate. I say that because it is perfectly obvious that, if the Government is going to appoint 900 additional staff over a period of three years, that amounts to \$18 million for a start. I believe that the Minister's original total programme commitment was another \$9 million. So, the mathematics that I held in question some 10 months ago and the questions that I raised were perfectly legitimate. It simply makes me wonder how many more of the calculations which were part and parcel of the Minister's and his colleagues' commitments were equally inaccurate.

In regard to the 90 additional staff, which are claimed to be required by the South Australian Institute of Teachers, in Ms Ebert's letter to Mr Wilson, does the Minister deny that those additional staff are urgently required to keep faith with electors, parents and teachers who were promised reductions in class sizes and other educational improvements? Is the Minister denying the truth of that statement?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I am denying the accuracy of that statement, yes. In answering the points raised by the honourable member, I would simply point out that the Minister should have paid more attention to what I was saying before the most recent election. At that time I was saying that we could take advantage of declining enrolments to fund most of the initiatives that we had in the Education Department, indeed, the overwhelming majority of them.

In terms of answering the question that always comes, 'Where will the money come from?', we can say to the taxpayer, 'Well, basically most of it is already coming because you are paying a significant amount of money to education. We are going to ask you to keep on paying that, even though enrolments will decline.' That is the point that I made in the public forum on a number of occasions before the last election. The situation, therefore, is that those liberated positions represented a significant pool of resources. The figure of \$9 million quoted by the honourable member is an assessment of the cost that would have been required in excess of maintaining teacher numbers.

In other words, that would be the real additional cost to the tax-paying community, because the other element is costs they had already had built into their payment system. What the honourable member is really talking about is the opportunity cost element. The opportunity cost certainly was greater than \$9 million, because it could have seen and, indeed under the previous Government was seeing, reductions in commitment as enrolments declined. So, that opportunity cost would take into account those salaries that could have been liberated by declining enrolments and multiply them by a salary figure; that is where the two figures come to hand. We stand by, with minor variations, the assessments made about the cost of the education promises before the last election, and to date we can prove that, of those we have put into effect, we have in fact matched them. The cost of putting back the extra ancillary staff was on line, and the costs of a number of other initiatives we have taken have been very much on line. Answering the second part which I started to answer, we do not agree with the assessment made by the Institute of Teachers as to the number of secondary staff that were still needed. We argue, with the figures we have used, that there were 25 salaries under in the secondary enrolment situation earlier this year, not 90.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Can the Minister tell the Committee the extent to which he will be retaining a number of staff during 1984 rather than appoint all of the staff at the

beginning of the year? How many teachers will he be retaining for appointment in term 2 and term 3 so as to reduce the number of additional staff at the beginning of the year, but to bring up the complement towards the end of the year? Also, the 30 June figures which he quoted, do not seem to have a lot of relevance, to my way of thinking, because generally we would look at the staff at the end of each term. So, 30 June is an artificial date in itself.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The honourable member is quite correct, and that is a point that I made before; they are on different bases. One is a static basis that the Auditor-General really must use, and the other one is a dynamic figure. The honourable member is quite correct: the end of term figure is the one to be looked at. Indeed, it has been the practice that there are always some positions kept until the end of terms to take into account changes that may take place then. That happened this year, and it will happen again next year. Retaining salaries certainly gives some greater flexibility to the Department in handling those changes, so that it is not under as much pressure with those staff allocations. I will ask Dr Tillett in a moment to provide some information on the actual numbers, or as close as we can get on that, but certainly the increased numbers help us achieve that greater flexibility.

Dr Tillett: There are two points that might usefully be added to the Minister's statement. The first is that the number of teachers in employment in the Department at any point in time does vary quite considerably, up and down, over a 12-month period. In particular, during vacation periods between terms the number will go down substantially because contract teachers cease contracts at the end of term, if they are on a term contract, and it is therefore very difficult to give an accurate picture as to the level of teaching staff at any point in time because of the extent of variations that occur over the year. It is for that reason, among others, that the yellow book information has gone towards the presentation of figures which give average levels over the 12-month period.

The other point that needs to be made is that, as the Minister has already indicated, a changed formula has been introduced for the staffing of schools in 1984. Schools have now been circularised with advice of that changed formula with requests that they submit back to the Department requests for staffing for 1984 based on the revised formulae. When those returns have been received and analysed it will be possible for the Department to make judgments as to the extent of reserve to be kept to deal with variations in actual enrolments as distinct from estimated enrolments when they occur at the beginning of 1984. The extent of reserve that is held would be of the order of 100 salaries, and it would be needed to meet a variety of requirements for change. One I have mentioned already is the variation between estimated and actual enrolments, whether in primary schools or secondary schools. The other relates to the fact that, in primary schools, enrolments increase during the course of the year, and there will be a necessity to have some salaries in reserve to allow for additional appointments to be made at the beginning of term 2 and term 3.

Mr FERGUSON: My question relates to the announced \$250 000 set aside for high technology in schools. What plans have been made to spend this money? What is the time span, and how will this tie in with the Federal funding? How does this tie in with the Government's policy on technology in education?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The Government has a clear policy of trying to ensure that our education systems are reactive to technological imperatives, and that our young people have the opportunity to take part in responding to those same imperatives. We have allocated in this year's Budget the sum of \$250 000 to be used for providing what

has been referred to as high technology schools. We are presently working on the best way of disbursing that money, ascertaining how we can in fact develop high technology schools, how the money can be used, balancing it between the purchase or leasing of equipment, or how other financial arrangements can be made to get access to high technology materials, and we hope to have some announcements about that in the near future.

However, when we talk about high technology schools, it would be important for members and indeed the general public not to misconstrue what is meant by that. We recognise the limitations on Government in terms of the amount of financial resources that will be made available to improve the response to technology in the education system. It would be nice to say that we can provide appropriate capital equipment to all our educational facilities. It would, however, be unrealistic to say that. The other option is to take the money that is available and to spread it thinly around all the schools: that may not be an appropriate response. The recommendation in the Keeves Report spoke about one school in fact becoming a centre of some note in technology. The proposition that we took in Opposition, which we are now spelling out in Government, is that we should try to regionalise that kind of activity and develop it further, and we want to see that there will be schools available in each region that can have this kind of focus.

So, not only do they serve a purpose for the students who go to those schools, but also they serve a resource function, or an educational support function, to other schools in the region. I have made that point about education support function, because it is not simply about aggregating equipment: it is also about those centres becoming centres for professional development activities, and curriculum activities as well. When we talk about high technology, we make a big mistake if we concentrate only on the hardware: we must concentrate on the software and the professional development that is necessary to go with it.

We are also considering the possibility of mobile units to service country schools, especially those in remote areas because, even with the regionalisation of the programme, it will not be much help to many country schools. In estimates relationship to Federal funding, such funding that has been proposed by the Federal Minister refers only to computers. Our assessment of high technology needs of schools goes much wider than that. We are looking at numerically-controlled equipment in craft shops, and upgraded scientific instrumentation in the science areas, as well as other forms of mathematical equipment in the mathematical and business studies areas. In resource centres other forms of technology apply in addition to computers: it is much wider than computers. That is all the Federal Government funding is considering.

The other point is that the regionalisation programme, although based on high schools, will offer support to all schools in the system. The computer programme of the Federal Government only addresses high schools at this stage. I have taken up the matter with the Federal Minister, as we must look at support in the provision of computers to primary schools. The Federal Minister has indicated that that is her idea of forward planning. As to technology in education generally, we believe that it is one element of the programme, although there are many others. Consequently, we will be establishing a task force into technology in education that will involve input from the Education Department and also the Department of Technology. These two Departments can liaise, and we can ensure, as far as possible, that our education system will be reactive to the technological imperatives facing South Australia in the year ahead.

Mr MEIER: I refer to the maintenance and furniture items. No doubt exists that the lack of maintenance is a

huge feature in schools. I refer to the rot of wood both in the walls and around windows on many of the early transportable buildings, the lack of painting, asphalt that is cracking up and becoming dangerous, and warped floors. Page 96 of the Estimates gives a figure for the maintenance of school buildings, but that figure is possibly not going to allow many long-term problems to be cured in the coming financial year. Can the Minister give details of the long-term programme? So often painting provides an effective or attractive facade. Often school walls along the roadway are painted but walls inside the school are not. Sometimes it seems that the protective part of maintenance is not done, but rather is glossed over, and rotted wood is left there. Does the Minister think that major maintenance will be achieved this year?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We have a serious maintenance backlog. However, we do not paint walls along the street frontage and not at the back. It is the concern of school communities that facilities be as good as possible. When the Public Buildings Department consults with schools on maintenance needs, it tries to address the education needs of the school. A backlog exists not only in maintenance but also in furniture replacement, and we must not allow that to increase. In this year's Budget, traditional funding is available through the Public Buildings Department whence most of the maintenance funds come under the Deputy Premier's lines.

In addition, \$500 000 has been provided under a new line within my Department's expenditure to try to cope with urgent needs that will come during the year. Members will appreciate that the allocation of Public Buildings Department money is done on a regional basis and assessed against regional priorities. Often situations will arise that will not have found their place in the regional priority system and may, therefore, upset the process. We decided to try this model this year. Cabinet has approved discussions between me and the Deputy Premier to ascertain the best way of handling the maintenance of furniture and school buildings. Such questions were raised by a committee studying the management of school resources, the committee having been set up by the previous Government.

The allocation for replacement and for new furniture has gone up by 19.5 per cent, and that is in excess of inflation. We would like it to have gone up more. The situation is serious and, I understand, if we are to talk about the replacement of all school furniture, we have enough funds to completely replace every 167 years. That was the case under last year's Budget provision. It has improved by 19.5 per cent. We still have a backlog, and those figures do not take account of changes in relative prices of furniture that often decline with improved design and manufacturing capacity. That figure should not be taken literally, but it indicates that we have seen the backlog added to, and school communities have to make many decisions on furniture needs. For maintenance, there has been an increase in real terms of funds available, but we need to do more work to determine the use of those funds.

Mr MEIER: How have fires and other acts of vandalism affected the total Budget in that area?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Destruction of buildings through fire is covered by the State Government Insurance Fund and is additional to any allocations provided. I understand, however, that that is not the case with vandalism, the cost of which has to come out of Budget provisions. However, our worst losses are through fire.

Mr MEIER: What is the Department's present policy on the type of units installed? Are portable units being installed in preference to permanent buildings (I refer to Demac units)? I have seen some classic examples of Demacs that are up for only a few years and start to fall apart rapidly,

especially those used for sporting facilities or showers. Are there specific buildings that require less maintenance and would stop the backlog accumulating?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: New buildings significantly reduce maintenance needs, first, because they are new and do not need maintenance in the first few years, and, secondly, because of improved design. If one looks at the buildings built over the past decade, one will find changed elements in the basic design that take into account maintenance needs. Indeed, I know that the member for Mount Gambier will have noticed, as I did last week, simple features in the new school at Tarpeena that will require low maintenance for many years. New coat hangers have been made of aluminium rather than wood with metal attachments.

That is one small example of something that does not need painting and will not rot away. There have been improved designs over the years in buildings and, as we apply new building technology to not only new schools but also refurbishing of schools, we should see future maintenance pressures reduce. Indeed, by recladding many of the transportables or prefabs with new materials, we are able to reduce the maintenance cost significantly, whereas previously the painted timber had high maintenance costs. Some of the design elements we have followed over the years (and I am talking about decades now) have not been as successful as others. Also, we have made some massive improvements in that area.

Mr MEIER: Page 88 of the Auditor-General's Report refers to major works and includes new schools. I note with concern that Minlaton Primary School, Riverton High School, Balaklava High School, and Warooka Primary School and others do not rate a mention. Yet, all those schools have been pushing for many years for new schools. To what extent does the Minister think that the Education Department or the Public Buildings Department will be able to catch up or provide alternatives where these new schools are obviously needed?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I referred to the capital works situation in answer to a question by the shadow Minister, acknowledging that we have had a reduction of funds available for school buildings in the Education Department. That does not apply in other areas of education capital works. However, there has been a reduction and, every year that we do not provide sufficient funds for that, we increase the backlog. Part of that backlog is ameliorated by improved design and, therefore, reduced cost of buildings that are needed. The per capita cost of providing new buildings does not necessarily match the cost of living, because of improvements in building technology. However, it is true that some schools in this State are worthy of redevelopment, even now. We will have to consider seriously that programme. I indicated before last year's election that the matter of penalty costs on failing to do this should be looked at. I intend to have a study into that area to determine what is the actual cost to the community of deferring capital works programmes.

However, I repeat the point I made in answer to the member for Henley Beach. The multiplied job creation effect of school buildings is not as great as the multiplied job creation effect of houses being built. The housing shortages of the State are disastrous, as any member of this House would know from the approach of constituents living in appalling conditions. An assessment was made by me, as Minister, that in the 1983-84 financial year the Government's priorities were job creation and housing. However, as I indicated on that occasion, every year that we do not provide adequate capital funds, we are adding to the backlog.

Ms LENEHAN: I refer to 'Education facilities—Director-General'. How does the increase in this year's Budget com-

pare with previous years in relation to the amount allocated for Government assistance to needy scholars?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The increase this year has been \$2, from \$33 to \$35 per capita, and that is marginally less than the rate of inflation. Because of the increased dire economic circumstances in South Australia, the number of students eligible for Government assistance has increased. The total amount of funds allocated by the Government for this programme will increase well in excess of the cost of living. Even if there had been no increase in the per capita amount, it still would have increased in excess of the cost of living. Therefore, it is a real drain on community resources, but it is a drain that has to be met because these children cannot be disadvantaged by not receiving some support in relation to some important education costs.

We will continue to provide per capita increases in the Budgets ahead, and it would be better if we could link those directly to the cost of living. That means that this year it would have been better if we had put in another 50c or maybe \$1. However, the situation in regard to the past four years is somewhat patchy. In the first year of the previous Government's office, there was a significant increase in the amount allocated to the per capita amounts for what was then the free book scheme. From then on, there were no increases until the last Budget when the amount increased from \$30 to \$33. Therefore, from the period 1980-82 to 1983-84, the amount has gone from \$30 to \$35, and \$2 of that has been in this Budget.

Ms LENEHAN: I refer to page 95, 'Personnel Directorate—Special'. Can the Minister say whether money has been allocated to the Seawinds Centre and, if so, how much has been allocated for this financial year from the Budget? For many years Seawinds Centre for severely handicapped children has struggled in terms of the financial commitment made by previous Governments. As the Minister became involved with Seawinds before last year's election, can he say what has happened in relation to it?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: This amount is provided under the 'Education Miscellaneous' lines, which we will consider later. However, I may as well handle it now.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Klunder): I think that we should stick to the lines as they come.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I can answer the question later.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I will ask the member for Mawson to ask the question again later.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I am quite happy to ask it anyway. My first question is supplementary to that which the member for Goyder asked. The Minister mentioned the Government's priority for housing when he was discussing the allocation of capital works moneys for school redevelopment and upgrading. School redevelopment is a job creation scheme in its own right, as is housing. This is not the time to discuss the line of the Deputy Premier as you are about to warn me, Mr Chairman. However, it is a serious reduction of \$2.4 million.

Will the Minister let me and the people of Prospect know when the redevelopment of Prospect Primary School will occur, bearing in mind that it has been suggested for 20 years? I do not mind asking this question on behalf of the Premier, because technically it is in his district. It is on the boundary, and even under the new boundaries, it will still be on the boundary between the two districts. The former Government had allocated the money, and was about to call tenders. The school community of Prospect Primary School is extremely disappointed at what has happened. Also, on behalf of the member for Morphett, can the Minister say when the redevelopment of Glengowrie High School will commence?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I agree with the honourable member when he says that building schools creates jobs. Many

months ago I asked for some studies to be done on the multiplier effect, and I was making the point that the building of houses creates more jobs than the building of schools.

With regard to the Prospect Primary School some funds will be spent in the 1983-84 financial year and the remainder will be spent in the 1984-85 financial year, because most of the work will be done in the 1984 school year. In regard to the Glengowrie High School redevelopment, no allocation has been made in the 1983-84 Budget and the 1984-85 forward planning is still subject to Government consideration.

The CHAIRMAN: I would be obliged if honourable members would stick to the lines under discussion.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Commonwealth funding with tied grants to the State is extremely important in education, and has a big impact on the State's education budget. Has the Minister objected in the strongest possible terms to the Federal Minister, Senator Ryan, at the Federal Government's dishonouring of its election pledges in regard to education funding to the States? I am concerned at the education funding for this State.

To save the Minister from doing it, I give credit to the Federal Government for its initiatives in participation equity and in Aboriginal education. I commend those initiatives, but they are dwarfed by the breaking of the Federal Government's election pledges in regard to education funding, especially the promise to provide \$37 million more for general recurrent grants to Government schools and \$16 million to non-Government schools, both of which have not been made. The \$9 million extra for primary schools has not been allocated, and no-one in this House needs telling of the extremely high priority that should be given on primary education and the need for additional funding for it.

There has been a cut of \$7 million in teacher development compared to what was promised. Also, as has already been pointed out by the Minister, \$6 million for computer education is 25 per cent less than what was promised and only one-seventh of what was recommended by the Schools Commission, and I think about less than half of what was promised by the Fraser Government. The last two items are intimately connected because the Minister has stated the importance of professional development in the allocation of funds for computer training in schools. I refer to primary schools, because we do need hands-on experience in primary schools. It is vitally important, because we cannot bring it about without the professional development of teachers as that is the resource problem. The Minister has already said he has contacted Senator Ryan on the question of computer development, but has he protested to the Federal Government on the allocation that it has made?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I have had discussions with Senator Ryan on several issues. The Minister asked whether I have protested: I think that I, with many other members of the community, am well aware of the difficult financial situation facing the Federal Government. I think it has been widely accepted now that the Budget for 1982-83 did blow out, and that presented real difficulties for the in-coming Federal Government. That was a problem we faced in South Australia as a State Government. That means that one has to consider the planning and implementation of one's priorities and promises made before an election. That has been done at State level and at Federal level.

One needs to consider how a policy is to be implemented, whether it was ever intended to be done in one year or whether it was supposed to be part of the three-year programme. I have made the point many times as State Minister that people might expect things to be done immediately, but I had spelled out before the election that it would be part of a three-year programme. One should look at the

score-board of the Federal Government after three years in office to see what it looks like at that time. In the case of the computer programme, the Federal Government promised \$18 million over three years, and with \$6 million is being provided in this Budget: it is right on schedule.

I put to the Federal Minister my concern that funding for primary education had not gone up, and I have already indicated my concern that the computer programme is limited to secondary schools only. I made an issue of cut-backs in professional development as well, because that will cause us real difficulties and we are having to work out what alternative strategies are available. It will mean a reduction in the funds available for that particular programme.

We have been conscious of the primary versus secondary relativities, and we took the Schools Commission's guidelines on that. At the South Australian level the expenditure last year, as was reported in the Auditor-General's Report, resulted in an improvement in that relativity. We indicated that we wanted to reach 72 per cent, which the Schools Commission asked for and the Auditor-General's Report shows that at 30 June the figure has gone from 65 per cent to 67 per cent. We can regard that programme as being on line.

The question of computer programmes is a matter of ongoing discussion between me as State Minister and the Federal Minister. I can say with some assurance that the Australian Education Council meeting to be held in Adelaide later this year will see several of these issues canvassed. I am conscious of the real problems the Federal Government has had financially, and I repeat again that the Government does not have a bottomless pit of money.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: In relation to the computer programme the Minister has said that the \$600 000 this State will get will be applied totally in the area of secondary schools. Can the Minister give details of what he proposes (I know he has a study under way) for the inception of hands-on experience (I take the Minister's point that we are not talking about computers *per se* but that there are other considerations) in primary schools, and the necessary teacher development that has to go with that programme?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The high technology school programme sees those schools as also being centres of professional development activities to service both primary as well as secondary: even though the schools are secondary schools they are to service primary schools as well. That is really where the State Government commitment will be in the coming 12 months, and where it has been for some time. My commitment as State Minister to computer education has not been in terms of financial support to schools in the purchase of computers, but rather in the two important areas of professional development (which has been so for some time) and curriculum development which has also been done as a State financed activity.

These activities will still remain priorities of the State Government. We are not able to say that we can give support for the purchase of computers by primary schools in the next 12 months, as that will not be possible. As to how the money allocated by the Federal Government will be spent, the \$600 000 applies not just to Government schools but also to non-Government schools. We expect to receive guidelines at the end of October as to how that money is to be allocated according to Federal Government requests.

There is one other important area associated with this. This is a minor digression, but it is an important point to make in regard to computer education. I refer to the point that I made at the National Computer Conference in Canberra last week, namely, that we must ensure that when we are talking about computer education we are not trying to create two groups of students: one for whom the computer

becomes the master, in other words the surrogate teacher, and all they are doing to the computer is using it as a problem generator into which they feed a programme and get ticks or crosses, and another group which is given the opportunity to develop programming expertise. We must make sure that our computer education programmes are designed to give all students access to and knowledge about computers; in other words mastery over computers. It is certainly the belief of those involved with the Angle Park Computer Centre and of those within the Education Department that we should be looking at computers as more than just surrogate teachers. That is an emphasis that will be maintained.

Mr FERGUSON: How far is the Government moving towards indexation of per capita grants?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The situation with per capita grants was published in the most recent *Gazette*, which I think has been circulated today. For primary, junior primary, rural, Aboriginal schools and the primary students thereof, the base has been increased by 10.3 per cent. The per capita figure has increased by 9 per cent. For area, special, rural and Aboriginal schools with secondary students, the base has been increased by 8.1 per cent. The per capita primary component has been increased by 9 per cent, and the per capita secondary component by 7.5 per cent. For high schools the base has been increased by 7.6 per cent, and per capita the increase has been 7.5 per cent. For special schools, special education units and other centres, each unit will receive a 9 per cent increase in funding over the 1983 funding.

There have been various increases in other payments, such as freight (9 per cent), and also this year provision has been made for audit support. Following the view that schools should be having their accounts audited by professional auditors, it has been agreed that funds should be made available to schools to help them to do that. There will be a per school allocation. It will be different from primary to secondary, because of the different accounting needs of those schools. That will be the first time that such an amount has appeared in Education Department funding.

I must say also in addition to that, from the amount of money budgeted for, and after providing funds to meet those increases that I have just read out, a sum of some \$480 000 will be available for special needs, including, among other things, major equipment purchases, and other special needs that we want to further examine and provide for. I hope to be able to announce details of how that money will be disbursed in the coming months. It is part of the Government's commitment to introduce needs based funding principles. I would have to say, however, that before the last election the then Opposition spelt out the proposal that of the increased money made available to school payments by means of indexation, half of that should be allocated on a needs based funding principle and half of it on a per capita basis. What has actually happened this year is not that situation.

Much less than half of the money has been allocated to needs based funding and more of it has been allocated to per capita funding. That has been done for two reasons: one, because, after discussions with school communities at all levels (junior primary, primary and secondary), it became quite clear that there was a degree of uncertainty about that policy commitment by the Government. They were either not in support of it or they wanted much more thought given to how it can be done equitably. The second point is that the view was expressed that more time is needed to consider what is involved in the very concept of needs based funding. I have been persuaded by those viewpoints, and, indeed, Cabinet has accepted my advice on this matter that we should therefore not adhere to what the policy said

we would do, namely, that 50 per cent of the indexation figure would be provided on a needs basis. It will be much less than that figure. Further work will be done on that in the coming 12 months, and we will be able to see in the 1984-85 year what changes will be made there.

Certainly, notwithstanding that, there has been a significant increase from some \$150 000 up to \$480 000 in the amount available for special needs. Of the percentage increases, all are either equal to or in excess of the estimated inflation rate for the next 12 months, with the exception of secondary per capita and secondary base, both of which are marginally less than the estimated cost of living increases over the next year. In total, funds paid to schools by school payments will increase by some 11 per cent, which is well in excess of the cost of living increase. That will be the first time for some years that payments to schools have increased at a rate greater than the cost of living. I am referring to not only the previous Government but also to the time when Governments before that were in office.

Mr FERGUSON: The Minister mentioned auditing fees. Some schools are having difficulty in coping with auditing because of the voluntary labour that is necessary. I do not blame them. It is a long job and to get it done for nothing provides schools and school councils with difficulty. Can the Minister tell me what provisions have been made for this and how the money is to be distributed?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: As I have said, this relates to a Cabinet decision made early this year. It is the first time that funds have been made available. I shall ask Dr Tillett to give details of the actual scheme.

Dr Tillett: The Budget provides an amount of about \$150 000 for the purpose of making cash payments to schools to assist them in engaging auditors to undertake the auditing of school accounts, a task which in some schools in the past has been done on a voluntary basis and which no doubt will be done on a voluntary basis in the future. The precise formulae for determining an amount for each school are being incorporated in a report that will be with the Minister of Education shortly. It sets up a structure of a base amount for each school plus a per capita component for each school. The further intention is that the amounts will be paid to schools together with the existing school grants, and that the percentage of the total amount paid to schools to assist in the auditing of school accounts will be the same as the percentage paid on each occasion in regard to the other existing school grants.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Will the Minister advise the Committee the extent to which he intends schools ultimately to pay from school base funds, the school grants, the cost of their own power, lighting and telephones? This has been mooted by the Education Department for quite some time, and I am well aware that there has been considerable resistance to it. Is the matter any nearer to resolution as a result of discussions between the Department and parent organisations?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes. There have been a lot of further discussions this year both between the Department and outside groups, and also within Government, on this very matter. At this stage approval has been given for a pilot programme to be run with a limited number of schools to take over some of these expenses at the school base level. With the exception of the H.P.I. component, all of the funds will be non-staff components; they will be part of that pilot programme. Of course, that includes such things as power, lighting and telephones. The view that I have expressed is that it should be a pilot programme and that we should be seeking not so much volunteer schools but a range of schools to be involved in that programme so that we can really canvass all the issues and come up with all the problem areas involved in this kind of proposal.

Conceptually, the scheme has a lot to commend it, but it also has a lot of hidden problems, and they have been identified by a number of community groups. We must make sure that we properly address those problem areas and that we do have strategies to cope with them that do not disadvantage school communities. The capacities of school communities to meet those responsibilities and handle them vary, and the honourable member would acknowledge that. At this stage I believe that we are still in the discussion process, talking with schools that could be involved in such a programme, but it is a limited part of the programme at this point. There is no intention until that programme has been completed to move to the wholesale introduction of such a concept to all schools in South Australia, because I want to make sure that we have canvassed those problems and developed strategies to cope with them before we even consider an extension of the programme.

Dr Tillett: About 30 schools have been identified, and invitations sent to them, to participate in a trial of the extension of the existing system of school management of resources. Representatives of the staff and the school councils from those schools came to Adelaide last week. We met them and gave them information about how we thought that the scheme might work in order to allow them to make suggestions to us as to whether they saw any difficulties with the proposals as they currently stand, and in order to allow them to assess whether or not they would wish to participate in the programme. During October each of those schools will be visited individually. Further discussions will occur with them so that they are able to make a decision as to whether or not they will participate on the basis of an adequate range of information. Also during October, based on the kind of feedback that is obtained as a result of those discussions, the Department will move to final recommendations to the Minister as to precisely which items would be included in the scope of the trial. At present it is considered that the trial would include utilities costs, power, water, telephone, hourly-paid instructor salaries, and maintenance items presently the responsibility largely of the Public Buildings Department.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Reverting to the computer question, the Minister said that an amount of \$18 million had been promised by the Federal Government: in fact, an amount of well over \$25 million was promised, but \$18 million was committed. I believe that the actual figure available for the three years is a very disappointing one. The previous Federal Government promised well over \$30 million so, in fact, we are looking at a commitment of about one-seventh for the triennium of the amount of \$125 million which the Schools Commission said was necessary to equip primary and secondary schoolchildren in Australia adequately for the technological era. No doubt, the Minister will be feeling a little more regretful over the amount committed than he is probably prepared to say. I imagine that, as Minister for Technology, he certainly should be having considerable regrets over the amount that has been committed.

However, more importantly, many statements are being made, and I believe that publications like *Time* magazine and *Bulletin* magazine have highlighted the fact that, the indications are that, among all of the world's computer manufacturers, a great number over the next few years will be bankrupt. They will be forced out of business because of the high degree of competition and the fact that many of them are having to throw out equipment at far less than cost at the moment in order to get out of financial problems. So, a very critical question for the Education Department will be what computers to standardise upon. I simply ask the Minister whether primary and secondary schools are being allowed to purchase computer equipment on an *ad*

hoc basis, whether the Department of Educational Technology, under Mr Dunnett, has come up with research, and whether the Director-General is in a position to recommend for purchase over the next few years any one or more lines upon which we can rely, not only as far as the hardware is concerned but from the point of view of readily available and relevant software. By 'relevant', I mean relevant to the South Australian educational programmes.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes, certainly. The point about relevant software is a very important one. We not only buy hardware; we have to buy something that is usable in South Australian schools. It is not a matter of what the Education Technology Centre is able to offer; it is also what the Angle Park Computing Centre can offer through its evaluation of products. It has in fact done extensive valuation of computers, and is doing it all the time as new computers come on the market. Notwithstanding that, advice was given to schools in November of last year (shortly after I became the Minister, I think, not because of it, because it had been part of a process that had been in line for some time), that recommended the Apple computer and the B.B.C. computer.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The Apple and the Acorn—is the B.B.C. the Acorn?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I apologise; the B.B.C. is known as the Acorn. I was not aware of that; I thought that the member was sharing a witticism.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The B.B.C. is known as the Acorn because the oak is the foundation of the Royal Navy from days gone by and great oaks from little acorns grow. It was a little more complex than that.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Certainly there will be a major shakedown in the computer industry; I think it is already starting to happen. We see this year that Texas Industries and Hewlett Packard have both had problems in their financial accounts due to a major down-turn in sales of computer hardware and/or software. It is not possible for either E.T.C. or Angle Park to determine who will disappear in the shakedown, because that would be speculation that even the best financial advisers are not able to predict at this stage with any accuracy. Within two years there will be fewer manufacturers around than there are now.

On the basis of their education applicability, the recommendation to schools has been those two computers because it is deemed that they are, first, usable by staff and students, and, secondly, that software is available and that we have software programmes here in South Australia that are applicable to South Australia's circumstances. That raises the very important point of the degree of expertise we have in software development. Considerable work is being done at Angle Park in regard to software development. Members may know that there are in fact joint arrangements with Tasmania and Western Australia as well in this whole area, and in fact we are examining further the possibilities of the commercial exploitation beyond South Australia of software development done here in South Australia, and indeed of other materials as well. This was something that the then Opposition (and present Government) committed itself to examining. We have been examining that matter further, and I hope that in the 1983-84 year we can announce some definite details as a result of that area.

The Schools Commission did indicate amounts greater than the Federal Government has made available. I have indicated that I have discussed this matter with the Federal Minister. Clearly, however, we can always say that there is an optimal situation that we would desire in terms of the allocation of funds, but we have to recognise that the financial circumstances do not always permit us having the optimal allocation of funds, and we have to acknowledge that at the State level as well. I do not want to make any more comments in relation to that issue.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I would like to refer to the provision of long service leave for staff in South Australian schools. As the Minister is no doubt aware, the number of applicants for long service leave over the past few years has been growing steadily, and the amount of money made available upon request to Treasury, and with some reluctance, has increased steadily. Can the Minister advise the Committee the extent to which long service leave applications will be met during the present financial year, obviously on the basis that it is never cheaper to provide long service leave than now, when it accrues; it becomes dearer if people are paid long service leave entitlement when they are employed at a much higher substantive rating. Will the Minister or his senior staff give any prediction as to whether this will increase steadily and create a further embarrassment, or whether there is some reduction in sight further down the track?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We can estimate that it will increase in the years ahead, partly as a result of fewer new teachers having come into the system in recent years. Most teachers have been in the service for some time and are reaching their first entitlement for long service leave or, in many cases, their second or third entitlement. We envisage the cost component increasing. If people defer the taking of such leave it becomes more costly, especially if they are still subject to incremental creep. It is better to take the leave as soon as possible. One of the difficulties with which the Department is faced is the time of year that people want to take long service leave. Term 2 is the preferred term and that can cause administrative problems with the number of people who may want to take leave at one point in the year. Such problems must be looked at, and I ask Dr Tillet to comment.

Dr Tillet: Provision has been made in the 1983-84 financial year for the replacement of teachers absent on long service leave at the same level as for 1982-83, such provision amounting to 130 000 replacement days. In 1982-83 the total provision was not used, the reason being not that there had not been the expected increase in applications for long service leave as the fact that it was found necessary to refuse some applications for such leave on the simple grounds that replacement teachers were not available and the effect on some schools would have been intolerable.

With respect to the first matter, if a teacher in a remote school is going on long service leave for one month, it may be difficult to obtain a person who is willing to take an appointment for only one month in such a location. That problem is compounded in country schools, especially secondary schools, if one is looking for a teacher with a particular expertise. The other consideration is that, if one has a school in which a large proportion of the staff (for instance, about half) all seek to go on long service leave at one time, the effects on the education programme for the students in that school could be severe even if teachers could be engaged to cover all absences. The Education Department therefore exercises a judgment as to whether or not applications for leave can be granted, based on the effects on the school as a whole and with regard to the possibility of replacing a teacher. Most often the solution arrived at is for some change in the date or period of long service leave taken by negotiations with the teacher but the net effect in 1982-83 was that not all of the provision made for replacement was used. It is anticipated that the provision for 1983-84 will be adequate to provide the required level of replacement.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Apropos the taking of long service leave, are staff encouraged to take the whole of such leave in one period or has the habit of staff taking leave in blocks of one month been encouraged?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It would be the desire of the Department to minimise the disruption to schools in the

taking of long service leave. We have a concern for the teachers in the classroom and also for what is available to students. We encourage the taking of leave in one piece where possible but, naturally, there are circumstances where, for entirely justifiable reasons, the teacher may want to do it another way. The Department is sympathetic towards requests put to it, although we prefer teachers to take leave one term at a time rather than straddle terms.

Ms LENEHAN: Will the Minister inform the Committee whether money has been set aside or made available for the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia? If so, does he consider that it will be sufficient for the effective implementation of the SSABSA Act?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The financing for the Senior Secondary Assessment Board is derived from two sources. The first is, from a separate provision of \$50 000 in the lines in excess of the amount made available to the Public Examinations Board. The other issue relevant to those lines is the redeployment of staff in the Education Department. For 1983-84 it will continue to appear in the Education lines but, after 1984-85, it will appear in a separate line under 'Miscellaneous'. It has been my view that, since the Senior Secondary Assessment Board is picking up some of the functions done by the Education Department for the S.S.C., for example, those resources should become surplus to Education Department requirements and be available for handling the same sort of activities under the new Board. Discussions are taking place to identify how much is available in that regard and what quantity of resources is available so that the necessary transfer can be arranged. It is also anticipated that there may be a transfer from another section to support the Senior Secondary Assessment Board.

Ms LENEHAN: When will that Board be operational?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In a sense it is already operational. We have a Ministerial advisory committee for senior secondary assessment which met for the first time two weeks ago. That committee operates as a Ministerial committee until the Public Examination Board has finished its work in early 1984. The legislation does not provide for the two groups to be concurrent Boards, so we have tried the Ministerial advisory committee formula to enable it to do its establishment work, the P.E.B. can do its wind-up work, and once that is completed for the 1983 school year, the Senior Secondary Assessment Board, which will be identical to the Ministerial committee board, will be proclaimed and become the functioning board, and will take over all the activities of the current P.E.B.

Mr MEIER: In the last electoral campaign much was said about large class sizes, and votes may have been won or lost on that very issue. In a rural electorate one finds many small schools, such as Brentwood, Arthurton, Lochiel, and Watervale, with small class sizes. Suddenly, the problem is the opposite. Parents wish to send their child to a school with larger class sizes. What are the Minister's thoughts, and has any provision been made in the Budget for small schools to be closed during the coming 12 months?

I am well aware of staff, equipment and maintenance costs for which the Department must pay. Has the Minister thought of any education programme to promote attendance at small schools so that their viability is maintained for a longer time? The advantages of the schools could be debated, but it was interesting to hear the other day that the former little school of Salter Springs (although closed for many years now) produced two Rhodes Scholars during its time—something which other schools possibly could not boast for the whole of their lifetime. Is a programme envisaged to promote such schools or will they be closed?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I was concerned when in Opposition that, when considering the future of small schools, we should look at not only the financial factor but the

educational factors as well. Indeed, that is a point which is critically important, because there are many educational merits to small schools. The honourable member is quite correct: some parents will make a decision that they do not want their child to go to a small school, not necessarily because the classes themselves are too small but because they may express some concern about their child being in a composite classroom from reception to year 7, and the teacher having to handle all those different needs.

In fact, I think that experience shows that the teachers handle that situation very well. Therefore, it is often a composite class situation over such a wide range that concerns them, involving even non-educational things such as social interaction needs. The parents are concerned that there are not enough children in the total school for their child to interact with and be part of a school community: in other words, there are not enough children of the same age for their child to play with in the yard. They are the other factors that sometimes come into account in relation to people choosing to go away from a small school. However, for any group of parents who do not want to use a small school, there are many who prefer to use a small school, and they express a desire for those schools to remain open. I suggest that perhaps Governments of all persuasions in years gone by may have been somewhat cavalier in the way that they have dealt with many small schools and may have been unnecessarily harsh on them.

That is not to say that there will not be the closure of small schools in the future, because there will be situations where it is inevitable that they must close. This year we have been considering a number of schools in that regard. I attended a meeting in the South-East a couple of weeks ago (and the member for Mount Gambier will be aware of this because it is in his electorate). Discussions are taking place with the school community as to whether or not that school should close. There are some schools in the northern region where discussions are also taking place about the future of those schools.

The cost of running a small school is more expensive in relation to maintenance and in terms of recurrent costs of those schools per capita. However, it must also be borne in mind that if one closes a school one has to transport children to other schools, and transport costs are very high. Indeed, the transport costs this year are coming close to \$18 million. Therefore, one has to take those factors into account, and it may be that the honourable member is thinking of one school in his electorate. In one particular school we have done a study of the relative cost difference between that school and the nearby area school. The variation in per capita cost is within tolerable limits, given the other costs that would come into play if that school were closed. I am adamant that, when we consider closing a small school, we should give the school community adequate opportunity to consult and give its opinion on whether or not that should actually happen. That has happened this year with the schools in question, and it will continue to happen next year. However, there will still be the closure of schools as there always has been, and I suggest that we take into account educational factors as much as financial factors.

Mr MEIER: Will the Minister say whether there has been a positive education programme to encourage parents to send their children to the smaller schools when at present perhaps they are by-passing them?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We try to offer support for small schools, and small schools themselves undertake a number of initiatives. I was very excited when I was on the Eyre Peninsula the other day visiting schools near Port Lincoln to see a network that had been set up between a number of schools in that area. I refer to Mount Hill Rural School, the Ungarra School, Darke Peak School, and a couple of

other schools which have networked themselves together for curriculum development needs and professional development needs.

That is a form of support that will help those schools to keep pace with educational changes and to assure the parents of those school communities that those schools are giving the best possible deal for the children within those schools. That kind of initiative is well received by the Department. The Department seeks to provide support wherever possible. There is also the concept of a hub school, where small schools relate to a central school and that central school provides support. We have a number of other areas where the smaller school relates to a larger school, which draws on that school for its professional development support or curriculum development support.

The other issue about which we are concerned is the staffing of small schools. The staffing of schools in the range from 50 to 70 has been a problem. It may have been something of a disincentive for parents to send their children to those schools because there have been some inordinately large classes because of certain logistical problems in that size range. The new formulae offer significant improvements for schools in that range. In the 1984 school year they will feel the benefits in terms of staffing, and this will be an incentive to parents who may have been worried about the situations at those schools.

The Education Technology Centre has done a number of exciting experiments in relation to technology and its application to education in remote communities, including small schools. This development will expand in the years ahead. Already we have a situation in Tarcoola where students are studying through a teacher at the Education Technology Centre for one of their subjects. That has been done by technology, and it means that the students at Tarcoola who may have been somewhat limited in the range of subjects available can now draw on one other subject, thanks to that technology. It is still at the experimental stage, but we can only see those things improving and expanding in years to come.

Mr MEIER: My second question relates to something that is now before a review committee. Does the Minister think that there will be freedom of choice with respect to country parents choosing a school in the future, bearing in mind that the Transport Policy Review Steering Committee is meeting in relation to the bus situation? At present, country parents are disadvantaged by a distance factor of 4.8 km as to whether or not they are within that range of the bus route, and they do not have the same choice that city parents have of sending their children to the school to which they want to go.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I think that the School Transport Policy Review Steering Committee is a very important development this year. It is the first time in 30 years that we have had the opportunity to reconsider the issue of school transport and a number of other issues which need consideration, because a number of anomalies are cropping up in the system. As to whether parents of children in country schools have freedom of choice, in one sense they have no less freedom of choice than have parents anywhere in the city. Subject to there being places available in the school to which they want to send their children, they are able to send them anywhere in the State. Of course, I acknowledge that the actual translation of that freedom is limited by distance factors. It is also limited to many city students by distance factors in terms of the cost of getting from one part to another; and the distance from, say, a northern suburb home to a special interest school in the city centre provides transport problems as well.

However, I hope that the review committee (which is chaired by Tony Flint and has not only Education Depart-

ment representation but also parent and institute representation, as well as other groups) will address all these issues and work out how, given the funds available (and that is an important point to remember), we can offer the best possible deal to all students by means of the transport system. I have to say 'given the funds available' because it is costing a lot of money. In South Australia it is costing \$18 million a year, and it is well in excess of \$60 million a year in New South Wales, where they have a much freer range of choice.

I would have to say that the outcome of the review will still see policies giving entitlement in some cases and not in others, because I do not believe that we have the resources available to us to provide open slather in that situation. Notwithstanding that, I am certainly looking forward to the outcome of this review, because I think that it can address a number of issues which are very anomalous indeed. The 4.8 km rule is causing a lot of heartburn not only for parents but also, I suggest, regional directors who have had to cope with those problems.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

Mr KLUNDER: I notice \$991 000 in expected receipts from curriculum services: is the Minister satisfied that this is the maximum sum that can be recovered in this way, given the enormous amount of effort that teachers and the Curriculum Director have put into the creation and manufacture of new materials? If the Minister is not satisfied that that is the maximum sum, can he indicate how he intends to increase revenue from this section?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I briefly canvassed, before the luncheon adjournment, the sale of curriculum materials. It was a point of some concern to the Government, before the last election, that South Australia had established such a clear record in its capacity to produce curriculum materials, including the fact that these materials were often sought by people in other systems and that we should look to maximising the return from the sale of those materials.

Since the election of the Government, I have had investigations undertaken into this matter and officers of my Department have been talking with various other appropriate departments, including Treasury, to work out what their most preferred model would be to expand the sale of curriculum materials to other systems, to individuals in other States or indeed overseas. I have indicated briefly that I hoped we might be able to make some statement about that later this year and certainly within this financial year. The revenues should increase quite markedly from the sum we presently receive on those items. I suppose the point could be made by some that in a world of equal contributions one could work towards a system whereby educational materials were simply swapped from State to State and no attempt was made to maximise financial return. The reality is that South Australia is a net provider of such materials to other States because of the amount of effort that has gone into that, so in effect it might be regarded that without some commercial response to that we could be subsidising the developments that take place in other areas.

When there is some commercial exploitation of these resources, the actual costs of production must be taken into account, and it is appropriate that those materials should be made available to our own schools as cheaply as possible; but in terms of other areas we should be expecting them to help cover the marginal costs of production we face in making these materials. That would be the case, notwithstanding any degree of swapping principles between the various States.

Mr KLUNDER: I welcome the Government's initiative in relation to the payment for auditing materials for the

auditing of school accounts. I have been asked many questions in my area about this so I am pleased that something is being done. There are basically two types of school accounts auditing: one is the on-going audit which has to take place virtually every week because there cannot be one large audit of receipts at the end of the year; and the other is the audit that must take place at the end of the financial year in order to present the accounts to other areas such as the school councils and the Audit Department. Is the Minister in a position to indicate whether the audit funds will provide only for the end of the financial year audit or whether they will be also at least partly for the audit that will take place during the year as an ongoing project which is usually done by teachers?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The audit support is for the end of year financial audit. I take the point that there are certainly those other important needs during the year. The Department is available to offer advice to schools with regard to the proper handling of that kind of auditing but it has not been possible to consider any wider advice because that is really going into the area of a full-time auditor for each individual school. Bursars serve that particular function in schools that have them and in other schools other people have the responsibility for those particular areas. The actual money made available is purely to help with the auditing of the annual accounts of the schools.

Mr KLUNDER: Auditors tend to run the audits, and if they run the books they cannot audit them. There is possibly some conflict of interest if people who are directly responsible to the bursar, namely, the ancillary staff of the school, are then required to audit the books that he has prepared. The reason I ask the question is that in many schools the auditor is required to do the audit at the end of the week, and this is a problem particularly in large high schools when it often takes a teacher two or three hours a week to complete the audit.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I accept that point.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Does the new staffing formula take needs into account? In the course of a reply to an earlier question, Dr Tillett discussed the matter of holding 100 teachers in reserve to account for the difference between estimated and actual enrolments, but does the new staffing formula take into account various needs of individual schools, such as one with a large ethnic content, disadvantaged children (for instance, a school near a women's shelter), a large content of Aboriginal children, physically handicapped, and schools in low socio-economic areas?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The point should be made that the formula for school staffing up to and including this year has really not taken needs into account at all: it has been established on the basis of negotiable staffing or by means of Commonwealth supported programmes. The situation for next year is that the change in the staffing formula does not even take in the special needs but there is another mechanism by which we hope to address it in an equitable way, and that is that we have sent out questionnaires to schools in the State asking them to identify to the Department the number of children in various categories (for example, those for whom English is not their first language, those who are handicapped, or those with various factors of possible disadvantage), as well as offering them the opportunity to highlight to the Department other groups of children which might not have been specifically identified within the survey.

The purpose of that will be to provide the Department with the basic information upon which it can then allocate needs-based staffing to the various schools. One proposition that had been put was that we should take an indexing approach. That would simply say that X students of a certain category of disadvantage would be responded to by

an allocation of Y staff. That has not been adopted: what we have adopted is the prioritisation of groups of particular disadvantage so that we can identify that school A has X students in one category and school B has Y students and so on down the list, and then determine how far our needs staff resources will go in terms of meeting those particular needs and allocate them accordingly. The formula that has been worked out does not contain that but this other mechanism is clearly an improvement on what previously existed, which was basically just a negotiable component. It is now formalised, which is in itself approaching a formula model.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: How many staff have you set aside for that?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Basically the negotiable package that previously existed will still be used to resource that, although there will still be a negotiable element in addition because there will still be occasions when, quite regardless of what that kind of survey comes up with, the results still mean that there will be other needs that may not be met. We will see how that works in 1984 and we can then make appropriate adjustments for 1985.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: As I understand it, varying amounts are being spent by the Education Department on school security as a result of vandalism and arson. My mathematics show that this amount is almost \$7 million a year, comprising the following: repairs and replacement of equipment vandalised or stolen, \$257 000; repairs to school buildings, including charges by Public Buildings Department, \$812 000; school equipment replaced by Government Insurance Fund, \$633 000; claims admitted by Government Insurance Fund for fire damage, \$5 million; preventative measures, payments for security contracts and maintenance of alarm systems, \$122 000. That total of \$6.8 million a year is an enormous sum. This matter is serious.

I am especially interested in the reaction of school communities throughout the State, and the Minister will be aware of some of those. Do those costs include the cost of school staff time spent in assessing damage, the cost of clerical time taken in processing applications for replacements, or the cost of time taken by officers of the Public Buildings Department in preparing estimates? That amount of time must be apportioned by Government officers not necessarily in the Education Department. There is also the time that must be applied by school councils and school staff themselves in trying to solve this extremely serious problem. The cost of prevention itself is of paramount importance. The Minister is well aware of the delegation that he received from the Central Eastern Region. As I understand it, the points put by that delegation to the Minister include the demand that immediate action be taken to install suitable alarms and locking devices. Another important demand is the provision of better access to information by school councils to help stop vandalism.

If school councils had these statistics and this information concerning instances of vandalism occurring, they would be far better placed to arrange for preventative action in their own schools. I have written to the Minister putting forward a suggestion that I received concerning the system currently being used in the United States of America, where schools are lit from the outside and the school principal has the means at his or her disposal of setting the time clock before leaving the school in the afternoon.

That lighting can be set to operate at varying times during the evening. I admit that some vandalism takes place during the day at weekends, but the system to which I have referred is worth considering. This is an extremely serious problem and the Minister has acknowledged its seriousness. The problem cost the State almost \$7 million in 1982-83 without taking into account the other hidden costs to which I have referred. Urgent action is required in this matter as vandalism

and arson are causing much alarm and concern throughout the community.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I realise the concern in the community as a result of vandalism and arson, because the response from the public to my office has been tremendous. Many people have contacted my office with suggestions as to how we could cope with this serious problem. We have investigated some ideas raised by the public and we have worked out whether they offer a real solution. In fact, the proposition being put by the honourable member about lighting school yards by lights actuated by darkness or in some other way is one that we have tried in many schools already.

In my early days of teaching in the Department, flood-lighting was installed at the school where I taught and it reduced the vandalism at that school. We will never eliminate vandalism or arson, but it is clear that some systems have a better track record than others. The Government is considering making funds available so that silent security alarms may be installed. Such alarms appear to have a good success rate in the schools in which they are installed, in reducing the level of vandalism and arson and in apprehending the people responsible for it.

However, no system can entirely eliminate vandalism or arson because basically these alarms operate inside buildings, whereas the damage is often done on the outside and it is difficult to provide a system to cater for that. Investigations are being made with a view to working out what we will do in the immediate future in respect of high-risk schools. I disabuse those who hold the view (and I do not include the honourable member here) that the schools most at risk are those in certain areas that can be identified easily. There is little relationship between high-risk schools and socio-economic status. The risk relates to other factors such as the design of the school and the location of the school near housing rather than on the geographical siting of the school.

What the community has been quick to recognise is that damage to schools is a loss to the community resource, which can be measured in financial terms. The honourable member has quoted figures, but we would have to check them out to match them with the exact information in terms of cost. Also, certain items cannot be identified in financial terms. For instance, how does one make up to the teacher whose 25 years of teacher-preparation work that he has kept at the school goes up in flames? How does one make up for the work of students which was kept in the school but which has now gone up in flames?

Such a loss represents a loss to the community resource and makes the public so anxious about this issue. The suggestion might be made that we are suffering from vandalism and arson much more than any other part of the world. We are not, but we cannot rest on the point that these levels of vandalism and arson are acceptable levels of destruction of education property, because no level is acceptable. There will always be a level of vandalism and arson, but we can work toward reducing it from the present level.

Various remedial propositions have had to be rejected, such as the provision of live-in caretakers, because their services have been dispensed with in other parts of Australia. Another suggestion made to me recently concerned the use of school caretakers as night watchmen, but that suggestion has had to be discarded, because such people are not trained for the category of work involved. People need special skills if they are to perform the duties of night watchmen. The Government is as anxious as are the community and all members of this House to reduce the level of vandalism and arson in our schools.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I take it that the Minister will supply me with a costing on those areas that I mentioned, and any others?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Provided that the honourable member appreciates that some of the areas are virtually non-quantifiable.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I am prepared to have the Minister's estimates.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: My final question concerns the matter of compulsory unionism. The Minister will want to call it preference to unionists, but I call it compulsory unionism, because I think it is nothing but that. I refer to a reply that the Minister gave to a question I asked in this place on 21 April. I asked the Minister if he could say whether he or any other member of his staff had given the instruction that the names of teachers or ancillary staff in the Education Department, who are not now union members, be supplied to the appropriate union. In reply the Minister said in part:

Members who come within the canvass of the South Australian Institute of Teachers are not referred to in that memorandum.

Of course, the Minister was referring to the memorandum sent to Government Departments by the Premier. He continued:

Members who could be members of the Public Service Association of course are canvassed in that, and accordingly, they would be the ones affected by that directive.

The Minister was referring to ancillary staff. Are the names of ancillary staff, who are also members of the South Australian Institute of Teachers (not the Public Service Association), supplied to the South Australian Institute of Teachers in regard to their not being union members? Is the Minister prepared to give this Committee an assurance now that since he has been the Minister no names of teachers have been supplied by the Education Department pay office to the South Australian Institute of Teachers concerning teachers who are not union members?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: No advice is given to the South Australian Institute of Teachers on this matter. As I said in April, they are not part of the Government's directive in this regard, and accordingly, nothing has been approved by me in that regard.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: What about ancillary staff?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The ancillary staff, inasmuch as they are covered by the Public Service Association, would be covered by the directive so that advice should be given to the Public Service Association. In fact, the practice of the Department is to supply in terms of Public Service appointments the names of those who are employed under the Public Service Act conditions.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Finally, as a supplementary question to that, to the Minister's knowledge does he know whether ancillary staff who are members of the Institute of Teachers and who are not union members, have had their names supplied to the Institute of Teachers?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: What the honourable member has just said does not make sense: he referred to people who are members of the Institute of Teachers but who are not union members. I think the point that the honourable member was trying to make was whether any advice had been given about ancillary teachers and staff who are not union members, if any, and the answer to that is 'No'.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Can the Minister give the Committee some idea of the present rate of resignation of existing staff? I understand that it is now probably down below 5 per cent. As a result of the low rate of resignation, what will be the number of new graduates to be employed in 1984, and

how many applications have been received for 1984 positions?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Earlier this year I gave to the House advice as to how many applicants we had had for 1983 and about how many positions we had been able to fill. From memory I think about 625 positions were filled. It was more than 600, which was a significant increase on last year. That worked on an attrition rate of about 4 per cent. I understand that the attrition rate has now gone down to about 3 per cent, which means that there are now proportionately fewer positions available on this maintenance of teacher numbers philosophy that the present Government adheres to.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: That is a low rate.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It is a low rate. In the mid 1970s we were dealing with a 14 per cent attrition rate. Possibly it is at too low a level in terms, and it will come back up again. I have been made aware of some schools of thought who consider that the really stable point is something like 7 per cent. However, the situation that we are looking at now is at a level of something like 3 per cent. That being so it means that 400 or 500 teaching positions are available for those who want to apply for them. Last year we had about 3 000 applications for teaching positions. One could estimate that the number might be somewhat greater this year, because we were not able to meet all the applications made last year. Given the fact that there will be more appropriately trained people coming on to the market, the number this year will probably be in excess of 3 000, maybe it will be about 3 500. There will be more applicants than there will be positions available.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I understood that the figure for new applicants was liable to be about 4 500. That seems to be an extremely high figure. I think that that was quoted somewhere in the press within the past two weeks. I wondered how official that was: it is about 1 000 higher than the highest previous estimate of the optimum figure.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We will check that report: it is certainly a higher figure than that which applied earlier this year.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Can the Minister give the Committee some indication as to the equation that we were trying to work out a couple of years ago regarding the intake and the output from South Australia following the amalgamation of the South Australian College of Advanced Education? When does the Minister believe that the supply and demand of teachers will be roughly equated? We were hoping at the time of the amalgamation that it would occur in about 1985 or 1986. Will that estimate be extended considerably or is it still achievable?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Advice from the Tertiary Education Authority indicates that it will still be around 1985 or 1986, partly attributable to the fact that there is increased demand given the maintenance of teacher numbers policy. However, as the honourable member would well recognise, it is an area about which it is difficult to project into the future in determining what is going to happen, for example, in the non-Government sector, demands of teachers coming from college, and about what is to happen interstate.

I made the point a few weeks ago that the Government is concerned about the loss interstate of some able graduates, because we were not able to offer them employment opportunities early enough. We have tried to resolve that situation by bringing forward this year some of the job-offer times compared to the situation that applied last year. That will mean that we will be able to achieve a higher retention rate in regard to some of those people in South Australia who otherwise might have been lost interstate. Advice I have at this stage indicates that we are looking to 1985-86 in terms of reaching a stable mark.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: There has been considerable publicity over the past two or three years, not only in South Australia and in Australia but also in other parts of the western world regarding the actual shortage of teachers of English, mathematics, physics and chemistry. A couple of years ago I said that the problem was not immediate but that in three or four years' time we might be faced with having to take some critical decisions about the situation that exists with teachers who are of any calibre, that is, those really proficient in English, mathematics, physics and chemistry being wooed by Education Departments all over the world.

Has the Minister and his staff given any further consideration to the various proposals to offer scholarships now to excellent students with a guarantee that in three or four years' time employment would be available within the South Australian Education Department? It would be a form of bonding scholarship. Such scholarships would be offered to young people of consummate skill in those areas.

The other matter, which is an obvious short-term solution to a problem should it occur in any one year, is to offer top-class students in universities and in C.A.E.s an end on course so that it could be determined that if a person takes an education course for that fourth year after having achieved well in one of those desirable subjects, a job offer could be made. Is the problem really as bad as has been publicised? Is it simply a question of short-term problems emerging when long service leave is taken, or when during winter term so many skilled staff are replaced with temporaries who may not have the skills that the Department is looking for?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It certainly is a problem. I believe that we are overcoming it by making earlier job offers to graduates in the areas of shortage. We are able to attract a higher number of those who are coming from our colleges rather than seeing them lost to interstate or even out of the education system altogether to industry. That is one reason why it is somewhat higher in some of these areas. These subjects of high demand are of reasonably high demand in employment outside of education. So the attrition rates in some areas would be higher than 3 per cent.

That is where the problem is arising I would guesstimate. This year, I think we offered 166 positions in the maths/science area in August, compared to the normal November, and we hope that that will resolve the problem for 1984. The problem that we have had in the past is that we have had to bring in people who have required authority to teach permission from the Teacher Registration Board because they have not had the proper qualification, but we have needed their expertise in these areas of subject shortage.

We are hoping that by the mechanism we are using this year, we will not have to do that in 1984. We will have to advise the House early next year if we have to use it. We are not following through the proposition of bonded positions or end-on scholarships at this stage, because we believe that by 1985 the situation will have stabilised.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair recognises that the normal format is coming to a close. Are there any other questions from Opposition members?

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I was interested in the Minister's reference several times today to the new staffing formulae. In 1979 the then staffing formulae created anomalies in that there tended to be a sharply stepped difference between each of three different formulae. Subsequently we amended one of the formulae so that anomalies were largely removed, and we had a smooth line transition from one section of the formula to the next. Will the new formulae create anomalies and, if they do, are they such that the Minister believes they will be justified on the various needs criteria?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: There will be no system that will be devised that will be without its anomalies, and we will soon discover them in 1984. The discussions that the departmental officers have had with various people in the education community have been extensive. They have tried to canvass all the present anomalies, and speculate on future anomalies, so that, as far as humanly possible, we believe the present formulae are equitable, given the resources we have available. Of concern to the honourable member is the small school question between the 50 to 70 category.

I think that we have been able to address that matter, and experience will tell us whether we have. It is reassuring that when we did a computer run-through of all schools in the State and worked out whether they would be worse or better off on the application of the new formula compared to the application of the present formula, the results clearly showed that most schools would be better off, and that the few schools that would be worse off, would be worse off to the tune in most cases of a .1 or .2 position. Indeed, the area where there did seem to be some modification of the effect was in primary schools between 200 and 250.

That really was part of the result of trying to introduce a smooth-line effect rather than the step effect, that gave that result. However, discussions with the schools affected by that seem to have indicated that they accept that proposition happening, but clearly other factors will have to come into consideration next year. We will have to relook at the situation then to find out whether any new anomalies have cropped up. A needs based component, as I mentioned a few moments ago, is the subject of a separate kind of approach as we are slowly trying to formalise our response to needs, but it is in a sense separate from this new staffing formula that will apply next year.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I want to discuss with the Minister the disadvantaged schools programme of the Commonwealth, as it applies to South Australia through priority projects. I will ask the Minister a series of questions that he can answer in writing if he wishes. There is one question I wish to discuss with him at the end of that series of questions. How are members of the task force for priority projects appointed? For what periods are they appointed, and what criteria are used in determining those appointees? To whom is the head of priority projects accountable? To whom is the priority projects task force accountable for the expenditure of money in schools? Finally, how and by whom are guidelines set by which task force members accept, reject and/or modify submissions received for priority projects from individual schools?

They are fairly comprehensive questions, and I should like answers to them. If the Minister can answer them now, well and good. Also, I ask the Minister about evaluation of priority project schemes. Obviously, being part of the disadvantaged schools programme, it is extremely important, and what tends to worry me and worries people in the community is that priority projects are instituted in various schools, and it seems from what I can learn that there is little evaluation of those projects.

I can give the Minister an example: home/school liaison is part of priority projects. A teacher is appointed to a school as a home/school liaison teacher or officer. After one, two, or three years perhaps, that teacher is moved to another school. I would be the first to admit that there are many schools that require this type of service, especially disadvantaged schools. However, as I understand it, the theory is that, by having that teacher at a school for three years, by the time that teacher leaves that school the rest of the staff are then able to pick up the home/school liaison in that area, despite the fact that the teacher has been shifted to another school.

I want to know whether there is an evaluation of the results of priority projects in schools? How is it carried out? Does the Minister agree that there is some problem with other teaching staff having to take on a programme when a teacher is shifted to another school?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I will hand over to the Director-General to give advice as to the mechanics of the whole scheme. However, I have a few comments. There is a problem of what one might call the transition of a school from the priority project programme to ordinary status, if one wants to talk about it like that. The Department has tried to accept it generally in terms of the way they have staffed schools that are going through that transition. In many instances, one will find that the Department has erred on the side of generosity in trying to accept those sorts of problems when schools come off the priority projects list.

One of the points that need to be made about special programmes such as the home liaison positions is that it is expected to be built into the model of the school and that, once the basic groundwork has been done, the contact has been established and the on-going maintenance of that effort is not seen as a major commitment. That is the theory. It is not a matter of saying that we can now accept it but also that it will not be as hard to accept as it would have been for another school that was not a priority school and start the whole project without any home liaison positions. There is an evaluation of home priority projects.

Earlier this year I had the opportunity to be present when some results about the evaluation programme were presented. I had studied priority schools over the past 10 years and monitored select groups of students to determine their attitude towards school and education generally as well as their abilities in some areas. The results found that, between 1973 and 1975, the priority projects programme for schools to which they applied resulted in an increased esteem for schools and education by students without any observable results on their achievement rates.

From that point on, there were also improvements in their achievement rates. The number of children below their chronological age in terms of reading reduced, and the number of children who had problems in numeracy reduced. That was found by 1983. Clearly, the priority programme support did have improvements in not only the view of the students in the schools but also in their achievements. One of the encouraging signs was that, when one analysed the number of students affected in priority project schools (and there are in excess of 100 priority project schools) and worked out the actual cost of the programmes, in terms of extra cost per capita effort, it was marginal for quite a large result.

I accept the fact that there is a transition problem that the Department tries to solve. Maybe we should be looking at other ways to ensure that the transition is better handled. In terms of the mechanics of the project, I ask the Director-General to comment.

Mr Steinle: The officer in charge of the programme was the person who was given the responsibility when the project was introduced some years ago. He has done post graduate work in the area of the disadvantaged: he has displayed much skill in that area and has distinguished himself in this State and nationally. He is seen as a spokesman in the area. The membership of the task force is reviewed from time to time. We try to ensure that task forces comprise a mix of people with skills and perception principles. The funding has to be acquitted within the guidelines of the Schools Commission, and we have to sign acquittal notices. We are also responsible in our own way to Treasury. The problem posed by the movement of staff is certainly critical, and I have great sympathy for the problem raised.

We try to let a school know as early as possible when there is to be a change to ensure that the school understands why the change has to be made. The programme essentially is designed to be remedial and, when the situation is to some extent remedial, we move the people out and put the money into another area. That always causes concern on the part of the school. The other problem we face is the integration of the additional teachers within the normal staffing of the school.

In the past we have had a problem because to remove a person appointed under the disadvantaged schools programme destroys the balance of staff within the school. We have tried to try to ensure that that imbalance, when changes are made, is not to the detriment of the school. That has not by any means been perfected, but it is better than it was. There is a dilemma because the School Commission money comes in a series of programmes like this. It can cause an imbalance.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: The Minister may be interested to know that I was approached at the SAASSO conference on Friday afternoon by two members of a school council of a priority projects school. That school is to lose their home liaison teacher this coming year. One person was a teacher at the school as well as being on the school council, and the other was a parent. They were expressing grave concern at how the rest of the school was going to continue the home-school liaison programme.

The school is in a disadvantaged area. Those people were extremely concerned and spoke to me at great length about the problem. The Minister may be interested to know that I do not share his optimism that, by taking a teacher away, the school can continue with the programme. Perhaps the optimistic result that the Minister gave reflects schools at which the priority projects officer had been at the school for a longer period than usual.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I was not indicating that there are no problems there. I said that there were transition problems in the status of a priority project school going to a non-priority project school. Even the loss of programmes, whilst still remaining a priority school, creates problems. I was trying to indicate that it is not quite as black as it might look, but we acknowledge that there are problems in the transition of one phase to another.

I can identify one situation (without naming the school) that not only moved from being a priority project school to being a non-priority project school but also moved from having high enrolments (with declining enrolments more rapid than schools around it) but also additional problems with the selection of being a principal A school to being a non-principal A school. It had three sets of facts with which to cope, and were a serious problem for that school. I am not casting aside the difficulties it faced. We have to consider such problems. It is not a matter of saying that the same amount of effort will have to be put in by the basic staff as was being put in by the priority staff. There is, nevertheless, an order of magnitude.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: If a priority school were to suffer vandalism or a fire destroyed a large part of the school, whence would the funds come for redeveloping the school? Would it come from priority projects money or out of the usual education funds allocated to all other schools.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I understand that it comes from the normal pool of money in the State Government Insurance Fund. It would mean that special items to be paid for by priority projects would be replaced by State Government funds. Most of the investment for priority projects is not in things but rather in people. There would not be a high cost associated with priority project losses, because the people are still there.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Can the Minister advise us of the reason for the quite considerable changes which have taken place in the Curriculum Services funding and staffing allocations referred to on page 37 of the yellow book? The Development and Advisory Services proposed funding in 1982-83 was \$13.9 million. The outcome was \$8.8 million, and the proposed allocation for 1983-84 is \$8.9 million. In relation to the provision of educational materials and auxiliary education, those funds appear to have been reallocated rather than just cancelled out. In relation to staffing, the Curriculum Development and Advisory Services proposed staff for 1983-84 is 279.2; the provision of educational materials, a staff of 75; and in relation to auxiliary education, a staff of 154.6 is proposed, a substantial change from the 1982-83 proposed staffing. However, from the actual 1982-83 staff it seems to have stabilised over those three divisions.

I wonder whether or not that is a true revision of staffing, or whether it is simply a reallocation of the staff which was originally in Curriculum Development and Advisory Services. What staff has now been allocated more appropriately to the other two lines?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: That is part of the point I was making earlier today: the comparability between the proposed 1982-83 and 1983-84 figures is very difficult indeed, because the basis of coming to those figures has changed. The more accurate one which is out of step with our normal procedure would be to look at the outcome and compare that with the proposed figures. Therefore, those figures indicate a stability in staffing rather than a massive increase. The reality is that, in terms of advisory positions for the 1983-84 year, there will be an increase of 10.5 in the advisory positions over what applied at the beginning of 1983. However, I will call on Dr Tillett to comment further on why the 1982-83 and the 1983-84 proposed figures cannot be compared.

Dr Tillett: This is really only an amplification that I would like to make of a point already made. The allocation of positions to one programme or another in the programme performance budget papers is, in many instances, an action taken on the basis of a subjective judgment. It is a manual process in most instances, and there are arguments as to whether a particular officer fits best into this programme or another, or in this category or another. In order to maintain consistency of information from one year to the next, it would be necessary, of course, that precisely the same procedures be followed from one year to the next. It is regrettably true that the working papers in relation to last year's allocations were not available when the allocation for this year was undertaken. Consequently, that kind of decision had to be made on a *de nouveau* basis and, whilst I can assure the Chairman and members of the Committee that the procedures adopted this year will be documented and ensure consistent approaches in future years, it is regrettably not possible to make sensible and meaningful comparisons between the outcome figures for 1983-84 on the basis of individual programmes, although such comparisons can be made meaningfully in terms of the total numbers across all programmes.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The transfer of the Education Department's itinerant drama groups to the Carclew establishment was proposed 18 months ago and was partly being achieved. One of the problems which presented itself was that there was a considerable salary differential between that being paid to teachers who are members of the Education Department's groups and the professional staff attached to Carclew. I think it was proposed that an amount of approximately \$189 000 be transferred from the Education Department with the crew when it was ultimately achieved. I wonder whether that was capable of achievement, or whether

the problem is still there, and how the whole situation rests in relation to the drama groups.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: There was a transfer from the Education Department to the Department for the Arts. That has been effected. Certain other aspects which are still within the Education Department's area of responsibility are the subject of review. One of those is Troika. That, along with other associated subjects, is the subject of Cabinet review and we will have to wait for the outcome of that review before determining what happens in that regard. However, there have been some transfers to the Department for the Arts, and I will call on the Director-General to elaborate on that.

Mr Steidle: I have nothing to add to that.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The Minister has already referred to the problem of closure of small schools, and he mentioned Suttontown, in the South-East, which has been a longstanding problem for probably 10 years or more. Can the Minister indicate how many small schools in South Australia are under consideration for closure? I have a copy of a letter which the President (Maurice Francis) and the Secretary (John Crawford) of the Olary school sent to me regarding the possible closure of Olary school. Coupled with that, how many junior primary schools are under consideration for closure in South Australia?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I refer to the situation with regard to the primary schools being considered for closure. Initially three primary schools are being considered for closure: Iron Baron, Olary, and Suttontown. It is now down to Olary and Suttontown which are under examination. I expect that I will be able to make announcements in relation to both of those soon.

The junior primary school situation is a little different. A number of junior primary schools were considered for disestablishment and two were considered for establishment. I asked the Department to undertake discussions with school communities in each of those instances to ascertain whether we could have junior primary schools either disestablished or established. The Reynella East community has now agreed to the establishment of a junior primary school on that school site. In relation to the other one where discussions were taking place, nothing will eventuate for 1984, but we are hopeful that further discussions during 1984 will see a result maybe in 1985.

As to disestablishment, a number were looked at in that regard. First, the Prospect Junior Primary School has been disestablished with the absolute concurrence (may I say) of the local school community and the Education Department. Another one that has been disestablished is the Brahma Lodge Junior Primary School, which is in my electorate, where there was some division of opinion in the local community. The Ascot Park Junior Primary School has been disestablished. Junior primary schools that were the subject of discussions about disestablishment but which have not been disestablished include Seacliff. Christies Beach has not been disestablished, and one or two others are under further examination. The other point to make with regard to closure of schools is that, with the opening of Miltaburra, three schools will close: Haslam, Wirrulla and Nunjikompita. I note that a great deal of sadness is being expressed about the loss of Nunjikompita, by virtue of its name. Therefore, those schools automatically close and become part of the new Miltaburra school.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: First, can the Minister say whether receipts from land sales in this financial year will go to bolster the Department's building programme, or will there be money going straight to Treasury?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: A share of the receipts from land sales goes to the Education Department capital works programme, and the remainder to Treasury. I suppose in a

sense the point we have to take into account in the allocation of the capital works budget is that certain estimates are made about how much money will be generated by land sales in any 12-month period and in terms of allocating the target figure in the Education budget, it is assumed so much will be received and that that will go to Treasury to pay back for capital works projects. That needs to be taken into account. In addition, some of the funds are specifically given to the Education Department. It varies from occasion to occasion. In some instances, for example, if part of a school campus is sold off because it is surplus to the needs of the school, often arrangements are made between the Education Department, the school community and Treasury as to how the funds will be disbursed and some proportion is assessed.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Will the Minister provide me with some details about projections for this financial year? What will be held by the Department and how much will go to Treasury? There has been a significant reduction in the school building programme, and I would have hoped that there would be some benefit from money received from land sales. Can the Minister say why the eastern end of the Salisbury Heights Primary School and the Ingle Farm High School sites are being sold off? I assume that it is because they are surplus to requirements but I would like to know why, because they are in areas where I would have thought they would be required.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I will have to get more firm advice. From memory, I believe that the Salisbury Heights sale is associated with a kindergarten development, but I will have to check that out. In relation to Ingle Farm, I know one school had to sell off land because of a road reserve requirement and that might be the school. I will get back to the member with correct information.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the Minister confirm that that will be brought down in a form suitable for inclusion in *Hansard*?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: My next question relates to ancillary staff in area schools. I understand that area schools are staffed by primary school formulae. I am also informed that in an area school of 200 high school students and 300 primary school students there would be two only ancillary staff provided for the secondary students because the whole school is worked out on the primary school formulae. I am also informed that this means that only a 50 per cent support staff is available. I am also informed that the school takes some of the primary ancillary staff time to assist at secondary level, thereby reducing the primary level. As they are unable to provide a full complement at secondary level, both primary and secondary levels are disadvantaged. Is the Minister looking at this question and is the information I have given to the Committee factual?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: As I understand it, it is not correct. Ancillary staff allocation to area schools is done on the basis of their primary component separately from their secondary component, so they should be receiving for secondary students and the teachers attached to those secondary students the proper secondary ancillary allocation. Notwithstanding that, I would certainly have to acknowledge that special problems have traditionally applied to area schools, particularly because their secondary numbers are normally quite low and therefore that does create some difficulties in terms of class formation and other problems. We have tried to look at this problem this year in terms of the formula and we will have to keep looking at that to make sure we are able to give adequate support to them.

The other point made by area schools is that they are an entity from R through year 10, 11 or 12, however many years they offer, and the seniors of the school offer a service

right across the school rather than just to the secondary component; that therefore should be taken into account. We have not really in the short term been able to look at that as well as we might, but obviously it is a point we will be looking at later.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote 'Education, \$507 446 000' completed.

Works and Services—Education Department, \$2 550 000

Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
The Hon. Jennifer Adamson
The Hon. H. Allison
Mr D.M. Ferguson
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Ms S.M. Lenehan
Mr E.J. Meier
Mr J.P. Trainer
The Hon. Michael Wilson

Witness:
The Hon. Lynn Arnold, Minister of Education.

Departmental Advisers:
Mr J.R. Steinle, Director-General of Education, Education Department.
Dr P.I. Tillett, Assistant Director-General of Education, Education Department.
Mr T.M. Starr, Chief Management Accountant (Education), Education Department.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: In relation to the purchase of school buses, the Minister mentioned earlier that he has established a review into school transportation. When does he expect that committee to present its report?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I would hope to have the full report later this year or early in 1984. The committee may choose to report on specific aspects in the interim, but I am leaving that for the committee to decide.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Will the Minister ensure that the committee takes into account the possibility of the private sector being used as much as possible in the provision of school transportation?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: That is not in the terms of reference, but one of the things that I know has already happened at the committee level is that it has had representation put to it by the private sector. I will leave it to the committee to decide what is its considered opinion about that matter, and then the Government will consider its attitude to that proposition. As the honourable member will know, the Department has a considerable number of contract buses (270) compared to the 430 Department buses we have, so we have a significant contribution from the private sector already.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I made that point because at one stage the Education Department bus fleet was greater than that of the S.T.A., which to a former Minister of Transport is a matter of some chagrin, but that no longer applies, I am glad to say for the Education Department's operating expenses. What criteria does the Department use in allocating diesel engined buses to country areas, especially in areas of high fire risk? The Minister will be

aware of the correspondence he has had with the Kangaroo Inn Area School on this matter. I am informed that during the recent bushfires some problems were caused by the vaporisation of petrol in the transporting of students from the area. The Kangaroo Inn Area School is very isolated and would seem to be one of those areas to which high priority should be given to the provision of diesel engined buses. I understand that the bitumen was melting at that time, which I know has nothing to do with engines. I would like the Minister to state the criteria that apply in providing diesel engined buses to schools where there is a high fire risk.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We are ensuring that some of the new buses we purchase are diesel engined. That is for two reasons; one reason comes out of the fires earlier this year, which highlighted some problems; the other problem really came before the Estimates Committees last year, when the member for Fisher and I brought up problems associated with petrol sniffing in some areas. It was stated at that time that diesel buses would be preferable if they could be made available. That is another criterion we have to respond to. We are somewhat more able to respond to that this year than we were in previous years because we have been able to buy more buses. During this financial year, we have allocated funds to add 48 buses, which is the greatest number for four years and, given the fact that we work on a 10-year replacement rate for buses if we follow the S.T.A. figures, that is in excess of replacement needs but we have a backlog to catch up, so it is partly eroding the backlog but still leaving some backlog. I have recently written to the Kangaroo Inn Area School about its request of having diesel buses. The problem is that we have only large diesel buses.

Kangaroo Inn has a mixed collection of buses including medium and small, but we do not have them in diesel. Given the fact that 48 buses out of 430 is about 11 per cent, that is not enough to meet State-wide needs, so Kangaroo Inn will get at least one diesel bus. However, they will not have all their buses replaced by diesel buses. The application of auxiliary pumps to petrol engines overcomes the blockage problems occurring with vaporisation earlier this year, so we could make petrol buses safe with these auxiliary pumps. We will look at that in terms of schools in areas of high fire risk, so it need not be a diesel solution: it could be a petrol solution with modified equipment.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: The sum of \$400 000 is allocated for the replacement of school furniture. I am concerned about the design of school furniture, especially the moulded plastic chairs which can have an adverse effect on the posture of schoolchildren and also on their comfort, and therefore their level of concentration over a period. Has the Department sought advice from ergonomists regarding the design of school desks and especially school chairs and, if it has, what advice has been received? Does the provision for new furniture imply that the replacement and additional furniture will be the design which is already used in schools and which I am told is not the best design for the growing bodies of children or indeed for adults who must use the chairs at school council meetings?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I take the honourable member's point. There is only one thing worse than having to use such chairs at a school council meeting: having to use kindergarten chairs at a kindergarten council meeting. We are locked in by the supply and tender process, which restricts us to certain types of chair. As I understand that we have not had advice from ergonomists, I will take up that point and have the matter referred for further investigation because the provision of seating that is good for posture and for study attitudes is important. If a student is not comfortable he or she will find it difficult to concentrate.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Klunder): Are there any further questions? There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: May I thank the departmental witnesses for their attendance and for their answers.

Technical and Further Education, \$73 369 000

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson

The Hon. H. Allison

Mr D.M. Ferguson

Mr J.H.C. Klunder

Ms S.M. Lenchan

Mr E.J. Meier

Mr J.P. Trainer

The Hon. Michael Wilson

Witness:

The Hon. Lynn Arnold, Minister of Education.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr L. Fricker, Director-General, Technical and Further Education Department.

Mr P. Fleming, Director, College Operations, Technical and Further Education Department.

Mr D. Carter, Director, Administration and Finance, Technical and Further Education Department.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Klunder): I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: At page 77 of the yellow book, the 'hospitality' line refers to the broad objectives and goals, namely, to provide a comprehensive range of programmes for vocational education training and retraining. Having studied all the programmes, I can find reference only to hospitality and no reference at all to tourism, despite the obvious and emerging need for people trained in the tourism industry, which is far broader than the hospitality industry. Can the Minister detail the components of the increase in allocation to the hospitality sector? Further, can he say whether the tourism courses conducted in the colleges are embraced in the hospitality line or is their funding included in some other line?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: There has been an increase in student numbers in the hospitality area. Last year there were 30 graduates in the pre-location area; 60 this year; and an anticipated 80 next year. For the advanced certificate, there were no graduates last year; 42 this year (the year of its introduction); and more than 42 are anticipated next year. On the food service course, there were 25 graduates in 1982; 50 in 1983; and 70 are projected for 1984. Regarding the travel and tourism courses in addition to the hospitality courses, in 1983 an additional 100 students were enrolled in the various certificate and advanced courses over and above those enrolled in 1982. Hospitality and local tourism courses will commence at Noarlunga in 1984, and two new staff will be appointed for that programme. We will have a school of tourism and hospitality at the new Adelaide College of Technical and Further Education.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: A school of tourism has been called for by the Opposition on several occasions and also by the tourism industry. The comment of the Minister is the first official advice that I have heard of the formal establishment of such a school at the Adelaide college

and I suspect that the staff at Regency Park and at Salisbury would feel keenly disappointed because it was their hope that such a school would be established at one or the other of those campuses. It seems unusual that Regency Park, which has pioneered the course and established it, should not be the site for the new school. What is the rationale behind the establishment of a school of tourism at the Adelaide college?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Never at any stage has it been suggested that a school of tourism would be established at Salisbury. Indeed, the honourable member may have meant that it might be established at Elizabeth. Regency Park clearly had been a possibility. The honourable member indicated that this matter had not been referred to before. I note from the Notice Paper that she has not yet had an opportunity to speak on this matter in private members' time. If the matter had not been raised during the Estimates Committee today it would have been raised in my response to her speech.

Regency Park has an important part to play in this whole area of education, indeed, a well renowned part throughout Australia. It is operating to peak demand, and we clearly had to consider what we were going to do in terms of facilities. At Regency Park a new kitchen has been commissioned for the School of Food and Catering, which is a very important part of the hospitality industry facilities at Regency Park.

The view was that the Adelaide College of TAFE is a central college. It will provide easy access to those within the square mile and surrounding environs who want to do part-time courses and work at other occupations, and a central location is very appropriate. The Business School at the Adelaide College, presently operating from Centrepoint, has a lot of connection with the expansion of the tourist sector, because good management principles must be involved there; so you have inter-relations with those two. I ask the Director-General whether he wants to make any additional comments.

Mr Fricker: I have very little to add to what the Minister has said. The key points have been mentioned. At Regency Park there is already a very good School of Food and Catering, which has been developing, as a peripheral activity, courses in travel. As the honourable member has said, travel is only a part of tourism. To accommodate a School of Tourism, which is still at the planning stage, will require facilities that simply do not exist at Regency Park at present. So, because of the combination of the possibility of additional space in the new building at Light Square, plus a central city location and the close liaison with not only business studies, as the Minister has mentioned, but also the School of Community Languages (because the teaching of basic vocabulary in foreign languages is an essential part of tourism), it has been recommended to the Minister that a School of Tourism be established at the Adelaide College.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: The Minister may recall that I have a Question on Notice that has remained unanswered for some time on the matter of whether, in view of the extreme cost of capital facilities for hospitality education, the Government proposes to duplicate at the Adelaide College any of the hospitality facilities (the kitchens, and so on, that are at Regency Park) in the new building at Adelaide. If that is the case I think there will be severe and very well justified criticisms. The Regency Park set-up is regarded as the Rolls Royce of hospitality training in Australia, and to duplicate anything that is there at another college a few miles away would be an extraordinary use of public resources.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In fact, it is not intended to duplicate the Regency Park facilities at the Adelaide College. There will be a minimal holding-type facility there for activ-

ities which for immediacy need to be there. Otherwise, Regency Park will be the centre where the facilities will continue to be located, and they will not be duplicated. An opposite anxiety was expressed on an earlier occasion by the member for Mawson about the Noarlunga College. Her concern was that facilities were not adequate for hospitality courses. The view that I took on that occasion was that the facilities are adequate for the courses that will be offered at that college. They will be able to continue to offer a significant range of courses without having a duplication of facilities at Regency Park, which indeed are there for specialist-type courses and for longer-term courses than will be available at the other colleges.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: Because tourism is so complex and diverse, and demand for it must necessarily reflect that fact, does the Government intend, whilst basing a school at the new Adelaide College, to use the resources of the College of Advanced Education and, possibly even on a contract basis if necessary, the resources of either of the universities to contribute to the resources of the School of Tourism? In an industry that is so basic, it would be common sense to use the resources of every available tertiary institution, even though the school will be based at only one such institution.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I shall ask the Director-General to comment on that.

Mr Fricker: It is the intention of the various sectors of the tertiary education spectrum to work very closely with each other in this regard. In fact, only about a week and a half ago a conference was held at TEASA (Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia) at which Mr Inns was present, as also were a representative of the Travel Association, representatives of the South Australian Institute of Technology and the South Australian College of Advanced Education, and I represented the Department of Technical and Further Education. The needs of the industry in regard to training were addressed in some detail. Different levels of training were identified in the various educational sectors.

I think Professor Malloy, from the Institute of Technology, suggested that a body should be set up, which might be a board of studies or a council, which could be given the title of, say, 'South Australian College of Tourism' and which would co-ordinate study programmes across the various levels of education, the TAFE Colleges, the C.A.E.s, the universities, and so on. We are to meet again in two or three weeks time, when we will have more specific proposals to put forward, which will first of all set out the existing position and then set out the directions in which we can see ourselves heading in future and also indicate how the resources that we possess can be utilised to the best advantage of South Australia and its tourism industry. Professor Malloy wanted it clearly recorded that the focus of any such body would be the college at Light Square. As I have said, that is still in the planning stage, but clearly a lot of attention about this has been generated. The fact that that was identified as a focus was, I think, very encouraging for future development.

Ms LENEHAN: I refer to the line 'Lecturing, administration and ancillary staff' and to page 67 of the yellow book where details are given of a proposed increase in staff from 2 265.5 as at 30 June 1983 to 2 305 (proposed) as at 30 June 1984. That represents a total increase in full-time equivalent staff of 39.5. Can the Minister say where this increase in staffing will be deployed, and can he give some rationale for that deployment?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: First, there is a new facility at Noarlunga which requires extra staff on a full-time commitment. In the past there has been a tendency to staff new activities not entirely with new staff but partly with staff from other colleges due to a running down of activities at

other colleges. That is being avoided in this budgetary situation. Further, with the apprenticeship programme at Whyalla announced earlier this year, an allocation has been made in this Budget to ensure that adequate staff is made available for that. At page 77 of the yellow book, areas where increases have occurred are identified. For example, business studies, electronic engineering, health and care courses, and rural studies have been areas of significant growth, as have the areas of commercial studies and transition education. Some of the increases are spread across a number of colleges. However, the other point that I come back to is that the development of Noarlunga does require that there be extra staff available.

Ms LENEHAN: My next question relates to the provision of child care within the technical and further education sector. It would probably come under the line 'support services' or 'services provided by the Education Department'. Can the Minister say how the \$75 000 allocated will be spent to expand the child care provisions in 1983-84, and whether the Department has significantly changed its policy from that of the last Government in respect to the provision of child care, and, if so, what is the current policy?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: There has been a major change in emphasis on this matter. The present Government believes that the provision of child care facilities is part of the question of access to education opportunity. Policy indicated that we wanted to provide child care facilities with one professionally trained person at each college. Repeating the points that I made this morning, of course, that is a phased-in programme and cannot be achieved in one allocation.

Immediately on coming to Government we put in train a provision involving three of the community colleges, and that will be expanded in the coming 12 months by virtue of the extra money made available in the 1983-84 Budget. The colleges where additional appointments have already been made this year are the Elizabeth Community College, the Gilles Plains Community College and the Riverland Community College, Loxton and Berri sites. We expect that during the coming year appointments will be made at the Kensington Park College, the Noarlunga Community College, the Riverland Community College and the other branches of that college, and the South-East Community College. We have 34 community colleges, so we still have some way to go.

Colleges have been so selected on the basis of, first, the demand that we anticipate exists in those communities; and, secondly, the availability of appropriate facilities. It is not a matter of unlocking any room and saying that will now be the child care facility. We must make sure that there are toilets, store areas and various other facilities available for child care.

The honourable member may have noticed an allocation of funds for the capital construction of the Noarlunga child care facility: we are working on the basis that this will be a joint facility between the Noarlunga health complex, which the Minister of Health announced some time ago, and the College of Technical and Further Education. We are working on the premise that it would not be a good use of community resources to have two separate child care facilities within metres of each other but, rather, that it would make more sense to try to amalgamate the two. Significant discussions have taken place on that line. That has meant, in effect, delaying the coming on stream of the Noarlunga child care facility and we regret that, but we believe that, in terms of proper provision for the Noarlunga community, it is better to have those discussions between those two departments because what we finally come up with will be a better service both for those who go to the health complex and those who go to the community college.

Ms LENEHAN: The Department of Technical and Further Education has been severely criticised for not providing current funds for new capital works involving the Commonwealth. Can the Minister outline what the present Budget is doing to answer these criticisms in general and, in particular, comment on the position regarding the new Noarlunga College?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I indicated a few moments ago that part of the increase in staffing is a result of the new Noarlunga College. We have been criticised by the TAFE Council of the Tertiary Education Commission with regard to State effort, but I would say that the 1983-84 budget has seen a reversal of the trend that has been in place for some years. There has been some increase in the State effort compared to the total package of effort in terms of recurrent funding. We still have some way to go to make up for what has taken place over recent years, but we have reversed the trend. We can obtain actual figures on the amount of State effort. There has been a 4 per cent increase in real terms in

the State effort for TAFE, and that is the first time that that has happened for some years.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: On the question of the TAFE budget, I welcome the increase in both Commonwealth and State funding. My first question refers to the distribution of the extra \$4.65 million (I cannot find my Commonwealth receipts but I think that is the figure) of Commonwealth funding received for TAFE. How is this to be distributed, and how much of that funding is represented by the participation in equity moneys flowing from the Commonwealth?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The participation equity programme is still being worked through between the State and Federal Governments (discussions are taking place almost daily on that matter), so I would venture to suggest that none of the \$4.65 million comes under that. I have a table of the figures here that indicates the programme involving allocations of Commonwealth money. I seek leave to have that table inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

Details of \$1 500 000—Commonwealth Programmes
Sub-programme \$'000

Item	Building	Business studies	Electrical	Health and care	Hospitality	Language	Mechanical engineering	Rural	Transport
Experimental training (\$298 000)	13	134 (3.5 FTE)		35 (1)	33 (1)		42 (1.5)	41 (1)	
Commonwealth Prevocational (\$709 000)	143 (6.5 FTE)		81 (3.0)		136 (5.5)		125 (4.5)	81 (3)	14 (6.5)
Whyalla B.H.P. (\$343 000)	13 (0.5 FTE)		33 (1.0)				193 (6.0)		100 (1.5)
Skills in demand \$102 000					102 (3.5 FTE)				
Advanced English (\$48 000)						48 (1.6)			

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: The Government has recently made a decision to impose tuition fees on all TAFE courses other than pre-vocational courses. How much is estimated to accrue from the imposition of those fees? Will any of those increased fees flow to the Department, or will they all go into Treasury?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In regard to the tuition fees for non-award courses, there are two elements that need to be considered. In a number of instances the Department in fact operates short-term courses for particular enterprises for its staff or, indeed, short-term courses for various people in the community. In Western Australia, the expansion of this area of activity actually generates funds for technical and further education, such funds being used to finance those particular programmes and other programmes. It was the Government's belief that we should consider that as a possibility for expansion in South Australia and, if we were to expand these short-term courses, we needed to generate the funds to pay for it, because we are in a time of straitened financial conditions. In addition, we had a major increase in the expenditure for TAFE in the State Budget. The honourable member has identified that there has been an increase in Commonwealth funds, but there has been an increase of 4 per cent in real terms in State commitment.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I believe I complimented you on that a while ago.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes, you did. The bulk of that is being funded from Consolidated Revenue, but part of that will be funded, first, by tuition fees and secondly, by part of the registration fees. The tuition fees in the 1983-84 financial year will not be a very significant item but will

become more significant in the 1984-85 financial year and onwards. It should be seen as funding part of the general TAFE activities and as providing an offset to the increased call on Consolidated Revenue that TAFE activities have imposed. The point that needs to be made is that the tuition fees will be linked with stream 6 fees, which are presently \$1.65 per hour.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: The Minister did not indicate how much he expected the amount to be for the full year.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In terms of tuition fees, the full year effect would be about \$250 000.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I refer to the Adult Migration Education Scheme: will the Minister advise how many contract teachers have now become permanent under this scheme and say whether there has been a reduction in the number of volunteers associated with it?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The matter is presently the subject of a submission to Cabinet. Following the recent Budget provisions of the Federal Government which see an increase in permanent staffing for such programmes, and given that we have had to wait for details from the Federal Government on how its Budget offering applies, we have not been able to move as early on this as I would have liked. I cannot indicate how many positions will be affected by any moves by the State Government, but I expect to know within about four weeks.

We have converted positions from temporary to permanent in State-funded areas and have now brought it down to below the 7 per cent—the threshold figure set by previous agreement. We do, however, still have problems in Aboriginal

education and that, in itself, is the subject of State Government Cabinet consideration. I indicated when in Opposition that we were concerned at the overwhelming use of volunteers in the adult literacy programme and that we should be trying to move back from that position. At this stage, we still have a heavy predominance of use of volunteers in that programme, and that situation will continue for the 1983-84 financial year. I hope that we will see at the end of the year less call on such people than we have seen in the past. However, there will still be a heavy call on that type of support.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Will the Minister undertake to consult fully with the volunteers before taking any steps to reduce their numbers?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We certainly value very much the support that volunteers give to the programme. My concern is that we have taken advantage of a considerable number of them and have not been able to offer them the full support they may have needed in order to run those courses. There have been a number of cases where volunteers have said they have been asked to do something and they do not have the necessary skills. They would appreciate extra support but, because of the size of the programme we run and the number of volunteers we use, it is a large programme and difficult to provide support for all of it. The work done by the Adult Literacy Unit and other units in TAFE is superb, but there is a limit to how far they can stretch that work. The honourable member is advised that we have concerns the other way, namely, that people who are h.p.i. instructors in this area are concerned that they are seeing their commitment reduced, and they want to be consulted about that.

Mr FERGUSON: I refer to the TAFE college at Croydon Park. Criticism has been made in the past about the absence of plans to take out the asbestos in the Stanley Street premises of that college. Is that problem being addressed in the present Budget?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes, funds are being provided for that. I share the honourable member's concern about this matter, which has been bedevilling the Department for some time; that is why the priority for that programme has been raised.

Mr FERGUSON: Will the Minister report on the progress of the unusual venture between private enterprise and the Government sector involving the cadcam undertaking at Regency Park Community College?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It has been an exciting proposition. Shortly after coming to Government I was appointed Minister for Technology. It was brought to my attention that the previous Government had given some encouragement to the Caddsmen Bureau to establish in South Australia with a cadcam facility (computer-aided design computer-aided manufacturing). This facility involved expenditure on equipment amounting to about \$500 000. An understanding had been given that some support would be extended, in the short to medium term, to that enterprise to cater for its first years of operation, but that was not forthcoming. On my appointment to the Ministry I faced the prospect of that company leaving South Australia from the Hendon Park industrial village and going interstate. It came to the Government to talk over the proposition.

At the same time, the Department of Technical and Further Education, conscious of the fact that the area of cadcam technology was one to which the Department must respond in terms of education programmes, as well as being conscious also of the high cost involved, was trying to examine how it could do that. The solution finally found was to consider the need to provide some assistance to the Caddsmen Bureau to keep it in South Australia as an industry that could be used by this State and also to accommodate education

equipment needs of the Department which wanted cadcam facilities. It was agreed that we would give it rent-free accommodation at the Regency Park Community College in exchange for the accommodation that it vacated. In addition, we would pay some money towards the maintenance of the machine. In return we would get access to the equipment after hours on a full-time basis and, during work hours, on a part-time basis. That means that the Bureau, which was having trouble maintaining itself in South Australia until such time as South Australian industry realised the great benefit that this technology could be to it, was able to receive Government assistance in the short to medium term.

The education community was able to receive access to equipment valued at \$500 000 which we did not have the funds to purchase at this time. We have been able to give access to this experience to our students much earlier than would otherwise have been the case. It is a good example of co-operation between the private and public sectors. Since the arrival of the Bureau at Regency Park, 76 students have completed the special course in computer-aided drafting and design. Previously, only about 12 students took the course annually. There is now a large waiting list of students wishing to do the course. They are from the Technicians Certificate in Numerical Engineering. Architectural students from the Gilles Plains Community College are also using the facility one night a week. It is not there only for students at Regency Park but goes further than that.

It has now been possible to include elements of the cadcam in existing technician certificate subjects such as, for example, engineering drawing and design 2 and 3. In addition to that, since the cadcam facility, Computervision, has lent the school a terminal free of charge, and that has been linked to the Caddsmen Bureau, and is also linked to the actual production machine that has the capacity, by computer control, to change tooling, work specifications and the like. The Caddsmen Bureau offers computer aided design technology. This other facility, which has now been linked with it at Regency Park, offers computer aided manufacturing so that we have been able to offer students both those aspects. It is an exciting proposition. We are pleased about that, and so are the Caddsmen Bureau and the students who have access to it.

Mr FERGUSON: In what ways have special allocations of provisions been made for Whyalla and its unemployed population through the Department of Technical and Further Education?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: As you would be well aware, Mr Chairman, soon after its election, the Government was concerned about the levels of unemployment and the number of apprenticeship courses available in South Australia. Using the facilities that existed at Whyalla and in co-operation with B.H.P., it was decided to offer 50 positions for apprentices to do their training at Whyalla. In the 1982-83 Budget that was done on the basis of existing resources. However, for 1983-84, special provision has been made in the Budget to meet the costs of the on-going training of those 50 apprentices.

In addition, the redundant employees scheme that operates in Whyalla had 78 students in 1983 at a cost of about \$164 000 in eight categories. In 1984, TAFE has again funded these courses, although, at this stage, we do not know the numbers that will be able to do those courses. We think that that is a significant contribution not only in terms of apprenticeship training because it has meant a significant increase in the number of apprenticeships we can offer but also in terms of addressing some of the unemployment and retraining needs of the Whyalla community.

Mr MEIER: I bring to the attention of the Minister and this Committee a possible move that could cost the Depart-

ment a significant sum, according to the information that I have. The area of concern is the proposed amalgamation of Clare and Northern and Yorke Peninsula colleges. To highlight the situation that could cause some difficulty with financing, I refer to a letter written to the Chairman of the group to review the proposed amalgamation by Mr Alf Russack (Chairman of the Yorke Peninsula College of Technical and Further Education). The letter states:

... we fail to comprehend the results of your committee's interim findings; in fact, we are sure that instead of following the concept of a review committee you have already made your decision that an amalgamation will be ordered no matter what the feelings are of the councils of the three colleges concerned.

The letter continues:

On every occasion that we have met for discussion, the Review Committee has told us that when an amalgamation of the three colleges takes place there will be greater advantages because of the points of view you would have us, as a College Council agree to.

It continues:

It is our contention that by persistent meetings with our council you will eventually wear us down to a point of acceptance,

It further states:

you stress as it were in words 'We want to hear your points of view' but in actions you demonstrate 'our decision has already been made.'

That was the lead-up. The letter further states:

We fail to understand in this difficult financial climate how on earth can the Department cater for a principal (responsible to the proposed amalgamated three colleges) plus his added office staff required, in the already crowded facilities of buildings now being used by the colleges concerned whether it be at Clare, Peterborough, or Kadina. It must be inevitable that a new building will have to be built or acquired to house these added staff positions plus another motor vehicle which would have to be adequate to convey necessary personnel, resources, and equipment to branches. This financial outlay for buildings, equipment, and personnel would indeed make your proposal extremely expensive.

If the TAFE Department can afford such an outlay as this, then we as a college would suggest that this expenditure so outlined could be used to better advantage.

Has any consideration been given to this possible expenditure outlined in the letter, and what the cost differential would be if the present set-up were retained as against the proposed amalgamation?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I will call on one of my officers to go through some of the differences in cost that might follow with an amalgamated college as opposed to three distinct colleges. Suffice to say that some of the propositions made in the letter are not an accurate reflection of the situation. However, the important point that we want to consider is that we can offer as wide a range of TAFE offerings to South Australia as possible, and we want to make sure that we can do it in as many communities as possible. The proposition that was considered when these amalgamation proposals were put forward was that we could more efficiently do that for people in the Mid-North if there were amalgamation of the colleges that have been named.

However, an amalgamation is not a closure. In relation to any one of those facilities, at no stage was it expected that either this or any other proposal considered by the Department would mean that any facility would close, rather that it would be incorporated in a larger multi-campus college. We have done that in other situations within TAFE. It has been done in South Australia in other education institutions, such as the South Australian College of Advanced Education, which operates a series of separate campuses. The point is that, if the amalgamation is to go ahead, it will still result in TAFE offerings in each of the communities where there is a campus now, because there will still be a campus there.

The other point that needs to be taken into account is consultation. I am concerned that, if the attitude expressed

reflects perhaps the viewpoint of the member as well, a viewpoint has already been made and we are determined not to listen to the viewpoints of those counter opinions. I hope that my experience in my time as Minister has shown one thing if nothing else: we want to listen to the viewpoints of others and take them into account and modify propositions if we are convinced that our course of action should be modified. However, it may not mean that we will accept all the opinions put by other groups. We can ultimately on various occasions come down with a conclusion that is different to the propositions that were initially put to us.

With regard to the Clare, Northern and Yorke Peninsula colleges, the committee considering this matter has not yet put its recommendations to the Director-General or to me. Therefore, the final decisions have not been made, but I would counsel against the viewpoint that it is a *fait accompli* and that the issue has already been decided. With those comments, I will call on the Director-General to comment on the cost differences of running it as an amalgamated college or as three separate colleges.

Mr Fricker: The situation in which we find ourselves has been going on for some considerable time. A committee was set up within the Department before I joined it that studied the situation of specific colleges, including the three colleges we are discussing now. One of the recommendations of that committee was that there might be an amalgamation of those colleges. That recommendation received wide publicity at the time, and was carefully considered by the executive of the Department and by other members of the community. It was decided at that stage to leave the matter in abeyance, subject to further investigation and, as it were, see what developed.

Earlier this year, when I was looking at the administration of the whole department, I was impressed by the fact that we had three small colleges with essentially a top-heavy administration with a principal and a small staff in each college. It seemed to me, after doing a few elementary calculations, that with the same expenditure of funds and resources we could provide additional teaching facilities for the whole region. In other words, we could reduce our administrative overheads, and put those resources into the education teaching process, which is a move I know is thoroughly endorsed by the communities in that area.

We started again a series of discussions with the councils and principals of the colleges, and as part of that continuing process a committee has now been set up to work on the problem. It would seem that some members of the community have interpreted the proposals by the committee as being actual decisions, but this is not the case. The committee is still working and I understand it will bring down its recommendations in the next week or two. The essential thing to get across is that our intention as a department is to increase the level of educational provision for that region and, as an offset, to reduce the total administration overhead.

Mr Fleming: I am Chairman of that committee and I believe that the report will be completed in about two weeks. We had telephone conversations some time ago on the matter. I think that it is a little unfortunate that one letter has been read out. We have had much contact with the community, have listened and bent over backwards to help. I think we have done that as well as we could. Not everyone shares the same views as the author of that letter. Part of our problem is giving to the Director-General and the Minister what is a wide range of views in the community in the Mid-North. We will do our best and present the case as best we can in about two or three weeks. After that many other things will be brought to bear on the situation.

Mr MEIER: I refer to the annex of the Yorke Peninsula College of TAFE, the Narunga Community College. This college, located at Point Pearce, basically caters for the

Aboriginal community in that area. It has been working under somewhat cramped conditions with a limited staff. It is pleasing to see the type of work that has been produced from students of that college under the prevailing conditions. During the National Aboriginal Week activities they had to borrow rooms from the primary school. Can the Minister say whether any additional building or buildings will be taken to Narunga Community College as a result of requests that have been made during the past year?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: May I preface my comments by apologising to the member because he has not been contacted earlier by me on this matter. He wrote to me in March of this year, and it was discovered only recently that, while we have prepared a reply to another correspondent, his letter had not been replied to formally beyond the holding reply. That has now been attended to, and he should soon receive my written reply. We have now established that a building will be available for Narunga, and will be liberated by the completion of the Port Broughton redevelopment. It would have been nicer to have had the building at Narunga earlier this year, but we think it will now offer extra accommodation. It is purely dependent on the completion of work at Port Broughton, and the consequent logistic problems of transport that might take place.

Mr MEIER: Under specific targets and objectives on page 76 of the yellow book reference is made to redeploying resources from declining enrolment areas to high priority areas such as rural studies, hospitality and tourism, and computer applications. Can the Minister indicate what are the declining enrolment areas.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In the allocation that has been made available to TAFE in this Budget we have not had to rob Peter to pay Paul as has had to be done in previous Budgets. We have situations of declining demand in certain areas, so that rather than choking off courses that otherwise might have had people available for them, if there is no demand for a course then clearly we may have resources that we can take away from them. The metal industry, and recently the building industry, are areas of declining demand. In each of these areas TAFE is a department that responds to changing needs, and the areas of declining demand may be areas of increasing demand in some years. The decline in apprenticeships in the metal industry has been matched by an increase in the pre-vocational courses we have been offering to students, and there has been a considerable increased demand for these. The demand for pre-vocational courses increased from 772 in 1982 to 1 244 in 1983, and the projected demand in 1984 is 1 312 and the figure might be as high as 1 500. Had we continued using the same funding formula that had applied in recent Budgets, any commitment to growth areas would have had to be done by choking off other areas. In this Budget we have been forestalled from doing that and any decline has been purely a decline in demand. We cannot force people to do courses.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Can the Minister explain how different the situation is at Noarlunga regarding the child care centre from that which pertained about 18 months ago? As I understand it, the Federal Government will not fund a creche and, therefore, if a creche is provided the State Government will have to provide about \$150 000. Does the Minister intend to do that?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We have funds in the capital line available for funding. It can be seen in the capital line that an allocation has been made that will match funds to be made available from the Health Commission, so that the child care facility will service both the health complex and the Noarlunga TAFE. We recognise that it is not receiving Federal funds at this stage, but we do not know what the policy of this present Labor Government will be. We are putting submissions to it that it should take responsibility

for this funding, but we have gone ahead on our own anyway.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: To what extent does the situation differ from that which pertained 18 months ago when the Childhood Services Council said that accommodation in that area was over-provided and that the presence nearby of a child-care centre was sufficient for such a centre not to be provided at the TAFE college? Has that situation changed?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It has, given the growing population in the southern suburbs. It is clear now that an off-site child-care facility presents real problems of access to many parents who want to do TAFE courses. We do not encourage the provision of car parks at some distance from colleges: we prefer to provide them locally so as to keep cars at one point. The provision of child-care facilities will be determined by the demand at the college. The lack of a child-care centre could be another barrier to those people wanting to take TAFE courses.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Where will the new child-care centre be situated? The Principal was informed 18 months ago by the former Government that, if he had accommodation available, he could use it, and subsequently he said that all available space was fully committed.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The only area that seemed to be available was the covered hallway in the college, and that would have to be converted.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Where is the new creche?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Between the new health block and the TAFE college: the eastern corner of the college where the two will come together. It will be a free-standing building.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: What colleges are now being considered for rationalisation, to use the Minister's own term, rather than amalgamation?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Brighton and O'Halloran Hill. The term 'amalgamation' is used because the two campuses will remain and neither will be closed.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: The Minister referred to the efficiency of the delivery of education services to the people. In the case of amalgamation, where two or more campuses are retained, I hope that the prime criterion will be the educational benefit to the community. It is easy to consider merely the cost efficiency of an amalgamation. Can the Minister assure the Committee that the resultant educational benefits to the community will be the prime criterion when an amalgamation is being considered?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: That is the first criterion used by the committee looking at each instance of amalgamation, and it has been foremost in the minds of those involved. The Director-General said that, if an amalgamation were to proceed, it would have to result in better educational services to each community. There are other examples of the amalgamation of colleges servicing more than one locality.

If members have any doubts as to the benefit to be derived from such amalgamation, I refer them to the Riverland College, which is a classic example of a multi-campus college. The Elizabeth College has a campus in my district, and no-one has suggested that that campus should house a single-campus college. Other examples that spring to mind are the colleges on the south coast and at Mount Gambier. These multi-campus colleges are meeting adequately the educational needs of their students.

Mr MEIER: At page 79 of the yellow book, concerning access and preparatory education, the following appears:

Needs for this programme have not been met fully due to the high demand and costs involved.

Under the heading 'Need being addressed', the following appears:

To provide basic life skills and basic vocational skills for disadvantaged persons encompassing:

Seeing that the Department cannot meet these needs fully, I assume because of financial constraints, to what extent could some of these needs be encompassed in the secondary schools programme so that the Department need not have to demand more money for this area? In other words, could the priorities of the secondary school system be realigned so that some of these needs might be satisfied at the secondary school level?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Does the honourable member suggest that, if secondary schools offered appropriate courses, these needs would not exist in TAFE?

Mr MEIER: No. I suggest that, if the needs of this programme have not been met fully, part of the resultant gap could be bridged by offering options at the secondary level and by encouraging students to stay on at secondary school.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: A joint committee, comprising representatives of TAFE and secondary education, has been discussing this matter in an effort to work out how the two departments can best meet educational needs of young people aged 16 to 19 years. That committee resulted from a joint statement by the Director-General of the Education Department and the Director-General of TAFE earlier this year. One of the objectives of the committee is to ascertain how better use can be made of the facilities of the respective departments. Some of the areas of education covered cannot be adequately addressed by the Education Department.

It may be suggested that secondary schools could take up, for instance, the course for those students who have English as a second language, but the best way to tackle that problem may not be by means of the normal school system but by means of a TAFE facility. In this connection, it must be remembered that the students wishing to take such a course are not all young people.

The same applies in other areas, including the educational needs of Aborigines. We have aspirations in each of these areas that go further than our resources have allowed us to go this year. Many people in our society need a literacy programme and we require a significant group of volunteers to help with such a programme. The volunteers have done an excellent job, but we have allowed the position to get out of balance in terms of the number of volunteers used.

That is a fact of life in terms of resources that we have available. For example, we would like the educational needs of prisoners programme to be expanded. The Chief Secretary would agree with me that that programme is a vital part of the rehabilitation of many prisoners, but, again, we are constrained in terms of resources available to expand that programme. There are other areas involved. TAFE does some very impressive work in the Aboriginal area. One can identify more things that we could do, which is really the point of the matter, and we have not been able to go as far as we would like.

Mr MEIER: Under the heading 'Specific targets/objectives for 1982-83' at page 83 of the yellow book the statement is made:

Endorsement by Government of corporate plan and promulgation—not achieved.

The following statement is made under the heading 'Specific targets/objectives for 1983-84':

Review and development of departmental corporate plan.

What is the corporate plan, and why is a review being undertaken when it seems that it had been endorsed?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I shall ask the Director-General to make some comments on that in a moment. It is not a failure of the Government that the corporate plan was not achieved last year. There was a change of Government, and any change of Government will bring about a change in

something as significant as corporate plans, because they direct the thrust of the respective departments for which they are designed. For example, in the case of the Education Department the organisation document was not a corporate plan; it was a structural document. There were changed emphases with the change of Government. Effectively, one had to go back a fair few steps to relook at situations pertaining. It is inevitable that a change of Government, in whichever direction, results in a delay in something as major as a corporate plan. I ask the Director-General to comment further.

Mr Fricker: The Minister has covered the main points that I would have made. The change of Government is obviously one of the key matters that has caused us to go back and rethink the development of a plan. However, quite apart from that, we are taking the opportunity to look at the trends becoming more apparent in the structure of our society, changes in the future employment situation, the structure of our occupation force, and the rethinking of the needs of the adult community for leisure interest courses. All of those things are now being put together again for formulation of a statement to the Minister on the direction in which the Department should be set over the next, say, five years. That is, in fact, the corporate plan.

Mr MEIER: I refer to pages 85 and 73 of the yellow book. On page 85 under 'Issues and trends', it indicates that there is an increase in demand from the community for more specific information on course content, and yet on page 73, under 'Employment', a programme of provision of public information on technical and further education is referred to, the staffing for which has dropped from 5.5 for 1982-83 down to five for the current year. That seems to be a contradiction in view of the purported increase in demand, and one would hope that the Government would provide for that increase by employing extra staff rather than by decreasing staff numbers.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I am advised in regard to the 1983-84 proposals that fractional totals were rounded off. In fact, the figures given do not indicate a reduction. This is also the subject of the reorganisation proposals being considered within TAFE as to its central administration and the allocation of its personnel centrally. But in fact that promotion of technical and further education courses is a very important target for the Department and there has been a considerable growth of public interest in TAFE courses, which I believe has been generated by the Department's capacity to put across its message. There is a widespread public acceptance now of what TAFE does, which I think is attributable to TAFE's capacity for selling its own wares.

Mr Fricker: The Minister's comments are music to my ears. I would like to do a lot more about informing the public of what we do and how well we do it. However, we have a budget and we must operate within its constraints. From our available resources and by more effective means of publicising our activities (although not through paid advertisements) we hope to get people interested, and by that means we hope to have a more effective publicity machine this year.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I compliment the Minister on the establishment of the TAFE Advisory Council, under the chairmanship of Roger Brockoff. The membership of that council seems to be extremely satisfactory, with a very competent range of people. The only problem that the Minister may have, I would suggest, is that so many competent people may provide a lot of headaches for the Minister concerning the range of projects that they might devise for TAFE to come up with. Under these circumstances, I wonder whether the Minister has any machinery in mind for the purposes of adapting any of the recommendations about

TAFE proposals, or whether in the longer term this would be an advisory committee in name rather than in deed and that the advice that it gives will be very difficult to implement in view of the financial constraints and the fairly rigid structure under which TAFE operates at present.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I thank the honourable member for his comments. I certainly concur with him in the value of the council. Tom Morris is the Chairman, and Roger Brockoff is a member of the council, SACOTAFE, as it is known, although he is Chairman of the Association of College Councils. I am pleased with the way the council has operated since its foundation. It brings together a diversity of community interests. It is an interim council. The Government intends to bring in legislation to formalise it within the Statutes, and at the same time we will change the name of the relevant Act to the Technical and Further Education Act, to formalise that part of the matter also.

The Government will listen very carefully to the advice it receives from the council, because it does represent a good ear to the community's needs. In fact the Director-General passed on to me today some of the recommendations from the interim council arising from the report of that council's access, enrichment and cultural committee on enrichment education. We asked the council to examine a number of questions in regard to schemes in stream 6 in the general education area, including not only the variety of offerings but also the way in which we structure those courses and the way in which they are financed, including such questions as concession policies. We have received a number of recommendations in that regard and both the Department and I, as Minister, are very appreciative of the work that it has done, and I can assure the Council that we will be taking its recommendations into account.

We need to remember that any change in education is not always a finance related one, because very often we are looking at processes and how we are using to the best advantage the resources that we actually already have available. Circumstances change over time, so that a new idea does not necessarily mean more money; it just means that we may be doing things in a way different from the way in which we have done them previously. Indeed, stream 6 concessions is one of those sorts of area: without costing any more the proposal is simply a consideration of a more equitable way of doing things.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: My next question relates to a very long-standing problem. Can the Minister tell us whether the Wardang Island project and its winding down is any nearer resolution, and whether ultimately funds will be transferred from the Wardang Island project to the Point Pearce College?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I understand that that has been totally removed from TAFE's area of responsibility. I would have to seek further advice on that.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: It was always a problem of TAFE; Premier Dunstan gave it to TAFE, but TAFE was fortunate enough to be able to hand it on to someone else. I say good luck to it!

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We can try to find out where it has gone. It is no longer in my responsibility.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—Department of Technical and Further Education, \$1 250 000

Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
The Hon. Jennifer Adamson
The Hon. H. Allison
Mr D.M. Ferguson
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Ms S.M. Lenehan
Mr E.J. Meier
Mr J.P. Trainer
The Hon. Michael Wilson

Witness:
The Hon. Lynn Arnold, Minister of Education.

Departmental Advisers:
Mr L. Fricker, Director-General, Technical and Further Education.
Mr P. Fleming, Director, College Operations, Technical and Further Education.
Mr D. Carter, Director, Administration and Finance, Technical and Further Education.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Of this amount, the purchase of plant and equipment is a reflection of the money paid by the Commonwealth: the exact amount being \$1 150 000. I would like an explanation of why the \$985 000 allocated for last year was not fully taken up, only \$606 122 being spent. Can the Minister give an explanation?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The problems that we often have with Commonwealth and State financing matters are that they often operate on a different 12-month period, financial years and calendar years. In fact, the amounts that have been allocated will be taken up in the fullness of time. It is one of those problems that we have with a different 12-month period being taken into account, and when invoices actually fall due.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Is the \$100 000 purchase of furniture, which I assume was transferred from the Minister of Public Works (where it was contained last year), a straight payment out of State revenue?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Mr Chairman, may I take the opportunity of thanking Mr Fleming, Mr Fricker and Mr Carter for their appearance before the Committee. I look forward to the time when we can spend a whole day on TAFE, rather than 1½ hours.

Works and Services—South Australian Teacher Housing Authority, \$1 600 000

Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
The Hon. Jennifer Adamson
The Hon. H. Allison
Mr D.M. Ferguson
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Ms S.M. Lenehan
Mr E.J. Meier
Mr J.P. Trainer
The Hon. Michael Wilson

Witness:

The Hon. Lynn Arnold, Minister of Education.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr K. Burrowes, Manager, South Australian Teacher Housing Authority.

Mr L. Drew, Accountant, South Australian Teacher Housing Authority.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I am puzzled by the results set out on page 147 of the Estimates. The Government has applied \$1.6 million this year out of State Loan funds for the Teacher Housing Authority, which represents, as I see it, in the accounts, \$800 000 from last year and \$800 000 from this year. It appears that the \$800 000 voted last year was not taken up. As it is a related matter, it also appears from the accounts that the Teacher Housing Authority borrowed \$2.015 million from semi-government authorities and other funds, and yet spent only \$1 333 276. That to me sounds like bad business, borrowing more money than one needs. I expect that there would be a logical explanation, but I regard it as quite serious, in financial management terms, to borrow \$2 million to expend only \$1.3 million.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In fact, the Authority did not actually borrow \$2 million. It was given authority to borrow \$2 million but borrowed only \$1.33 million, and is therefore only servicing that amount. As to the advance from State capital funds, the \$800 000 was not taken up last year and that is why this year's figure is \$1.6 million. It incorporates the \$800 000 carried over. I might say that plans are under way for the expenditure of that full amount this year. We will not have the situation at the end of the year where those moneys are not used.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I appreciate the frankness of the Minister's reply, because he has admitted that the \$800 000 was not taken up.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It says so!

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I understood from remarks made in the House that there were other matters to be considered. What I am asking is why was the money not taken up in the past year, seeing that there have been so many problems in the Teacher Housing Authority area?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: First, we have had the change of Government. This Government came in in the middle of the situation. There was the reallocation of general capital works programmes that was undertaken both upon the change of Government and indeed, prior to the change of Government. There was reconsideration of capital works issues under way as well.

Mr Burrowes: The Authority, whilst it was voted the allocation shown on the Estimates sheet, must negotiate with Treasury to enable these funds to be taken up, and all borrowings on behalf of the Authority attract an interest debt. The Authority for a number of years has not been able to service that interest debt and accordingly cuts its programmes to suit the amount of money available within the Authority to enable interest debts to be made. At the same time in the capital programme the Authority is mindful of the State Government and Treasury objectives of relocating capital moneys to areas of Government need. For this reason, in conjunction with Treasury, the moneys were not taken up in the 1982-83 year.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I do not understand. The real nub of the answer to my question is that the Government reordered an allocation of priorities upon coming into Government, and that that was one of the reasons

why the money was not taken up by the Teacher Housing Authority.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: No, that was not a Government directive; these were decisions of the Teacher Housing Authority.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Before the member for Mount Gambier comes in, the increase in Teacher Housing Authority rentals of an average of 19 per cent—

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Approximately.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Mr Chairman, I do not intend at this stage to canvass the vexed question that the Minister is faced with in the increased rentals, but I would like to know the estimated amount of increased receipts that will flow from the increased rentals. I would assume they would go into T.H.A. funds, but I ask the Minister to explain the situation.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We estimate that the rent increases will be worth about \$600 000 in a full year. The increase will be operative from October, and is therefore not for a full financial year. The member used the word 'average'. The maximum rent increases are 19 per cent, subject to dollar rounding, or \$8 per week on a 52-week basis—which ever is the lesser figure.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: That flows as a result of the Minister's decision to peg the rental increases at that level?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes. Cabinet considered the matter of Government employee rents and, at the same time, looked at the Government Employee Housing Authority proposition whilst reporting on the matter. It made recommendations in regard to rent increases and instructed me, as the Minister responsible for the Teacher Housing Authority under the Act, to accordingly instruct the T.H.A. In accordance with that Cabinet decision, I have given instructions to the Teacher Housing Authority to make rent increases as I have outlined.

Mr KLUNDER: I refer to page 147 of the Estimates of Payments, showing an amount of \$1.1 million for the purchase and construction of new houses for last year. For 1983-84 that amount is to be increased to \$3.4 million. Will the Minister outline where that money will be spent?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: First, we have in progress work to the tune of \$1 million which require further work on them. They consist of homes in the Aboriginal lands area (\$488 000), Leigh Creek South (\$63 000) and other homes and constructions elsewhere (\$451 000). We then have new works of the order of \$1.56 million for the Aboriginal lands area and \$910 000 for other homes. That points out that the total value of homes being constructed in the Aboriginal lands area is \$2.048 million for the coming financial year and for homes including those in Leigh Creek South, \$1.424 million—a significant increase on the amount of money being spent on houses. It will help us meet many of the shortages that we have been experiencing.

Mr KLUNDER: A major complaint from people in existing T.H.A. houses is the extent of the backlog of maintenance. Will the Minister indicate whether there will be a mitigation of that problem?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I was very conscious of the maintenance problem when in Opposition and also as Minister. I gave undertakings that I would not be supporting rent increases for T.H.A. houses until we could undertake to do something about the maintenance and upgrading backlog. There is some confusion on those two separate areas. We have now been able to show in this Budget that we can do something about both situations. The increased rental that is gained from the 19 per cent increase will in itself fund activities that will flow on to such things as upgrading

and maintenance programmes. Additional funds are available for that. In March of this year the Teacher Housing Authority mounted programmes designed to catch up backlog maintenance, including planned preventive maintenance for the purpose of maintaining the fabric and structure of its assets. As a result of these initiatives, the backlog of houses on Aboriginal lands (which are the areas of greatest hardship), has now caught up and no outstanding maintenance exists at this stage for those areas.

In other areas progress has been made by carrying a full years normal cyclic painting programme into three months—April, May and June—of the 1982-83 financial year. In 1983-84, subject to weather conditions, work is under way to tackle backlog on exterior and interior painting and other maintenance works, such as guttering and downpipes, prior to paint repairs and any general maintenance designed to minimise repetitive day-to-day repairs. The authority has budgeted for accelerated progress on the removal of backlog maintenance as a result of rent increases to apply from this month. Work has begun on a capital works programme of about \$4.5 million, which includes the expenditure of almost \$2.1 million on Aboriginal lands. This capital programme includes disposal of houses found to be uneconomic to maintain and/or upgrade and utilises the proceeds of disposal for provision of new low-maintenance housing stock.

The real outcome is that, come the end of the 1983-84 financial year, we will have found significant improvements in the Teacher Housing Authority area and will be able to show that the backlog in the maintenance and upgrading programme has been eaten into dramatically, and that we are able to keep ongoing maintenance needs attended to. That is really one of the principal issues that has come through to me as I talk to teachers renting T.H.A. houses. I pay a tribute to the officers of the T.H.A. who have a difficult job to handle, with a small staff, a big enterprise. It handles about 2 000 homes—a big piece of real estate. Given the isolation of many of those homes, it generates many problems that need attention.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Can the Minister advise us whether, in future, Teacher Housing Authority rentals will be kept in line with South Australian Housing Trust increases? They have been out of kilter for the past three years and have now been brought back almost up to the South Australian Housing Trust level.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: When the honourable member says 'brought back up', I appreciate that he means brought up to the 80 per cent level. They were attached by formula to Housing Trust rental levels. In arriving at the percentage figure, Cabinet was mindful of that very proposition that rents should be returned to being at 80 per cent of Housing Trust rents. Notwithstanding that, given the difficulties that would come from increases that were too great, it still set ceilings that prevented the full achievement of the 80 per cent figure. Subsequently the 19 per cent and \$8 a week maximum was arrived at. Housing Trust rents went up by 10 per cent earlier this year which, without an increase in Government employee housing rents, would have seen that gap widened still further. We are re-examining the whole question of Government employee housing. That, in itself, may bring up further propositions which will need further discussion. At this stage it was that policy that was at the core of the Cabinet decision some months ago.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Minister of Education and Minister for Technology, Miscellaneous, \$51 593 000

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

The Hon. Jennifer Adamson

The Hon. H. Allison

Mr D.M. Ferguson

Mr J.H.C. Klunder

Ms S.M. Lenehan

Mr E.J. Meier

Mr J.P. Trainer

The Hon. Michael Wilson

Witness:

The Hon. Lynn Arnold, Minister of Education and Minister for Technology.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr D. Matters, Executive Assistant, Office of Minister of Education.

Mr J. Wood, Acting Administrative Officer, Office of Minister of Education.

Mr J. Reedman, Executive Officer, Advisory Committee, Non-government Schools.

Mr D. Shaw, Deputy Executive, Director, Kindergarten Union.

Dr. F. Ebbeck, Executive Director, Kindergarten Union.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the vote open for examination.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I open my questioning in relation to the non-government schools line. Did the Minister issue guidelines to the Advisory Committee on Non-government Schools when he took office, on what funding recommendations they should make to him? I understand that when the Victorian Government came to power it issued guidelines to the Victorian Board of Education on the funding of non-government schools. When answering the question, the Minister might also like to answer the Question on Notice I asked him whether, as has happened in past years, the report of the Advisory Committee on Non-government Schools will be made public.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Shortly after my election to the Ministry, I met with members of the Non-government Schools Advisory Committee to canvass the implications of Government policy, and at the same time I indicated to them that I wanted the committee to examine how needs-based principles as applied in South Australia could be extended. I was mindful of the fact that South Australia was the only State in Australia up to that point that had at the State level needs-based funding principles for non-government schools. It was indicated that we wanted to extend that. The committee indicated that it had been looking at this matter in any event and canvassed with me some of the issues which I thought were important. We discussed those issues, but there were no guidelines as such.

The Advisory Committee worked for some months on this issue, and in March 1983 came back to me with a set of propositions. Those propositions were then considered by the Government which, after consideration, recognised that the proposition that had been put to me by the Chairman of the Non-government Schools Advisory Committee contained within it a phased element, namely, a proposition for the first year with further possibilities of extension based upon the needs-based element later. The Human Services Subcommittee of Cabinet considered the matter and decided to adopt the recommendations of the Non-government

Schools Advisory Committee for the 1983-84 financial year but applying to the 1984 school year, giving the Government the opportunity to further examine the whole issue and all the questions raised by that issue with a view to any further extension in the 1985 school year. It will certainly be the intention for the report to be made available.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: The Minister, in a meeting of parents of children attending non-government schools (which I attended) very briefly discussed the integration of the non-government and Government school systems. I must admit that the Minister referred to it only in passing, but it has been a matter of some concern in other areas throughout the Commonwealth. The Minister has heard me refer to the report on the Radford School from the A.C.T. To make sure that I am not misleading anyone, I hasten to add that Senator Ryan has already stated that she is not considering the integration of the non-government and Government school systems. Of course, we know that Senator Ryan has on previous occasions stated that it is a long-term policy of hers that there should be some type of integration of the two systems.

There have been reports on the integration of the two school systems recently, in particular one commissioned by the Schools Commission of Victoria (I think). Can the Minister give us his views on the question of integration of the two school systems and say whether he believes that the present Government would be moving towards such a concept? I qualify that by saying that at no stage do I wish to give any impression that I oppose any concept of co-operation between the school systems. I believe that the more co-operation there is between the non-government and Government school systems, the better it is for both. For instance, I believe that it is advantageous for teachers from both systems not only to rub shoulders together at educational conferences and the like but also to belong to the same union.

I believe that it is advantageous to get this cross flow of information between the two systems. I also accept the fact that where the non-government school system is accepting public funding, there has to be some accountability. I would not want the House to think that I was not in favour of that, either. Having said that, I ask whether the Minister believes that there ought to be a closer integration of the two systems and, if so, what form should that take and whether it represents even long-term Government policy.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It is not the policy of the State Government for there to be the integration of the non-government and Government school systems, and that has been spelt out quite clearly. However, we have certainly pushed very strongly for co-operation between the two systems and believe that South Australia is very fortunate to have the degree of goodwill that exists between the two sectors. With that in mind, we certainly want to see a greater sharing of facilities between the two sectors, which is a separate issue. However, we believe that that offers some very real prospects for development. Notwithstanding that, I must say that, because of the considerable degree of community discussion about the concept of Christian State schools, it is an area that I have asked to be investigated by the Department with a view to there being some public discussion of this matter.

Members will know that two school communities in particular have strongly promoted this concept. It is a concept about which a wide range of opinions have been expressed. I believe it is important that we have those opinions canvassed and that we bring out all the issues and discuss their implications before any changes are countenanced by the Government. Inasmuch as that could be seen as integration (in a sense, it could be if we are talking about that kind of school) it is a matter of public discussion but in terms of

the general integration of the non-government schools sector, that is not Government policy.

The meeting after next of the Australian Education Council of Ministers may well be looking at this issue as a matter of discussion because it is likely that the following meeting may well be held in New Zealand. New Zealand has integrated the two systems, and the New Zealand Minister has expressed his interest in having this as a seminar topic so that the Ministers can canvass various points of view, but that will be a discussion forum and not a decision-making forum.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: No doubt the Minister is aware that the New Zealand system is not necessarily favoured by establishments like the Catholic education community in Australia. Is the Minister yet in a position to say whether he has reached any finality in relation to the amendments to the Act concerning the Non-Government Schools Registration Board which we discussed in the House two or three weeks ago?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes. Following further discussion on this matter with the various groups involved I have submitted a proposal to Cabinet. Cabinet will consider that within the next two weeks, and then whatever comes out of those discussions will possibly come to the House.

Ms LENEHAN: Realising that the non-government schools receive grants from this Government alone amounting to about \$500 000, how and when does the Minister plan to implement Labor Party policy concerning financial accountability? The Labor Party policy states:

A State Labor Government will require all non-government schools that receive moneys from it to be subject to the same degree of financial accountability as applies to Government schools.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I made the point long before the election that we did not expect the non-government sector to bear rods any harder or less harsh than the Government school system. Quite clearly the community has a lot of expectations about the resources they make available to Government to disburse in seeing that they are well used and that there is some accountability for the way they are used.

In relation to Government schools, today we have canvassed some areas where Government has made funds available for the auditing of school accounts, for example, to assist schools in providing an adequate reporting on how those funds are used in the Government school sector. It is my intention in this financial year to have further discussions with the non-government school sector on the various models that we use for accountability. The proposition has been put to me by a number of people in the non-government school sector that they already provide a lot of information and they are indeed accountable at this time.

We need to follow through with them a number of questions before I can make a final decision on what action we will actually take. We are not going to expect of the non-government system anything harder or more rigorous than we expect of the Government system, but the community would have us, in disbursing significant amounts of money as we do, account for how those moneys are used.

Ms LENEHAN: I would like to ask a general philosophical question which I can relate to the lines 'Kindergarten Union' and 'Other Child/Parent Sectors' under 'Miscellaneous' on page 99 in the Estimates of Payments. Is it proposed to rationalise the sum available for early childhood services, especially pre-school education for four-year-olds?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The provision of pre-school education for four-year-olds is constantly the subject of rationalisation as we try to use our resources to the best effect in the light of declining enrolments in some areas and increasing enrolments in others. The Government has approved the retaining of Marie Coleman, of the office of the Child Care

Officer at the Commonwealth level, to investigate the whole of the early childhood area. In recent years we have received a wide range of reports on early childhood issues, relating not only to education but also to health, welfare and other child-care issues. The Government has tried to tie together all these reports with the object of considering what action should be taken, and Marie Coleman is at present meeting with people from the various sectors to see what can be done. We hope to have her report by the end of the year so that policy decisions may be taken next year. In saying that, I do not want people to get the idea that we believe that there should be the dispensing with child-parent centres or Kindergarten Union centres.

Ms LENEHAN: On page 99 of the yellow book, \$542 000 was proposed for the provision of kindergarten facilities in 1982-83, whereas \$1.105 million is proposed for 1983-84. What is the explanation for the dramatic increase in proposed expenditure on this line?

Mr Shaw: The repayment of money previously borrowed by the Kindergarten Union, as well as the interest on such loans, is a significant part of that expenditure.

Ms LENEHAN: My interest in the matter of pre-school kindergartens is genuine as in my District of Mawson there are 13 kindergartens under the auspices of the Kindergarten Union and three child-parent centres. I am concerned and disappointed at the fact that there will be no additional staffing at the plasticine face as opposed to the chalk face. On page 98 of the yellow book, realised expenditure on the provision of pre-school education in kindergartens for four-year-olds and five-year-olds in 1982-83 is shown as \$640 200, and the sum proposed for expenditure this year is the same. I am concerned at the way in which the financial cake is being divided. At page 102 of the yellow book, under 'Kindergarten Union, Support Services Category', provision is made for various lines. I take it that the support services category does not apply in any way to the staffing of kindergartens by kindergarten teachers and teacher-aides but that it applies mostly to administration, executive management, etc. What is the explanation of the provision of \$594 000 for total support services in 1982-83 and the considerable over-spending on that line by almost \$1 million last year? The sum of \$1.603 million has been allocated for that line this year. Why is there such a dramatic increase in the sum proposed and how will this money be spent?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I have asked the Kindergarten Union to make available data on enrolments for this year and enrolment expectations for next year and to determine the possibilities that exist from the rationalisation exercises that have been carried out by the Kindergarten Union for some time in terms of resources that may be available from those exercises. The explanation may be that some funds have been required for kindergartens that opened during 1982-83, so to some extent it represents the payment of extra staff. Other expenditure may depend on the change in enrolments in certain inner-suburban areas compared to those in outer-urban areas and country areas.

Mr Shaw: I draw to the attention of the honourable member the entry 'Less amount notionally allocated to programmes' on page 102. In 1982-83, \$21 000 was allocated under this line, whereas the actual expenditure on it for the year was \$636 000. Part of that reflects on how the programme documents were drawn up and how a significant number of items included in that programme were taken out in accordance with our experience with the Public Buildings Department. The following line: 'Residual Support Services', is a more accurate reflection of support services costs. The Department can provide a detailed list of how the increase has occurred.

Ms LENEHAN: Could that information be incorporated in *Hansard*?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes. We will take the question on notice and incorporate the answer in *Hansard*.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The sum of \$106 277 was allocated for minor grants last year and \$113 423 was spent. This year \$96 000 has been allocated for this purpose. As the sum allocated this year is much less than both the allocation and the amount spent last year, will the Minister provide precise details of the allocation? I realise that this is very small beer in a Miscellaneous line of almost \$52 million and a total education line of well over \$600 million. Nevertheless, the people involved with these minor grants very often are dependent on them for their survival. As the Minister is unable to provide us with a breakdown at the moment, can he have his officers read out to us the details of the grants now or, alternatively, supply the Committee within the next day or so with details of the precise breakdown?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We will certainly provide the list as required. I indicate at this stage that the changes to last year's allowance involve, first of all, the Carlew grant of \$19 000, which has disappeared from the minor grants list. The South Australian Technicians Certificate Board allocation also disappears from the list, not that that was a very significant amount. As for the other grants, *en masse* they have received increases of 4 per cent, which is in line with the generally allocated increases to groups in various areas of Government. So, groups have been advised already in many cases that their grant for 1983-84 will be 4 per cent more than their grant for 1982-83.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Does the Minister undertake to provide us with a list?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: That list will be incorporated in *Hansard*.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: A sum of \$136 000 was paid to the South Australian College of Advanced Education last year, money which was not previously committed. Another amount of \$139 000 is proposed for 1983-84. Will the Minister explain how that money was used, and how it will be used in the coming year? Will he also advise the Committee whether the two separate totals were derived from the interest account which is outstanding on the sale of the Kingston property, or whether in fact it is a completely separate Government allocation?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The two amounts actually take us to \$275 000. Of that amount, \$250 000 was paid to fulfil a commitment made before the most recent election that the Government would give some funds to assist with the difficulties faced by the college as a result of amalgamation. The offer of that \$250 000 was made to the college immediately after my appointment as Minister. In discussion with the college it put the point of view that the college would rather have that amount paid in two payments, one of \$136 000 in the 1982-83 financial year, and the other of \$114 000 in the 1983-84 financial year. So, the separation of that amount of \$250 000 into two payments over two financial years was at the request of the South Australian college. The source of the funds for that was not by way of interest received from the sale of the Kingston property; it was by a call on Government funds. That leaves another amount of \$25 000 to fulfil a Government commitment to work for the establishment of a centre for childhood learning difficulties in co-operation with the South Australian college. An allocation of \$25 000 has been made from this Budget so that that centre can be established to operate as from January 1984. The Government's policy is for that body to be supported over a three-year period and to renegotiate in regard to its support after that time.

In the 1982-83 financial year, discussions were held between officers of my department and officers of the South

Australian college as to how such a centre could be established. A similar centre is working very successfully at Monash University, and clearly, we want a centre that relates particularly to the needs of South Australia. We have now reached initial agreement and, consequently funds have been made available in the Government's Budget. Shortly there will be an interchange of letters between the Government and the South Australian college as to how we can go further on this and actually have a centre operating from next year.

I believe that this will be a very exciting support service to those people who are concerned with the education of people who have learning difficulties in South Australia, first, in as much as it will offer research opportunities so that particular areas can have further research addressed to them, secondly, because it will offer support to parents and teachers who have children with learning difficulties and who will be able to call upon the expertise of this centre and get assistance in terms of developing learning programmes for individual children, and, thirdly, because it will actually offer specific programmes for children taken into the programmes that are directly offered by the centre. So, three levels of support will be offered. All those things considered, it is a very low-cost programme, remembering, of course, that the sum of \$25 000 is a half-year figure. Notwithstanding that, it is still a low-cost programme, which we believe, with successful endeavour, will offer significant contribution to the education of those people with learning difficulties in South Australia.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I refer to the line 'National Technical and Further Education Research Centre'. This was brought to South Australia in the face of considerable reluctance, if not straight-out opposition from the New South Wales and Victorian Governments, for the expenditure of a little over \$20 000-odd last year. It brings in from other States across Australia almost \$500 000, making it one of those desirable education establishments which is funded from outside rather than from within. The matter of the continuation of that research centre in South Australia I think is up for review during the current year. It has been operating for three years and now it is subject to a sunset clause built into the agreement. I wonder whether the Minister is currently engaged in literally fighting for the retention of that centre in South Australia. I know that New South Wales is desperately anxious to have it established possibly at Newcastle: that was one of the places proposed. It would be delightful if South Australia could retain that centre. South Australia has very few of these national centres, and I would certainly like to see this one retained.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Certainly it is my intention as Minister to ensure that we maintain the centre here in South Australia. Some months ago I had the opportunity to visit the centre and I was very interested in the work done there. In fact, the centre offers a very important educational function for the TAFE sector throughout Australia. The honourable member is quite correct in saying that it is a clear plus for South Australia that, first of all at the funding level we have this resource which is funded basically from outside located in South Australia, and, certainly, in educational terms it is a very important resource. This matter will next receive official consideration at the meeting of shareholders or directors of the National Centre at the conclusion of the next A.E.C. conference, which is being held here in Adelaide in November, and when other Ministers will be determining what course of action we should take. I will be able to advise members shortly after that time.

Ms LENEHAN: I want to take the line of questioning back to matters concerning the Kindergarten Union, and I refer to the rationalisation of staff. As there will not be an increase in staffing of kindergartens, I would like to refer

to the statement on page 110 of the Programme Estimates, as follows:

Redeployment of staff in reponse to enrolment fluctuations which raises sensitive industrial and personal issues when kindergartens lose staff.

I do not know whether the Minister is aware of this, but my experience is that this redeployment is taking place very slowly and that in fact there is a reasonably long period of time during which kindergartens are retaining more staff than they are entitled to under the set ratio of pre-school students to teachers. At the same time, many kindergartens are crying out for desperately needed staff. I am wondering whether the Minister or the Kindergarten Union has addressed the problem of facilitating this redeployment in a much more effective way than is the case at present.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I think it would be appropriate for Dr Ebbeck to tell the Committee about the rationalisation process that is being undertaken by the Kindergarten Union.

Dr Ebbeck: We are going through a rationalisation process for implementation at the beginning of the pre-school year. In conjunction with the Institute of Teachers, the Union has agreed that it will conduct one rationalisation a year, and this has been accepted in principle by this Government and by previous Governments. However, it is correct that the time lag between the implementation of one rationalisation and the next one can be as much as six to eight months. We fine tune the rationalisation at the end of term 1, but after that there are no staff movements, or practically none, from the end of term 1 to the end of the school year.

Ms LENEHAN: I am not delighted with that answer, but thank you for it. The yellow book at page 112 refers to the provision of facilities, major resource variations. Why has \$390 000 been allocated for expenditure on office premises this current financial year when there was no allocation in 1982-83? I am not sure whether that sum is for new office premises for the headquarters of the Kindergarten Union, or whether it has to do with the regionalisation of the regional offices?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Before answering, I would like to make one comment on the previous question. In fact, the rationalisation process as has been identified is always difficult, but clearly there are other difficulties if frequent rationalisations are carried out. Kindergartens in the system may be disrupted. So, there has to be a balancing of the two difficulties that are faced, and the solution that has been arrived at by the Kindergarten Union and the Institute of Teachers is one that is trying to reflect those two countervailing problems.

As to the matter raised by the member, I understand that that sum will be expended for the new headquarters of the Kindergarten Union, which will be located at Magill. In fact, that is to be funded from the funds historically held by the Kindergarten Union, so it is not a call on the Government's capital funds. Also, it will be reimbursed from the sale of existing properties in North Adelaide.

Ms LENEHAN: I have more questions on that issue, but I will keep them for the moment. I fully understand the reason behind that, but it becomes very difficult when parents are desperately trying to get their children into pre-school and when they are told, 'We are waiting to get another staff member from somewhere else.' I face both problems. At two kindergartens in my district rationalisation has taken place in the past, but the other kindergartens are in the opposite camp—they are expanding at the rate of knots.

Referring to page 110 under 'Broad objectives' in terms of staffing of kindergartens, while I have been able to find elsewhere a reference to this issue, I have not been able to find on this page a reference to the professional development

of staff. Incidentally, I totally support these goals. Professional development and support through counselling are referred to, but there does not appear to be any reference to professional development courses for the upgrading of skills. I know that that matter comes in later, but it does not specifically refer to the staffing of kindergartens. Are there currently professional development courses for which staff are able to be withdrawn to attend?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In fact, the professional development component in the Kindergarten Union budget for the coming year will maintain the commitment level of the last budget. There will be no increase in that area. Indeed, as I understand it, there are courses available for directors and staff of kindergartens, and very often time is set aside each week for staff to be released for those activities.

Dr Ebbeck: This current calendar year there have been no release time scholarships for staff. There will be a number of release time scholarships, probably between four and six, in the 1984 pre-school year in regard to which staff will be released for full-time study. Coupled with that is the normal in-service programme conducted by the advisory service of the Union, and time has been set aside for release of staff for that throughout the year.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: My question relates to 'Miscellaneous—Kindergarten Union', \$987 000. Is the Minister aware of the proposal currently being considered by the Kindergarten Union to sell its premises at North Adelaide and to use the proceeds to construct new premises on property at St Bernards Road, Magill (which happens to be in my electorate), on or near the Magill campus of the South Australian College, and, if so, what is the Government's attitude to that proposal?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The honourable member must have been absent from the room: in fact, I spoke about that minutes ago. The Government has supported the move that has been undertaken by the Kindergarten Union in this direction. It is being financed from the Union's own historically held funds and from the sale of its own assets in North Adelaide. We held the opinion that location at Magill offered the opportunity for liaison with the Delissa Institute and the resources held there, and it also offered the opportunity for expansion of the support services to pre-school education. So, yes, I am aware of that matter.

The Hon. JENNIFER ADAMSON: Supplementary to that, whilst I can appreciate the benefits outlined by the Minister, I wonder whether the Government sees any disadvantages in the loss of a central location and the burdens that that will impose on the people who live south, west, north and, indeed, east of Adelaide (because there is a single bus route servicing that area).

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Indeed, one thought that had been put to me as Minister was that the Kindergarten Union could be located more centrally, in the square mile of Adelaide. There was even a suggestion that maybe accommodation was available in the square mile of Adelaide. However, that would not mean that the Kindergarten Union, just because it was central, would be more accessible, given the parking problems that exist within the square mile of Adelaide. The Kindergarten Union clearly had to move or to do something about its present location. The cost of upgrading the premises in North Adelaide was viewed as excessive, given what it would receive for that upgrading, and even then there would still be some accessibility problems. The square mile had clear accessibility difficulties.

So, whilst geographically this location is off centre, it is still felt not to be a remote area. The other point that must be borne in mind is that the regionalisation programme of the Kindergarten Union will offer much closer contact to kindergartens throughout South Australia. Indeed, this year the Kindergarten Union will be starting the regionalisation

of the special services section with the allocation of extra salaries in that area. That is the sort of service that many kindergartens will want—close access—and they will get much closer access than they have had in the past.

Ms LENEHAN: The yellow book at page 112 under '1983-84 Specific Targets/Objectives' states that six new centres are planned for completion and commissioning in 1983-84. Where will the six new centres be located?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: They will be located at the Aberfoyle Park Hub, Flagstaff Hill South, Kirton Point at Port Lincoln, Salisbury Heights (and if we can refer back to the previous issue, I believe that this relates to the land disposal question), and Para Hills West. I am still considering a proposition, subject to my obtaining more information in that regard, so at this stage I would rather not name that particular centre.

Ms LENEHAN: That puts me in a difficult position, because I wanted to ask what is proposed in regard to capital expenditure on new kindergartens, if not in the current financial year then in the next financial year, given that the member for Baudin and I have a problem in respect of the provision of facilities in the Hallett Cove area. That is something on which negotiations have taken place with the Kindergarten Union. I intended to ask whether the Kindergarten Union was proposing to provide a new facility in the Hallett Cove area and, if so, could the Minister say when. Currently a child-parent centre operates at the Hallett Cove South Primary School. It has in excess of 90 students, it is bursting at the seams, and there is a desperate need for a new facility.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I will have to take that question on notice and obtain more information. I will have the reply incorporated in *Hansard*. One of the issues that we are hoping will be examined is the provision of pre-school services throughout the State in areas where we have problems because of the absence of pre-school facilities. The honourable member refers to one area in which there are obviously pressures.

Ms LENEHAN: I refer to 'Major resource variations': am I correct in assessing the analysis under that last section as indicating that the proposed total expenditure for the provision of facilities will increase by 59.4 per cent on the 1982-83 Budget but that the great majority of that amount (almost all of the increase) will go into debt servicing charges and, in fact, the expenditure on new kindergarten facilities will remain at the same level of \$1.1 million? Is that an accurate assessment?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes, certainly, debt servicing charges represents a significant part of that sum, but the other point that needs to be taken into account is the extent to which the Kindergarten Union draws upon its annual allocation of capital funds and the effect that that may have. As a statutory authority, the Union is entitled to carry over borrowing rights from previous years, and that affects the allocation for a particular financial year. One must look at it over a period to obtain a more stable figure.

Mr Matters: We did not incur any Loan money debts last year, so there was not an excessive repayment cost. The figure for debt servicing will be greater in the coming financial year.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I refer to the research centre for learning difficulties at the South Australian College of Advanced Education Sturt campus. I have been to that campus to discuss the matter. I am very excited about it, as is the Minister, particularly as much of the special education teaching is carried out at that campus. However, I am concerned about the amount of funding that will be available for the research centre. It seems that (if I heard the Minister correctly) the sum of \$25 000 will be available initially and that the Minister will be having discussions

with the college to see what else can be supplied. Will the Minister amplify the situation, as considerable funding will be required? These initiatives can start slowly and, if it can be started next year, well and good. Will the Minister give some projection on the anticipated funding?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In coming to that figure we were conscious of the proposal that had been put through the Principal of the South Australian college on this matter. I had had discussions about the concept before the last election. We raised the matter with the South Australian college and asked what it meant in terms of what it would be able to offer. The proposal that came back indicated a full-year costing at the outset of \$49 000. The other point that was clearly taken into account was that the source of the funds would be not only through Government grant but by fund raising by interested organisations to supplement the initial Government grant. It is a carefully measured proposal that attempts a lot with a very limited budget. It is a sound way to start out. We will see how it goes and, as needs can be identified, we can determine, in conjunction with the college, what further support may be required. The college did not see that facility as being a major cost centre. The same could be said of the Monash proposal—it is not a high-cost facility.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: I refer to the line 'Tertiary Education Authority of South Australia', and the proposed allocation of \$784 000. I understand that that Authority no longer accredits, as most accreditation is done through the Commonwealth committees. Indeed, individual organisations in South Australia and in all States are self-accrediting to that extent. Therefore, it comes to mind that TEASA, in some respects having lost that power of accreditation, must be searching for a role. I am not advocating the demise of the Authority which, I understand, has provided, from time to time, some important research papers on various facets of tertiary education; however, it seems that this role was formerly provided by the South Australian Council for Educational, Planning and Research, which is no longer with us. I know that the Minister intends to alter the Tertiary Education Authority Act some time in the future so that there will be more members on the Board. Has the Minister thought through the future role of TEASA?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The honourable member will realise that a committee of review has looked into the role of the Tertiary Education Authority. Its recommendations included the legislative changes now being considered by the Government and alluded to by the honourable member. It is true that certain of the functions of the Authority no longer have quite the same role that they had in the past and, indeed, that has been reflected in the reduced staffing commitment of the Authority. There have been reductions in the staff of the Authority to a significant extent.

Whilst it is true that accreditation has now been handed back to individual institutions, and whilst there is a national overview, TEASA does still have, in the State realm, an overview responsibility, although admittedly it is reduced from what previous accreditation mechanisms indicated. It also has an important function in terms of providing advice on the disbursement of funds made available by the Tertiary Education Commission, as it has a State level interface with tertiary institutions. That is an important element to ensure that the provision of funds for all tertiary education facilities in South Australia is as appropriate as possible.

The other point mentioned was the research function. In general, there has been a reduced effort because of a change in circumstances. Fewer people are employed and there are to be further reductions in the staffing commitment as attrition permits.

The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON: Will the Minister amplify the situation in regard to the grants to the Seawinds and Gullywinds day-care centres?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We have allocated \$15 000 in the Budget in this regard. Prior to the last election I indicated that we would allocate \$10 000 to Seawinds. Gullywinds has now come into existence and it is a similar facility. Secondly, the Schools Commission has picked up the need for supporting such institutions and has given \$10 000 to both. Those centres now come more closely under the Woodville Spastic Centre. We decided not to use the Schools Commission funding as an excuse for replacing our funding, and we have gone ahead with supplying \$15 000 to the two centres. Such funds will be made available this financial year.

We believe that that action is important in regard to education, as these centres serve an important educational function for the young people who attend them. They also serve other functions of a health and welfare nature, but the education aspect is important. The Schools Commission recognises that, as does the Government.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]

The CHAIRMAN: I have been advised that Mr Ingerson has been substituted for the Hon. Jennifer Adamson, and the Hon. Dean Brown for the Hon. Michael Wilson.

Ms LENEHAN: On page 97, \$75 000 has been specifically allocated for clinical and remedial services. Will this be spent in the regional offices or in head offices, and how will it be spent?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Before last year's election, the Government made a commitment that it would double the size of the special services section of the Kindergarten Union, because it was clear to us that it did valuable work in terms of identifying and remedying problems in regard to special learning difficulties amongst children who came within the care of kindergartens. On coming to Government, we put a proposition to the Kindergarten Union as to how that could be best effected. The Kindergarten Union held the view that regionalisation of its special services section would be the most appropriate way of using the expansion in resources and, consequently, the Government accepted that proposition. In this Budget we have allocated 5.5 salary equivalents, which is about \$75 000 for the half-year effect, which is the first stage of the doubling of the special services section. Obviously, we still have more to do. That represents an increase of about 33½ per cent in the size of the special services section, so there is still more to be done in the following Budgets.

Ms LENEHAN: I do not know whether the Minister answered my question. Will it be spent in the regional centres?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The question was answered. The answer was 'Yes'.

Ms LENEHAN: In relation to the \$25 000 (on which I must commend the Minister) which is a special provision to assist the integration of handicapped children in kindergartens, which I think is absolutely essential, how will this be spent in respect of the integration of handicapped children?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The special services section has one very important function. However, we must recognise that many kindergartens or pre-schools are trying to cope with the needs of disabled children in individual kindergartens in integrated settings. It was recognised that, if there

was an extra allocation of funds available for this, it could be of significant assistance to those kindergartens that have established programmes in this area. There are some kindergartens in South Australia which have developed some expertise in this over the years and having visited them, as shadow Minister and as Minister, I can concur that they do very important work in this area. When in Opposition the Government put a policy commitment that it would provide funds in relation to this to the tune of \$25 000, and that has now been provided in this Budget as the first instalment. We will repeat that in following Budgets. We are leaving it to the Kindergarten Union to determine how it will disperse that amongst its constituent members, and it will be based on those kindergartens with programmes to handle integration.

Ms LENEHAN: I believe that the Minister has authorised the purchase of another bus for the Kindergarten Union. My question is why, and whether there are proposals for further buses to be purchased, and what will be the deployment of those buses?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The bus has already been bought. It is already running and has been running for some time. Members may recall that a couple of years ago there was some problem at the Alberton Aboriginal Kindergarten (now known as the Alberton Yelkindjeri Kindergarten) regarding the transport of mainly Aboriginal children from outer urban areas. This was proving a very real drain on the resources of that kindergarten, and the then Minister approved the purchase of a bus to help transport those children. The bus was a small one, coped very well, and provided a very good service.

Two things have happened. The number of children who wanted to go to Yelkindjeri expanded, and the bus was under real pressure in terms of numbers. There was another development in Aboriginal pre-school education at Elizabeth West (on property known as The Farm) known as Tukutja. Children have been transported by taxi to the kindergarten for many months, and that proved a real drain on the resources, particularly of the Aboriginal Education Foundation, which was providing the cost of that service.

The proposition was put that another bus be purchased, so what the Kindergarten Union decided to do was transfer the Alberton Yelkindjeri bus to Tukutja, at Elizabeth West, and purchase another larger bus for Alberton. It put a submission to the Government that this should be funded out of the budget allocation of the Kindergarten Union but, given the urgency of the matter, decided to go ahead and purchase it without having the result of the Budget debates, realising that it might not be approved in the Cabinet submission. The Government has accepted that it is an important project and has, therefore, made provision in the Budget for it; hopefully, it will be passed by the Legislature.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Office of the Ministry for Technology, \$637 000

Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
The Hon. H. Allison
The Hon. D.C. Brown
Mr D.M. Ferguson
Mr G.A. Ingerson
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Ms S.M. Lenehan

Mr E.J. Meier
Mr J.P. Trainer

Witness:

The Hon. Lynn Arnold, Minister for Technology.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr P. Ellyard, Director, Ministry of Technology.
Mr M.J.F. Knight, Chairman, Data Processing Board.
Mr G. Kelly, Principal Adviser, Data Processing Board.
Mr G. McDonald, Chief Adviser, Technology Advisory Unit.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the vote open for examination. The member for Davenport has indicated to me that, as lead questioner of the Opposition, he would like to make a brief policy statement on the activities of the Department, and the Chair recognises that.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I do not wish to make a long statement. I simply wish to say that it is the first time that the Ministry for Technology has been before the Estimates Committee as such. Certainly, we would be looking for co-operation from the Minister and his officers to obtain as much information as possible. We will try to keep our questions short, because we see that time is limited and it is an area on which we want to explore a great deal of new information. This is also the first time that the data processing has appeared under the Ministry for Technology, and this could perhaps involve a new emphasis. I highlight that we wish to keep questions and answers as short as possible to get that information. I raise the issue of Technology Park, the attraction of high technology industry to the State, and acknowledge that only last week the Minister had the fortune (which I did not have, because I was declined) to attend the Technology Conference in Canberra organised by the Federal Government. Certainly, I think it is fair to say that South Australia as a State has led the way in terms of setting up an infra-structure and an appreciation of the need for high technology industry in this State. Certainly, we led the way under the previous Government in establishing Technology Park.

Can the Minister outline what he sees as the long-term objectives of Technology Park, what type of industry the Government is attempting to attract to Technology Park, what are the techniques it is using to attract those industries, and to what extent can he make some predictions on how much of Technology Park he now sees will be occupied perhaps by 1985-86?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I must preface my remarks here by indicating that Technology Park is more directly under the Minister of State Development as a State development project but, naturally, there is a close liaison between the Minister of State Development and me as Minister for Technology. Both of us liaise with the Technology Park Corporation. The objectives of the Technology Park Corporation, as the honourable member realises, are spelt out in legislation and are still being adhered to with enthusiasm by the corporation and supported, first of all, by the responsible Minister, the Minister of State Development, and me, as the other Minister with an interest in this matter. It clearly relates to the fact that technology, if it is to develop in South Australia, needs a Government interest in it. It also recognises that there is a relationship between technological development and education and research; of course, hence the siting of Technology Park by the former Government.

The types of industry which we hope to attract to Technology Park are a mix of industries. First of all, we have continued the consultancy with Graydon that was taken up in the United States to try to attract major enterprises to

Technology Park. We are getting results from Graydon on the results of that, but we also believe that, if we are going to have a Technology Park that is successful, we will need a mix of enterprises ranging from large, through medium to small. With that in mind the Government approved the construction of a multi-tenanted facility at Technology Park, which those who have driven along the Main North Road will have seen under construction. We look forward to it being ready by December.

That will provide the opportunities for small companies to establish out there without the major difficulties of actually constructing a building. They will have office space and limited workshop factory space. We hope that that will provide a conducive environment to local companies to set up home there. I also know there are other companies, regardless of the consultancy we have in the United States and the development at the multi-tenanted facility, with whom discussions are being held, and I would imagine that the Premier will be making announcements about those early in the new year.

As to the techniques to attract industry, first of all, we have a couple of other things I should identify and, again, I am really canvassing the ground for the Minister of State Development; issues such as the Enterprise Fund being initiated and the Small Business Corporation, both of which will have significant support for industries that want to take advantage of technological industries.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I thank the Minister for that information. At the time of the State election the Premier put in his policy speech the following:

Instead of just talking about it, we will establish a special technology task force and provide real incentives to attract high technology industries to South Australia and to Technology Park in particular. The present Government took up Labor's idea for Technology Park.

We know that is wrong. Continuing with his speech:

All we we have seen despite three official openings is a lot of park and not much technology.

I dispute that last sentence as being quite wrong, but we are not here to debate that sort of thing. I would ask whether a special technology task force has been established yet, will it be established as promised by the Premier, and what real incentives, apart from what the Minister has already indicated that the Enterprise Fund and the Small Business Corporation might offer in the future, will be offered other than that previously offered? I point out to the Minister, from what has been said publicly at least so far, that I understand the tenants of Technology Park so far are Duntech, which I announced before we left office, and there is the recent announcement that British Aerospace is buying 3.5 hectares. In fact, I had been negotiating with them, through the Department of Trade and Industry, for something like 12 months before we left office and the board of British Aerospace was in Adelaide on the Monday and Tuesday after the election in order to finalise things, so I am delighted to see that that has now been formally announced. I wonder whether any other companies that have negotiated with the Government have announced their intention to establish in Technology Park since we left Government.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The first point of the technology task force is that that was significantly upgraded on the election of the Government by the creation of the Ministry, which represents in a sense that very same task force concept, only an expanded concept. Indeed, since the creation of the Ministry, Cabinet has also given approval for there to be technology advocates within each area of Government, in order to maintain links between the Ministry for Technology and various Government departments and to ensure that there is a responsiveness to technological change.

A number of other areas are being pursued, some of which I canvassed at the National Technology Conference last week when I put the point of view of South Australia and, indeed, I am certainly happy to repeat those here tonight. Another area with regard to Technology Park which I think bears mentioning is the proposal for an innovation centre at Technology Park which will also be opened. I am interested in the member for Davenport's comments about British Aerospace and the others. Certainly discussions on a number of these things have been going on for a long time. However, I would counsel against an attitude which says, 'We did it first,' because in fact we found that we had to pick up the Caddsmen Bureau after they had felt they were really led along without adequate follow-up. In the inevitable course of events a lot of these discussions start and take some time to be finalised. This Government has not yet been in power 12 months. We believe that we have done what we can to pursue matters that were in train and have initiated other matters since. We are bringing to finalisation matters that were already in hand, we believe successfully so.

I would repeat the point that we hope to be in a position to announce next year a number of companies that have expressed interest in Technology Park. However, it is not the view that we take that we should float company names, until we are absolutely certain we are going to have them involved, because the raising of expectations is not a reasonable way to sell the concept of anything like Technology Park.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I ask the Minister whether I could have a copy of the speech he gave in Canberra last week. I would appreciate that, so that I could have a look at some of the points he raised. I certainly was not trying to say that we brought British Aerospace here. I was trying to highlight that they are two of which I knew that were well advanced and I was trying to find out whether there were any others involved, partly to find out (I would remind the Minister of my earlier question) to what extent does he see Technology Park developed by, say, 1985-86.

My assessment is that there is a false expectation in the community as to how quickly those grass paddocks suddenly will be turned into high technology industry. In about August of last year we brought out from Britain, from one of the technology parks there, a couple of consultants. We did not talk about them publicly, because we brought them out to advise the Government confidentially and their advice was that, I think in the first year, they got one company and in the next year they got two companies, and the year after that it was something like four companies: so it was a truly exponential type of growth. I think they filled the park within four years and were then in the process of doubling it. That doubled area was likely to be filled within a period of three or four years. I raise that point because I think there are two things we need to look at in terms of Technology Park. The first is that our estimate was it would take eight years to fill Technology Park and I wondered whether the Government had changed its thinking on that, having had another year to assess it and to assess the sort of companies coming along and talking to them. I realise that one of the ear-marked companies, which was Amdel, is no longer likely to establish in Technology Park.

Secondly, if the rate of growth at Technology Park is exponential, the Government should be careful at least to earmark (and we had done that) the land that might be available adjacent to Technology Park which, although it might not be part of the park, would have many of its attractions. There was land across the road owned by another stock firm about which we negotiated as an alternative site, and there was land owned by other owners almost adjacent. The Minister should be carefully monitoring the likely demand and, therefore, working four or five years in advance in respect of the availability of land. Will the innovation

centre referred to be a multi-tenant facility or is it a tenancy within the multi-tenant facility? What is meant by the term 'innovation centre' as opposed to a multi-tenant facility?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I note the honourable member's comments, which deserve a considered reply from the Minister of State Development, and I will arrange for such a reply to be given. It was not anticipated to be the sort of development that would fill up within two or three years. When in Opposition and being briefed by officers of the corporation, I recall that it had not been formed. Indeed, the legislation had not been passed. The understanding was given that the full employment potential of Technology Park would not be achieved until the 1990s, even though the estate would be full before that. Therefore, I think that it is accepted that this is a developmental thing. Although the growth may be termed exponential, the park will not be filled up by 1985. I will get a considered reply on this matter from the Minister of State Development.

As to the innovation centre, at present there is a submission being developed to come before Cabinet for subsequent presentation to the Commonwealth Government for the funding of a joint project. It is different from the multi-tenant facility: that was supposed to offer opportunities for other enterprises to be involved in high technology industries at Technology Park. So, at this stage that is all I can say on that point.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister has put out a brochure on the innovation centre and the implication of that brochure is that it will be housed in the multi-tenant facility. The brochure is headed 'Innovation House'. I might be confusing Innovation House, which is a multi-tenant facility, with the innovation centre.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: There is a natural confusion. The term used, 'multi-tenant facility', is Innovation House. The innovation centre represents an expansion of the services and facilities provided by the multi-tenant facility rather than being incorporated within it. That is where the confusion may arise. The title adopted for the centre is 'Innovation House', which will be housed within that facility. The basic value of the facility is to offer accommodation for other enterprises to develop in this area.

Mr KLUNDER: Last week the Minister attended the national technology conference in Canberra. I understand that the conference was intended to be a first stage in the programme to develop a national technology strategy in Australia. Can the Minister say whether South Australia will be preparing a State-level strategy to match that Commonwealth programme?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We have already started on that line. I indicated to conference delegates and to other members at a luncheon before the technology conference that South Australia wanted to develop a strategy. Work is being done on a discussion paper to be released for community discussion, and I hope that the matter can be discussed within Parliament and that we can develop a Parliamentary debate on where South Australia should go in respect to technology. After all, there are viewpoints from all sides of the House that could be put together to make a strategy to further the interests of South Australia in matters of technology. I indicated that to the national conference last week.

The conference was subtitled 'Leading to the development of a national technology strategy for Australia'. It was acknowledged by all that such a strategy would take time to develop. Indeed, it was not anticipated that by last Wednesday afternoon the strategy would be prepared and accepted by all concerned, and that did not happen. That strategy will now be framed on the basis of the viewpoints shared by the delegates to the national conference and be subject to further national discussion.

South Australia and, I presume, other States are developing their own strategies, but that is part of the debate on where Australia as a whole is going. The conference last week followed a meeting of Ministers for Technology held in Perth in June this year, the first such meeting at a Ministerial level specifically addressed to technology. That meeting canvassed some of the interstate issues involved in each State pursuing its own goals in responding to technology.

Mr KLUNDER: The Minister for Technology is also the Minister of Education. I believe that South Australia is the only State that so links the two Ministries. Why has the Government so closely linked education and technology, and what programmes will be initiated in the next 12 months?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It is interesting that South Australia is the only State where the two have been linked. It was a conscious move on the part of the Government. The Government's view was that the technological imperatives of the years ahead are such that, if we are to respond to them, we must have an education system that helps our community respond to them, an education system that is addressed not only to the years of formal schooling, but also to informal education after people have left formal education behind. We believe that the Minister of Education can usefully address both these areas, despite the large size of the Education portfolio.

In terms of programmes under way in the coming 12 months, we have canvassed some of the issues in the educational field, such as the high technology schools. There are other issues that have been canvassed in the policy statements of the Government, and these will be followed in due course. These include the provision of adequate high technology equipment and education facilities. However, in addition, we want to establish a task force into the question of technology and education, because there are important subquestions that come out of this debate. For instance, if we are talking about the ongoing education of people throughout their lives, we must work out how the education system must respond to that issue. How will the education system provide the ongoing retraining of people at various points in their lives, given that the body of knowledge in their various areas will change so rapidly?

If we are to talk about education in the formal sense, how will we respond to some of the major issues? Are we in fact going to believe that responding to new technology is just computer education, or will we believe that it is education about other technology changes as well? In such areas as computer education, are we to believe that computer education means the provision of surrogate teachers who happen to be white and pale blue machines with keyboards used by students to solve problems? Alternatively, are we to believe that computers are something to be mastered by students in the education process so that education is about learning how to control and use computers for their own benefit? There are a number of important questions that come up in this area. We will establish a task force into technology and education. I have asked the Ministry for Technology and the various education systems under my control to work out such a proposal.

The Australian Council of Education Ministers, which meets in November, has accepted my suggestion as a seminar topic that very question of education and technology. It was interesting to note that, at the technology conference last week, time and time again the education issue was raised in the seminar groups that discussed various issues. Wide-ranging issues on technology were discussed by representatives of commerce, industry, unions, community groups, and so on. Clearly, in the minds of those who are wanting to respond to new technology, education is seen as being critical if we are to adequately respond.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the Minister outline what he sees as being the achievements of the South Australian Council of Technological Change, which was established several years ago? Does the Minister intend to reconstitute the council in any way? Does he intend to have the council carry on the task that it has been undertaking for the past two years? If the Minister does intend to make any changes to the council, in terms of either personnel or direction, what will be those changes?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: This matter has been the subject of discussions between me as Minister and the present council. Those discussions led to a Cabinet submission made early in September to approve the change in the way in which the council is structured. They led also to a change in the working party model of the council. It now may be somewhat *ad hoc* or responsive to particular needs that crop up from time to time, as opposed to standing committees of the council. Council membership has been modified, and we are now inviting those bodies which have representation on the council to submit their nominees for such representation. There was some discussion about the role of Government department representation on the council, and eventually it was decided that there should be some Government representation. Therefore, the Government will be seeking names of nominees to represent it.

I believe that the council has served South Australia very well since its establishment. The technology appraisals it has generated have been very useful for the discussion of various issues in South Australia. Indeed, I released another one in that series 10 days ago in regard to biotechnology, and others are due for release shortly. As there is now a Minister for Technology, the Government believed that it was appropriate to reconsider the role of the council. The Government is also hoping that the council will have the opportunity to research issues as it has done in the past, and indeed it will be able to call on funds available from within the Ministry for Technology to support those research programmes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister stated that Cabinet has agreed to change the composition of the council, although he did not spell out what the changes are or what Cabinet had actually agreed to. The Minister also indicated that groups represented on the council had been asked to submit details of new nominees to the council. I point out that to start with there were no nominees on the council; I went out and hand selected the people. The various bodies involved were not asked to nominate people; they were selected on the basis of what contribution they could make. Therefore, I do not understand how the Government could go back and ask certain organisations to put forward new nominees when in fact there were no nominees to start with. I would appreciate knowing, for instance, who will chair the council and which bodies apparently have now been asked to nominate people for the council. Also, what specific change in function and role does the Minister envisage for the council?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We do have invited representation from bodies such as the Chamber of Commerce and the U.T.L.C. We also want representation from the tertiary education sector as well as from the public sector. Indeed, in the makeup of the previous council those sectors were represented. There is another group which is not represented as such but which as a general group is supposed to represent a balance of interests to give a full overview with the whole council. That makes up the council membership. It is supposed to provide a source of information, and also in itself it is a body which is there to generate discussion about particular issues in the technology sphere.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I take it from what the Minister has said that at this stage he is unable to say who is likely

to be on that council; whether, in fact, Professor Donald Stranks is likely to continue as its Chairman?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Given the fact that the submission approved by Cabinet requires people who are nominated to the council to be approved by Cabinet itself, it would be pre-emptive of me to provide further details. I suppose we could speculate that the membership is likely to consist of many of the people who have been on the council previously, but that is really as far as I can go.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: My next question relates to the support services to the council, and therefore the number of public servants actually involved in matters of technology, new technology and the carrying out of associated work. Previously there was a Technological Change Office under the direction of Mr Garry McDonald. In 1981-82 that office was allocated 5.2 people. That detail is given in the programme performance papers for 1982-83. In 1982-83, six people were employed. I note in the programme performance budget for this year a staff allocation of 4.6 people.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Automation!

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It is either automation or going backwards—I am not quite sure. It would disturb me greatly if during a period in which the pressures of technological change are increasing at a tremendous rate the actual staffing complement for the office were to be cut back. Referring to page 134 of the programme papers, if one adds up the figures in the last column, excluding those for the Data Processing Board, one comes to a total of 4.6 people. If the Minister has any doubts about previous figures, I refer him to page 40 of the 1982-83 programme performance budget for the Department of Industrial Affairs and Employment.

Also, will the Minister clarify the position as far as technology impact statements are concerned? Throughout the programme papers, reference is made to the fact that one of the tasks for the current year is to publish the technology impact statements prepared in 1982-83. However, the clear indication is that there will be no further technology impact statements beyond those prepared in 1982-83. Why has the Government taken this decision to stop the preparation of those technology impact statements? I personally believe that that is the best form of drawing to the attention of the public what changes in technology are occurring and what aspects of that new technology need to be looked at and studied in greater detail.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: In regard to the staffing of the Technology Advisory Unit, which supersedes the Technology Change Unit (of which Mr McDonald is the chief officer), there are three project officers. There is one seconded officer from the Federal Government attached to that unit. There are two secretarial support staff. Also, consultancy funds have been made available to the Unit. In addition, Cabinet has approved the concept of secondments to the T.A.U. It has approved a level of six secondments a year. It is the Government's belief that, rather than creating a large department out of the Technology Advisory Unit, it would be more appropriate if we tried to have a flow of people from various Government departments, and (may I even speculate and say) from the private sector as well, flowing into and out of the Unit. So, we are trying to develop the model of having a system of secondments of extra staff which, on the one hand, provides the staff for the needs that exist and, on the other hand provides an interface with a number of other Government departments, bringing in the expertise of other departments which will eventually flow out again in terms of those people returning to their original departments.

That will therefore provide significant increases in the personnel available to the unit. Certainly, we want to print the final technology appraisals that have been finished by the council, but that does not indicate that there will not

be any more: it indicates that the council will want to determine for itself where it wants to go with some of these issues. It is already addressing two other tasks: one, a task force on automated fuel systems; the other, a task force on technology aids for the disabled. These are the sort of issues that follow through from ideas initially canvassed. It is not to say that there will not be any more appraisals, just that the council wants to look further down the line at some of these issues.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am rather confused because I thought that the whole idea of a programme performance budget was to include in that budget all of the people working on that programme. If there are to be six secondments to the Minister for Technology I would have thought, irrespective of where their salaries were being paid from, the whole idea would be that they should be shown as heads, at least in the programme performance budget. If that is the case, it appears that the whole basis of preparing the yellow document on technology is at least incorrect.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I must accept the point that it should have been included as part of the proposed staff commitment for that unit.

Mr FERGUSON: Can the Minister indicate whether the Department has any plans to utilise the high technology sector within the Public Service as part of its programme for economic development? Does the Minister believe that the public sector must be used as creatively as in the private sector if a State strategy is to be successfully implemented?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Certainly; it is not reasonable to consider only half of the community responding to new technology. It will be important for all sectors of the community to do so, and that includes the public sector. We have developed within the public sector this year guidelines for the implementation of job affecting technologies, and we are trying to encourage the implementation of similar guidelines within the private sector. Further, by the creation of technology advocates in various Government departments, there is an awareness that technology can have an impact on various avenues of the public sector. It is certainly true that the public sector can play a very important role in showing a creative use of new technology. The Government is certainly trying to pursue that matter.

Mr FERGUSON: One of the most critical areas for the successful development of new industries based on technological development, and the changeover and renewal of old industries, is industrial relations. Can the Minister indicate what the Government will be seeking to do in order to ensure that our industrial relations climate does not impede the successful implementation of a technology strategy in Australia, and to ensure that the benefits and costs of technological change are equally shared?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I mentioned the guidelines for the implementation of job-affecting technologies in the public sector. As I said, it is our hope that the private sector will look at similar developments and similar guidelines within their respective industries. It is certainly the case that those industries that have had adequate consultation with its employees when they introduced new technologies have fared best with the implementation of those technologies. One might refer to a number of companies in South Australia where this has happened. In fact, in one case, in the case of the print media, South Australia was a world leader in the implementation of new technologies in printing. An interesting corollary of that was an example in the United Kingdom where a leading newspaper failed in its consultation mechanism with its employees on the implementation of these new technologies, with disastrous results. We have a number of companies that have shown the way on this, and the Government is keen to promote that in its own right. Quite clearly, there will be cost involved in the

implementation of new technology, but the other argument is that there may well be much greater costs otherwise. Therefore, we have to take up the challenge, but make sure that the costs are shared equitably around the whole community so that all of us can share the benefits of it. If we do not do that, we are real danger of creating a new generation of Luddites, always copping the cost and therefore kicking back. However, our role in that will be to stimulate an interest in the private sector in this regard. I am happy to say that a number of firms in South Australia are keen to respond to that kind of approach.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would like to take up with the Minister this relationship between technology and education which he himself has highlighted when answering a number of questions this evening. I understand that this afternoon the Minister referred to the six high technology high schools that have been established in this State. I understand that reference was also made to the \$6 million allocated to the whole of Australia by the Federal Government for computer training in schools. Can the Minister indicate—and I am asking this as a technology-oriented question rather than an education-oriented question—the type of programme that will be implemented in the schools to ensure that every child who goes through the schooling system (certainly at this stage immediately in the secondary schools but also involving primary schools) receives at least a basic understanding of training on the use of computers, so that there are no children who leave school, as from the end of this year, who have not had that basic opportunity of absorbing some computer literacy?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I first of all disabuse the honourable member: the programme that I spoke of this afternoon in relation to the high technology schools is not necessarily to be automatically seen as the special vocational awareness schools created under the former Government which have served a very useful function. We are presently developing guidelines (I canvassed that whole topic this afternoon, and I refer the honourable member to the *Hansard* report of that discussion). Certainly, I take the honourable member's point that we do not want one group of our young people not receiving adequate education in this area. As I already indicated earlier today, I have flagged it with Senator Ryan that I am concerned that the first stage of the programme, involving primary schools, did not appear. She indicated that that is certainly part of their forward planning, and I will be keen to pursue that matter to make sure that it translates into primary education as well. Notwithstanding that, we are very pleased that the Federal Government has initiated a programme for secondary schools, and that will be a programme across all secondary schools. It is not a matter of providing hardware: it is also a matter of curriculum and professional development, and in South Australia we have developed some expertise with that. If we are to make sure that all our students get access to knowledge or literacy about computers, it is critical that they have teachers who are able to do that, and it is course work that those teachers are able to use. Angle Park and the Education Department generally have developed that expertise and are trying to share it around all the schools in South Australia.

On the matter of high technology schools, which are not to be taken as being just computer schools (there are also other areas of high technology), they will be seen as resource centres for their surrounding schools. So, it is not simply a matter of there being a school for the students who happen to have the opportunity to go there: they are also supposed to service their surrounding schools. The honourable member referred to 'the end of this year': I do not know whether we can do something by next week to catch them all by December, but certainly we will be looking to see changes in the 1984 school year.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: My wife sits on the Unley High School Council, which is and has for the past few years been struggling on the issue of which computers to buy for the school. Unley is one of the leading high schools in the State and has brought a relatively small number of computers—three or six so far. They are trying to work out which computers they should buy now. The options are a B.B.C. or an Apple, both of which, from my knowledge, are out of date. The only advantage with either computer is that adequate software is available to use it. It concerns me that school councils are currently investing (if Unley High is any indication) many of the hard-earned parent dollars on computers which, in 12 months, will be well and truly out of date. I know from confidential information in my possession that what they are buying, at least from one company, will, by the beginning of next year, be well and truly out of date in Australia.

There will be tremendous resentment by school councils and parent bodies which raise those funds, as they are striving to buy the equipment and ending up with computers that will be out of date very quickly. They will resent the fact that the staff of the school will be back to the council in 12 months saying that the equipment is out of date. Furthermore, they are still fiddling at the edges in terms of buying six Apples II or III, or six B.B.C.s. However, whichever one is involved, it will have minimal impact in educating 1 000-plus children in a high school on the basic use of computers. Somehow the Education Department needs to reassess the basis on which it will purchase its computers, who finances it, and how the whole programme is introduced into schools.

I find it disturbing, to say the least, that, in what I believe is a high-class technology area, we should be using the most primitive techniques available in terms of how we are stepping into the area. My wife, who understands little about computers, shakes her head in amazement at the basis on which Unley High School is operating. Having spoken to people on other high school councils, I have found that they have the same problem. How does the Minister propose to solve the problem and put an end to what is occurring out there?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: A number of points have been raised. I refer, first, to computers that are recommended by the Education Department. The Department tried to forestall the situation that was occurring, as there was a free for all in which many schools were going into a wide variety of different brands of computer. We have canvassed that issue again this evening and acknowledged that there will be a major shakedown in the market and many suppliers will go out of existence. It is not possible to guesstimate whether Apple and B.B.C. will be still in the market in two years. If we had that foresight, we would have made those decisions already. However, I believe the member will agree that it is difficult to estimate. That decision is based on the software that is available here and also its applicability for use in schools. Just because equipment may have been outdated through generational changes in computer technology, it does not mean that it is no longer applicable in computer teaching.

In other areas, school equipment is often outdated before it is purchased as there are plans on the drawing board elsewhere in the world. That also happens in industry. I indicated before the last State election that this presented real problems for schools. In the policy area I spelt out that we needed to have a consultancy look at how a Government department responds to generational change in its equipment needs. Previously, our financial models had anticipated that we could buy a piece of equipment and need not replace it for 10 to 20 years unless it broke down. It may not break down for 20 years, but it may be outdated in a shorter

space of time. Our financial models cannot cope with that. The consultancy is to study the magnitude of the problem, and it will pick up many of the valid points that the honourable member made.

Secondly, it will also try to investigate what options the Government can consider to finance the problem because, clearly, if we are looking at a four-year or less turn-round on computers, we are facing major problems. In terms of responding to new technologies, perhaps computers are the cheap end of the problem. In craft shops we have a greater order of magnitude of cost problems with generational change. We want the consultancy to examine the problem and provide Governments with answers. When we try to undertake financial planning for the coming years, we will have a proper understanding of where we are going. Just because equipment is outdated by generational change, it does not mean that it is no longer useful.

It is interesting to note that in Japan, where they do not have much use for computers in their school system, they are still reliant on the abacus. It was outdated many generations ago, but, in terms of its applicability in education, it is still very useful indeed and the Japanese are rather loath to part with it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I fully understand the point that equipment, due to the development of new technology, becomes outdated. We cannot overcome that, and I agree with the Minister. However, I was making not that point but rather that current advice is to go out and purchase equipment which is already out of date. The equipment is purchased and is therefore out of date. I do not wish to reflect on any individual company, but I believe that we have all known for some time that at least one of the computers now being recommended, although still an extremely popular model of computer with a tremendous range of software available in the teaching area, is, in terms of computer function, well and truly out of date. The company itself would be the first to admit that, as it has brought an entirely different product on to the market.

The change in the product is such that it no longer requires the type of programme which the old computer required, and it is important that schools get advice on the most up-to-date equipment, particularly if such equipment will radically alter the type of training and, in fact, simplify the level of training and reduce the amount of software needed to feed into the computer. What techniques will the Minister adopt to overcome the bureaucratic resistance within the Education Department to a modern quick response and assessment of what is needed in the computer training area? Because of that resistance, slowness, and an unprofessional manner in handling this problem, despite a lot of good will (I am criticising not the Education Department or the teachers but rather the way in which the problem has been tackled), it is causing much concern amongst parents.

My colleague from Bragg made the point (with which I agree) that there is panic out there amongst parents because they can see that at their own schools, with only five or six computers, only a select number of children have a chance of gaining access to those computers. They believe that their Johnny or Sally will not get any training, and they are worried that their child will come out of school unable to cope with the computer age.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I take exception to the word 'unprofessional', as I believe that those who have worked in this area of the Education Department have done so to the best of their professional ability. I refer to those within the Angle Park Computing Centre, those in the Central Education Department and those at the school base level.

It is interesting that South Australia is regarded very well nationally in this regard and much of the work that has

been done in terms of developing a national approach to computers in education has drawn upon the expertise that has been developed in South Australia. I pay tribute to those who have been involved in that and, indeed, we did so earlier this afternoon as well. That is not to say that there are not very real concerns, and I accept that.

I believe that the Federal Government has tried to take that up. Indeed, I acknowledge that the previous Government was trying to take up that matter in terms of trying to make funds available so that we could guarantee the spread of the availability of computers throughout all our schools. The member has mentioned one brand that is available being outdated by its own improvements. I venture to suggest that that would have happened with any model that might have been recommended. The facts are that a significant body of software is available for what we are recommending. Another method is to follow the approach of some other State Governments which have looked to a computer that is produced in this country. They followed what might be called the Brazilian approach of the fostering of national industry, and that has a lot to commend it. That in itself involves other problems, so various decisions have to be made by various education systems as to which product will be used. I do not know that every decision will be a perfect one, but I think that, given the fact that we have acknowledged software development, professional development of teachers is two-thirds of the question. The system in South Australia has responded as best it has been able to.

The other point we want to make is that computer education does not simply have to involve hands-on experience: it also involves a lot of other education to make it successful in regard to computer literacy. Angle Park took that action for years, long before many schools had access to computers. Angle Park has dealt computer education programmes for thousands of pupils in South Australia.

Ms LENEHAN: I refer to page 134, 'Summary of programme structure'. The first section deals with protection of persons, their rights and property. I specifically refer to the area of preparation for the impact of technological change on society. I was a member of the A.L.P. policy committee on technological development. One of the problems to which we as a committee addressed ourselves was this very issue of the way in which employees are consulted. Is the Government planning to develop and implement guidelines to ensure not only adequate consultation with but also input from employees before new technologies are introduced?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I previously mentioned that the public sector guidelines were approved by the Government earlier this year. Under those guidelines, wherever a job affecting new technology is to be implemented in the public sector, a consultation process must be gone through. Also, in a case of a disagreement between various parties, there is an arbitration process. South Australia is not in the vanguard of the nation in this regard. We have come after other States and, indeed the Federal Government, but we are not the last State and it is certainly important that such guidelines be introduced.

I have indicated that we are eager to promote the idea within the private sector as well, and a number of companies have had *de facto* guidelines of this sort: they have implemented proper consultation processes, and very successfully. One initiative that is under way is the conferring of representatives of the Trades and Labor Council and the Metal Industries Association to prepare guidelines that will be considered by the Council of Technological Change. We hope to have those guidelines available for the Council by the end of October.

Ms LENEHAN: I refer to 'Economic Development, Technological Change' and specifically 'Stimulation of Technology Transfer, Development and Innovation'. It seems to me and to many other people that the success or failure and the growth of high technology and knowledge-based industries in South Australia will depend on whether Governments adhere to the policy of 'buy Australian'. At present, there seems to be very little co-ordination or overall policy direction in this very critical area. Will the Minister indicate whether significant new initiatives are proposed in South Australia in the future?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Yes, indeed, the matter of procurement policy will be before Cabinet within a month. The other issue canvasses State preference policies. May I say that South Australia has taken the attitude at both the Ministerial conference in Perth and the national conference last week that State preference policies designed to promote local industries in the high technology area are counter productive in that South Australia particularly will lose out by that kind of approach. We are trying to promote a national approach in this regard. We also believe that 'buy Australian' policies will be helpful in terms of promoting technological innovation, research and development in this country provided they are tied to those questions. It has to be recognised that, in talking about programmes of encouraging the purchase of Australian goods, there has to be a recognition of the R and D component built into this. I also relate that to offset programmes. We should be encouraging involvement in R and D programmes in this country. Again we spelt out our support in that regard last week at the national technology conference.

It is also important to realise that the whole technology question is not simply a matter of the level of research, which, in the private sector, is inadequate: it is also a matter of the development of that research, and in the past there has not been enough follow-through on research in the private sector in terms of developing products or processes that can assist that industry or other private industries. That involves a lot of other questions which immediately may not be thought of as being relevant to the technology question. This includes management education and other forms of education for those involved in the work place. Again, those issues came through last week at the national technology conference as being issues of some considerable importance. So many ideas die on the drawing table: some great ideas are never followed through. We must assist in the process of following through ideas.

Ms LENEHAN: As I understand it, Western Australia, Victoria and New South Wales have introduced innovation centres. Does the South Australian Government plan to introduce a similar type of centre which obviously would address itself to some of the situations that the Minister has outlined in regard to ideas being great on the drawing board but not being picked up and implemented? I understand that some money was made available in the Federal Budget for this purpose. Is that correct?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The honourable member may have been absent from the Chamber when we canvassed this matter. The Government is considering how we can respond to that Commonwealth initiative and Cabinet will discuss the matter in a few weeks.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The Federal Government has taken a decision to provide the secondary education system with computers, whereas obviously the hands-on experience is needed throughout the educational system. I would suggest that the Minister's advisory committee seriously considers that, if nothing else, it should at least make that point patently clear to the Federal Government—that an error made 14 or 15 years ago is being repeated and that the salvation of South Australia will be in the emulation of

Western Australia and Tasmania, I believe, in providing computers to far more schools than the small number which at present have State and Federally-funded machines available to them. I would also suggest that the children in primary schools are already in gear to benefit from computerisation, because one has only to look at the amusement parlours anywhere in South Australia to realise that children have a very high degree of technological skill. They are extremely alert; they are very swift in the way they manipulate the wide variety of entertainment machines; and they are prepared to pay. They will contribute their hard-earned or given spending money to go into these amusement parlours, and it seems a crying shame not to take advantage of that sort of attitude on the part of the youngsters.

I suggest that there is a completely different relationship between the provision of resource centres in the 1969 period onwards and the provision of computers now, because whereas the videotape is part and parcel of today's sales spiel, where almost every home, it is envisaged, will have a video recorder in the next two or three years, in the case of computers we are already some 10 to 12 years behind. Private enterprise has been availing itself across the world of computerisation. In the woods and forests area alone, two years ago at the last national expo, which was held, I believe in Sweden, one could opt for computerised machinery, or for the manually operated machinery. The forestry exhibition this year has computerisation built into everything; the option not to have it has been removed.

I suggest we can have as many committees as we like, but the problems are standing out like sore thumbs. We know that youngsters have to stay at school longer. We know that there are communication skills in language, mathematics, the sciences and, an often neglected skill, comprehension (we can have all the others, but if comprehension is lacking we may as well have nothing). These skills have been at a premium for a long time. They do not necessarily depend on computerisation: they depend on solid basic educational training, that is, a good solid core curriculum. Apart from that, we have the problem where young people stay at school longer, knowing that they have to acquire skills and then are faced with the realisation that, as they look around, the more companies spend on equipment the fewer are the people required to work that equipment and the greater the productivity. For example, in primary production some 20 per cent of Australians were previously producing on the land, and now it is down to about 4 or 5 per cent producing far more.

We know what the problems are. When do we get together and acknowledge that expenditure of considerable sums of money to update our equipment and to get hands-on experience for youngsters right throughout the system is really the solution, because the more committees we have, the longer we take to acknowledge that these problems are really the basic ones, then the further Australia is going to be behind the eight-ball. I suggest we are probably a decade behind many of the more sophisticated Western countries.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The purpose of committees is not to find the problem: I think we all know what the problem is, and we have to find the solution to it. I am not absolutely certain in the area of computer education that the solution has been found by other countries. The Japanese education system is choosing an answer that is not particularly highly reactive to computers as such.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I did acknowledge that you referred to the abacus, but an abacus and a computer have an identical system. The speed and the competence really lie in the manual skills of the two operators. They finish virtually spot-on together if you set them going side by side. We saw it done by the Yamaha computer operator and the

abacus operator on television not long ago and it was the manipulative skills of both.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The other point I am hoping this consultancy into generational change will give us is some hard-nosed facts with which we can argue convincingly about the situation. One of the things we have at the moment is a lot of feeling that we have a major problem and we have to work our way through it, but we have a number of options. I am not absolutely convinced which one is the best option with which to tackle it, but I think it is about time that we got down to hard-nosed solutions and spelled out how they can be effected. I think we would recognise that the problem is well known to us all and we cannot allow ourselves to keep on bemoaning the fact that the problem is there. We have to start doing something about it. The point I want to make is that the computer programme that is presently being supported by the Commonwealth Government is not simply a matter of its saying that this is what is going to happen and the next day in the post comes a letter saying, 'We are going to issue an ABX computer to every school; it will arrive on Friday. You can plug it in, and it will have this set of tappets to go with it, so now use it educationally.' We have not in fact finally got the absolute guidelines of how that programme is running, because it has been left to educators at the Federal and State levels to talk through what is the most appropriate way of using that money so that it can be used to the best effect.

So, it is very much in the hands of the Schools Commission, and in South Australia Peter Sandery has been involved in the programme. I take the point about the exercise in the late 1960s. That may have been a disaster, but sometimes good things come from such an experience. The homestead video scheme, which was thought out quickly in 1980 by the Commonwealth, was to provide videos for outback homes. South Australia has taken that scheme and done marvels with it. Educators got hold of a half-baked idea and converted it into an idea that has been educationally sound and successful. Even with the video experience good things may happen, although I accept the honourable member's general point. We must look at what is good generally for the education of our young people: it will not be sufficient to think that we will have merely lessons in computer education.

In South Australia, we have the basis of a good education system on which we can build. At last week's national conference the point was readily made that we must not force young people into restrictive areas of education from which they cannot break free. They must have an educational base on which to build later when technology presents them with the need to retrain.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Some computer companies have recently been dumping superseded models of computers on to the United States market. It might be an idea to approach such a company to arrange the importation of obsolete equipment for installation in our schools so that youngsters may get hands-on experience on these old machines. The hardware is durable, but sometimes the software lasts longer than the hardware. In some South-Eastern school libraries I have seen software capable of use 10 years after its acquisition. Companies could be asked to lease the obsolete equipment and, when it has been superseded, the more modern equipment could be installed. At Angle Park, equipment was leased for about \$10 000 a year compared to the purchase price of \$180 000 for equipment that was rendered obsolete within 12 months. I believe that parents would be much happier about committing reasonable sums in this way rather than arranging for the installation of something obsolete on a permanent basis.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I thank the honourable member for his suggestion. The money made available for high

technology schools focuses on the leasing of equipment. I will refer to the Department the honourable member's suggestion concerning the leasing of obsolete computers to see whether it is workable. An Australian producer of computers would need to be consulted because that company might feel disadvantaged by our embarking on such a project. The Angle Park Computing Centre spends time following the brands of computers coming on the market so that it can advise those schools needing computers.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: More and more women are being employed in Australia, but a pressing problem concerns the effect of computers in areas where women have traditionally obtained employment: for example, in the textile industry and in commercial fields where computerised machines are replacing typists and stenographers. Has the Minister any long-term optimism to impart on that aspect?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: True, the effects of computerisation on the employment of women can be serious indeed. Such effects will have to be looked at in the development of a national strategy so that we will not disadvantage a specific group in the population. I hope that such issues will be canvassed. In certain areas job opportunities may be created in the tertiary or information sector. Regarding education, boys and girls must be instructed at the secondary level. A survey is being conducted in Melbourne to determine why students, especially girls, are not choosing maths and science subjects: some students are selecting themselves out of subjects that might give them job opportunities later. I am keen to see the results of that survey because they could provide us with ideas on how to redress the balance.

Ms LENEHAN: On page 134 of the yellow book, reference is made to the preparation for the impact of technological change on society. In the past I have had cause to prepare papers on technological change, specifically as it applies to women. Is there a specific section of the promised report that will provide figures on the impact of computers on the employment of women? Members need that hard evidence if they are to address themselves to specific areas.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The Director tells me that he is preparing a report for me on this aspect, but I hope that reference is made to it in the reports of some of the task forces and in the terms of State strategy, because it affects all South Australians. The discussion of that strategy paper will give people the benefit of the research to which they should have access. That would open up to us areas of research that we should be considering further. I indicated an area in which I was interested in seeing progress which is occurring in Melbourne as part of the national programme. Certainly there are other areas that we would want to look at as well.

Mr MEIER: I do not believe that the Minister answered a question asked earlier by the member for Davenport. Recognising that the office of Ministry for Technology was formerly incorporated in the Department of Industrial Affairs and Employment, what actual increase in employment, if any, has there been in relevant areas, and in which areas has most employment occurred? Is it possible to compare the previous Ministry and the new Ministry?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Apart from secondments, three extra people have been employed: the Director of the Ministry for Technology, his secretary, and a steno-secretary addition to the Technology Advisory Unit. So, three people are involved, plus the secondments that will be arranged. It is quite a conscious belief on my part that we do not want to see the technology Ministry grow into a massive department in its own right. It is supposed to be a functional department addressing the needs of all Government departments, and it will do that more effectively if it makes an effort to develop that interface with other Government departments, rather than just building up its own size. That

is not to say that there will not be grounds for further staff increases in the unit, but we are taking it step by step. Obviously, we will be responding later. I would not hold out the prospect (and I think all members would agree with me) that eventually the Ministry for Technology will have a staff of 100, because that is not the road that we are going down.

Mr MEIER: I note from the Programme Estimates that advice is given from some of the agencies of Government, whether from Angle Park or from the Ministry itself, regarding computer hardware and software to private individuals and to companies. I wonder whether that advice is free or whether it is charged for. I ask that in a sense that lately I have seen so many travelling salesmen with computer gear in the back of their cars. I guess that people need advice as to what they should or should not buy, to prevent them from being taken in by a fast talking salesman.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The honourable member would realise that this is a very difficult area. If the Government was to begin getting into what people should be doing it would be taking on the role of *Choice* magazine. We could well be seen as discriminating against certain private companies. Clearly, in regard to Government departments we have the Data Processing Board, which plays a vital function in terms of evaluating the processing needs of Government departments, but that is where its function finishes. The Angle Park Computing Centre is available to support schools and provide advice to them. The Government has not really considered the prospect of going wider afield than that.

We are eager to support educational seminars with small business concerning various impacts of new technology and the matter of how they should be responding that the imperatives. That would involve canvassing with them the sorts of issues that they should be looking at when investing in computers. Rather than saying, 'We think you ought to stay away from brand X like the plague and go for brand Y', we would be saying, 'Let us help you look at trying to analyse your problem and at the various systems available and what they would tend to do for you in terms of responding to your problems.' That is talking on the level of computers; there are other levels to be considered. They would then make their own determination about matching the advantages or disadvantages of a system with their new perception about their real needs. Other than that, we could probably leave such matters to *Choice* magazine.

Mr MEIER: I know that the Electricity Trust provides an excellent service with respect to most electrical items, particularly air-conditioners. I have spent quite some time recently with the officers of the Trust receiving advice, which was most helpful: hopefully, I have made the right decision. The Minister's answer was most interesting.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: My Director has passed to me a note saying that Techsearch, of the Institute of Technology, has a proposal before it so set up a micro-computer advisory service.

Dr Ellyard: For some time the Ministry has been trying to work out how far this type of service, for which there is a very real need, should be best provided. The industry and the Australian Computer Society recognise the need. Quite a lot of the private sector recognises the need. We think that the Government has a role to play in it. We have not yet defined the maximum mix of who does what, but we are of the view at present that we should help support the service being provided in South Australia by an independent group such as that being provided by Techsearch, at the S.A.I.T. We have a draft proposal internal document at that stage now, and we are about to put a suggestion that this is the route to take. We have not yet developed any detailed costing of the proposal, so we do not know exactly how the

financial shares would be finally allocated. It is an area which we are considering very carefully.

Mr MEIER: Are specific financial or other incentives available to companies that wish to locate high technology industries in South Australia?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The Enterprise Fund announced by the Premier will have elements connected with it that will be trying to provide support for companies that want to involve themselves in changing technologies. That is a State Government response. The other thing is that, the established State Government support mechanisms which are available are available to certain companies that want to involve themselves in high technology, anyway, and various payment schemes are available through the State Government. They have been available for some years and are still available. The Caddsmen Bureau also included part payment for that type of programme.

The Government waited to see what finally came from the Federal Government. A proposal had been put by the State Government earlier this year, and in the absence of a final report from the Federal Government it was felt that it would be best not to proceed further with it until the Government had been notified of what the Federal Government was going to do. Now that the Federal Government has effectively come down with adopting the recommendation on support in terms of tax deductibility, it now leaves it open for the State Government to once again pursue where it picks up from here.

The other point is that Technology Park in itself should be seen as an incentive or assistance to industry. When establishing Technology Park, the previous Minister acknowledged that it would be partly a contribution by the public sector, in terms of the way it was to be financed, to provide assistance. That same emphasis is still there. In other areas the small business corporation will naturally consider companies that are looking at high technology as well, but the Enterprise Fund would be the main aspect that shows promise at this stage.

Mr INGERSON: Can the Minister expand on a comment he made earlier about technology aids for the handicapped?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The Technological Change Council maintains that we should encourage the development of industry here in South Australia in this regard. That is not done by plucking wildly at a thorn in the air, but on a basis that we do have expertise for that in South Australia. There are some areas in the totally private sector and also in the semi-private or educational sector where significant work is being done in the development of technology aids for the disabled.

For example, I have had the opportunity to go to Regency Park and see some of the work that is being done at the centre. Other work is being done in other parts of South Australia. So, on the basis of that existing work in South Australia, it was felt that maybe we have a chance for a specific industry. It is a specific industry, not a high volume industry, but it could well be the sort of industry that we could find a niche in.

Mr INGERSON: My next question relates to small business, and the Minister has already mentioned the problems of getting into the information area. It has also been reported by Dr Ellyard, but there are a couple of comments that have been made in the programme papers. One is in relation to automated fuel systems, and also an area on advice on venture capital. Could those two areas be expanded on by the Minister as they relate specifically to small business?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: First of all, in regard to the automated fuel systems, a task force is presently under way. A survey of retail petrol outlets has been designed, and Techsearch has been commissioned to undertake the survey which should take place early this month. The report on

the systems would be expected by the end of November, and the report on the principles that could be applied to assessments of propositions, such as the one received from the South Australian Automobile Chamber of Commerce, is expected to be debated by the council in November or December. So, a final report can be released by the end of December. With regard to venture capital, part of the consideration of the Enterprise Fund looks at those areas. We have been waiting until now on the Federal Government response as to what it would do in regard to venture capital. Now that we know that the Government will license particular companies to enter this market, we will be responding to that.

Mr INGERSON: My final question goes back to what I think is still the major problem in this whole area, and that is the explanation to the public of what technological change is all about. In many of the pages before us social issues are brought forward as major points. There is comment about the sponsoring of seminars and publications, and so forth, and it seems that this is a major problem that needs to be faced. How are we to get across the message of the effect of technological changes. I wonder whether the Minister could comment on that?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Certainly, that is correct. It is a major problem area. One of the problems I note that Techsearch has had jointly with us in some seminars they have been organising and partly funded by the Ministry, trying to encourage participation of people in the community in some of these issues, particularly in small business, is that a lot of people do not understand the magnitude of the problem for themselves, and do not take advantage of the opportunities to come along and learn about it. So, we cannot get people to some of these seminars to talk about it. Maybe there is something wrong with the model, but we will have to pursue that a lot further. It will have to happen, and maybe we will have to do some lateral thinking in approaching people. It will not be done by token columns in magazines or newspapers that call themselves technology columns which look at what new equipment is available in the market; it will have to go further and look at the implications.

The other important thing is that we do not want to suffer from tunnel vision, that high technology is just about a certain set of things, such as micro-electronics industries, laser industries or robotics, or whatever. It is also about other sections of the community and other sections of endeavour, and we need to recognise the fact that for example South Australia, with its primary industry being a very important sector, has an industry which has been very responsive to technological changes over the years, and will continue to be in the years to come. So, that changing technology will apply itself to many areas of activity. Again, that is a problem when one hears the words 'sunrise industries'; we forget that there are also sunset industries that can respond to changing technologies and forestall the sunset, perhaps. That is one problem we have to educate the public about; it is not a matter of saying 'Let all the glorious chips come'.

Mr INGERSON: It is the latest catch phrase. If one goes to a party or anywhere, people are talking about technological change, but when asked what they are talking about, no one is really sure. It seems to need a massive education process.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would like to take up the point raised in the previous question concerning venture capital. I understood that the Labor Party last year announced on several occasions its intention to set up, through the Government, a venture capital company. It is still its intention, and if so, would it seek registration or approval as a high technology venture capital from the Federal Government if such a company was set up? If it is not its intention

to do that, what is its intention in terms of trying to achieve a venture capital company in South Australia.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It is my recommendation that the Enterprise Fund, when established, should indeed apply for one of the licences to be issued by the Federal Government.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the State Government be supporting an application which I would have thought would come through from the new venture capital company formed by private groups in South Australia for their registration as an approved venture capital company?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The answer to that would be 'Yes', but naturally we would have to see the details of the application, and they would be considered by the Government. However, the Government would certainly be, if it is a sound application which shows it to be workable, keen to support it; but it would want to have a look at it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would now like to turn to the Data Processing Board, for which the acting Commissioner of Highways is present. Whilst I would like to ask him some questions about the north-south transport corridor (I would hope to get better answers than from the previous Minister), it is probably not appropriate to do so.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Klunder): It is indeed not proper to do so.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am sure you would try to stop me if I did.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I would not try, I would stop you.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I know that the Data Processing Board looks at the implementation of data processing right across the whole of government. One area which I know from being on the Budget Review Committee which faced a great deal of difficulty was the Health Commission and the individual hospitals. We have already seen the impact on the State Budget of the fact that there are so many bad debts in various public hospitals, and that those bad debts are not being collected. One of the reasons put to the Budget Review Committee is that they are not yet on on-line computer operations, that they have been very slow in going on line (this is individual hospitals), and that, until they are on line, it will be extremely difficult and fairly ineffective to try and catch up with bad debts in hospitals. I ask the Minister what headway has been made in terms of putting the Health Commission and individual public hospitals on line.

Mr Knight: The Health Commission completed the chief computing plan in 1981. It is a very broad plan, and it is currently updating that and indeed, going into the detail which we are talking about. We are still waiting on that plan from the Health Commission.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Is there an assessment as to when the Health Commission and the hospitals will be on line in terms of an effective accounting procedure?

Mr Knight: Some are already on line with regard to some systems. The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is currently implementing a financial management system on that system. In the total planning, we are still waiting on that.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I refer specifically to accounting procedures for hospitals, in particular the Flinders Medical Centre and the Royal Adelaide Hospital. I understand that they are the two hospitals carrying the worst load of non payment or bad debts. The biggest single reason for the blow-out of the State Government deficit last year, on almost the same basis as the three great disasters of bushfire, drought and flood, was bad debts in hospitals. Does the Data Processing Board believe that accounts in hospitals will be on line with the computer?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I ask Mr Kelly to respond.

Mr Kelly: Currently the Queen Elizabeth Hospital has chosen to implement the most modern financial information system available. It recognises that on-line computing does not resolve computer accounting problems but rather exacerbates them. Good accounting practice and management are the fundamental bases. The Royal Adelaide Hospital and Flinders Medical Centre have been using external computer bureaux for accounting for some time.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I understand that one of the problems at the Royal Adelaide Hospital was that it was not sure who had been patients at the hospital and therefore who should receive accounts. There was a complete breakdown of data processing and storage within the Royal Adelaide Hospital. I can recall, on one occasion, that for literally millions of dollars worth of accounts there was no definite answer as to whether or not they were bad debts. Whilst I accept the point Mr Kelly made that it often comes back to financial accounting procedures and not necessarily being on-line with a computer, I also assure him, from what the Health Commission told the Budget Review Committee, that the system had broken down to such an extent that the information had not been collected and needed a computer to collect it because of the vast amount of information available.

Mr Kelly: That is true. The point to note about the Royal Adelaide Hospital is that it has a fundamental characteristic different from any other hospital in the State. It is a 1 000-bed hospital and is therefore more complex administratively than the Queen Elizabeth Hospital or Flinders Medical Centre. The Royal Adelaide Hospital is implementing a patient information system. It is under trial as an interim system, and has been successfully implemented. It will be under evaluation by the hospital and the Commission and, eventually, by the Data Processing Board within the next few months. It is fundamental to the billing of patients and for ascertaining who goes in the door, who goes out and who stays in. Once the patient information system is evaluated, assuming it is successful, one would hope that that hospital will build up more positive accounting procedures. One would accept, particularly in hospitals, that accounting procedures are never very good. The State, through the Health Commission, is slowly recognising that it has to build the basic data on patients before it can start billing them. It is a slow process, but it has started, and I suspect that we are moving in the right direction.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The Minister mentioned that one possibility at which he would be looking would be the blue and white machines acting as surrogate teachers. I would like to think that he would do everything possible to scotch that impression amongst members of the teaching profession, for two reasons. The first is because they would be in a state of panic at the very thought of being replaced by machines. Quite logically, they do not want to be replaced any more than do people in the textile, timber, or iron and steel industries. Secondly, as this type of technology has made its impact on the educational system, whether it is audio or video tapes, the better teachers have quickly seized the technology and utilised it to keep the brighter, sharper students occupied on something to extend themselves.

At the same time, they have utilised the technology to enable them to teach a smaller class. The children who are technologically advanced will quickly get the machinery. They are often ahead of the staff. If one wants to have a piece of machinery used quickly in a school one gives it to the children, and the staff will follow. That has been my experience as a teacher for 17 years. I hope the Minister will not use sentences like that, even flippantly, for fear of sending the teaching profession into a panic. We will accept the realities of the situation: they can be magnificent teaching tools in the hands of good staff.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The point I was trying to make was that there are some who think that that is all they are—surrogate teachers. However, it is much more than that. I suggest that, in some parts of the world, that is how it is being seen. If one looks at projections done earlier this year on job prospects in many areas, one finds that teaching jobs are under threat in terms of some assessments. People are seeing computers taking over in many areas, but we are not following that philosophy in this country. We believe that computers are aids in the teaching process, which is still very much a person to person issue—a person teaching people.

The other point I found interesting was comment by the National Education Association in the United States which raised the matter of a fear of two classes of students being educated. One class was being given the real challenge of computer education, giving them mastery over it in terms of programming skills and the like, whilst the other group was merely being expected to be occupied with a machine and be kept amused by it, whilst not really stretching their knowledge or imagination or comprehension of what they were doing. They are becoming alarmed that, unless they can do more in terms of professional development, that may well happen, and we will have two groups of students coming through. We have been trying to work against that system for years. It would be a real tragedy if the application of technology took us back to a two-class system. It is not the Government's intention to replace people. I take the point that that would be alarming for teachers. We still firmly believe that education is a people thing, with people teaching people.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I take up the point that the Minister has made about two classes of students emerging from the education system. From personal experience I believe that there have been two classes of teachers in the education system, and nowhere was it more patently obvious than being in charge of a large resource centre where the majority of teachers would ask what software was available. The other type of teacher was more afraid of technology. This is linked up with the need for teacher education and training. The other type of teacher would come along not anxious to familiarise himself or herself with the software, and simply say 'What do you have to keep the children occupied?' In other words, the technology became a baby-sitting machine instead of an education tool. Therefore, the essential thing to do is programme the teacher first, and the Minister's concern for an educational staff training programme is obviously of paramount importance if the teachers are to be programmed in the first place. However, I believe that teacher motivation in today's South Australian educational system is extremely high, and I have no fears at all about the calibre of the vast majority of staff who are anxious to make technology work in the best interests of the student.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: It is true that the overwhelming majority of teachers are eager to take up those challenges. This is where professional development is so important because many of them will say, 'I want to take up those challenges, but I do not quite know how to do it.' It is up to professional development programmes to assist that process so that all teachers have that opportunity to make maximum use of it. It is the same in areas of curriculum development. When we develop new curricula, we want to make sure that we are not just lumping new curricula on people, but that we give them the opportunity to use that effectively.

I have to agree that professionalism is one part of the package. It also must involve curriculum development materials that go with that. That same situation applied to the introduction of the video machines in schools as well.

Not only did it require professional development in the use of video machines and the operation of that equipment: it also required the preparation of materials suitable for showing on video machines. I think that South Australia has a very good record in that regard.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The Minister referred to curriculum development. It was a more sophisticated curriculum development which I was considering. I find that the pace of academia is ponderous in the way that it considers, evaluates and finally accredits courses which are of vital importance in today's rapidly expanding field of technology.

May I quote one which has come to my notice recently as a member of the South-East College of Technical and Further Education Council. The council has for some time been considering the impact of technological change on the timber industry. The Minister will be well aware that the South-East college has a timber technology course which is actually approved. The Federal Government agreed to have it in Mount Gambier with the knowledge that it was the only one in Australia.

Ultimately, we believed that the present certificate courses will proceed through diploma and possibly to the full tertiary stage: if not a degree, something very similar. We are finding that the writing of curricula can be done by the experts in the field in the South-East. Dr Roger Porter is one person of whom the Minister has approved a transfer to Adelaide for that purpose. Then we are faced with a possible lengthy delay. That is why we are moving early to provide the South-East funded curriculum writer in Adelaide. We find that the pace of consideration and then accreditation is something which may set that programme back.

If the Minister and his Committee could work with industry and commerce in any other identical situation to present to the national accreditation body courses for rather quicker consideration and approval, industry would not have to experience the delay. Industry has to have fewer but much more highly qualified people, and it is the internationally recognised feature that Russia has about nine technicians to each person with a degree. The United States, Britain, West Germany and other Western advanced countries have up to eight technicians to each person with a degree. Australia, some six or seven years ago, had .9 technicians to each person with a degree. One had chiefs doing indians' work, and until that gross imbalance is redressed we will not be in a competitive field: we will have people with degrees, whereas we should be looking at training in the Institutes of Technology and Departments of Further Education for more technicians motivated to go through certificate, than diploma courses. I hope that the Minister will consider that and exert all possible pressure at a national level to get things moving and keep them moving. It is nothing new: it is simply that the pace of recognition is slow.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: One element that concerned me last week at the National Technology Conference was how little emphasis or recognition was placed on the important role of sectors like the TAFE sector in terms of providing education that will be needed if we are to respond to changing technology. Indeed, it will be important in terms of providing technicians, and we must be doing so much more reactively than we have done in the past. I made the point at the outset of the conference in the time that I had to give a contribution, and repeated it at the end, when I somewhat bemoaned the fact that it had not been mentioned very much throughout the conference. There was a lot of talk about universities (and that is important, too, of course), but we need a mix of educational offerings that will provide for sound social and economic development.

That incorporates technician training through TAFE, through institutes of technology and the like, so I concur in

those points. As to particular matters of course accreditation, I am certainly happy to take that matter up further and find out whether we can look at our system to see where it may be unnecessarily slow. Of course, one of the problems in terms of accreditation is that we must have a mechanism that thoroughly examines all the things we have been wanting to achieve and we end up accrediting what we started out trying to teach. It is not always possible to simply say, 'Yes, we will have a course like this and we automatically agree it should be accredited,' but I am certainly happy to look further into that matter and see whether some of the bottlenecks can be removed.

Mr INGERSON: I would like the Minister to explain several comments on page 143 in relation to the Data Processing Board: it mentions getting appropriate advice, issuing computer planning guidelines and then appraising 22 different corporate plans. There is a suggestion that it gives advice and also makes fairly specific directions. What actually happens in a department if the department wishes to computerise? Where does the Data Processing Board sit in that particular area?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The department must consult with the Data Processing Board if its proposal is in excess of \$50 000. First of all, it has to spell out its objectives and what it hopes to achieve through any computerisation; and, secondly, how it is proposed to implement it. So it is not just a matter of saying that they want that piece of equipment, but how it is to be proposed and what implementation of the proposal is needed in terms of staff development, and the like. In fact, the general guidelines that have to be followed are, first, as I said a moment ago, the definition of the problem, finding out why it is needed; secondly, a feasibility study on its application to an area; thirdly, how it is proposed to purchase it—the acquisition process; fourthly, a financial analysis of the proposition; fifthly, what project management there would be when it is introduced, how it would be monitored in its early stages and how later on it would be integrated into the full process of the department; and, sixthly, the system development—the ongoing development—of the system. The next point is the system evaluation so that in fact there is a *post hoc* analysis of whether or not it is working. The other point which now needs to be taken into account, of course, is the technical change guidelines that the Government has adopted. These are the processes that have to be gone through.

When the matter has to be referred to Cabinet for decision, the Data Processing Board's comments have to be available to Cabinet for it to take into account, and very often, in terms of major projects, the Data Processing Board is actually involved in the implementation committees so that it monitors as the whole process is going through after it may have been approved. In some instances it can then be involved in the follow-up evaluation as well.

Mr Kelly: The Data Processing Board does not sit and wait until a department gets the idea that it wants to computerise and put a proposal. The staff of the Board have been working closely across all departments suggesting to the senior executives that, as soon as they get the idea, they get in touch with us and we will give the chief executive of the department a training course on their responsibilities for data processing and how they can best organise themselves to go through in a systematic, businesslike and cost-effective manner.

Mr INGERSON: Page 145 mentions the establishment of a word processing and information retrieval system: does that apply purely and simply to the Minister for Technology, or is it a very broad-based comment—in other words, to look at word processing and a retrieval system in all departments?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: That concerns clerical support for the Ministry.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Have the guidelines laid down by the previous Government for the operation of the Data Processing Board been changed by the present Government?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The only change has been the requirement that the public sector guidelines must be considered. Another guideline concerns corporate computing planning by the Department.

Mr Kelly: As more departments and statutory authorities have realised the need to develop computer planning across the corporate structure, there have been developed corporate computing guidelines that have been issued to all departments. All guidelines of the Data Processing Board are reviewed every six months to ensure that they match the latest trends in technology.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the Minister make available a copy of the public sector guidelines?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Certainly.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In terms of the organisation there appears to have been a fundamental change in that the Board, which previously had a close working relationship with the Government Computing Centre, seems to have broken the nexus and one Minister is responsible for the Centre and another for the Board. Is that so? If it is, how do the two carry out liaison? What say has the Board on the activities of the Centre?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Mr Kelly is on the steering committee of the Government Computing Centre, so he maintains input from the Board to the Centre. The Board has an advisory role to all Government departments. The centre serves by fulfilling a mechanistic function so it is in another Ministry. However, the interface between the Board and the Centre is provided by Mr Kelly's activities.

Mr Kelly: The Director-General of Services and Supply, who is the departmental head for the Centre, is also a member of the Board.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Who has taken over the role that Mr Guerin previously had on the Board? He was either Chairman or Executive Officer.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The Chairman would have taken over that role.

Mr Knight: Under the previous Government, the Chairman of the Board was a full-time officer of the Board. Under the reorganisation, the Chairman holds a part-time position: that is a position I currently hold.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: A function of the Board is to establish a word processing and information retrieval system within the Government. The previous Government contracted with Raytheon International for the establishment of an assembly and marketing operation at Hendon. An agreement was reached between the company and the Government for the purchase of word processors for use within the Government, provided that the company's product was competitive as to price and performance, with the understanding that the Government would purchase the equipment from the company because that equipment was made in South Australia. Is the present Government adhering to that agreement, which is a form of preference to a South Australian firm? Can the Minister indicate how much word-processing equipment has been purchased from Raytheon International?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I will take that question on notice because it comes under the Minister responsible for services and supply.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I appreciate that another Minister may be doing the purchasing, but I have asked the Minister for Technology a question because I believe that it is a policy question that relates to the Data Processing Board. Will the Minister indicate what was the total value

of purchases of word processors for 1982-83, and what percentage of those purchases was from Raytheon International? Will he also give details of what other individual companies the Government purchased from? Secondly, what is the anticipated overall purchase for 1983-84? I appreciate that at this stage it would be impossible to indicate from which companies that equipment may be purchased. Also, will the Minister indicate any change in Government policy in terms of the application and purchase of word processors within Government?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I will take all those questions on notice and answers to them will be provided.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I refer to the policy that the Data Processing Board adopts for the implementation of data processing procedures within individual Government departments. For example, there is the on-line computer facility for the Motor Registration Division of the Department of Transport. At a committee meeting at which the Chairman of the Data Processing Board was present, I raised the point of whether perhaps Government policy, at least that policy adopted by individual divisions and departments, should change. I am not criticising Government policy, but I am referring to how it is applied, in that there seems to be a tendency by Government departments to spend large sums of money on consultancies when in fact if they went interstate they could probably pick up existing on-line procedures and use that software, which would probably meet 99 per cent of the requirements of the departments in South Australia. The classic case is the Motor Vehicle Registration Scheme, which is already in operation in both the Northern Territory and Western Australia. Another is the on-line police computer, which, I recall, involved enormous expenditures on consultancies and enormous delays in implementation, and ended up needing the purchase of additional equipment. Again, I understand that similar procedures or programmes were actually operating in Western Australia.

Will the Minister indicate how much money has been spent on consultancies for data processing during 1982-83, and how much it is anticipated will be spent on consultancies in 1983-84? Will the Minister ask the board to look at whether it may not be a cheaper alternative to go out and purchase existing software programmes rather than allowing individual departments to try to develop their own specialised programmes to meet their own specialised needs?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The first two questions will require a search for figures, and that information will be supplied. Mr Kelly will comment on the third point raised.

Mr Kelly: Interestingly enough, officers from the Motor Registration Division have just been interstate to look at alternative systems to assist them in evaluation of a system for a particular solution. Several Government departments do that at various times. The Data Processing Board keeps close contact with the Commonwealth Government and all other State Governments with a view to rationalisation of software facilities. The matter is of growing concern, and it is an important area.

Mr Knight: When submissions come before it, the Data Processing Board always requires that those organisations should have been interstate to determine whether or not there are systems available that would suit their needs. The on-line system of the Motor Registration Division is a little bit unique in that, whilst the Department has had a look at systems that might be available interstate, the Government is indeed looking at the possibility of interfacing this with the justice information system because of a certain commonality of data involved, and indeed that does make it a rather special situation.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will the Minister direct the Data Processing Board, in its deliberations in analysing any

requests by any individual department, to look at a new data processing operation, and in particular, before that department is allowed to take on consultants, that it refers that specific need to the Government's own computing facility to see to what extent that computing facility could immediately meet the needs of that department without the expenditure of money on consultants?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: I have the feeling that it already happens. I have had it confirmed that it does in fact already happen.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Following up the operation of the procedure in individual Government departments, I ask for an assessment from the Data Processing Board as to how effective data processing has been in the Police Department, in the hospitals that have already purchased equipment (whether or not they are on line is another matter, and in particular I am referring to the Flinders Medical Centre), and the Department of Marine and Harbors, which I think was involved in considerable consultancies and the purchase of equipment last year, and any other Government department that has purchased equipment valued at more than \$100 000 in the past couple of years. I would appreciate an assessment, which will take time, from the Data Processing Board as to how effective those operations have been.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: We will take that question on notice, as some aspects of that kind of evaluation would take a considerable length of time. It would involve major questions, the answers to which we will not know for some time. There will be short-term answers that we will be able to give on some of those topics.

The CHAIRMAN: Before the member for Davenport continues, again I would point out to the Minister that, if there is any information to be made available, it must be in a form suitable to be put into *Hansard*.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: In clarifying what I would like, I do not wish the Board to go off and involve large numbers of people in an assessment of those schemes. In fact, I am fairly sure that the Board, from its existing knowledge, would have a fairly accurate assessment of how effective are those individual operations.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: Indeed, it is part of their present charter to follow through such matters.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I realise that the charter of the Board is to review that. I am asking for an immediate assessment, not here but in writing, of the larger amounts of money spent by individual departments, and how effective that has been. It is an area where a lot of money has been spent, but I am not sure how effectively. There has been some criticism from outside of Government: whether some of that criticism is valid or not is another matter, but there has certainly been plenty of criticism. Can the Minister indicate what Government Departments are likely to move into the purchase of major new computing equipment in the next 12 to 18 months?

Mr Kelly: There are of course, as you will imagine, several major acquisitions planned or under way. One would be the Treasury Department, in the installation of its accounting system. A second is the installation of a further system at the Government Computing Centre for common accounting procedures throughout various departments, and the third under investigation is the replacement of the common payroll system by the Public Service Board. The Education Department is at present doing a corporate computer plan on the administration side, and looking at computer planning on the education side, as are TAFE and the Kindergarten Union, which are now tendering for equipment, The Electricity Trust is looking for a system for computer aided design.

A major data base is being planned by the Lands Department. The justice information system is at the feasibility

study stage. The Department of Woods and Forests is implementing systems, as is the Department of Marine and Harbors. Almost all departments are thinking or planning computing, including the Department for the Arts, which has just set up a computer planning committee. I can provide a list of departments for the honourable member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would appreciate such a list. I refer to the attraction of high technology industry. Does the Minister see scope for biotechnology industry in this State? If so, what initiatives are being undertaken by the Department to establish such industries?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: There are possibilities in biotechnology. Indeed, the council released a technology appraisal a few days ago. Many substantive issues and questions have been raised in the field of biotechnology. Indeed, the appraisal refers to the fact that there should be further discussions on some of those questions. In the light of that, I have approved the convening of a seminar on biotechnology, to take place next week, bringing together a number of people from various areas of interest connected with biotechnology to talk about further questions raised in the appraisal. Once that happens, we will be able to go further from that point.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Is the Minister willing to make available to members of Parliament a copy of that technology appraisal on biotechnology?

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: The honourable member can have my copy now.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Thank you. Could members of Parliament receive future copies of any technology appraisal

released in order to keep us up to date on the excellent work carried on by the council? Could we be kept informed of any such conferences? The Leader and I would appreciate that in order for us to participate, if appropriate. All Parties in this State appreciate the value of high technology, and one of the advantages is that we have reached a great deal of consensus between the Labor and Liberal Parties over a number of years on what approach should be taken. It is important to maintain that as far as possible.

The Hon. Lynn Arnold: As Minister, I have been conscientiously trying to maintain that viewpoint, and I will be happy to circulate technology appraisals to members of Parliament and inform them of conferences, where appropriate. If it is a conference of experts in the field, it is not always an appropriate forum for politicians, but other conferences may be. I have done that on a number of occasions already and have acceded to requests for politicians to be invited.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 5 October at 11 a.m.