

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 2 October 1984

## ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

**Chairman:**

Mr Max Brown

**Members:**

The Hon. H. Allison  
 Mr E.S. Ashenden  
 Mr T.R. Groom  
 Ms S.M. Lenehan  
 Mr M.K. Mayes  
 The Hon. Michael Wilson

*The Committee met at 11 a.m.*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Will the Minister have other officers when the Committee debates the technology aspect of his portfolio?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, Sir, there will be a change of officers for Technical and Further Education, another change of officers for the Teacher Housing Authority and the Miscellaneous lines, and a further change when we debate the Ministry of Technology vote.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Can the Opposition indicate at what time it expects to be reaching the different lines?

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** We expect to reach Technical and Further Education some time around 2.30 p.m. and other officers perhaps should be here around 4.30 p.m. We will deal with technology after dinner.

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Education, \$577 811 000

**Witness:**

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

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr J.R. Steinle, Director-General of Education, Education Department.  
 Miss H.H. Kolbe, Director of Education (Resources).  
 Mr W.C. Marsh, Acting Director of Personnel.  
 Mr T.M. Starr, Chief Management Accountant.

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

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** As I have said previously, expenditure in the Education Department budget

only in terms of payments authorised by Appropriation Acts was \$507 466 million in 1983-84 and the proposed expenditure this year is \$577 811 million. In 1983-84 the Education Department budget represented 29.16 per cent of the total Budget and this year it represents 26.12 per cent, which is a reduction of almost 3 per cent—quite a significant reduction. If we then take, as the Minister did when in Opposition, the total education expenditure, including Technical and Further Education and Miscellaneous with total State recurrent payments including payments authorised by special Acts, last year the total education expenditure was \$632 408 million compared with \$725 286 million this year.

Comparing that with last year, one finds that last year's figure was 30.32 per cent, compared to 28.18 per cent this year, once again a reduction of over 2 per cent. I mention these figures because they were the parameters set down by the Minister when in Opposition and they compare very unfavourably to the 31.5 per cent obtained in the Ministry of my colleague the member for Mount Gambier. I say nothing more about that at this stage.

As I mentioned, in the Estimates the increase in expenditure for the Education Department alone represents about 13.7 per cent over the past year. However, looking at the programme papers, the reconciliation page (page 6) shows an increase of 6.6 per cent over-expenditure in this financial year which represents—allowing for inflation—a real increase of just over 1 per cent. I have no quarrel with that: I just point out, that in reading the agency overview in the programme papers, we are talking about 6.6 per cent as against 13.7 per cent in the recurrent budget.

Concerning staff numbers, as I understand it, retaining teachers at current levels means that there will be 250 teachers approximately—and I would like the exact figure from the Minister—retained over and above the staffing formula. I would like an exact breakdown of how those 250 teachers are to be deployed and how many will go into the primary, secondary, advisory, special education areas and so on.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I will tackle the number of issues raised by the member for Torrens. First, I noted the honourable member's comment on the share of the Budget; he made those comments in the second reading speech on the Budget debate. Certainly, the point is noted, that there may be reasons for other areas of the Budget increasing disproportionately in any one year. I have previously indicated areas such as housing and issues of importance to the Government, and that can affect an overall percentage.

To have this matter further clarified, I asked my officers to compare a comparison of the Education Department's real expenditure over the past eight years, including the budgeted proposal for this coming year. They have come back with a set of figures which identify the money dollars spent in education on salaries and contingencies from 1977-78 to the proposed 1984-85 figures. They then deflated that to take it back to 1977 dollars, according to the approved rate of deflation. It would be appropriate for that table to be available to members. I seek leave to have it incorporated in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REAL EXPENDITURE IN 1977 DOLLARS

	1977-78 \$'000	1978-79 \$'000	1979-80 \$'000	1980-81 \$'000	1981-82 \$'000	1982-83 \$'000	1983-84 \$'000	1984-85 \$'000
Salaries and Wages .....	267 525	284 763	312 270	362 165	389 168	444 658	476 658	512 878*
Less—Salary Certificates								
77-78 .....	9 249	17 389	17 389	17 389	17 389	17 389	17 389	17 389
78-79 .....		5 869	11 115	11 115	11 115	11 115	11 115	11 115
79-80 .....			17 102	24 655	24 655	24 655	24 655	24 655
80-81 .....				26 854	37 619	37 619	37 619	37 619
3.6 per cent .....					14 308	12 606	12 606	12 606
81-82 .....					16 375	46 272	46 272	46 272

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT REAL EXPENDITURE IN 1977 DOLLARS

	1977-78 \$'000	1978-79 \$'000	1979-80 \$'000	1980-81 \$'000	1981-82 \$'000	1982-83 \$'000	1983-84 \$'000	1984-85 \$'000
82-83 .....						24 128	27 981	27 981
83-84 .....							24 455	56 476
84-85 .....								
Museum Exp. ....	1 956							
Exp. in 1.77 dollars .....	256 320	261 505	266 664	282 152	267 707	270 874	274 566	278 765
Adj. for No. pays .....				13 200		1 204		
A> adjusted exp. '77 dollars .....	256 320	261 505	266 664	268 952	267 707	269 670	274 566	278 765
Contingencies .....	31 660	33 575	36 123	39 337	45 081	50 293	61 530	64 933*
Less Museum .....	-383							
Total contingencies .....	31 277	33 575	36 123	39 337	45 081	50 293	61 530	64 933
Deflated by C.P.I. '77 dollars .....	0.951	0.886	0.805	0.737	0.667	0.597	0.554	0.526*
B>adj. contingencies exp. ....	29 744	29 747	29 079	28 991	30 069	30 025	34 088	34 183*
A + B total adj. exp. 30.6.77 dollars	286 064	291 252	295 743	297 943	297 776	299 695	308 654	312 948*

\*Estimate only

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In looking at this table I draw honourable members' attention to certain items. First, the expenditure in 1 July 1977 dollars under the salaries section shows an increase in real terms from \$256 million in 1977-78 to \$278 million in 1984-85.

The other point that should be noted is that that figure— if one takes the adjustment for the number of pays in each financial year—represents the highest figure of any of the eight years mentioned in that period. Similarly, last year's figure was the highest figure for any of the years mentioned in that period. Now, I will identify, of course, that the only year in which there was a cut-back in real terms was, according to these figures, 1981-82, but I acknowledge that for every other year there was a progressive increase in the salary level available.

The figure just above the bottom figure, indicating adjusted contingencies expenditure, runs from \$29.7 million to \$34.18 million, and shows that the highest figures achieved in real terms have occurred during the last two budgetary periods. I take the honourable member's point about the share of the total Budget going on education: it was a point that I raised when I was shadow Minister of Education. The present shadow Minister of Education has now indicated his views on two Budgets, and I have noted those views.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I thought that the ground rules were so good that I should follow them.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I appreciate that. The figures point out that any indication that there has been a reduction, certainly in the last two Budgets, is not supported by those figures. I also note the member's point about comparing the figures in the Budget papers with those in the yellow book. In regard to the comparison of \$13.6 million with \$6.6 million, clearly, the \$6.6 million figure is being looked at and indeed that is the value of having that documentation. In regard to the breakdown of positions, the honourable member suggested that the difference was some 250 positions. In fact, that is not far out: we are working on the figure of 245 as being the difference. It is proposed that at some stage during the 1985 calendar year all of those positions will be retained. I also advise that not all of them will be retained from the start of the year because with some programmes we cannot immediately put people into place because the programmes will not be ready for them, and also the 1984-85 Budget must be considered.

At the moment it is proposed that we will maintain 103 of those positions directly in primary education for the purposes of modifying and improving class sizes. It will also partly overcome the displacement effect. It must be noted that one cannot automatically take the pupil-teacher ratio figure and decline the employment level to maintain the pupil-teacher ratio and hope to have no displacement effect. There will be a displacement effect, which can cause staffing difficulties. For one year there can be a pupil-

teacher ratio exactly the same as for the previous year, but if all those numbers are allowed to drift there may be some intense staffing difficulties in certain schools because, as the honourable member would understand, students do not disappear in class lots—they disappear at various levels across the system at various age groups. Therefore, a significant proportion of the 103 positions will be needed to take account of the displacement effect, and others will be available to reduce the number of large class sizes. If members wish to do so, that issue can be tackled further later. Further, other positions will be used for the purposes of minor adjustments to the staffing formula. We modified the staffing formula last year. A few difficulties occurred with the staffing formula. We feel that some of the salaries must be available to help iron out some of the difficulties. We can tackle those matters later, too.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I would like as much detailed information on this as possible. If it cannot be supplied now, I would appreciate receiving it later.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We can go on to talk about those issues. In regard to other areas of unused teacher salaries, we are proposing from the start of the second term to put in 25 of those salaries for improved staffing of primary resource centres. Some of those will be used in the provision of a formula entitlement for junior primary schools for resource centres and others will be used to make some adjustments to the present formula for primary schools. At the moment the salaries of resource centres are broken up at about 55 per cent formula and the remaining 45 per cent above formula. We have about 284 salaries presently in primary resource centre libraries, but only about 150 are accountable by the formula. A number of schools have an over formula entitlement. The figure that I referred to is approximate—it may be marginally higher. We have decided that we will adjust the formula to take account of who are actually in the libraries and schools by improving the formula. That will mean that some schools may still be above their entitlement.

Therefore, we need salaries to help iron out some problems there, so that there are not too many dislocations. What we are trying to do is build in to formula entitlement the number of people serving in libraries at the moment to prevent any tendency for that allocation to resource centres to be reduced in years ahead. That will also result in a top up of about 25 extra full time equivalent positions from the start of term 2.

We also want to use some salaries for anticipated growth in secondary enrolments. Therefore, we propose to transfer from primary to secondary 20 salaries to meet the anticipated growth in secondary enrolments. Honourable members will recall that last year we transferred a significant number of salaries—about 100—from the primary sector. At the start of February the actual secondary enrolments were greater than we anticipated by some 500.

Cabinet approved the appointment of another 20 full time equivalent positions, which are not being retained this year, because those actual increases in enrolments at the start of February (some 500 extra) did not stay on through the month. By the end of February the actual number of secondary students represented an increase of only 1 600, which was exactly what was budgeted for. Those 20 salaries are being removed from the staffing level in the 1984-85 Budget.

Nevertheless, another 20 are needed to take account of the extra secondary enrolments anticipated for next year. We also propose to start our curriculum development support for primary schools. Before the last election the Government had a policy of trying to offer curriculum development time to primary schools. Both the Department and I are very excited about that.

We are not able to put in the salary commitment that the policy indicated. It is larger than we were able to do, but we want to start. Towards the end of this term we will invite schools to start developing proposals for access to some of those salaries that we will consider during first term next year. We will then make allocations at the end of the first and second terms. Two lots of salaries will go into that—20 from the start of second term and another 20 from the start of third term.

This gives us the benefit of being able to separate that staffing exercise from the normal staffing exercise at the beginning of the year. That is a start to meeting the Government's policy in this area. I acknowledge that it is a long way short of the stated policy, but we are at least starting to get it in place. We can answer any questions about that in due course. The number of advisers will be increased by 10. We can go through particular variations in advisory positions if honourable members want that.

Another policy of the Government was for the provision of induction opportunities for newly appointed teachers to Aboriginal schools. For a long time there has been much feeling that we expect in most schools in the Pitjantjatjara area (all but one, in fact) a bilingual programme to be run—Pitjantjatjara and English. However, we have not given adequate opportunity for teachers to be briefed and to learn Pitjantjatjara before they go there. Nor have we given them adequate inservice opportunities to understand the particular educational climate into which they will move.

So, from the start of the third term, these three salaries will be available to release teachers who have been appointed to Aboriginal schools to enable them to undergo six weeks inservicing before they go there. We are also very excited about that. Three full time equivalents will provide enough inservicing for the number of people whom we believe will be needed in 1986.

Also, we will put in another five full time equivalent salaries from the start of term 2 to the Aboriginal resource teachers. We started appointing these upon the election of this Government: we appointed 20 immediately upon election and another 15 last year. A further five full time equivalent salaries are going in here.

These will not be five new people. We want to use these to top up the fractional appointments that the other 35 full time equivalents will become. I imagine that another 55 people would be involved in those 35 full time equivalents. We would like to improve some of the time allocations that some of those people have. Effectively, it will mean 40 full time equivalents. That is how we propose to use those extra positions that are liberated.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I assume that that adds up to 245. I have not been doing the arithmetic in my head.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It does not; I made a mistake. The figure we are retaining for displacement and improvement in class sizes and adjustments to formula is not 103, it is 145.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I thought that there was a discrepancy. I want to move on to student numbers. What

are the updated figures for student numbers in 1985, for both primary and secondary? Later, I would like the latest figures (projections of the Department) between January 1985 and 1990, because I am very concerned at the trends that seem to be occurring because of the enormous problems that they raise.

First, let me deal with primary education. As I understand it, the enrolment decline in primary education will continue, although it should start to bottom, if it has not already bottomed in the past 12 months. Nevertheless, once again there will be a reduction in primary school enrolments and, of course, if the increased retention rates are to continue in secondary education, we would expect to see an increase in enrolments in secondary education in 1985. However, the Minister can give me those figures. At this stage I wish to refer to primary education enrolments, and then in my last question in this bracket I will discuss secondary education.

Page 5 of the Programme Estimates, under the strategies to be adopted by the Department, states:

Improve primary education resource commitment levels.

Of course, we also have the Minister's policy, which he released before the last State election and of which he has sent me numerous copies (so many, in fact, that I have had trouble disposing of them). On page 8 of his policy, the Minister makes the following statement:

Evidence suggests that over the next three years, of the 945 positions to be liberated by declining enrolments, 743 will come from the primary area.

He further states (which is an absolute commitment):

Labor's policy will see it receiving back more than those 743.

In other words, we are saying that the present Government in its policy of retaining teachers over formula will see that at least 80 per cent, if not more, of those teachers will go back into primary education. That is quite a definite statement, and I wish to expand on that a little. As I understand the Auditor-General's Report, we see on page 69 (and the Minister does not really need to look it up) that there has been a reduction from 1983-84 of approximately 150 teachers in primary education. In the Programme Estimates the Minister will also find that there is estimated to be a reduction of 100 teachers.

I know that the Programme Estimates, at least as I understand them, deal with the matter on a calendar year basis, whereas the Auditor-General's Report deals with it on a financial year basis, and that would obviously explain that discrepancy. However, my real question to the Minister is: how does he propose to retain 80 per cent of teachers in primary education when in fact it has not been borne out by his actions over the past two years? The Minister is aware of some of the problems that apply in primary education.

The Minister in his policy placed great emphasis on the importance of primary education, as indeed does this Party. We believe that primary education suffers in comparison to secondary education in regard to the resources applied to it. The Minister really accepts that because of his own statement and the statement in the Programme Estimates. For instance, it appears that because of the formulas there is less non-contact time for teachers in primary schools.

The teacher librarian formula is less than that applying to secondary schools. The Minister has just mentioned additional teacher librarians in primary schools, but the formula is less than that which applies to secondary schools, and indeed the same applies to area schools; and that is another important question. I think that the question of TRT days probably needs to be addressed in regard to primary schools. There are no seniors in primary schools and the ancillary staff formula is less than that applying to secondary schools. The question of remedial teachers or special education in primary schools is probably as important as any facing education.

**Mr GROOM:** What is the question?

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Just be patient and you will find out.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Talk to the Minister about the length of his answers. Be fair: the honourable member has spent nowhere near the time that the Minister has.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order!

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** My question is: how does the Minister reconcile the statements I have made, quoting from his own policy and the Programme Estimates, with what has in fact actually happened?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I wish to clarify one thing for the member for Todd. The question put to me was detailed and I wish to give a detailed answer. It will be a long answer. If members do not want a long answer, I will obtain information later and have it inserted in *Hansard*.

*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Chair has been most lenient on most occasions and is still prepared to be most lenient. I have allowed the member for Torrens a great amount of latitude as he is the lead questioner for the Opposition. He has that right. I do not want interjections to continue.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** There have been enrolment declines in primary but not in secondary areas. They were expected before the last election. I have not got the latest receipts from schools this September, but I understand that we are expecting a decline of about 3 600 in the primary sector and an increase in the secondary sector of about 400 for 1985. I will obtain, estimates for insertion in *Hansard*, the estimates for 1986-87 up to 1990. I undertake to get that information as quickly as possible.

As to the 940 positions referred to before the last election, I am glad that the honourable member has read some of the policies. However, I ask him to note that, of the 940 salaries, 743 were to come from the primary sector and 197 would comprise the secondary enrolment decline. When in Opposition, I sought that data from the then Minister. It was given in good faith by the then Minister from departmental sources. We based our policy on enrolment projections given and received in good faith. We then believed that 197 salaries would be available through the secondary enrolment decline. However, when we came to government, to the surprise of everyone right around Australia—as it happened in every State—there was not a secondary enrolment decline but rather an upturn. So, the 940 figure on which the policy was premised no longer existed as a figure, and two things had to be decided: would we expect the secondary enrolment increases to be sustained within the present secondary enrolment staffing, so that all the primary enrolment decline could be used in primary enrolment; or, would we expect to borrow some from the primary sector to feed the secondary sector? We chose the latter, because we believed that it was important that secondary education not be stressed by being under resourced with salaries.

It did, however, mean that in the 1983 school year the pupil/teacher ratio for secondary schools worsened by .1 per teacher because we did not put in sufficient to meet the maintenance of the pupil/teacher ratio. We expected some salaries to come from primary and secondary to bear part of the brunt itself. In 1984 the situation improved and there was no worsening of the pupil/teacher ratio in secondary at all. That is the significant difference between what was stated before the election and what has happened since. Nevertheless, notwithstanding that, we have already put back in to the primary sector as many salaries as we could. If one looks at the figures, one sees that after the election we put back 231 salaries. The figure was about 167 which, in one way or another, went into primary schools. The following year we retained 300 salaries. Of those, about 160 can be attributed to primary schools. If one adds up the various figures, this year we are proposing about 180 salaries

to be retained in primary schools. That gives a figure of just over 500 having been retained in primary schools. We still have the 1985-86 Budget allocation decisions to be added on to that. So, while we will not be able to provide more than the 743 salaries, I would suspect, we are getting close to that figure.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** You will obtain the figures?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** That costs the Government money.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I simply wanted to make the point.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The 231 salaries were not proposed to be retained until we made the decision to do so. Up until then only about 60 positions were proposed to be retained—231 to about 291. That was a Government decision. The question of the primary sector relativities has been noted by myself previously, and I accept it. That is why we have tried to improve the resource allocation to the primary sector.

In fact, because primary enrolments have gone down but teacher numbers have not gone down by the same number (they have gone down, because there have been some transfers to secondary) we have seen an improvement in terms of the cost of educating a primary child relative to the cost of educating a secondary child. In 1982-83, I think it was about 64 per cent, so a primary child cost 64 per cent of what a secondary child cost. The figure this year is about 69 per cent and that has been because of policies we have followed. I committed myself before the last election to achieving 72 per cent; I do not know whether we will reach 72 per cent exactly, but I think we will get to over 70 per cent.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** The Schools Commission rating was 80 per cent.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It was 72 per cent in the previous triennial report. I am concerned to see that the most recent triennial report has omitted altogether any analysis of the relativities of primary and secondary and I have raised that matter at a Federal meeting of Ministers. There is improvement in the resource commitment to primary relative to secondary, although naturally it still happens that a secondary child costs more to educate than a primary child costs.

I have noted the points about the TRT issue and the ancillary staff. There is at present under way a major review into ancillary staff, and by the request of that review committee I have given it an extension of time. It was not my decision to stall their report: they requested that if they were to deal with the matter thoroughly enough they needed more time, and they have been given the time. I expect to receive the report later this year. That report will tackle the issue of the primary ancillary formula as well as general ancillary staffing. As to TRT, in the 1983-84 Budget we put in an extra \$709 000 to restore the formula there, but I acknowledge that there may still be some discrepancies that need further work. It is a case of doing what we can with the funds available. The policy we gave was given in good faith and we are adhering to it I think remarkably closely, given the fact that the circumstances are significantly different, to the tune of about 197 salaries not being available which we thought would be available.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** When will the hollow in primary school enrolments hit secondary schools, and what effects does the Minister expect this to have on the staffing of secondary schools? If we get vastly reduced numbers in secondary schools there will be a problem with curricula, and I believe that this is one of the most important problems facing education today. If we get reduced numbers in secondary schools we will be faced with a reduction, as I see it, in curricula availability for students, especially in

years 11 and 12, where we could be looking at classes of three or four students (maybe even one or two). If students are to be guaranteed that they will be able to finish the curriculum offering that they started in the first years of secondary school (in other words, if certain students are studying a modern language in year 8), we should be able to guarantee that those students will be able to finish that particular language course at a Government high school. If student numbers are down, as I expect they will be (and that is why I want those figures from the Minister), we will be faced with the enormous problem of staffing. I need to know from the Minister what plans the Department has to cope with this problem.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We expect on present expectations that the enrolment decline in secondary schools will start in the 1986 school year. However, we have to take into account what may happen to the retention rate, and that has complicated the analyses in recent years. If the retention rate increases again in 1986, the decline may be only a small one or may not exist at all. I think we can reasonably confidently say, however, that there will not be an increase in 1986. To have an increase in students, given the age group going through, would require quite a phenomenal increase in the retention rate, and it would be greater than the increases over the last two or three years. That is when the decline will start taking place. I believe, in terms of the forward planning proposals based on the policies we have been adhering to in recent years, that a number of things will have to happen.

First, some of the liberated salaries within secondary will need to be retained to attend to areas of need and, secondly, to attend to the problem we are talking about (I will come to that in more detail later); but also some would have to be returned to primary to address some of the problems which still exist there and which were not able to be met in this three years because of the figures mentioned in the previous answer not being as we expected them to be and we have had to borrow from primary, so to speak. The honourable member raises an interesting point that there could well be problems in this area. The Department has already had discussions with me on this matter and it is very concerned about it, and we are looking at the moment at what management or education strategies we can adopt for the next five to 10 years to cope with that. A number of things become possible. Working from the standpoint that we want not to reduce educational opportunities but to at least maintain them and if possible improve them for each individual child, then we have to make some other decisions.

In other States one of the things they have looked at is the amalgamation of schools. That has always been politically a thorny issue, as it has been in this State but I think it is one thing that school communities would have to be involved in fully if there were to be any amalgamations, so that they have the opportunity to say whether or not they thought it was educationally good for their children; I hope that, if at any stage any amalgamations are discussed, school communities are critical to that discussion so that decisions are not made on high floors of skyscrapers in town: it is something that has been talked about in the local school communities.

We have already started to develop in South Australia other models for meeting some of these problems. Co-operation between schools is improving in a number of areas. I have cited on numerous occasions the Port Augusta example, with two Government high schools and one non-government high school co-operating together to improve the range of secondary offerings to students without creating unnecessarily small classes or without reducing services available to junior secondary, for example, by having large

junior secondary and small senior secondary classes. That is a locally based initiative which is working well. I have used it as an example but in fact we have started to see similar things happening in other schools in this State. I think that that offers us great possibilities and we should encourage that to happen. When I say that that kind of co-operation is taking place, sometimes it does not take place just in the metropolitan or provisional centres: we have students at Marree coming down one Wednesday a week, I think, to Leigh Creek to make use of the technical studies facilities. That is the kind of sharing that is taking place and that is a somewhat more distant situation than the three schools at Port Augusta. I believe that that offers us some means of trying to maintain or improve educational offerings to students throughout the State.

Thirdly, we have distance education. We are doing a lot of work on distance education in South Australia. At the end of term 2 we had 60 schools making use of the diverse uses communication technology, the DUCT system. According to Telecom, we are the biggest Teleconferencing users in Australia (I think they said) of any agency, education, private enterprise or any other group. We see a lot of opportunity from that kind of model giving curriculum opportunities to country students so that we can have city-based teachers teaching some courses where there are only one or two students in a school. Likewise, correspondence schools will play an increasingly big part in the provision of course materials. One of the things I have asked the Department to examine is the possible use of teachers appointed to schools who are responsible for co-ordinating distance education within that school. The teacher would not have a class as such but would be responsible for the students concerned, some of whom may be doing matric geography, some doing correspondence history, and some doing other correspondence subjects. That teacher would be a support teacher to those students doing those sort of subjects. They are the kinds of strategies we are looking at and there are doubtless others we must also look at. The Department is doing that, and it is keeping me posted on its discussions.

**Ms LENEHAN:** My first question relates, I think, to the line 'Office of the Minister'. I wish to ask my question in relation to equal opportunity within the Education Department. I am aware that the Equal Opportunities Unit in the Department is responsible for the implementation of the Equal Opportunities Management Plan. However, I would like to know details of the personnel in the Equal Opportunities Unit of the Department. Secondly, I would like a break-down of the figures in respect to the employment of women in the Education Department both in numbers and in the positions held. I would like to have that information incorporated in *Hansard* if appropriate.

Thirdly, to what extent has the Department implemented the affirmative action of women's employment in the public sector programme? I would briefly like to outline this action plan, because it is relevant to the question.

The proposed action plan is to include, first, research into and identification of the major obstacles faced by women in career development; secondly, the appropriate staff development initiatives aimed at minimising these obstacles; thirdly, establishing a follow-up mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of both of these; and, fourthly, the introduction of relevant changes which should be introduced as the research has shown.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I will ask the Director-General to give the actual size of the unit and detail on the progress of the affirmative action issue. However, the equal opportunities section of both the Education Department and TAFE have grown in size since this Government came to power. It was a policy commitment that they should do so, and

the Departments have achieved that within reallocation of their own resources, because they have appreciated that that has been the Government's policy on that matter.

Equal opportunities are critical, I believe, to the success of the delivery of educational services, both in terms of the students and the system and also those who work in the system. I have on many occasions highlighted how important it is to me that equal opportunity at all levels and with respect to all people within the education sector should apply and be developed where we cannot yet claim to have achieved adequate demographic features, for example.

I have recently spoken with both the Director-General of Education and the Director-General of TAFE about something which I hope we can develop in the near future in my Ministry. In other Ministries the equal opportunities people are invariably attached direct to Ministers and therefore meet with Ministers to discuss the development of issues. It is a different situation in the Education Department, given the kind of service being provided and the kind of work that it does—and that needs to be maintained—but I am anxious that I have the opportunity to hear issues concerning equal opportunities from both sections, and arrangements are being made with both Directors-General for that opportunity to take place: that I can meet with them and hear the issues that they wish to relate.

Information as to the breakdown by gender is not immediately available but it is available and can be sought, and it will be incorporated in *Hansard* as soon as it can be obtained. I now ask the Director-General to comment.

**Mr Steidle:** We are in a state of change in this regard, because we are changing the structure of the Education Department, and one of the areas that we will be endeavouring to ensure is covered in the local areas is equal opportunity, and we are now negotiating people to work in each area. At present that is a little uncertain but it should be resolved, certainly within a fortnight.

Strategy plans are being worked up in the areas. The northern area is well under way: they had a quite sizable launch of their plan: it was explained to principals on a very successful occasion, and other areas are adopting the same policy. Over time, all the areas will have that in place. However, the only area, to my current knowledge, that is complete is the northern area.

**Ms LENEHAN:** I would like the breakdown of figures both on gender and on the relative positions of people within the Education Department, not just how many men and women are working but at what levels they are employed. May I say in prelude to my next question that I am delighted to hear that the Minister will be having direct input from the equal opportunity advisers in both Departments: it is a great leap forward.

My next question relates to the Minister's answer to the shadow Minister in respect of class sizes. The Minister touched on this matter in answer to a question relating to teaching personnel, and I am looking at the line involving primary teaching personnel. As a local member in probably one of the fastest growing areas—I am told the fastest growing area in Australia—no doubt everyone on the Committee would be aware of my interest and indeed concern with increasing class size numbers. Where there is this incredible explosion in population, it is to be expected that class sizes must increase and that there will be some lag time, I guess, in bringing those class sizes back to an acceptable level. It is Government policy to reduce class sizes to 25 in junior primary and 27 in primary schools: can the Minister tell the Committee how this reduction programme is proceeding and my interest, I might unashamedly say, is very parochial.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I will answer, first, one other matter raised in the previous question relating to the equal

opportunities section of the Education Department: that section consists of three officers plus clerical support and, as mentioned, there is one PO equivalent in each area providing support to equal opportunities. Of course, the equal opportunity question canvasses all areas of equal opportunities, be it on the basis of gender, multi-culturalism or Aboriginal education, and works in consultation with other areas of the Department charged with those areas as well.

On the matter of class sizes, the Government did give an indication of policy commitment before the last election to have no junior primary class larger than 25 at the end of the Parliament nor any year 3 through 7 class larger than 27: it made no commitment as to secondary class sizes. I have had this issue monitored by regular surveys of all schools in the system over the past two years, and I have some statistics on this matter. I seek leave to have these statistics inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

	1982		1983		1984	
		%		%		%
Primary Schools Years R-7						
<26	1 062	35.1	1 335	41.6	1 836	46.4
26-27	780	25.7	880	27.4	959	24.2
28-30	924	30.5	842	26.2	994	25.1
>30	258	8.5	148	4.6	163	4.1
	3 024		3 205		3 952	
Junior Primary Schools R-2						
<26	263	58.7	294	64.3	451	87.4
26-27	131	29.2	120	26.2	57	11.0
28-30	47	10.4	41	8.9	8	1.5
>30	7	1.5	2	0.4	—	—
	448		457		516	
Rural Schools Years R-7						
<26	54	100	49	100	70	100
26-27						
28-30						
>30						
	54		49		70	
Area Schools Years R-7						
<26	111	60.6	135	66.1	137	55.4
26-27	41	22.4	36	17.6	60	24.2
28-30	25	13.6	28	13.7	39	15.7
>30	6	3.2	5	2.4	11	4.4
	183		204		247	
Area Schools Years 8-12						
<26	432	87.0	1 496	85.4	3 254	97.3
26-27	53	10.6	178	10.1	72	2.1
28-30	11	2.2	56	3.2	9	0.2
>30	—	—	20	1.1	7	0.2
	496		1 750		3 342	
Special Rural Schools Years R-7						
<26	16	100	16	100	17	100
26-27						
28-30						
>30						
	16		16		17	

	1982		1983		1984	
		%		%		%
<b>Special Rural Schools Years 8-12</b>						
<26	8	100	8	100	7	100
26-27						
28-30						
>30						
	8		8		7	
<b>High Schools Years 8-12</b>						
<26	1 049	53.4	10 106	60.6	26 969	81.8
26-27	347	17.6	3 331	20.0	2 771	8.4
28-30	456	23.2	2 514	15.0	2 197	6.6
>30	109	5.5	700	4.2	1 032	3.1
	1 961		16 651		32 969	
<b>All Schools Years R-7</b>						
<26	1 506	40.4	1 834	46.4	2 511	52.2
26-27	952	25.5	1 038	26.3	1 076	22.4
28-30	996	26.7	918	23.2	1 041	21.6
>30	271	7.2	155	3.9	174	3.6
	3 725		3 945		4 802	
<b>All Schools Years 8-12</b>						
<26	1 491	60.4	11 612	63.0	30 230	83.2
26-27	400	16.2	3 509	19.0	2 843	7.8
28-30	467	18.9	2 570	13.9	2 206	6.0
>30	109	4.4	720	3.9	1 039	2.8
	2 467		18 411		36 318	

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I wish to make a couple of points: first, the survey data is for all classes (primary and junior primary) for 1982, 1983 and 1984. However, the 1982 figure is based on some recollection of data by primary schools at the start of 1983, so there may be some variations in that. For secondary schools, however, the data is only universal for this year: last year it was a sample data collected from secondary schools.

The other point that should be made is that these figures are February enrolment figures and, as members know, they change from February to October, in the case of junior primaries that is significant. So, the figures must be modified by that, but at least they are comparable to previous years and that is what is being aimed for in these figures. To give some indication, in junior primary schools, for example, the number of classes less than 26 (in other words, 25 or under) in 1982 was 58.7 per cent, and in 1984 it had risen to 87.4 per cent, so there is a significant improvement there.

In primary schools—R through 7 schools, that is, all year grades—the situation with regard to those less than 28 (27 or under) in 1982 was 60.8 per cent, and in 1984 it was 70.6 per cent, not as dramatic an improvement but a clear improvement.

The number of classes over 30 in junior primary schools was 1.5 per cent (seven classes) in 1982 and no classes in 1984. In primary schools, R through seven, the number of classes was 8.5 per cent in 1982 (258 classes), and it is now 4.1 per cent, less than half (163 classes).

We have achieved some significant improvements in class sizes: we have not finished as there is still more to be done. One of my concerns is that 256 out of 400 primary schools have classes with numbers greater than 27 students. In itself that is not a principal concern, but, of those 256 schools, 63 have 50 per cent or more of their classes larger than 27. That is more of a concern and a matter about which the Education Department is having discussions with area officers and schools with a view to examining why that should be so and what can be done about that within the resources available. So, that must be taken into account.

**Ms LENEHAN:** I refer to the line under 'Resource Directorate' concerning the replacement of school furniture. Recently I have been involved in communication with the regional office about the provision of an adequate number of chairs for the Morphet Vale High School. Therefore, I was concerned to note the reduction in the amount allocated for the replacement of furniture. Can the Minister explain that reduction to the Committee?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I would ask the member to look at the figures for the vote this year and the vote last year. Those are the figures that should be taken into account. The member should combine the recurrent figure with the figure that appears on the capital line which provides a further \$500 000. That amount also appeared last year and is a steady figure. Comparing the vote figures, for 1983-84 the combined capital line money and recurrent money was 22 per cent greater than it was for the previous year. It was the first year in five years that money available for furniture had actually gone up—in either money terms or real terms. In all previous years over the five-year period it had gone down. This year, comparing vote with vote, and combining the recurrent and capital figures, the increase is about 6 per cent. I acknowledge that it is a smaller increase, but it is still greater than the CPI rate for SA for the last 12 months, which was 3.6 per cent, and it is turning around. As to why the actual figure in the pages is greater than the vote figure, and what is happening with regard to the actual figure this year, the actual figure last year was increased because the money spent on the maintenance line was not fully up to the amount voted because money for some of the maintenance programmes for which money had been committed was not able to be spent, given logistical problems, and rather than see the money disappear it was transferred into the furniture allocation to enable it to be more quickly taken up.

Likewise, the proposition this year is that if funds are available for line reallocation, clearly, furniture will have a high priority for funds available. I am certainly anxious for that to happen, because we have a serious furniture problem that has been developing for some years. We were able to stem part of it last year with the money increase of 22 per cent (a real increase of about 11 per cent). We will be able to stem it this year with the real increase that has been achieved, but it still means that the rate of replacement, if we were to divide that by all the desks in the State, is not very good. More work needs to be done in this area, and I acknowledge that.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** A couple of years ago the Minister seemed to be at great pains to tell the public that the Keeves Report was in error in recommending the establishment of a Ministry of Education. The Minister was firmly committed to winding down that unit, giving the public the general impression that the present staffing within the Minister's Department would be perfectly adequate. Pages 11 and 64 of the yellow book, under the support services category, indicate that for 1983-84 the Minister and the Minister's office had a total staff (proposed and outcome) of 13. This seems to represent a higher total than the highest ever achieved in the Minister's office before, including the Ministry of Education. Apart from that, I do not believe that that figure would include Ministerial aides. Can the Minister tell the Committee what are the classifications and categories of staff comprised within that 13, and what additional aide staff is employed within the Minister's office?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I will obtain a breakdown of the categories of salary levels. We disbanded the office of the Ministry which was created on the Keeves recommendation. It was not so much that it was a Keeves recommendation but partly because we believed that some of the purposes that the Keeves Committee indicated that the office of the

Ministry should do did not get built into the actual office of the Ministry that existed. If some of the recommendations in the Keeves Report had been picked up, it might have been a bit different. In fact, there has been a change in the categories of positions that exist in the office. Mr Barry Grear, who was the head of the Ministry, is now Deputy Director-General of TAFE. He is an excellent officer for whom I have the greatest respect. Of course, that was a very high level position. He was supported by Doug Shaw, who is now with the Kindergarten Union as Deputy Director there—again, a very high level position. I cannot recall the exact category of those positions, but they were EO positions. Also, there was John Sangster who I think had an AO1 position. He left and is now working for Santos. Further, the late Gill Wheadon transferred across.

Those positions were not maintained. When John Sangster left, his position was filled by John Wood, because there was the \$50 million of Miscellaneous expenditure that needed to be looked after from within the Ministry rather than from within the Education Department where it had been before the creation of the office of Ministry. That was a functional purpose, an objective that still had to be achieved. That has been maintained. So, there has been a decrease in senior positions. However, the positions that have been created since that time involve some clerical support positions in the CO1 and CO2 range, and also Mr Trevor Barr has been seconded to the Ministry as Director of the full Ministry. Among other things he is co-ordinating the Miscellaneous lines and general area. But there is a clear reduction in salary commitment as a result of categories of people involved.

In regard to the clerical support positions, the work load of the Ministry has increased significantly. The Public Service Board investigated the work load of the Ministry and looked at, for example, the amount of incoming correspondence, telephone inquiries, and so on. The Public Service Board checked the figures relevant to a six-month period in 1981 and a six-month period in 1983. From memory, for the six-month period in 1981, 2 800 letters were received by the Ministry, whereas, for the corresponding period in 1983, 6 600 letters were received—a tremendous increase in the number of letters which were received and which required answering. That was not just because it was the first six month period under a new Minister (which was the case in 1983), because the figures have been confirmed by a similar count taken in 1984, when, if anything, the figure had increased even more: therefore, a quite out of order increase in the number of letters being received by the Ministry has occurred. I would have to say that that has meant that some problems with the speed of answering some of the correspondence have probably occurred, because of logistical difficulties in getting them all typed up and processed. That is why increased clerical support was required. The matter was investigated by the Public Service Board: it was not a political decision, but something on which the Public Service Board made recommendations resulting in increased staff in the CO1 and CO2 range, apart from the secondment of Mr Trevor Barr.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I listened with great interest to one statement that the Minister made: that there had been a definitely reduced commitment (I think he said in the salaries line), yet if one looks at the Minister and the Minister's office figures at page 67 of the yellow book the employment levels for average full time equivalents have been pegged at 13 proposed and outcome and 13 proposed for the following financial year. However, the recurrent expenditure on the first line is \$422 000 increased to \$516 000, with the outcome last year of \$473 000. That simply does not bear out what the Minister claimed, that there has been a marked reduction. Bearing in mind the

vast amount of correspondence that came through the Minister's office in 1979 to 1982, when we signed personally as many as 600 letters a day to individual school children, I still find it hard to sympathise with the Minister that he is hard pressed as far as correspondence is concerned. Could he be a little more specific? How can he say that the salaries line has reduced? The figures do not bear that out.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Coming back to the figures I quoted a minute ago from the Public Service Board, going through the correspondence register of the Ministry for the two periods: I take it the honourable member is not disputing the independence of the Board and the way it did its count. There was no purpose to myself trying to make up those figures. They are Board figures from records. There has been a clear increase.

I point the honourable member to the 1982-83 final figures for expenditure. One sees that there was a reduction in that year in the amount of money spent. I also have a note that was given to me this morning with regard to that figure. There is apparently a mistake in the outcome figure for 1983-84, given the way that a salary was allocated between the Education Department and the Ministry. That mistake works in favour of the Ministry by underestimating what was actually spent in 1983-84. I do not seem at this minute to have that piece of paper with me. It is around; we will have it later in the day when we can reconcile that figure. It proves that there has not been a real increase in the money spent in 1984-85 over 1983-84. It is not a proposed real increase, because we have not got the figures for 1984-85.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I find rabbits out of the hat a little hard to take at this hour of the morning, particularly when we are not told the precise page and amount. The Minister lost the piece of paper conveniently. It does not alter the fact that in 1983-84 the proposed figure was \$422 000 and in 1984-85 the proposed figure is \$516 000. Employment levels have remained static. There is an anomaly somewhere that a figure on the outcome will not change. I refer to the 1983-84 proposed and 1984-85 proposed, and the Minister keeps telling us that it is the identical figures that we should compare. I have always abided by that. There is really an additional \$90 000-odd between the two years which is higher than CPI. I still believe the Minister has not satisfactorily explained that discrepancy. I know he is defending his officers, and the increase. He would need to do that after the criticism he addressed to the previous Ministry.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I thank the honourable member for the time he took to enable me to find the piece of paper, which I appreciate. I have now been deluged with pieces of paper. If one looks at figures in the yellow book and line Estimates, in the line Estimates the voted figure is \$312 000 and the actual figure is \$244 000; the proposed is \$368 000. The same sort of question can be asked about those figures as well. The difference between the recorded actual and the voted figure was caused by salaries being charged incorrectly to other Education Department salary lines.

Actual cost for 1983-84 (in terms of the definition of the line Estimates) was approximately \$352 000, which included wage increases during that period. Therefore, one compares in the line Estimates not \$244 000 with \$368 000 but \$352 000 with \$368 000. That \$352 000 is greater than \$312 000 voted because of wage increases, which is a standard situation.

As to the yellow book (page 67), to which I think the honourable member referred, the proposed figure is \$422 000, the actual figure is \$473 000 and the proposed figure is \$516 000. Similar increases would need to be made to those figures to take into account what the line Estimates show. The figures are higher because the yellow book includes the



Minister's salary (which is not in the line Estimates) and contingencies (which are separated in the line Estimates) and apportionments costs such as superannuation that are also separated in the line Estimates. I will obtain the exact variation needed for the yellow book figures.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** At page 73, Minister's salary is in special Acts.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes. The same thing shows up in the yellow book and in the line Estimates. That is as a result of a mischarge being made. When the adjustment is made for that mischarge there is no real increase.

**Mr GROOM:** My electorate is partly an inner metropolitan area in which a number of schools are experiencing declining enrolments. In fact, one school at the commencement of this year went down to some 190 students. While I expect that this has bottomed out as far as enrolments are concerned, the fear of closure of the school spreads throughout the school community, with a consequent belief of loss of a valuable community resource. Under what circumstances would a metropolitan school be contemplated for closure? In other words, what is the bottom line for a metropolitan school with declining enrolments?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We do not have distinct metropolitan and country policies for closure of schools except in relation to junior primary schools. First, we do seriously consider closure of a junior primary school where it is on the same campus as a 3-7 school when the enrolments consistently stay lower than about 100. If that is the case and if projections indicate that it will stay in that order for some years to come or go down further, we close such schools after discussing the issue with the local community to determine the appropriate time for closure.

Some junior primary schools have been disestablished since I have been Minister. Also some junior primary schools have been established, using the reverse psychology, and there was not too much of that happening in previous years. As to full closure of schools I indicated before the last election that when the Cusack Report was being considered it seemed to me that far too much attention was being paid just to the financial aspects of the cost of running a school and not enough to education aspects.

The report tabled in this House by my predecessor gave one paragraph to educational aspects of closing a school and nine pages to financial aspects. It seemed that there should be better equality between those considerations. Whenever a school is subject to closure discussions I have indicated that the school community must be actively involved. As it happened, some schools in the State have been closed since I have been the Minister. I have never denied that that would be the case, because sometimes schools just get too small. If they consistently show that they will have fewer than 10 students, we cannot offer good education in those circumstances.

However, we do not have a distinct metropolitan policy for consideration of closure of schools. What is more often done, I suppose, is a rationalisation of the physical resources they may have. We may consider certain physical resources being available for other uses. Part of their site may go for other education uses or uses outside the education sector. The honourable member has raised with me already the matter of schools in his electorate. The Department has looked at these and neither school is subject to closure discussions at this stage. Neither is the subject of closure discussions, full stop. It is as simple as that.

**Mr GROOM:** Dealing with another aspect parochial to me, my electorate comprises some 25 per cent (approximately) of people of Italian background. Page 27 of the yellow book, dealing with multicultural education (the programme sector being primary and secondary), states:

In a State in which the population is multicultural, schools need to adapt curricula to better reflect diverse interests and cultures. Positive support is needed for schools which are striving to infuse a multicultural perspective in all aspects of their operation.

In a general sense, what support can primary schools expect by way of assisting in the establishment or implementation of a second language, such as, in this instance, the Italian language?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The Government is firmly committed to the issues involved in multi-cultural education and to picking up the kind of ethos that surrounds multi-cultural education in the 1980s; this is a development in progression from attitudes in educational philosophies in the 1960s and 1970s. I have appointed a task force to look into multi-culturalism across the entire education arena, not only the Education Department but also TAFE, the remainder of the tertiary sector, pre-schooling, and the like. That committee, under the chairmanship of George Smolicz, reported to me and that report was released in July. We now have a group looking at how the recommendations of that report can be implemented in the education arena, and a number of recommendations, for example, refer to language teaching in primary and secondary schools. Therefore, that area will have to be considered by that committee.

It will make recommendations to me and I will discuss this matter with officers of the Education Department to determine how feasible the recommendations are, what resources may be available, what resources might be needed and what improvements we can consider achieving in that area. However, I raise that as an example to identify that the issue of multi-culturalism is of great importance to the Government. I believe that the Smolicz Report is a profound one and deserves serious consideration by the entire education arena. We have also undertaken reviews in other areas. One is into the Multi-Cultural Education Co-ordinating Committee, and decisions on that are being stalled pending our consideration of the Smolicz Report recommendations, and likewise ethnic schools are the subject of a review to look at their contribution to the wider education arena.

So, that is a commitment to multi-culturalism in education. We will look at the recommendations in further detail towards the end of this year. The Department will be actively involved in that to determine what can be actually achieved, and a plan of action will be set out which I have to say will last for a period of 10 years or so to see these things developed. That is against a backdrop of an improvement in community language teaching in our schools in the past 14 years. We have had an increase in the number of schools offering and the number of students studying community languages in South Australia over 14 years.

However, we have certain problem areas. One is in regard to senior secondaries. Why, for example, are there high drop-off rates in senior secondaries in community language studies? That is a matter of some concern: it is certainly of concern to the Italian community, and we must look further at those courses. However, in answer to the honourable member's question, I can summarise by saying that we are committed to improving education in those arenas.

**Mr GROOM:** I refer to administration on page 66 of the Auditor-General's Report, dealing with departmental reorganisation. I notice that a proposal has been implemented to form five area offices—three metropolitan and two country—with a redeployment of staff. Some concern has been expressed to me that the division of the Department administratively into areas could mean a contraction of money for non-administration items such as minor works. Can the Minister outline the manner in which departmental reorganisation is taking place in this context?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Reorganisation has been developed by the Department and approved by the Government. It

sees the creation of five area offices. When the Government considered this matter, it was firmly of the belief on advice given that there would not be an increase in money spent on administration. There would be the generation of improved support services for schools of various types. So, in fact, the arealisation (if one can create such a word) of the Department is to improve the quality of education at the classroom door level. It is true, however, that in the short term some resource adjustments may be needed as one moves from one structure of 10 regions to another structure of five areas. This clearly happens in any case of major governmental reorganisation, so certain extra resources will be needed for that purpose in the short term, but those resources will not be needed in the medium or long term and there will be a liberation of resources from administration to support. In that context, there will not be then a contraction of the support available to schools.

One of the other things that was important in deciding to go down this path was the awareness that, while 10 regions supporting schools may have been good (having so many), it was also too many for us to be able to support adequately the resources that we had available. We could not guarantee to each region an adviser in each subject area. Too many would have been needed to do that, but, by having area offices, we believe that we can have in each area a better spread of resources—human and otherwise—available for use by schools. So, we are moving progressively on the path. There are some short term resource costs to it, but in the medium term there is a commitment to a reduction in the cost of administration in the education sector.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** First, I would like to address myself to the line 'Maintenance of school buildings' under 'Resources Directorate—Property services' on page 121 of the Estimates of Payments. I note that in that line only \$500 000 is proposed for spending on the maintenance of school buildings for the coming financial year, although on page 38 of the Treasury lines under 'Special allocation for works and maintenance' appears an amount of \$3 million. Can the Minister indicate to the Committee how much of that \$3 million will come to education for maintenance of school buildings and how will that amount compare with last year's spending?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The \$500 000 that appears in the education lines needs to be taken into account with something of the order of \$15 million that appears in the Minister of Public Works lines. The question of \$3 million in the Premier's lines is presently the subject of Cabinet discussions to determine the allocation between various areas, and I cannot give a firm answer on that. The Premier will be giving information on that in the near future. It is our belief that we will be maintaining maintenance moneys available for schools in the 1984-85 year. That is not to say that that is an ideal situation. There are serious maintenance needs in education. One of the purposes behind the creation of the \$500 000 allocation in the Education Department lines is the belief that some maintenance problems cropped up separately from the general run of maintenance problems that had been identified by regional officers (now area officers) in consultation with officers of the Public Buildings Department, and we needed to have some capacity to pick up those sorts of problems.

Let me highlight one example. I refer to the state of the toilets at Coober Pedy last year. Members may recall that issue. I went to look at those toilets and, quite frankly, I agreed with what the community had been saying: here was a problem that would not have been adequately addressed by the amount that would have been available in the ordinary programme developed by the region with the Public Buildings Department. It needed a more major kind of programme

than that. It is this allocation in this Ministry to pick up those kinds of special problems that have caused hiccups in the past in terms of allocation of maintenance money. The final figure of what is available for maintenance will not be available, first, until the \$3 million figure has been determined and, secondly, it is affected as we go through the year by Cabinet decisions, depending on reports on the maintenance situation. The honourable member will know that in the last financial year \$900 000 was voted by Cabinet in addition to the vote in the Budget in December to pick up problems that had been highlighted, so that kind of consideration also needs to be considered.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I relate the Minister's answer specifically to my electorate. Every school in my electorate—be it primary or secondary—has maintenance problems, many of which are long outstanding. I will not name the schools, but, as the Minister would probably know, I keep in extremely close touch with my schools. I have four foolscap typed pages of outstanding maintenance that requires to be done at one school, and I am sure that the Minister can appreciate that, with the funding for maintenance either being only line ball or probably reduced over the last year, the members of that school council are extremely unhappy indeed.

Another school council has advised me that the maintenance on the guttering was so bad that they had a working bee of parents to replace guttering as it was causing so many problems to the children. Also, they were afraid that, with the standard of the guttering, water would enter through the ceilings and cause further damage, which they thought they would have no hope of rectifying. I am sure the Minister is well aware of another primary school which, for years, has been after the resealing of its school yard where injuries have occurred. That has been the subject of correspondence between the Minister's office and me, but still no firm answer has been given as to whether or not that is to be rectified. I have 25 education institutions in my electorate. I could go through every one, as each one has case after case of long outstanding maintenance, much of which is regarded by the school councils and professional staff in the schools as being urgent and essential maintenance which they are being told cannot be done due to insufficient funds.

It has been pointed out to me that, if this continues, it will reach a stage where it will be virtually impossible to rectify many of the problems that can now be rectified. If they go much longer it will be a matter of replacement rather than rectification. I certainly share the belief that that is false economy. The problem of outstanding repairs and maintenance required in schools is growing and not diminishing. What hope can the Minister hold out to parents on school councils in my electorate that their schools will be adequately maintained? Parents do not mind whether the money comes from the Education Department or the Public Buildings Department—they only know that the Government is responsible for maintenance. They cannot get the funding and are becoming extremely frustrated.

Morale on school councils is, after all, very important. If parents are to continue to work for their schools, they look to the Government to at least meet its responsibilities. I make this a more particular question, because school maintenance in my electorate—and, if one reads the speech of the member for Davenport—in many other electorates is very urgent.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The member for Todd mentioned a problem with gutters in a school. Did he mean to refer to the maintenance or the state of the gutters?

**Mr ASHENDEN:** The state of the gutters was such that the school applied for work to be done to rectify the problem. It was not done and the parents had a working bee one Saturday morning to replace the gutters.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The matter is of great concern to me. I want to make that point. I hope that we will be able to address that problem with more funds in years to come. We certainly will be able to maintain in real terms the level of service provided, but I agree that that will not eat into the backlog of existing maintenance which I acknowledge exists. I appreciate the fact that the member for Davenport acknowledges that it is not the result of one or two year's budgeting but rather the result of a number of years budgeting. I acknowledge the point he made in that regard.

One of the points of concern is to ensure that the money that is available is spent as well as it can be. The Minister of Public Works and I have jointly instituted regular meetings between ourselves and officers of both the Public Buildings Department and the Education Department so that we can sit down and talk through some major maintenance problems, including where there are hiccups in the system in order to solve some of the problems and get the best value from the available money. The first meeting in that series took place last week. Other regular meetings will follow up. We hope that that will give us a better oversight of what money is available and how it is being spent.

I am aware of the problems raised by the member for Todd as he has raised them on a number of occasions. If he does not want to name the schools, that is fine, but I think I know to which schools he refers, particularly the one with the paving problems. We have not had a report on the reconsideration of that school in line with other priority areas. I have no intention of moving schools out of their priority line in terms of dealing with some schools before others with more serious problems. I am anxious that the school in question be examined in that context and dealt with as early as equitably possible. I am sure that the member would agree that the allocation of maintenance resources needs to be done judiciously and with absolute credibility so that every school gets its fair share of available funds for needs as they arise.

Several other issues need to be examined. One that came up recently was the matter of the kind of policies that apply to certain kinds of maintenance or upgrading. I am having those policies reinvestigated as they come to my attention and where there appears to be some sort of anomaly. I believe we will find at the end of the 1984-85 financial year that the funds will be maintained in real terms at the very least. The expenditure will not, however, be enough to erode the backlog, as there is too much. It will continue to exist, and that is of considerable concern to me and to my colleague the Minister of Public Works.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Another matter that has been put to me has also been pointed out to me by the member for Mount Gambier. Parents in many cases cannot understand the Government's priorities. The member for Mount Gambier has pointed out that \$20 million was found overnight by the Premier for additional spending on the ASER project. An amount of \$20 million would not rectify all the maintenance problems in schools, but it would certainly assist a lot in overcoming some of them.

Another school council has provided me with my next question. One school has a large number of outstanding maintenance problems. They have told me that, on reading the Budget papers, they cannot understand why funding in this vital area is line ball or reduced when, in the Minister's own office, there was an increase of 14 per cent this year over last year. They have asked why there was an over expenditure of over \$62 000 in the Director's office and why, in all but five of the Education Department's lines, there was over spending and that, in 12 of those lines, the over spending was more than 10 per cent over the budgeted figure. They have asked what steps the Minister took to

control over spending in his own administrative area. The parents who have raised this question with me regard the maintenance of their schools as important—as the coal face where their children are trained and the teachers have to work. The Minister's priorities seem to be more in his own area than they are in the important area of schools. It is a fair question, and I ask the Minister to comment.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I am a little alarmed at the mention of the ASER project again. The Premier on other occasions has wondered where the Opposition stood on this project. The project offers great possibilities for this State in terms of development. It will create employment and revenue opportunities in South Australia. There are so many other areas of expenditure that could have been picked out, but this one constantly seems to be picked out. The member for Todd indicated that his question was as a result of a piece of paper handed to him by the member for Mount Gambier. The member for Mount Gambier was a former Cabinet Minister and would know the way that funds exist in Government and can or cannot be transferred from various areas as well as what sources and costs are attached to them, so that he should not have written that kind of note.

On the matter of over spending, there has, in some areas of the Ministry, been over expenditure. It is true that the matter has been subject to close examination by me and departmental officers to determine whether the over expenditure was not justified. As a result of that, a number of lines of expenditure in 1984-85 will be reduced to compensate for the over-spending that took place in 1983-84, where there has not been a justification that over-expenditure was necessary for the delivery of education services.

I have no hesitation or qualms about saying that, because it is entirely appropriate where over-expenditure cannot be justified the penalty has to be borne by that particular line of expenditure and not by some other line. The worry of the member for Todd is that when there is over-expenditure it is borne by maintenance. That has not been supported by me. If a section of a department has overspent and has not justified the purpose of the overspending its budget for 1984-85 is cut according to the amount overspent in 1983-84.

**Mr MAYES:** My question relates to the relocation of teachers prior to the commencement of the education year. As the Minister will be aware, several problems have been encountered at the Goodwood Primary School. I ask the question in relation to streamlining the administration system in handling the relocation of teachers, both prior to and during the educational year. It would appear that there was a break-down in communications between the Director of the region, the school and also head office as to the number of teachers who would be permanently allocated, given the enrolments that were predicted prior to the beginning of the year and then, when the readjustment was made on the actual enrolments in February, there was to be a relocation. I know that the Minister is aware of the problem and I ask him what steps have been taken within the Department to try to prevent a recurrence of the situation that developed particularly at Goodwood Primary School.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** There are very real problems always taking place in staffing exercises in a Department as large as the Education Department, which has over 14 000 full-time equivalent teachers spread around about 700 schools, it is a logistical exercise of no mean feat. I do not think that we will ever design a perfect personnel distribution system. It just cannot be done because people will resign at the last minute and not be available for appointment, or other factors will come into it; for example, enrolments might suddenly increase at a school where they had not been genuinely anticipated, or they might suddenly decrease

at a school where that had not been genuinely anticipated even weeks before. All the good plans that may have been set in place by personnel suddenly fall apart, as happened in the case of one particular school.

The other point I would like to make is that the creation of areas should lead to an improvement in this particular issue. Previously, if a school had a staffing problem it could contact a number of areas of source of information: one was the Regional Director; the second was the Director of Personnel; the third was the Deputy Director-General of Education or one of the Assistant Directors-General of Education; and the fourth was the Director-General of Education himself. That kind of scattergun approach sometimes complicated the picture rather than assisted it. Under the area situation, it will be assumed that schools will be contacting for basic staffing problems the Area Director, and only if there are major problems of staffing philosophy would they be contacting the central department, namely, the Director-General of Education in this regard. A simplification of those lines of communication has been developed by the area process, and that should mean that a more equitable way of staffing schools should be possible.

Another point which is important is that the Director of Personnel within the Education Department is now looking at policy issues with regard to staffing to try to overcome in a permanent and structural way the sort of things that have happened in the past rather than live by some sort of crisis management approach which the Department has been forced to live by previously. This is the first time that think time has been available to develop policies for personnel. We presently have seconded to the Department from the Public Service Board Mr Philip Bedford, who is working with the Director of Personnel on the development of staffing policies for the future of the Education Department. I hope that those sorts of things will improve the way in which staffing takes place, but to come back to the bottom line: it is sad that there will always be some problems. What I hope to do and believe we will do, is reduce the number of problems and the significance of those problems in the case of individual schools.

**Mr MAYES:** It is often said that pupil-teacher ratios are perhaps a more accurate reflection of the available level of teaching resource as against class enrolments. Can the Minister say what the situation is regarding pupil-teacher ratios compared with last year and whether any improvements have been brought about through the same allocation of salaries in spite of fewer enrolments?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Before I answer the question, I now have available for inclusion in *Hansard* the enrolment projections for 1984 to 1990. I also have a copy for each member of the Committee. I seek leave to have the figures inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

ENROLMENT PROJECTIONS 1984-1990  
SOUTH AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS  
(FEBRUARY)

	P	S	T
1984	117 835	83 008	200 843
1985	114 180	83 370	197 550
1986	112 800	81 600	194 400
1987	112 400	79 200	191 600
1988	113 100	75 800	188 900
1989	114 900	72 800	187 700
1990	117 500	70 900	188 400

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** There are various purposes for looking at each figure in connection with pupil-teacher ratios. The class size figure is important in certain circumstances and the pupil-teacher ratio is important in other circumstances. I believe another figure we ought to be looking at

from time to time is the marginal staffing ratio. In other words, there may be an increase in students in a school; it does not require a new principal or new senior staff—it is happening within particular classrooms—so that an increase of 50 students in a school of 900 will have a different staffing need from the sudden creation in a new area altogether of 50 students needing a new school which has to have a head teacher, and the like. I believe that we should develop over time the concept of the marginal staffing ratio as well. The way we have staffed increases in secondary enrolments has been based upon that kind of principle of marginal staffing ratios. The pupil-teacher ratio is a figure that has a useful purpose in some educational analyses, and I have some figures which I would like to have inserted in *Hansard* without my reading them.

Leave granted.

Primary PTR

	1981	1982	1983	1984	
	18.0	18.0	17.2	17.0	0.2
(1) Junior Primary Schools	15.0	14.9	13.4	13.7	0.3
(2) Primary Schools	18.6	18.6	18.0	17.6	0.4
(3) Metropolitan R-12 Schools	19.4	17.2	18.1	19.5	1.4 (2 schools)
(4) Area Schools	16.2	16.8	15.5	15.6	0.1
(5) Special Rural Schools	11.6	12.1	12.0	11.8	0.2
(6) Rural Schools	13.6	12.1	11.4	11.0	0.4

Secondary PTR

	1981	1982	1983	1984	
	12.2	12.2	12.2	12.2	0.1
(1) High Schools	12.5	12.5	12.7	12.6	0.1
(2) Metropolitan R-12 Schools	12.8	12.6	12.8	12.2	0.6 (2 schools)
(3) Area Schools	9.0	8.9	9.2	9.0	0.2
(4) Special Rural Schools	8.1	8.4	7.3	7.0	0.3

Special PTR

	1981	1982	1983	1984
	5.9	5.6	6.4	6.0
	0.3	0.8	0.4	0.4

Other Schools

	1981	1982	1983	1984	
(1) Correspondence School					
Primary	12.7	N.A.	N.A.	9.2	
Secondary	9.7	N.A.	N.A.	9.8	
Total	11.2	12.0	9.5	9.5	
(2) School of the Air	N.A.	8.2	8.0	9.3	
(3) Language Centres	5.7	7.9	9.5	7.8	(2 schools)
(4) Aboriginal Schools	11.7	12.1	10.6	11.2	

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It will be seen that as regards the pupil-teacher ratio for primary the overall primary area has improved from 18 in 1981 to 17 in 1984. In the case of junior primary schools it has improved from 15 in 1981 to 13.7 this year. Regarding secondary, in 1981 it was 12.2, and in 1984 it was 12.2, so there has been no change. I mentioned earlier that in 1983 there had been a deterioration of .1, and it went up to 12.3 in 1983.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Does the table include advisory teachers and special education teachers who are not allocated to particular schools?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The figures I have quoted are based on teachers actually appointed to a school. I would like Mr Marsh to comment on those figures.

**Mr Marsh:** I would like to draw to the Committee's attention the fact that these pupil-teacher ratios are designed

according to criteria laid down within the Education Department and are not directly comparable with pupil-teacher ratios prepared by the Commonwealth Government.

**Mr MAYES:** Another matter that is of interest to me locally is that although, other than Goodwood High School I do not have any secondary schools in my district, I do have a number of students who travel from my district to Glenunga, Adelaide, Daws Road and Unley. There is an ongoing debate in the Unley community about which secondary school is most appropriate for children to attend. One aspect is that some parents in particular want to bring their children into the computer age by encouraging them to go to the school that provides the most up-to-date computer facilities and Glenunga High, by word of mouth, is generally the one to fall into that category.

It is often said to me by constituents that Glenunga High School has the best facilities. It is an interesting comparison when one looks at the facilities offered at Unley High or Daws Road High. Can the Minister explain how much money has been allocated for the technology centres in high schools programmes—I think it is called the secondary school technology project programme—and how it will operate next year? Is this what is referred to in page 17 of the yellow book in regard to the 1984-85 'Targets/Objectives', which states:

Improved provision of technology in schools with the Computers in Education and Technology in Schools programmes.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I thank the honourable member for his question. It is true that the programme at Glenunga High School is a most impressive one, but we also have some impressive programmes in computing education available in many other schools in South Australia, very much including primary schools, and parents can be very pleased with the kind of offerings available. I would encourage parents to make inquiries as to that if this is their particular area of interest.

In relation to the moneys being spent, there are three sources of money: that is, money spent by parents in schools; money spent by the State Governments; and money spent by the Federal government. Regarding computers, the money spent by the State Government for computers is money spent on course-ware development and inservice training opportunities by, among other places, the Angle Park Computing Centre and money spent on the payment of computing advisers in the Department. Every region, I think, now has an adviser in computer education. So, that is the State Government's financial commitment to computers.

The Federal Government has made the commitment by means of a special programme. A programme was announced for the 1984-85 school year involving \$400 000 to Government schools and \$100 000 to non-government schools, roughly. That is to be split in three ways; between hardware support (the purchase of equipment); course-ware development; and professional development opportunities. So, the secondary school technology project programme which the honourable member mentioned and which is referred to at page 17 is not in fact the support of computing hardware for schools.

As a State Government, we asked how, if we had only limited resources available, we should spend money on improved technology programmes in schools. We decided that, if the Commonwealth was picking up some of that tab, let us move into other areas, because in responding to changing technology, there are many areas other than just computing in new technology. So, the money that we have allocated is for areas other than for those basically concerned with computing. Fair enough, they may be areas involving computing but they are not predominantly computing areas. I will give an example of some of the schools to receive grants last year. One school that had some expertise in art

and design put forward a submission where it wanted access to new technology drafting equipment—not CAD (computer-aided drafting) but the generation just below that. So, a grant was given to support that.

A second school wanted to develop expertise in new welding technology and again, a grant was given. Another school wanted to use numerically controlled lathes. It had some computer input, but it was basically beyond just computers, and a grant was given for that. The State money is going to areas other than those basically with regard to computing. That was developed last year: we spent \$125 000 on that line last year, and a further \$125 000 will be spent this year. However, more work is being done on the development of how that money should be spent. A committee was formed which came up with contextual statements, and I must say that I am most impressed with that. Some minor adjustments still need to be made to it before it is released. However, I would encourage members, when we have the opportunity to release it, to read it because it is an excellent analysis of how this money can be well spent in schools.

One of the important things is that the money is to be spent where schools put forward submissions that say they will develop learning materials within their school which can be used elsewhere, not just in their school. Likewise, they will provide for the opportunity for students and teachers elsewhere to see what is going on with that equipment and, in some cases, the equipment is mobile enough that for some periods it can be lent out to other schools.

The money is seed money, to encourage educational developments in these technological areas but with the distinct purpose that it should be spread as far as possible around all the students and teachers in the State. For that reason, for example, basically no grant would be approved where there was already a grant approved in that area of technology. So, I am very excited about how that is developing. We have seen some exciting proposals come forward. We hope to see more and, as more come forward, we will have to examine the funding allocation available. Clearly, we have financial constraints, but we wanted to get this programme off the ground; hence the maintenance of it in 1984-85.

**Mr GUNN:** I wish to raise two matters with the Minister: one is with regard to isolated education and schools a long way from Adelaide, and the matter of year 12 being made available to those schools. I understand that the Minister and the Department have now resolved the problem at Streaky Bay and that that will probably be put into effect in the next school year. Can the Minister advise in what other similar locations in the northern and western parts of the State are likely to benefit from year 12? It is my concern that there are a number of other areas where it is difficult for students to get any reasonable access to year 12, except by coming to Adelaide. Is the Minister considering that problem?

My second matter is similar to that raised by the member for Todd in relation to the upgrading of schools. Where does Wudinna stand on the list at present? I understand that the Minister has visited Wudinna School and he would be aware of its condition. The parents have expressed grave concern at the lack of action. I would appreciate it if the Minister was able to give me some information about that matter.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** On the matter of year 12, the member for Eyre has raised this matter with me on previous occasions, and I appreciate his concern. In answering a question earlier from the member for Torrens, I indicated the Government's concern to improve or at least maintain educational offerings available to senior secondary students, wherever they are in the State. I said earlier that the Senior Secondary Assessment Board, when created, should involve

an attempt to improve educational offerings to all students, not just increase the disparity of offerings available to metropolitan students compared to country students.

The issue of Streaky Bay was of concern to me when we were unable to make a recommendation favourable to that school in 1984. I asked for that matter to be relooked at, and the Department was anxious to do so itself: it has a strong commitment to this area. While I have not seen the final report, I have been informally advised that the recommendation is that it proceed in 1985. I am very pleased that is the case.

I mention some of the strategies that will have to be considered in the years ahead, the next five years, earlier: for example, better use of co-operation between schools and better use of distance education opportunities and the like. It is by means of that that we will be able to improve what opportunities are available to year 12 students throughout the State.

As to the matter of upgrading, this has come to my attention before from the honourable member. Indeed, I have visited Wudinna; I was there some time ago. I have had approaches from other members of Parliament about that same school. It has had a tortured history in terms of its place on the redevelopment programme. One of the problems of comparing where the school has been on the redevelopment programme is that people do not take into account the amount of money that has been available in that programme at the time it was on the programme. The sum of money is not the same this year as it was five or 10 years ago in terms of real money. So, I cannot give an answer at this stage, because we are looking at a number of schools that have redevelopment needs, and those needs are recognised by the Department and by me. We are looking at how we can best fit them into the programme. I gave a commitment earlier that I would get back to the honourable member about Wudinna. I maintain that commitment to advise him when I have some formal advice that I can give.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Following on from the Minister's answer and the answer to my last question, the Minister talked about the problems of the country, distance education and the like. He mentioned the DUCT system and things of that nature. I put on record that I believe the problems that I spoke about in relation to the so-called curriculum guarantee apply now in country areas.

I believe that what is occurring is of extreme concern. It is partly because we are the most centralised State in the Commonwealth, and that is something for which we must make an allowance. I refer to the metropolitan experience that will probably occur. I am grateful for the figures on enrolments that the Minister has just supplied to us. In regard to an area south of Adelaide, probably the member for Mawson's area, I refer to some supplementary information that the Minister kindly provided during the last few days. It concerns enrolments in secondary schools. On page 17 figures on enrolments for the Christies Beach High School are referred to. That school has an enormous enrolment of 1 558 students, which is a very large number of students. Further, it shows that the Morphet Vale High School has an enrolment of some 1 000 students—once again, a very highly enrolled school. The Mawson High School has nearly 500 students; Dover High School has an enrolment of 475; Aberfoyle Park, 313—which I understand will increase very rapidly; Seacombe High School, just under 800; and so on.

Obviously the situation at Christies Beach is serious. The scenario to which I have referred applies in other areas in Adelaide as well. What steps does the Minister intend to take (and this matter follows on from the Minister's previous answer) in rationalising these enrolments without necessarily building a \$8 million high school in the area to provide for

the surplus enrolment? It seems to me that very acute planning is needed to solve this problem. The Minister has mentioned some of the ideas that are being investigated, such as curriculum sharing. What about questions such as year 11 and 12 colleges? The Minister has already had a problem with Dover High School. The Minister said quite correctly that action should not be taken without consultation with the parents of school children involved. Obviously this is one of the great problems in any State Budget. It can be compared with the problem that one has with public transport, of which I am well aware, where the more people one has using public transport the higher the costs involved, even though one would think it would be the other way round. This is another grave problem. Is the Minister committed to providing a \$8 million high school to solve the problem, or will the Minister solve this problem by other means?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The Minister is committed to providing the best educational services within the resources available. A number of things must be looked at in regard to the southern region of the metropolitan area. I have already made announcements about this, for example, as a result of detailed work that has been done by the member for Mawson into the secondary education needs of students in the Hallett Cove, Karrara, Sheidow Park and Trott Park area, and I have given an undertaking that an R through 10 school will be created in that region. Clearly, the needs of the secondary population of the southern suburbs will not be answered by that one project.

Before I determine that the Government will build another high school at any location or expand present high schools, or whatever, I believe we must have some thorough understanding of the demographic conditions, because they are changing due to the recent residential developments, and also an understanding of what other options are available. The project that has been under way for some time now concerns discussion between the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education in terms of providing senior secondary educational opportunities in the Christies Beach area. Those discussions have not yet reached the stage of recommendations having been made to me as Minister. It is one of the options that we are considering, and I hope to see some results from that.

In addition, the Director-General of Education is having prepared for me (and he advised me of this last week) an options paper on other options that may be available in terms of meeting increased enrolments occurring in the southern area from resources presently available or from resources that might be able to be used for this. Those options will have to include a number of other factors; for example, the possibility of establishing new high schools or, alternatively, the expansion of existing high schools, or perhaps the bussing of students to schools to fill up the spare capacity that already exists to make better use of interfaces between the Education Department, TAFE, and so on. Those are the sorts of options that are being considered by the Director-General and by officers of the Department.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Clustering.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, the clustering of schools as well: a number of options are being looked at. I shall be formally receiving advice in the not too distant future, and we will then have some good ground work for decision making as to resource allocation for the next four or five years. The member for Mawson has raised this matter with me on many occasions, as has the member for Brighton. There are serious concerns about how the secondary school needs will be met. Perhaps the Deputy Director-General would like to make some additional comments on this matter.

**Mr Steinle:** I would not want people to think that a great deal of work on the matter has not already been done. As the Minister has said, long discussions with TAFE and between the Department's schools have taken place. Also I think it ought to be pointed out that discussions have occurred with schools in the independent sector also. The same enrolment problems that are of concern to the State sector are of concern equally to schools in the independent sector. There are examples in South Australia (almost uniquely in this country) of co-operation between the State and non-State sectors. So, we would not see ourselves as going at this problem alone. We have already had discussions with Mr McDonald, the Director of Catholic Education.

Also, a commitment has been made by the Federal Government that proposals concerning any money for new schools in the independent sector will be referred to State Government authorities. So, the question is wider even than that of State schools. We shall be looking at this matter in the widest possible context. We shall also be looking at the matter in terms not only as have been suggested (such as clustering, which is one possibility) but also in terms of new approaches to the delivery of services to years 11 and 12. That kind of delivery will mean a much wider approach than simply that involving that through schools. I would hope that it would also mean that we would be in touch with employers, so that it will be possible for some senior students to take advantage not only of what schools and TAFE can offer but also of what is available in employment, so that they are not committed to simply one line of development.

*[Sitting suspended from 12.58 to 2 p.m.]*

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I thank the Minister and the Director-General for their replies to my previous questions. I hope that Parliament and the people would be informed by the release of a discussion document on secondary schools, curriculum guarantee, and the methods that can be taken by the Department to try to solve the important problems of over-enrolment in some schools and under-enrolment in others. Will the Minister consider releasing such a document for the edification of members of Parliament and the general community? It has always disappointed me that we do not get enough public discussion in the media of these important matters. By the release of such a document, the Minister could use the Mawson experience as an example to get input in respect of this problem, especially on the contentious issue of bussing.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We are examining the options available and there have already been discussions between the Minister and the Department on this matter. It was clear during the progress of those discussions that we would throw that matter out for public consideration. Whether the options put to me by the Director-General will comprise the final document to be released, I cannot say. The matter must be discussed dispassionately, and I am keen that this debate be conducted on educational grounds and not emotively on other grounds. That has always been my intention and that of the Department.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Regarding the 500 or 600 contract staff that the Minister is to convert to permanent, he has already made an announcement. Will he say what criteria he will use in selecting that number out of the 2 000-odd contract employees in the Education Department? Will country service and length of service be taken into account? It is important to know the criteria and what plans are in hand for the conversion of those contract positions to permanent positions, because it has been reported to me during the past week that one of the Minister's officers has said that no criteria or mechanism exists within

the Department at this stage to transfer these contract officers to permanent positions.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The Government has a clear pre-election commitment in this area. In 1983, in the TAFE and Education Departments, we converted 250 positions from contract to permanent. That action indicated our good faith in this area. In 1984, we intended to convert more positions, but we have not in fact done so yet because we have been involved in negotiations with the South Australian Institute of Teachers on certain matters affecting the conversion of general teaching positions from contract to permanent. The Government submitted propositions on this matter and required propositions in return from the Institute. Those propositions were the subject of arbitration before the appropriate board. After that, we continued the negotiations.

Since this matter has now dragged on through most of 1984, we have been unable to convert positions in 1984 and I intend that we add those to the positions that we would convert at the start of 1985. However, we still await further advice from the Institute on a certain point and, when that is received, I will take the matter to Cabinet for final decision. The figure given by the honourable member (between 500 and 600) is significant. Probably about 500 positions will be able to be converted from contract to permanent.

Regarding criteria, I believe that we should choose the best expertise available from the contract teachers there. Therefore, we would say that those who have a 'Highly recommended' assessment would be given preference over those with a 'Recommended' assessment. We also take into account the length of service that the officer has had on contract. There has been a change in the profile of new teachers employed since I have been Minister: we now employ about 40 per cent from recent Arts graduates, the rest coming from other sources, including contract teachers.

Final details need to be worked out and, until I receive the Institute's response to a certain matter that I have put to it, I cannot say exactly how many positions will be converted. However, we intend that positions be converted from the start of the 1985 school year, and the total number of such positions will take into account not only what we propose for 1985 but also the positions that we could not convert this year because of the length of arbitration procedures.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** When can we expect an announcement?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** That will be done at the earliest opportunity.

**Ms LENEHAN:** Regarding the R to 12 schools at Reynella East, in the southern area, there are 788 pupils at the junior primary and primary schools at Reynella, and the secondary enrolments at Reynella East total 926, making a total, in February 1984, of 1 714 students attending the Reynella East campus. In the text that was circulated this morning concerning pupil-teacher ratios, the third paragraph talks about metropolitan R to 12 schools. Unfortunately, that is an area where the pupil-teacher ratio has not decreased: in fact, it has risen by 1.4.

I suspect that some of that increase has been caused by the rapid expansion of Reynella East. As this school is in my district I have been approached over the years by parents and by school councils of both the primary school and the secondary school, and I am a member of the council of the Reynella East High School. I have been told that the school continues to grow and it has been suggested to me that some form of zoning should be introduced so that only those pupils in the immediate catchment area should be allowed access. Because the school is taking students from

outside that area, parents inside the area are upset about the continuing pressure on facilities.

I know that the Minister is aware of this because I have, in the two years I have been a member of Parliament, made him aware. My concern is further exacerbated by the news that the first development of the Morphett Vale East land will be in the catchment area of the Reynella East R-12 school. How large does the Department intend to allow Reynella East to become and what sorts of emergency plans are in hand on the longer line of perhaps zoning to restrict people from the catchment area, or are any other plans in hand to meet the evident increasing demand for Reynella East?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The Reynella East area is part of the consideration we are giving to education facilities in the whole southern area. We are very aware of that. I was also aware before the last election of the particular problems of fast growing schools and the way in which they were able to deploy their resources. I asked that some work be done to develop a growing schools policy. That resulted last year in the Department's calling together a group of people, including Principals of growing schools, to examine what sort of policy could be developed to provide more appropriate resource allocation to such schools in an era of general enrolment decline.

I have not received that paper yet: I expect to receive it in the near future. That will help us, I hope, plan better for rapidly growing schools such as the Reynella East campus, which includes junior primary, primary and high school. As to zoning, I assume that the honourable member was talking about zoning for primary schools, because of course high schools have a natural right of entry zone. We have only two primary schools (or very few, anyway) with enrolment ceilings. All other schools generally enrol as applications come.

We think very carefully before we bring in new ceilings in other schools. In the case of places like Reynella East we have to be especially careful because we may not adequately take into account the way in which residential subdivision changes in the locality. If one has a ceiling, one could end up cutting off people who live close geographically to the school. It is not something that we enter lightly into.

As to class sizes there, from the data that I have circulated previously, Reynella East Primary School has a high proportion (47.37 per cent) of classes over 27. That is indicative of the special problem that growing schools have. It is the sort of thing that the Department wants to look at—to try to examine those 63 schools that have over 50 per cent of their classes over 27. The figure of classes greater than 27 for the high school is not the same; it is 9.34 per cent. The point made by the honourable member is certainly noted and appreciated by the Department and by me as Minister. We are taking it into account in our planning.

**Mr Marsh:** Reference was made to the metropolitan R-12 schools in the table. There are only two schools—Paralowie and the Heights. There are two metropolitan schools with enrolments from reception to year 12.

**Ms LENEHAN:** I feel it is important that I bring to the Committee's notice the reason why I really asked this question about a zone of right for the primary area. If one looks at comparable statistics produced in the supplementary booklet, for example for Reynella South Primary, one sees that one is looking at a number (as I have added up) for Reynella South primary and junior primary of only 455. Of course, for the Reynella Primary School (which does not have a junior primary section), the figure is 420.

Returning to the statistic of 788 which I quoted earlier, it has been brought to my attention that many people, because it is a new school and an exciting concept of R-12, are actually sending their children to Reynella East primary

campus particularly so that they can go right through and that the other schools would be quite happy to have extra enrolments. All I am putting to the Minister and his advisers is that it may well be that we must look at that in that area because of what is happening and because of the increasing development that will take place in Morphett Vale East.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We certainly will take a further look at that situation but, following Mr Marsh's point earlier, I state that Reynella East is not a reception to year 12 school. It happens to be three schools in geographic locality; they all abut each other. There is a junior primary school, primary school and high school, all on the same block of land, but it is not organised administratively as an R-12 school. However, I certainly note the honourable member's point about the relative attraction possibilities of the school and intimate that we will look further into that matter.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I would like to continue the line of questioning that I adopted at the end of my last set of questions—that is, the question of overspending. I want to concentrate only on the Minister's own office. I mentioned that the Minister has proposed expenditure this year of \$368 000—an increase of 14.7 per cent over the actual amount spent last year. When we come to contingencies, we find that in that area there has been considerable overspending of some 42 per cent in actual payments last financial year, compared with what was anticipated. Can the Minister explain why the cost of running his office will increase so much? Where did that overspending in contingencies in his office go?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I indicated that I would obtain for members a comparison of the particular grades of various employees in the Ministry from before the last election to the situation that applies now, so that members can understand the wage rates that apply to the respective people, even though the head count remains the same. In 1983-84 Mr Trevor Barr was seconded to the Ministry from the Education Department. He brought with him his salary needs. Mr Barr is responsible for oversighting the Miscellaneous lines, which is a massive portion of the Budget. We will come to that at about 4.30 or 5 p.m. It is a figure now in excess of \$60 million. The Government felt that it was appropriate to have someone oversighting that area of expenditure. It is not an over-expenditure as such; it is an increasing responsibility over 1983-84 planned where that salary was built in to the Budget allocation. Mr Barr is in the higher salary range, so that represents the increase.

As to contingencies, I repeat that there has been an increased volume of work load. I quoted figures from the Public Service Board. The member for Mount Gambier attempted to have us believe that he signed 150 000 letters a year, if one takes 600 letters a day on face value. Notwithstanding that, the Public Service Board showed that the increase in correspondence is about 250 per cent compared to what it was before. That has attached to it all sorts of non-salary costs in terms of paper work, stamps, postage, and the like. We have had some figures done on various lines of the Ministry since before lunch because we knew this question had been asked.

**Mr Starr:** One additional cost was incurred in the 1983-84 outcome which was not envisaged under Estimates of Expenditure, and it related to superannuation charges. Some of these charges can be spread as overheads to various lines, and are not always picked up and put to a particular line. In this instance, there has been a very significant increase or first charge relating to the Minister's office for superannuation charges. Also in respect of 1984-85, one of the significant increases was the full year effect of the secondment of Mr Barr to the Minister's office. Most of the other items relate to inflation or contingency items that are quite easily



identified and some other costs associated with increased workload.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I also direct my second question to the contingency area, this time in relation to private schools, because the Minister has just advised us that the costs of running his office are increasing and that that is why a much greater amount is proposed this year than last year and why overspending occurred. However, when we look at the private schools section of the contingencies we find that there is a severe reduction from an actual payment in the last financial year of almost \$2.1 million to less than \$500 000 planned for the coming financial year. With a reduction like that, just where will the cost cutting occur and how will it affect church and private schools in South Australia and the very important education that is offered to the children attending those schools? I refer to page 121 of the Estimates of Payments.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I ask a supplementary question of the honourable member. He refers to page 121 and talks about the contingencies in the primary area. Then he refers to private schools, which appear at the bottom of the page.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** That is correct. I refer to the line at the bottom of page 121. I should have addressed the page number to the Minister. I refer to the allocation for general private schools which, as I said, was reduced from an actual payment of almost \$2.1 million in the last financial year to less than \$500 000 this financial year.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** If the honourable member looks at the amount paid under the 'Miscellaneous' lines, he will see a very important increase there, and I believe that that represents the book fee payments that are paid to non-government schools. Previously they were recorded here: now they are recorded under the cumulative total of payments to non-government schools in the 'Miscellaneous' lines. The honourable member will notice that a very large percentage increase appears there. Indeed, public comments have been made about why it is such a hefty increase. Like this, it fails to take account of the fact that there has been a transfer of funds from the other line.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Let me be quite clear on this. Can the Minister give an assurance that the amount of funding that will be made available to the private schools will not be a reduction in real terms? They will have equivalent funding or better funding this coming financial year.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Before the last election we had a policy commitment that we would maintain the relativities. We committed ourselves to the 23 per cent figure and we have adhered to that. Of course, what we have done within that is distribute from the less needy schools to the more needy schools: that has happened. However, the total bucket of money available to private schools from State Government sources has been maintained in real terms. Mr Starr would like to make a comment on that.

**Mr Starr:** In fact, what has happened in this case is that the funding in that area was determined under the departmental lines and was subsequently transferred to 'Miscellaneous'. In the Estimates of Expenditure document there should be a note indicating that the transfer has been made. However, it has been a transfer only in terms of moving it away from the Education Department on exactly the same basis to the education 'Miscellaneous' line.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I refer again to the line on page 121 of the Estimates of Payments relating to 'Maintenance of school buildings' and 'Replacement of school furniture'. I refer to the following commitment made by the Minister some two years ago in his personal policy address in regard to educational facilities:

The maintenance of buildings both within the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education is a major cost centre for Government and it is not one

that readily submits to cost cutting exercises without presenting later financial difficulties. It has been the contention of the Labor Party for some time that arbitrary deferrals of minor works and cut-backs in funds for maintenance in these sectors will present further serious financial problems to the taxpayers of this State by the mid 1980s. Labor will not, therefore, be taking part in exercises in false economy in this area.

I believe that the inferred criticism that came my way from the Minister before lunch when he adverted to the fact that I had passed a brief note to the member for Todd regarding casinos also contained the comment that I knew jolly well what happened in Cabinet. I simply ask the Minister whether things are any different now in Cabinet from the things that occurred a couple of years ago when it was not the task of Ministers of Education who were fighting for the salvation of their department and looking for capital and other expenditures to go first in the defence of casinos. I simply pointed out that the casino bill was \$140 million. It jumped \$20 million overnight, and all the Premier did when he was told of that was simply say, 'We will pay the bill.' That happened in this Chamber, which made me wonder how easy \$20 million was to come by.

I simply ask the Minister whether, if the Treasury said, 'You get \$15 million now,' and the Minister really needed \$40 million but was quite happy to settle for \$25 million, he would then go in to bat and fight for \$25 million, as happened three years ago, or whether he would simply accept the \$15 million and put out the excuse that came from the Minister recently: 'After all, there are no new schools to construct and, therefore, I suppose that somebody else can have the money.' I hope that the Minister will tell us that he fought like billy-o to increase the expenditure for education because there were no new schools to be constructed and that that saving could be transferred into the area of school repair and maintenance and the upgrading of those schools that have long been, as he claims, lacking in funds because they needed upgrading. That was contained also in his policy statement.

I hope that the Minister would use exactly the same rationale for capital works for repair and maintenance that he was quite happy to use a few moments ago, when he repeated his statements on page 8 of his policy document (an interesting one) as follows:

Evidence suggests that over the next three years, of the 945 positions to be liberated by declining enrolments, 743 will come from the primary area, Labor's policy will see it receiving back more than those 743.

The Minister is prepared to fight for that on the one hand (and successfully as it transpired), but I hope that he will say that he will fight equally hard to get money from the capital area and put it into repair and maintenance where it belongs, because I never had the opportunity as Minister to say, 'I do not have any new schools.' There were always plenty of new areas to be looked after.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Neither do I have the opportunity to say, 'I have no new schools.' In fact, I think that the honourable member ought to take a very close look at that. In fact, there are new schools built into the 1984-85 capital works programme.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** No new high schools.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, that is different to there being no new schools. So, let us qualify what we are saying. In fact, there are new schools coming on line. An announcement will be made in the 1984-85 financial year about what will then be a new high school in that financial year, although not in this financial year. I stand by the policy commitments that I gave before the last election (and I concur with the honourable member that it is a very interesting document that is worthy of reading). I must repeat the inferred criticism, because the ASER project and the casino project happen to be on similar sites and linked to each other. I should have

thought that it has been well spelt out in this House that one is not the other, and the honourable member full well knows my personal views about the casino issue: they have not changed at all.

However, I am fully supportive of the ASER project and I have always been so. As to the capital works question—money being transferred from capital works in the education sector to fund the ASER project—I draw the honourable member's attention to the sum total of capital works allocations in my Ministry or indeed in that of the Minister of Public Works relevant to education. If one adds up the allocation for the Education Department, the Department of Technical and Further Education, school buses, the Teacher Housing Authority, furniture and for other things, one finds that there has not been a reduction in the capital works allocation across the whole Ministry.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Do not forget the purchase of school buses.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I hope that I will not be criticised for purchasing school buses. In a situation of so many resources being available to Governments, one has to best allocate those funds across the various demands, and there happens to be an urgent demand for the purchase of more school buses.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I refer to page 30 of the yellow book, dealing with Aboriginal education. How many staff in total of the 162.6, listed at the bottom right-hand corner of page 30, are Aborigines? Is the Minister happy that the training of Aborigines for future employment—short and long-term training—in South Australia's education system is proceeding satisfactorily?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** As to how many are Aborigines, I do not have that information readily available but will obtain it. This Government initiated the policy of guaranteeing employment to every appropriately qualified Aboriginal graduate from the South Australian College. We have done that since we have been in power. Those teachers enter the general employment force of the Education Department and can be posted anywhere within the Department. We do not require that they serve only in Aboriginal education programmes to which reference is made on page 30. Some do, but others do not. Also, in this Budget, as from the third term next year 40 full-time equivalent Aboriginal resource teachers are included. Not all of them are of Aboriginal descent, but some are. They serve in schools where basically Aboriginal students are a minority of the student body, and this is to take account of the special education needs of those students.

As to the training matter, of course the member for Mount Gambier will know of the concerted effort by staff in the schools, particularly the Pitjantjatjara schools, for teachers to be involved in the in-service training of Aboriginal education workers, so the time will come when they can take over more responsibility in the education being provided by those schools. I had the good fortune to visit those schools late last year, and I am happy with the degree of in-servicing that teachers are able to offer to Aboriginal education workers. I hope that we can do more. The programme is not being downgraded but being maintained by teachers in the field in those schools.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** The Minister gave a firm commitment in the lead-up to the last election at page VII of his policy document relevant to personnel staffing and training. Under the heading 'Country Services' the policy states:

Labor will implement the study leave recommendation of the Auchmuty Inquiry for teachers who have served seven years continuously at least 150 km from Adelaide.

A question was raised of the Minister by a signatory from Penong, in light of the fact that the promise, which I have just read, had not been acted upon. The letter states:

To date, there has been no indication that any moves have been made to fulfil this promise and I feel that the following points may have been overlooked:

1. There is a need in country areas for teachers to have professional study, to make them aware of new teaching methodologies of which they may be unaware due to their isolation from their professional colleagues and educational facilities in the metropolitan area. Not to implement this policy may disadvantage children in the country.

2. The granting of this study leave would be a means of maintaining more experienced and up to date personnel in country regions. . .

He gave the Minister a run-down with which I am sure the Minister would be familiar, since he made the commitment originally. What is the Minister's intention with regard to that commitment?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I would be interested to know what was the member for Mount Gambier's commitment. If he is asking, now, I assume that he is interested in seeing it implemented. In regard to the Auchmuty recommendation, I did give that policy commitment before the last election, and we stand by our desire to achieve something in that regard. We made a number of commitments before the last election—in fact, 93. We have fully achieved over 33 of those commitments. We have achieved in part a further 30 or so, and some cannot be achieved in full immediately as they require a certain action each year. That takes us to over 65 commitments. There are fewer than 30 on which no action has as yet been taken, and that recommendation fits into that area. I had hoped that we could do something in the 1984-85 financial year. It does not appear that we will be able to do that and will have to defer action until the 1985-86 Budget. It is still part of the Government's consideration, and we hope that we can institute something towards achieving this policy commitment at the earliest possible opportunity.

My answers to the questions being read out by the member for Mount Gambier were to have been 'Yes' and 'Yes' to the first two questions. The honourable member did not read the remainder of the questions. When we do implement the first stage of each, it will be a much smaller programme than we originally thought possible, but we want to make salaries available to release teachers for that, and we hope to do so in the 1985-86 Budget, although it depends on the financial circumstances facing the Government at the time. We have, however, gone through many of the commitments and credibly achieved what we promised before the last election. However, this one is in the category of having not yet been actioned.

**Mr GROOM:** The member for Unley has touched on the matter of technology centres in high school computer programmes. I have been asked to obtain an outline specifically in relation to what support by way of ongoing programmes, financial or otherwise, primary schools can expect to have computers installed as part of their teaching programmes.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The State Government has made a decision to leave computing education in terms of hardware purchasing entirely to the Federal Government while we allocate our money to non-computing areas of new technology. Because of that we have to then respond to the guidelines laid down by the Federal Government. They have precluded access by primary schools to those funds. I have lobbied very strongly on a number of occasions, stating my viewpoint, and indeed the State Government's viewpoint, that primary schools should be eligible for access to funds made available by the Federal Government. We had hoped that there might be some change in the most recent Budget circumstances. That has not happened, but we would not ease up on the pressure we are putting on the Federal Government. We believe that a genuine reason exists for primary schools to be concerned about computers and edu-

caution. We know from a number of experiences in South Australia that they are actively involved in this arena. It is an inappropriate use of the Federal money available when a certain sector is being cut out from access to it. Some of the work done in courseware areas and professional development areas is just as applicable to the primary sector as to the secondary sector. To arbitrarily cut one out is not saving money: it is just not using it quite as efficiently.

The services available from places such as the Angle Park Computing Centre and the computer advisers existing in the areas involving State-funded activities are, of course, available across the education arena from primary through to secondary. Likewise, when I say that the Department is eager to see the interchange of ideas from work being developed within schools, so primary schools developing courseware are encouraged to share what they develop with other schools in the system. There are excellent examples of that in South Australia.

**Mr GROOM:** I refer to pages 72 and 73 of the Auditor-General's Report wherein it is reported that payments for security contracts, installation, maintenance of alarm systems and other security costs during 1983-84 totalled \$300 000. Will the Minister outline what is proposed by way of security in schools for the 1984-85 year? Will the Minister link his remarks with the security of computers in the schools that have purchased computers?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** On the first matter, on the programme for this year, the first thing the Government had to consider in the 1984-85 Budget was the ongoing cost of maintaining the security system we installed last year. Those systems involved an installation cost; now they have running costs. That was the first Budget item we had to add this year, and that has happened.

Secondly, we are adding a similar sum for the installation of new security alarm systems to maintain that programme, and that therefore means that the total commitment to security alarms has naturally increased. We believe we are seeing the results of that in terms of reduction in the level of deliberate vandalism or arson in schools. However, I make the point that neither of those features will ever be totally eliminated from any area of Government. We can expect to see continuing vandalism and arson but we would hope at much lower rates than previously existed. In 1982-83 the level of damage to buildings and contents of buildings burnt within the Education Department amounted to \$4.5 million and the figure for 1983-84 is about \$1.6 million. We would hope to be able to reduce that further, because it is a public asset, an educational asset in a local community, being destroyed. We are maintaining a programme of security alarms in addition to picking up the ongoing tab of paying for the servicing of those alarms and that is a significant amount.

In the area of security of computers, the Department has issued guidelines on the ways in which computers can be kept in secure places so that schools can make appropriate arrangements for that to happen. Many schools have put requests to me that we especially put in place physical changes to the structure for securing purchases they have made. That has to be taken in line with the competing demands for minor works funds that are available to the area officers. It might happen that that is an appropriate expenditure or it might not. In some cases schools have made their own investment in this area and I commend them for that. We would like to be able to pick it up but we have not been able financially to do that.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** My next question is in relation to computer programmes, particularly for primary schools because it was a primary school council that raised this matter with me. That council (and many other school councils incidentally) have expressed to me the desire that both

the Federal and State Governments should provide additional funding and support for the development of computers within schools in South Australia, and most of the approaches that have been made previously have been in relation to hardware, in other words, the provision of the computers themselves and ancillary equipment. There is no doubt at all that over the years there is going to be a greater need for the development of proper computer facilities within schools. One of these schools has referred particularly to software. That school has its own hardware, as it is one of the fortunate schools in my district that has a hard working group of parents and it has set up a good programme with the computers that have been purchased by funds raised by the school parents.

However, it was put to me at the last school council meeting I attended (and this was backed up by an article in an overseas magazine that they gave me) that one of the most important areas in which Governments should become involved is the provision of ancillary staff trained in computer software to assist the professional schoolteachers themselves in preparing programmes specifically designed for the needs of the children at that school. In other words, it was pointed out to me that having a core group of computer programmers or persons who can write computer programmes for the Education Department would be a help, but the point was made also that the need is coming, and will become more urgent, for ancillary staff to be appointed within schools to assist teachers to prepare programmes specifically for that school. Is the Minister aware of this overseas research, and if so, does his Government intend to move towards providing funding that will enable staff to be employed within schools to assist in the way I have outlined?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** First of all, on the subject of State and Commonwealth Government funding requests, I repeat the point I made before that we have made a conscious budgetary decision that with the limited funds available we would want to spend some money on new technology for schools from State Government coffers but that we want to see attention to all areas of new technology and not just computing and therefore we have consciously directed our hardware money towards non-computing areas. We are spending State money on these other non-hardware areas of computing.

As to the software situation, certainly the Department is very anxious to see a wide range of materials available for primary and secondary students and we are aware of the rapidly growing demand for courseware right across the curriculum, not just in computing studies but in various areas of the curriculum, such as English, maths, science etc. Some of that is produced by Angle Park itself, some is produced within other areas of the Education Department, and purchases are made outside, from the commercial producers and manufacturers of hardware or from other non-hardware manufacturers who do produce software.

One of the things I have said is that we should be encouraging the exploitation in other markets for the software we produce in South Australia within the education arena and by so doing we can raise money for South Australia so that that money can then be available to enhance further courseware development. Cabinet approved a submission of mine that we should see the marketing exploitation of South Australian produced educational products interstate and overseas after we receive a consultancy report on this matter, and at least 50 per cent of the revenue obtained from that will go back to the education sector for its enhancement.

The previous practice was that any money earned disappeared into Consolidated Revenue without being attributed to the area where it was generated. That is really having non-South Australians who are excited by the material we

are producing in this State, paying money to our system for the benefit of receiving those materials. Without any shame we are going out and pushing that as fast as we can to obtain the maximum benefits for students in South Australia. I mention the education arena rather than just the Education Department because we have a Software Committee looking at the software produced by other areas of education in South Australia such as the Department of TAFE, the South Australian College, the universities and the Institute of Technology which are also producing software, and these are marketable commodities that we should be trying to do something about. We already have some financial agreements with interstate distributors which earn us royalties, and these are benefiting the development of further software, or courseware as I prefer to call it, here in South Australia.

I am interested in the point made by the honourable member on the matter of ancillary staff. I cannot quickly say whether we do offer in-service courses at the Angle Park Computer Centre for ancillary staff but I do not think we do.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** It was pointed out to me by the school council (one member of whom is a person involved in computing) that it would be no good taking a teacher or an ancillary person and giving them the sort of training that would be necessary. He was talking about actually employing ancillary staff who are software or programme writing specialists within the school, rather than training ancillary staff who are already there, that is, actually bringing in ancillary staff who would be able to provide the type of programme writing assistance being sought in specific schools.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I take the point. I still believe that there might be some purpose where an in-service option is available. There is nothing to stop individual schools in terms of the allocation of their ancillary hours to so put on people because they have a much greater degree of flexibility with regard to the employment of ancillary staff. They can select in most cases the people they want to fill vacancies. That provides the opportunity for them to actually choose someone in the software area.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** The salary would be rather higher than that paid normally to ancillary staff.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Sure, and they would have to pick up the extra amount. The point is an interesting one and I will take it on board and investigate the possibilities. The one warning I would give is that we would not want a lot of reinvention of the wheel taking place with a courseware being done in 700 schools on a maths curriculum. That is the problem. In a sense we could overcome that with better communication links so that we would know what people are doing in different areas. Nevertheless, I take the point on board.

**The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms Lenehan):** There being no further questions, I declare the examination completed.

#### Witness:

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

#### Departmental Advisers:

Mr J.R. Steinle, Director-General of Education.  
Miss H.H. Kolbe, Director of Education (Resources).  
Mr W.C. Marsh, Acting Director of Personnel.  
Mr T.M. Starr, Chief Accountant.

**The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms Lenehan):** I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** The Opposition will ask only a few questions on this vote, partly as my colleague the member for Mount Gambier has already covered some of them under the former vote. Whatever the Minister says about the totality of capital expenditure as far as the Education Department is concerned the fact remains that there is a 22 per cent reduction in the school building and redevelopment programme. As my colleague the member for Mount Gambier said, the Minister may not be building any more high schools at this stage but surely I do not have to point out to him the enormous backlog of school redevelopment programmes that should be before him on his priority listing. Nevertheless, I will not pursue that matter at this stage, besides which you, Madam Acting Chairperson, should not allow me to because it is the wrong line.

There has been \$3 million allocated for the purchase of school buses. The Minister has an inquiry running on school transport which has been going for a long time. At the Budget Estimates Committee 12 months ago, the Minister promised a report in late 1983 or early 1984. It is now October, well past the time of early 1984. Will the Minister tell the Committee when the inquiry is to report and are there within the inquiry any differences of opinion preventing it from reporting?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes. I notice the comments on capital works and the inappropriateness of some of those comments, as acknowledged by the member for Torrens; we are not debating them. I notice that the honourable member pulled you up, Madam Acting Chairperson, before coming to praise the increase in TAFE capital works much of which is extra State money.

Regarding the school transport review, I gave an undertaking that it would be released by late 1983 or early 1984. The enthusiasm with which that committee has tackled the first review of school transport since 1954 and the response it has received from the community at large on this issue have been such that it has not been able to complete its work within that time. I was advised by Mr Tony Flint about two months ago that I can expect the report in the near future. It will then be available for the Government to consider what action it will take. I know that I gave an undertaking before. It is not a report that I have received; therefore, we have not been sitting on this report. The committee has been seriously pursuing this matter and receiving significant community response.

This is the second year in a row that there has been a significant increase in funds dedicated to the purchase of school buses. It is essential that we do so, so that we can guarantee that the bus fleet is being maintained as well as possible with buses of appropriate age from the funds available.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Can the Minister explain the position of the \$6.2 million worth of buses from the State Education Department now leased by the South Australian Government Financing Authority? Are some of the buses marked down for purchase under the proposed \$3 million to suffer the same fate and how much has the Education Department received back from Treasury for the

Works and Services—Education Department, \$4 160 000

#### Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

#### Members:

The Hon. H. Allison  
Mr E.S. Ashenden  
Mr T.R. Groom  
Mr M.K. Mayes  
Ms S.M. Lenehan  
The Hon. Michael Wilson

leasing of its buses? The \$6 million worth of buses on lease were paid for from capital funds allocated to the Education Department lines. How much of those capital funds have come back to the Department?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I am advised that appropriate transfers were made in all the relevant lines for those buses. So, there is no net deficit cost to the education recurrent budget in servicing those lines.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I would be quite happy if the Minister would agree to provide me with a statement as to where the transfers took place.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, we will do that.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I do not expect the Minister to give it to me now, but perhaps he could provide a detailed explanation of what type of lease agreement it is—leverage leasing or whatever—and how it reacts with the South Australian Government Finance Authority. This is all new and the interface between the Department and the Financing Authority interests me greatly.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We will obtain that information for the honourable member as soon as possible.

**The ACTING CHAIRPERSON:** Could the Minister have that information passed on to the Clerk of the House by 19 October?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We will endeavour to do that. With the situation of the refinancing arrangement made for the purchase of the buses, I am advised that all the full capital cost of that was transferred by Treasury out of the commitments in the Education Department lines but we will have that explained in a reconciliation statement later.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** For the Minister's edification I would not see the Education Department deprived of moneys that really belong to it.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The concern of the member is admirable. In fact, one point that needs to be made is that this money is not to be used just to disappear as a financial book entry. It will enable the purchase of new buses to replace buses that are due for retirement from the fleet. So, it is \$3 million of real money for the purchase of real buses that will be used by real students on real school routes in South Australia.

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

Technical and Further Education, \$85 118 000

**Chairman:**

Mr Max Brown

**Members:**

The Hon. H. Allison

Mr E.S. Ashenden

Mr T.R. Groom

Mr M.K. Mayes

Ms S.M. Lenehan

The Hon. Michael Wilson

**Witness:**

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

**Departmental Advisers:**

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

Mr B.J. Gear, Deputy Director-General.

Mr P.W.I. Fleming, Director, College Operations.

Mr D.R. Carter, Director, Administration and Finance.

Mr T.J. Beeching, Chief Accountant.

**The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms Lenehan):** I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** The Minister will be aware that in my Budget speech I canvassed the question of the Commonwealth allocation of TAFE moneys to this State. For the Minister's information the amounts allocated to the States appear at page 46 of the Commonwealth Budget papers. The Minister will also be aware that of the \$39 million additional added to TAFE expenditure right around Australia, South Australia will receive \$1 million.

That is an additional \$1 million in both capital and recurrent funds, when under the 10 per cent formula we could reasonably expect to get \$3.9 million. I find that extremely difficult to understand. The Commonwealth Budget papers make a real point in discussing the matter of State effort in technical and further education, and it is intimated in the papers that if the State effort is not there, neither will be the Commonwealth funding. Can the Minister tell the Committee why South Australia received only \$1 million out of the additional \$3.9 million allocated for the whole of Australia?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In Opposition we were concerned about the reduction of State effort in the area of technical and further education. In the 1983-84 Budget we had the first turn-around in that situation in terms of the decline of State effort. I believe the situation with the 1984-85 Budget will be relatively static in terms of the share of State effort. I pointed out before that clearly it is something that would cause problems if there was an allocation away from State effort. This is a reason why in the TAFE capital line this year we have seen an increase of State effort in that arena. We were concerned about the effects of long-term Commonwealth funding for those areas.

**Mr Carter:** We do not have final figures for 1985 yet from the Commonwealth in regard to TAFE grants. However, based on the indications that we have, there will be real increases in these allocations to South Australia. They will be significant increases, to some extent beyond the per capita calculations that can be made. Those figures will be available shortly. I expect a real increase to be reflected in those figures.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I appreciate the information given by Mr Carter. However, I am quoting from the Commonwealth Budget papers. I know that there is a discrepancy in Commonwealth funding as against State funding because of the matter of considering allocations for the financial year and the calendar year: that always poses a problem when trying to rationalise figures. But the Minister has virtually admitted that it is a question of State effort. I hope that we will see a reversal of that trend forthwith. In my travels around the TAFE sector this year I have noticed more concern expressed by TAFE councils, principals, staff and students than ever before about the indicative funding that they will receive for the next calendar year.

One of the complaints that they make is that the actual budgets for next year are not in place. However, the indicative budgets require reductions in expenditure by TAFE colleges. As I have already pointed out in this place, the easiest way to make reductions is in the areas of hourly-paid instructors. That means that it will be programmes such as those for adult literacy, and the handicapped, as well as some leisure programmes, that will be cut back. Programmes for adult literacy and for the handicapped are the programmes that should not involve any cut-backs. I am extremely concerned about the present situation. The adult literacy situation is extremely serious—perhaps I shall devote some attention to that in a moment. What action will the Minister take to prevent cut-backs in those programmes?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In regard to the first point about State effort, this has been a matter of concern to me which

is why in the State Budget last year there was a reversal of the trend that had been established over the previous three years of reducing State effort. At that time the graph went back slightly the other way, and this year, in real terms, there is a increase of some 1 per cent in real terms in money allocation that is available from State effort. We are concerned about this matter and we are making moves in the right direction, even if they are not very large moves. I would also point out (and I suppose this is partly a recognition by the Commonwealth of this matter) that we have recently received advice from the Commonwealth that the Commonwealth will transfer to South Australia a further \$1.3 million of capital funds from TAFE, as a result of the comparison of the relative stage of South Australian projects *vis-a-vis* interstate projects. That certainly will affect the share of money available from the Commonwealth for TAFE in each of the States. That is very recent advice: it post-dates the printing of the yellow book or the line Estimates. The honourable member indicated that he will ask further questions about adult literacy later, so I will leave my answers to those matters until then.

In regard to the matter of cuts in programmes, clearly in any educational arena it is always the case that some programmes are funded by increased resources and that others are funded by a reallocation of resources. TAFE at all times is examining its programme commitments and considering what it will maintain and what it will not maintain. Over the years there have been programmes that have not been maintained, and programmes which have been developed and which have grown, while others have remained at a static level of commitment. That is the situation applying in the 1984-85 financial year, as it has applied in other financial years. A point that I have made clearly is that there is equal commitment by the Department of TAFE for various areas of endeavour, be they vocational, access or enrichment. Each one of those areas is of equal importance to the Department and it is endeavouring to make sure that, in developing or in planning what programmes will be run in each of those areas, any dislocation is shared rather than felt by one area alone.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** It seems that the Minister is admitting that at this stage he is not prepared to do anything about trying to reverse the trend of some colleges to do away with some programmes of enormous importance to the community. The Minister is on record as saying that about 50 000 adults in South Australia need tuition in adult literacy. That is a very high figure, really a blot on our society. I do not have to emphasise to the Minister the importance of programmes provided by TAFE for the physically and mentally disabled. Yet, as I understand it, the Minister is not prepared to intervene at this stage. The Minister has said that over the past few years programmes have been instituted while others have been done away with, but he has given no commitment at all at this stage.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The honourable member has not listened to what I have said on this and on previous occasions. I have indicated equal priority for each one of those areas. One of the problems that have existed in the past has been that very often access areas of TAFE education have been particularly vulnerable and have suffered the worst cuts. I have indicated that this is a matter of equal priority to the Government and the Department and that what the colleges do should reflect that degree of priority.

The honourable member may recall that recently I answered a question from the member for Elizabeth on the matter of adult literacy courses at the Elizabeth Community College. The initial indicative planning of that college indicated cuts of up to 50 per cent in adult literacy courses. The honourable member would also recall that in my answer to that question I indicated that the Department (reflecting

my belief and very certainly its own), in having further discussions with the college, had reached a situation where there will be an effective maintenance of that programme in the coming financial year, rather than there being a 50 per cent reduction that had been talked about. In fact, in regard to the whole adult literacy area—because it is a matter of concern to us—the Government has had discussions with the colleges on this matter and the resource commitment to adult literacy courses in the 1984-85 financial year will be the same as it was for the 1983-84 financial year. Some minor re-adjustment in how those services are delivered may occur, but the global allocation of resources to adult literacy will be about the same.

Another point that I have referred to is that within the structures of TAFE we need to pick up how these priorities are embedded in the system so that colleges can be aware of that in terms of their future planning and budgets. The situation for 1984-85 is now quite clear in that area. We are concerned about what the colleges do, and there is consultation between the colleges and the Department, and certainly between the Minister and the Department, about priorities. We do not expect the colleges just to set their own priorities without reference to the general educational policies of the Department or the Government.

**Ms LENEHAN:** My first question concerns the line that covers lecturing, administration, and ancillary staff. I refer to the provision of child care courses for students presently attending the Noarlunga TAFE College and those wishing to attend in future. I understand that at present the first-year course is offered to students at that college. As a member of the Noarlunga TAFE College Council, I am aware that the council and the community are keen to see that the course is extended to a full-time child care course. In this respect, I refer to the report, which has been sent to TAFE administration, on the need for qualified child care workers in the southern community. In this area we have an abundance of young people, mainly female, who wish to undertake this form of training, but at present only the first year of the course is available at Noarlunga. These young people must travel a long distance to the Croydon Park college, where they can complete the course. It has been put to me that many people are being denied access to the completion of the child care qualification because, due to their age, they do not have private transport. Further, many of them must work late hours, in some cases until 6 p.m. and later, and public transport from the area to Croydon is not a viable option. Some young people are using a car pool. Many are employed in family day care, which is lowly paid work, so that they do not have access to sufficient funds to buy a car to get them to Croydon Park.

It seems to me and to my constituents that there is a need to train people for a vocation in which there are jobs: it is not a matter of training people and then hoping that they will find employment. The jobs are there and the potential of people to fill the jobs is there: therefore, the child care course should be provided as a complete full-time course at Noarlunga. Although I am mindful of the funding constraints in the Department, I believe that the community would be delighted if a full course in child care could be implemented stage by stage. Will the Minister say what plans have been made or are being made to meet the demand for a complete child care course at Noarlunga TAFE College?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Those demands have been considered along with similar demands for child care training all over the State. Indeed, there is a purposeful commitment by both the Commonwealth Government and the State Government to the provision of child care services in this State, and a meeting, attended by officers of the TAFE Department, the Community Welfare Department and the

Department of Social Security, is at present being held to examine the matter of training of child care workers. Therefore, the provision of such training in this State and the necessary expansion of facilities and their location will be examined by members of that committee so that recommendations may be made to their departments.

Until that officers meeting has concluded, I cannot say what will happen in respect of each TAFE college. Suffice to say that the Department is well aware of the needs and will do what it can from its resources to meet the needs that are identified. We are examining other options for the provision of support for child care training, the skills and demand scheme being one of the areas being examined at present.

**Ms LENEHAN:** I am happy to hear that. Can the Minister or his officers say what is the present status in the implementation of an equal opportunities plan for the Department of Technical and Further Education? Specifically, will he provide for members a breakdown of employment by sex and specific classifications of officers in the Department? Further, to what extent has the affirmative action for women's employment in the public sector been implemented or to what extent is it being implemented in the Department of Technical and Further Education?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Regarding gender and job classification of employees in the Department, I will take that question on notice and get the information for the honourable member. As to the Equal Opportunities Unit, I have already indicated the position in the Education Department, and the same reply could be given in respect of this Department. As the result of Government policy in this matter, the Department has increased the size of the Equal Opportunities Unit to meet the needs in this area. I will ask the Director-General to comment on the progress of the action plan in the Department and to state the size of the Equal Opportunities Unit.

**Mr Fricker:** The Equal Opportunities Unit is headed by a Principal Education Officer, a lady named Marilyn Davis, who has a support staff of permanent officers who have been appointed to the Unit, as well as people who have been seconded from colleges. Speaking subject to correction, I believe that the total strength of the Unit at present is 10 officers. The programmes which that unit has mounted over the past two years have been far-ranging, imaginative and highly successful. Many seminars have been held on sexual harassment, and people from the colleges have taken part in those seminars. Throughout the Department, including constituent colleges, an equal opportunities contact network has been set up so that in every college throughout the State there is an individual who is designated as the equal opportunities person. That person works directly with the Equal Opportunities Unit to ensure that where we run programmes, for example, to bring girls into trades or in the every day running of the college, if there appear to be instances of discrimination or harassment, there is on the spot a person who can provide the supporting environment that is needed by the changing demands of our society within the Department of TAFE.

After all, the Department is historically a very macho department, many of our officers having been recruited from trades areas that have, historically, been male dominated. Therefore, the work that is proceeding to change attitudes and to increase awareness of our staff as well as students has been one of the priority areas of this Department, and the Equal Opportunities Unit has done much work in that regard.

**Ms LENEHAN:** Regarding the programmes that have been referred to, I am aware of what the New Opportunities for Women programme is doing, as I have certain information from the Noarlunga TAFE College, which introduced

such a programme this year. I have a recent commitment from the Minister that such a course will be offered at Noarlunga next year. However, as I have an interest that is broader than my own district, I would like to hear from the Minister what commitment has been made, generally, to programmes such as the New Opportunities for Women programme in the future. Is this seen as something of a short term block of programmes to be offered or is it seen by the Minister and Department as something that is more permanent and longer term?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The Department and Government have a commitment to areas such as the NOW programme. In fact, it was designed as an initiative within the Department of TAFE originating from the equal opportunities section and taken up by the Department at large. As I indicated in my answer previously to the member for Mawson, it has had a respectable growth rate.

In the 1984-85 financial year a number of programmes have already been offered within that area. It would be true that over the 1984-85 financial period (until 30 June next year) the number of programmes offered will be, at the very least, comparable with what was offered in 1983-84, if not greater. The spread of how those courses is offered will depend upon the immediate allocation of resources to colleges. There may be some variation from month to month within the colleges.

As I advised the honourable member earlier, on the basis of information given to me, the programme will be offered at Noarlunga college in 1983-84. The Department and I have a commitment to this, because we believe that it is an important area; it is a question of access education. If one does not want to address it positively, one might just as well forget about many other questions of education because one cannot address those adequately if one is dispossessing a section of the education electorate. The Deputy Director-General may wish to make some further comments.

**Mr Grear:** The way in which these programmes run is important as people look at the amount of effort involved in future. Over a period of three years, first we run a pilot for a particular programme in a college with substantial support from the Equal Opportunities Unit. In the second year, the programme runs within the college with much more involvement by the college. In the third year of the programme the expectation is that the college within its own resources will have built that into part of the total package of the college. When information is available about the number of NOW programmes that are running or commencing, and we are only talking about those that relate to special input from the Equal Opportunities Unit, they will roll progressively through the colleges and through the different programmes.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I want to ask a series of three questions that relate directly to the Tea Tree Gully TAFE. However, before I do so, I would like to place some statistics before the Committee so that they can be considered by the Minister in answering the questions. First, the area of Tea Tree Gully serviced by the Tea Tree Gully TAFE, from the most recent figures from the Bureau of Statistics, has a population of 81 000. That is a doubling of population in the last 10 years.

Also, the previous Government and the present Government support the Golden Grove extension. This will result in another 14 000 people living in the catchment area of the Tea Tree Gully TAFE by 1988, and by 1990 there will be another 30 000 on top of that. This shows quite clearly that we have, first, a very large population in an area that should be serviced by the Tea Tree Gully TAFE and a population that will grow even more rapidly than it has in the past.

Other statistics that I have been able to obtain from the Bureau indicate that of those people presently living in this

area 16.7 per cent are between the ages of 15 and 24. I am sure that the Minister would acknowledge that this age group should be served particularly by TAFE. Incidentally, this percentage is much higher than the average for that age group throughout the State of South Australia.

I have also approached the CES, which has provided me with figures that indicate that in the most recent quarter available to them within the Modbury area (the CES office at Modbury) 3 147 people are unemployed of whom 61 per cent are between the ages of 15 and 24. The figures indicate that the retention of school leavers in the area is lower than average and that fewer students proceed from year 11 to year 12 in the Modbury area than in other areas.

I give that as a background because we now come to the TAFE college itself. We find that there are 11 800 subject enrolments by students living in the catchment area of the Tea Tree Gully TAFE. Of those 11 800 subject enrolments, 9 478 are undertaken at other TAFE colleges. In other words, only 2 300 of those subject enrolments of residents of Tea Tree Gully can be and are being undertaken at the Tea Tree Gully TAFE.

Over the years there has been a reduction in the number of courses that the Tea Tree Gully TAFE is able to offer residents in Tea Tree Gully. The number of staff has been reduced. In 1982 three Matriculation courses, five business study courses, nine commercial courses and certificate courses were offered at the Tea Tree Gully TAFE. In fact, a total of 17 substantial classes was offered by Tea Tree Gully TAFE in 1982. In 1984 the number of Matriculation courses was reduced from three to one: business studies was reduced from five courses to three courses, and commercial study courses were reduced in number from nine to four. We can see that in an area of rapidly growing population the number of courses being offered by the Tea Tree Gully TAFE has been substantially reduced.

It is quite fair to compare the Tea Tree Gully area with the Noarlunga area: although Noarlunga services an area smaller than that which the Tea Tree Gully TAFE college area should be servicing, it has a budget 10 times as large as that of the Tea Tree Gully college and 10 times the number of staff. When we look at the staffing of the Tea Tree Gully TAFE, we also find that in 1982 there was a Principal, two senior lecturers and six lecturers. This has now been reduced to a Principal and four lecturers. In fact, only recently it was down to three lecturers; a fourth lecturer has only just been reappointed.

I also point out to the Minister that many constituents have contacted me because of the reduction in courses at Tea Tree Gully, some of which was done without any long announcement at all. After starting a course, one constituent now has to travel to O'Halloran Hill to complete a programme which she commenced at Tea Tree Gully. Some now have to go to Elizabeth to complete courses that they started at Tea Tree Gully TAFE. Others have had to go to other colleges of TAFE; and others have had to drop their courses because they cannot afford the cost of attending other colleges. I give that as a background to what has been occurring at the Tea Tree Gully TAFE college.

How can the Minister's Government sustain a picture like that which I have just drawn? Every figure that I have given has come either from the Bureau of Statistics, CES or departmental records. We have a growing population, yet we find continually that there is a reduction in funding and staffing. I notice that one of the officers is shaking his head. I am sure that the Minister is well aware of the correspondence that has gone on between his office and the TAFE Council over a conflicting point of view in relation to funding. Even if we do not bring funding into it, the staffing situation which I have outlined over the past two years shows quite clearly that there is a severe reduction. If

the staff is being reduced, obviously the courses are being reduced and, if courses are being reduced, the facilities available to residents of Tea Tree Gully are also being reduced.

Why is this being allowed to occur in such a tremendously important and growing area, which is suffering so much from unemployment and which needs desperate help for those people? Why is Tea Tree Gully being treated in this way?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Before the Minister replies, I would like to take up a point made by the member for Todd. He referred to an officer. I had trouble on a previous occasion, and I advise members of the Committee that they should not refer to the officers or interject, because the officers are only here by invitation. If members want to have a go at the Minister, do so.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I am sorry: I was not 'having a go' at the officer.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Chair is not suggesting that you were. I am merely saying that we should not allow you to do that under any circumstances.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** I accept that ruling.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I think that for the edification of the Committee it would be appropriate if at a later time I have a cumulative summary of the resources committed to the Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE provided for the Committee, because the honourable member has raised, as he has on other occasions (and I acknowledge that), serious questions regarding service provisions to that college. We will have brought down by 19 October (I think) a summary of the resources committed to the college over the past five years, including details of what that has meant in terms of staffing and course offerings at the college. I think that that will help us gain an understanding of the problems that the college has faced. Some of those problems have certainly been acknowledged by the Department in terms of attempting to assist by making extra personnel available from time to time and by giving budgetary assistance after indicative budgets have been made for the college over a number of years.

There was a problem in 1981 when there was a real cut in the services there and the same situation applied. However, one other thing has to be acknowledged: a package of resources is made available to that college, and then it is for the college to get the best value out of the package of resources made available by the Department in terms of staffing and non-staffing resources, and to identify where those resources are inadequate to meet the programmes that it believes should be provided in that area. There have been lengthy discussions between the college council, my office and the Department of TAFE. I have taken an interest in this matter to find out what is actually happening with the Budget provision for the Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE in 1984-85, as I have with all other colleges in the Department.

Indicative figures given earlier this year are not the final figures: there have been some modifications. I believe that the second indicative figures have recently been supplied to the colleges. The Director-General has just reminded me that the principals of the colleges have been invited to specifically talk with the Department about the difficulties that this second indicative budget may provide for the college, so that any appropriate adjustment can be made from resources available. So, that will clearly try to put into perspective all the needs of all the colleges in the State. I certainly note the points that the honourable member makes about the special needs in the north-east of Adelaide, and there are other areas that have similar needs. Nevertheless, I do not want to decry the figures he has given: they are



very serious figures that need to be taken into account. However, we need to look at a number of other issues, too.

One thing that the Department must take into account in terms of services provision through TAFE colleges is the opportunity for students to go to another college. On the one hand, the honourable member raises the matter of 9 400 of the 11 800 Tea Tree Gully residents going outside the area to other TAFE colleges as a negative factor, and I can appreciate that. On the other hand, it is also a positive indication that they have somewhere to go, and this is a very real problem in terms of course provision in the country colleges, where, if it is not available at that immediate country locality, it is not available at all because there is nowhere else to go. One does not have the time to travel for three hours down the road to the next college to get those services.

So it has a negative aspect to it but here is also a positive aspect: there are other places to go, including Gilles Plains, which is not that far away. That is another point that needs to be taken into account. I appreciate the comparisons in terms of the population in the north-east compared with the population in the southern suburbs, and the comparison of Tea Tree Gully and Noarlunga. In fact, I think that it would be better if a comparison were made of the area surrounding Noarlunga and the area surrounding Tea Tree Gully and Gilles Plains, because the proximity of Tea Tree Gully to Gilles Plains is much greater than that of Noarlunga to O'Halloran Hill, for example, or Noarlunga and Brighton, whereas one has colleges at Tea Tree Gully, Gilles Plains and Elizabeth, which is again closer than O'Halloran Hill is to Noarlunga.

So, one has to take a package of TAFE offerings available from those three colleges to compare it with the Noarlunga college. Also, the Government has a commitment to the development of the Tea Tree Gully Community College. We have forwarded to the Commonwealth Government as part of our schedule of capital works funding a proposal for the development of, among other places, the Tea Tree Gully Community College. I also say that it has been the practice of this Government that when we open new facilities we commission them properly by making resources available for them. That did not happen in every instance previously. For example, in regard to the Noarlunga college we have had to pick up in the 1983-84 Budget the short-fall in commissioning of that particular facility.

The other issue we must take into account is that in the metropolitan area one has to consider the network of course offerings. One cannot expect every community college to offer every course. That is not to be a defence of changes in certain course offerings at the Tea Tree Gully Community College, but it is to say that there will be reductions in some courses from time to time at any college as we choose to locate at other colleges that degree of expertise, because we cannot offer everything everywhere. So, a year-by-year comparison will be made so that the Committee can be better edified on this matter. It is something that is of concern to me, because it has been brought to my attention by the members for Todd and Newland and the Chairman of the college council, Mr Blight, on a number of occasions. We have closely examined all aspects of the funds available to that particular college and the matter is still under consideration, as it is for other colleges, with regard to the 1984-85 financial year.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Just before asking my second question, which will be based on the information I gave before, I accept some of the answers the Minister gave in his reply but the constituents who have contacted me do not see it as an advantage that they are, to quote the Minister, able to travel to other areas, because one person had to go all

the way south of Adelaide to O'Halloran Hill and others to Elizabeth. It is extremely difficult for them to do that.

The other point I would make is that the charters of Tea Tree Gully TAFE and the Gilles Plains college are quite different. I know that the argument has been used for a long time that residents of Tea Tree Gully have also the facilities of Gilles Plains but I believe that is over-stressed in defence of the lack of facilities at Tea Tree Gully. The point is that their charters are different; they are designed for different purposes but to work hand in glove, and they do, but it is not in my opinion a defence for there not being more courses available at the Tea Tree Gully TAFE.

My second question relates to staffing only. First, I would like to quote from a letter the Minister wrote to the Chairman of the Tea Tree Gully TAFE on 17 August following a visit which he made to the college. I can assure the Minister that all the members of the council appreciated very much the fact that he took the trouble to visit the college and see at first hand the problems they are experiencing. I will not be quoting out of context but, if the Minister believes that I am, I will quote in more detail. In part the letter states:

The difficulties being experienced by the Tea Tree Gully college in meeting local community needs have been recognised and certain staffing initiatives have been taken. A senior lecturer in general studies was recently approved as an additional appointment and the appointee commenced duty on 4 June 1984.

The Minister referred to some other matters, including business studies, but I will not refer to them now. The college council took those two sentences to be an indication to them that a senior lecturer had been appointed and it would be a permanent appointment. The college council was extremely pleased indeed to receive that letter. Then, unfortunately, they received a letter dated 6 September from the Director-General of Technology and Further Education which reads in part:

Thank you for your letter of 18 July regarding staffing at the college—

acknowledging receipt of the letter from the Chairman of the TAFE college—

The position is that a senior lecturer has been appointed as an additional staff member at this stage—

in other words, a qualification has come into it—

and the lecturer in general studies is being allowed to stay on until the end of 1984 when a review of general studies staffing will be made throughout the Department.

When that letter was received by the council, alarm bells rang, and the council was concerned to learn that no decision would be made about 1985 until the end of 1984, in contrast to what the Minister had stated in his letter of 17 August. Can the Minister assure me, so that I can pass it on to the college, that that additional appointment to which he referred in his letter of 17 August will be retained next year?

I make the point that if that lecturer is not retained (I have already gone through the reductions that have occurred) this will reduce the number of lecturers from four to three, a reduction of 25 per cent in the staffing facilities of that college. I am sure members of the Committee would appreciate the outcry that would occur if 25 per cent of the staff were to be taken from O'Halloran Hill or some other college. It might be said that this is only one person, but that one person to the Tea Tree Gully TAFE is a very important person, and it is just as important as a 25 per cent reduction in staff would be to any other college.

Concern is now very real in that college council, because they can see the possibility of an even greater reduction in their staff. As has been pointed out to me by the Chairman of the council this means that the Principal is unable to plan effectively for the courses that she is going to be able to conduct in her college, because she does not know whether she will have a 25 per cent reduction in her staffing. The

Chairman has asked me to raise this directly with the Minister, because if he can give an answer the college will be able to plan. Can the Minister say whether, as was read into the letter of 17 August, that lecturer will remain at the TAFE next year?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The college council, or Mr Blight, did indicate to me that in terms of planning the utility of an extra appointment it is much better if it is known how long the person concerned will stay there. There was never any understanding as to how long the appointment would be made for but a clear wish was expressed that he should stay on into 1985. Some concern was expressed at the time about the qualifications of the person to fit in with the programme of the college but I understand from the comments made by the member for Todd that the college council believes he could be integrated very well—

**Mr ASHENDEN:** That is my understanding.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I accept that. It is a standard procedure that towards the end of every year we determine staffing needs for the coming year, in this case 1985, and I would not want the college to take unnecessary concern from what has been advised by the Director-General, because that is not specific to Tea Tree Gully: it is in fact specific to all colleges that that is what happens as a matter of course, and then at that time, when the staffing matters are considered, the particular needs of each college are considered, also taking into account the effect a withdrawal of staff would have on each college. The point made by the honourable member that the withdrawal of a staff member from Tea Tree Gully will have pro rata a much greater effect than the withdrawal of one staff member from one of the larger colleges will be noted and taken into account by the Department.

It is the same sort of exercise that takes place in schools at the end of every year: we look at what the staff pool is at the school, what will be needed for the next year and what we have available, and then we spread it accordingly. So nothing different has happened to Tea Tree Gully Community College than what is happening to any other college. I certainly would hope we can say that within the next few weeks that position will be maintained but it will have to be considered within the priorities of all the other colleges, together with the relative effect that staffing movements will have on other colleges as well.

I am not able to give the categorical assurance that the honourable member now requests because that pre-empts that staffing discussion by the Department which will involve college principals. I have already mentioned that, but it is certainly my hope that the best possible result will be achieved for the Tea Tree Gully Community College. However, they are not being expressly singled out by the paragraph in that letter from the Director-General.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** My next question relates to the Government's plans for the new TAFE building, which is a programme that has been under consideration not only by the present Government but also by previous Governments. I have a letter sent to the Chairman of the college council by the Director-General. Again, the council has asked me to raise this matter in the Committee because it is concerned about some of the points contained in the letter.

The letter was sent on 21 August in relation to what was being put to the council as a possible bringing forward of the date of the building programme for the new Tea Tree Gully TAFE college. The previous Government had given an indication to earlier Tea Tree Gully TAFE councils that, in fact, a TAFE college would be built at the same time as the planned terminus and interchange for the guided busway. As the Minister would be well aware, the previous Government had indicated that that would be completed in 1986 and, therefore, an indication had certainly been given to

previous councils that the college would be completed at that time. I am sure the previous Minister would be happy to confirm the points I have just made.

The council was very concerned as later advice was that no commitment could be given on when the college would be built. The letter was then received indicating that it would hopefully be brought forward. In the letter are a number of qualifications, such as, 'The TAFE Council is still to be persuaded of the priority of the project.' That sentence certainly caused very great alarm to the TAFE Council. I will not go over the statistics which I brought up earlier, but the council and residents of Tea Tree Gully do not believe that any persuasion is needed as to the importance of a new TAFE in Tea Tree Gully. The letter also indicated that application would be made to the Federal Government and that the project will also have to be approved by State Cabinet and a range of State authorities. I have not quoted fully from the letter and have not attempted to be selective. I have taken from the letter sentences that have caused the college council concern.

The council felt that there had been first a 'going out' of the projected date at which the TAFE college was to be built, and now it sees again qualifications coming in. Because of the history of events at Tea Tree Gully, it is concerned that, in fact, the college may not go ahead along the lines indicated in that letter. I have been asked to put to the Minister how importantly he regards the priority of the new building for the Tea Tree Gully TAFE college and whether he believes that the indication of 1987 as a date for the commencement of the new TAFE is more likely than less likely to be a time at which the council can start to see work on the ground with bricks starting to go up for a college that is so desperately needed in the north-eastern suburbs.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In relation to the capital or building side of the situation, one indication of the Government's commitment to it is the fact that the land set aside for the college is being retained and one house on the site is now being used by the college.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** The next council meeting is going to be in that house, because they want me to see how bad it is.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Nevertheless, some education programmes are running there. Other TAFE allotments have been sold because we did not have a commitment to them. It does not apply to the Tea Tree Gully TAFE college as we have clearly a commitment as a State Government to developing that site. That is why that valuable piece of commercial real estate is being retained. Other land is being disposed of for use in general capital funds programmes. We have included it in our application to the Commonwealth in the schedule of activities, and it stays there. I have just been advised by my officers that they know nothing of a commitment given about 1986 being the date when the new college would be constructed, so I cannot comment further on that. It is from a previous time and no records are available to me.

For a moment I thought that the honourable member was trying to link up the two Estimates Committees at the same time, given that transport is under discussion in another place currently. The honourable member raises the concern of the college council about the phrase 'the TAFE Council has to be persuaded'. I can understand that, but that is the case always: with any building project that comes forward on TAFE, the TAFE Council (which is a Federal council reporting to CTEC) has to be persuaded about the merits of a project. I ask the honourable member to reassure the college council that there is nothing especially different applying to the Tea Tree Gully TAFE college. That would

have to happen with any project and it has happened with other projects, for example, with Noarlunga.

A number of qualifications are made in the letter that certain things must happen. They are the blunt facts and the situations must always be gone through. It is a foolish person who says that he pays no account to any discussions that take place and that therefore I will not identify these issues to people. We are trying to say that that is what the system is, it has been the case for years, and when we move on it they are the stages through which we must move. Much the same was said by me and the Department about Port Pirie. We did not give any firm date on when it would start. We indicated that we hoped it would start before the end of the life of this Parliament and, in fact, as things have turned out, it has started earlier than anticipated.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Just as well.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, that is part of the reason that State money went into that. It was a firm effort on my part and on the part of the member for Stuart, the Minister of Local Government, as well as on the part of the Department. None of that was tied up with firm commitments earlier than construction will have started in 1984-85. Likewise, we are not able to do the same with the Tea Tree Gully TAFE college. We have a commitment to it and we must proceed through the stages. None of the stages can be circumvented, and the TAFE Council is one of those. It is on the schedule of activities that we have already sent to the Commonwealth Government for consideration. Perhaps the Director-General would like to comment on that aspect.

**Mr Fricker:** I addressed the TAFE Council on the proposal for the Tea Tree Gully college. Its initial reaction was to be against the proposal for the sorts of reason that have already been advanced: for example, that there was a college at Gilles Plains close by and other colleges within striking distance of the whole area, including Regency Park and Croydon. The group sitting in Canberra looks at the map and measures the distance. It is not impressed with stories about travelling time or about the fares being too high for young people to afford. It tends to look at the Adelaide situation in much the same way that it would look at Sydney or Melbourne—much greater metropolitan areas.

However, I took with me a great deal of statistical material of the type that the honourable member has been quoting. Robin Ryan and I did a presentation with visual material, graphs, and so on, together with a video. It is my belief that we convinced the TAFE Council of the need for a new college at Tea Tree Gully and that the approval will be given to planning for that college in 1986 in accordance with the schedule put forward. However, I cannot stress too strongly that it is not a foregone conclusion. While all of us here might share the view that a college is absolutely necessary in that area, the TAFE Council will rate it against requests from the whole of Australia and it may not have the same degree of enthusiasm.

When I first took up duty in 1982, I had several meetings with the Tea Tree Gully college council and also with the Mayor of Tea Tree Gully. I have consistently put the view in conversation that I would hope to see the commencement of construction within five years from that date (that would be 1987 or thereabouts) and the college within 10 years. Maybe that is where the impression has grown that the previous Government had a commitment; I am not sure. If I have sinned in any way there, my apology, but I believe that that programme is feasible and I am hoping that the Commonwealth will provide the funds to make it a reality.

*The Hon. Michael Wilson interjecting:*

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I would like to take up one point that the Minister said but, as my colleague has just pointed out, one of the commitments of the previous Government was to establish jointly an O-Bahn terminal at Tea

Tree Gully and a TAFE college. The former Minister of Transport (who is currently the shadow Minister of Education) and I were in close consultation. Land had been acquired almost *in toto*; I think there was just an option on two blocks still to be obtained and I think that was in the hands of the then Director-General (Lou Kloeden). Certainly, negotiations were very near to finalisation for land at Tea Tree Gully just adjacent to the present shopping centre. I believe the land would still be in the possession of the Department of Technical and Further Education. Part of that negotiation included disposal of another area of land I believe to a freemasonry group for the construction of a much needed old folks home. I believe that has gone ahead, with part of that land subsequently being sold to the Housing Trust. It was a parcel deal to make land available at Tea Tree Gully adjacent to the plaza.

The point that I was wishing to take up with the Minister was relevant to the firing up of new colleges, and the Minister did mention Noarlunga. He referred to the fact (and I accept the point) that Noarlunga college was fired up only in part in its first year when it was partly completed. The Minister then said that the new Government had picked up the tab for the backlog and had continued to fire up the college. I accept that as a criticism and I think inherent in it is the implication that the firing up of the Noarlunga college, of Elizabeth and the South-East Community College rural studies section and also of the new Adelaide college, when it is completed, will be undertaken by the Government as new initiatives. If the Minister is to be critical I assume that he will do something positive about it and that these would be fired up as new initiatives. If this is so, I fail to understand how the Federal Technical and Further Education Commission can continue to make criticisms of South Australia for its reluctance to maintain State effort. It used to be said that South Australia was ahead of all other States and I believe that for some several years, from the 1970s through to the early 1980s, we traded on that and said that we were so far ahead of the others that our initiative has kept us well to the fore.

I understand that in the past two to three years the Federal Government has been extremely critical of South Australia's lack of effort. Therefore, can the Minister confirm that new colleges will be fired up, not at the expense of other colleges but rather in their own right, and that procedures that seem to be currently under way, such as raising service fees for colleges, are not going to be the answer to college ills? It seems to me like using a bandaid when one has a heart condition. Will the Minister tell the Committee that he intends to fire up these colleges in their own right and still maintain effort in the other colleges?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** With regard to the 1983-84 and 1984-85 Budgets, as the new facilities have come on line they have been provided for in the Budget allocation: that to some extent is a track record. It would be our hope, certainly the strong desire of myself as Minister and of the Department, that in 1985-86 and future Budgets new facilities coming on stream will be staffed from new resources. So, all I can say is that we have a track record, we have a hope and it is a matter to be followed through in the 1985-86 Budget when that Budget comes around. It is certainly, as any Minister of the former Government would know, not possible to have a forward bid on a future Budget.

As to the matter of State effort, the comments have been made by the TAFE Council over previous years; I am not aware of a recent comment made by the TAFE Council criticising questions of State effort. However, I acknowledge the point made by the member for Mount Gambier that this is a matter that had existed for some years, and I take the point of the member for Todd that it was under Governments (plural). However, we believe there has been some

minor turn-around in that area and it would be our hope to continue that turn-around within the constraints that apply.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** The Minister has said that he was not aware of any criticism but I simply point out that the threat has been made recently by TAFEC to take action against South Australia or any State that persistently refuses to increase effort. I am told that other States have increased effort across Australia and I was under the impression that the Federal TAFEC had carried out its threat by giving South Australia \$1 million out of \$39 million when, under all normal circumstances, we would have expected to receive 10 per cent of Federal allocations; it has been pretty standard practice, that South Australia receives about 10 per cent, give or take a small amount.

The second question I would like to raise concerns correspondence which the Minister has had perhaps with a number of people, but this concerns a reply that he sent to a Federal Senator (Senator Messner) regarding the concessions which were made to pensioners enrolling for TAFE courses. The Minister's response to Senator Messner has no date, but it states:

Thank you for your letter of 22 May 1984, concerning pensioner students in TAFE adult education classes. I am aware of the concerns that the introduction of the general service fee has caused some pensioners, but I think you will find that the attached draft letter explains the situation in some considerable detail: you may care to use this letter as background information when responding to . . .

Then there is the name of the lady who applied to Senator Messner for advice. The letter continues:

A Concessions Review Committee has been established by the Government to review all State Government concessions. One intention of the Committee was to report on the possibility of a more consistent concession policy across all concession categories. Although a report has not been finalised, it has been suggested that, even with the level of fees that have had to be introduced in TAFE, pensioners are receiving generous concessions when compared with those available through other Government departments.

However, I have asked the Department of TAFE to consider whatever steps may be possible to provide the maximum opportunity for all students seeking TAFE courses.

The letter is signed by the Minister as Ministers of Education and Minister for Technology. The letter that was enclosed was a letter to all pensioners. It was headed 'General service fee letter to pensioners', and its departmental heading reference was 0177M/78. The letter advised pensioners that the fee would be introduced. It was in response to pensioners who had complained. The Minister advised as follows:

It therefore seemed reasonable this year to introduce a charge of 45 per cent per hour (one quarter of the normal fee) for concession students, to lessen anomalies that had been occurring. The anomalies were that some pensioners had voluntarily decided to contribute in order to commence or to maintain certain subject classes—generally in stream 6. The Minister further stated:

It was the desirability of reducing anomalies which led to the introduction of fees. However, in setting the concession fee at 25 per cent of the full fee Cabinet was responding to advice that such a percentage would not in fact result in any extra revenue being paid to the Government other than what was already being received through the previous anomalous and inequitable situation.

The Minister was inferring that a few people were paying a certain proportion and was indicating that this was one of the ways of levelling the charge across the whole of the pensioner community. The remainder of the letter simply expands on that matter. It concludes by repeating:

This move with regard to concessions has not been made as a revenue raising activity. It is not anticipated that any extra funds will be generated over and above what has already been received.

I accept the rationale behind that. If that is the Minister's intention, it simply means that all pensioners will as of now be paying 25 per cent of the hourly charge. I point out that

when the Minister wrote that letter to Senator Messner he referred to the Concession Review Committee. That committee's report was handed down on Budget day by the Premier and the Minister of Community Welfare.

No mention is made in the review committee's report of concessions for the TAFE sector. It says that it has ignored a number of State taxes because they were part of the Treasury's responsibility and not of Ministerial responsibility. The report has also ignored a number of charges, including the TAFE charges. Only two recommendations have been treated so far by the Government, and they have been quite negative responses to the recommendations contained in that report. The Government has decided quite unequivocally to not charge war service veterans any additional funds for drivers licences, I think it was. There was a recommendation that they come back to the field. There was also a recommendation—which was completely rejected—that pensioners should now pay a proportion of bus fares, irrespective of the time of travel by pensioners. That involved a \$2 million saving that the Concession Review Committee was trying to achieve.

In view of that quite strong rejection by the present Government of the Concession Review Committee's report, on just those two counts, I wonder whether the Minister's decision to charge pensioners 25 per cent is now as firm and irrevocable a decision, as his letter would appear to suggest. Can the Minister also tell the Committee whether the Government is still providing a pensioner subsidy to colleges?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** There is a lot of detail in that matter that I would like to answer. First, the member is quite correct in his reference to my letter that the Government was advised that there would be no net revenue return over and above that which was being earned previously. I would say that by and large that that has been sustained by the evidence. If one looks at the revenue return, one sees that it is actually in the receipts listed in the Premier's Budget speech. One will see that the rate of return to the Department of TAFE has been roughly maintained. However, it is true that an anomalous situation applied before. Different people in the same class were paying different amounts in fees, even though each of them notionally was eligible for pensioner concession. Therefore, in terms of individual pensioners, it has enabled some greater opportunities for pensioner students to undertake courses.

The matter of the relatively brief reference to TAFE concessions within the concession review is certainly noted. Reference was made to it, but it was very brief, and, as has been mentioned, the report came out after my letter had been written. In discussions with my colleagues on that matter earlier, it had been identified that no incorporation of that area nor of Education Department concessions seemed to have been taken by the review. However, it was felt that at this stage that was not an appropriate action to take, and I accept that decision.

I point out that the concession that is offered is a 75 per cent concession as opposed to a 50 per cent concession that applies to many other concessions. The Government does not intend to vary that rate. It is not intended to reduce the concession on TAFE stream 6 courses from 75 per cent to 50 per cent. The revenue return question is such that a Government subsidy is required for TAFE stream 6 courses. The extent to which that is there to fund the involvement of pensioners I suppose varies from college to college, depending on how many pensioners are in various courses.

In 1984, \$210 000 was paid from the State coffers for that Government subsidy for TAFE stream 6 courses. The exemption categories for the eligibility for concessions to stream 6 have been known previously. They include pensioners holding a Department of Social Security concession

card or a State concession card, in receipt of unemployment benefits, holding a health benefits card or a health care card, as well as ex-service people holding a Department of Veterans' Affairs concessions card. They are the people who are eligible for the concession. No alteration to that has been made for 1985.

**Ms LENEHAN:** My question relates specifically to the Noarlunga College of Technical and Further Education, but a principle underlines the question that may well apply to other colleges. It is becoming increasingly difficult at the Noarlunga TAFE College to in any way approximate the target of 87 per cent return on what would be a full payment for courses. One of the biggest problems that is encountered is with the Victor Harbor college, which is a branch college of the Noarlunga TAFE College. The Minister is aware of this problem because on several occasions the council has communicated with the Department about trying to increase its return from people attending the Victor Harbor college. As the Minister would be aware, because of the demographic situation in regard to Victor Harbor a very large percentage of people attending that college are pensioners or people who are eligible for concessions.

In the future, in terms of ascertaining the sort of return applicable, would it be possible to have a third category of college, that is, in regard to colleges that are not wholly metropolitan or wholly country colleges but like the Noarlunga college, which in a sense encompasses both metropolitan and rural areas? Also, as a second criterion, would it be possible to take into account the varying socio-economic and demographic factors, because, for example, a college that is situated in a fairly affluent area has a much greater chance of attaining the 87 per cent return than has a college in a newly developing area, such as Noarlunga, where a very low socio-economic factor prevails which is influenced by demography and where very young families live which have incredibly large demands on their financial resources. At the other end of the spectrum, there is the pensioner group. In the review which I believe is taking place and to which the Minister referred, can those factors be taken into account in future?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I thank the member for Mawson for her question. The rate of return for the Noarlunga college is 87 per cent, and what was the South Coast campus of the Noarlunga College has an adjusted rate of 80 per cent. So, some account is taken of the situation. I take the point that that is not a significant difference for a community where a significant proportion of the students comprises pensioners. Certainly, the points raised by the honourable member are well worth taking into account. The Department will consider those, as well as the possibility of creating a third category to take into account varying socio-economic circumstances and the fact that some communities cannot be classified as either country or metropolitan.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** The TAFE budget programme papers show an increase of about \$11 million over expenditure last year, and it is revealed that the additional expenditure is taken up mainly with the commissioning costs at the Adelaide college and, no doubt, Noarlunga and Elizabeth colleges. Will the Minister provide a detailed list of the additional sums required as commissioning costs at those colleges?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, by 19 October.

**The CHAIRMAN:** And the Minister will provide it for *Hansard*?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I emphasise the problem that I foresee concerning the commissioning of large TAFE colleges, and I assume that the same thing will apply at Port Pirie and Tea Tree Gully colleges, which I hope will be completed as soon as possible. I am concerned about this

matter because it seems, from what I have been able to ascertain in travelling around the TAFE sector, that, when new colleges are commissioned, it affects the whole sector. Already this year, it is obvious that the indicative budgets are showing that individual colleges will have to cut back. When new colleges are commissioned, it is necessary to provide for additional recurrent expenditure to make up in regard to the rest of the TAFE sector. For instance, when Marlestone college was completed, the recurrent costs on some overhead items rose by as much as 300 per cent, although the additional money was not necessarily forthcoming for that recurrent expenditure.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I will get information concerning the Marlestone college. However, I wish to separate two issues: the resourcing of new facilities coming on line and the indicative budgets. The first indicative budget was not final, anyway, and the more recent one may not be final either, because further discussions must take place with the Department. Part of the reason for some of the indicative budget was the over-expenditure in 1983-84 that was not budgeted for, and that over-expenditure must be taken into account. In other words, there have been programme commitments over what was provided in the funds in the 1983-84 Budget, and that must be accommodated in the 1984-85 Budget. Therefore, the two issues must be separated. The position in respect of the Marlestone college may be the result of the new building being air-conditioned, whereas the old building was not.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I am not singling out Marlestone: I am pointing out the effect of these new initiatives which I believe reflect on the whole TAFE sector.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** A similar thing could be assumed to have happened at Panorama. However, the issue of the indicative budgets as they are proposed and the programme commitments of the colleges are really a reflection of what has happened in the previous year as much as what is happening to other colleges coming on line and the additional funding required to meet recurrent expenditure. We have tried to put in the extra money needed to meet those costs.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** In my opinion, it is no good bringing on new colleges without having the additional money to sustain them. My next question concerns the School of Printing and Graphic Arts at Croydon or Kilkenny. Earlier this week, I received a petition from students at that school and, as one would expect of a petition coming from that school, it is well drawn up and printed. However, it is not in the form in which it could be presented to Parliament in the normal way. The petition states:

We, the students of the School of Printing and Graphic Arts, Kilkenny, wish the Government to institute a full inquiry into problems associated with our course at the Croydon Park College of TAFE.

It appears that the college administration is failing to fulfil the responsibilities that it has assumed.

We the students express a deep sense of rejection and injustice resulting from the administration's rigidity and abdication from any true helpful involvement with our course. Although our crisis is clearly genuine, they have virtually ignored our repeated requests for assistance.

The problems have stemmed from a grossly inadequate working environment with no proper facilities. With promises of better things and money apparently spent (\$70 000), we still have nothing to show for it. We would like to know exactly where and how that money was spent. We also pay material fees (approximately \$15 000 p.a.) and have received very little in return, as money was spent on equipment that should have been supplied by the college.

As the basic function of TAFE courses is to train people for careers in the work force, we can't understand the disproportionate funding given to non-vocational courses. The funding allocated to us is abnormally low. The course was originally designed to cater for part-time students, but now with cut-backs in part-time staff we are concerned that these students will be unable to complete the course they have started.

The lecturers are being coerced by the administration and have been put in a highly vulnerable position under the terms of their employment.

What we think is necessary is a proper general audit, to ascertain what funds have been allocated and how they have been spent. Also investigation into where student fees money has been spent.

Last but by no means the least we need a vastly improved study environment. This implies a very simple but fundamental structural change in administration and/or premises.

I understand that the School of Printing and Graphic Arts, on being transferred from Stanley Street, was promised adequate facilities. I am informed that the present building is substandard, to say the least, and is a concern to everyone. I have not had a chance to look at it, but I will do so. I have also received a communication from someone connected with the course who asks the following questions:

(1) Why is it that the advertising and graphic design and the display courses, which contributed over 50 per cent of the student hours to the art and craft course, are now working in an old Simpson Pope factory at Kilkenny?

(2) Why is it that a reply to constant requests by staff in the advertising and graphic design and display courses for a senior management evaluation of current plans and the future development of the advertising and graphic design and display courses, for the next five years, has not been forthcoming?

Will the Minister comment on both the petition and the questions that I have received?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The whole matter is the subject of planning of the redevelopment at Croydon college, which involves a number of sites, and concerns other problems involving the buildings that have been referred to. Some of these problems are already being attended to: for example, asbestos in the Kilkenny multi-media building. Therefore, it is not a matter of picking out one specific subject area but of taking in all the subject areas at Croydon and determining how they will fit into any plan for the redevelopment of the college.

In fact, apparently the printing component of the course mentioned is and has always been at Croydon itself. There has been no change to that. The other components have been moved to the Kilkenny site. As to the matter of materials fees, the suggestion is that this is subsidising other areas, because it is a heavy amount: materials fees paid for this course, I am advised, are no different from the level of fees paid in other States. There is no different expectation required of the students in regard to this. It is an expensive fee/materials area, because naturally many materials have to be used. I am not saying that one should not see some turnaround in the amount of fees charged. Maybe that should be considered when funds are available. It is a high materials consumption area, therefore involving money.

As to wanting to know where students' fees money is going, of the general service fee 50 per cent is paid to colleges and the other 50 per cent is retained by TAFE itself. However, one could not give a categorical assurance that for every cent paid in by students they would see those same cents returned to that course area. Looking at the question of general services and amenities within colleges, one cannot tie it so tightly to the fact that because 10 per cent of students may be from one course it will ensure that 10 per cent of the amenities exist in that part of the college. That would be quite ludicrous.

I am not sure that we can answer that question at all positively, except to give some understanding of how the general service fee may be used between different branches of Croydon college. However, these matters are for the Croydon college council to determine, because the money within its control is for it to spend within guidelines set by the Department. A number of issues are raised in that petition. We will get further information on those and bring down a report.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** In response to what the Minister says, I believe that the situation is extremely urgent

as far as this problem of printing and graphic design is concerned. The Minister will have to have a close look at it himself, because I understand not only from these people but from talking to the TAFE Teachers Association the other day (a fairly responsible group) that the position is serious. I mention that to the Minister so that something may be done about it. Finally, is it a fact that of participation and equity moneys that came to this State from the Federal Government only about 20 per cent went to TAFE and the rest went to secondary schools? If so, is the Minister satisfied with that percentage, bearing in mind the importance of TAFE in the employment sector?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** At the outset of the TAFE allocation the Federal Government made an assessment that the amount of money given to TAFE for transition education should be maintained for both Departments; the new money added in excess of the transition education programme would be heavily devoted towards secondary education. I took issue with that at the time and indicated that that was an unfair break-up. TAFE should get a greater share of that. Some modification was made in the initial outline.

In the 1984-85 Budget there will be an increase of some \$337 000 in PEP moneys to TAFE from the Commonwealth. There is a minor variation in that: we have to acknowledge that it is tending towards secondary education. While the work being done there is very important, I maintain comments I made previously about the importance of PEP initiatives in TAFE. The Director-General may wish to comment.

**Mr Fricker:** I do not think that I have anything meaningful to add to what the Minister said. Undoubtedly, from the view of the TAFE sector (not only in South Australia but nationally) we would like to see a different distribution of PEP funds *vis-a-vis* schools and TAFE.

**The Hon. TED CHAPMAN:** My question was signalled to the Minister by a note earlier today. I request formally an answer from him in relation to land purchased in the Sellicks Beach area (presumably for future education purposes) in the early 1980s, and purchased with a heap of justification for future needs in that region. That land is now subject to sale. Could the Minister take on board the question and provide me with an answer in *Hansard* by 19 October or, if it is brief, now?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Both my principal departments are main purchasers of land for purposes of education facilities, either Education Department or TAFE. From time to time allotments are bought in anticipation that there may be a need for a facility in an area. Land was purchased by one of the principal departments at Sellicks Beach in 1981 for a future education facility. That is now being considered for disposal. I will certainly obtain a report for the honourable member on the Sellicks Beach land situation and an understanding of how the relevant department proposes to meet future education needs of that community.

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

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Works and Services—Department of Technical and Further Education, \$1 560 000—Examination declared completed.

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Minister of Education and Minister for Technology,  
Miscellaneous, \$62 357 000

**Chairman:**  
Mr Max Brown

**Members:**  
The Hon. H. Allison  
Mr E.S. Ashenden  
Mr T.R. Groom  
Ms S.M. Lenehan  
Mr M.K. Mayes  
The Hon. Michael Wilson

**Witness:**

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

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr J.L. Reedman, Executive Officer, Non-Government Schools Secretariat.

Ms S. Chee, Senior Administrative Officer, Office of Minister of Education.

Dr F.N. Ebbeck, Executive Director, Kindergarten Union.  
Mr W.A. Monks, Director (Administration and Finance), Kindergarten Union.

Dr Y.J. Weaver, Early Childhood Education Advisory Committee.

Dr G. Speedy, Executive Officer, Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I declare the vote open for examination.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I must make one other point, and I ask the indulgence of the Committee. There are some amendments to Programme Estimates that need to be identified to members of the Committee in the Miscellaneous lines and they refer to page 152 of the yellow book. There have been the following omissions from the yellow book: Tertiary Education Authority, South Australian College of Advanced Education, and concessional transport passes for scholars. The minor grant of \$2 000 has been omitted. I will have copies of that made available to members of the Committee. I seek leave to have the amendments inserted in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

AMENDMENTS TO PROGRAMME ESTIMATES 1984-85

A. Miscellaneous Lines	1983-84 Proposed	1983-84 Outcome	1984-85 Proposed	Policy Area	Programme Sector	Programme
<i>Page 152</i>						
Minor Grant . . . . .	2	2	—	Education	Education, Planning and Co-ordination n.e.c.	
<i>Omission</i>						
Tertiary Education Authority of S.A. . . . .	784	918	854	Education	Tertiary Education n.e.c.	Education, Planning and Co-ordination n.e.c.
South Australian College of Advanced Education . . .	139	139	54	Education	Tertiary Education n.e.c.	Education, planning and Co-ordination n.e.c.
Concessional Transport Passes for Scholars . . . . .	5 275	5 294	6 130	Education	Education planning and co-ordination	Transport

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** There is another omission that was noted last year, namely, that the minor grants lines themselves are not itemised. There is usually a sheet with a number of minor grants separately listed. I recall that during the Estimates Committee last year we sought the minor grant printout and there was an undertaking to provide it. I do not recall having ever received that: it certainly did not appear in *Hansard*, so I ask whether that can be provided. It is rather an important paper.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In fact, I have those pages here and they will be photocopied also.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Are there any questions?

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I am delighted to see Dr Ebbeck and Mr Monks here. It seems that the Minister is expecting questions on early childhood services. Let me address my first question on the subject of the South Australian College of Advanced Education. I have a document from the South Australian college entitled 'Academic Priorities 1985-1987'. I will not go into great detail about the document. It is partly a TEASA document and partly a college document, and it makes the point that there will be 600 fewer students enrolling at the college in 1985. I forgot to mention that the Minister has already canvassed this matter in the House in answer to a question and has said that he was concerned about it and was taking up the matter jointly with Mr Fordham, and with the Federal Minister, Senator Ryan. In view of Senator Ryan's promise to provide additional tertiary places around Australia, how is it that the South Australian college is now faced with having to reduce enrolments by approximately 600 students?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I find that quite an amazing question because it is more appropriately a question to be asked in the Federal Parliamentary Estimates Committee. The simple facts are that a certain allocation has been made.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I thought that you might have ascertained that.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Certainly we have, and the point I have made by virtue of my letter jointly with the State Minister from Victoria is that in fact we believe that insufficient funds have been provided to the South Australian College of Advanced Education to meet the maintenance of its educational programmes, or indeed an expansion of those programmes, according to statements made by the Federal Government. The situation is that two problems apply here: first, there are insufficient funds available to meet the expansion as desired by the Federal Government; and also there are the problems of a college that has gone through the process of amalgamation.

That process of amalgamation, naturally, has caused some dislocation in terms of the resources that are needed and we have argued that case to the Federal Government. Soon after coming to power we made \$250 000 available from State funds, and it is relatively rare for a State Government to put money in like that. However, I asked the very same question of the Federal Government: why does it not make more funds available to this very important area, because there are problems for the college resulting from the absence of those extra funds?

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I realise that there are problems and I am surprised that the Minister should take

the view that it would be better to ask the question of a Federal Estimates Committee. He is the Minister responsible for the Act and he has already admitted that he has asked the question. I wonder whether Senator Ryan has given him an answer.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** This is something that I have raised with the Federal Minister. As I indicated on a previous occasion, I am awaiting a response from the Federal Minister. I have also had discussions with the Chairperson of the CTEC, highlighting my grave concern about this matter. Naturally, as I have already indicated, I have had discussions with my Ministerial colleague in Victoria, and when I receive a reply I will let the Parliament know as soon as possible.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** My third question relates to speech pathology. In view of the time, I will not go through all the information I gave the House in a recent question to the Minister, but the Minister undertook to consider the question of enrolments in speech pathology. Has the Minister been able to do so yet and, if so, will he tell the Committee the results of his deliberations?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Both the Minister of Health and I have made approaches to the South Australian college. I have the authority under the Act to consult with the college on these matters. I have taken up that opportunity and I am awaiting a response from the college on that issue as well. However, I understand that there have been some further developments in relation to the matter in the South Australian college on the initial proposals put forward, and I am awaiting formal advice on that. I also take this opportunity to say that I have circulated to members the minor grants summary that was requested by the member for Mount Gambier. Because of its absence from the yellow book, I ask that it be inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

#### MINOR GRANTS 1984-85—SUMMARY

No.	Grantee	1984-85		Timing of Payment
		1983-84 Actual \$	Approved Grant \$	
051	Better Hearing Australia	1 000	1 100	October
052	A.M.E.B. Federation of P. & F.	14 500	14 500	June (1)
053	Catholic Federation of P. & F.	4 600	4 800	October
054	Independent High School Councils	2 300	2 300	October
055	Association	1 100	1 200	October
056	Maths Association of S.A.	5 995	8 250	as required (2) 2 payments
057	SPELD	14 600	19 000	
058	S.A. Association for Media Education	500	500	December
059	S.A.A.S.S.O. S.A. Debating Association	13 500	14 400	October
060	S.A. Association of School Parent Clubs	500	700	October
061	Womens Studies	8 300	8 900	October
062	Resources Centre	13 900	12 200	Quarterly as required
063	Rhodes Scholarship Bush and Mountain	5 000	2 500	(3)
064	Walking Imperial Relations Trust	5 400	5 800	Quarterly
065	Fellowship	1 800	2 00	April
066	AEC Satellite Professional Development Programme	1 500	1 500	May (4)
067	Association of J.P. School Parents Clubs	Nil	Nil	Nil
068	Institution of Engineers	—	500	October
069	SPBA-FM	—	1 000	October
070		—	500	October

No.	Grantee	1984-85		Timing of Payment
		1983-84 Actual \$	Approved Grant \$	
	Nat. TAFE (R&D)	400	—	—
	Freight School Materials to PNG	184	—	—
	S.A. Multiple Births Association	400	—	—
	M. Peake—Maths Olympiad	200	—	—
	Uncommitted	—	1 350	as required
	Total	95 678	103 000	103 000
	Budget	96 000	103 000	103 000

- (1) After specified conditions have been met
- (2) May not require all allocated funds
- (3) Funding not required if no S.A. participant
- (4) Funding may not be required.

**Ms LENEHAN:** I ask for an explanation in regard to the line on page 123 relating to the Kindergarten Union. Obviously that has now been transferred to the Treasury line and I take it that there are two separate sections, having checked with the Clerk earlier. I refer to debt servicing, which appears on page 34 under the Treasury Department in programme 6 and which has increased dramatically.

The other area is on page 29 under 'Miscellaneous' of the Premier's lines which lists 'Children's Service Office' \$150 000. I am interested to receive an explanation about the general area of funding for the provision of children's services which obviously will be taking in the traditional area for which the Kindergarten Union has been responsible and some of the newer areas that are envisaged. Is it possible for the Minister to give the Committee an indication of what direction the Department will be taking?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In regard to the new Children's Service Office, work on this is still proceeding at this stage and we expect to have a Bill before Parliament within the next few weeks on this matter. It is assumed by the Government that the level of resources presently available in the pre-school arena and in other areas of State Government funding brought together will not in itself be sufficient to see the creation of the new Children's Service Office, given the fact that any new creation requires some extra money just to help the process of development. In fact, the South Australian college situation that we talked about a moment ago is indicative of that. There must be a little extra money put in. That is why \$150 000 has been provided in the Premier's line because the Premier has Ministerial responsibility for the implementation of the CSO. In addition to that a sum of \$150 000 has been made available for pre-school staffing and special service needs within the pre-school sector added in. Clearly, however, there are still some other needs but until such time as the office has been established and can then assess all the needs of those areas and needs available, I cannot make any more comment.

**Ms LENEHAN:** Will the extra funding made available for special service needs be reflected in an increase in the regional services within the Kindergarten Union and, if so, how and where?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Two aspects need to be taken into account with respect to special service funding for the Kindergarten Union this financial year. The first is that there has been an increase in costs simply because last year's allocation in the Budget started from 1 January rather than from 1 July, and so that matter needed to be funded for a full financial year and not just half a financial year; that is an increase in effort. Secondly, there has been the decision by the Kindergarten Union that some of the money made available to it by the Government will be used for special service needs and I think that figure is \$50 000 to increase



the special service section again. The way the money last year was allocated and the way it is proposed this year is to regionalise. Murray Bridge will be the source of this year's extra staffing (last year's was Port Augusta), and the positions will be a speech pathologist position and a special education position based at Murray Bridge. Regionalisation is continuing as the focus for the use of that money. We have not yet been able to double the level of special services but we are increasing that and reaching the commitment we gave before the last election.

**Ms LENEHAN:** My next question relates to the answer the Minister gave to my first question and it is in relation to increases for staffing. I am sure that the Minister and, indeed, the Director of the Kindergarten Union are very well aware of the problems that my area is experiencing in respect of increasing numbers. I think it is fair to say that, of the 17 kindergartens and child-parent centres, about 13 are experiencing an increasing demand for more staff so that at least four-year-olds can get four sessions a week. Can the Minister and the Director of the Kindergarten Union outline to the Committee what additional staffing is planned to overcome this increasing demand for staff?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In the case of the Kindergarten Union an extra \$100 000 has been made available for that, and that is in addition to the resources that will be liberated through the rationalisation process within the Kindergarten Union. The figure for the child parent centres is about \$50 000 made available to assist there, in addition to resources liberated by rationalisation. There has been an exacerbation of the problem this year, given the dramatic changes in housing in the last 12 months which have really provided an extra pressure on some of these pre-school centres that had not previously been anticipated. Whilst we have a rationalisation programme that is presently taking place identifying what the possible staffing adjustments could be, they will not be able to take effect until the start of 1985, so there will still be some serious problems in the third term of this year at child-parent facilities and pre-school facilities.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** My question is in relation to early childhood education, with particular reference to the Kindergarten Union and other child parent centres. I naturally have an interest, as shadow Minister of Community Welfare, in the early childhood area. Having attended a public meeting in the Minister's Education Building earlier this year, I was concerned at the prospect of legislation imminent to see the Minister's senior officer representing him there and a senior officer representing the Minister of Community Welfare almost completely unable or unwilling to answer a whole range of questions addressed to them by the 200 people all of whom were vitally interested in the pre-school area.

The questions covered a range of areas such as training and accreditation of all staff in pre-school areas, which unions ultimately would represent that staff, whether industrial awards had been addressed and whether working conditions had been settled. If all of those questions are still to be addressed and resolved, when does the Minister expect legislation to be introduced in the House? Will he introduce the legislation whether or not those matters are resolved and, if they are not resolved, do we then contemplate that everything will remain pretty well as it is with the exception that the Kindergarten Union will have been effaced?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We intend to bring this legislation into the House before the end of this year and to have it passed by the Parliament before the end of this year so that the establishment can take place in 1985. The matters referred to by the honourable member as being raised some time ago at a public meeting have been further investigated and regular meetings are taking place between those with an

interest in this area. Mary Coric has been appointed to implement the proposal and she is supported by a steering committee which consists of officers from the Premier's Department, the Minister of Community Welfare, the Minister of Health and my Department. In addition to that, a specialist consultant group to advise Mary Coric on her work comprises representation from both the pre-school sector and the child care sector. Each of those issues is being pursued so that there can be the earliest possible answers to the questions raised.

I do not know whether the honourable member was present at a meeting in the South-East last week but I have a report of a meeting which Mary Coric attended and she tells me that there was concern and anxiety on a lot of issues but there was a good feeling about the way many of these issues are being addressed and a feeling that answers are being provided to the questions that were asked.

It has been a strong feeling of mine that we must reach out and make information available, and that is why two newsletters have been issued to child care facilities and pre-school facilities among others on what progress has been achieved. The third newsletter was sent out yesterday and will be received by centres later this week. It has been brought to my attention that the first draft of the legislation has been sent out for comment by community groups, so that the honourable member should receive a copy.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Since the shadow Minister of Education and I have a personal interest through our shadow portfolios in this area, I ask whether the Minister could send me a copy as well as the shadow Minister of Education.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** If it has not yet happened, I will arrange for it to happen.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** The present Director of the Kindergarten Union is with us this evening and, as a long-term Director of the largest single provider of South Australia's pre-school education, has he been vitally involved in the preparation and consultation for the new legislation and on what committees has he served or is presently serving to advise the Minister?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** When I spoke to a general council meeting of the Kindergarten Union I indicated my strong belief that the Union needed to be closely involved in the developments of the Children's Services Office. I indicated on that occasion that we would want somebody from the Kindergarten Union represented in a consultancy capacity for the Government to draw upon the expertise. I indicated on that occasion that I assumed, given the experience of Dr Ebbeck in these matters, that he would be the selection of the Kindergarten Union. Indeed, that happened, but I believe it was appropriate for the Union to make that nomination and not for me to say who it should be. Fred Ebbeck was appointed and he serves on the consultants committee that advises Mary Coric, and I have regular meetings with the Executive Director. We talk about ongoing issues in this whole matter. His advice is much appreciated by me, as has been the situation right throughout, the consideration of the Coleman Committee report, even before the Government determined on the establishment of the Children's Services Office. I ask the Director to comment.

**Dr Ebbeck:** I meet regularly (weekly) with the consultants committee and by telephone and other methods daily liaise with members of the steering committee secretariat. I am in close contact with those working towards the establishment of the new office.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I asked the question only because I knew Dr Ebbeck's worth to the previous Government and wondered whether he was given the same opportunity to contribute to the new childhood services legislation. Will the Minister advise the Committee whether assets of the

Kindergarten Union will be disposed of or whether they will become an integral part of the new commission?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The matter is being considered at this stage by Mary Coric and in conjunction with consultants. On a number of issues legal matters need to be resolved, particularly with regard to certain trust funds, as some are clearly tied and it is not the Government's wish to not respect the tying of certain trust funds. With regard to other assets, with the developed new office presumably they become part of the assets of the new office. The Government is anxious to respect the history of the Kindergarten Union in providing services in South Australia in terms of planning the new office. This matter is being handled with great care. I ask Dr Ebbeck to comment.

**Dr Ebbeck:** It is a fair statement. Some concern is expressed abroad amongst Kindergarten Union kindergartens, particularly those built through community effort and from community funds. The general feeling at this stage (and I underline 'feeling' because, as the Minister says, we are having to seek legal advice as to the future ownership of those buildings) is that they will remain as they are with the titles in the hands of the community committee that built and operated the kindergarten.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Under agreement, the maverick of the Parliament will now be allowed a question. The member for Mallee.

**Mr LEWIS:** I wish to ask a question on the state of kindergartens in my electorate and refer first to a letter from the Institute of Teachers Acting President, Ms Leonie Ebert. In that letter to Mr Fuller of the Deputy Principals Association of the Coomandook Area School she stated:

At the July council you asked the following question:

I believe funding for capital works for the Kindergarten Union has reached an all time low in 1984—\$0. Will the President seek an assurance that the Government will restore this funding in 1985?

The letter then lists the programmes which, upon research, were shown to have attracted money during 1983-84 and the centres under construction. Finally, concluding the letter Ms Ebert states that it is likely that Smithfield, Lake Wangary, Geranium and Leigh Creek will be delayed due to Budget short-fall (nil dollars makes a big Budget short-fall). Does the Minister dispute the assertion made by the Acting President of the Institute of Teachers, and what does he propose to do about the situation?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, I do dispute it. As to what I will have to do about it, I will say that I dispute it, will give the facts and leave it at that. I do not propose to enter into correspondence on this matter with either of the people mentioned. Funds have been allocated in the present Budget for capital works needs of kindergartens and I will identify what the funding allocation will cover in the 1984-85 financial year.

There is the completion of modifications to the Alberton Yelkindjeri Kindergarten amounting to \$79 000. We expect that to be completed by the end of October. Secondly, there is the completion of Kirton Point kindergarten at Port Lincoln, as announced by me in 1983. We expect that to be completed by the middle of October. Thirdly, there is the Modbury Kindergarten, at a cost of \$224 700. The contract was let in late August and we expect it to be completed by the end of December. Fourthly, we have Flagstaff Hill South, with a budgeted amount of \$185 500. It is presently subject to tender valuation. If all things run to schedule we would expect it to come on line in early 1985. Fifthly, there is Salisbury Heights at a cost of \$29 500, it being subject to the tender process and expected to come on line in early 1985.

Sixthly, we have Para Hills West, with \$122 000 budgeted. The tender call is due in the near future and, again, hopefully,

it will be completed in early 1985. For Karrara, the land is valued at \$25 000 and the building at \$147 800. Tenders have been called on that with the hope that it will be available in early 1985. Minor projects amount to \$17 000. Those projects are proceeding in the 1984-85 financial year. I have quoted budget figures for each one of them. In each case the budget figures are the subject of continuing review as to whether or not that figure is needed or if an amended figure is needed to cover the cost of those projects. The figures total \$948 500, of which some money has already been spent, obviously, and other funds will be available in the 1984-85 Budget period.

That clearly leaves a capital works programme and other areas with building needs as well. The member for Mallee identifies some of these areas including Geranium, Coomandook, and so on. They will have to be considered in the ongoing capital works programme of the Children's Service Office in the consideration of the 1985-86 Budget. I appreciate the concern that the honourable member expresses for those communities that there has not been a definite commitment in the 1984-85 financial year, but likewise other communities have had to wait for a considerable time before being given a commitment on building. Some have waited for some years before the project was started.

**Mr LEWIS:** The people who live in the districts around Coomandook for several kilometres—not just four or five kilometres but in the order of 40 kilometres—and around Geranium, are indeed very concerned about the fact that they have no pre-school facilities whatsoever of any reasonable standard. If people in the metropolitan area were to see the facilities presently being used—a concrete floor in a galvanised iron tennis shed with caneite lining for a ceiling to try to stop the wind blowing through in the winter and to reduce the effects of the heat in the summer—they would cane the Government for allowing children to be kept in that kind of facility for the purpose of providing them with pre-school experience.

Quite justifiably in my judgment my constituents harangue me constantly about this matter whenever I am in those localities. I have received a lot of correspondence, the most recent and important of which is from the Secretary of Murraylands Region 6 of the Kindergarten Union about those two centres, and they find my answers in the same terms as the Minister has just given the Committee quite unsatisfactory and unacceptable. I urge the Minister to reconsider their position because of its uniqueness; they do not have access to anything else anywhere.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** One of the hopes that the Government has with the new CSO is that it will be able to bring to bear the resources that are available and ensure that they are spread across all the needs of early childhood as equitably as possible. It is certainly the intention of that office that it will try to identify the needs where they exist and see that the resources as they become available are allocated to those areas.

I do not want to indicate at all a lack of feeling or a lack of awareness of the needs of those communities because I can recall the amount of correspondence that I received from Geranium, for example, or from Coomandook; I have received a lot of correspondence in both cases. As I say, it is a case of having to allocate as best we can the resources that we have available and meet all those needs. I make the point that the building programme of the Kindergarten Union over recent years has shown a spread of money being allocated to country areas as it has to urban areas. In this series, there is one major country project, namely Kirton Point, but country pre-school needs are not overlooked by the Kindergarten Union or by the Government.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Is the South Australian Tertiary Education Authority planning to transfer, either partially or

completely, responsibility for accreditation of approved courses to the advanced education institutions in 1985?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It is proposed that there be progressive transfer of accreditation to colleges but very much within the guidelines issued by the Tertiary Education Authority. Those guidelines are still within the control of the Tertiary Education Authority itself, but the actual process of accrediting will be transferred to tertiary institutions.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Can the Minister explain the over-expenditure by the South Australian Tertiary Education Authority in 1983-84 by \$134 000, which is nearly 17 per cent; in which areas did the additional expenditure occur; and what proportion of the total expenditure of \$918 000 was met from the Commonwealth funding for tertiary education?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** First, last year an under-provision was made in the vote, and that had to be adjusted during the year; that was about \$90 000, which was provided to cover unavoidable costs, for example, the termination costs of the Deputy Chairperson of TEASA and also to restore the budget base after some incorrect calculations that had been made in the 1982-83 Budget year. In addition, part of that increase is accounted for by salary payments of \$44 000 as the result of national wage increases.

The reduction this year is because of the abolition of the position of the Deputy Chairperson of TEASA which no longer has to be funded. That is why there is a reduction in the vote to below the actual payments for last year. That is in line with a review committee that reported on the operations of TEASA about three years ago making the recommendation for the streamlining of the organisation. The honourable member's second question was in relation to the funding of TEASA from Commonwealth funds.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** What proportion of the total expenditure of \$918 000 was met by the Commonwealth?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** My understanding is that it is all met from State funds but, of course, some State funds are provided from Commonwealth sources. However, there are no tied Commonwealth moneys paying for TEASA.

**Mr ASHENDEN:** Did the South Australian Tertiary Education Authority make any grants to institutions or organisations outside the tertiary education area and, if so, what was the source of the funds used for those grants?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It is possible that the member is referring to the further education grants that fall within Tertiary Education Authority responsibility, and a sum of \$100 000 is involved there; that particular \$100 000 would I think be Commonwealth money, but I will check that matter out. They are allocated to further education programmes for which various groups apply. Some of those are community education programmes, and there would be a very fine line to define whether or not a community education programme run by, say, a neighbourhood house, for example, is tertiary education, in the sense that it is very similar to the work being done by TAFE enrichment classes. TAFE is part of the tertiary sector, and therefore by that definition, because it is similar and because TAFE does it, it is therefore tertiary education. On the other hand, one could say that it is not tertiary at all: it is just further enrichment education. If the honourable member wants a list of grants given by the Tertiary Education Authority, we will provide that by 19 October.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Let me say how pleased I am to see Dr Ebbeck again. While he is here, I would like to ask the Minister how far he has progressed in doubling the Special Services Division of the Kindergarten Union, as he promised, and how far he has progressed in achieving a staff/student ratio of one to 10?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I stand to be corrected on the exact figures but, as I understand it, when I became Minister

the Special Services Division of the Kindergarten Union had 15 people, and last year we put in 5.5 positions, with an additional two positions this year, which makes 7.5. So, we still have further progress to make on that matter. It is understandable that a number of policy commitments were framed in being phased in over the three years.

The next point about the pupil/teacher ratio is that we have not made significant progress in that area. The ratio that applied when I came into the Ministry was about 11.5 to one. I do not believe that there has been a significant variation from that. The figure may be slightly different from that, but we have not achieved the 10 figure at all. So, that is a matter to which further consideration will have to be given in 1985, in terms of the preparation of the 1985-86 Budget.

One of the matters that has really come into account is that the Government, because it had such a major review of the early childhood arena, really left some of these issues waiting on what decisions would be made about early childhood services. Now that that decision has been made and some changes have been made from 1985, we can go back to addressing the extent to which we can pick up those policy commitments in the 1985-86 financial year. Again, I make the point that that will depend upon finances available at that time.

One of the points that Dr Ebbeck makes to me is that we are now seeing the effect of the marginally increased birthrate that took place a few years ago—I am aware of that—that, therefore, we are seeing some increases in the number of the aged cohort that go into the four year old group each year, and that is increasing the enrolment pressures on pre-school facilities in the State. That has to be taken into account by the Government as well in terms of deciding how far it can achieve the policy commitment of reducing the ratio to 10 to one.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I apologise if I missed part of the Minister's answer to the member for Mount Gambier. When does the Minister intend to introduce the legislation to establish the Children's Services Office; and has he solved the problem of the Commonwealth funding for child care in relation to the statutory structure required for the State to be able to accept that funding; and why was it a problem for the Kindergarten Union to be able to accept that type of funding?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** On the first matter, it is hoped that legislation will be available for introduction within the next few weeks, that is, by the end of October or early November, so that it can be passed by the Parliament in November and we can move for 1985. That will enable us to proceed on matters such as the appointment of a Chief Executive Officer for the new authority. As to the Commonwealth funding situation, we have chosen the statutory authority model because of funding needs and how we can get greatest access to the funds available.

In the child care area at this stage it is proposed that child care facilities will retain some autonomy but that they be linked in a planning and funding source way with the Children's Services Office. As to the difficulties faced by the Kindergarten Union, it operates some child care services already. I will call on Dr Ebbeck to comment on the funding situation with regard to the Kindergarten Union.

**Dr Ebbeck:** The major problem and one which is being negotiated at the moment by the Federal Government through Mary Corich's steering party concerns how the State and Federal Governments can work together to solve a problem that is inherent in the Federal Government's Child Care Act, namely, that State instrumentalities, departments and authorities cannot directly receive funding for child care from the Federal Government. I think that the short

answer to the question is that they are negotiating to see how they can overcome this barrier at the moment.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I appreciate that answer, because that is in fact what I suspected, namely, that the Children's Services Office being a statutory authority is no different from the Kindergarten Union for the purposes of receiving Commonwealth funding. That is what I was trying to ascertain.

In regard to the non-government school system, can the Minister explain the situation in regard to the new model school formula, and how the betterment factor applies in that formula?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** First, can I make a point about the new model school formula. It does not really show itself up in these Budget figures. The model school formula was first adopted by the former Government, and it really tied up a static formula for funding of non-government schools. The figure of 23 per cent related to 23 per cent of a static Government model. Because we have had betterments added into the Government schools, it was clear that the model school formula no longer necessarily represented what a Government school actually was.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Do you mean for inflation?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** By deployments: by retaining liberated position against declining enrolments. So, I approved the creation of a small committee to investigate the situation. It had representation from the Advisory Committee on Non-government Schools, my office and from Treasury to examine what changes should be made. That committee made a report with recommendations available to me, and it was considered by Cabinet, which resolved that we would not implement the new model school formula that was recommended in the 1985-86 financial year. However, it is important to bear in mind that it will be implemented in the next financial year. The Committee made another recommendation regarding supplementation of salaries that had not been paid in the 1983-84 financial year involving a sum of some \$400 000. That was approved by Cabinet for inclusion. That appears in the figures that we have here. I invite Mr Reedman to comment on the changes to the model school formula which have been proposed by the Committee and which have been adopted for implementation in 1985-86.

**Mr Reedman:** The betterments relate to actual numbers of teachers and aides in schools rather than dollar amounts. Had those betterments been applied for this financial year, the cost would have been about \$1.6 million in 1984 figures. The costs will now all be set as at 1 July and that cost will apply for the whole of the calendar year. The implementation of these amounts next year will amount to about an extra 4 per cent or 5 per cent in real terms per student funding.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Had that betterment factor of \$1.6 million been added in, would that have increased the per capita relationship from 23 per cent to 23 per cent plus?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** No. The 23 per cent would have remained the same. That is 23 per cent of the figure determined by the model school formula. At present it is 23 per cent of the model school formula as determined under the former Government. From the next financial period it will be 23 per cent of the new model formula, but, as Mr Reedman indicated, there will be an increase with the new model school formula. However, the 23 per cent figure remains the same.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I made that point because one of my colleagues has handed me a copy of a submission to the Premier from the South Australian Commissioner for Catholic Schools. I shall quote briefly from the submission. It states:

At present the Budget indicates that we will have a deficit of \$892 000—

this is referring to the Catholic school system in this State—at the end of 1984. This deficit will increase if the supplementation from the Commonwealth Government does not eventuate or is less than that which we have anticipated.

I find that reference to the Commonwealth Government interesting in the light of what the Minister has just said. It continues as follows:

Basically our difficulties stem from two factors—

The submission then refers to some of their own problems, and then cites one of the problems as being:

The recent decision by the State Government to defer implementation of the new model school formula.

It is a long document, and I certainly will not read the whole thing.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** This matter is presently being considered by me as well as the Premier and Treasury officers. We are considering the options that may be available to us. We had a meeting with Archbishop Faulkner, John McDonald, Annie Watson, and Bishop De Canto and discussed the options that may be available. At no stage did I give a commitment to what the answer to the approach by the Catholic Commission would be. Clearly, I have had to tell them that any answer must be within the Budget framework that we have for 1984-85. The Government notes the difficulties that the Commission has identified to us. I did not quite pick up the context of the honourable member's reference to Commonwealth funding.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** You talked about State supplementation, and the document refers to Commonwealth supplementation.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Our supplementation this year was delayed, but the normal supplementation has now been paid. It is a sum of some \$400 000 to the non-government schools sector. That approach is being considered by the Government at this stage.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I believe that for a systemic system like the Catholic education system to be running at a deficit of nearly \$1 million is a very serious matter. I have no further questions on this line, and I thank the officers for attending.

**Ms LENEHAN:** I notice that a substantial increase in funding for the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia has occurred. Is that a real increase in funding available to the Assessment Board, or is it a matter of a transferring the effort from the Education Department?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It is a matter of both. A clear undertaking was given that the new Senior Secondary Assessment Board was taking over all assessments and that the resources available within the Education Department would be transferred across for that purpose. The transfer of effort from the Education Department amounts to some \$300 000 to cover the operations of the SSC (standardised school certificate) programme. The remainder of the extra \$1.5 million is extra funding that had to be made available to the Senior Secondary Assessment Board.

That partly reflects the figures to be added in at the end of the 1983-84 financial year. The initial vote that was put in last year was about \$50 000 plus the Public Examinations Board money. In fact, the \$765 000 PEB money plus the \$50 000 allocated for the Senior Secondary Assessment Board totals only \$815 000, whereas more the \$1 million was spent, because Cabinet made an adjustment earlier this year after it had considered the work programme ahead of the Board. That programme is heavy because the Board must oversee the introduction of new accreditation courses in 1986. The courses presently planned for 1984 and 1985 have been approved automatically by the Board, but the Board will take full control of approval from 1986 onward.

The year 1986 is not far away: we have only one full academic year to go through before 1986.

So, the Board has worked hard with the creation of curriculum committees and other processes in order to achieve its aim, and that has taken extra resources which we have made available to it. However, the Board has put to me the proposition that in certain areas it will have difficulty in meeting the brief of the legislation. In Parliament we talked about research into assessments and other education issues relating to senior secondary assessment, but the Board has recently told me that it has not the necessary capacity to do that work with the limited funds available. However, it has applied to the PEB programme to research certain areas of senior secondary education and participation that relate to students or those of the same age cohort who do not have the opportunity to participate. The Board is following up those issues by separate approaches for funding. Other issues that the Board has raised with me are subject to further examination. A significant increase of funds in real terms has been made available to the Board to fulfil the brief that has assigned by the Legislature.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Are there any further questions on this line? If not, I declare the examination of this vote completed.

Works and Services—South Australian Teacher Housing Authority, \$2 800 000.

**Chairman**

Mr Max Brown

**Members:**

The Hon. H. Allison

Mr E.S. Ashenden

Mr T.R. Groom

Ms S.M. Lenehan

Mr M.K. Mayes

The Hon. Michael Wilson

**Witness:**

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

**Departmental Advisers:**

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

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

**The CHAIRMAN:** I declare this vote open for examination. Are there any questions?

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Last year, I asked why the Teacher Housing Authority had not spent the sum voted to it and, again this year, I point out that it has not done so. I understand from the requirements of teachers in the field who are living in the Authority's establishments that there is a dire need to spend the amount allocated. That seems to be brought out by the Government's allocating a larger sum for the 1984-85 financial year, which shows that there is an express need. A total of \$8 500 000 has been voted on this line for the ensuing year. For the purchase and construction of new houses \$1 million was underspent last year, and about \$700 000 was underspent on modernisation and upgrading. Will the Minister comment on these facts?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We must take into account the capital commitment programme. I draw to the attention of the honourable member the statement on page 409 of the Auditor-General's Report for the year ended 30 June 1984:

The large commitment resulted from delays in pre-arranged schedules and expectations of work programmes: for example, housing on Aboriginal lands.

That situation applies from year to year, and it has applied this year. There was a much more significant shortfall in respect of what was spent in the last financial year than has taken place this financial year. At June this year, the capital commitment on capital works amounted to \$2 254 000, which means that in 1983-84 the Authority committed itself (and that is the operative phrase) to an expanded capital programme of just over \$5 million. This was made possible not only by means of funds allocated here but also by internal finance arrangements within the Authority through the sale of assets which exceeded the budget. I now call on the General Manager of the Authority to comment on the modernisation and upgrading programme.

**Mr Burrowes:** The vote in 1983-84 for modernisation and upgrading of houses was not spent, because first we had to carry a commitment into 1984-85 of \$265 000, which represented works in progress on upgrading that were contracted out and being carried out as at 30 June 1984, but not yet completed. The additional diminution in funds available for upgrading and modernisation resulted from a transfer of some of these moneys into other capital works, such as the provision of new housing in respect of the requests that came in during the year and were not foreseen when the original programme was determined.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** I do not understand that. Could the Minister arrange for a detailed explanation of those figures?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I have always been happy for the officers of the appropriate Authority to brief the shadow Minister and, if that serves the purpose on this occasion, it is all right with me.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Do we need something for *Hansard*? If this is to be a private discussion, that is all right with the Chair.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** Can the Minister say what is the future of the Authority? Does the Government intend to set up a Government Housing Authority and, if it does, when will that Authority be set up?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Soon after the 1982 election, the Government fulfilled a pre-election commitment that we would arrange for a further examination of the Government employee housing authority report that had been prepared for my predecessor.

That matter was examined and considered by Cabinet. As a result of further consideration, we determined that we would establish a Government Employee Housing Authority. A task force or implementation committee was created about the middle of this year. That committee will report to the Government on the practicalities of creating such an authority but will not determine policy matters which will still be determined by the Government in terms of framing this authority.

The Teacher Housing Authority that we propose would be absorbed within the Government Employee Housing Authority. One of the points that we have been keen to note is that the Teacher Housing Authority is the big provider of Government employee housing. Clearly, anything that happens with the new Government Employee Housing Authority must take account of that; over 50 per cent of housing is provided by the Teacher Housing Authority. It has been provided with great efficiency and expertise over the years. The experience of the THA will need to be taken into account. The Government is keen that that should happen. The task force or implementation committee has only recently met, because membership has been invited from the Trades and Labor Council to participate on that

committee, and we have only recently received its nomination.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** My final question concerns recent increases in Teacher Housing Authority rentals. I understand that the amount is in the order of 17 per cent, and that followed an increase of some 19 per cent last year, although of course the Minister will well remember the problems he had last year with increases of up to 28 per cent in some cases, which I understand he has subsequently adjusted. I have here several letters on the question of the recent increase in Teacher Housing Authority rentals, and I intend to quote one or two sentences of each letter, because they do give an over-view. The first is from Swan Reach Area School to the Premier (signed by various teachers from the school). I am sorry if I quote out of context, but the Minister is welcome to look at the letters later. The letter reads, in part:

The Labor Party platform recognised the need for country incentives—to raise the rent charged by Teacher Housing Authority by the above amount [that refers to the 17 per cent] makes a mockery of this promise. The current rents provide a disincentive for country service. Apart from being morally wrong the end result could well be a disequilibrium in the quality of teachers in rural areas compared with the quality of teachers in urban areas . . .

Rents have risen in four of the five residences in Swan Reach, yet only one capital improvement to one house has occurred in three years—hardly a justifiable reason for the 17 per cent increase across the board.

That letter was provided to me by my colleague for Mallee. I have another letter from the Principal of Curramulka Primary School, again to the Premier, and from which I read:

I request that your Government reconsider the proposed 40.4 per cent rent increase for teacher tenants. Such a rise would violate the accord which your Government claims to support.

That is a very short letter. Another letter from Greenock Primary School reads, in part:

I have been in this particular house for five years. In that time the rent has increased from approximately \$93 per fortnight to the soon to be \$126. Earlier this year I was discussing rents with my next door neighbour who was renting privately. His rent over a full year was \$2 600 (\$50 per week). Mine was \$2 331 (\$55.50 for 42 weeks). He could not believe that I was paying only \$269 per year less than him. He thought I got the place for free! I'll wait while you have a bit of a laugh over that one. Imagine his mirth when I inform him that in the future I'll be paying \$46 a year more than him. Two houses side by side—my neighbour because he chooses to live there, me because my employer says that I am to be at Greenock Primary.

The writer talks about maintenance:

I have carried out minor maintenance and repairs at my own expense. Teacher Housing Authority has been supportive in major jobs (a new septic tank, tree lopping, etc.) but never has a paintbrush been raised in anger.

I have various other letters from people in the community who are dissatisfied. One letter is from the Burra Community School complaining about 70 per cent rental increases for teacher tenants and an additional 20 per cent increase for new tenancies. There is a great deal of dissatisfaction. The correspondents acknowledge that there was a moratorium on Teacher Housing Authority rentals but they believe that such massive increases well above the rate of inflation over the past two years are unjustified.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I make just a few points about this matter: there was a moratorium under the former Government on rent increases for the Teacher Housing Authority. There had also been no deliberate rejection of the policy for setting rents in the absence of the moratorium—namely, the achievement of four-fifths of the Trust's rental increase. In fact, the present Government decided that Government employee housing is to return to these policy rents so that people will pay four-fifths of Housing Trust rental figures for the houses in which they live—that is four-fifths of what Trust tenants are paying.

That required hefty increases in rent, spread over two years. With regard to the Teacher Housing Authority I, as Minister, under the Act determined before 1 October last year that the rent increases would be kept to a maximum of 19 per cent, subject to dollar rounding. This year it has been 16.8 per cent, subject to dollar rounding again, except in the case of vacancy rentals. The point that needs to be taken into account is that that other constraint, in terms of how much rent increase people pay, is that no rent increase was to be greater than \$8 a week on a 52-week year or \$10 a week on a 42-week year, which is how it is determined in Teacher Housing Authority cases.

The accord has been mentioned. We believe that this is consistent with that, given that it was achieving a policy rent that had been in existence for some time and had been put on a back shelf without being formally rejected. Also, we accepted that last year a wage increase went through for teachers in excess of wage indexation guidelines. It was deemed to be in agreement with the accord that they receive that extra amount, as was found by the appropriate arbitration tribunal.

These things do happen: matters in excess of inflation have been deemed to be consistent with the accord. As to the Greenock Primary School matter, tenants have the right to appeal if they feel that their rent is not correctly set and that a mistake has been made. I urge the honourable member to advise the correspondent accordingly to lodge an appeal.

**The Hon. MICHAEL WILSON:** That goes to the Minister.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** To me: then my office will prepare a letter advising the correspondent to appeal in that regard. Figures of 19 per cent and 16.8 per cent have been quoted. Of course, they are the maxima over a two-year period, which would come to 38.9 per cent, subject to dollar rounding. But rent has been less than that for a number of houses—in some cases much less.

I personally went through the records of the Teacher Housing Authority last year and this year to assess the extent to which people have paid the maximum rent increase. I found that the majority of houses for which I have done figures so far (amounting to 150 houses, of which some were randomly selected) the majority have not had to pay the maximum; they paid less than that. Admittedly, in many cases it is still 36 per cent or something less than that, but in some cases it is down to 24 per cent or below.

The Institute of Teachers also asked whether they had to look down the barrel at further massive rental increases next year. Frankly, we are getting closer to achieving policy rents for most of the houses of the Teacher Housing Authority. In fact, only 98 houses have not yet achieved policy rent other than those that are exempted for various reasons. That figure is less than the figure last year, and the gap between rents presently charged and the policy rent is reduced. Significant figures have been done on that. I believe that next year rent increases for the majority of houses will be closely related to the rent determination for Housing Trust rent increases.

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

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

Office of the Ministry of Technology, \$810 000

**Chairman:**

Mr Max Brown

**Members:**

The Hon. H. Allison

The Hon. D.C. Brown

Mr T.R. Groom  
 Ms S.M. Lenehan  
 Mr I.P. Lewis  
 Mr M.K. Meyes

**Witness:**

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

**Departmental Advisers:**

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

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

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I would like to advise members that it might be appropriate if I circulate the 1983 annual report of the South Australian Council on Technological Change. It has just been received from the Government Printer and has not yet been formally tabled in Parliament, but that will be done when the House next sits. Since we are discussing these sorts of matters, I think it is appropriate that members have access to this report now.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I would like to start by asking the Minister when he anticipates the final technology strategy will be released. As the Minister will recall, the Parliament debated a draft version of the strategy in about April this year, I think a worthwhile Parliamentary debate and a fairly unique one. I think a number of interesting points were raised during that debate. My understanding was that the strategy was to be reworded and the final copy released very shortly. I wonder where it is, when can we expect it and what is the procedure once it has been released?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The officers of the Institute of Technology appeared before the Economic Expenditure Subcommittee of Cabinet last Monday and gave a briefing on this and a number of other matters relating to technology. One of the points they made related to proposals they were making for consideration of technology strategy issues in 1985. What is presently under way is a draft document with regard to a technology policy, and it would be hoped that that would be available for release later this year for general circulation.

However, the other matter that really needs to be considered is the effect of technology policy on other areas of Government implementation, and it is those other areas that are taking time at the moment in looking at what other ways Government can consider the implications of the technology strategy, so the debate, which was a very worthwhile debate, I believe, and helped focus the issue, has resulted in considerable further work by the Ministry of Technology in the intervening period, and I would hope we would see something later this year.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** We had what I thought was a draft strategy released in April. The Minister has said that that has been reworded and we are now about to get a draft policy. I would like to ask what is the difference between the draft strategy paper and the draft policy we are about to get. When are they going to stop being drafts and become the real document?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The document that will be released will be released after consideration by the Government. It will be a policy document and it will also incorporate an action plan for the Government to consider. One of the comments made on a number of occasions in the Parliamentary debate was that what it said was fine, but it did not say much about what we could do towards achieving

that. That point was taken on board and it is that kind of area that is presently being looked at. It is that which we hope we can release as a document indicating where we believe we should go.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Will that be a final document, or will it still be a draft?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It would depend on Cabinet's consideration of that document, and I do not want to preempt Cabinet discussions at this stage.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** When this Committee met 12 months ago the Minister indicated that the role of the South Australian Council on Technological Change was being reassessed by the new Government. What are the conclusions of that reassessment, what is Government policy towards that council, and what does the Minister now see as the role for the council in the future?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The council has been reconstituted. That matter is referred to in the Annual Report which I have just tabled. We have done away with the standing subcommittees of the Council on Technological Change and it now has a capacity for *ad hoc* subcommittees. Membership of the council has also been modified. I have taken the opportunity on a number of occasions since the last Estimates Committee to refer matters for advice to the Council on Technological Change, for example, automotive fuel systems and such issues, and most recently the bread industry, so it is providing advice to me on those sorts of matters.

It is also working very closely with the Ministry of Technology and has been closely involved in work on development of the draft strategy that was debated in this Parliament; it has been actively involved in that. The amendments to its structure did take place. The amendment to its operation did take place. It still meets monthly and its work programme has acted as previously.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Basically, a clarification: the Minister indicated that the membership of the council had been changed. The Minister will appreciate I have only just picked up the document given to me a few moments ago, but upon looking at the membership I have the impression that the membership has not changed greatly. I think Sue Richardson is a new member and John Lesses is a new member, because the former Secretary of the UTLC is now a member of Parliament, but could the Minister indicate in what way has this council been reconstituted and in what way has its structure been changed?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I will call on Mr McDonald to report on the change of membership, because there has also been a recent change which needs to be identified.

**Mr McDonald:** The structure is still similar to that which prevailed previously, in that there are employer and employee association representatives. The membership as actually reported in 1983 reflects more the membership as it prevailed during the previous Government's term. It is subsequent to that that the current membership has changed its role, but the Chairman is still the same. Sue Richardson is providing an academic input. Di Davidson has just resigned and is due to be replaced. As mentioned, Mr Lesses has been replaced by an alternative member. Colin Perrett, Head of the CSIRO Division of Manufacturing Technology, is now a member. A permanent place is provided for a representative from the Department of Labour. Currently that is the Assistant Director of Industrial Relations, because of the expertise he has in that area and that is required by the council. There is also a position held by a Department of Technical and Further Education nominee, currently Mr Jack Jordan from Regency Park.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Could we have a list of the new members and what they represent?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, we will have that provided by 19 October.

**Mr MAYES:** I refer to page 144 of the Estimates papers under the heading '1983-84 Specific Targets and Objectives, Significant Initiatives, Improvements and Achievements'. There is listed there the establishment of the Education and Technology Task Force. Could the Minister indicate what resources are available in funding and staff to this task force, what are the terms of reference, and when will it report?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** This task force was created by me last year as an indication of the importance we placed upon a study of the question of education and technology. Since the establishment of the task force a number of things have happened which need to be identified. First, on the suggestion of South Australia the Federal meeting of the Australian Education Council of Ministers both Federal and State resolved to set up its own national task force for education technology and indeed the Federal Minister, Senator Ryan, appointed me as the Chairperson of that national task force. So, since the establishment of the State task force there has been a need to modify what the State task force was doing to fit in with the national task force.

There has also been some reconsideration of the membership of that task force and most recently because the former Chairperson, Ben Cooke, was unable to continue due to arrangements with the South Australian college a new Chairperson, Kevin Gilding, has been appointed. The matter of resources available was considered in the 1984-85 Budget context and there are still some issues that need to be sorted out with regard to that. A number of departments have made available members of the committee by releasing them from duties for varying periods per week: in some cases they are released for one day a week and in other cases for two days a week, so that represents a resource commitment to that task force. In addition to that, there will be made available from my lines a sum of money for contingencies and consultancy expenditure of about \$30 000. In addition to that, application has been made to the Commonwealth Employment Programme for funds to fund certain research projects and those funds are expected to come on-line in the middle of October.

So, that is the kind of package of resources that has been put together. However, while the committee has been doing some work to date (indeed it has been doing work in terms of a literature search on literature available on technology), and while it has also been doing some work on the plan of action to which it should address itself, it has had to reconsider its actions in the light of the national task force that has been meeting since June this year. An Executive Officer has also been appointed to the State Task Force, Mr Don Matters, who has been appointed full time. The five terms of reference will be subject to some modification. They are:

(1) To identify and describe the features of an education system that responds to and, where possible, anticipates the needs of the South Australian community in which technology and change are major features.

(2) To establish a priority of initiatives necessary to help the education system better to play its key role in relation to technology, change and the future development of South Australia. These initiatives will derive from present strengths and opportunities; present deficiencies; existing and proposed local activities; and consultation, in relation to technology in the education system. They will also draw upon relevant experience interstate and overseas.

(3) To prepare plans for and act as a catalyst in the implementation of the proposed initiatives.

(4) To plan strategies to raise the level of community involvement in discussions and activities relating to an understanding of and participation in the technological society.

(5) To devise means of monitoring the extent and effectiveness of the proposed changes to the education system.

The task force will report its findings to the Minister of Education and for Technology.

The last point I should mention is the actual membership of the committee. As I said, Kevin Gilding is the Chairperson of the Committee; Ben Cooke, who was the Chairperson, is still a member of it from the South Australian College of Advanced Education. Other members are Ms R. DeBats from TEASA; Ms N. Gilding from the Department of TAFE; Mr D. Harrison from the Department of Labour; Mr Dennis Henschke from the Education Department, and Mr A. Moir from the Department of Technical and Further Education. In addition to that, we also have a part-time member, Mr Jack Jordan, from the Regency Park Community College. So, it comprises people from various areas of Government.

**Mr MAYES:** What is the time scale for final reporting?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The original proposition put to me was that the committee should report by June 1985 in terms of a final report. That matter is really the subject of some reconsideration at present, because the national task force has set a deadline of October 1985. It may happen that some of the recommendations that come down from the national task force have clear implications for State Governments and what they do, and therefore we will need to have some committee to determine how to interpret the national recommendations for State purposes. So, while it may be still appropriate for the State task force to report by June next year, it may be the case that that committee needs to be recreated after the national task force reports to consider those recommendations.

Alternatively, it may be that it might be appropriate for the State Task Force to confine its activities to a more limited area in the intervening period until it has the national task force report to consider. Whatever the case, these matters are presently being considered by the State task force for report to me. I would expect it to report within the next week or so.

**Mr MAYES:** Page 144 of the yellow book, under 1984-85 specific targets and objectives, states:

Establish an industrial relations and technology task force.

What will be the functions of the industrial relations and technology task force and is there a possibility that it will overlap the Industrial Relations Advisory Council?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In handling the task ahead the Ministry of Technology identified a number of issues that needed tackling and also a number of ways of tackling those issues. It felt that the task force mechanism was probably the most appropriate way of tackling certain issues, for example, such big issues as education, the issue of industrial relations and it also suggested the proposition that legal questions—the questions of technology and the law—could be examined by a task force.

However, other areas have been proposed for treatment in other models, so the task force actually is being limited to these three areas. We are not proposing to proceed with the task force and the law at this stage, but I have sent a memo to my colleague the Deputy Premier and Minister of Labour, and I am awaiting a reply from him as to his views on the establishment of such a task force. If he is happy for it to be established, then it is proposed that the task force will report to the Government through a joint steering committee of IRAC and the South Australian Council on Technological Change, so it would not overlap IRAC: it would be linked in with IRAC. This would be important for a number of reasons. The issues that I am proposing that such a task force should deal with are:

(1) The actions required to preserve South Australia's harmonious industrial climate during the imminent period of major industrial restructuring and technological change.

(2) The actions required to alleviate industrial relations constraints which impede the widespread and rapid



adoption of advanced technologies in South Australian industry, and which mitigate against greater innovations, better quality, better design and improved productivity in South Australian industry.

- (3) The affirmative actions required to ensure current inequalities in employment are not increased by technological change but rather where possible redressed.

As I say, I am awaiting a response from my colleague on that, and further advice perhaps will come later.

**Mr MAYES:** I note that the annual report just handed out to the Committee refers to the guidelines for the introduction of technological change into the public sector, and page 2.2 refers to the guidelines for its introduction in the private sector and to the committee that has been established. Under 'Specific targets' it is referred to again. What is the time scale for the publication of those guidelines and what impact will the recent Federal Conciliation and Arbitration Commission decision have on those guidelines?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It has quite a significant effect because it does delay or forestall any present action on the guidelines produced at present by the South Australian Council. To recap briefly, last year the Government issued guidelines for the introduction of new technology in the public sector. I said at the time that it seemed to be important that the private sector should look to develop similar guidelines. The Council on Technological Change took on board that issue. I cited the many good examples we have in South Australia where appropriate measures taken in the work place have resulted in the successful introduction of new employment in enterprises. The Council took that on board and prepared some draft guidelines to which it gave limited circulation for consideration by various interest groups in the private sector and was about to prepare a final document.

However, the final document will not now be published in its existing form because of the recent decision of the Conciliation and Arbitration Commission on termination, change and redundancy. MINTEC (the Ministry of Technology and Department of Labour) will investigate the need for such a guide and, if such a guide is to exist, it will be set in the context of the requirements of the Federal Commission's decision and any subsequent State decisions. This cannot occur until after the Federal Commission's decision has been confirmed by all parties and the UTLC's decision on a test case for general order of the Commission's decisions to include State awards has been made. So, that really has come in at the pass and interrupted the work that had already taken place. However, it is critical that the work that has taken place be stalled while those matters are resolved.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Where does the Minister see South Australia's role in industry at the moment as more people are involved in the preparation and exchange of information than in many of the primary, secondary and tertiary industries? We have now received a report which states that more people are engaged in information preparation and exchange than in all other industries combined. So, a massive industry is emerging. I recall a few years ago the Federal Minister, Barry Jones, referring in his maiden speech in the House of Representatives to two newly emerging areas of industries. He referred to them as quaternary and quinary areas. Does the Minister believe that South Australia is yet in the area of substantial quaternary and quinary industry? If not, what steps are we taking or should we take to get on to that rapidly burgeoning field of employment?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I, too, noted the comments that Barry Jones has made on other occasions. Quaternary and quinary are not the most beautiful words in the English language. I know that they fit in with primary, secondary

and tertiary, but they start getting clumsy and ugly as one goes along. The information sector does, in fact, employ more than the other sectors combined, and that situation roughly applies in South Australia also. Clearly, we have to examine the impact of future changes in this area. One area of concern to the Government is the adoption of information policies in Government departments, and information technologies as a whole sweep can be considered.

There are also questions of the spread of information technology amongst the rest of the community. Most recently the State Government put forward a proposal that has been accepted by the Federal Government on the spreading of access of information about information technology to the Aboriginal community by means of the ITEC programme. That programme is a very exciting one based upon the English ITEP programme in some ways. It was a belief that we had in South Australia that, as there are rapid changes in information technology, some groups in the community have traditionally always been behind the eight ball when changes came along. This was an opportunity to see that those groups normally dispossessed in the process of technological change were not dispossessed once more.

The ITEC programme has been put together and the Commonwealth Government has agreed to fund it. That is one area for addressing one group in the community in South Australia. The other important matter is that Cabinet has approved the creation of an Education Software Promotion Committee to promote the developments that have taken place within the South Australian education sector right across the board—from primary through to secondary and tertiary sectors—so that work can be commercially exploited for the enhancement of the level of information technology in South Australia.

A further point has been proposed by the State Government and accepted by the Federal Government (and this matter came up in this Committee last year), namely, the decision to establish a microcomputer advisory centre for small business, so that it can be given dispassionate advice about the role that information technologies can offer for the enhancement of their business. We discussed that last year. We have been told that we have gained support from the Federal Government for the funding of that initiative and it is quite an exciting area to help develop the fourth and fifth sectors in South Australia.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I refer to the first line on page 138 concerning the preparation for impact of technological change on society. It almost made me smile when I thought of what happened more than a couple of hundred years ago with the Industrial Revolution in Britain. We have trodden this ground many times before. Will the Minister comment on the quite serious difference now and the fact that, since the early to the mid 1970s, we have had a rapid phasing out of almost all aspects of manual labour from industry?

I recall gaining permission for youngsters to leave school at 13 or 14 years of age with the then Director-General's permission, only to find that by 1975 those youngsters had had their work completely replaced with the advent of automation industries such as the timber and cheese making industries of the South-East. I notice that the very projects that the Federal Government currently has under way, ostensibly to help that chronic target group—the acutely unskilled in Australia—are now struggling. A tendency exists for there to be very little manual labour available.

A couple of examples that come to mind are the tree planting in South-East which absorbs \$10 000 to \$15 000 at the very most of the millions of dollars available in the State, and also the swimming pool that has been projected for Port Lincoln, where cement mud bricks have been made to provide manual labour for those chronically unemployed in the local community. Apart from that, there is very little,

other than tidying up and general maintenance around the place—certainly not enough to absorb the tens of millions of dollars that are available across Australia.

In the timber industry in the South-East I noticed an amazing similarity in the equipment currently being used to strip down the trees—debark them, clean them up thoroughly, get them on rollers and channel them through the entire sawing process. The process is so similar to that used in the iron and steel industry which I left in 1955 and which was then almost completely automated. It was almost a sense of *deja vu* as I could see red-hot billets going through where the coal and timber was going through. Even in the last two or three years we have seen optional electronics in timber handling machinery replaced completely with electronics. There is no longer any option as the electronics are built into the machinery.

What efforts are we making in 1984—some 10 years after these manual jobs have gone—to retrain the unskilled? The crying need for literacy and numeracy is highlighted by the fact that we have a rapidly burgeoning communication industry which demands those skills, yet the young people who constantly are brought before me looking for work and asking for help are the ones who, since 1975 (in other words, there is a 10-year backlog of young people), have been crying out for retraining.

It harks back to the youth and adult literacy programmes and the crying need to get these people into some sort of educational order before they are ready to cope with what this line says, 'Preparation for impact of technological change'. It has been there for 10 years. We have a lot of patients in the queue waiting for treatment. What sort of treatment are we going to give them?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** While it is true that there will be major changes to the employment structure that takes place with technological change over the years, it is also true that there will still be some interesting features taking place as to the kind of jobs that are available. I was listening on Monday to a comment which indicated that the most rapidly growing employment categories in Silicon Valley, which is of course the legendary home of much of the micro-chip effect on technology, are the categories of domestics and janitors. So, two areas of unskilled labour have grown more rapidly than other areas, and that kind of feature, whether we comment on the appropriateness of that—

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** They are cleaning up the whole valley because of bankruptcy problems aplenty down there, I understand.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Some financial problems are now setting in in some of the companies, that is true, but the issue of retraining is very important. That is why it is important that the national and State task forces will have a big responsibility to address the issue, not just of primary and secondary education but of further education. I say that not just in the sense of tertiary education, for those who complete secondary and go straight into tertiary—

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Sub-tertiary.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, sub-tertiary, but also in terms of life-long educational opportunities and how they should be provided. It is a point that I think I mentioned last year and, if I did not, I do so now. It concerned me at the national summit into technology that not enough attention was paid to what actually was meant by the word 'education'. Everyone said that education was important in technology but not enough effort was spent in saying 'This is the kind of retraining—the retraining kind of education, the informal sorts of networks—that will enable a person in a job who is suddenly deskilled or wiped out to gain the opportunity to learn more about another area or to improve his or her capacity in the area in which the person was in.'

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** My third question is with regard to the training and retraining in industrial technology. In 1970, the South Australian Department of Technical and Further Education (DFE as it was then) seemed to be well ahead of industry, which was responding rather slowly to the technological change. DFE got in early on the ground floor and had sophisticated equipment by the then standards. By 1975, and coming into 1980, the DFE lost considerable ground because its equipment was ageing and technology was coming into the factory and everywhere else so quickly that almost year by year obsolescence was built into the machines that were available. In the early 1980s it is apparent that TAFE across Australia, even allowing for new developments interstate, is pretty well behind industry.

Where does the Minister see the Department of Technical and Further Education in the current area of training and retraining in industry? Should the Federal Government be primarily responsible? This was, I think, the ploy that most State Ministers of Education assumed for the Federal Government since it was going to cost probably hundreds of millions of dollars to re-equip the whole of the TAFE sector. Should the Federal Government be involved massively in that field as well as subsidising industry by way of tax concessions and other grants; should the State Government, with its immediate responsibilities to the State, be assuming a greater financial role in this training; or is the wheel going to go full circle again with the stress now laying with industry and commerce to obtain its own technology and to train and probably to retrench staff simultaneously at its own expense? Where does the Minister see the trends laying?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** This is a particularly important question in terms of the allocation and development of TAFE resources in years ahead. It needs to be looked at from a couple of angles. First, there needs to be an assessment of what we want TAFE to do in terms of its equipment provisions. There are various possibilities. It can be stocked with equipment that is leading edge, that is, the best that there is, the most recent generation of equipment; we can expect it to reflect what is most commonly expected state of the art equipment available in industry at large; or we can expect it to be lagging behind and using equipment that is out of date.

There are sound arguments for saying that it is appropriate for TAFE to try to make sure that it has a bit of each, because leading edge equipment is fine but, if one is educating students on leading edge equipment and they are not finding it anywhere in the workplace, that can cause some problems. However, on the other hand, it is worth while in terms of extending their knowledge of what is going to come in years ahead, to give an expectation. Similarly, state of the art equipment that applies in industry is worth while to try to use. In some areas, it is even true to say that equipment that is generationally being replaced already can still be educationally useful. In other cases that is not true, but in some cases it is. It certainly has to be true in some areas because no sooner than a piece of equipment has been bought by a TAFE college or by a private company than it is already obsolete by the time it is bought because something has happened somewhere in the world.

So, that question needs to be taken into account, combined with the rate at which generational change takes place nowadays compared with what it was doing as recently as 1970. So, the departmental response is to try a mix of things—first, by means of money that it is able to allocate from State resources to try to put something in. However, clearly I would concur in the comment by the member for Mount Gambier that we have to say to State Governments that the bills involved are so big that we rely on significant Federal funding to help us out, remembering that the TAFE sector is a huge sector in terms of its involvement in tertiary

education. Therefore, the cost for upgrading equipment is well beyond the capacities of State Governments to pick up without Federal assistance.

The other sort of mix of options include trying to have improved co-operation with industry, to use equipment that it is using, whether it be at the work site (I think we should develop more of that) or whether it be industry equipment located at TAFE facilities. We have quoted on many occasions the CAD/CAM example of the CADDSMAN Bureau, but also there is the example of the plastics and rubber industry, which got together as an industry and decided that it was important for TAFE to be able to provide expertise or training in plastics and rubber.

So, as a professional group, as an industry, it got together and subsidised or paid for the bulk of the equipment that was placed at Regency Park to develop that as a centre of excellence in that area. That is the kind of thing that will also help. Industry naturally realised that it was a case of scratching each other's back because it assisted them in knowing that the apprentices who came out would have had the opportunity to work on that equipment and be more appropriately trained when they got into the workforce.

**Ms LENEHAN:** Page 144 of the yellow book, under the heading '1984-85 Specific Targets/Objectives', states:

To further refine the technology strategy part of which covers employment and education.

Can the Minister explain the words 'further refine' in this reference, and, as this was debated in the technology debate in April, can the Minister give a progress on developing an action plan stating how these strategies will be implemented? Also, can he say how such action plans are reflected in the Budget lines?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I answered in part this area as a result of an earlier question. I will go through it perhaps in more detail. Taking the information that we received prior to the Parliamentary debate and the Parliamentary debate, we are developing a technology action plan in which will be specified all the actions needed before the objectives of the technology strategy have been attained. This has resulted in close consultation within Government, particularly by means of the technology advocates that have been appointed in Government departments. That plan will then list a series of actions that will need to be considered by Government, either as possible within existing resources or for which additional resources might be required.

As I mentioned a moment ago, that will be considered later this year by Cabinet, and at that time it will be up to Cabinet to determine what happens with that action plan. We must do something (not just in a discussion document sense in regard to a technology strategy) which will give us some guidance for action for the future, and we must clearly link that with what is happening in South Australia in both the private and public sectors.

**Ms LENEHAN:** A further objective referred to at page 144 of the Programme Estimates is to 'Sponsor studies of effects of technological change on particular groups of employees.' This also relates to a section at 2.14 on page 3 of the annual report of which the Minister has just given us a copy. My question relates to the contribution that I made in the debate on technology when I raised the matter of the effects of technological change on women, as a specific group of employees. Can the Minister outline any studies that have been undertaken and say whether the communication, consultation and negotiations referred to in this report have taken place with any registered organisations of women employees, and can he say what effects that will then have on their employment?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** First, the education and technology task force addresses those issues. The third proposed term of reference of the industrial relations task force clearly

relates to the matter of equal opportunities. In addition, the Ministry has consulted with the New Opportunities for Women Advisory Commission within the Department of TAFE and has discussed relevant aspects of interest to both the Ministry and that Commission. That issue is important and is consequently taken into account in any actions to be taken.

**Ms LENEHAN:** Much debate has occurred about the effects of technology and the introduction of new technology. I am concerned about this matter. Can the Minister or his advisers tell the Committee about how much the role of technology plays not only in regenerating employment but also in creating new employment in South Australia, and how this is reflected in the Budget?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** This is a very complex area in terms of examining what the actual outcome will be. The Government certainly believes that it is an important area. The Ministry of Technology and I as Minister for Technology work closely with the Minister of State Development and the Department for State Development, as well as with the Technology Park corporation. There is a very important interface between those areas in regard to this area. Secondly, the Ministry believes that certain technologies are sometimes assisted by the creation of promotion mechanisms. Recently the Biotechnology Co-ordination Committee was established. That is an attempt to promote the use of biotechnology throughout industry and to make industry realise how significant biotechnological developments can be. South Australia has some expertise in that arena, but that must be shared with more industries.

Likewise, an attempt has been made to promote the CAD/CAM (computer aided design and computer aided manufacturing) technology as well. A point that I attempted to make time and again is that the Government can play a role in pushing technology if people can accept that role. I suppose the aspect that is quoted is that concerning the cold fear that people feel down their back when someone says 'I am from the Government and have come to help you.' In fact, Australia has kept a leading edge in participation in agriculture because of the role of the public sector in promoting technology and research since the time of European settlement in this country. The use of agricultural extension officers has played a very critical part in keeping Australia well to the forefront internationally in primary industry. That same kind of investment should be possible with regard to technology. The public sector has a responsibility to participate in that.

The other important point in regard to sound economic development in South Australia is that it is not sufficient to think that the Ministry of Technology will look at only the glossies in terms of technology, that it will consider only the sunrise industries: they are important and will have a part to play in the development of South Australia, but unless we are prepared to look at the role of the traditional industries in South Australia and at how they can be enhanced by technology upgrading, we will be in serious trouble. It is my intention and that of the Ministry to promote the benefits that technological change can bring to all levels of industry.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Several weeks ago in a question to the Minister of Transport I raised the matter of purchase of electronic fare collection equipment by the State Transport Authority. In reply to that question the Minister of Transport indicated that a technological assessment of the equipment had been undertaken by the Minister for Technology. Basically, in reply the Minister of Transport indicated that the equipment would be purchased from a European company, that the contract was worth about \$5 million and that about 30 per cent of the cost would be offset by work done here in South Australia. I pointed out that the other competitive

tenderer was a Western Australian company, and that two of the subcontractors for that work were well known South Australian companies: one is Codan Pty Ltd, which I think we would all agree is one of the success stories in high technology industry, and the other Technical Suppliers Pty Ltd of Hendon. I am concerned that even if 30 per cent of the work in the \$5 million contract is offset work, that is still less than \$2 million coming to South Australia as a result of a new venture by a European company set up here, which will simply mean a distribution and possibly an assembly facility.

It will do nothing for the technological aspect of South Australia's development. I know that only too well having been vitally involved in negotiating a number of ventures involving high technology companies wanting to set up subsidiaries in South Australia. It appears that the contract to supply the fare collection equipment will go to an overseas company. The technology for that equipment will be developed overseas at the expense of two South Australian companies and a Western Australian company, whereas all of the technology could have been developed here. The Minister has just tabled a report from the South Australian Council on Technological Change. At page 12 one of the recommendations from one of the studies undertaken is highlighted. It is recommended that we should:

Encourage the local design and manufacture of special purpose industrial automation devices, including robots.

That is exactly what technical automation equipment, validating equipment is all about. The matter to which I have referred is a classic case of where equipment could have been developed in Australia and thus have enhanced Australian technology rather than such equipment being brought in from overseas. There might be a 30 per cent offset involved, but that will not involve the technology industry, having regard to past experience. Will the Minister table for the Committee his assessment of that request put to him by the Minister of Transport so that the Committee can assess whether or not the decision to buy the equipment from an overseas supplier rather than from a domestic Australian supplier was valid?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The matter of the selection of the Crouzet company for the supply of ticket validation equipment was raised in this House previously, as mentioned by the honourable member. I want to make a few points about that company. The deal involves between 30 per cent and 40 per cent of local offsets. A decision is being made that export possibilities exist with the Crouzet deal because there are South-East Asian marketing possibilities for equipment it manufactures here. So, it is more than offsetting the contract with STA: it has the possibility of generating new contracts, and the honourable member will probably ask why could that not happen with other validating technology.

The assessment that has been done indicates that the Crouzet technology is the leading state of the art and the one with the most potential. I believe that the Crouzet has the magnetic scan and that the Western Australian equipment involves the optical scan technology. The assessment found that the magnetic scan is the one that offers the most promise not only for the purpose of local requirements but also because of the possibility of getting into other markets by means of an enterprise established here. It will result in technology transfer to South Australia, and we should not be too critical of that. On the one hand, we want to stimulate technological innovation that is generated in this country but, on the other hand, we also need to stimulate technology transfer from one area to another.

The issues involved in this matter concerned the Government before the Crouzet issue arose. The general issue arose whether or not the use of Government purchasing

power to assist technology development was possible. Hence the Government has had a procurement review working as a result of a submission put to Cabinet jointly by the Premier, the Minister in charge of Services and Supply, and me, and we expect that group to report soon on what changes could be considered when the Government is procuring large quantities. As a nation, we should be concerned about another aspect. We have details of how the offset agreement will be tied up with the Crouzet deal, but it is a concern that at the national level much of the defence contracting that takes place in this country with promises of offsets over the last 14 years has resulted in inadequate achievement of the agreements entered into by those enterprises. So, the question whether the offsets are achieved is important, but in this case the Government is confident that the agreements entered into will result in the appropriate offsets taking place here.

I will table the Ministry of Technology assessment on this matter, as I have been requested. It also comments on the STA assessment carried out earlier, so I will have to consult with my colleague on that aspect. The Technology Ministry assessment canvasses the differences between the two technologies. I raised this matter with the Ministry when I first heard of the proposal and asked whether an Australian company could produce this equipment with the same degree of technological expertise as that demanded by the STA, and I was told that, given the specifications set by the STA, it could not, because the STA wanted to go for the leading edge technology.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Although I do not reflect on the French company, I come back to the debate I saw on video film when the Federal Minister for Science and Technology was being interviewed. There the point came out clearly (and it has been a constant problem for Australian Governments) that, unless the Government makes a conscious decision perhaps even to subsidise an Australian company to develop the technology (which may not be available here: the leading edge of the technology may be held by the French company and not available in Australia), and unless the Federal and State Governments and their agencies tell the Australian companies with the capabilities of developing such technology here and, if necessary, pay the cost penalty for developing it, it will not be developed.

When I was Minister, we negotiated a similar deal with a company in another area where it promised to establish certain technology here. Certainly, it met an offset requirement that was far greater than this. I am not sure that it has led to an increase in technology in this State. It may have created jobs, but simply factory or assembly types of job, and I suspect that that is what we will end up with here.

It is time for Australian Governments to rethink what they will do. In another case, a substantial electrical contract was due to go to a company in another State; the State Government paid the penalty of \$200 000 and paid for the manufacturer here to develop that technology. As a result, he won substantial contracts elsewhere in Australia immediately afterwards. The French, no doubt, would pay the local company to develop the technology so that it could be exported. So, although I appreciate the facts presented by the STA, I point out that it may need a change of thinking by Australian Governments. I also looked at offset manufacturing, and I agree with the Minister that offset contracts and commitments have largely not succeeded. Looking at offset work that has succeeded, I point out that it does not involve a high technology component: most of it is based on low technology, hack manufacture. I say that without reflecting on oversea manufacturers, but they will not develop in Australia, for a one-off contract, any high technology. Indeed, they would be foolish to do so. Recently,

I had a three-hour debate with the top people in Boeing International on that very point. They are extremely critical of the Australian offset requirements and the way they are practised. Australian Governments, both Federal and State, must rethink that area.

The Minister said that a deliberate programme was developed to produce software in the educational area that would be marketed throughout Australia, and I am delighted to hear that. Educational software gives tremendous scope for Australians to develop their own software because much of the software coming from overseas is merely amusing gimmickry that is not suitable for Australian conditions. In the TAFE area, I understand that there is a substantial contract out at present and that at least one South Australian company is tendering for that TAFE software contract. I would want to see an assurance that, if possible, a South Australian company obtain that contract because in that area there are enormous potential spin-off benefits in terms of future marketing. Once such a software package was developed, it could be marketed at a fraction of the cost afterwards. Will the Minister consider the payment of a cost penalty to see that software is developed in this State if that is possible and technically feasible?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The honourable member is asking me to sign a blank cheque. I am willing to look at the matter and to determine the extent to which it would be possible for South Australian industry to provide this material. I agree with the honourable member that South Australia has shown a capacity to develop educational courseware, so it is highly likely that it is within the capacity of South Australian courseware producers to come up with what is required by the Department of TAFE. I do not know what specification was issued by TAFE. I will certainly look into that matter. I am prepared to accept some cost differential or penalty. Obviously, as the honourable member acknowledged, I cannot say that without qualification.

It is true that one can have development of a software package, then it can be promoted elsewhere and be a major revenue earner. I recently had the opportunity to launch a new school library computing system which had in place a software package developed in Sydney. It was the second school in Australia to use that package, which was very successful. I believe that this package will now spread to other schools in Australia.

It developed because somebody made the point to the person who wrote the course software that he could not find anywhere software appropriate to resource centre usage in this country and that it was all based on overseas material which is not relevant to us. That is the Lothlorien system from New South Wales. I concur with the point that the locally produced course software is well done and can, for many uses, meet what is needed. I will certainly try to see if this can happen in the TAFE situation.

I comment on a couple of other points raised by the honourable member. The Federal Government has an offsets review in place, because serious questions are raised there. Certainly, the way in which offsets have not resulted in substantial technology transfer is of concern. The procurement review will report within a month to the Government. It will indicate ways in which Governments could expect Government instrumentalities or departments to use their purchasing capacity as an instrument of technological development. We will receive recommendations on that subject.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I make a suggestion to the Minister: I realise that if one asks a South Australian manufacturer to develop a software package and, as a Government, one must ask the question about the extent one should pay a cost penalty. The experience of at least one country overseas of a way to overcome the problem is to pay the cost penalty, but a condition of issuing a contract

to that local company is to then take out a royalty on future sales.

Therefore, if future sales flow from development of that software package, the State would get a 10 per cent return. That has been done in some Provinces of Canada, very successfully. It could be looked at here, particularly where we have six States and the flow-on benefit could be six times over. The 1983 annual report of the council specifically refers at page 1 to the following:

New functions have been authorised by Cabinet and the new council will begin work in 1984.

The Minister has already agreed to provide the Committee with details of the new membership. I ask that the Committee also be given details of the new functions as approved by Cabinet for the council.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** That certainly will be done. I do not have them with me at the moment. The first point raised by the honourable member is a good one; we will take that on board. The Government does receive royalties in other areas. Maybe that is an instrument that can be used for promotion of technology. It may already have been looked at by the procurement review.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** The Federal Budget was a disaster when it came to promoting high technology in Australia. I think even the Federal Minister now acknowledges that publicly. I see that in this afternoon's edition of the *News* the Premier made some statements about how the Government supports the export development grants. On looking at the details of the Budget I find that allocation for new export development grants in 1984-85—that is grants that have been already committed—is down something like 60 per cent compared to last year. I do not have the exact figure here, but I have quoted it previously. I am concerned about the effect that will have on a large number of South Australian companies (particularly smaller companies) which really deserve benefit from the export development grant. The Minister knows of the work of ADPRO, which hopes to export perhaps 78 per cent of its production, yet the export development grant is almost the lifeline to keep such a company going.

It has brilliant resources; it needs finance to pay for the development of its export markets whilst developing the market then to be able to recoup the money. Is the State Government looking at expanding the export bridging finance scheme that was established in 1979 as a means of perhaps overcoming the lack of funds that will come out of Canberra for export development? I think I am right in saying that the total allocation of export development grants in South Australia in a full year to small companies would be only about \$400 000 under the criteria used under that bridging scheme, and I am not talking about large companies. It might be that the State Government itself should look at picking up and running its own development scheme—not only a bridging finance scheme—to encourage exports and perhaps double the allocation to small companies that would otherwise have come from the Federal Budget.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We are having a review of all incentives across Governments. When this matter first came before us I made the point that, if we were to have such a review of incentives, one of the things to look at is the way in which incentives can promote technological development in South Australia. That was incorporated in the terms of reference of that review.

I think the honourable member would agree that there must be a purpose to incentives: they must attempt to do something, such as increasing generation of wealth other than what would have been available under existing incentives. They should not just be the cream on the cake added into an enterprise. Export development grants, about which the honourable member spoke, are an example of trying to

tie something to wealth generation; it is trying to stimulate trade opportunities. It is a matter of the incentives review by the Government examining ways of using incentives to promote technological development as well.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I was studying the South Australian Council on Technological Change booklet (the annual report) that the Minister kindly handed out this evening, I noticed that one of the earliest topics was the prospect of resisting change and the fact that there are guidelines for the introduction of technological change within South Australia which seem to be based upon fear within different organisations that they will be adversely affected. I then read the third section, which relates to principles for use by the Government in considering proposals that a technological change be impeded. I notice that this is a recommendation, not necessarily Government technological policy, but I could not help feeling that this was one of the more positive parts of the booklet in so far as there is a presumption that technological change is desirable.

The principles set out in the booklet are quite forward looking, accepting technological change and recommending ways with which change can be adapted by our contemporary society. Nevertheless I cannot help thinking that this report by the council is essentially negative as there is some sort of fear inherent in the whole thing. I could not help thinking about the film that we saw (I think it was one brought into Parliament House some two or three years ago) that showed how progressive forward looking groups could accept technological change, take hold of it by the scruff of the neck, and not necessarily get vitally involved in the manufacture of technology or the superimposition of technology upon its own society, but could evolve a whole range of different ways of utilising software, making it and adapting it not only nationally but internationally.

The group which readily comes to mind is the United Kingdom group, which goes across the world sending out teams of people who have devised different means of using software packages, utilising a whole range of different pieces of hardware, not necessarily one batch from one company, and then selling their mentality, their brains. They are bringing a lot of money into the United Kingdom.

When Lee Kuan Yew was in Australia recently, and again when I was in Singapore. I noticed an article reiterating the fact, he was critical of Australia, in that we were already a decade or a decade and a half behind in the imaginative use of hardware and software. Whether it is right or wrong, he pointed out that all secondary students in Singapore readily use and understand the computer calculator and, therefore, are able to move much more quickly in different fields of communication than our young people can.

Another example is in the United Kingdom where the technology was overseas, but where the CAT scanner, the computer axial tomography scanner, which is in use in at least one South Australian hospital, was devised in Britain and marketed across the world at I think about \$500 000 per machine, but using overseas technology. It was simply the brains which went into it from the United Kingdom and brought up a marketable commodity, so there is a lot to be gleaned from technology which is very positive, provided we escape from this feeling that technology is going to be superimposed on a community, that it is going to affect that community adversely from the outset.

I wonder whether the Minister could first of all convey to the council that we could be looking extremely positively towards technological change and that possibly within the South Australian Education Department we could be training young people, not necessarily all youngsters in education, but streaming a few pilot groups as a matter of absolute importance in primary, through secondary, through technical and further education and university, with stops along the

way, or starts along the way, not necessarily assuming that one has to go through the whole corridor to open the door, and that if we do start in South Australia along that track, providing opportunities at all stages of education, then we are going to come up with youngsters at various stages of education who can step off, who can grab hold of the technology and start making software, start the lateral thinking which will bring in income for South Australia and for Australia.

It is not something that cannot happen. It is something that has already happened overseas as long as five or 10 years ago. The doors are open. The technology is available and if we can encourage the Federal Government to spend some of the tens of millions of dollars it is spending on community employment projects on something really constructive such as this, instead of making it available to people with just manual skills, literally at the fingertips, then I think we will be doing something positive along the lines we were following three or four years ago with the transition education programmes, which were really designed to improve the educational skills of youngsters. I ask the Minister once again whether he thinks it is possible, given the State's limited finances, to persuade the Federal Government to channel some of its money into projects like that, of which South Australia could take immediate advantage.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I just make a number of comments on what the member for Mount Gambier has said. First of all, I note the worry the member has about the report of the council being a negative report. Can I in fact suggest that the thrust of the council all the way through has been to deal with the managed introduction of new technology so that it is indeed introduced. At my meetings with the council, it has very much been its policy that there must be an introduction of new technology.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I did applaud the positive approach in three principles where it said it asked for acceptance.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Can I just say the example I used on many occasions, which seems to me to be the major difference between talking about the issues and considering the implication of the introduction of new technology. I quote the example of the *Adelaide Advertiser* on many occasions as being a good sound example of a group which talked about what it was going to do with its employees, thought about it, and retrained where necessary. It dealt compassionately with those whose jobs were affected in a deskilling way in the enterprise, and the result is that we can hold our heads high that we have here in South Australia a daily newspaper which is a world leader.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Griffin Press was the first.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes. That has not been the example overseas. There are numerous overseas newspapers which have hit the headlines occasionally in our papers, because they were centres of major industrial disruption when they have tried the same thing but the wrong way. I think that really sums up the attitude that we as a Government want to take on this matter and I think the council also wants to take the same attitude. Let us forthrightly promote it and do it in a managed way, as it says at one stage in its report.

I absolutely agree with the matter of using our brain power. In fact, we do have good examples of that in South Australia, where in fact we are investigating the opportunities for selling brain power in software systems techniques overseas. We are apparently making approaches in Japan and Singapore trying to sell the kind of expertise, because the sort of example the honourable member mentions is a wellknown example and a good one. It is the sort of thing we should be taking heart from. The use of technology

developed elsewhere and developed by brain power here or in Australia also applies in other ways. I can think of the example of the laser lamp, which has a South Australian branch but is not a South Australian company. It is a Victorian company. That company has taken laser technology and developed laser cutting equipment that is now exported all over the world. It started out because this person wanted to have a machine for doing certain kinds of laser cutting. He looked at the overseas market and could not find any machine of that kind and therefore built his own. When he did build his own he discovered that there was a big international market which had been asking the same question but had not taken the trouble to build its own. He now exports it overseas.

It is just not a matter of inventing the gizmo. Again, this uses brain power. It is a case of developing the process. As I go around many companies in South Australia, I find that a lot of brain power is being used in a limited way in terms of improving process by the application of technology, but it really stops there and they do not realise what they have done in terms of spreading it further and making new products, improving the process even further or selling the idea. They process ideas elsewhere. I was intrigued to hear the other day, for example, about the difference between here and Japan. One example was quoted in Japan of the Mitsubishi Company, which apparently in one plant has 4 000 employees. The company has a suggestion box. In that suggestion box the 4 000 employees came up with 64 000 ideas for processes and various other applications of technology. The enterprise actually applied 58 000 of them, and that was an amazing example of the application of brain power at all levels of its manufacturing system from production right through. I think there is a lot more of that which we should be doing here.

The comment was made when that point was raised in a forum I was attending that that happens on numerous occasions. You ask somebody on the shop floor in this country and they will be able to identify the areas, but they have not taken the trouble to do it. We should encourage that. As to how we can try to stimulate this through the education system, again I come back to this task force. I hope this will give us some important guidelines, but the purpose of the technology grants that we as a State have developed for schools in areas other than basic computing are partly trying to do much that same sort of thing as well and we are hoping that schools will develop programmes based upon that.

In relation to trying to spread that to other areas of education, I think the concept is a sound one. I have mentioned, for example, trying to break out of the mould by the development of the Institute of Technology centres using what has been very successful in the United Kingdom and I think it offers us opportunities here, so we are trying to work in those sorts of direction also.

One other thing that I believe is very important in the application of new technologies in the education system is the spreading of that resource and those ideas amongst people other than the immediate clientele. I was most impressed, for example, with one primary school that has established a class network of computers to find out that they have after hours the opportunity for students to come to the school to use it and also the opportunity for parents and other people in the community to use it. In other words, with their good resource for which they have paid they are making sure that not just the primary student clients of the school use it. That kind of philosophy should be spreading to other areas in education as well.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** The next question relates to something that crops up very briefly. I think that it is probably something that I read only this afternoon in the

education lines. I refer to the continuing experimentation with telephone and television links between the Education Technology Centre in Adelaide and certain outback school communities. I recall sending one of the earlier messages to Caltowie School and probably another one to Ceduna three years ago. Apparently, that idea is still being developed, but at the same time three years ago we were then studying through Colin Dunnett, the Director of the Education Technology Centre, the prospects of renting or purchasing a portion of a satellite pod for the South Australian Government to use and so that different departments could lease their own sections of that pod. Is that satellite still a possibility, or has it been shelved in the short term?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** First, with regard to the satellite, this is tied up in the consideration of the use of AUSSAT (Australian Satellite), and that is very much a vital area of investigation by the Department at present and indeed by the Government.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** As I recall, it was about \$100 million for a unit for the State.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I cannot remember the exact cost figures, but we can certainly get some information on that. However, the Department and other areas in my Ministry are actively looking at how AUSSAT can be used by South Australia for various purposes. At present, the Education Technology Centre (and it may have been used in the honourable member's time as Minister—I am not sure) is using an abandoned satellite above the equator for communication with the University of Hawaii. When I say that it is an abandoned satellite, it is one of the first satellites put up and it no longer had the capacity needed by international communication systems so they just left it. The University of Hawaii got access to it and we, too, have been granted access to it. So, for no cost we are able to do some development and experimentation with satellite communication with people in Hawaii. Indeed, I have been on a session talking with a group in Hawaii. That is giving people in the Education Technology Centre some experience in the use of satellite communications.

I have briefly referred to DUCT this afternoon. Officers of Telecom have told us that we are the biggest teleconferences in Australia. As at the end of the second term, it is going to 60 schools in South Australia, and it is a very exciting thing. One can sit in one room, as the honourable member has done himself, and the student is a couple of hundred miles away, and perhaps another teacher is involved in another school, completing a triangle, because that is also possible. We have signed an agreement with Werner Electronics for the commercial manufacture of that equipment, with the royalty payable to the education system so that we can make money out of that as this model that has been developed in South Australia is sold interstate, and, who knows, maybe overseas.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I think that recently it was reported in one of the business reviews that a noted Australian businessman came out with a sort of counter technology view, or at least he was not nearly as fearful as most, that one should not expect too much or fear too much from technological change and that, while change was certainly with us and would continue at a rapid pace, he still saw the basic needs in Australian education as the acquisition of basic skills. Since it was essentially a communications era that was blossoming in this area, once again he emphasised that the needs of all youngsters would increasingly be for communications skills in language and numbers and, of course, numbers is just one more language.

I wonder whether the Minister will continue to emphasise through primary and secondary schools, given the tremendous call more within the Education Department than outside it for diversity (and we have our diversity booklets

which have been going around for a few years), that there are certain things in our schools, such as English and Mathematics, that should not be sacrificed in the name of diversity? I think that this is a tremendous danger. It was highlighted only a few days ago on radio Helicon (one of the national radio programmes) by an American interviewee who was responsible for tertiary education and technological information exchange in the United States.

He, too, highlighted the fact that he thought that the American educational system had somewhere along the line in the past 20 years dropped its bundle and lost the very essence of education, namely the ability to be able to communicate in language and numbers. He said that they would have to start reinventing the wheel as far as education was concerned. I think that when an international educationist is saying that and Australian business people are saying the same thing, we should not view comments made by the Partingtons of South Australia, who are connected with ACES, as just another humorous matter, because the points of view that are reflected by respectable people such as Leonie Kramer, the founder of ACES, are points of view that are held in very high regard by the greater number of parents in South Australia.

When I say that, I also point out that the parents of the lower socio-economic children in Australia seem to attach more importance to this than do most other groups. We usually seem to think that the parents of private school-children have communication skills in mind, but the children who are most seriously disadvantaged by the trends towards diversity and any dilution of communication skills are the very group that most need help in our community. They are the parents of the socio-economically disadvantaged. They are the ones who have gone to the industrial scrapheap if they could not communicate. These are the ones who remain underprivileged. I ask the Minister, almost to the point of educational honour, to maintain standards in all schools in South Australia, but particularly in those that are socio-economically disadvantaged. If we throw anything out, let us not throw out the baby. Throw out the bathwater, but keep the baby in there.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I make the point that we in the education system in South Australia very strongly believe that the maintenance of education for basic skills is an important part of the general education that needs to be provided to students in the modern age. There are big dangers in having an education system that is ultra specific in terms of delivering a focus on certain very narrow kinds of students in the belief that they will give them the skills to cope in a technological society, because the danger is that, as the society can change around them, their skills can become irrelevant overnight. We need to give students the capacity to communicate and the capacity to relearn.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** And to comprehend.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** So, it is teaching comprehension skills. I think we can be pleased with what is being achieved in the South Australian education system. I visit a lot of schools around the State, and everywhere I go I am impressed with the kind of dedication to that sort of issue that I see. My concern with the kind of debate that is fostered in some quarters is that it is not fostered on educationally constructive grounds. I believe firmly that there should always be an education debate for posing of different views and ideas on education, so that we can tackle them.

But I think it needs to be done in a positive constructive way rather than in a way designed to raise fears or phobias. That is my concern about some of the issues that have taken place in recent times in the education debate. As I speak to people in the education system in South Australia

and, indeed, around Australia and talk about technology, the issue of providing a general education which canvasses the acquisition of basic skills is broadly accepted. Of course, the development of courseware that is taking place in South Australia is addressing itself to those issues as well. The course ware is not simply in computing studies, but across the areas of curriculum including areas of numeracy, literacy, and the like. I have noticed some very good course ware being developed in terms of helping those who suffer some degree of disability to gain ability in literacy and numeracy. Excellent work is being done at Regency Park in that area.

We are not simply providing an education for people to obtain a certain job: we are also trying to provide an education to develop life skills, so that they can enhance their own life fulfilment as well as enhance their capacity to live in a society with others. These are important questions. We in South Australia think that the connection of education and technology is an important nexus rather than the separation of technology away from the education system.

**Mr LEWIS:** Given that we are dealing with the line 'Office of the Ministry of Technology', can I ask the Minister to give his opinion of the definition of 'technology'?

**The ACTING CHAIRPERSON (Ms Lenehan):** I hope that the Minister will endeavour not to take a long time.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I will endeavour not to take a long time. The application of the definition of the word 'technology' means a lot of different things to different people, that is true. One of the things that worries me is that too often it means a very limited area; it means only something that is a gadget, a gismo, that makes people think of the twenty-first century. In fact, technology is really the application of human endeavour to the improvement of life, to the improvement of life process, and that can take many forms. Indeed, technology is as old as humanity, because the moment humanity started living as a social entity technology has been applied by means of tools or by means of anything. What we mean by technological change is the question of new ways of doing things, and that is why I raised the point before in answer to a question from the member for Mount Gambier dealing with process being important. We very often do not think of technological change as involving process rather than just something one can physically identify; it is rather the way one can do things that is also important in technological change. Many of the significant changes in previous years of rapid technological change, the Industrial Revolution among others, involved as many changes to process as they did to actual things. That briefly is not an answer to the question in one way but in the other way it is my statement that sometimes I worry that we are too narrow perhaps in our definition of what technology is.

**Mr LEWIS:** One of the foxes that has already been shot but one to which I still wish to refer, despite the fact that it has been laid, has been mentioned by my colleague the member for Mount Gambier in a question to the Minister about the application of electronic communication systems, such as DUCT, in providing a broader spectrum of educational opportunities to children in remote areas such as there are in rural South Australia, whereby it is clearly to the advantage of those children in future that they will have, unlike their mothers and fathers or older predecessors, access through audio-visual equipment and instantaneous communication with the teacher in the correspondence school.

My five older brothers were wholly or partly educated by correspondence school lessons. I know the enormous problem my mother had as an untrained teacher working with them in their respective exercises. That was very restrictive on



the capacity of the child to acquire the desired skills. I remember the Minister's remarks about that but I am anxious that as far as and as quickly as possible we adapt this technology to children living in remote rural areas and enable them to not only acquire the essentials of survival through the education system of literacy and numeracy but also enjoy the benefits, which are available to children in urban settings, of diversity in their respective curricula.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I endorse the comments that I made earlier in answer to a question from the member for Eyre concerning this matter. I agree that this offers great possibilities for maintaining or further enhancing education opportunities available to students in remote circumstances. We are very proud of the DUCT system and of what has occurred in that regard. Of course, it involves the teleconferencing technique involving telecommunications. It offers us a lot of possibilities—perhaps in the short term many more than other forms of technology. We are investigating the satellite, but with a satellite receiver dishes are required in local communities, and that involves a cost aspect that is quite a lot more than costs associated with having a DUCT receiver on a telephone line.

The other thing that we need to remember is that over the years some interesting things have been done in South Australia in distance communication and distance technology. One of the results of that work is that South Australian industry has a considerable expertise in distance technology. The member for Davenport referred to Codan Pty Ltd. That company has developed this, because one of South Australia's needs concerns coping with distance.

It has also had an effect on the development of educational technology over the years. One does not immediately think of it, yet we should realise that the School of the Air, and things like that, represented profound changes in educational technology for their time and gave the opportunity for educational delivery to be made in a much better way than had previously been possible in regard to children in isolated circumstances. More recently, I think in 1980, the home video scheme was introduced. That was federally funded. We have now been advised that it will continue to be federally funded for the next three years, and we are very pleased about that. Video recorders are provided for homes in isolated communities so that video material can be rotated. In South Australia, we are supplying video materials to such homes. That is yet another way in which we can use television technology.

**Mr LEWIS:** Are there interstate and overseas markets for these programmes?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes. We have an interstate sale of materials, although I do not know that much is sold overseas from either Australia or South Australia. We have had the diverse-use communication technology (DUCT) and the investigation into Aussat and what satellite communication will mean to the education system. We have been doing interesting things over the years in that regard. Other issues need to be taken into account in respect of distance education. We must consider the provision of support at the receiving point if we are to have distance or correspondence education. For instance, we may need teachers based at some of these schools whose job it is to be correspondence teachers at those schools.

**Mr LEWIS:** In asking my question, I wished to draw to the attention of the Minister the considerable benefits that will flow from introducing those systems in the way that they can be introduced for children in isolated communities in the first instance. My next question relates to the concurrent development of that kind of communication for education purposes so as to provide Mum and Dad with

the sort of information that they want for shopping or selling: in other words, videotext. Bearing in mind again that South Australia has, since the introduction of the pedal radio, been a pioneer in this area of advanced technology, how does the Minister see the videotext system developing? For me, it cannot come quickly enough. What problems does the Minister foresee in the adaptation of videotext given that Elders-IXL, the largest stock company in Australia, is using it to convey information to clients through agencies? Indeed, I do not doubt that ultimately it will be the medium through which livestock are sold.

At present, such systems are available for livestock sales, although not to the same extent as the programmed instant replay by means of which everyone who wants to participate as a buyer attends the local hall where the instant replay video is set up. I see no reason why such a system would not enable us to eliminate substantial and costly damage to livestock that is caused by the process that we subject them to at present: we put them into vehicles; take them to the saleyard; unload them; drive them to their pens; frighten them by exposing them to many human beings whom they have not seen before; sell them; and drive them back through the races to trucks and other conveyances such as railway carriages. Indeed, by the time they arrive at the slaughterhouse for slaughter, they have suffered considerable damage and loss of condition. If, however, they could be simply sold on site through the videotext system, all that risk and damage and consequent cost would be eliminated, and there would be considerable benefit to the producer because the market forces would ultimately ensure that the benefit will end up at that end. Will the Minister say whether that development is proceeding apace and whether any impediments are foreseen or have been found by the council, but not mentioned in the report, that might be slowing down the introduction of such a programme?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** The member for Mallee referred to the upgrading of videotext application as it is generally used to include visual presentation of images rather than just text. That is not presently the case with videotext technology. I am not saying that it should not be; that is what was implied. With sale of animals one would want to see an animal, but the videotext system does not allow that yet. That is the next stage.

Videotext has been introduced by Elders IXL. The Department of Agriculture has already experimented with it. Our information so far indicates that it is a mixed success; it is certainly not a total success. The example of Prestel, in the United Kingdom, has not lived up to the great expectations people had of it five years ago, when it was felt that every home would have one, so to speak. However, every home does not have one because every home did not quite see the purpose of having one. That is where in the application of new technology we need to look at the cost effectiveness of what is being done.

That is a decision being made by households in the United Kingdom. They failed to see cost effectiveness from their point of view of application of that new technology. It is a great new technology with the capacity to transfer volumes of information to people. Videotext systems will only really take off if they are attuned to what they are doing, and the kinds of information needed. The honourable member mentioned the rural community which needs information. It does not really need to identify weather forecasts in Barcelona all the time.

The other issues that needs to be taken into account is what kinds of distance technology may grow more rapidly than videotext. Electronic funds transfer is one example of that. Only about four years ago all of us would have seen a television programme about this marvellous village in France where as people bought goods in shops their accounts

were immediately debited from their bank, just as they went to the checkout. People thought that we could not see it here for years, but they are already starting to see that kind of technology applying in South Australia, indeed in Whyalla. It is a technology driven by an observable need by the community that is creating its spread, rather than an assessment that 'this a humdinger of a technology; let us make sure that it flows everywhere.'

It is important to think about that in terms of what new technologies will take place. It all comes down again to the human element involved. It is not a case of what machinery there is; it is a case of how we can enhance the quality of life by using brainpower to create a better quality of life. Technology is an instrument in that process. If technology can be seen to assist in that it will be adopted. If it is not seen to do that, it will not be a great success.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Does the Minister recognise the need for post-implementation reviews by the Data Processing Board? If he does, what action has he taken to ensure that those post-implementation reviews are in fact carried out? I would like to clarify that question with some information and ask how many additional staff the Minister intends to appoint to the Board. From looking at the programme performance budget, it would appear that there is no projected change in staffing levels during 1984-85. The thirty-second report of the Public Accounts Committee drew attention to the need for this, and quoted at some length from evidence taken by the Committee at which the Chairman of the Board (Mr Knight) said:

There has been a report on this. It indicates that we would be looking for another two or three people in order to carry out a review function. This is a proposal of mine because I believe it is a necessary function.

So, the Chairman certainly agrees with that. The thirty-fifth report of the Public Accounts Committee on post-implementation review of computer systems refers back to the original statement of policy for the Board laid down in July 1981. I quote from that report:

(d) Evaluate the performance of Government computer systems and installations. The prime emphasis in this area will be on encouraging use of consistent, regular reviews as an integral part of routine management and performance improvement.

It is certainly in the terms of reference laid down by the Liberal Government in establishing the Data Processing Board. However, the PAC also drew attention to the fact that 350 feasibility advisory studies were carried out by the Board but only 50 post-implementation reviews have so far been conducted. Does the Minister agree with the post-implementation reviews, as does the Chairman? If so, what will the Minister do about it, and is he appointing additional staff to carry out those reviews?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, I do agree with post-implementation reviews. I think that they are important to see that what was promised is in fact fulfilled and that the community's resources are being well used. As to the matter of the PAC report and its recommendations, that matter will be being considered by the Data Processing Board this Thursday. That Board will be giving me advice after its meeting on Thursday. So, my general support for that in terms of its translation into definite actions will await the Data Processing Board's meeting on Thursday.

As to the matter of staffing, I am aware of the Board's staffing needs, and I am presently examining a way to obtain some reallocation of resources in order to assist the Board in that regard in the near future. Of course, if the PAC's recommendations are accepted by the Board, and they advise me accordingly, practical ways of doing that will have to be examined, so that what is being achieved is a practical review of programmes rather than just the generation of voluminous reports using extensive hours of personnel input

which will cost a lot of extra resources with no observable benefit. I know that that issue was addressed by the PAC in terms of the way in which that can be done, but we need to examine whether that recommendation is the most practical one. I am awaiting the report of the Board, but I do support the idea of post-implementation reviews.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Would the Minister clarify a number of points there? As I understand it, the Minister said that there was a likelihood that additional staff would be appointed to the Board for that specific purpose this year. Therefore the programme performance budget that we have before us is in fact out of date, because that shows no increase in staffing at all. I find it hard to comprehend. We have one document served up which we are told to believe, but this evening the Minister has said something quite different. Which of the two do we believe?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Can I clarify one thing? I am presently examining ways of providing some increase in staff to the Board this financial year for the purposes of the operations of the Board. The member makes the point for this purpose. As I said, I am awaiting advice from the Board on Thursday morning, but it is clear that the Board's work programme, whatever developments take place, justifies some improvement in staffing. I am having to examine the reallocation within my portfolio area to assist with that. This work has come up since the preparation of these documents. As the member knows, these documents are not prepared overnight, so it was not an attempt not to provide information to the Committee but rather something that just happened to come along after the preparation of these documents. Clearly, if the recommendations are accepted there will have to be further consideration of the resource implications in the preparation of the 1985-86 Budget. However, that is a separate issue.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I point out to the Minister that the thirty-second report of the Public Accounts Committee was laid on the table on 8 December 1983, nine months ago. So, there has been quite adequate opportunity, and the Government has known about the need to increase staff. The Chairman made it quite clear to the PAC. I am sure that the Chairman would also have made it clear to the Minister. It would appear that for nine months the Minister and the Government have taken no action to implement the recommendations of the PAC.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** One other point that needs to be taken into account is that this matter has had to be taken in the context of a major organisation review of the entire Ministry for Technology and the needs of various other areas. That has been a detailed review that has been considered by the Public Service Board and a lot of issues have been involved. Considerations were undertaken in the 1984-85 Budget process. They did not show up in the 1984-85 Budget allocations. However, as I said, there were some issues that are significant enough that we need to find some re-allocation in budget figures from within the Ministry and that is precisely what I am attempting to do. I hope that some assistance is given where it is needed without being an extra impost on the Budget at large.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** How close is the Government to establishing a criminal information system under the Attorney-General? I presume that this information system would have to be at least examined by the Data Processing Board and in the opinion of the Board how close is it to being practically implemented—in other words, calling for tenders for equipment and so on?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Of course, as the honourable member has already indicated this is under the Attorney-General's responsibility. Tender specifications are presently being drawn up and we would expect them to be released soon for calls. The Data Processing Board will be invited

to comment on the tender specifications and appropriate modifications will be made. We are at the tender specification draw-up stage.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Has the Data Processing Board looked at the whole proposal so far? I presume that that is so.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, very much so. I will ask Mr Kelly to comment.

**Mr Kelly:** The Data Processing Board appraised the proposal some months ago, and a letter of appraisal was recorded in *Hansard* at that time. Since then various discussions have been carried out between the Board, the Chairman of the steering committee of the Justice Information System project, various members of that committee and the project team on various issues of concern to the Board. The Board recognised it as a major project. It is also a very important project. It has particular complications and issues such as privacy, the size and the pay-off times, and it is looking across six major departments of the Government as well as interacting as far as possible with other departments.

Therefore, a great deal of care and attention is being paid to it. At this point tender specifications are being prepared and the Board will comment on these to the steering committee. In fact, it will also comment on the evaluation of tenders once they are received. It will pay particular attention to the cost benefit analysis when the true costs are known after the evaluation of tenders.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Earlier today I questioned the Minister of Transport about an on-line computer system for the Motor Vehicle Registration Department. I was surprised that it is at least another 12 months before that on-line system is due to operate. The Minister indicated today that savings of \$1 million a year can be achieved once the system is operating and it is fair to say that it is now at least three years since that system was first promised.

I remember, as a member of the Budget Review Committee, giving the approval to go ahead with the purchase of equipment as quickly as possible in 1982 because, particularly, of a \$1 million saving in salaries. As the Minister responsible for data processing, can the Minister explain the delay and can he shed any light on how we can speed up some of these processes without making mistakes, so that the savings that are talked about can be achieved, because by the time this equipment is eventually purchased we will have lost in effect \$4 million, which probably would have paid for the equipment several times over?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** I will ask Mr Kelly to comment first on the process followed in the intervening period and I will comment following that.

**Mr Kelly:** The current progress on the motor vehicle registration system is that it is also preparing tender specifications with the aid of consultants, and it is most opportune that it is doing so because it then closely correlates through the co-ordination process of government with the Justice Information System. There are interconnections and data links between those two projects for passage of information about motor vehicle records and the like. It is opportune that both are going to market at the same time or very near to each other. The Data Processing Board is concerned that proper co-ordination processes are in place between the two projects, and officers of the Board have been attending steering committee meetings with the Motor Vehicles Registration Division and will evaluate their tender before issue to market and will also comment on their tender report once they have evaluated submissions.

So, in fact, it is not so much a case of delay in that context but a question of bringing together very major, complicated and reasonably high risk projects. The savings as such will be subject to the collating of savings that can be made against the speed by which a system can be imple-

mented. It cannot be implemented in isolation. It has to take account of its relationship with the total Government information environment. There can be savings, obviously, although they have to be treated with care and caution when naming figures.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** One of the issues that needs to be taken into account is the skills of people involved in the implementation of any new system, how much knowledge is presently held in the minds of people who currently operate a non-computerised or manual system and how one transfers that body of knowledge to a computerised system. Any implementation, while it may have immediate or long-term savings, needs also to take account of the logistics of movement of people before one can achieve figures that may be notionally spoken about.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I thank the officer for the information supplied. I am not being critical of the Data Processing Board, but my concern is that Government Departments are often reluctant to take a step like that for fear of making a mistake. If it is left up to them we will talk about something for years, and that is well known. Departments need leadership and guidance and, at times, a real shove or kick to make them take the final step. Will the Minister supply a complete listing of all data processing equipment purchased by Government and Government authorities within the past 12 months to the value of \$20 000 or above?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Above \$50 000.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** Is any record kept within Government of purchases less than \$50 000? I realise that the Data Processing Board has a cut off of \$50 000, which was established a few years ago. I know that certain Departments are trying to purchase equipment below that cut-off point (they were trying to do it when we were in Government). It may be \$20 000 or \$30 000 worth of equipment and departments buy it in several components, ending up with a rather botched system with no central processor and incompatible units. Can we have a list of equipment purchased to the value of between \$15 000 to \$50 000 and also equipment over \$50 000?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** We cannot supply the information for purchases below the value of \$50 000, but we are aware of the issue that the honourable member is raising. The Board is keenly aware of it and is preparing a micro computer policy which can be adopted for application to purchases such as those to which the honourable member refers.

**Mr Kelly:** The policy to which the Minister refers has been completed and is due to be issued to all Government agencies for comment by the end of October. After that comment has been received and edited, the comments and the policy will be forwarded to the Minister for consideration. Once that is received the Data Processing Board will expect all systems purchased from zero dollars upwards to be automatically recorded in a computer-based system just coming into operation. It was developed by the Board and currently contains all purchases above \$50 000. All micro computers, etc., will be put on automatically by the departments concerned either from actual physical locations connected on line to the Government Computing Centre where the system locates or by going to the Government Computing Centre and using its terminals. This is the first system of its kind by the way that any Government in Australia has.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** That sounds like good news. I would appreciate, when that policy is finalised, if we could see a copy of it. Incidentally, I would appreciate the list of all purchases of \$50 000 and above.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Yes, that will be supplied to the honourable member.

**The Hon. D.C. BROWN:** I would appreciate a brief statement from the Minister on the Government's policy in

terms of the purchase of data processing equipment. I realise that that will be covered in more detail when the actual policy is finally released, but can the Minister outline whether it is a policy that all computers, whether micro, mini, personal or large, should all feed into a central processor? Should there be compatibility throughout Government? Is the Government encouraging decentralisation or encouraging a mixture of centralisation and some decentralised data processing? Could the Minister give a brief outline of where he sees data processing heading in Government?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** In a moment I will ask Mr Kelly to comment on the development of an overall strategy by the Board in this matter. However, clearly the purpose should not be to develop something that is a nice diagram that covers all Government departments and looks nice on a sheet of paper. Clearly, the first question is what is the function proposed that the technology is aiming to assist. What is the process in Government functioning that is being aimed for? Once that question has been addressed, how does it fit into the general information technology layout of that department and that department as it relates to other departments, and how can that functioning be assisted by the use of stand-alones or separate micro computers in each section or a network of micro computers within a department or, indeed, information and technologies that interface with bigger systems, be they with the Government Computing Centre or whatever else? The key starting point is not to say, 'Let's draw up a nice plan that builds a nice grid which looks pretty'; rather, the function involves what is supposed to be the purpose of each application and how we can maximise the use of the resource for the best functioning of each agency.

**Mr Kelly:** Over the past two or three years in particular the Data Processing Board has been concerned with encouraging individual agencies to develop corporate computing plans, not just in producing proposals for individual systems which are part of those plans. In the past six weeks or so it has been starting to bring together those plans on a corporate Government basis and has embarked on a quite ambitious programme for developing an overall technology strategy covering all Government departments and all statutory authorities. The work being done at present is located within the Board. Eventually as this process goes into further detail it will cover liaison with other central Government agencies and then all line agencies. Very fundamentally, this approach is to look at Government needs on a corporate level, recognising that Government is here to serve the public. So, looking at an information technology strategy, it does not look inwards to a Public Service but looks outwards to providing a service to the public. These needs are seen to be realised at the individual agency level, and the strategy we are looking for is that which links those needs through information technology in computing, office automation and data communications. So, the needs are realised, giving maximum accountability to the agency management while meeting the corporate policies of the Government of the day.

It is an interesting point that two weeks ago I mentioned our approach at a conference in Sydney of all States, including the Commonwealth Government and the Government of Fiji, and we are the only State, including the Commonwealth in this, which has embarked on this plan. Already I have received notification that another State is starting to follow our lead. We hope that the process of planning that we are developing, coming back to another honourable member's question, will be saleable in the future.

**Mr LEWIS:** I refer to page 13 of the Annual Report of the Council on Technological Change, where a statement is made as follows:

At the request of the Minister, a biotechnology seminar was conducted at the University of Adelaide where the idea of forming such a committee was discussed. A subsequent review of the seminar was held at which the idea of a co-ordinating/promotional committee was enthusiastically endorsed. At the reporting date, it was anticipated that the Minister for Technology would soon announce the membership and functions of the Biotechnology Committee.

I have no recollection of any such announcement having been made, although I may have been remiss and have not noticed the announcement. Will the Minister provide me with details on the formation of the committee? Has the committee been formed, and if so, what is its membership?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** It was formed some months ago. The meeting at the Adelaide University did take place, at which time the shadow Minister for Technology was present. I formally announced the formation of the Biotechnology Co-ordinating Committee some months ago. Barry Jones and the Premier were also at the meeting. Also on that occasion I announced that Professor Peter MacDonald from Flinders University was the Chairperson of the committee and that Dr Susan Weeks was the Executive Officer of the committee. I was speaking with Professor MacDonald recently and he advised me that he will provide me with an interim report within the next few weeks.

**Mr LEWIS:** Does that committee have an interest in the biotechnology research that is being done where there is an interface between genetic engineering and cellular engineering, or at least reproductive engineering, in plants relevant to the development of new hybrids?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** Among other things, yes.

**Mr LEWIS:** If that is so, are we in South Australia presently engaged in any way with the identification and isolation of the amino acid responsible for the suppression of specific genetically controlled pollen grains so that we can sterilise one parent of a desired hybrid *en masse* by spraying them with that amino acid—this is particularly relevant in the context of cereals—after which process they are fertilised with another desired pollen source from the other parent of the hybrid grown adjacent to it? I believe that I saw matters of this kind reported in a magazine published I think by the Shell Company which they are experimenting with and in regard to which they may already have made a breakthrough. It would seem to me that that is the next quantum leap in the expansion of cereal production, if not in this country, at least in other places around the world.

We have been leaders in plant breeding. We have such outstanding names to our credit as those of Mr Bakewell, who undertook research at Roseworthy College earlier this century with Weapon Wheats. In more recent times there have been men like Rex Krause, and currently Professor Colin Driscoll is at the Waite Agricultural Institute and Gill Hollamby is at Roseworthy Agricultural College. Although I have no certain knowledge, I am sure that they would be interested, if not anxious, to participate in any such programme. Are we getting there with that kind of approach? It is important. When I referred to a quantum leap, I meant of the order of 15 per cent plus, which is a fairly big kick in yield.

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** This matter is certainly being canvassed by the promotions committee. It is one of the biotechnology areas to which they are paying attention. Biotechnology is an area in which endeavour has been the case for many years. Concerning the sorts of area that are being talked about, the earlier moves in plant breeding go back thousands of years with the development of maize and corn by the American Indians, so it is not in that sense a new technology. Those ideas are now being applied in new ways and we have the combination of other technologies with that kind of process to enhance plant varieties, and

there may be more quantum leaps ahead of us in terms of productivity in that area. That matter is being addressed by the committee, which includes a member of the Waite Research Institute, and some of the projects being tackled would be in this area.

**Mr LEWIS:** I thank the Minister for that information. I picked that one from the whole range that was rushing through my mind, such as the genetic manipulation of *dunaliella* for beta carbon production with hydro-carbons as a byproduct if it can be properly harvested in the right state with centrifuges, and so on. They need to be controlled, and 10 years ago it would have been impossible without automatic data processing equipment to do the kind of finite control that is necessary in the refining process. I am glad that the Government is up with that.

I recognise the part that is being played by private industry in rural areas, especially by making a specific contribution to a dedicated fund to finance that kind of research. I sincerely believe (and I would like the Minister's opinion on this) that that is the best way for the brains and inclinations of industrial entrepreneurs to indicate to the people's purse the direction in which technology can advance so as

to enhance the rate of expansion of the economy. Does the Minister agree that it is a good idea to obtain that kind of commitment, however small but still there in principle, from the private sector before committing public funds to any project?

**The Hon. Lynn Arnold:** That is what the Biological Promotions Committee is trying to do: to bring areas of expertise not only from other areas of Government and from academia but also from industry. The South Australian Brewing Company and F.H. Faulding, both of which have expertise in these areas, are represented on the committee. The committee advises the Government and private sector as to how further developments can take in biotechnology.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Are there any further questions? If not, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

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#### ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m., the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 3 October at 11 a.m.