

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 3 October 1984

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

The Hon. D.C. Brown
 Mr D.M. Ferguson
 Mr T.R. Groom
 Mr J. Mathwin
 Mr K.H. Plunkett
 Mr W.A. Rodda

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I will call the lines in the order on which agreement has been reached.

Public Buildings, \$41 571 000

Witness:

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings, Minister of Housing and Construction and Minister of Public Works.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr H.E. Roeger, Director-General, Public Buildings Department.

Mr G.T. Little, Director, Administration and Finance.

Mr R.F. Power, Director, Operations.

Mr R.R. Alwis, Manager, Management Accounting.

Mr B.P. Griffin, Senior Administrative Officer, Minister's Office.

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

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Before any questions are asked, I would like to make a statement to the Committee regarding the current state of the Public Buildings Department and the Government's attitude to it.

The Public Buildings Department has come through a five year period of difficult change and still has much more work to do to achieve its role of providing effective and efficient construction and maintenance of Government buildings. It is the belief of this Minister and this Government that there is an important role to be performed by the public sector in advice, construction and maintenance of Government assets. Through the last decade PBD was recognised as an efficient performer and, although the size of the operation is now smaller, it is my intention that it again becomes cost effective.

In 1979 the Labor Government initiated the reorganisation of the Department, a process which was endorsed by the Liberal Government and which more recently was re-endorsed by the present Labor Government. Whilst the reorganisation is almost complete and a number of benefits are now becoming evident, there is an urgent need to address the costs of services provided by the Department whilst at the same time preserving the level of the blue collar workforce. Both construction and maintenance costs for work carried out by the Operational Services Branch, in the main, are not competitive with the private sector. A major exercise is being undertaken to address this problem. New computerised accounting and project management systems are being developed and the balance of trades in the blue collar

workforce is being given attention, along with the careful programming of work.

The level of maintenance of Government buildings is a growing concern with expenditure having slightly and consistently decreased in real terms over the past five years. I am particularly concerned about the maintenance of Government schools. Quite clearly schools must be safe, adequately maintained and provide a pleasing environment for their students. This Government is committed to these principles and is providing sufficient resources for the short term, within a tight budgetary period. Last year a special allocation of \$1.4 million was made and again another \$3 million has been put aside for special maintenance projects, of which something in the same order will go to schools. This special funding will also enable the Public Buildings Department an opportunity to address trade mix problems within its own work force.

To date this Government and its predecessors have embarked on restructuring PBD. Unfortunately, this has reduced morale, moved many very good people out and created a temporary loss of efficiency. As Minister I now want to revitalise, remotivate and pull together PBD as an effective Government organisation.

The CHAIRMAN: In fairness, I now ask whether the member for Davenport would like to comment on that statement.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I appreciate the Minister's making that statement to begin with. Can I say that as Minister responsible for the Public Buildings Department for three years, and certainly during the major part of both the preparation and the implementation of the reorganisation, I understand fully what the Minister has said. In fact, the Minister would realise that it was my objective to streamline the PBD to make it a more efficient body—with a much smaller workforce—and to highlight the need for professionalism within that Department. I think that the results speak for themselves. The former Government reduced the size of the Public Buildings Department from about 3 400 to about 2 350 during that three-year period.

It was a very difficult period, because we undertook not to sack people and we honoured that undertaking. The Minister has raised a number of points, such as maintenance of Government assets, a subject that I have debated recently in this House. These matters will be raised during questions, so I do not wish to take any further time of the Committee at this stage to pursue them.

Therefore, I proceed with my first question relating to amendments to the Public Works Standing Committee Act. The Minister would be aware that the Public Works Standing Committee is the body that examines major public works costing \$500 000 or more. It reports to Parliament on these projects after taking evidence from PBD officers, the client department and the community or any other person who wishes to give evidence.

I prepared preliminary amendments for this, because there is an urgent need to ensure that the Public Works Standing Committee has the power to go back and look at jobs after they have been completed—in other words, to go back and do a review as to whether or not what was said to the Committee before the project was started has been carried out and, if there have been any problems, to find out the reasons for them and report to Parliament.

That has not been done. This Government has now had two years to introduce those amendments. I am disturbed to see that in the Governor's Speech there was no mention of the fact that such amendments would be introduced. It is an important part of the reorganisation of the Public Buildings Department, as is the way in which the Government looks at increasing the efficiency of construction of

Government assets in this State, to ensure that the Act is changed. Does the Minister intend to introduce amendments? If so, when, and what amendments to the Act does he propose to introduce?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The member for Davenport is quite correct in stating that when he was Minister of Public Works he prepared a draft Bill to amend the Public Works Act. He is also aware that prior to that—under the Corcoran Government—a draft Bill will introduced but not proceeded with. I am concerned that the present Act, covering not only the areas about which the honourable member is talking (giving the Committee the right to go back and review projects), is completely out of date and needs to be modernised.

We need to look at areas, especially in today's environment, such as Government buildings that require vast amounts of money to be spent on renovation but which do not under the terms of the Act, fall into that category. That is something that I am addressing. However, the Government does intend to amend the Act, although I am not quite sure when that will be introduced. I imagine that it will be some time in 1985. However, I am fully cognisant with all the problems to which the honourable member referred.

One of the things that concerns me is that the previous Government still intended to stick to the limit of \$500 000, but, if one looks at the workload of the present Public Works Committee, one sees a need for this Government and Parliament to consider seriously upgrading that sum of money, whether it be to \$750 000 or \$1 million. I am concerned that the Public Works Standing Committee's current workload is creating real problems. I am sure that the member for Victoria, who is a member of that Committee, can confirm that the workload, especially over the past six months, has caused that Committee and its Chairman some concern. It is also causing this Government some concern. In the Estimates of Payments, or the capital works programme, if an item has not been reported on by the Public Works Standing Committee, it cannot be shown.

That is something that really needs to be considered. So, we need to look at the whole Act, bring it before the Parliament and upgrade it, bring it down into modern language and give the Public Works Standing Committee a chance to move into those areas where we are talking about renovation of existing buildings. However, as to whether the Public Works Standing Committee will have the power to report back, the Government will have to look at that fairly closely, but when the amendments come before the Parliament I would like to think that the member for Davenport's concerns about its becoming a streamlined committee will be met.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I can assure the Minister that I will be one strongly supporting appropriate amendments to the Act, including the coverage of statutory authorities, and I would not argue with the fact that there should be some minor adjustment in the cut-off level at which a project would need to go to the committee. In his statement this morning the Minister has highlighted problems in the Public Buildings Department and I would like to bring to his attention a letter from the Mypolonga Primary School dated 1 August 1984. The letter was sent to Mr Peter Lewis, the member for Mallee. The letter is signed by the Acting Principal, the President of the School Council and the President of the Parents Club. I would like to read that letter because I believe that it highlights the sort of problems that confront the Minister at present and then ask a series of questions about the letter, which states:

Dear Mr Lewis,

The School Council, Parents Club, staff and students of Mypolonga Primary School would like to express their concern at the length of time, and number of errors involved in building the

office extensions and classroom modifications at our school. The aforesaid have caused students and teachers alike undue hardships and problems in the course of education. Details are included for your information and action.

Yours faithfully,

I would like to read what they enclosed with that letter:

Mypolonga Primary School applied in the 1981 Education minor works programme to have the art room and office areas built, and three classrooms modified and extended. The overall budget of \$70 000 was divided into two sections, with half to be completed at the beginning of the 1982-83 financial year, and the office area and two classrooms to be completed at the beginning of the 1983-84 financial year. We were prepared for building to commence in September 1983, but this was deferred until December 1983, then February 1984 and finally began on 26 March 1984. During this time, the budget had increased to \$38 600 for the second half of the programme. This was the architect's estimate that was later changed by the works department to \$57 000; \$50 000 of this was paid by the Education Department for work done up to the end of June, and at present, 27 July, there is approximately four more weeks worth of work to do. According to an education spokesperson, any amount over the \$57 000 budget is to be funded by the PBD, and so it is not possible to find the exact deficit through my sources.

Children from years 3-7 have been regularly shunted out of their classrooms and into library and art rooms, where overcrowding and lack of facilities have added to student and teacher problems.

There have been understandable delays as problems with renovating the old building were overcome, and materials ordered took longer to arrive than expected. However, there is still a great deal of time for which there is no accounting. Twice materials have arrived to find double or triple the required amount has been ordered by mistake. Lunch hours have stretched from 11.45 a.m. until 1.15 p.m. on many occasions. Tea breaks in the afternoon frequently begin before 3, and finish just in time to close up before knock-off time at 4 p.m.

Parents and local residents of the town have commented about PBD workmen who have nothing better to do than to wash their cars during working hours . . . thus giving the PBD a bad name with the public. The proprietor of the local garage complained to the School Council about the amount of time one of the men spent at his establishment during working hours, and on a daily basis.

The doors of the fire-escape in room 2 were put on back to front and then the lock was broken, thus leaving the children with no escape in case of fire. Despite numerous requests, this was not remedied for four weeks. Little or no regard is given to the children's presence, as workmen have the radio blaring and carry out full conversations loudly and colourfully in the full hearing of classes.

Several times the electrician called to find that what he had intended doing was ahead of the builders and could not be completed or not done at all, requiring a return visit. The plasterer arrived following a call from the main office in Adelaide to find that the men here were not ready for him and those areas that were ready were so untidy he could not work in them satisfactorily. The plasterer, a private contractor, who tendered for the job in February and who was losing money on it due to increased prices, had come from Adelaide for a 1½ day job, to end up taking two days plus overtime, because he had to wait for one of the rooms to be finished before he could work there.

School council had measured and estimated the amount of jarrah timber to come out of the old walls, and found that less than half was left a week after it was cut out of the walls. A member of the school community had seen one of the workmen leave the school with wood sticking out of the station wagon he drove, and a blanket draped over it. Upon questioning, the man claimed that all that was in the car was a tool-box. However, no-one can account for the missing wood, similar to which the man had offered to buy.

Long telephone conversations of a personal nature were held by two members of the group, usually in working time, interrupting staff members and students doing small group work in the staff room (there being nowhere else to go). Although they were paid for by the men concerned, conversations had nothing at all to do with work. A terrible mess has been left in both classrooms and although one room has been cleaned to an extent, it has caused undue work for the cleaner and upset the teachers, whose personal property as well as school property has been soiled. Photographs of one of these classrooms are included as evidence. Notice the lack of plastic covering on the carpet, despite requests.

An average of three men have been on the site over a period of 17 weeks. They are all travelling in separate cars and claim \$250 per week each—a total of \$750 per week, and an estimated \$15 000 by the end of the work period. Since the job has taken

closer to 20 weeks than the estimated 10 weeks, travelling expenses have nearly doubled. Surely one car would suffice. All members of our school community are aware that there will be some inconvenience to everyone when a project such as this is undertaken. We were prepared to make adjustments and put up with these problems. However, I am sure our complaints are justifiable.

That is the end of the enclosed submission. Will the Minister carry out a full and thorough investigation and have the results of it reported to the House of Assembly as soon as possible or have it inserted in the *Hansard* transcript of the Estimates Committee?

I would also appreciate the Minister's finding out why the men were paid for separate travel in, I presume, their own cars to Mypolonga each day on a daily basis at an apparent cost of \$250 each per week and a total cost per week of \$750. Why was not one vehicle used instead of three vehicles? Why has the job taken approximately twice the estimated period? Why have materials ordered been sometimes three times in excess of or double the requirement?

What happened to the old jarrah removed from the old building? What supervision was applied from head office to this job and why were these mistakes not picked up earlier rather than waiting for the school council to write a letter, such as the one that it has had to write? Could the Minister also investigate whether excessive lunch hours and afternoon breaks have occurred? My understanding was that part of the introduction of the 38-hour week negotiations or the 19-day month negotiations with the unions was the abolition of the afternoon tea break. I am, therefore, surprised to find the men even have an afternoon tea break, let alone an afternoon tea break of approximately one hour. I ask whether that is in fact practised on other jobs as well.

I would also ask that the Minister take appropriate steps to make sure that there is an apology given to the school and the local Mypolonga community for what is obviously an absolute disgrace, if what this letter in fact states is correct. It concerns me that a letter such as this should be required to be written from an Acting Principal of a school, a President of a school council and a President of a parents club. I would appreciate an assurance from the Minister that all that I have requested this morning will in fact be done and reported to the House.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: When the Public Buildings Department receives a letter such as the honourable member has read out, both the Department and myself are very concerned. Originally that letter went to the member for Mallee; it should have actually gone to the member for Murray. The member for Murray kindly passed it on to my Department. I did call for an immediate report because I was concerned that Public Buildings Department employees were in effect doing things that they should not: allegations of stealing; allegations of washing cars and so on; allegations of taking extended lunch hours; allegations of using the school phone to make private calls all caused me a lot of concern. First, the honourable member has kindly read out the letter to the Committee and asked me to make a full report. I have had a full report prepared and I will now make this available to the Committee. First, I will read the letter which I sent to the member for Murray and which I think sums up the attitude of the PBD and the attitude of this Government. It states:

Dear Mr Wotton,

Thank you for your letter of 10 August 1984, concerning the extensions and alterations at the Mypolonga Primary School.

Following the receipt of your correspondence, I requested, and have now received, a comprehensive report on the project and associated allegations. Without going into laborious detail, careful examination has revealed that a number of the complaints addressed by the School Council were matters that fell outside the control of the Public Buildings Department, or where contractors' staff were not subject to the direct control of the project supervisor.

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However, investigation has revealed that, whilst not all complaints can be justified, some unsatisfactory practices did occur on site. These practices are not tolerated by the management of PBD and the appropriate officers have been reprimanded and counselled. This action should ensure that similar occurrences are avoided in the future.

It is regrettable that the Principal or the School Council did not raise their concerns with PBD management at an earlier stage so that corrective measures could have been undertaken immediately, rather than waiting until the project was virtually completed.

Nevertheless, both the Director-General of the Public Buildings Department and I apologise to the staff and students at the school for any inconvenience that they have experienced as a result of the shortcomings.

Yours sincerely,

The letter is signed by me.

Dealing with the allegations, it is fair to say that there was a comprehensive report made by officers of the Public Buildings Department: in no way was there any attempt to cover up malpractices that had occurred. As I said earlier, those officers were reprimanded and counselled.

I cannot give an assurance to the Committee that that will never happen again, and I think the honourable member would appreciate that fact. I think this could be seen as being an isolated incident. In most cases where PBD staff go out to undertake maintenance or minor works programmes in schools or other Government buildings maintained by that Department, they do a good job, and the people in the buildings concerned are quick to inform the Department how satisfied they are. The allegations made and the replies to them are as follows:

Paragraph 1—'. . . and finally began on 26 March 1984.'

Answer—Preliminary investigation by supervisor commenced on 29.3.84. Project commenced on 2.4.84. No other comment on this paragraph.

Paragraph 2—'Children from Years 3-7 have been regularly shunted out of their classrooms . . .'

Answer—Children have been moved from their classrooms on three occasions during the course of the project as follows:

- (a) moved from eastern classroom once for one week following request from supervisor to teacher and Principal because of excessive noise and dust.
- (b) teacher in the western classroom offered to move out for similar reasons.
- (c) on one other occasion, again upon request, moved out for a period of four weeks into the Art Room. We needed the classroom for working space and long lengths of materials.

This cannot be described as regularly shunting children out, but was necessary on the above occasions to execute the works.

Paragraph 3—'. . . and materials ordered took longer to arrive than expected. However, there is still a great deal of time for which there is no accounting . . .'

Answer—As already stated, this project is 38 working days behind schedule and is accounted for as follows:

Awaiting materials	20 days
Unforeseen work	10 days
Variation Orders (to date)	8 days
Total	38 days

At one stage earlier in the project, we did contemplate closing the project down because of the serious effect that the lack of materials was having on progress, brought about by industrial action by the purchasing officers.

However, because all our other projects were suffering a similar fate, we had no choice but to continue with the project with the smallest labour force that materials available could sustain, because no other work was available elsewhere. As a result, the project duration was extended.

Paragraph 3 (second sentence)—'Twice materials have arrived to find double or triple the required amount . . .'

Answer—Hardiplank cladding was ordered by the supervisor and found to be three times the quantity required when delivered to site. The excess material was returned to the supplier and a credit received. Some sheets of plasterboard left over from this project have been returned to Netley for use elsewhere.

Paragraph 4—'Lunch hours have stretched from 11.45 a.m. until 1.15 p.m. . . .'

Answer—Our supervisor states that in the first month of the project, he did allow personnel to cease work at 11.55 a.m. to wash and clean up on occasions when extremely dirty and dusty conditions existed, and recommenced work on one or two occasions

at 12.55 p.m. at the latest. He was reprimanded and instructed that lunch breaks are not to exceed ¼ hour.

It should be noted, however, that trade contractors do not necessarily take their lunch at the same time that we do and could give the impression of lengthy lunch breaks, when contractors are on site.

I think that is fair comment: school staff could not differentiate between contractors and PBD workers. I continue to quote:

After the first month of the project, the construction officer allowed the lunch break to be reduced to half an hour and for work to cease at 4.15 p.m., to allow our employees to get an earlier start home.

It is policy not to alter start time, breaks and finishing time on any of our projects and the construction officer has been reminded accordingly.

Paragraph 4 (second sentence)—'. . . tea break in the afternoon frequently begin before 3.00 and finish just in time to close up . . .'

Answer—Our supervisor admits allowing a ten minute tea break in the afternoons but strongly denies the above allegation. He has been severely reprimanded for allowing afternoon tea breaks at all because they are not part of any award.

Paragraph 5—'. . . PBD workmen who have nothing better to do than wash their cars during working hours.'

Answer—Cars have not been washed during working hours, but on a few occasions during dirty weather, our personnel have wiped grime from windscreens, head and tail lights. Contractors and PBD trucks have on occasions filled up with water and hosed windscreens, etc., in dirty weather.

Paragraph 5 (second sentence)—'. . . the proprietor of the local garage complained to the School Council about the amount of time . . .'

Answer—Our supervisor and two tradesmen have had repairs to their vehicles carried out by the local garage during the course of this project.

On one occasion, the garage repaired the brakes of one tradesman's vehicle and he found that on braking, vibration was so severe that it necessitated having the vehicle repaired at Murray Bridge.

He returned to the local garage and received a refund from the proprietor. Our supervisor states that since this incident, other repairs have been carried out on other vehicles and the proprietor has been hostile with those concerned.

As far as time spent by one of the men at the proprietor's establishment during working hours and on a daily basis is concerned, our supervisor denies such an allegation and states that the proprietor, because of the incident described, is prejudiced against our personnel.

Paragraph 6—'The doors of the fire escape in room 2 were put on back to front and then the lock was broken . . .'

Answer—One door only was hung the wrong hand in room 1, not room 2, and was changed to the other hand approximately one week later, when external steps and landings had been installed to both rooms.

No lock existed on either door, but barrel bolts and one of these was accidentally broken. A variation order was then issued to provide night latches which were received about one month later.

Please note that prior to hanging the new doors, there were no fire escape doors to any room and there never have been.

Paragraph 7—'. . . as workmen have the radio blaring and carry out full conversations loudly and colourfully . . .'

Answer—Not once during the course of the project has our supervisor been approached by teachers or the Principal regarding this matter.

Paragraph 8—'Several times the electrician called to find that what he had intended doing was ahead of the builders . . .'

Answer—The electrical contractor visited the project of his own volition at random when he was in the area to assess progress and provide labour as required. He was certainly not requested to call regularly by our supervisor.

Paragraph 8 (second sentence)—'. . . The plasterer arrived following a call from the main office in Adelaide to find that the men here were not ready for him . . .'

Answer—The contract plasterer arrived on site at approximately 8.30 a.m. and did not commence work until 10.30 a.m. The two hours were lost whilst the plasterer complained about the amount of work he was expected to do compared with the amount he had priced and that not all the work was ready for him, but there was plenty of work ready for him to tackle.

It was the plasterer's responsibility at the time of tendering to visit the project to see the full extent of the works as stipulated in the contract documents. However because his price was so low, we did assist him free of charge with sanding down of flush jointing.

The plasterer has not lodged any claim for additional costs due to work not being ready for him and would not be justified anyway because once he started, he continued until completion, the next day.

Paragraph 9—'School Council had measured and estimated the amount of jarrah timber to come out of the old walls, and found that less than half was left a week after it was cut out . . .'

that is the allegation of stealing—

Answer—Seven jarrah studs were removed from the existing wall between classroom 1 and annexe 1. The studs were 3.0 metres long and to facilitate removal, were cut at approximately 800 mm above floor level. The seven longer lengths are still stored below the school building. The short 800 mm off cuts were discarded.

The existing wall between classroom 2 and annexe 2 was also removed in a similar fashion. However, the seven studs in this wall were oregon, not jarrah, and were reused elsewhere on the project.

This section of the building is of a different construction and this has not been realised by the School Council and hence their confusion over the amount of jarrah timber involved, namely seven lengths at 2.4 metres not 14 lengths.

Paragraph 9 (second sentence)—'. . . a member of the school community had seen one of the workmen leave the school with wood sticking out of the station wagon . . .'

Answer—Our supervisor explained that he was approached by a member of the School Council who stated that a workman driving a red station wagon was seen leaving the project with something in the back covered with a rug, and wished to talk to the owner.

The owner of the vehicle, one of our tradesmen, denied ever taking any timber from the project and pointed out that he kept a tool box in his vehicle covered with a rug to avoid the possibility of his car being broken into to get at his tools.

The police were not called in to investigate the matter by the community or the School Council.

Paragraph 9 (third sentence)—'However, no-one can account for the missing wood, similar to which the man had offered to buy.'

Answer—The tradesman explained to me that he had offered to purchase from the School Council some existing timber bench seats, not jarrah studs, and he did this by asking his supervisor to approach the Acting Principal.

The School Council replied that he should wait until nearer the end of the project. All seating is still stored in the school's lunch shed.

It would appear that the School Council have their materials mixed up and that there never was any missing timber, or any taken from the project.

Paragraph 10—'Long telephone conversations of a personal nature were held by two members of the group . . .'

Answer—Our supervisor admitted that he and one other employee made telephone calls of a personal nature regarding their children and repairs to their vehicles.

The school never complained to the supervisor of these calls at the time.

However, any calls regarding vehicles could be described as work related, because of the need for employees to get to and from work.

Paragraph 11—'A terrible mess has been left in both classrooms . . .'

Answer—Steps were taken to protect rooms by covering floors with plastic sheeting and a tarpaulin was used to separate classroom 1 from the work area. It is accepted that more care could have been taken with floor protection by replacing plastic sheeting as it became torn.

Prior to demolition work commencing, our supervisor asked the teachers to remove personal and school property from the classrooms because of the likelihood of excess dust. Some property was removed but not all.

It can only be expected on a project involving mainly alterations and additions far more debris and dust will be present than normal.

No comment can be made regarding photographs of one of the classrooms because they were not provided.

Paragraph 12—'An average of three men have been on the site over a period of 17 weeks. They are all travelling in separate cars . . .'

Answer—There have been an average of three men on site for the duration of the project, namely, 20 weeks. They are travelling in separate cars because we cannot force an individual to transport labour unless he wishes to do so and in any case it would not be practical in this instance because of the distance between their homes. One individual, for example, would have to start approximately 5 a.m. to pick up others to be on site before 7.45 a.m.

The cost per week per man for mileage and travelling time is \$285.65 and the cost per week for one person at a hotel at Murray

Bridge is marginally more expensive at \$300 approximately, and this is why we allowed our personnel to travel to the project by car.

Had there been no delays whatsoever on this project, and for example six men had completed the work in 10 weeks, instead of the actual case of three men for 20 weeks, the costs for mileage etc. and hotel accommodation would still have been the same.

Paragraph 13—'All members of our school community are aware . . .'

Answer—It is my view that the children using the two classrooms where demolition work was required, etc., should have been housed in temporary transportable accommodation for perhaps the duration of the project. This would have considerably reduced any inconvenience to the school community. However, this was not our decision to make.

I hope that by reading out that report from a member of my staff I have answered all the questions that the member for Davenport has put to the Committee. If not, on reading the transcript, I will provide additional information. I think that the point that needs to be made is that whenever there is a serious complaint made—

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: On a point of order, Mr Acting Chairman. I do not wish to interrupt the Minister but, as he has quoted from a Government docket, I ask that the whole of that docket be tabled, as the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly provide.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Ferguson): I am not sure that the Standing Orders of the House of Assembly apply. The Committee operates under separate Sessional Orders, which do not refer to the tabling of documents. I ask whether the Minister is prepared to table that document.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I have read verbatim the exact report that was provided to my office. That would now be in *Hansard*. I see no relevance in the further request. The point I was making is that I am concerned, and PBD is concerned, when serious allegations come into—

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: On a further point of order, Mr Acting Chairman, I am not satisfied: it is well known that these Estimates Committees abide by the procedures of the Parliament whereby, with any docket that is read from, the whole of that docket can be required to be tabled. There is other matter in that docket besides that to which the Minister has referred. I ask that the whole of the docket be tabled.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: My ruling is that the Minister is appearing as a witness and not as a Minister and he is not obliged to table the document. The Sessional Orders of the Committee are contained in a leaflet which has been distributed and which in fact is in front of honourable members. Referring to paragraph (15), the suggestion is that the proceedings should follow as far as possible the procedures observed in a Committee of the Whole House. I am ruling that there is no need to table the document.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: This Committee is in charge of its own affairs, and accordingly I move that the whole of that docket be tabled.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Is the motion seconded?

Mr RODDA: Yes, Sir.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The motion is seconded. I put the motion. Those for the motion say 'Aye', those against say 'No'. I believe the Noes have it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Divide!

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Ring the bells.

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee has before it a motion by the member for Davenport that calls upon the Minister to table certain documents. I call on members to indicate that they are in favour of the resolution simply by raising their hands. I count two for and three against: the motion is lost.

Motion thus negatived.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I expected that result from a Party that has no concern for

ensuring efficiency within Government departments. It is interesting that the Government has used its numbers. If these allegations are serious, and I believe they are, the Government members on this committee have stopped the tabling of the full docket on this material. They should be aware—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair will not sit here and allow the member for Davenport to embark on an argument as to the pros and cons of a vote that has just been taken. I point out to the member for Davenport that this is an Estimates Committee and that it literally has its own Standing Orders. It has nothing to do with what he might or might not be able to do if we were in the House. I hope that the member for Davenport does not proceed on with that barrage of interjection. Has the honourable member any more questions?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would like the Minister to respond to my second question.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I comment on the honourable member's request for that information. My interpretation of what this Estimates Committee is all about is that the Minister appears before a Committee of the House and he is asked to give particular information.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I do not know that I will allow the Minister either to embark upon a debate as to what we are and are not going to do in the Estimates Committee. I have already explained quite clearly what is the procedure for the Estimates Committee. If the Minister wishes to reply to a question asked by the honourable member, he is quite at liberty to do so. However, unless he has a reply to a question we will proceed with further questions.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I ask my third question. When I was Minister I issued an instruction that the day labour force of the Public Buildings Department was not to be used on any project outside the Adelaide metropolitan area unless it had the Minister's specific approval. The reason for this is obvious: one is involved either in paying very considerable travel expenses (which are estimated in the case of Mypolonga Primary School at \$15 000) or in very considerable living expenses that have to be paid to the day labour force.

What the Minister has outlined is the very reason why the Liberal Government insisted that those types of projects be done by outside or private contractors. The Minister himself highlighted the justification for the decision I made earlier. Has the Minister withdrawn that instruction that I issued as Minister of Public Works to the Department or, if he has not, who has withdrawn it? When was the instruction withdrawn and for what reasons?

I believe that the Minister's detailed response covers a number of points that I raised, for which I thank him. I am disappointed that he should have been upset over the request for the full docket to be tabled. I thought that that was a reasonable request. I asked other points as well. I now ask the Minister to make sure that those other questions are responded to. I also ask whether the Minister will now carry out an investigation into whether afternoon tea breaks are taken anywhere else within the Public Buildings Department and, if so, whether they are in contravention of the award?

The Minister himself acknowledged today that tea breaks being taken at the Mypolonga Primary School were in breach of that award, particularly as it was a subject that was resolved as part of the granting of a 38-hour week to the workforce. It is a serious matter to see some of the trade-offs achieved as part of those negotiations virtually lost in a matter of two years under this Government.

I also ask the Minister to take more appropriate action, because I believe that a severe reprimand for the points that he has highlighted is inadequate. It needs to be more

than that in terms of action by the Minister to correct the sort of problems that he has outlined. I ask the Minister to look again at what further action he should take and to report back to this Committee or to the House of Assembly.

I understand the problems that the Minister faces. I would be the first to stand up and say that on most major projects the Public Buildings Department does an excellent job, but problems tend to arise on smaller projects. I experienced that as Minister. I am not trying to throw a blanket criticism over the whole Department, but the sort of problems that I highlighted this morning occur not as isolated incidents, but on numerous occasions.

For instance, the theft of materials was something that I pursued as Minister. I had such matters reported to me on previous occasions when in Opposition. When I was Minister several prosecutions were laid or people were sacked from the Department for theft of materials. I always appreciated the co-operation I received from the Director-General, who immediately instructed that a full investigation be carried out and asked that the police be called in. It is important that efficiency operates within a large Government department such as this.

Will the Government reconsider its attitude towards making sure that the majority of work is done by outside contractors because in that way, through sheer force of economics, one can ensure that the sort of inefficiencies that have developed on this project will not recur on other projects?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will certainly undertake an investigation in regard to tea breaks to find out whether Public Buildings Department staff are taking unauthorised tea breaks outside the award in other work areas. I will bring down a report to the Committee. In regard to the question about a severe reprimand and counselling being sufficient in that case, it was my officers' view (in which I concurred) that it was. It was not serious enough to dismiss people from the Public Buildings Department.

In the case of stealing or any other major offence, certainly that kind of action will take place (as it took place under the previous Administration and as it has taken place under Administrations going back through the years). Regarding the previous Minister's instruction that Netley based personnel are not to be used outside the metropolitan area, I do not know whether that was an instruction or an understanding. I ask Mr Roeger to advise the Committee exactly what the situation was when the member for Davenport was the Minister and what the situation is now.

Mr Roeger: As the Minister says, I am not clear about whether the honourable member, as previous Minister, gave a specific instruction. I would have to check the records to ascertain whether it was a written instruction, but it certainly was an understanding that the Department would not send people away to the country to do work if that involved travelling and accommodation costs. To some extent the principle still applies. The Department would be very reluctant to send people away to country areas to do work that would simply increase costs, which we would want to avoid. However, in some cases it is necessary in order to have a programme of work for all the tradesmen to keep them continually employed now and again to do some near country jobs.

In recent times we have done work on a school at Birdwood; there is a particular project at Mypolonga; and we did a small job at Cleve, where we had the right kind of people available to do the job and it fitted into the overall programme for utilisation of employment. Some other jobs come up which are not suitable for contract, anyway, where there is difficulty in specifying in detail the extent of the work and giving a fairly firm base on which a contractor could produce a price. However, our general policy is to

avoid sending away people to do the work where it would involve additional accommodation and/or travelling costs.

Mr PLUNKETT: My question relates to the Public Buildings Department. On page 156 under 'West Terrace Cemetery—Administration expenses, maintenance, minor equipment and sundries', I see that \$34 000 was voted in 1983-84 for this line. However, actual payments amounted to \$92 259. Can the Minister explain this variation?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The Committee may be aware of or recall some criticism by the President of the Historical Society of South Australia, Mr R. Nichol, some time ago when he expressed concern with regard to the derelict state of some historical pioneer graves in the West Terrace Cemetery. It received quite a fair amount of press publicity inasmuch that, while most of our pioneers were buried in the West Terrace Cemetery, little or nothing was being done by the State Government to bring those graves to some form of decent standard. It so happened that the PBD had set aside a sum of money from its overall maintenance programme to do some work there, bearing in mind that it was not the responsibility of the Government to maintain graves: that was the responsibility of families connected with people buried there.

However, the work that the PBD did was quite significant. If members of the Committee would like to go to the West Terrace Cemetery, they will see the work that has been carried out by our maintenance people. There is still a lot of work to be done, and that is why in the allocation for 1984-85 we have set aside an additional sum of \$91 000 to continue necessary maintenance work. However, I would like to make the point that the Government does not accept that it has the full responsibility of maintaining graves: that is the responsibility of those people who have ancestors buried there. So, this work will be an ongoing programme.

I do not know whether we can complete this work in this coming financial year or whether money needs to be allocated next financial year. However, we are trying to contact members of the community who have some interest in the graves in that area to inform them that they have a responsibility to maintain graves. A lot of the work this coming year will be carried out on the paths, landscaping, etc. However, the initial \$92 259 was spent on upgrading grave sites.

Mr PLUNKETT: I follow up that question and again refer to page 156 under 'Electorate Offices—Accommodation and service costs'. I see that the vote was \$333 000, actual payments were \$372 864 and the proposed amount \$378 000. There seems to be a substantial increase. Can the Minister inform us what that increase is about?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: All members would be well aware of the demands that are placed on their electorate offices. I notice that even in some of the previous examinations questions were asked about word processors, etc. However, actual payments amounting to \$372 864 was a result of over-expenditure on office machines, hire and repairs, rents, telephone rents and calls. In some areas, such as photocopying, where one goes above one's allocation, individual members are required to reimburse the PBD.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Such as the member for Davenport.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes, I will give credit to the member for Davenport because, when he was the Minister of Public Works, he tried to accommodate the problems that some members had in regard to telephone rental when he incorporated a new scheme that was for the benefit of individual members of Parliament. However, in the case of those items for which one has only a fixed sum of money or a fixed amount of paper for photocopying, one is required to reimburse the PBD. The increased provision for 1984-85 is to cover expected cost increases. It is not a significant amount, but, if further demands are made by members of

Parliament (and in most cases quite justified demands), the Government will seriously have to consider increasing that allocation for 1984-85.

Mr PLUNKETT: On page 156 under 'Leader of the Opposition—Administration expenses, minor equipment and sundries', I see that the voted amount last year was \$13 500; actual payments amounted to \$15 048; and the proposed expenditure this year is \$18 000. Can the Minister explain the difference?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The actual voted line was \$13 500. The breakdown for 1983-84 was as follows: for minor office equipment \$200; hire of office machines \$4 000; travelling expenses \$9 000; and sundries \$340. The significant increase in actual payments related to travelling expenses, which went from \$9 000 to \$10 945. I do not have a breakdown of why travelling expenses exceeded the sum voted by that amount. However, I understand that obviously the Leader of the Opposition was able to provide information to the Department to justify that increase. Also, the sum of \$3 000 is allocated for 1984 for the installation of telex facilities in the office of the Leader of the Opposition.

The Leader put forward a proposal to the Government that he should have telex facilities. The Government responded to that request and that is one of the reasons why the proposed sum for 1984-85 has gone up from \$15 048 to \$18 000. Also, there has been an increase in the allocation of travelling expenses from \$9 000 originally voted in 1983-84 to \$10 000 for 1984-85.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Public Buildings Department for some time has had a surplus of weekly paid employees—so called day labour employees. That does not necessarily imply that the people are not working, but that they are surplus to requirements even though jobs are being found for them. Will the Minister indicate to the Committee how many surplus employees there are at present and what reduction in surplus employees has occurred in the last year? What reduction does the Minister anticipate will occur during the next 12 months? Would he also indicate the type of jobs on which these people are now working and what additional funding was required to find work for those surplus employees? I also refer to Government instruction—I think it was called the Premier's instruction—issued in early 1983 to all Government Departments that, before having any work done by outside contractors, that work should be referred to the Public Buildings Department to see whether that Department can carry out the work. Does that instruction still stand? Is it the Government's intention to continue that instruction indefinitely or to withdraw it and, if so, when?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is the view of this Government that we have no surplus employees within PBD. I take it that the honourable member is referring to blue collar workers, or was it to Public Service Act employees?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Both, but principally in the blue collar area.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No surplus labour is employed at PBD. They are all gainfully employed. The figure proposed for 1984-85 will be 1 250 average full-time equivalents within the Public Service in the blue collar area. We have made the statement before that all our tradesmen, provided they are in the wages vote, are being gainfully employed. It is Government policy to reduce numbers progressively through attrition, and the proposed target for 1984-85 is 1 250 blue collar workers.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am surprised to hear from the Minister that there are now no surplus blue collar workers. At the end of my time as Minister there were something like 220 to 250 surplus blue collar workers, and I know that the reduction in the Department's work force since that time has not accounted for the removal of 220 people. I

am also amazed that, if there are no surplus employees, the Government is sending its day labour force to Mypolonga Primary School and incurring transport costs. Part of the Minister's justification was that the Department had to find work for employees. The Minister has put forward two quite separate arguments today: one justifying why people were sent to Mypolonga from Adelaide, and the other claiming that there are no surplus employees. I ask the Minister to reassess the answer he has given. Will he also cover the other question as to whether or not the instruction issued by the Premier to all Government departments to refer work to the Public Buildings Department has yet been withdrawn or is likely to be withdrawn?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The difference is the philosophy of the previous Government and the philosophy of this Government. The previous Government embarked on an exercise to put the bulk of the work out to the private sector, thereby creating a surplus labour force within PBD. This Government has changed and is ensuring by its policies and programmes within PBD that all people employed by PBD are gainfully employed. It is a red herring when the member for Davenport says that when he was Minister there were 220 to 250 people sitting around doing nothing.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I did not say that—I said 'surplus to requirements'.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I recall the member for Davenport saying a couple of Wednesdays ago in the House that employees were sitting around doing nothing. That was because the previous Government put all that work out to the private sector and therefore left very little or no work for our people. In the same way it tried to give the work ultimately to the Visiting Tradesmen Scheme. Whilst the member will say that the Visiting Tradesmen Scheme was very successful in that it provided much needed work in different areas—whether it be on council owned properties, schools etc. (and I acknowledge that some schools felt that the programme was beneficial—I am not denying that)—it comes down to a difference in philosophy. The previous Government was hell bent on putting out as much work as possible to the private sector. This Government has maintained a commitment to its blue collar work force employed within PBD and keeps them gainfully employed.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The parents of the Mypolonga Primary School children might question the last statement from the Minister that the work force is kept gainfully employed. My second question relates to school maintenance. In his opening comments the Minister acknowledged that there was a major maintenance problem, particularly in schools but also in other Government areas of Government assets. The Minister made the statement that, over some period, the maintenance funds had declined in real terms. I have been somewhat more precise and have tabled in the House in the last few weeks a specific table showing funds allocated for maintenance of not only schools but also Technical and Further Education buildings, police, courts and other Government buildings. It showed that the former Liberal Government took the amount from \$19.8 million up to \$24.9 million, but last year it dropped down to \$22.8 million. In looking at the comparison on pages 155 and 156, it would appear that the money allocated for labour and costs generally (including costs for materials) has dropped from \$40.9 million to \$39 million.

One of the major components of that, of course, is in fact maintenance; approximately \$23 million (or more than half of that allocation) will be for maintenance. It would appear therefore that there is a real reduction of funds allocated this year of about \$1.9 million without allowing for inflation in wages and in material costs. The Minister has said that \$3 million has been set aside as a special maintenance fund. Could the Minister indicate what portion

of that \$3 million he expects to go to the Public Buildings Department? I am told that part of that \$3 million will also go to the E & WS Department, the Highways Department and possibly to the State Transport Authority? Assuming that there has been a real reduction this year of \$1.9 million, without taking into account the cost of inflation, and allowing for a 6 per cent inflation rate (which is what the Federal Treasurer has allowed), we would expect, therefore, that there has been a real reduction in the allocation to PBD of about \$4.5 million, or perhaps as high as \$5 million.

Therefore, it would appear that the funds that the PBD will have this year for maintenance will be even further reduced, compared to the 17 per cent real cut last year. I know, that since moving a motion in this House several weeks ago on maintenance of Government schools, there is enormous concern out amongst the parents of school children about the maintenance of school assets and the problem is far worse than I had even realised myself.

I would appreciate the Minister letting the Committee know what he estimates is the backlog of maintenance work within the Government schools. In other words, if all of the maintenance was worked out—not just urgent maintenance—what would it cost in any one year? When I asked for that figure to be prepared I think the Director-General—and I am working from memory—said that it was about \$27 million back in about 1981. On that basis, for the Government to catch up that backlog over the next four or five years—assuming that there is an ongoing maintenance need—it would need to increase its allocation for maintenance by about 25 per cent. That is how serious the problem is. So, I would appreciate the Minister's providing the Committee with that information.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I think that there is not one member in this House—I am not talking about just this Committee—who could not give examples of schools in his or her electorate where, in the opinion of the school principal, the school council or the parents, some necessary upgrading should be carried out. I think that is generally accepted. One could also selectively pick certain schools which would be outside the norm and could be seen as areas where there has been considerable neglect over the past five or six years. I was heartened when the member for Davenport, in introducing the motion, said that if we are talking about blame, it could be spread over many years.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am not blaming you as Minister, but it has reduced this year, last year and the previous year.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Successive Governments have, in the light of tight budgetary situations, perhaps not allocated as much on school maintenance as need be. Another problem is that we are dealing with the open space type schools which went away completely from the traditional type classroom situation. Carpets, wet areas, air-conditioning and other things considered necessary to give a better education standard to young South Australians were included: that in itself has created a problem. We are now finding that carpets and air-conditioners need to be replaced, and so on, again creating a further situation over and above the maintenance of school grounds, internal and external painting etc.

So, that is the scenario. I would like to think that, when the Committee grapples with this problem and questions me as the Minister, or when the Parties look at where we should be going, many considerations need to be taken into account. What has been spent over the past five years? How much money was injected by the previous Government? How much money was injected into the maintenance programmes by this Government last year, and how did it reflect on the school maintenance programme?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It is all in the Auditor-General's Report.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes. I have some brief comments about the standards of certain schools. I am not suggesting that the member for Davenport used scare tactics. I would not make that accusation. However, when I looked at the schools listed by him in his attempt to raise public awareness of the state of school maintenance, I find—and I think it is very disappointing—that some of the allegations and the advice that I have received about the state of those schools is not what was outlined by the honourable member. It is fairly important that I correct the record in this Committee dealing with the schools that were named and give the true situation of the state of each school at present and the programme to correct any problems which still exist.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I rise on a point of order. I do not want to stop the Minister from giving that information but as it will obviously be a lengthy list the Minister wants to go through, can he either table the information without reading it, which I think this Committee would accept—

The CHAIRMAN: Any relevant material can be tabled and put into the *Hansard*. We can do that because Standing Orders of the Committee allow for that. So, if the Minister has relevant material that can be inserted in *Hansard* he is quite at liberty to do that if he so desires.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I did not mention specific schools today, as far as maintenance is concerned. The Minister could respond to my motion: I am happy if he tables it. I am worried about the time, as we only have about a half an hour left in this Committee.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is all hand written: it is not typed. The intention is not to waste the Committee's time, and I am sure the honourable member appreciates that. I feel that we are in a very emotive area. In the case of the Hawthorndene School, the allegation is that it was built in 1965, painted, and has not been painted since.

That is a very emotive statement, and it is wrong. I believe that if it is simply tabled it will be lost. I think that the allegations made should be responded to immediately, and I do not think that it would take up more than five minutes of the Committee's time. They are brief notes which I put together this morning, there being no time to have them typed. I also point out that where allegations have been upheld, when a member has said something and nothing has been done—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair does not want a fiasco. I think that the Committee is master of its own destiny; it has reached an agreement which is logical, sound and reasonable, and the Chair is happy about this. I appreciate that the Minister is under some apprehension that a slant has been put on the Department in relation to the maintenance of schools. I point out to the Minister that, rather than rock the boat, the rough draft can still be used as regards including it in *Hansard*, and if it answers the member for Davenport's allegations, they will be answered in *Hansard* just the same as they would be if the Minister reads it. I think we ought to realise that we do not want to jeopardise the consensus and agreement connected with this Committee. I ask the Minister to consider that point. The material in question can be sent down later and included in *Hansard*.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will have it typed during the afternoon session and then have it incorporated in *Hansard*. Far be it from me to want to rock the boat, Sir.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I think the Minister was in the process of answering how much of this year's budget was to be allocated for maintenance and how much of the \$3 million would go to PBD.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: For education only, the sum for 1984-85 will be \$14 959 000 and for TAFE \$1 104 000, giving a total of \$16 063 000.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: And the figures for other Government buildings, the police and courts?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It will be about \$9 million but I will get the exact figure.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: How much of the \$3 million will go to PBD?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This depends on a submission to Cabinet but I am hopeful that of that \$3 million PBD will receive \$1.4 million for education, in line with the additional figure we received last year over and above the allocation.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the member for Davenport that there is no provision to allow the Minister to table anything, but there is provision that allows any information relevant to a question to be inserted into *Hansard* without the Minister's reading it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Auditor-General's Report last year stated that \$825 000 had been allocated for preliminary design work for buildings which were not built, are not likely to be built and therefore involve a write-off cost for wasted work done in preliminary design on the buildings. Can the Minister indicate which buildings are included in that list and the amount for each building? Is the Brompton Remand Centre one of those buildings and will the Minister indicate the purchase price for the land for the proposed Brompton Remand Centre and any buildings on that land?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The figure was included in the 1983-84 payments to allow design costs to be written

off when it was determined that projects would not proceed. No previous allowance had been made for these costs and those were projects on which preliminary design work had been carried out and for one reason or another a decision had been made not to proceed with the project. The abandoned projects, the honourable member will realise, are many and varied, and they cover several years.

I have an extensive list of the projects involved over the years, and I believe it would be completely wrong for me to waste the time of the Committee by reading them all out. I would gladly table the list but the Committee should bear in mind, when considering the figure of \$824 829, that it does not include the Adelaide Remand Centre at Brompton, for instance, because it was taken out the previous year. The final figures show that loans in connection with schools totalled \$325 764.44; loans, other Government buildings, \$1 380 371.14, and loans, Department of Further Education, \$18 087.21, giving a total of \$1 724 222.79, less the amount for the remand centre, which gives the figure of \$824 222.79. I will table all those figures—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is no provision to allow the Minister to table anything. The Chair has persistently stated that, if the figures which the Minister has in his possession (and which he has said) can be provided for *Hansard*, that is all that is required, and *Hansard* will include those figures.

The following projects are currently being held in suspense accounts awaiting approvals for transfer to Abandoned Projects:

Account No.	Description	Amount \$
<i>Schools: (41-8888xxx)</i>		
41-39355	East Adelaide P.S.—Redevelopment Stage 3	5 222.19
41-30442	Pinnaroo A.S.—Redevelopment	78.72
41-40562	Heathfield H.S.—Modify Admin. and Entrance	1 200.00
41-36082	Meadows P.S.—Redevelopment	25 000.00
41-41457	Port Lincoln Sth P.S.—Entries to Classroom	56.00
41-38494	Thebarton H.S.—Redevelopment	20 000.00
41-39790	Gawler East P.S.—Redevelopment	6 870.00
41-40496	Mimili—New School	9 500.00
41-38069	Port Germein P.S.—Redevelopment	10 425.32
41-34670	Surrey Downs H.S.—New School	11 642.44
41-32394	Heathfield P.S.—Master Plan	374.68
41-36357	Brahma Lodge J.P.S.—Redevelopment	25.16
41-36304	St Morris P.S.—Redevelopment	99.99
41-41079	Thebarton H.S.—Security System	0.90
41-38232	Stirling East P.S.—Redevelopment	230 000.00
41-39574	Marla P.S.—Establishment	1 846.50
41-42226	Wudinna A.S.—Library Porch	212.05
41-40732	Koonibba Aboriginal School—Upgrade	3 210.49
	Total	\$325 764.44
<i>Other Government Buildings: (47-8888xxx)</i>		
47-34583	Parnanga Rec. Centre—Landscaping	5 657.00
47-34571	Port River Fisheries Office and Store	30 000.00
47-40272	Temporary Criminal Court	2 658.85
47-39590	Adl. Magistrates Court—Stationery, etc.	496.87
47-40224	Adl. Magistrates Court—Alterations	453.00
47-28883	Art Gallery—Relocation	73.38
47-37818	Residential Sports Training Centre	821.24
47-40272	Temporary Criminal Court	1 095.58
47-38537	Grahams Castle Conference Centre—L/Scape	916.68
47-38550	Mylor Recreation Centre—Accommodation	1 803.83
47-34369	Goolwa Conference Centre—New Block	1 565.27
47-35404	Dept of Mines and Energy—Office Building	73.50
47-34572	P.A. Police and Courts Building and Courts Complex	35 925.92
47-35506	Grahams Castle—Goolwa Conference Centre	4 093.09
47-40908	Cnr Admissions Centre—Accom. Feas.	998.50
47-25732	Nuriootpa Research Ctr—Field Service Station	46 673.82
47-37169	Ceduna—Erection of Courthouse, etc.	44 473.00
47-37968	Port Augusta Gaol—New Female Division	5 814.45
47-37259	W.T.C.—Visitor Reception Area, etc.	4 000.00
47-39669	Magill Home—Relocation of Admin. Complex	315.00
47-24776	Holden Hill PHQ and Courts	42 000.00
47-40224	Adelaide Magistrates Court—Alterations	332.41
47-37169	Ceduna—Erection of Courthouse, etc.	395.68

Account No.	Description	Amount \$
47-40465	Salisbury Community Welfare Centre	11 649.91
47-41109	Prospect Court—Accommodation	144.21
47-40224	Adelaide Magistrates Court—Alterations	120.00 CR
47-36632	Clare District Office	10 150.00
47-38457	Yatala Labour Prison—Stage 4	50 000.00
47-39349	Mylor Recreation Centre—Emerg. Bridge	1 028.90
47-40008	Frozen Food Factory—Pipe Insulation	7 494.53
47-40004	Demolition of Supreme Court Hotel	115.00
47-39668	Magill Homes—Demolition of Wards	11 304.72
47-39669	Magill Homes—Relocation of Admin.	2 987.36
47-39717	Child Traffic Centre—Demac	6 000.00
47-34571	Port River Fisheries Office Store Fac.	13 000.00
47-41619	Ceduna Police and Courthouse	1 511.38
47-34604	Elizabeth Court—Additional Land	7 930.00
47-41810	SAC 15th Floor—Improve Air Flow	66.00
47-39668	Magill Homes—Demolition of Wards	3 776.79
47-37169	Ceduna—Erection of Courthouse and Offices	3 021.57
47-40008	Frozen Food Factory—Pipework Insulation	3 401.00
47-30802	Art Gallery—Landscape Study	397.39
47-40002	Emergency Operations Centre	10 401.41
47-39292	Darlington Courthouse	7 503.60
47-40038	Elizabeth Law Court—Relocate Classroom	10 000.00
47-40039	Gladstone Gaol—Upgrading	5 552.18
47-38352	Government Office Building—Wakefield Street	625.15
47-39668	Magill Home—Demolition of Wards	1 447.00
47-41410	Leigh Creek Dag—Prop. New Residence	880.92
47-41277	Bordertown Police Station—New Cells	10 000.00
47-41468	Beachport Police Station—Feasibility Study	5 000.00
47-41635	Echunga Police Station—Indoor Menage	8 061.00
47-37169	Ceduna—Erection of Courthouse and Offices	6 743.00
47-42740	Whyalla Police Station—Access for Disabled	244.28
47-38463	Merrilama Cottage Glenelg	4 606.87
47-41635	Echunga Police Station—Indoor Menage	557.00
47-43399	Treasury Building—North Wing—Cabling	275.67
47-40600	Adelaide Remand Centre—Brompton	897 671.95
47-40600	Adelaide Remand Centre—Brompton	32 755.46
47-42980	Aid to Charitable Organisations	136.02
47-41757	Gladstone—Use of Former Army Fac's	13 179.94
47-42886	Supreme Court—Registry	234.00
47-34247	Echunga Police Station—Indoor Menage	0.14 CR
	Total	<u>\$1 380 371.14</u>
<i>Department of Further Education</i>		
48-38633	School of Art/Craft—Alterations, etc.	15 618.00
48-41855	Wakefield Open Centre—Com. Lang. Unit	1 732.50
48-42491	Riverland C.C.—Access to Toilets for Disabled	736.71
	Total	<u>\$18 087.21</u>
<i>Summary:</i>		
	Loan Schools	325 764.44
	Loan O.G.B.	1 380 371.14
	Loan D.F.E.	18 087.21
	Grand Total	<u>\$1 724 222.79</u>
	* Less amount on receipts file for Adelaide Remand Centre—Brompton	<u>900 000.00 CR</u>
		<u>\$824 222.79</u>

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Page 174 of the Auditor-General's Report lists the debtors of the Department totalling \$14.5 million. I presume that that is referring to debtors who owe the Public Buildings Department that \$14.5 million. Can the Minister provide some information? The Auditor-General's Report states:

Debtors at June 1984 amounted to \$14.5 million of which \$9.4 million related to Government Offices Services costs, raised in June 1984, in respect of the period July to December 1984. Other outstanding accounts included Capital Works Assistance Schemes (Schools) \$788 000 and Technology Park \$2.9 million.

Is it correct to infer from that that Government departments have not yet paid \$9.4 million to the Public Buildings Department? If so, is that an outstanding amount owed to the Department which has not yet been reflected in the accounts for the other Government departments? If that is the case, that is fairly significant, because it would mean that the \$9.4 million of recurrent expenditure still owing to PBD has not yet been shown in the accounts of other departments.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I call on Mr Little to respond to that question.

Mr Little: Some changes have been made in the procedures, in that we are now cross-charging for much of the Government office accommodation, and that has had an effect on this line. We are now cross-charging for all Government-leased accommodation, and that is reflected in the debtors outstanding figure referred to. Other amounts, such as that relating to Technology Park, are mentioned. Technology Park is awaiting funds from the Police Pension Fund. That amount is \$2.9 million and it was carried at that time. That is something over which we had no control and is in the hands of Treasury.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: You are saying that \$9.4 million for Government accommodation is still owed to PBD from other Government departments?

Mr Little: We continue to pay the accommodation costs but we bill the departments on a six-monthly basis, so for each half-yearly period there is always a carry-over of accommodation for which we have paid but for which we

have not received payment. So in that situation there is always a carry-over of debt.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: When in Opposition the Labor Party promised to produce a five-year works programme so that the private sector building construction industry would know exactly what to anticipate. The Minister has not yet produced that programme, although the Labor Party has been in office for two years. Does the Minister intend to produce a five-year programme and, if so, when? If the Minister does not hurry up his three years will be up without it having been produced—in fact, it should have been produced in the first year after the promise had been made.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This matter has been discussed at the Industries Conference. The conference was very well received throughout all sections of industry, including heavy industries, the Government departments involved as well as the trade union movement. Perhaps I should give the member for Davenport credit for setting up that conference, which provides a chance for all sections of industry to get together and discuss the relevant programmes that need to be established. The private sector requested some form of programme to be undertaken by the Government so that it could respond accordingly. Governments of whatever persuasion have accepted that premise, bearing in mind that a three-year or five-year programme cannot be seen as being a firm programme to which the Government of the day will strictly adhere.

A programme that was discussed at one of the conferences has been prepared. I will be Chairman of the October/November meeting, and I will give an undertaking that there will be a proviso indicating that the private sector cannot hold the Government to the last letter in regard to a programme. Obviously, things will change in regard to a programme. I do not know whether the member for Davenport is aware that there is now a reciprocal Federal construction conference. The first of these was held this year, and they will be ongoing. The main idea of a Federal construction conference is for matters to be tied in with the individual State construction conferences so that the Federal Government can be made aware of what the States have in mind and alternatively, and perhaps more importantly, so that the States can be made aware of forward programmes envisaged or being prepared by the Federal Government.

A point that came out of the Federal construction conference which was promoted by the Hon. Chris Hurford was that in the area of construction we need to get away from the Federal Government's putting in major construction programmes in States that are perhaps, can I say tongue in cheek, sitting on an election. That serves no purpose for the individual States, and it is no good for the Commonwealth itself. In regard to the construction industry, we must place all our cards on the table and consider what is beneficial for the whole of the Commonwealth and ultimately for the States. At the conference I was encouraged to find that there was none of the parochialism that has sometimes occurred in the past when States would scream that they needed more money. There was a degree of compromise evident, a feeling that we should all get together and that there should be a free flow of information. A commitment that I have made (which I think was also made by the member for Davenport when he was Minister of Works) is that a programme be prepared as soon as possible. We have had a problem in preparing the programme, because Budget guidelines have not been fully prepared. Once the Budget was prepared we then had to produce forward planning details. That forward planning programme will be ready in time for the next conference. This programme will be for the benefit of all South Australians.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will you make the report available?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As soon as it is ready. I add the proviso to which I referred earlier, namely, that events can change over a three to five-year period. That has been accepted by the private sector.

Mr FERGUSON: I refer to the line 'Office of the Minister', at page 155. The proposed estimates for the coming year have risen considerably. Can the Minister say whether this means an increase in the number of people on staff? If it does, can he enumerate those new staff positions?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I take it that the honourable member is concerned about the figure of \$597 000.

Mr FERGUSON: No; I am looking under 'Administration and clerical staff' at the top of page 155, where the figure has gone to \$189 000 from \$131 800 in 1983-84. That is quite a substantial increase.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I must admit that it does seem a rather drastic increase. That line covers clerical staff of the Minister of Housing and Construction and Minister of Public Works. A sum of \$131 800 was allocated in the 1983-84 financial year for the staffing of the Minister of Public Works' office. A reshuffling of personnel in the Minister of Public Works' office following the redistribution of Ministerial portfolios in February 1984 rendered the original allocation inadequate.

As a result, expenditure in 1983-84 exceeded the allocation. The increased provision sought in 1984-85 is due to the full effect of the increase. The previous Minister had a staff of six, which was charged to PBD, but the Press Secretary was charged to the Department of Labour. This has been increased to eight under the new Ministry, and compares favourably with two other large portfolios: for example, Department of Labour 11; Department of Education 13; and Tourism and Local Government eight. This really means a reshuffle of the portfolios and a transfer from some areas of Local Government into PBD and, consequently, PBD having to take up some of the allocation that was previously hived off to the Department of Labour and Industry, such as the employment of the Press Secretary.

Mr FERGUSON: I now turn to page 156 and the lines under 'Contingencies, Office of the Minister'. The sum of \$71 000 is proposed, which is a rather large increase. That refers to administration expenses, minor equipment and sundries. Can the Minister explain the reason for that increase?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This line includes provision for two major items: first, \$45 000 has been provided for me to undertake overseas travel next May for five or six weeks. During this trip I will examine overseas developments in public housing and urban developments with particular emphasis on inspecting new initiatives in design and management of public housing programmes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Was that amount \$45 000?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This is under 'Administrative expenses, minor equipment and sundries', for which \$71 000 is allocated.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister said \$45 000 for the overseas trip?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes. I propose to visit countries with comparable public housing situations to that in Australia, including Canada, the United Kingdom and Eastern Europe. While the programme has not been fully finalised, it is to look into areas of medium density and alternative housing related to the shortage of housing land in the metropolitan area. The same kinds of problems exist mainly in Canada, the United Kingdom and Eastern Europe.

It is intended that I will be accompanied by my wife, my Ministerial assistant and the General Manager of the South Australian Housing Trust. All costs associated with the General Manager of the Housing Trust will be borne by the Trust, so they are in no way reflected in the initial sum of

\$45 000. Also, with regard to my wife and myself, I intend to take full advantage of the other means available for Parliamentary travel and to use as much as I can through that area. The \$45 000 is a nominal sum. In no way do I feel that that sum will be used to a great extent.

I had discussions with one of my Cabinet colleagues who found that it was quite easy, using the existing travel arrangements on which we can all draw within the House over the three-year life of the Parliament, to carry out such a trip and draw minimally on this sum of \$45 000. So, in all probability that \$45 000 will either not be used at all or very little of it will be used.

The other area is a sum of \$26 000 to cover administrative costs of the office, including such items as office stationery, photocopying, travel expenses, entertainment expenses, office equipment and all other expenses of an administrative nature. I point out that one of the reasons why payments in 1983-84 exceeded the sum voted was the rather heavy interstate travel related to the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. That entailed at least three Ministerial trips (two to Canberra and one to Hobart), and officers of my Department had to go at regular intervals to negotiate with officers of the Federal Department of Housing and Construction. When one looks at the excess in expenditure for 1983-84 of some \$7 000 and notes the successful renegotiation and legislation ratifying that agreement, one sees that it was money well spent. If the Committee requires a breakdown of those administrative costs, I am perfectly happy to give that now.

Mr RODDA: I refer to the Auditor-General's Report (page 169) and ask a question about an asset management information system. What does the Minister propose in relation to this system and when will it be operative?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I ask Mr Little to explain that.

Mr Little: We have been developing the asset information system over the past two or three years to provide detailed information on all the assets that the Department manages. That system is now complete and is being made very good use of, particularly by the Education Department. We are able to take out from the computer system detailed layouts and plans of all the schools within the system. This is being used on a regular basis by the Education Department. It is also the basis of further developments of our systems within the Department.

The Department's ongoing management information systems that we are developing now will have the asset management information system as its data base, and it is envisaged that in the longer term we will feed into this same data base system information on alterations to buildings and maintenance of those buildings. This will enable us to improve greatly the management of the Department in years to come.

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

Membership:

Mr Evans substituted for the Hon. D.C. Brown.
The Hon. B.C. Eastick for Mr Mathwin.
Mr Baker for Mr Rodda.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Ms Margie Hill, Senior Project Officer, Office of Housing.
Mr G.T. Black, Manager, Office of Housing.
Mr P. Edwards, General Manager, South Australian Housing Trust.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Opposition members will not ask questions directly concerning the Housing Trust until the capital expenditure is being dealt with later. Further,

under the 'Miscellaneous' line are two items that will be subject to a vote later. In some measure those items cross-refer to the Minister of Housing in the policy area. With leave of the Committee, if there are questions and comments concerning those amounts, I hope that the Committee will be happy to take questions and comments at this stage and that, this evening when the Miscellaneous vote comes up, it will be passed without further debate.

The Minister holds the combined portfolio of Housing and Construction, and the Public Buildings Department is a major part of that portfolio area. At page 6 of the yellow book, housing is listed under Public Buildings Department. Specifically, an agency overview is referred to on page 4 of the yellow book. Will the Minister say whether certain statements on page 4 concern housing as well as other areas of the Public Buildings Department? On page 4 of the yellow book, the following statement appears:

Through the Office of Housing, provide advice to the Minister on all matters relating to housing.

That ties in with the matter as such. Under the heading 'Strategies', at the top of the second column, the following statement appears:

The Department must continue to reduce its resources . . .

Does that statement apply to the Minister's role as regards housing? The yellow book shows that there has been a massive increase, from one to eight, in the number of people involved in this respect. That is hardly consistent with the statement that the Department must continue to reduce its resources. Will the Minister say whether the Office of Housing will also experience a reduction of resources in due course? Under the heading 'Strategies', the final statement is as follows:

To draw more funds, both public and private, into housing and direct assistance as precisely as possible to those in greatest need.

That attitude has been endorsed in a bipartisan manner. Under the heading 'Implications for resources', appears the following statement:

The growth in Government assets and the ageing of the existing stock of assets will require a closer evaluation of existing resource utilisation.

Will the Minister say whether the agency overview is as involved with the Office of Housing and its activities as it is with the Public Buildings Department? Specifically, what is to be the reduction in resources if that applies? Regarding the ageing of the existing stock of assets, does that statement apply to housing as well as to the Public Buildings Department?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The statement on page 4 of the yellow book covers the Public Buildings Department and the Office of Housing. Under the heading 'Strategies', the following statement appears:

The Department must continue to reduce its resources to match current and expected expenditure levels and review its role in the delivery of services in line with Government policy.

That statement applies purely and simply to the Public Buildings Department. With hindsight, if I were to put the yellow book before the Committee in future years, I would tend to extract material that is relevant only to the Public Buildings Department and separate it from material that is relevant to the Office of Housing. The honourable member says, correctly, that under 'Strategies' we are talking about reducing resources, yet within the recurrent costing of the Office of Housing there is an increase in resources.

Although the question does not relate to the line, 'Administration and clerical staff, Office of Housing', it may be relevant for me to explain the background of how this Government has seen the role of the Office of Housing compared to the position under the previous Government and under the Government that was in office before it. That explanation would indicate how we see the role of the Office

of Housing and perhaps explain some comments in the yellow book.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Including its current structure?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes. In 1976, there existed in the Public Service in one form or another a small policy advice unit that provided support to the Minister responsible for housing. From 1976 to 1979, there was a Housing Policy Unit of 10 or so officers within the Department of Housing, Urban and Regional Affairs. Those 10 or so officers were policy advice officers, not clerical back-up staff. That housing policy advice function was transferred, in 1979, to the Department of Local Government; that transfer came about with the change of Government when Mr Tonkin became Premier.

From there a small Housing Advisory Unit was established—initially employing one officer and increasing to two in 1981—and operated until 1983. By that time the Unit was being staffed by only one officer, the other having been seconded to the Victorian Government. The role of the Housing Advisory Unit was to provide policy advice to the Minister on housing and related issues, comment on housing proposals submitted to the Minister by the South Australian Housing Trust, the old State Bank, Treasury, and other Government and non-Government agencies concerned with housing issues.

It was given the task of responding to members of the public who raised issues to the Minister regarding the services provided by the Housing Trust and/or the old State Bank. It was also given the task to brief the Minister on issues and trends in housing and to provide executive support to the Minister's Housing Advisory Council. The Office of Housing was established by the State Government from this unit in June 1983 and the office remained within the Department of Local Government, which was at that time part of my portfolio.

I will now give the reasons why this Government established the Office of Housing. The State Government (and this has been said many times) recognised the extreme importance of the housing sector to this State. The existence of a healthy housing industry is vital to the State's economy. I draw on a recent CSIRO study that identified that 66 full year jobs are generated for every \$1 million spent on new housing construction, which meant a higher employment multiplier effect for many other major goods-producing industries.

At the time that the Office of Housing was created, the Government aimed to maximise the access of low income householders to a reasonable standard of accommodation at a price within their means in the three housing tenures: home ownership, private rental housing and public housing. This is another very important part of the Office of Housing and is perhaps why we have gone from the position of 1:2 to 1:8.

Also a large number of agencies and bodies have direct involvement in the housing sector, including Federal and local government, the Housing Trust, the new State Bank, the Treasury Department, the Department of Environment and Planning, the banks and building societies, the Housing Industry Association, the Master Builders Association, and the Real Estate Institute, as well as a wide range of community based organisations. Each of the agencies and organisations involved in housing has its own charter and objectives that need to be taken into account by the Government in its decision-making processes.

It was for these reasons that the State Government considered it important to have in the Public Service a well resourced and visible unit operating independently of all agencies working in the housing field to ensure that the Minister and the State Government were provided with broad based information on matters including the effec-

tiveness of housing policies and programmes and the significant trends in housing activity. Perhaps more importantly, the State Government wished the Office of Housing to undertake the co-ordinating of housing related activities between Government agencies, including Budget development and ensuring that administrative functions were performed.

When the Office of Housing was established provision was made for it to be staffed initially by three positions. The position of Manager was created to augment the two positions that already existed in the Housing Advisory Unit. So, those are the reasons why in effect there was a shift that met half way the situation that occurred under the Urban and Regional Affairs Department, which had an office staff of 10. The Housing Advisory Unit that existed under the previous Liberal Government had a staff of two and this Government felt that the role of the Office of Housing should be an advisory role not only to the Minister but also all those other organisations and Government departments that I have mentioned.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Minister may be able to advise the Committee what specific initiatives have arisen from the new Housing Advisory Unit or support group that he has so established. What does he see as new initiatives taken up and put into place as a direct result of that structure?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Page 9 of the yellow book goes into the area covered by that.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: That is very broad brushed. I am looking for specific initiatives.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: A significant initiative was participation in getting the Housing Trust's construction programme in 1984 at a record level of commencements. As a result of advice given to me where I could go to Cabinet and give a projected programme that the Trust could possibly follow, we have convinced Treasury and Cabinet that not only is it necessary to increase the number of dwellings built by the Housing Trust for social needs (and I am sure that the Committee is well aware that the number of families on the Housing Trust's waiting lists is now approaching 33 000) but a higher construction programme by the Housing Trust is necessary to increase employment and stabilisation in the building industry in this State. The Trust commenced 2 272 dwellings in 1983-84, representing a 4.5 per cent increase over the previous year's figure of 2 175.

We also implemented many changes as a result of the recommendations of the home purchase assistance review. Those recommendations included the reintroduction of a rental purchase scheme, changes to eligibility conditions for home purchase assistance, realignment of subsidies provided under the programme, and an increase in the weekly loan approval rate of 55 to 60 per week.

The review was completed in September 1983 and a number of changes arising from it came into effect on 1 October 1983. If the Committee wishes me to go into a more detailed explanation of the rental purchase scheme, the changes to the eligibility conditions and the realignment of subsidies, I am perfectly prepared to do that after I have read out the remainder of the achievements during 1983-84 as a result of the formation of the Office of Housing within my portfolio.

The Office of Housing had a significant input in the renegotiation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement and, as members of the Committee will be aware, a Bill ratifying a new agreement is currently before the House.

The reorganisation of the Emergency Housing Office was necessary because of the demands on the Office—again, another reflection of the need within the community to have assistance provided by a semi-government authority to enable people to get into private rental homes with the

assistance of bond money, and so on. The broadening of the eligibility conditions of the Mortgage Relief Scheme, and extension of assistance available under the scheme was another initiative. That scheme was reviewed as part of the home purchase assistance review conducted by the State Government in 1983 and, as a result, changes implemented in October 1983 included the income limit for eligibility being increased by \$18 a week, which was 5 per cent of average weekly income, for each dependant beyond the first. Previously that income limit did not reflect family size.

Assistance was made available as non-repayable subsidies as well as loans. Previously assistance was provided only as loans. Originally, when the Fraser Federal Government introduced a mortgage rent relief scheme, one of the provisos was that all assistance should be considered as loans. When this Government took office it felt that, in some instances, assistance should be made available as non-repayable loans. I would not say that a means test was instituted, but many cases of long-term economic hardship would result from placing a proviso on those recipients that the money received should be repaid at some later date. I have been very pleased to see that, in some cases where people received subsidies as being non-repayable, when circumstances changed they came back to the Emergency Housing Office and repaid that money. For that they should be congratulated.

Householders can now receive assistance for more than 12 months because it is recognised that the general trend is that unemployment usually stretches through a minimum of 18 months. Keeping to the old criteria of 12 months would not help people. Mortgage assistance is now available to separated or divorced parents who are attempting to keep the family home but are unable to meet repayments. That, again, was to assist not only the people in that situation, but in so doing to ease the resultant burden that would be put on to DCW to provide additional funding.

The completion of the review of my consultative arrangements led to the establishment of a new Housing Advisory Council. I have stated before, and do not wish to repeat myself, that the problem of the old Housing Advisory Council under the previous Government was two-fold. The housing unit within the Department of Local Government, which was servicing the then Minister of Housing, was very small and, due to the limitations on staff (not on the expertise of staff), it could not give adequate alternative advice to the Minister. There was a move to the Premier of the day by the private sector that there should be a body outside the Housing Trust, the Housing Industry Association and the Master Builders Association to give independent advice to the Minister.

Even those people who were appointed to the old Housing Advisory Council would have to agree that the council was not working. It had a membership of more than 30, was never able to meet on a regular basis, and its advice was rarely acted upon. We all know that where councils are set up to advise Ministers, in some cases the Minister does not respond to that advice. However, in this case the Housing Advisory Council was simply not working. When I was shadow Minister of Housing I was often critical of the operation of the Housing Advisory Council. I recognised that a need existed for such a body drawn from all spectrums of industry and the community, but if it was to work it had to be not only serviced by an office of housing and be given some financial assistance to carry out its research within its own committee structure but also the Government had to draw heavily on the advice of the private sector, otherwise we had a situation where the Government was drawing advice only from the South Australian Housing Trust. Even the South Australian Housing Trust would agree that, if a Government is to function in the best interests of the community, it should have a balanced form of advice to the

Ministry. That is why the newly formed Housing Advisory Council began operation in mid 1984.

Other areas of improved housing services for special needs groups included the expansion of housing co-operatives for women, the aged and the disabled. So far we have had an acquisition of 40 units between 1983 and 1984, the construction of three new Trust homes, 83 units of accommodation, owned or committed to six rental housing co-operative associations. Three of those associations commenced activity in 1983-84. To briefly mention three referred to above: the Women's Shelter Housing Association Incorporated was established in December 1980 and houses women and children; the Northern Suburbs Aged Housing Association caters for the housing needs of the elderly in Prospect, Enfield and Walkerville; and the Manchester Unity Housing Association Incorporated houses disabled tenants.

I place on record that the co-operative movement, when first mooted in the early 1980s, was supported fully by my predecessor, the Hon. Murray Hill, by some sections of the private sector, and by the South Australian Housing Trust, which acts as a guarantor in case any co-operatives fail to meet their repayments. Fortunately, that has not happened, but, on the basis on which it was given the seal of approval by my predecessor, the housing co-operatives have gone from strength to strength. Members may recall my second reading explanation last week regarding the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. The area of co-operatives has been picked up by the Federal Government and endorsed completely, with the other States of the Commonwealth being urged to follow South Australia's lead. Within the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, we now have a separate area of funding based on the three-year term and covering local government and community housing projects.

Another area in which the Office of Housing has promoted new initiatives is that of funding for youth housing. The Office of Housing has been involved with other agencies in negotiation with the Commonwealth concerning a new housing programme for groups, including youth, which is called the Supported Accommodation Assistance Programme. This has been one area where Governments of all political colours have been criticised by the young and by those agencies that support the young who believe that there has been no positive programme for youth not only in this State but in other States of the Commonwealth. This area is attempting to address that situation and to provide a policy for youth. Not only are we trying to provide a positive policy for youth regarding housing, but we are also trying in conjunction with DCW and other agencies to establish why young people choose to leave the family home. That is one of the areas that this State and the Commonwealth should look closely to—not providing assistance to young people when they leave the family home but to establish why they leave; that is an integral part of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Programme.

In other areas there is the support for the establishment of a women's housing research project. A project officer has been employed by the Office of Housing since April 1984 under a 12-month Community Employment Programme project.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Can the Minister identify the officer?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The officer is Jen McCarthy. A State-based speak-out on women's housing was held in July 1984, and I was quite pleased with the number of members of Parliament who attended. I was due to address that meeting but unfortunately there was a Cabinet meeting held on that day. However, I do understand that it was well attended by many members of Parliament.

It is also rather interesting that the Women's Housing Action Group, a group of people who have lobbied the

Government to establish this women's housing research project, has members from both sides of Parliament. So, it is purely and simply a bipartisan approach to address the problem of women's housing needs. As a result of the State-based speak-out, there will be a national women's housing conference in March 1985 aimed in part at identifying women's housing needs. This will be a first in Australia and the general indication so far is that all of the other States are keen to participate. We are hopeful that, as a result of that conference and stemming from it, there will be a clearly defined policy that will affect not only South Australia but the whole of Australia. From that conference there will be representations made to the Federal Government.

Lastly, we have seen the development of a national research programme to identify subsidy differentials between different housing tenures and to identify procedures for implementing tenant participation programmes. These two programmes are currently in train through the Australian Housing Research Council, and South Australians are supervising these two projects.

The Housing Research Council is funded by grants from the Federal Government to carry out research in all areas of housing and the Federal Government usually picks up its recommendations and implements them within current or forthcoming Commonwealth-State Housing Agreements. So, generally the review of achievements and ongoing programmes that have stemmed from the Office of Housing are quite encouraging and we are hopeful that its activities will give this Government and the Federal Government a clear indication of what action is necessary.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Would the Minister provide for the Committee—if not now, supplementary to the answers that he has given as an overview—the composition of the Housing Advisory Council; the term of appointment of each of the persons; the terms of reference relative to that organisation; and, concurrently, could he give the Committee an indication of the personnel associated with the women's housing research project (if there is other than the officer the Minister nominated); and, again, the terms of reference of that appointment?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The Housing Advisory Council that was set up by my predecessor mainly comprised people within the trade, and there was also the Emergency and Youth Housing Advisory Committee, which was funded by the South Australian Housing Trust. There were problems with both committees. The committee funded by the South Australian Housing Trust, I think it would be fair to say, had some members who felt that, as a result of change to the previous Government's decision the committee could only advise the Minister, that in effect it was part of an organisation with no real teeth; they were there to give advice and the Minister could choose whether to take it or ignore it.

The Housing Advisory Council had—to put it bluntly—a very curious membership. Apart from the fairly obvious members, such as members from the Real Estate Institute, the Housing Advisory Council, the South Australian Housing Trust and other bodies, there were people on that council such as an interior decorator. For the life of me I fail to see how an interior decorator could advise the Government on the type of housing one should have, especially low income housing.

As a result of the recommendations of the review committee, I set up a Housing Advisory Council, comprising an Industry Committee and a Community Committee. As I wanted to establish some co-ordination between the committees, both have common membership because in many cases (whether or not this criticism is true, I do not know) concern is felt that the industry is not aware of the views of those who would make up the Community Committee and, conversely, the Community Committee could be looking

at some of the social needs without recognising some of the real problems that could exist in the building and financial arrangements, etc.

The Industry Committee was set up to provide regular advice to the Minister of Housing on matters of significance to the housing industry in South Australia and in particular to report on the state of the housing market; ways of increasing the availability and reducing the cost of finance for home buyers; ways of ensuring adequate investment in private and public rental accommodation; policies that promote equity between home purchase, public rental and private rental tenures; the effectiveness of and improvements in Government assistance provided in each tenure; proposals for improving the efficiency of the housing industry; the cost and availability of resources, including land; proposals for improving the planning and building control systems; ideas for stimulating the underlying demand for housing; any matters referred to the council by the Minister, and to make recommendations to the Minister on the services and resources required in the housing sector.

It can be seen in the areas on which they were to report to me that they were dealing directly not only with building problems but also other areas such as those involving local government, environment and planning, the Engineering and Water Supply Department, ETSA, the Lands Titles Office and the whole area of land development, building and providing advice to reduce delays. Two or three good things have come out of the Industry Committee particularly in the areas of Engineering and Water Supply Department and ETSA services and land titles matters. The recommendations from that committee to me, which were then passed on to my Cabinet colleagues, produced definite responses which have alleviated some of the problems the developers were having in this boom period we have been experiencing over the past nine to 10 months, for example, reducing times for services being provided and dramatically reducing Lands Titles Office delays. In the short time that the Industry Committee has been in operation some positive steps have been taken by the Government and other bodies to respond to its recommendations, and it is also looking into the availability of land in various local government areas within the State.

The Community Committee was to provide regular advice to the Minister on matters of significance to housing consumers in South Australia and, in particular, report on housing needs within the community; difficulties facing people in connection with emergency housing, private rental, public housing, and home purchase tenures; the adequacy of services and other assistance provided in each tenure; the co-ordination and rationalisation of services provided; policies which promote equity between tenures; ideas for innovative housing schemes; any other matters referred to the council by the Minister; and to make recommendations to the Minister on the services and resources required in the housing sector.

Again, as a result of that committee there has been movement to pick up particular problems which the Community Committee believes are of some concern not only to the Government but also to the community; it has picked up successful schemes operating in the United Kingdom which are now being introduced in Victoria. It is setting up dialogue between those people in the private sector who could possibly move into areas where they could provide some alternative type of accommodation for aged people other than that which is provided by the South Australian Housing Trust and some of the church bodies. Currently, the Community Committee is moving into areas concerning which the following details are relevant:

Singles housing: needs, level of demand and problems are being identified; current public housing policy is being examined and

guidelines for future policy is to be drawn up after appropriate consultations.

Private rental market: factors affecting the market have been identified and a number of options for action are being considered.

Special needs housing: the areas of aged, disabled, women and youth are under examination. A survey of aged independent living units, hostel and nursing home availability of accessibility is underway; a Women's Housing Speakout has been held highlighting women's housing problems and needs, and a National Speakout is in the course of preparation. Problems associated with dual/multi occupancies are under investigation.

Priorities on the above have been identified and preparations made for further studies.

The Industry Committee is providing regular advice to the Minister on the state of the housing market. It is important that I receive regular reports. I have regular reports on the state of the housing market from the South Australian Housing Trust, and I also have reports from my own Office of Housing on the state of the housing market, but it is also very good to be advised of the kind of problems being encountered by people in the private sector. I get regular advice on those issues. I receive advice on private rental market issues and dual occupancy. I recall the member for Light during the last Estimates Committee asking how far we had progressed with the provision of dual occupancy. I can advise him now that a special committee has been formed within the Industry Committee to look at that matter. The view of the Industry Committee was such that the provision of dual occupancy units as such would not satisfy present or future needs, and the committee believes that dual occupancy should be approached from the viewpoint of seeking to maximise the variety of housing available, rather than treating it as a separate issue.

To this end the committee proposes that the issue of dual occupancy be locked into the Department of Environment and Planning's current efforts to encourage housing diversity. Lastly, and most importantly as far as the Industry Committee is concerned, I am being given independent advice on issues relating to land availability. The member for Light asked how long these members will be on the council. I do not have that specific information with me today but I think it is for two years. I will make the information available for the honourable member later. The membership is as follows:

Industry Committee

Chairman, Mr Don Kennett, State Manager, EPIC Building Supplies. Past President, Housing Industry Association (S.A. Division) Housing Industry Association:

Mr Don Cummings (Chief Executive)
Master Builders Association:

Mr Peter Gasteen (Executive Director)
Real Estate Institute of S.A.

Mr John Black (R.V. Jordan Pty Ltd)

S.A. Association of Permanent Building Societies:

Mr John Pounsett (Managing Director, Co-operative Building Society)

State Bank of S.A.:

Mr Graham Willoughby (Manager, Housing Loans and Arrears)
State Bank (previously Savings Bank of S.A.):

Mr Vern Pfeiffer (Manager, Retail Lending)

Since the amalgamation of those two banks those two members have remained members of the council. The committee membership continues:

Local Government Association of S.A.:

Ms Chris Maher (Research Officer)

Indicative Planning Council:

Mr Brian Martin

Trade Unions:

Mr Frank Fahey (Electrical Trades Union)

Mr Frank Gosden (Building Workers Industrial Union)

S.A. Housing Trust:

Mr Paul Edwards (General Manager)

Department of the Premier and Cabinet:

Mr Terry Tysoe (Senior Cabinet Officer, Cabinet Office)

Department of Environment and Planning:

Mr John Hodgson (Director, Development Management Division)

Department of Local Government:

Mr Bernie Coates (Project Officer)

Office of Housing:

Ms Margaret Hill (Senior Project Officer)

Community Committee:

Chairperson (and SACOSS representative)

Ms Helen Hardwick (Project Officer, SACOSS)

Shelter (S.A.):

Mr Gregg Ryan (Project Officer, Red Cross (Shelter S.A. representative))

S.A. Youth Housing Network:

Ms Pam Simmons (Service to Youth Council)

Women's Shelters Advisory Committee:

Ms Dawn McMahon

Salvation Army:

Brigadier Hedley Steer

Goodwill Industries and Crippled Children's Association:

Mr Michael Wooley

Northern Suburbs Aged Housing Association Inc:

Mr David Kilner

Hindmarsh Housing Association (Inc.):

Mr Thanasis Avramis

Real Estate Institute of S.A.:

Mr Deane Hill

S.A. Housing Trust:

Mr Jim Crichton (Assistant General Manager, Housing Services)

Ms Robyn Morisset (Manager, Emergency Housing Office)

Ms Pam Drew (Housing Trust tenant).

When dealing with community involvement and community concerns we thought that it was very important to include a Housing Trust tenant in the committee membership. The committee is further comprised of:

Youth Bureau, Department of Labour:

Mr Neill Lean

Department for Community Welfare:

Mr Ian Lewis (Director, Community and Planning Services Division)

Department of Social Security:

Mr Grant Troubridge

Women's Adviser's Office, Department of the Premier and Cabinet:

Ms Clare Byrt (Acting Women's Adviser)

Department of Public and Consumer Affairs:

Mr John Reid (Acting Registrar, Residential Tenancies Tribunal)

Office of Housing:

Mr Greg Black (Manager, Office of Housing)

In the short time that those people have been on the committee they have managed to achieve significant progress. The present Chairman of the Housing Advisory Council is Don Kennett. The chairmanship will alternate every two years. There has been complete co-operation between both committees. When the committees were set up initially it was expected that there might be some degree of feeling within the committees that each might not be appreciative of what the other was talking about, but that has been negated because both chairpersons get together on a regular basis and keep each other fully informed. Both have direct access to me as Minister and I have made it a policy to attend as many meetings as I can.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: With respect, the Minister has not answered the question about the women's housing project.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In regard to Jen McCarthy of the Women's Action Housing Group?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I also asked about the terms of reference of the other officers involved.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will forward that information to the honourable member later. Jen McCarthy was employed under the CEP programme, which is a 12-month programme. Basically the purpose of that was to promote enthusiasm and support for a women's speak-out on issues related to those single people, and so on, who were having problems finding accommodation. Further, there are people who may be unable to get into women's shelters because these shelters are full, and there is also the matter of problems for people coming out of women's shelters after a certain period of time who must then find somewhere else to go.

I refer also to the role of the Housing Trust in providing accommodation for people after they come out of women's shelters. I can make available to the honourable member

details of the terms of reference in regard to the employment of Jen McCarthy.

The CHAIRMAN: I ask that any information provided later be in a suitable form for incorporation in *Hansard*, and also that it be provided as soon as possible.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: From where is the Housing Work Unit of Jen McCarthy operating?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is based at the Office of Housing in Wakefield Street.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Are there any other subgroups working with it?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No. Jen McCarthy's position was created as a result of lobbying from the Women's Housing Action Group, which is a broad based organisation of women and which includes the Hon. Diana Laidlaw from another place. The organisation comprises people from the whole metropolitan area and from country areas. A request was made to me as Minister to apply for a CEP programme grant to employ one person to co-ordinate all the needs of the Women's Action Housing Group. The Office of Housing applied for a grant to enable the employment of one person for 12 months. The logical place for that lady was in the Office of Housing, which could provide clerical support.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Has the Office of Housing sought to exercise any influence on the distribution of the Emergency Housing and Rent Control Fund or the subsidy for managed houses? These are provided under the Miscellaneous lines. I am not suggesting for a minute that there is any problem in regard to these funds being available. I am interested to know whether the distribution of the funding is in any way involved with the initiatives of the Office of Housing.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I want to make one point clear, and then I will outline details about where that money comes from, whom it goes to and who is responsible for the delivery of that assistance to the community. The Office of Housing has no input as to where that money goes. Its only input concerning funds may be in regard to its role in preparation of the Budget documents that go to Treasury and Cabinet. The South Australian Housing Trust, in conjunction with me, has a significant overview of what takes place in regard to the Emergency Housing Office and also in regard to rent relief, which scheme the Housing Trust administers.

The answer to the honourable member's first question is 'No': the Office of Housing has no say in where that money goes, who gets it or how much. If one looks at page 156 of the Estimates of Payments one sees that the State Government allocated \$756 000 in the 1984-85 Budget to the Housing Trust for operation of the Emergency Housing Office and administration of the Housing Improvement Act: that is an 8 per cent increase on the 1983-84 allocation of \$700 000.

If one looks at the number of people seeking assistance from the Emergency Housing Office, one sees that \$756 000 is nowhere near sufficient to meet that demand. In fact, the Housing Trust estimates that those two programmes will require a total net expenditure of \$2.9 million in 1984-85. The funds required over and above the State grant will be provided from untied grants under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement. At the time of the last renegotiation, it was agreed that that would be so. One could argue that the State Government has not increased its allocations to those two functions by an adequate amount, especially in the light of increased demands placed on services.

However, in line with the theme of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement negotiations, that line of argument is no longer relevant. State Governments have no need, apart from putting in a set sum, to put in money to cover all services. We have now been able to overturn the situation;

the former Commonwealth Government was rather miserly and forced the States to borrow large sums of high interest Loan funds to maintain their housing programmes. The CHSA now provides funds (mostly as grants) for a wide range of purposes as well as giving the States the capacity to nominate Loan funds for housing and, therefore, attract a concessional interest rate of 4.5 per cent. Nominated funds will save the South Australian Government tens of millions of dollars this financial year.

So, we have placed housing into a policy framework that facilitates the establishment of coherent priorities throughout the programmes, rather than considering individual aspects in isolation of budgetary purposes. We have funding coming from the State—in this case for emergency housing and home improvement—of \$756 000. We have money coming in from the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement: in this year grants (no loans), The Trust, in consultation with the Office of Housing, then allocates (knowing the need for the coming financial year) so much Commonwealth-State housing money to emergency housing, housing improvement, rent relief and rent rebate.

Basically, we now have an overall programme of all the money coming in and where we need to allocate it. In future Budget papers I will attempt to give information under 'Miscellaneous' about where that money is going. However, because the renegotiation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement came in fairly late, this is the only way in which we could proceed to do it in this year's papers—to give out the State grant and the managed subsidy area, the rest being in Commonwealth-State housing grant money in an overall Budget programme. In future years we will try to put it down in figures to cover all those areas such as housing improvement, emergency housing, rent relief, and so on.

Mr BAKER: The Minister explained at length the role of the Housing Office. Have increased resources in that area been matched by a decrease in resources in the Housing Trust area, or are these additional positions?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: With the exception of the officers who are giving policy advice (honourable members may recall that in an earlier explanation I said there were originally two in the old Housing Advisory Unit), there is also provision in the Budget to employ a further project officer. However, all the back-up and clerical support that we used to receive from the Department of Local Government has been absorbed by PBD, which has supplied the clerical support that we need. So, it has not affected the overall structure of the PBD staffing level.

Mr BAKER: More particularly, some of the functions that the Minister described to the Committee today have been carried out by the Housing Trust in the past. When I was a member of the HURA and other bodies that linked planning to housing there was some sense to that. There was such a large staff because the role and functions were somewhat different from what we see here. Many of those functions have been carried out by the Housing Trust's research area. The Minister is now saying that we need this extra body of expertise.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The member for Mitcham has got it slightly wrong. In the old days, when we had the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs (and I talked earlier about 10 policy advisers) there was a change of Government and that unit was abolished. Those people went to the four winds and the small Housing Advisory Unit was taken up within the Department of Local Government. The Housing Trust did not then give advice to the Government: that function was taken over by the Treasury.

Mr BAKER: The Minister is talking about the capital Loan function in one case and about other functions that relate to people who cannot afford—

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The research was taken over by the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs. When that Department was disbanded, a small policy unit of two people (one of whom eventually went to Victoria) was established within the Department of Local Government. If an allocation of money came from the Federal or State Governments, the Housing Trust could then provide advice to the Government on what it intended to do.

When I have finished, Mr Edwards might explain in detail the role of the Housing Trust while we had this small unit within the Department of Local Government. The advice formerly given by the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs to the Government was picked up by the Treasury. The Office of Housing has been given responsibility for certain substantial functions that were previously undertaken by the Treasury, including the co-ordination of budget development with the State Bank and Housing Trust programmes, monitoring of expenditures, the administration and fund flows, and the administration of the reporting requirements of the CSHA moneys. Before 1979, that role was performed by the Department of Urban and Regional Affairs. I now ask Mr Edwards to outline the role of the Trust when the Department of Local Government had a small Housing Advisory Unit and to say what is the present role of the Trust in relation to the Office of Housing.

Mr Edwards: In reply to the specific question, there has not been a reduction in the number of staff employed within the Housing Trust because of the establishment of different administrative arrangements elsewhere in the public sector. Initially in my experience over several years with the Housing Trust there was a process of interaction with the Department of Housing, Urban and Regional Affairs on such matters as Housing Trust policies and programmes, funding levels, advice to the Minister on negotiations with the Federal Government on various aspects of housing policies and programmes. Subsequently, following Government changes, the same process of liaison was carried on with the Department of Local Government, and Ministerial advisers were also involved in that. Much the same kind of liaison discussions took place. Following further changes, they were the same kind of issue discussed with HURA and the Department of Local Government that are now discussed with the Minister's Office of Housing. Over that period, initially separate discussions were held with the Treasury and there has been an increasing trend for Treasury to simplify its role in the housing area; so that some of the matters on which previously we had dialogue with the Treasury are now the subject of dialogue between the Trust and the Office of Housing. So, from my side of the discussion and negotiation process, it is the same kind of dialogue on the same kind of issue but with different bodies, although not infrequently the same people are involved.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Would it be easier if I asked the Manager of the Office of Housing to outline the positions in his office?

Mr BAKER: Yes. If at the same time he talked about where they were sourced previously it would give a better idea of the policy changes and explain why we need eight staff to perform these tasks.

Mr Black: The staff comprises eight officers, seven being permanent and one a CEP position for the women's housing project. Of the remaining seven staff, two were as under the previous arrangements in the Housing Policy Unit. The third position created is that of Manager. Part of the additional function there has been with the creation of the new Housing Advisory Council arrangements. A fourth position has been created and, as the Minister suggested, a significant

part of the role of that position has been in relations with the State Treasury in reporting and in co-ordinating State Budget development with the State Bank, Housing Trust and the other community based programmes. The fifth position is that of a person responsible for providing the Minister with draft responses to questions received from the general public, either written questions or those made by personal approach. The two remaining positions are clerical back-up positions. Of those seven positions, four have been transferred from the Public Buildings Department, two were as under previous arrangements, and one new position has been created overall.

In summary, three of those positions have been those which, under previous arrangements, were carried out by the Department of Local Government and, before that, by the Department of Housing, Urban and Regional Affairs and are of a clerical and administrative nature. The fourth position is to some extent the result of new arrangements with the Housing Advisory Council and the new responsibilities of the Office for Treasury matters and Commonwealth-State financial management arrangements. The three policy positions include a new position. A significant part of the increase in staff of those policy positions has been through the establishment of the Housing Advisory Council.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Minister said that some advice he regularly received from his Department related to an analysis of house and land values on the market. Will he indicate the basic variations that have occurred in such values over the past 18 months, based on the advice that he has received from his officers?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: For some time the member for Light and I have been at variance on the subject of what has caused land prices to increase. The honourable member has said that some increases have been caused by trade union demands, but he has yet to prove that to my satisfaction. However, we agree that the increase is the result of a significant boom throughout Australia, especially in South Australia. Whereas, speaking from memory, the rest of Australia is experiencing an increase of about 33 per cent in land prices, we in South Australia have experienced an increase of between 53 and 57 per cent in building activity, and this obviously would be reflected in the increased price of land.

The kind of information that I have received has referred not only to the cause of land price increases but also to whether this Government can in fact be assured that the present rate of increase will not continue. On this subject there is a divergence of views depending on whom one talks to. Some people say that the upward price curve is levelling off already and that the change in the Federal Government's first home ownership scheme, with its restricted guidelines as to eligibility, will further keep the increase down.

However, if we are talking about land I have some figures from both the Housing Advisory Council from my Office of Housing and local government authorities. Land prices in the six major growth local government areas between 1983 and the first quarter of this year were as follows: in Marion, in the southern region, the price of an average block of land in 1983 was \$12 138 and in March 1984 it was \$14 173, an increase of 17 per cent; for the same period in Happy Valley the price went from \$13 278 to \$15 644, an increase of 18 per cent; in Noarlunga it went from \$8 241 to \$9 884, an increase of 28 per cent; in Munno Para it went from \$8 799 to \$11 255, an increase of 28 per cent; in Salisbury it went from \$12 155 to \$14 567, an increase of 20 per cent; and in Tea Tree Gully it went from \$16 930 to \$20 488, an increase of 21 per cent.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The question was wider than land and included the cost of building or the cost of homes as well. The Minister is correct in saying that there have

been some major shifts, and there will be and will continue to be a variable view as to the reasons. I was interested to know what the analyses of the shift in overall housing prices were, and if one reads the newspapers of recent times hardly a week goes by without a substantive statement by a member of either the Real Estate Institute or a person from the media who has a particular expertise in the area of housing. I mention the following articles: an article in the Saturday 23 June 1984 issue of the *Advertiser* by Stuart Diwell headed 'House prices up 70 per cent in five years'; an article in the October 1983 issue of the *Para Gazette* headed 'Salisbury land boom'; an article in the 8 March 1984 issue of the *Advertiser* headed 'House prices rise 32 per cent in three years' by Malcolm Newell; an article in the 4 March 1984 issue of the *Sunday Mail* headed 'Our land prices set to soar again'; and an article in the 29 February 1984 issue of the *Advertiser* headed 'Established houses in Adelaide up to 12 per cent dearer' by Malcolm Newell.

There is a conglomerate of land and house prices. If one relates this to the cost of valuation associated with the taxing measures across many local government areas, one will find that the figures have escalated in some areas of the order of 43 per cent in the past nine to 10 months.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I take the point. I am not saying that the member for Light is selectively stating particular areas. He is not; he is just quoting the figures available to him. When I mentioned the increase in the cost of land in six major local government areas, he said, 'But that is just land. What about the cost of building houses?' No-one has been able to slot in everything that is causing a particular rise in a particular housing area as opposed to another one. One thing that is causing me concern, because it does not pick up on the ABS statistics, which will then be reflected in a rise and fall provision of a housing contract, is labour and material cost increases.

We have evidence that in the past builders have been able to go to suppliers for certain materials and because there was a slump period (and I think that everyone accepts that prior to that lift in late 1982 and early 1983 a lot of suppliers were facing pretty hard times) a means of attracting orders was to make substantial discounts, but that has no longer been the case in the past two or three months. People are going to suppliers expecting that normal discount situations will prevail. They find that they do not get that and they have to increase the price of building, and in some cases that is quite considerable.

There is a shortage of labour. We have evidence that there has been a shift back from States such as Queensland, where tradesmen went previously, having left this State in the early 1980s, particularly in 1981 when especially the cottage industry was in a depressed state. They went to Queensland not to see Joh Bjelke but in response to advertisements by builders who once lived in this State. There has been a shift around—not a dramatic shift—and the trades are coming back to this State.

At this time there is a shortage of labour, mainly in the subcontractor area. I refer not to those subcontractors who have been unionised but those who are still free agents, and it is an unfortunate fact of life that, if we are talking about ripping off the industry, we are referring to those subcontractors who have decided, for reasons known only to themselves, that they will not be involved in the trade union movement, who will seek awards that those unions are trying to get for them and who are going on their own and putting themselves up as private contractors for the highest bid.

It is in that area that we are experiencing a significant increase in the cost of labour. There are other areas where the costs have increased. I refer to some award payments that have been negotiated with private developers. However,

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in the main we do not have a comprehensive picture of building costs. As soon as we have and as soon as I can get that information I will gladly make it available to the Committee.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I indicate to the Minister that I believe that it is extremely urgent that he does get that information, because it has been analysed by other people and it does not support some of the contentions he has just put forward.

I also point out to the Minister that his view that the Office of Housing has been able to identify some problems associated with E & WS, the Lands Titles Office, and so forth, is recognised. Regrettably, the end result is still not as good as it should be to the point that the General Manager of the State Bank wrote to me only last week in respect of a person seeking to take out a bank loan. From his own inquiries from the Lands Titles Office he found that it will be at least nine to 10 weeks before a document, which got into the system four weeks ago, emerges. So, there are tremendous delays.

A little later, in relation to the Housing Trust, we will be discussing the period for the completion of contracts, such period being extended to the point where a number of people are now cancelling contracts (I am talking in the private field) because the guarantee that they would commence within a certain number of weeks is blown out by as much as eight or nine weeks. The Minister's own colleague, the Deputy Premier, advised by letter, which I will read to the Minister shortly, that there was no dearth of skilled labour. Yet, the Minister acknowledges, as everyone else knows, that a dearth of skilled labour exists and, if it had not been for Jennings and Hickinbotham going to Queensland to bring people back to put into the system, we would be in a worse situation than we are currently.

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

Works and Services—Office of Housing, \$146 400 000

Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
Mr. S.J. Baker
The Hon. B.C. Eastick
Mr D.M. Ferguson
Mr T.R. Groom
Mr J. Mathwin
Mr K.H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings, Minister of Housing and Construction and Minister of Public Works

Departmental Advisers:

Mr G. Black, Manager, Office of Housing.
Ms M. Hill, Senior Project Officer, Office of Housing.
Mr P. Edwards, General Manager, South Australian Housing Trust.

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

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: On the bare facts indicated of the advance, \$154 500 less the amount that was underspent during 1983-84, can the Minister indicate the reason for the under-expenditure? I fully appreciate that one cannot always have delivery on date. Certainly, the lack of delivery made a mockery of the figure which the Government has used in relation to the number of completions for 1983-84. There

are in fact fewer than 2 900, not 3 100. Whilst I appreciate that a number of those may be in place within the next two weeks, they were not there by 30 June 1984. It was an error of 6 per cent which has been perpetuated in a number of statements by the Premier and by the Minister.

If they had been able to claim that 6 per cent error, I wonder whether next year the Premier or the Minister would have reduced the number at the end of June 1985 by the number that came on stream after 30 June 1984. One gets the position that in 1985, if that figure had been allowed, it would have amounted to a 12 per cent error, not just the 6 per cent in 1984. However, we on this side laud the fact that there were almost 2 900 added to the stock. We hope that that much, or better, is achieved in 1985. Regarding the sum made available in capital for housing (which is barely over a 5 per cent increase on the total sum available in 1983-84), at a time when inflation has reduced but has not reduced so much in the housing area, how many homes does the Minister believe that he will be able to achieve with the funds that are available for 1984-85?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As to the \$8.1 million, which relates to the first part of the question, it is true that in 1983-84 \$8.1 million was not spent, and that in effect gave a figure of \$146.3 million for 1983-84. Even though that \$8.1 million was not spent during that year, the Housing Trust and the State Bank both achieved significant programmes.

The Trust added 2 889 to its rental stock during the year and its target of 3 100 additional units actually reached 3 125 by the third week of July. The State Bank increased its loan approvals from 55 a week to 60 a week in March 1984 as well as increasing in February the maximum loan limit from \$35 000 to \$38 000.

That was basically due to efficient management, and I think this Committee would be the first to recognise that the South Australian Housing Trust is regarded by all other housing authorities as being an efficient statutory body. For some reason the target figure of 3 100 is significant to the member for Light.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: If it is an untruthful statement.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: He seems to be saying that if the Premier says that we will produce 3 100 houses in the 1983-84 financial year, we will produce them. However, the member for Light does not take into account adverse weather conditions. No-one would deny that towards the latter part of the 1983-84 financial year no work was done on building sites because of excessive rain.

Through efficient management, the State Government has been able to generate considerable funds from internal sources which were channelled back to the housing programme in 1983-84. I am really saying that the \$8.1 million which was not spent is not reflected in the number of houses that we were not able to produce in 1983-84. The State Bank (both the old State Bank and the new State Bank) through efficient management was able to plough back into the system extra money that was coming in from repayments being made to it. The \$8.1 million does not represent a real problem. It means that \$8.1 million is being transferred into the 1984-85 programme, which makes a total of \$154.5 million, which will allow us to embark on our projected programme of 3 100 houses in the 1983-84 year (which was the statement made by the Premier in the Budget Speech).

I have dealt before with the failure to meet the 3 100 target. Yet the member for Light still insists on saying that because of that failure (for whatever reasons) the Premier has given false statements to the House which have been backed up by documents appearing in the Budget papers; that, therefore, I as Minister, have misled the House; and that, because we were not able to meet that figure, we were deceiving the community. Dwellings produced under the

trust design and tender scheme totalled 1 535, under design and construct 776, and purchase housing 578, making a total of 2 889 at a cost of \$128.6 million.

The advice of the Trust (which is a competent housing authority) to the Minister is that it understands that the Government intended to produce 3 100 houses in the 1983-84 financial year and that it would do its utmost to produce those houses. It programmed its contractors to meet that target. The Trust built 2 889 units but the member for Light is making great play on the fact that it did not build 3 100. However, within the first week of July a further 144 houses were acquired; by the second week of July a further 27 had been acquired and by the third week of July a further 65 had been acquired. Thus, the number of units acquired by the third week in July was 3 125. Furthermore, by the end of July another 262 new houses came on stream, as did 102 purchase houses. Therefore, the total for 13 months was 3 253 units.

Another point which needs to be made clear is that 200 design and construct houses which were to be completed by 30 June were not handed over in time. Firm commitments were given by builders in the private sector to provide an additional 200 design and construct houses for completion by 30 June, but they were not handed over in time, through no fault of the South Australian Housing Trust or the Government. I am talking about those 200 houses and the others that came through in July. The delay in their construction was outside the control of the Housing Trust and outside the control of the Government.

An important point was made by the member for Peake. He said that a person on the waiting list of 32 000 people who were seeking accommodation would be unlikely to castigate this Government because it said that it would build 3 100 houses (the greatest number of houses built in one year since 1957) but fell short by just over 100, yet within two or three weeks of that projected date we had made available more than the projected 3 100 houses. Is that person going to complain to this Government? Would such a person say that the Government did not keep its promise and, therefore, a Labor Government cannot be trusted?

There are in the community people who could not care a damn whether they will obtain their home by 30 June or whether they have to wait until the second week in July—as long as they know that the Government has made a positive attempt to alleviate the severe housing shortage and to provide housing for low income people. The same situation may apply next year; I do not know. One cannot predict what the weather conditions will be like. I do not know whether the situation pertaining to those people who are building homes for private buyers at the moment will remain the same. I do not know and nor does the General Manager of the South Australian Housing Trust.

However, it must be recognised that in 1983-84 the Government put aside enough money to produce 3 100 homes for the public sector. The Government has made the same commitment for the present financial year. I will not lose any sleep at the end of this financial year if we are 50 or 75 houses short because, if that was so, those houses would be brought on stream shortly after that due date. That is the way in which the general community will see the present Government operating under the public sector scheme. Perhaps Mr Black would like to talk about the activities for the forthcoming year.

Mr Black: The Housing Trust has made a recommendation that we propose to take up, namely, that in the Budget context in the course of the next financial year the total level of activity of the Trust will be used as a description of its performance, as opposed to the actual number of additions to Housing Trust stock. This makes quite good common sense. For example, there could be a situation

where the Trust increased its number of keys handed over and additions from, say, 1 000 to 2 000 a year. However, given a decline in the number of commencements and a net decline in the amount of work in progress at the beginning compared to the end of the year, the indication could be given that the total level of activity generated by the Trust through the year had fallen. As a consequence, in the next Budget context we propose to describe the Trust's activities in terms of commencements, completions, purchases, and the net work in progress from the beginning to the end of the year.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Perhaps the General Manager could bring the Committee up to date on the state of play at present, as an indication of whether we are in front or behind.

Mr Edwards: I can provide information up to the end of August, that is, for the first two months of the financial year. During those two months the Trust acquired 501 completed new homes and purchased 221 homes—making a total 722. To the year ended 30 June 1984 there was a shortfall of 211, and that was a great disappointment to the Trust, even though the target was substantially achieved within a few days of 30 June. Allowing for that shortfall for the first two months of the current financial year we have 511 homes completed for our 1984-85 programme. While the building industry does not always operate on an absolutely even basis, that number represents an average of 255 a month, or, after multiplication, provides a yearly figure of 3 060. By the end of August we had made good the shortfall that existed at the end of June, and we were on track to achieve the target that the Government had given the Trust for the current year. But, of course, we are subject to conditions prevailing in the building industry, and the recent weather, among other things, has caused some delay to programmes. Nonetheless, the latest figures indicate that we are on target for the current year's programme.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I think the Minister has protested too much. There has never been any criticism of the South Australian Housing Trust or of the Government's effort: the criticism has been about the politicising of the issue by the Minister and the Premier in laying claim to a reservoir of homes that they did not achieve. The information provided by the Minister and that which we were pleased to accept from the Manager of the Trust in regard to the number of houses taken into stock for July and August is very gratifying. However, in the next Budget the Minister or the Premier would have discounted the number of houses that had already been counted for 1983-84 when providing the true facts relative to the number of houses completed in 1984-85. The Government must bear the responsibility for that dishonesty. Apart from that, on 30 August—almost two calendar months after the end of the financial year—the Premier in this place referred to a figure that was overstated by over 200 homes. That is where the argument lies. It is not with the Trust or in regard to efforts made: it is purely and simply in regard to the facts that were known. The facts are here in the Auditor-General's Report for 1984, which very clearly indicates the number of homes that were built. That information was available to the Government, yet it saw fit to misrepresent the position to the people of South Australia.

I will refer to various other aspects of the Trust's building programme later. In regard to the Auditor-General's Report, it appears that the total trading loss of the Housing Trust, or operating deficit, was \$10 million. Associated with that loss were trading results adverse to the Housing Trust due to the funding that the Housing Trust is required to make available by way of concessions to a large number of people who are less fortunate than others. I do not criticise the Trust for that. I believe that for leased housing there was a

deficit of \$177 000, that rental rebates amounted to \$32 million, and that rental income amounted to \$9.4 million. I am not certain whether that should be part of the \$32 million or whether it is an additional amount.

The management agreements were responsible for a loss of \$289 000. Further, an amount of \$800 000 was written off for excess water, which is a cost that is accepted by the Trust. Also, Aboriginal housing showed a loss of \$1.1 million, and the Mortgage Relief Scheme also showed a loss. Depending on where that \$9.4 million from rental income is situated, the overall cost to the Housing Trust in providing services to South Australians was about \$44 million. When that amount is compared with the \$10 million operating loss, it is apparent that most certainly the Housing Trust is to be lauded for providing a very worthy service to the people of South Australia.

I would appreciate the Minister or his officers telling me about that approximately \$44 million of concessions to the people of this State, no matter whence it is sourced, whether it comes from the Commonwealth or eventually from Consolidated Revenue or elsewhere. On the documents made available from the Auditor-General it would appear to be the sum that has to be found by the Trust in providing its services to the community.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The Trust incurred an operating deficit of \$10 million in 1983-84, as opposed to a surplus of \$3.7 million in 1982-83. The member for Light touched on some of those areas. The deficit is attributed to the dramatic increase in rental rebates granted to tenants from \$22.646 million in 1982-83 to \$32.013 million in 1983-84. The percentage of tenants in receipt of rental rebate has increased from 35.43 per cent to 64 per cent in the five years ended 30 June 1984.

The member for Light is quite correct about the way in which the Trust responds to those people in that if there is money available (a surplus) that surplus is better spent in providing necessary assistance to those people in need rather than being retained within the Trust's coffers. The Government supports this attitude, as I am sure would all members of this Committee.

The last two rental increases of the Housing Trust, endorsed by the State Government, mean that those people on rental rebates are not affected, because this Government and the South Australian Housing Trust feel that we have a moral obligation and responsibility to charge the least possible rent to those in such an unfortunate situation at the moment (mainly due to unemployment).

Interest paid increased from \$33.753 million to \$39.93 million—an increase of \$6.177 million, reflecting primarily an increase in the Trust's indebtedness from \$698.355 million to \$784.093 million. Also, for the first time, there is the full year's effect of substantial semi-government borrowings in 1982-83 of \$54.309 million at a rate of 17.5 per cent in 1982.

Perhaps the members for Light and Fisher can recall that the Opposition at that time objected most strongly to the Trust's being forced to take out loans at a high cost of 17.5 per cent. Our argument was that in future years the Trust would not be able to carry such a high rate of interest. The argument put to us by the previous Minister was that the Trust had an obligation to build public rental accommodation; if it had to build it by getting high interest loans, so be it. This is the first time that the chickens have come home to roost and the Trust is having to pay such a high rate for the privilege that it did not really want at that time.

The maintenance of rental stock has increased from \$26.986 million to \$31.449 million—an increase of \$4.463 million. As a consequence, both the increase in rental stock and catch-up of maintenance tasks have been deferred from previous years. Again, one of the criticisms from Trust

tenants reflected in letters received by me from members of Parliament and by the Trust from irate tenants is that maintenance programmes are not being carried out. The Housing Trust made a positive move over the last financial year to try to catch up on its maintenance work. Again, that is reflected in the overall deficit shown in the Auditor-General's Report.

Rates paid to local government and E & WS Department increased by \$2.93 million. Those are the kinds of things that have contributed to the \$10 million deficit. I am sure that the Trust makes no apology for that; nor does the Government. The Trust's role is not only to provide rental stock to people on low incomes, but to act as a humane authority in providing those services and drawing rents from those people. These hard times mean that our rental rebates have to increase up to a level of 64 per cent. If we are forced to pay high rates of interest as a result of a previous Government's decisions, so be it. However, I am sure that the Committee will not condemn the Housing Trust for having such a deficit, nor would the general community. We are providing the service to the community, as set out in the charter. I, for one, applaud the Trust for what it is doing. Perhaps the General Manager would like to enlarge on some of those points.

Mr Edwards: First, in the year 1983-84, the Housing Trust made an operating surplus before rental rebates of \$21.9 million compared with an operating surplus before rental rebates in the previous year of \$26.3 million. Although our income due from rents increased over the year, there were increases in expenses (as the Minister mentioned) particularly in the area of interest, bills, maintenance and general expenses. Notwithstanding that, there was still an operating surplus before rent rebates of \$21.9 million. But between the two years also the cost of rent rebates jumped from \$22.6 million to \$32 million—an increase of \$10 million. That figure of \$32 million wiped out the operating surplus that we had achieved. I emphasise that the Trust did achieve an operating surplus before the rent rebate bill: it was a substantial surplus.

Secondly, as a consequence of the renegotiation of the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement (which I think the Minister identified in his second reading explanation) it will be possible now to use Commonwealth funds to offset at least part of the cost of the rent rebate bill in future years. That will have a beneficial effect on the costs to the Trust of providing the rent rebate scheme.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Looking at the cost of money to the Housing Trust, one sees at page 380 of the Auditor-General's Report (note No. 20 to the accounts) that on 15 March 1984 the Trust transferred \$213.967 million of semi-governmental loans to the South Australian Government Financing Authority in exchange for a consolidated loan with the South Australian Government Financing Authority. This loan was immediately reduced by \$6 million repayment of principal by the Trust.

Interest is at the weighted average of all South Australian Government Financing Authority borrowings of 1983-84, 12.2 per cent, with no other principal repayments required in 1983-84. What effect on the overall State Budget and indeed on the Housing Trust budget will this manipulation or cross-financing have? Is the 12.2 per cent above the interest that would otherwise apply to the Trust in its borrowings? Is it a weighted figure which is against the best interests of the Trust?

Mr Edwards: Basically, it was a rearrangement of borrowings that had been made on behalf of the Trust by the Treasury from a variety of lending institutions that provide semi-government finance. Those were consolidated and transferred to the one debt to the South Australian Government Financing Authority. The average interest rate on

those semi-government borrowings in the year just concluded was 12.2 per cent, compared to 11.99 per cent in the previous year. That difference reflected changes in the prevailing rates of interest in the market-place. Its real effect was to consolidate loans to one source and its impact on the Trust's operations was marginal.

Mr PLUNKETT: The previous Government changed the rent control system, placing it under local government and making it the toothless tiger to which I have often referred in Parliament. No department was set up: it was merely a gimmick of the previous Government to get rid of an efficient and helpful organisation that would have assisted many of my constituents. Immediately the Tonkin Government came to office, nothing was set up, but the Government forgot to tell local government. So, when I contacted the four councils in my district to inquire on behalf of my constituents regarding rent control, local government officers said that they knew nothing about it and that the Government had made no arrangements. I was most disappointed with that. I have raised the matter many times in this Chamber.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Last year's Estimates—

Mr PLUNKETT: The member for Light has been asking questions all day, and I have sat here for nearly seven hours waiting for a chance to ask a question. It would be kind of him to let me ask it. In Committee B he would have been ruled out of order on practically every question he has asked, because they have been like Ministerial statements.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Ferguson): Order! I ask that interjections cease, and I ask the member for Peake to go ahead with his question.

Mr PLUNKETT: Will the Minister outline the activities under the Housing Improvement Act in 1983-84, which was the first full year of operation of the legislation since responsibilities under it were returned to the Housing Trust in November 1982?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I am sure the member for Light did not mean to be unkind. By far most of the orders made under the Housing Improvement Act apply in the honourable member's district, which explains his interest in this subject. I have made strong statements in the past as a member of the Opposition on the decision to take away from the Housing Trust an efficient operation, which was designed to protect people on low incomes, and give it to local government. We tend to associate excessive rents with the private sector and generally think in terms of homes and flats that have been built in the more affluent areas, but that is not always the case. Excessive rents generally are charged for homes in an appalling condition. That is why the Housing Improvement Act was introduced in the 1940s by that great liberal socialist, Sir Thomas Playford, to provide protection for people on low incomes. That legislation was in line with Sir Thomas Playford's knowledge that in the past people on low incomes could not get access to low cost homes (not jerry-built homes, but substantial homes built for low income people).

We can see the benefit of that programme throughout South Australia, especially in my district of Elizabeth. The honourable member has often asked why the previous Government suddenly changed the arrangement for the efficient management administration of the Housing Improvement Act, which had been working to the benefit of those people living in substandard conditions and to the benefit of the whole community. Ever since 1940, few claims have been made against the Trust when it was administering the Housing Improvement Act that landlords had been given a raw deal. When an order was placed on a substandard home, the landlord generally accepted it as a fair cop: he put his house in order and was forced to charge a reasonable rent.

When the previous Government was in power, my predecessor decided that he did not wish to assign this function to the Housing Trust: he wished to give it to local government. However, he did not tell local government about his decision and, at any rate, local government said that it could not administer the Housing Improvement Act. Its role in this area concerned only a house that was plagued by termites and needed to be demolished. After a full year's operation of the Act, there was a magnificent increase in the number of houses inspected and in the number declared substandard. In 1982-83, 2 182 houses were inspected and, in 1983-84, 3 568. In 1982-83, 56 houses were declared substandard and, in 1983-84, 144. In 1982-83, 161 houses were satisfactorily improved and, in 1983-84, 239. In 1982-83, 77 houses were demolished or converted to other uses and, in 1983-84, 299. As at June 1983, 517 houses were under the control of the Act and, as at June 1984, that number had increased to 4 712 houses.

Those figures indicate that a substantial number of people on low incomes were forced to live in substandard homes. After the renovation of those homes the tenants paid a reasonable rent. They are mainly people who eventually will apply for Housing Trust rental homes. The cost to the Housing Trust of the administration of this programme is small.

The expenditure on salaries, superannuation and sundry administration expenses was \$523 000 in 1983-84. After recharging costs of \$78 000 to other areas of Housing Trust activity, the balance of \$445 000 was met from sundry income of \$110 000—mainly fees for inspection of Government buildings—and from Consolidated Account came \$335 000. About \$460 000 has been allocated to fund the administration of the Act in 1984-85. So, what we have is a very effective mechanism administered by the Trust to guarantee that ordinary people in the community have somewhere to go (in this case, the Housing Trust) and say, 'My home is substandard; I have been charged gigantic rents for the privilege of living in that substandard house,' with the knowledge that the South Australian Housing Trust on their behalf will ensure not only that the substandard home is renovated to a habitable condition but that they are paying a fair market rent.

Mr PLUNKETT: Can the Minister provide an estimate of work generated for private sector builders and contractors in 1983-84 under the Housing Improvement Act?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This is only an estimation—we cannot give the exact figures—but it has been estimated by South Australian Housing Trust officers who are concerned with the Housing Improvement Act and with those landlords who are being forced to have their homes renovated to a standard acceptable to the tenant, the landlord and the Trust, that in 1983-84 \$2.9 million was generated in the building industry to provide those improvements. In 1982-83 the figure was \$2 million. As a result, with the Housing Improvement Act now working at full bore with the co-operation of the Housing Trust and all the other agencies that are able to refer tenants to the Trust, we are able in effect to inject some work into the building community.

Mr PLUNKETT: Can the Minister indicate how much money has been allocated to the tenant participation programme which was originally a pilot project in the Marion, Oaklands Park and Dover Gardens areas and which is now being used in other areas by the Trust?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: There is very little money available, and getting a tenant participation scheme set up in different areas relies heavily on the goodwill of the Trust's Regional Manager and the tenants themselves. Tenant participation has always been an objective of the Trust to ensure that its housing and associated services are appropriate to the needs of tenants. One can always argue that, unless

there is tenant response to what seem appropriate measures, it always tends to be a one-sided situation. Many members of this Committee who have large areas of Housing Trust accommodation in their electorates know that they get coming in at fairly regular intervals complaints such as, 'The Trust is doing this in my area and we have not even been consulted, and we don't like what it is doing.'

So, there was a positive move from the Trust encouraged by this Government to become involved in tenant participation. The key objective is to provide a mechanism whereby tenants who wish to become involved can have a say in issues affecting their homes and the broader community. There are problems associated with this. If one tries to get tenant participation in a new area, where there are young married couples whose sole concern in the first two or three years of living in Trust accommodation is to get the family going, one will find that they have little interest or time to get involved in tenant participation.

However, it is working in the three pilot programmes that the member for Peake mentioned, and so far we have seen significant ways in which this involvement has allowed people to develop a greater pride in their homes and their immediate environment and also to develop confidence in their own abilities, and that is a very important part of being Trust tenants. Sometimes they tend to see themselves as people just living in a double or single unit and think that no-one seems to care about exactly what is happening.

During the year, seven committees were formally elected by tenants to represent their needs. These committees have held regular discussions with Trust representatives and have also consulted local government on policy issues that are of concern to them. They are becoming involved in social needs, raising money for tenant projects and developing a community attitude among tenants, and they are encouraging greater understanding of each other's needs. Tenant participation has also further strengthened the relationship that the Trust has with its tenants. The pilot schemes that the member for Peake has mentioned have been progressively extended to areas with particular emphasis on medium density developments, where experience has shown that there is a greater acceptance and interest by tenants.

I think that it will be some years before the Trust can say that tenant participation is working at a maximum, but from the initial results that we have received from those three pilot programmes the Trust and the Government are convinced that we are on the right track. This is the first step towards actively involving tenants in the running of their own homes. Members of the Committee may recall, when I was dealing with the representation on the Community Committee of the Housing Advisory Council, that I mentioned that a Housing Trust tenant is a member of that committee. We know that she is passing back to other Housing Trust tenants throughout the State all those kinds of details that are being discussed. It is successful, and we hope to extend it beyond the pilot schemes. We know that there are problems, but all in all it is working well and we expect great things from it.

Mr EVANS: Can the Minister indicate what the Trust would be paying for broad acres now if it bought such land, the number of allotments that it would get per hectare, and the cost of the services in developing those allotments if the Trust were to move into that field? In asking the question, I am looking at underground power, roads, sewerage and the lot, because we need to establish if we can the cost to the Trust of creating allotments on today's prices and to attempt to establish the cost to the Trust of actual construction and perhaps administration on today's prices. What does the Trust expect to pay for broad acres at present? If it is not buying such land it should be possible to give an estimation of what it is worth on the open market and

how much it is costing to create those allotments and have them ready to be built on. Also, what is the number per hectare?

Mr Edwards: That is a difficult question to answer, because the Trust is engaged in the business of buying and developing land, and it has detailed concepts and costings for each project. There is so much variation between one project and another because of the variations in the conditions of the site, whether it is the slope or accessibility to services, etc., that I find it difficult to offer any quantified answer at all. In respect of broad acres, we pay a price close to the value endorsed by the Valuer-General. Every time we buy a parcel of land we get a valuation from the Valuer-General or responsible private valuers. We always try to purchase under that price, although occasionally we are driven slightly above it but in close proximity to it. The price varies depending on whether we are buying land in the central metropolitan area or in an urban fringe site, as the two would be considerably different. The same applies with the cost of development. I could provide for the Committee some examples of cost rather than attempt to quote a general figure with universal application.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: That is a good idea, and the figures can be included in *Hansard* in due course.

Mr EVANS: I am aware that land in the Morphett Vale East area is coming on to the market. Some land may be already owned by the Trust or other Government agencies. I believe that in that area we can get a clear indication of what the Trust expects the land will cost and what the developmental costs will be. I hope that that information is included in the detail. Can the Minister say what it is costing the Trust now per unit—whether it be units of 100 square metres or square metres—to construct a house on today's prices compared with 12 months ago?

Mr Edwards: I will take the question on notice and provide some examples from cases, as the figures vary considerably according to the type of house. It will be a matter of choosing comparable pensioner flats and comparable single unit housing.

Mr EVANS: I would expect that there must be an average because we have been talking on a previous line about the cost of housing and building. All sorts of arguments were put up at the time as to why costs have increased. It amazes me that even an average figure is not readily available to us today. Does the Trust have subcontractors working within its operations, whether they are working for principal contractors or for the Trust? If so, is the Minister aware that, even though those subcontractors may choose to take out an insurance policy covering them for any work injury to a value of compensation the same as though they were on workers compensation, the principal contractor, be it the Trust or another contractor, also has to take out workers compensation for those individuals? That in itself is pushing up the cost of housing considerably. If that is the case and the Minister has not been aware of it, will he take it up with his colleagues? If he is aware of it, will he explain why the Government has condoned leaving the Act as it is to date? Within the answer will the Minister indicate to the Committee whether the Government has persuaded the Trust to enforce upon its principal contractors the use of fewer subcontractors and more day labour?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As to the final part of the honourable member's question, the Trust does not place any provisos on principal contractors that they employ other contractors or day labour—it is entirely up to them. The contract is between the South Australian Housing Trust and the developer. If the developer wishes to use day labour employed by his own company or if he intends to use contractors, it is entirely up to him. I will take the remainder of the question on notice and supply a detailed reply.

Mr BAKER: There is an increase in management expenses, according to my calculations, of about 18 per cent during 1983-84. That is separate from maintenance items, interest, and so on. Is there any specific explanation for that blow-out in management expenses?

Mr Edwards: There was an increase in management expenses overall within the Housing Trust last year compared to the previous year, which reflected two basic factors: first, there was an increase in the number of staff employed; and, secondly, in accordance with the normal processes of salary awards people gained increments, or higher payments were made. The effect on the annual income and expenditure account is somewhat distorted because our management expenses are allocated in two ways: some are charged to the income and expenditure account while others are charged to capital works—in relation to the size of the capital works programme, the amount that is handled in house and the amount handled by design and construct. The proportion of management expenses allocated to the capital works programme declined during the year and, therefore, there appeared to be an above average increase in management expenses within the income and expenditure account. That was partly produced by the way in which the allocation of funds between capital and recurrent expenses was carried out.

Mr BAKER: Will the Minister explain why on 17 April 1984 he provided me with information that the interest bill for 1983-84 would be \$52.3 million when in fact only \$31.4 million was paid out?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Was that in reply to a Question on Notice?

Mr BAKER: Yes, the reply was given on 17 April and stated that there was a principal repayment of \$5.279 million and interest of \$52.264 million. The Auditor-General's Report states that the interest paid was \$39.93 million—a far cry from the \$52.264 million. I guess my query was whether the Department was capitalising and not meeting the interest obligations but rather sinking them into the debt structure of the Trust.

Mr Edwards: The total interest payable by the Housing Trust in 1984 was \$49.981 million which related to the estimate given to the honourable member earlier, I would imagine. Some part of that interest bill is properly charged to capital works, because money is invested in work in progress and, as any developer would do, interest is charged to his capital account in respect of work in progress. The amount that was so charged was over \$9 million; hence the amount shown in the income and expenditure statement was reduced to \$39.9 million. The explanation for the difference between the two figures is basically that a portion of the interest was charged to the capital account.

Mr BAKER: Yes, which is exactly increasing the debt situation. One matter that alarmed me when going through the rental rebates—and we understand why they are necessary—is that there seems to have been an enormous blow-out in that figure. On a mathematical basis one would have expected that there would be a movement in line with the other changes taking place, yet there seems to have been a \$10 million increase in rental rebates. The Minister has explained that everyone previously on a rebate then did not get an increase of any sort. Can the Minister confirm that and explain why that is the situation, and why rental rebates did not move slightly, realising that some of these people are under very difficult circumstances? Why did they not move slightly in relation to other community movements, such as movements in pensions and various other things?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: If I take the member for Mitcham's question correctly, he is asking why at any time did we not move—

Mr BAKER: There has been a 50 per cent increase in rebates in one year, which is fantastic in terms of the impact that it is now having on the Budget.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, there has not been a 50 per cent increase in that one year; it rose from 35 per cent to 64 per cent over five years.

Mr BAKER: It rose from \$22.6 million in 1983 to \$32 million. I will not argue the point or toss the coin on 50 per cent or 47 per cent. However, there has been about that order of increase in that one item, and it must decrease the Minister's ability to be able to service—

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Pensioners are now included in that total figure as being on rent rebates.

Mr BAKER: It is a paper figure. Is it now included for the first time?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes.

Mr BAKER: So, pensioners have been included for the first time. Previously pensioners were not under the rent rebate scheme as such even though they were receiving subsidised rental. However, they are now included in there?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: There is a time limit on the material to be supplied to *Hansard*. It must reach *Hansard* no later than Friday 19 October. The Minister has indicated that there was some material to go in, and I thought I would mention that.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: There has been a review of State Government concessions, and the final report has been handed down. There is a section between pages 85 to 89 that directly relates to the Housing Trust. It gives something of the historical background and the increase that has taken place. It also gives figures, at table 6, of the Housing Trust's statistics and then it goes on, under the heading 'Discussion and options' at page 87, to provide a number of options which have been considered by the particular committee. It does not indicate precisely what action is to be taken.

I would suspect that the document is now available to the various Ministries for a response. I would be interested to know what the views of the Housing Trust and the Minister are in relation to the options A to F that were provided, and whether there is a preferred course of action which is intended by the Department or, indeed, already decided by Cabinet in relation to this matter. It relates very pertinently to the problems that have been outlined by former questions, although it does not pick up precisely some of the other costing factors which I was able to draw from the Auditor-General's Report as notes to the accounts and which for example picked up the loss on excess water and the other losses.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In relation to the concessions report that the member for Light has referred to and the options that would be available to the South Australian Housing Trust, the honourable member would be aware that the General Manager of the South Australian Housing Trust was on the committee of review. Some of the problems highlighted in that report have now been partly offset by the use of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement grant money to be used for rebates. Which option will be picked up depends on the decision made by Cabinet.

The on. B.C. EASTICK: I take it that no such decision has yet been made?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to the general budgetary figures made available to South Australia by the Commonwealth Budget (this overlies the Housing Trust and the other activities), I find that South Australia received \$1.918 million for mortgage and rent relief, or 8.94 per cent of the total sum made available in that area. It received \$1.112 million for crisis accommodation (8.93 per cent of the total); for pensioner housing \$2.622 million (only 7.06 per cent of

the total Australian allocation); for Aboriginal housing \$5.595 million (or 13.19 per cent of the total); for local and community housing \$620 000 (8.94 per cent of the total); and for other housing assistance grants \$61.284 million (or 12.91 per cent of the total).

In fact, South Australia received \$73.15 million, which amounted to 12.3 per cent of the total funds of \$592.484 million that were made available in the Commonwealth Budget. Concerning pensioner housing, Aboriginal housing, local and community housing, it is noted that no matching grant is required. However, in the case of the other housing assistance grants, which I indicated totalled \$61.284 million for South Australia, a formula requires that there be a matching grant of 91.92 per cent of that grant.

It is indicated that the States are allowed to allocate the grants for home purchase assistance programmes and rental housing programmes as they determine for themselves and that these grants are the summation of the previous grants of long term 53 years concessional interest loan grants that were previously available. On what basis is the State meeting that matching sum? Is it from its Loans programme? There was some question in discussions on the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement on how the matching would be programmed to flow over and whether the States would have to generate funds to meet the matching sum from sources other than Loan funds. I would appreciate hearing from the Minister what the precise situation is.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: This State has no problem with matching because we are using nominated funds.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Your Loan funds?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes. In relation to the document from which the member is reading, I understand the tie up with the \$73.2 million coming into this State, but could the member clarify the question? Is he saying that the money which we are receiving from the Commonwealth, worked out as a percentage, is less than what the State should be receiving?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In some areas it would appear to be less at 12.3 per cent of the total. It would appear that the State has done well compared with the percentage of the total Commonwealth cake that it gets for transport at the moment. Whilst for three of the six nominated funds for South Australia we are getting 8.93 per cent, or 8.94 per cent, it gets as low as 7.06 per cent for pensioner housing and as high as 13.19 per cent for Aboriginal housing. The source of that information is the Commonwealth's own Budget documents which were circulated at the time of the handing down of the Commonwealth Budget. It is explained on pages 58 to 61.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Basically, as the honourable member is aware, we get 8.9 per cent, which is the State's percentage. The allocation for pensioners is based on the number of pensioners that we have in our State, and that explains the drop in that allocation. With the \$73.2 million that this State received for 1984-85, we have received overall generally more than a fair share of the proportion of Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement money when one considers that the percentage is based on the population of this State. I ask Mr Black to explain that in more detail.

Mr Black: In relation to the untied grants of \$61.3 million, it may be recalled that up until the early 1970s both the housing and total works programmes were combined, and until about 1974 South Australia was receiving about 15 per cent of the total allocation to housing when the housing and works programmes were split off.

In 1981 a formula was introduced with the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement that allocations to the States were to progressively move towards a per capita allocation by 1991. That has been in operation over the past couple of years. That has meant that we have had a very high

allocation, but slowly but surely by way of a percentage decrease of half a per cent per annum we are moving towards a situation where in 1991 we will be receiving a per capita allocation. South Australia has been fighting this, and discussions about the future of that arrangement are continuing. As the Minister has said, in regard to pensioners we receive funds on a recipients basis rather than on a per capita basis which, historically, has been the case for some time. The mortgage rent relief, local community housing and crisis accommodation are all specific purpose programmes for which we get a per capita allocation. The Aboriginal housing allocation is much more complex with funding coming from various sources.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Can the Minister indicate whether the unmatched portion of the grant (if South Australia is to get that 8.18 per cent of the grant that does not have to be matched) in fact does reduce the cost of interest in regard to overall budgeting? I am referring to money that is additional, an amount that does not have to be matched. It is costing nothing, therefore it is of benefit to the budget.

Mr Edwards: The question of whether or not funds have to be matched is essentially a problem (if it were to be a problem) for the State's overall allocation of funds. If the Commonwealth indicates that it wishes to match funds then that requires a commensurate commitment to be made by the State Government in its general budgeting arrangements. It does not have any direct impact on the profitability or on costs to the Housing Trust or the State Bank, in that if the funds are made by way of grant, matched or unmatched, there is no cost involved. If the funds are made by way of loan and have to be matched, then it makes no difference whether they are matched or unmatched. The real issue about matching is the claim it places implicitly on the State's overall resources; the impact on the operations of the Housing Trust or the State Bank depends on whether the funds are made by way of grants or loans.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: That begs the question as to whether because it is a tied grant for housing, although it is being made available to the State, it is flowing to the housing area without cost.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: If it comes as a grant, yes.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Perhaps I misunderstood Mr Edwards in believing that it had to come from Government sources. However, after reading the material on the record if I have further questions about that matter I will take them up through correspondence.

Mr GROOM: Will the Minister provide some information on the extent of the Trust rent increases that will come into effect on 6 October? In answering that, will the Minister outline some of the reasons for that increase?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Everyone is aware that, under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, State Governments are required to review their rents annually. The decision which the Government made some months ago and which will take effect as from 6 October this year means that rents will increase by 7 per cent. The Government and I agreed that in regard to low income people the increase in rent should not reflect any rate of increase greater than that of inflation. We have achieved that, although some members of the Opposition (no-one who is in the Chamber at present) have stated that the increases will range from 17 per cent to 25 per cent and that it is a form of back-door taxation. That does not do much credit to the reputation of the Housing Trust. If members of the Opposition wish to make wild accusations against the Government of the day, that is their prerogative. However, members of the Opposition know that the Government is guided by advice from the Housing Trust about rents. The rent will be increased by 7 per cent.

As a result of Government policy, 40 per cent of the tenants will not be affected. The increase will not apply to those tenants receiving rent reductions. That will include low income earners and pensioners. Rent paid by tenants not receiving rent reductions will be increased in the metropolitan area by \$3 a week for double units and by \$6 a week for single units, and by a maximum of \$6 a week for other forms of housing. The differential between metropolitan and country areas will be maintained. Rent for pensioner cottage flats will increase by \$1.50 a week for single pensioners and by \$2 a week for couples. Pensioner rents are reviewed annually and are set at about 16 per cent of the pension.

Pensioner rent increases over the past two years equate to about 12½ per cent of pensioner increases in the same period—very much less than the accepted rent to income ratio of 16 per cent. Pensioners over 75 years of age have their rents frozen and are not subject to any rent increases, and generally Trust rents will remain lower than rents for equivalent accommodation being offered by the private rental market. The member for Hartley asked for reasons for the increase: they are fairly simple. Housing Trust operating maintenance costs have increased considerably over the past year. The Trust and the State Government have kept the increase to a minimum. Rental income is to cover only operating and maintenance costs, and it is not a revenue raiser. It was never intended to be a revenue raiser and it never will be while the present Government is in office.

Mr GROOM: On the subject of wild allegations, I have heard it said that the Trust automatically takes a substantial proportion of any pension increase and that public housing does not allow pensioners to improve their position. Can the Minister explain the relationship between rents charged by the Trust for tenants on Commonwealth pensions and increases in those pensions? This is supplementary to the Minister's previous answer.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Perhaps it is timely that the member for Hartley raised that question, because twice in the House over the past month—

Mr BAKER: Has the Minister—

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I hope that, after I have explained the comments made by one of the member for Mitcham's colleagues, he will show the same outrage that I felt and I am sure that members on the Government side feel in relation to one member's attitude to the South Australian Housing Trust's way of passing on rent increases to pensioners. I sincerely hope that that laughter in which he is indulging will not be followed up when he hears what one of his senior back-benchers said in relation to Housing Trust rents for pensioners.

Mr BAKER: What is a senior back-bencher?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: A senior back-bencher is one who is on the front bench at present but who, due to a reshuffle, will find himself on the back bench. I refer to the member for Mount Gambier, who was a Minister of the Crown and who now carries the responsibility of being shadow Minister of Community Welfare. Twice in the past month he has made comments. The first was as follows:

Let us look at what happens in housing, too. Almost invariably when we have rumours that there is to be a pension increase, the Housing Trust will be one of the first to hear definitely that a pension increase is on the way. Of course, pensioners are told generally two or three weeks before their pension is actually increased that the Housing Trust rents will go up by an amount that is very close to the increase in pension. In other words, their living standard (or at least their income) is being kept static, yet the Government increases its charges by vast amounts far in excess of the cost price indexation.

The member for Mount Gambier said on another day:

What a farce to protect the Federal Government! Pensioners have had to meet increases in transport, gas, water, electricity, food, clothing, etc., in non-budgetary increases during the year,

along with South Australian Housing Trust increases which always seem to anticipate any slight increase in pensions. I believe that they got their notices two or three weeks ago that rents were going up.

That is an allegation that when the Federal Government was set to improve the pensioners' lot by giving them an increase it warned the Housing Trust by saying, 'Look here; pensions are going up in a month's time by X amount of dollars. Get in there now and increase the rents.' That is a scurrilous thing to say. I am sure that all members of this Committee will condemn the member for Mount Gambier for making such statements.

We all deal with pensioner rents and with pensioners' attitudes when rents are increased: we all know that in many cases pensioners do not quite understand the formulae with which the Trust works to reflect what rents should be paid as a result of a pension increase. However, for a former Minister in a previous Government to come out twice with those statements and say that there is collusion between the Federal Government and a statutory authority—the South Australian Housing Trust—to fix rents to offset any increase in the pension is scurrilous.

Everyone knows that the Trust makes it its business to periodically inform members of the House of Assembly and the Legislative Council of rates of rent increases and how they affect all types of tenants and pensioners. Perhaps for the member for Mount Gambier's benefit I should put before the Committee information about the relationship between Trust rents and pension increases.

The rents of tenants paying reduced rents—including all tenants on pensions—are reviewed six monthly or, in the case of aged pensioners, annually. Tenants on reduced rents are not affected by general increases in Trust rents, but subject only to these separate reviews. Apart from aged pensioners, the Trust assesses the rents of other types of pensioners, and other low income earners who are unable to afford full rents, in accordance with a rent to income scale. This scale was introduced in 1974 and last amended in August 1983.

The rent to income scale ranges from about 16 per cent of the lowest incomes up to a maximum of 25 per cent of incomes of \$320. This State Government introduced a measure last year that restricted increases in rents for tenants on incomes of less than \$140 a week to a maximum of 20 per cent of any increase in income—i.e. if the pension rises by \$2, the maximum that can be paid in increased rent is 40c. Prior to this measure being introduced, up to 60 per cent of pension increases had been absorbed by increases in Trust rents. This measure was a watershed in governmental approach to income maintenance of low income public housing tenants. And I might add that this measure is indexed to the CPI, so that the cut off figure will remain at a meaningful level.

So, in 1983 this State Government introduced a measure whereby, if the pension rises by \$2, the maximum that can be paid in increased rent is 40c. That is true; that is fact. All members in this Committee who have large scale Housing Trust accommodation in their electorates know that is true. Yet, we have a senior member of the Opposition saying that there is collusion between the Housing Trust and the Federal Government so that when there is any increase in the pension the South Australian Housing Trust is given advance notice and, in effect, encouraged to go and take all of that increase in rent. That is not true. We know it and I think that the member for Mount Gambier should be condemned for saying such things in this House.

As far as aged pensioners go, those occupying cottage flats have their rents determined on a rent reduction basis equivalent at about 16 per cent of the pension. As I have said, this is reviewed annually. The rents paid by pensioners in

cottage flats and rental grant dwellings will increase on 6 October by \$1.50 a week for singles and \$2 for couples. From November 1982 to the present, increases in pensioner rents represent only 12.5 per cent of increases in pensions over the same period; that is, 3.5 per cent lower than the accepted level.

The facts are, as I have outlined, that there is an established figure of 16 per cent of income for aged pension rents, and that the Government has moved to ensure that no single increase in rents will take more than 20 per cent of any increase in pensions. The Trust takes into account past pension increases; it does not pre-empt them. The Government's belief is that public housing tenants receive a substantial public subsidy that is justified and fair. They are paying generally much lower rents than they would in the private rental market, as the Government believes they should. In fact, one of the key changes to the new CSHA sought by the Bannon Government was a deletion of the private market rents formula for determining public housing rents and the adoption of a cost rents formula. I am proud to say that partly because of this State's perseverance we now have cost rents formula in the CSHA, which essentially means that Trust rent increases will not be as great as they would have been under the private rents formula inserted by the Liberal Government.

Mr EVANS: Earlier it was mentioned that the Trust has communication with other departments when doing research—particularly the housing division—to establish demands. Is there any co-operation between the Housing Trust (or any other section of the Minister's Department) and the Community Welfare Department in relation to bond money for those who cannot afford to pay the bond required by a private landlord? I have been informed by a young couple that it is quite simple to ask for a bond, open a bank account in a fictitious name, bank the bond in the bank account, draw out the bond (bar the last dollar), leave the account open and walk away with the money. Apparently, there is no check on who the landlord is, although the money is given to pay a bond to a landlord. Nor is any check made to see whether the flat is available for rent. The scheme was exploited. Is there any communication between the two departments about this bond money for disadvantaged people? I believe that bond money should be made available to those who are disadvantaged, but that the system should not be exploited by those who have found a way to do so.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In any system, be it private, Government or semi-government, there will be abuses. If, as the honourable member said, someone gave a fictitious name of a landlord, put the money into the bank, pocketed it and walked away, that would be a criminal offence. If that person were detected, the full weight of the law should be brought to bear on him. However, that would be an isolated case. If the honourable member has information to pass on to the Ministry, I will follow it up but, if it is just hearsay, we can only condemn that attitude on the part of some people who are preying on agencies that provide much needed help for a group in our society who need it.

In the Emergency Housing Office, we carried out a review in 1983 and, as a result of that review, the office has been organised as a separate unit with its own premises. The Manager now has direct access to the Minister. The office has expanded its services to suburban areas with the appointment of regional housing officers at Salisbury, Noarlunga and Woodville. A senior housing officer has been appointed to oversee and co-ordinate service delivery. Staff levels have been increased from 18 full-time and two part-time officers to 28 full-time officers and one part-time officer to meet the increasing demand for services. The office is planning a pilot project to extend services to selected

country areas in 1984-85 and to expand the full house programme within the Emergency Housing Office in 1984-85 to 150 houses.

Within the new structure there is a mechanism that enables us to monitor more closely those people who seek bond money and other forms of support from the Emergency Housing Office. The person who would try a con trick such as that referred to by the member for Fisher may have been able to succeed previously but, since our review, we have many more staff, including part-time staff, to fulfil those functions and I doubt very much that the misuse of other people's money is likely to continue. Perhaps the Manager for Housing can enlarge on the kind of fraud that could take place in the Department.

Mr Black: I should like to make two points. First, I can recall two instances of that kind of fraud. Both were followed up and, as other offences had been committed by those people, the Commonwealth police were called in and brought those people to justice. Secondly, in the greater metropolitan area, bonds are required under the Residential Tenancies Act to be lodged with the Residential Tenancies Tribunal. The Emergency Housing Office has an effective mechanism and a relationship with the Residential Tenancies Tribunal whereby joint records of lodgments are kept.

The Emergency Housing Office can tell within a short time which bonds have or have not been lodged. The office then has a process whereby an officer follows up the matter with estate agents or landlords who have not lodged bonds and requests them to do so. Therefore, they can soon identify what is outstanding and ask the Tribunal to follow it up. If such a case occurred, the officers of the Residential Tenancies Tribunal would identify it soon after a certain time had elapsed.

Mr EVANS: The simple solution to the problem is for a telephone call to be made to the supposed landlord to ascertain whether he has a house available and that the individual has applied. In the case that I have in mind, the individual uses a false name, so it does not matter if the Tribunal wishes to check up, because the contact has been lost. Does the Housing Trust still encourage its tenants to buy their own homes, especially to buy their Trust home at market value, or is such a practice not condoned? Does the Government advertise regularly, albeit with the people's money, to explain to people the benefit of owning their own home and to encourage people at an earlier age to see the benefit of owning their own home? If not, will the Minister take this suggestion up with his colleagues?

If the Government convinces only 50 couples a year that they should own their own home early in life, the savings to the State will be dramatic. We advertise national fitness campaigns, the need to recognise cancer early, and the benefits of not smoking. I cannot understand why Governments will not take up the challenge of trying to explain to society generally the benefit of buying a home at an early age, because ultimately the cost of public housing will be so high that the taxpayer will not be able to foot the bill. The Trust should encourage tenants to own their own homes, and it could even embark on an ongoing telephone campaign to that effect.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That is a good suggestion. As a result of our home purchase review system, the committee saw the benefit of encouraging people (not only Trust tenants but also tenants in private rental accommodation) to invest in home ownership, along with banks, building societies and other institutions that are always extolling the benefits of home ownership. Indeed, when I gave the second reading explanation of the legislation to ratify the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement, I cited the example of two people, both having the same number of children, both earning the same income, and both renting their home. One was lucky

enough to take advantage of a loan from his family and embarked on home ownership. Within 10 years the loan had been repaid and, after taking into account local government and water rates, the home owner was still streets ahead of the other person who had continued to rent his home.

As to what this Government has done to encourage Trust tenants to buy their home, first, the rental purchase scheme, which we advertised under our Home Ownership Made Easier programme was reintroduced as a modified version of the previous one (which I can say quite fairly was not working at all) in October 1983 as part of our HOME programme. The reason for reintroducing the scheme was that it is commonly recognised that some householders have greater difficulty than others in saving a deposit for a home. That is the reason why a lot of people cannot get into the home purchase market. This applies to many low income couples earning less than about 90 per cent of the average earnings, particularly those with dependants.

The low deposit purchase scheme operated for two years to assist householders having difficulty in saving a deposit to buy a home. However, the relevance of this scheme diminished with the introduction of the Federal Government's first home owners scheme, and the Government decided to replace it with the rental purchase scheme that is now operating. The rental purchase scheme, which operated until 1979, was a popular and effective method of facilitating home ownership for low income families and those with reservations about taking on the obligations of a mortgage. However, unlike the previous scheme, the new scheme applies to the private market as well as Housing Trust homes which makes it more attractive than the previous scheme.

The number of householders who are likely to be particularly attracted to this scheme include low income householders, householders who have difficulty in saving a deposit, and householders who could meet mortgage obligations but who are reluctant to do so for fear of the consequences of not being able to meet the repayments. One of the features of the rental purchase scheme that we introduced—and there are three areas where we honed in to try to encourage people to move out of Trust tenancy and get into the home purchase market—is the proviso that, if they fall on unfortunate times and become unemployed or have prolonged periods of sickness (and I refer to sickness that can last for two or three years), they can revert to being tenants.

So, the great saviour of the rental purchase scheme is that once people enter into an agreement they never lose the roof over their head. If one looks at all the surveys that have been carried out on the reluctance of people to get into the home purchase arena (especially those on low incomes) the fear is, 'What will happen to me if I lose my job or I am sick for a very long period?' The rental purchase scheme ensures that once one is in a house that roof remains over one's head. If one's terms of payments change, that person reverts to being a tenant of the South Australian Housing Trust.

That scheme has become a very popular scheme. The demand has been very strong, and as at 30 June 1984 the Trust had received about 1 287 listings for rental purchase, which comprises about 20 per cent of the total of the State Bank waiting list. There would be additional numbers on the waiting list wanting rental purchase who have listed with the bank rather than the Trust; that is, they have listed with the bank for a concessional loan, but when they get to the top of the list they can go to rental purchase rather than the normal low concessional loan with the bank. As at 30 June 1984, 167 rental purchase arrangements had been settled with the Trust or the State Bank. So, that is one area where there is active encouragement to get people out of the Trust's rental market and into the home purchase arena.

The other area is in the sale of double units. There is an ongoing commitment by this Government to sell double units to existing tenants. While it depletes the stock, the money that the Trust obtains can immediately be used to purchase a rental home. The existing ability with regard to the sale of double units is that, when the Housing Trust tenant wishes to purchase a semi-detached unit, he or she is renting the services of the unit, and the adjoining unit must be completely separated in order to obtain a separate title. Under the present arrangements the tenant initiating the purchase is responsible for all costs incurred in carrying out the work. However, in the event that the adjoining unit is sold at a later date half the cost would be refunded.

This is causing a real problem because some Trust tenants feel that, while they wish to purchase the Housing Trust double unit home or part of the double unit home, they have to incur half the cost of the separation. I know that some members of the Committee have written to me regarding the problem that their constituents are suffering. I am currently reviewing whether the Housing Trust should continue to sell double unit housing. If people wish to buy a double unit, we transfer them to a single unit and let them buy that. That takes away the problem of the separation costs.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: You cannot transfer the beneficial improvement, though.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I think that that would be taken into account, but that is a point. That is one of the considerations involved. The other is whether alternative arrangements could be initiated with regard to the payment of costs of the separation of services for future cases. As part of this review, we are examining means of recouping the costs outlaid by those who have already purchased semi-detached units from the Trust and who are awaiting purchase of the other half of the unit. We are reviewing the situation. We have not come up with any real way of putting this into operation.

We recognise the problems of people wishing to buy their part of the double unit, having to bear the cost of separation and possibly having to wait 10 or 15 years to recoup half of those separation costs. However, they are two ways in which the Housing Trust is actively encouraging its tenants to either purchase their existing homes or move out and buy other homes.

Mr BAKER: What is the estimated value of your housing stock? I notice that the total is \$778 million. Obviously the houses are worth a lot more than that.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The estimated value is \$2 billion, give or take \$1 million or so.

Mr BAKER: Noting that the real return, if one considers the rents forthcoming, is of the order of .5 per cent, is it of concern to the Trust that it will continue to rely almost solely on Commonwealth and State generated funds for its building programmes rather than being able to self-generate from the resources of the Trust? I ask this because the Minister has outlined the difficult circumstances in which people find themselves, but there are certain stages of life when those circumstances become less difficult. I refer to two-income families and all the other trappings that go with normal living. One of the criticisms is that when those improvements do take place full market rents are not charged, and that allows the Trust greater flexibility in creating not only further housing but also greater equity in the system for those who do not have a chance.

I am looking at the Trust's accounts. It is behind the eight ball now. It has had to capitalise its \$10 million or \$11 million in interest rates, which means that it has continuing difficulty in being able to generate more housing on its own behalf. It is completely out of line at this stage on the whims of Federal Governments which change and the

ability of State Governments to negotiate loans at subsidised interest rates.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Before I ask the General Manager to comment, I think that the member for Mitcham needs to be aware of the kind of tenants that one has in Housing Trust rental accommodation. Perhaps I am fortunate in that I represent an area that is almost predominantly Housing Trust rental accommodation, and I can assure the member for Mitcham that it is not the norm, as circumstances change, that we have families with two incomes. One has only to look at the percentage of those on rebates—64 per cent. We are lucky to get families with one income in Housing Trust rental accommodation. Therefore, it has never been within the Trust's charter to make a profit from rent. In the days when there were better employment prospects, the cost of maintenance and some minor capital works were able to come out of rents. Public sector housing in this State and in any State is heavily reliant on money that is forthcoming from the Federal Government under the Commonwealth-State Housing Agreement or other money coming from the State Government or Loan Council where we can use nominated funds at a low interest rate to carry out our capital programme.

We will always be reliant on Federal Governments and use Loan moneys coming in at a low rate of interest to carry out extensive building programmes. If we ever got to a situation of trying to match rents being charged in the private sector for Housing Trust accommodation, we might as well give up our role as a public sector authority in this State, the same as any equivalent body elsewhere in Australia would have to do. I ask Mr Edwards to comment.

Mr Edwards: Historically over 47 years the Trust has at different times generated a surplus in its activities and did apply them to investment in further housing. We have not been able to do that recently. We have been running down the reserve invested in housing primarily because of the high cost of the rent rebate bill. However, over the past five years I would estimate the cost of rent rebate to be of the order of \$100 million, and the money that might otherwise have been invested in additional housing by internal resources has not been used to offset the cost of rent rebates. If those rent rebates were fully met by the Commonwealth (and they have been suggested to be a property and income security responsibility), we would have been able to use our internal resources to provide housing in the way suggested.

Mr FERGUSON: I am interested in the 3 000 plus units to be built in the coming financial year. How many units will be located in the Henley and Grange, Fulham Gardens, Findon and Seaton areas? I assure the Minister that the local member for that area is totally in favour of having Housing Trust units in that area, as a big need exists. Unlike other members in the House who would not like to see Housing Trust units in their areas, the local member for the areas to which I have referred is extremely anxious to see Housing Trust rental units in such areas.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Unfortunately, I cannot give the member the number of homes that are to be built in the Henley and Grange area, but I know that it falls in the major proportion of the metropolitan area where a real need exists for Housing Trust accommodation. We will be negotiating with other Government departments that may have surplus land for sale where we can embark on a programme to provide housing. In any areas such as Henley and Grange we try to integrate houses to match the existing form of housing in that area. I assure the member for Henley Beach (and I know his attitude to Trust accommodation in his area; he has a real concern for the needs of the people there) that, if it is possible and the price is right, the Trust will embark on a building programme in his electorate.

Mr FERGUSON: I would be very pleased to see it. What programmes did the Trust undertake in 1983-84 in partnership with other parties to increase rental stock? I am interested in any comments that the Minister could make about the proposed partnership situation with the Western Community Hospital.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: On a point of procedure, Mr Chairman, do you accept the motion that the time for the questioning of the Minister be extended to 6.15 p.m. as some compensation for the Minister's delaying tactics?

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly, if we had to go beyond 6 p.m., there would have to be a motion, but not for that reason. With the way that we are going, we will obviously need to have the Trust officers back after the dinner adjournment.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The commitment is to the Public Buildings line after tea. I have another question.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will answer the question raised by the member for Henley Beach, but I do not know whether the member for Light was being facetious or serious.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I was being deadly serious.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are wasting time at present. Does the Minister have the answer for the member for Henley Beach?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes. In relation to partnerships with other parties to increase the rental stock away from the normal rental stock acquisition, such as stock purchase, we engage in joint ventures with local government and community organisations in providing aid for accommodation as a joint venture with the Trust. We have worked with hospital boards, private enterprise, community development boards, church groups, lodges and associated Government departments during the year. Also, we have a good working relationship with those people who tend to engage in co-operatives. Those co-operatives obtain their finance from the private sector and the Trust guarantees the loan.

The CHAIRMAN: If the member for Light would like to move a motion to proceed beyond 6 p.m., I will accept it on the basis that there is to be only one more question.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Yes. I formally move:

That the sittings of the Committee be extended beyond 6 p.m.
Motion carried.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: To 30 June 1984, six co-operatives have been established: the Women's Shelter Housing Association Incorporated; Northern Suburbs Aged Housing Association; Hindmarsh Housing Association Incorporated; Ecumenical Housing Association Incorporated; Manchester Unity Housing Association Incorporated; and, Southern Support Housing Association Incorporated. We intend, over the next 12 months, to increase that to something like 50 or 60 other co-operative units in that area.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is it the intention of the Housing Trust to accept the role, stock and responsibilities of the Teacher Housing Authority and any other Government housing? I do so against the background of the reply that was given by the Minister of Education yesterday, that it is his intention to wind up the Teacher Housing Authority.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: A committee has been set up by Cabinet to look at the whole aspect of Government employee housing, but it has yet to bring down its recommendations to the Government. Whether it means that in the final recommendation the Housing Trust takes over those houses, I do not know. It remains for the committee, of which Mr Black is a member, to bring down recommendations to Cabinet.

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

[Sitting suspended from 6.3 to 7.30 p.m.]

Works and Services—Public Buildings Department,
\$83 380 000

Chairman:
Mr Max Brown

Members:
The Hon. D.C. Brown
Mr D.M. Ferguson
Mr T.R. Groom
Mr J. Mathwin
Mr K.H. Plunkett
Mr W.A. Rodda

Witness:

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings, Minister of Housing and Construction and Minister of Public Works.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr H.E. Roeger, Director-General, Public Buildings Department.

Mr G. Manning, Acting Manager, Client Liaison.

Mr N. Nosworthy, Senior Planning Officer.

Mr G.T. Little, Director, Administration and Finance.

Mr W. Dunbar, Programme Manager, Client Liaison.

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

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would like initially to take up the allocation of capital funds for Education Department buildings. I see that there has been a drop this year from \$24.2 million in 1983-84 to only \$20 million for 1984-85; that is a fairly significant drop, to say the least. It involves 16 or 17 per cent, without even taking inflation into account. So, if inflation is added to that we are looking at a drop of almost 25 per cent. Could the Minister indicate what effect that is likely to have on the construction programme for new school buildings and how many significant new school developments will go ahead under that programme this year? By 'significant' let us put a cut-off point of say \$500 000 or more. In other words, what new projects will start in 1984-85 that will require a reference to the Public Works Standing Committee, and what is the potential impact of that significant reduction in the capital works programme for schools in terms of the actual needs of the schools, and in terms of expanding schools or building new ones?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The short answer as to why there was a drop is purely and simply a question of priorities. They were considered by the Government as being the north-east busway and housing, on which this Government places great importance, and other major items such as highways. That is the short answer as to why there is a drop.

The CHAIRMAN: Now that we have the short answer, perhaps we should have the long answer.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I asked for specific information, and I would appreciate that response. How many new schools will be started this year which will cost at least \$500 000 or more? The short answer has nothing much to do with the question.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Seven new schools are listed under the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works, because they exceed the \$500 000, and another two are unlisted because of the requirements of the Public Works Standing Committee Act where they cannot be named.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I was wanting to know from the Minister the names of those schools. I presume that they are new projects to start in 1984-85.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: There is the Karrara Primary School additions, Public Works Report Parliamentary Paper

181/84; the Gawler East Primary replacement, Public Works Committee Report 178/84; the Munno Para Primary stage 2 additions, Public Works Standing Committee Parliamentary Paper 182/84; the Willunga Primary Redevelopment Interim June 1984 Report; the Lucindale Area development stage 1, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works Report 175/84; and the Mount Compass Area Redevelopment Stage 1, Interim Report June 1984; and the final one is the Aberfoyle Park additions stage 3, Parliamentary Standing Committee Report, Parliamentary Paper 151/82. The two jobs which are not listed but which are listed in the appendix are the Aberfoyle Park Hub Primary and the Parafield Gardens Primary.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: There are a number of schools which I think we used to call or still call holding schools, which were largely of a temporary or prefabricated structure. I wonder whether any of these holding schools are part of the current redevelopment, and, if so, which ones and which holding schools have been constructed for which there is no solid construction of any substantial nature. I appreciate that it may be necessary to come back to the Committee with further information as to the last part of that question. I appreciate it may not be available this evening.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In relation to the schools I have listed, do you want those which were originally holding schools but are now part of the solid construction?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I want to know which holding schools are in the process of getting solid construction and which holding schools still do not have any solid construction and certainly will not get any during the current financial year.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I refer to the Karrara Primary redevelopment and the Munno Para Primary stage 2 additions. As to the others which are still in their holding school concept, I refer to Salisbury Heights and Moana, which are currently scheduled for 1985-86. So, that would cover all the outstanding schools that the honourable member needs to know about.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would like now to take up a specific point, because I believe this to be the one chance where we can go around and talk about individual school redevelopment or other building redevelopment. I take up particularly a redevelopment proposed at the Willunga High School, which was a new school built whilst the Liberal Government was in office. Apparently, there was a shortage of accommodation and it was decided to relocate a portable wooden building from the Port Broughton school, which is under redevelopment, down to Willunga. This was done at a cost of \$30 000 for the relocation of that building. I point out that, because of the restrictions on moving such a wide and heavy long load, it had to go via the Barossa Valley to miss the Adelaide metropolitan area. It cost \$30 000 to get the building there. Now that it has arrived it has been declared to be in a state of disrepair and it is considered to be in a condition beyond economic repair. The building appears to be worth less than the actual cost of delivery.

So, I understand, at least from my colleague the member for Alexandra, who obtained the information from the school, that the school is concerned because it appears that the building is not suitable. It needs now to be rejected but \$30 000 has been spent on getting it there. I wonder what assessment was made prior to the relocation of the building or whether or not it was a fit building for relocation. Does the Government do a very careful analysis of whether it is really worth moving some of these buildings? I think the Minister would be the first to agree that for \$30 000 one could have a reasonably solid construction equivalent to a classroom, yet \$30 000 has been spent on moving a building which has apparently been officially declared junk. Could the Minister look into not only this particular case—I would

appreciate an answer on that—but also on the general issue on whether or not it is really worth relocating some of these buildings that are currently being relocated?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will have to have an investigation carried out into the transportable building that was transferred from Port Broughton to the Willunga school. I will get that report for the honourable member. As to whether there is a thorough investigation of whether these buildings are in a fit condition to be used again, let alone spend exorbitant amounts of money transferring them, yes, I should imagine that does take place but I will look into that matter for the honourable member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Apparently, it has been decided to set up or relocate a third-hand classroom—I presume of the same temporary nature as the ones that we have just been talking about—at the Strathalbyn High School. Let us be frank: these are the old wooden buildings of the early 1950s which in some cases have been moved from one school to another to another, and which are probably getting to the stage of being rather rotten—at least many of the timbers are. I understand that the school council at Strathalbyn is upset because this third-hand and rather run-down building is about to be dumped on a site where nine almond trees will have to be pulled out. Apparently, the proposal to pull out these nine almond trees is upsetting all of the teachers. I am sorry, I said the building was one of the wooden buildings—in fact, it was one of the early metal buildings. The council is upset because there is no drainage, the building is in a poor state of repair, and apparently nine precious almond trees in the Strathalbyn school ground are to be lopped to make way for it. Would the Minister look into that matter and consider whether it might be more appropriate to put the money into a solid construction building, rather than bringing in a temporary-type building which they also highlight would not fit in with the rest of the school?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes, I will look into the matter for the honourable member and bring down a report.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Minister does bring down a report, could it be provided to *Hansard* if it is possible?

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would appreciate all of the Minister's reports being inserted in *Hansard* in the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: I would point out to the Minister once again that if he is obtaining information as a result of questions that have been asked, that it ought to be in the form it can be put into *Hansard* so that there is a proper record kept. I hope that the Minister understands.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: There is one slight problem in light of the comments that you, Mr Chairman, made earlier this afternoon: to go into *Hansard* the information has to be available by some time tomorrow. By all means, I will get my officers to obtain those reports as quickly as possible, but it might mean that it may take some weeks. In that case, then my only avenue would be to give it to the person who asked the question.

The CHAIRMAN: I point out again that we have until Friday 19 October. If it is not feasible to get it in by that date, then perhaps it will have to be made available personally to the member for Davenport. The Chair is not turning this matter into an argument, but simply saying that if it is possible to get it before Friday 19 October, then it ought to be, for record purposes, made available so that *Hansard* can put it in in proper sequence; that is the way I want to put it. I hope that the Minister understands that I am not holding that to the Minister. I am simply pointing out that is what we would like, if it is possible.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The lights at Wakefield House will burn into the early hours of the morning, Mr Chairman, to meet your requirements.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I ask the Minister in obtaining information on the Strathalbyn school whether he could supply information on the actual cost of relocating this metal transportable building.

Can the Minister outline how much money has been spent in redeveloping the Black Forest Primary School over the past two years; how much money is proposed to be spent in the next year; and also perhaps what specific work has been carried out? I know that that school was looking for a new toilet block—frankly, the old toilet block was an absolute disgrace. I know that it was also looking for some renovations to the classrooms and other improvements.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: A description of the work at the Black Forest Primary School comprises internal modifications and an extension to the main brick building in order to provide extra toilet facilities. In addition, internal modifications are to be made to existing space to enlarge and resolve the administration area. The justification and need that went into providing that work was to provide toilet and administration facilities of a standard comparable with other schools. Estimated cost is \$117 000; expenditure to 30 June, \$4 076; proposed expenditure for 1984-85, \$100 000; planned commencement was October 1984; completion in March 1985; current situation, a cost of \$120 000.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Thank you, Minister; I appreciate that. Perhaps I should pre-empt my remarks by saying that I appreciate the fact that the Minister has been willing to see a deputation from the Linden Park Primary School. That school has been extremely concerned about the need for redevelopment. I will not read into *Hansard* a very lengthy seven-page letter that I have received, signed by every teacher at that school, but I think that I have sent a copy of the letter to the Minister. The school consists primarily of wooden classrooms. It has been asking for many years for a major redevelopment. When I was Minister I made sure that a redevelopment plan was prepared, and that was finished I think in 1982.

I freely acknowledge that the school is in the area that I represent: perhaps because it is a safe Liberal area the matter tended to be ignored by Governments in the 1970s. However, the school is very concerned about the poor state of repair of the buildings. Having now achieved a redevelopment plan including a series of stages for redevelopment, the school expected to be put on the list of schools to be redeveloped in 1983-84. It was disappointed when that did not occur and expected to at least be put on the list for 1984-85. The school was disappointed to hear from the regional office that it will not be considered in 1984-85 or in 1985-86. As I have said, the Minister is to meet with a deputation of both teachers and members of the school council, including the Chairman of the school council, Dr Clayer. Can the Minister indicate at this stage when it is likely that the redevelopment of that school, which has been on the waiting list for some 15 years, will occur?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The priorities for 1985-86 are being considered by the Education Department at the moment. At the moment the PBD is not aware of what they are, but we know that the school to which the honourable member has referred is on the priority list. Perhaps I shall be able to give the honourable member and the deputation further information when they come to see me.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That would be greatly appreciated. Some of the buildings are in such a deplorable state of repair that children have fallen through the floors in some cases. There is no point in spending money on trying to repair the buildings, because in the next week or maybe in a year further timbers will go. The school needs a substantial amount of money spent on redevelopment; it needs some decent classrooms put in. Every time I visit the school they gingerly walk me past all the collapsed floor boards,

and so on. In one of the classrooms the sag in the floor is so great that students cannot sit in that part of the room because the desks are on too great a lean. That is how bad it is. I appreciate the Minister's co-operation.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Before we move on to the next question, the information mentioned when we were dealing with recurrents has now been typed and is available for inclusion in *Hansard*.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Could we see it?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We will have photostat copies made so as not to waste the time of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: *Hansard* will insert it in the record.

SCHOOL BUILDINGS—MAINTENANCE

Information provided is based on areas of concern as identified by Hon. D.C. Brown, M.P., on his motion concerning maintenance of State Government Buildings on 19 September 1984.

Cleve Area School

Areas of Concern:

- (1) Poor plumbing, i.e. toilets and drains.
- (2) Torn carpets and floor coverings.
- (3) Need for interior and exterior repainting.
- (4) General repairs—taps, door handles, glass replacement, etc.
- (5) Security unsatisfactory.
- (6) Poor noise conditions.

Advice:

- (1) Repairs to toilets and blocked drains have been completed.
- (2) The carpet repairs have been completed.
- (3) This work has been programmed for the 1986-87 financial year.
- (4) General repairs have now been completed.
- (5) and (6) Security and noise conditions are considered adequate.

Hawthorndene Primary School

Area of Concern:

- (1) School interior unpainted since 1965.

Advice:

- (1) The repainting of the interior of the school is on the regional maintenance programme, although a commencement date for the work has not yet been established. Internal painting was last carried out in 1972 and recent inspection shows that it is in reasonable condition, although not immaculate.

Evanston Primary School

Area of Concern:

- (1) Deterioration of asphalt play areas.

Advice:

- (1) The repair of the asphalt play areas at the school is listed on the regional maintenance programme. Based on current priorities this work may take place in the 1985-86 financial year.

Thorndon High School

Area of Concern:

- (1) Deterioration of tennis courts surface.

Advice:

- (1) Resurfacing of the courts is currently in progress on the courts. Regrettably, the contractors' performance on this work has not been satisfactory and this has delayed the availability of the courts.

Nailsworth High School

Areas of Concern:

- (1) Breakdown of interior and exterior paintwork.
- (2) Deterioration of asphalt yard plus grading and sealing of new areas.
- (3) Internal windows broken.
- (4) Dry rot in external timber.
- (5) Repair or removal of timber buildings.

Advice:

- (1) Interior paintwork is not on the regional maintenance programme.
- (2) Part only of exterior has been identified for repainting, although programmed commencement date not yet finalised.
- (3) Windows replacement is performed once the District Building Office has been notified of the breakage. This work is not placed on a maintenance programme.
- (4) PBD is not aware of any dry rot, although where identified, this will be included in the exterior repainting programme.

- (5) External painting of the two dual timber buildings is listed on the regional maintenance programme, although a commencement date has not been established.

Wilmington Primary School

Areas of Concern:

- (1) Leaking drains.
- (2) Water leaks in staff room.

Advice:

- (1) and (2) These problems will be rectified by the end of October 1984.

Linden Park Primary School

Areas of Concern:

- (1) Portable Buildings—relocation of, and additional, power points, conversion of classroom porch areas to wet areas, refurbish interior, carpeting, painting and air-conditioning.
- (2) Resource Centre—shelter for doorway, airconditioning, power points in office, darkening part of building for slides.
- (3) Administration, Staff facilities and Sick Bay—carpeting, additional seating, airconditioning, hot water and shower facilities for staff.
- (4) Replace rusty water pipes.
- (5) Asphalt yard and hard pave from oval to class room.

Advice:

- (1) This work is not on the regional maintenance programme. The carpeting and painting considered to be in satisfactory condition. The external painting is likely to be programmed for 1985-86 financial year.
- (2) This work is not on the regional maintenance programme.
- (3) This work is not on the regional maintenance programme.
- (4) This work is on the regional maintenance programme and it is anticipated that it will be completed by January 1985. This will include boundary fencing repairs at a total cost of \$15 000.
- (5) This work is on the regional maintenance programme, although a commencement date has not yet been established.

Gladstone

Area of Concern:

- (1) Requires painting/fascia board rotting.

Advice:

- (1) The work is listed on the regional maintenance programme for commencement during the 1985-86 financial year.

Laura

Areas of Concern:

- (1) Painting overdue.
- (2) Toilet guttering requires replacement.
- (3) Replacement of decayed wood sections.
- (4) Soaking wells may require replacement.

Advice:

- (1) Painting is scheduled on the regional maintenance budget for the 1985-86 financial year.
- (2) Toilet guttering replacement has been completed.
- (3) Wood sections will be replaced as necessary during repainting.
- (4) Soaking wells were replaced approximately three years ago and are operating satisfactorily.

Walleroo Mines

Areas of Concern:

- (1) Overdue for painting.
- (2) Damaged pinup boards.
- (3) Guttering requires replacement.
- (4) Asphalt badly deteriorated.

Advice:

- (1), (2) and (3) This repair work has now been completed.
- (4) Repairs to asphalt have been identified on the regional maintenance programme for 1985-86.

Booleroo Centre

Areas of Concern:

- (1) School requires repainting.
- (2) Dry rot in wood work.
- (3) Yard requires upgrading.

Advice:

- (1) and (2) Although not currently on the maintenance programme, it is anticipated that the work will be undertaken during the 1985-86 financial year.
- (3) The condition of the yard has been examined and upgrading is considered a low priority.

Melrose

Areas of Concern:

- (1) Poor condition of boundary fence.
- (2) Damaged wall of sports shed.
- (3) White ant damage to library wall.
- (4) Carpet repairs.
- (5) Breather tops for sewerage.

Advice:

- (1), (2), (3), (4) and (5) It is understood that all items have been identified on the regional maintenance programme, and it is anticipated that completion will take place by January 1985.

Plympton Park Primary School

Areas of Concern:

- (1) Repainting required on main and old site buildings.
- (2) Ongoing toilet blockage problems.
- (3) Lifting of lino tiles due to leaking plumbing.

Advice:

- (1) This work is not identified on the regional maintenance programme.
- (2) The toilet blockages were attended to on 13 September 1984.
- (3) This work is not identified on the regional maintenance programme.

Mr RODDA: Last year there was the unfortunate business of a considerable number of schools being burnt, causing parents and children of the schools involved very real problems. From memory I think that some schools have been burnt in recent times. It is an ongoing problem and a very serious one. In regard to arson, from where in the funding does money for replacements come?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Funding for replacement of school buildings does not come from the capital line that we are dealing with at present. It comes from the line 'Insurance of cash, motor vehicles, etc., and transfer to Government Insurance Fund for the payment of claims in respect of Government buildings, etc.' under the responsibility of the Treasurer (page 38 of the Estimates of Payments). The amount voted last year was \$2 million, and the amount voted for 1984-85 is \$1.4 million.

Mr RODDA: During investigations made by the Public Works Committee matters concerning surveillance of buildings were considered. Does the matter of surveillance required to prevent damage occurring come under the responsibility of the Minister of Public Works?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The Public Buildings Department has a role in setting up pilot projects. In regard to Education Department buildings that is dealt with in the Minister of Education's lines. For obvious reasons I do not want to say too much about the matter. Schools that have been fitted with surveillance systems have not been named, and even the number of schools with those systems has not been made known. The Minister of Education could probably provide the honourable member with that kind of information. As to whether a down-turn in the number of fires has occurred in relation to schools that have been fitted with a system, again that information would be available from the Minister of Education. The kind of security system that has been designed to work within the PBD (and we are proud of the work that it is doing) has been very successful. I understand that some private concerns have offered their services to schools in relation to security systems. So, the PBD does not have a monopoly in that regard. It is more or less research and development programmes that we are running.

Mr MATHWIN: My colleague has referred to a number of schools with difficulties, but I can assure the Minister from my own observations and experience on the Public Works Committee that of all the schools in South Australia the Brighton High School would be in the worst condition: I say that without fear of contradiction. It has more than 32 timber classrooms—that might not be a record in relation to an E & WS Department site in the middle of the desert but it is certainly some sort of a record for a school, especially one of the calibre of the Brighton High School which has a great record of achievement with its students.

Only recently the school won an Australian orchestral competition in which its performance was outstanding, yet its music rooms are shocking. I know that this has gone on for some time. I do not blame this Government for the hold-up, but I think that it is high time the Government

took its responsibilities by the horns and started to map out a programme for Brighton High.

I know that we are in the middle of sorting out problems about what I call a gymnasium, but the school has been asked to pay over \$140 000-odd, which is a large sum of money for parents to raise. However, they have started fund raising, but that is only part of the massive problem at that high school. A former Minister of Education was faced with the same problem. It has not changed since I have been involved, yet time goes on and it is about time that the school saw the light at the end of the tunnel. I ask the Minister to give me some pleasure today: I had a lot of pleasure last night and this morning, but I would like some tonight.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I understand that the honourable member had a good night last night. On behalf of Government members, may I offer him congratulations on his great win: it proved that democracy can win out in the end.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is nothing in the line remotely connected with the win of the member for Glenelg in his preselection battle.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It was part of the question. I do not know of the member for Glenelg's good news this morning, but I can give him some good news tonight, apart from the fact that it is still a question of priority for the Education Department. We will call tenders just before Christmas for the hall, change-rooms and canteen to the cost of \$500 000, so we can guarantee the honourable member a Christmas present as well. We hope that the remaining development will proceed within the next two years, subject to Education Department priorities. However, on the forward list that we have before us the remaining development will be before the next two years. The member for Glenelg can pack up and go home now.

Mr MATHWIN: No, I cannot, because I feel crook; I have to stay here for a while. I appreciate the reasonable news from the Minister, although it was not as good as I had expected, because he gave us no joy at all in relation to the shocking conditions in so many timber classrooms, which are very cold in winter and very hot in summer.

Another point, although I am reluctant to raise it, relates to the terrible fire hazard at Brighton High School. If there was a fire it would be impossible to get fire engines anywhere near those classrooms. That sword hangs over the Minister concerned. Now that I know it is the Minister of Education, it is over his head. I assure the Minister present that it is a very serious problem indeed. Some advancement must be made and some priority must be given to it. I would have thought that input from the Minister's Department would hold some sway with the Minister of Education.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I appreciate the honourable member's concern about the fire hazard, but all I can say as some small comfort is that the remaining development of Brighton High School is high on the priority list.

Mr MATHWIN: I ask my next question specifically in relation to Brighton High School, because of pressure on it from southern areas, particularly Hallett Cove, which has only primary schools and no high school. What is the future high school development at Hallett Cove? Pressure on Brighton High School from that area is considerable; likewise it appears that the same or similar pressure is placed on Mawson High School, which is now moving more into what one could call a technical school, even if we are forbidden to use those words. However, the Minister knows what I mean: it caters for a certain section of youth and fulfils a very great need in that area. If the Minister does not have that information on hand, could he take the question on notice and give me some information about what will happen regarding those two schools?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I understand that the Education Department is carrying out demographic studies in the whole of the southern region to establish where new primary and high schools should be located in line with population shifts. As the honourable member knows so well, there has been a big shift to new homes being built in that area—young families are establishing themselves there. I also understand that the Minister of Education recently announced a new primary and high school for the Hallett Cove area (an R-10 school), and I think that is proposed for 1987.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I raise a matter on behalf of my colleague the member for Alexandra, who is involved in another Committee this evening and therefore cannot participate in this Committee dealing with public works. It relates to some 36 broad acres purchased by the Public Buildings Department on behalf of the Education Department near Sellicks Beach for a future primary school. I think that that land was purchased in 1980 or 1981. Forecasts at the time showed that there was likely to be tremendous growth in that area, which would cause overflows at the Willunga, McLaren Vale and Aldinga Primary Schools. Those forecast overflows have now occurred: in fact, the situation is becoming quite serious.

Each of those schools is within a radius of five or six miles of the Sellicks Beach area, and their classrooms are already acutely embarrassed by overcrowding. Therefore, all schools were very keen to see this proposed new Sellicks Beach Primary School go ahead as soon as possible. My colleague has been informed that this land (36 acres) is this week being advertised for sale and development for housing. As the Minister would realise, my colleague and, naturally, the parents at schools that are already overcrowded and developing at a very rapid rate are very concerned as to where the expanded number of primary school children will go in future.

The Willunga District Council has expressed opposition to the housing proposal on this site, and the local school staff and parents have made a plea to their local member (Hon. Ted Chapman) for retention of this land for the building of a primary school as a matter of urgency. In fact, one Aldinga parent this week said, 'The Bannan Government could be looking at the cash. The land would be worth nearly double what they paid the local farmer for it.' My colleague is especially concerned that the sale be stopped and that he be given an indication of when the proposed primary school can be constructed at Sellicks Beach.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We are not aware of the sale of the land. As the honourable member is well aware, when the Public Buildings Department buys land on behalf of the Education Department, the title is vested in the Minister of Education. If what the honourable member says is true and the Education Department considers that a school is no longer required in that area and that the land should be sold for housing, I suggest that he or the member for Alexandra contact the Minister of Education to ascertain what is the situation. We are not aware that the land is being sold. We purchase land on behalf of a client department, and it is then up to that department to decide whether, say, a school should be built on it. If, on the other hand, it is no longer required the client department will divest itself of the land in its own way and we have no input into that sale: it does not come back to the Public Buildings Department. We could undertake to ascertain for the honourable member what is the exact state of the art at Sellicks Beach and inform him so that he could pass on the information to his colleague.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The member for Alexandra would appreciate the Minister's taking up this matter with his colleague and asking him for an assessment of the potential development and the likely number of schoolchil-

dren in the whole area over the next 10 years. My colleague could then see what plans the Minister of Education has for coping not only with the projected growth but also with the overcrowding that is at present occurring in other schools in the area. I am not sure that there is a state of the art: the residents there are more concerned with the lack of development. This is an excellent justification for the policy of my Party when in Government: any land that was purchased was held in the name of the Minister of Public Works rather than in the name of the individual Minister concerned, because one Minister might be selling a piece of land and another might be buying land. If one common agency is involved in holding land as far as possible—the Public Buildings Department—that is its rightful role and could save the duplication of effort and, indeed, conflicting effort on the part of the various Government departments. Will the Minister consider that policy so that land can be held in the name of Minister of Public Works rather than being fragmented across several Ministries?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In response to the last statement made by the honourable member, concerning the policy of the previous Government that surplus land should be held by the Minister of Public Works, I do not know that that always occurred. The attitude of the current Government is that, if land is no longer required, steps shall be taken to see whether it is of use, say, to me as Minister of Housing and Construction; and, if it cannot be used, it is then disposed of through the Lands Department, which one would have thought was the ideal agency to hold surplus land not required by a client department.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: At page 174 of the Auditor-General's Report for the year ended 30 June 1984, the approved expenditure on the Sir Samuel Way Building is shown as \$32.768 million, whereas expenditure to June 1984 is shown as only \$25.449 million. Can the Minister say whether further payments are to be made on the building or has the building been constructed at a cost of about \$7.3 million less than the original amount approved by the Tonkin Government?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The item referred to is not a capital item: it is a reimbursement item.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Auditor-General's Report refers to the capital account, so I have raised it specifically under the capital line.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: On page 174 of that report appear the words 'Reimbursement Accounts', and under that heading there appear the Sir Samuel Way Building, the South Australian Fire Brigade Headquarters, the ADP Centre, the Capital Works Assistance schemes (schools), and the Renmark Community Centre. The amounts alongside those projects are all reimbursement grants. I will get the information for the honourable member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I should like to know whether it is virtually the last payment, which I would have thought it was at this stage, and whether the figure of \$25.449 million truly reflects the cost of the building.

Mr Roeger: As the Minister has indicated, we will get the information. The line represents payments to the Public Buildings Department from the South Australian Superannuation Fund and would cover building costs but not the whole cost of the project which includes the cost of Moores building and other costs incurred by the Superannuation Fund such as the cost of land. The full cost is not necessarily shown in the Auditor-General's Report.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Certain members of the Minister's Party predicted that that building would cost at least \$40 million to construct. I have a newspaper cutting that states that a member of the Adelaide City Council predicted a cost of \$40 million, and I recall members in this place making a similar prediction. I draw to the attention of the

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Minister, and he in turn can draw to the attention of his Cabinet colleagues who made some pretty wild statements in the early 1980s, that the final cost of the construction is about \$15 million short of their prediction. Further, it is a credit to the Public Buildings Department that that result was achieved on budget, and it shows that the Department could take on the most difficult task of renovating an old building, without all the detailed design work done before the project started, and carry out the work according to cost.

I also draw attention to the fire brigade building, which is the next one on the list and for which the approved figure was \$17.7 million. Again, that is a Tonkin Government initiative, and to the end of June \$12.8 million had been spent. I realise that there is still another stage to be finished on that building, but I understand that the building is below the cost estimate. It is a credit to the PBD officers involved, and it highlights, perhaps in sharp contrast, the matter that we were discussing this morning that, when there is a major project and a proper construction team is put together with proper supervision from the PBD, they act as professionals to the highest standard that one would find in the industry. I would like the Minister to pass on my congratulations to the teams involved in that type of project.

I refer to the ADP centre—again another project I remember approving as Minister—which has come in under budget. I suppose that the Renmark Community Centre is yet another one that has come in under budget. I can recall on each of those projects predictions being made that they would blow out well beyond the approved amount. The facts show that that has not occurred. So, the sceptics in this community should be told that it is about time that they looked at the facts and were informed that their wild predictions of two or three years ago were nothing but that and they should eat some humble pie as a result.

Mr GUNN: Under the line 'Plant and equipment', can the Minister advise the Committee whether some of this money has gone or will go to purchase word processors for Ministerial offices or for departments? As he is the Minister of Public Works with responsibility for certain facilities for members of Parliament, will the Minister say whether consideration has been given for members' offices to have some form of word processing which, from the information I have been given, appears to be equipment that most people are now starting to take for granted. I understand that there are considerable numbers of them in schools and in most offices that one enters.

I repeat the first part of my question. Can the Minister advise (because the Minister in charge of the Supply and Tender Board indicated that in his opinion all Ministerial offices have them, and I would like to know whether that is correct) why the Leader of the Opposition does not have one in his office? What studies have been made to ascertain whether word processors are available that would be suitable to assist members with the considerable workloads that they have to carry?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The \$1.28 million to which the member for Eyre has referred relating to plant and equipment is for plant and equipment to be used by the PBD. I have been following closely the rather good questioning by the member for Eyre in the Estimates Committee and I notice that on a couple of occasions he has shown some concern about word processors. I think that he has put forward some quite valid arguments about putting word processors in electorate offices. Of course, my colleague the Minister for Environment and Planning, in his role as Minister responsible for State Supply, dealt with the rather delicate subject of what would be available if those word processors were placed in electorate offices. However, I take the point that it could speed up the process in electorate

offices and provide a better service to our constituents. However, I make the point that my Ministerial office does not have a word processor, but I suppose that we must eventually keep up and perhaps from next year's Budget we can purchase one.

As a result of the question that the member for Eyre asked the Minister for Environment and Planning, I received a very urgent report from my Department and from the Deputy Premier. From my Department the sum that is put aside for auxiliary services for electorate offices does not include any provision for word processors. We estimate the cost per electorate office to be \$3 500 plus the cost of training the operator. So, there is no provision in the auxiliary line with which we dealt earlier.

I received from the Deputy Premier a minute stating that he will in the near future request the Public Service Board to examine the needs of electorate offices. That is not only in regard to word processors but also the overall modern technological facilities that electorate offices may need. I do not know whether that satisfies the member for Eyre. It is something that the Government has picked up—not only the delicate situation that some of the information coming through the processor would obviously need to be blanked out but also the cost to the Government. The present sum of money that we have set aside does not include word processors, but the Deputy Premier is looking into the situation.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the honourable member again, I point out that we are drifting away from the vote that is before the Committee. However, the question was definitely on the borderline. Notwithstanding that, I will call again on the member for Eyre.

Mr GUNN: Can the Minister clarify the situation, although I do not want to press him unduly about it? I understand that it is breaking new ground and I understand, too, the work loads that most Ministers' offices have. I am of the view that this sort of equipment can greatly assist people who shift a lot of paper and who have a lot of repetitive things to do. I take it that the Minister was not actually rejecting out of hand the possibility that in the not too distant future these pieces of equipment may be available.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I for one would be the last to say that the line of questioning from the member for Eyre should really have related to the PBD recurrent line, because that is the area in which any sums of money would be made available for word processors, whereas we are dealing with sums of a capital nature. However, I am saying that it is my role to provide the equipment that goes into electorate offices, but it is the Deputy Premier who decides whether that equipment should be purchased. If it is the opinion of the Deputy Premier after consultation with the Public Service Board that there is a need for this type of equipment, money will be placed in next year's recurrent Budget account and those things will be purchased. Of course, it is subject to whether the Public Service Board and the Deputy Premier feel that it is necessary for electorate offices.

Mr GUNN: I refer to another subject that I think is of a capital nature. As to the fact that the Public Buildings Department would be involved in the construction of community school libraries (and it comes to mind that there has been some alteration to the programme at Ororoo), does the Minister have any knowledge about where the Department stands in relation to the construction of the community library at the Ororoo School? I understand that the community was of the view that construction would commence and the Ororoo District Council had fairly quickly assembled its share of the cost. I believe that suddenly the school has been informed that the project has been put back. Can the Minister advise whether or not this is so?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The community library is on the future programme, but I do not know when. I will try to establish that and make that information available to the member.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I refer to page 163 of the Auditor-General's Report and in particular to fees paid to private consultants. These fees, of course, are paid from capital funds for various projects. I would like to compare what happened in 1984 with that of 1983. The fees to architects dropped from \$952 000 to \$735 000 in the last year; for engineers from \$619 000 to \$481 000; for quantity surveyors from \$680 000 to \$313 000; and for contract draftsmen from \$53 000 to \$30 000. So, that is a total drop from \$2.3 million to \$1.6 million. Will the Minister say what are the forecasts for the current financial year 1984-85, if possible, by each professional category? If it is not possible to break it down into categories, will he at least give the total?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The main reason why there has been such a significant drop from 1983 to 1984 is that buildings about which we are talking have either been completed or are in their final stages. I refer to the Metropolitan Fire Service building and the Samuel Way building. In relation to the Museum redevelopment, most of the architectural work is in its final stage. However, if one compares the figure for 1984 with that of 1982, one will see that we are basically still using the same number of consultants in money terms. There was such a dramatic lift because the bulk of the work was being used in those buildings to which I earlier referred.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can the Minister indicate what the projection is for 1984-85?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We do not have that at this stage.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: As he would know what work will start on new buildings during 1984-85, could the Minister indicate which of those buildings are likely to go out to private engineers, architects, quantity surveyors and contract draftsmen?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As a rough guess (and I am sure that the honourable member would not hold me to this), it would be roughly the same as last year. If the honourable member looks at the aggregate figures over the past five to six years, he will find it is a fairly consistent figure in all areas. If he wants the fine details, it may take us some time to get the information. However, I would say that it will be roughly at the same level as we have had this year.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: If the Minister could perhaps in the next few days supply a rough estimate, I should appreciate it.

Mr MATHWIN: I wonder whether the Minister intends to change the Public Works Act. Over the years, a number of Governments, not only the one of which the Minister is a member but also previous Liberal and Labor Governments, have had some problems with it. As has been stated in reports for many years, I believe it is wrong that all projects do not go through the Public Works Committee. We pride ourselves on being termed the Parliamentary watchdog. We are there to look after the interests of the Government and of the public of South Australia, but big or very large projects, such as the Fire Brigade building, never came before the Committee. The casino development will not come before us. Any bridges constructed by the Highways do not come near us, and that involves the spending of an enormous amount of money.

I believe that that type of investigation, because it is very valuable to the Government, should be channelled through the Public Works Committee. I wondered whether the Minister and the Government intended to expand the area of

surveillance by the Public Works Committee. We know at the moment the criterion is \$500 000, but by any recommendation the Committee can look at any project under that price, if requested by the Government or by a particular department. The Public Works Committee has always been a very good Committee with no politics involved at all. We are there because we feel that there is a problem and that the public would be better served if we were able to have these references given to us on larger developments which entailed large amounts of money.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That point was discussed at length this morning. We canvassed many of the problems about which the member for Glenelg is now talking and also others which he has not mentioned. I did inform the Committee that in the new year a Bill would be put before Parliament to amend the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works registration. Whether the new Bill will take in all the points that the member for Glenelg is raising now, or those raised by the member for Davenport, I cannot guarantee. However, the Government will at least be picking up the problems about which I know the present members of the Public Works Committee are concerned, and it will reflect some of those concerns.

Mr MATHWIN: When the Minister is drawing up the Bill and directing the Parliamentary Counsel, I am sure that he will take into consideration the matters that I have drawn to his attention, because after all I think it is imperative that we expand in that field. The Public Works Committee does a tremendous job as a watchdog on public spending in South Australia.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I would now like to ask a general question about all capital works projects. Because of the introduction of Medicare there has been a very artificial reduction in the consumer price index in Australia within the past six to nine months. I know that within the building industry the builders are suddenly finding that they have been dealing with costs of construction which are far, far higher than the consumer price index.

The artificial reduction in the CPI has flowed onto other areas which has then falsely lowered the level of compensation for people in terms of rise and fall contracts. Has the Minister been made aware of this problem? I understand that he has certainly been made aware of it in relation to the Housing Trust and, after all, we are still debating the capital works line of the Housing Trust, as well. Is the Minister aware of this as a general problem and what action will he take, both in the housing area and the general construction area, to overcome what has been this artificial lowering? It is causing enormous hardship and loss of finance to a large number of builders which are locked into contracts where the normal rise and fall does not seem to be applying; the rise and fall clause is applying but not to the extent that would normally occur because of this reduction due to Medibank.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Mr Roeger might like to comment.

Mr Roeger: For our contract 'subject to rise and fall', the application of rise and fall is by way of a formula that takes into account movements in wages, which are not affected by CPI, and it also takes into account movements in the cost of materials, which again are market costs. The rise and fall formula is not based on the CPI itself. So, whether the CPI is fictitiously high or low would have no effect on calculations under the rise and fall formula.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I know that there have been meetings of a number of builders initially in the Housing Trust area, and I understood that the Housing Trust applied the same conditions of rise and fall as does the Public Buildings Department. I know that for two weeks the builders have been meeting and negotiating with the Housing Trust,

and they have in fact appreciated the response that they have received so far from the Housing Trust in making sure that there is some other form of adjustment.

I have been told by builders that the same problem is about to surface there as in the housing area—and I am sure the Minister will receive requests very shortly, at least in the Housing Trust area. It may be the board of the Housing Trust has already made a decision. I do not want to do more than draw the Minister's attention to it and make sure that he is aware of the problem and that some reasonable compensation is paid to these companies. I am surprised that no-one here seems to have heard of the difficulty. Certainly, in the Housing Trust area, it has been an enormous problem. I know a group of builders who have spent an entire week negotiating with the Housing Trust trying to overcome it.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I am aware that within the Housing Trust there are some problems dealing with the rise and fall clauses of the contract. However, to my knowledge, there has been no resolution of that problem that the builders see. I accept the honourable member's comments and I will take them on board and make sure that officers from my Department talk to some of the major construction companies to see whether they are experiencing the problems to which the honourable member has referred.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: It may be that there is a subtle difference between the contracts between the Public Buildings Department and the Housing Trust that I am not aware of. However, certainly, a problem has arisen with the Housing Trust and I ask the Minister to make sure that the Housing Trust takes a very reasonable approach on it. One builder alone has quoted to me six figures that he has lost on existing contracts due to those adjustments. If that is the case, then the Minister should be careful, and I am sure that he is aware of the flow-on effect.

If the best builders in the Housing Trust go into liquidation because of the unique circumstances that have occurred, then the Minister will end up with second and third-rate builders. I am sure that the Housing Trust and the Minister would not want to see that sort of problem develop. The one highlight of the Housing Trust is that it has developed a very close understanding with its builders over the years and it has developed therefore an excellent group regarded as the best builders of homes anywhere in Australia, and I know they are sought after by some other States. We want to maintain that housing base in this State. Any action to fail to adequately compensate those people could jeopardise that pool of builders that currently exists.

I refer now to the Department of Technical and Further Education, and want to record that this year the allocation has increased from \$17.2 million to \$21 million. What major new works are being undertaken as part of the 1984-85 programme? I realise that there is a list of works in progress at page 194 of the Estimates of Payments.

Mr Nosworthy: Works in progress and new works.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Apart from those referred to at page 194 is any other work to be undertaken which has not yet been before the Public Works Standing Committee and which therefore is not included in this list?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, not this year.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: So the vast majority of the funds will be spent partly on the Port Pirie Community College and on the second and third stages of the Adelaide college, which is the major development—in fact it would be fair to say that more than half of the total funding is being spent on the Adelaide college. Is that project running on schedule and on budget?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Ahead of time and on budget.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That highlights the confidence of both the PBD and the contractor, that is, Baulderstone,

in carrying out that project. I refer to other Government buildings. In regard to the Museum, was the proposed programme deferred last year and, if so, for what reason?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The answer is 'No'.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Allegations made on *Nationwide* I think referred to stage 2 being deferred. I realise that the Premier in his Budget speech announced that the work would proceed this year. Is it true that the work on stage 2 as originally planned (and this is certainly my recollection as Minister) was due to start in 1983-84? In fact, my recollection was that stages 1 and 2 were certainly to be finished by our sesquicentenary celebrations, with the possibility of stage 3 (and I am becoming a bit hazy as to what was intended in stage 3) also due to be started by about 1984. Can the Minister indicate whether that original programme (laid down, I think, in 1981 or 1982) has been deferred?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Within the stages and phases it does tend to get rather confusing (and I am not trying to confuse the Committee), but we are still working to the programme that was set out by the previous Liberal Government. There has been no change in it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is good. Am I right in saying that the third wing, or the wing on the building demolished and on which work was started in 1982, has been finished?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The trades school, which includes the basement and superstructure, is due to be completed in April 1985.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The next stage was upgrading of the old armoury and various other buildings at the back. Is that correct?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The institute asylum is due to be completed in May 1985, and the armoury barracks are due to be completed in May 1986.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What other work will be completed by the end of 1986?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The associated siteworks related to the three I mentioned will be completed in May 1986 as well.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Will any work be done on redevelopment of the main museum building before the end of 1986?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: There is \$2 million for relocation of special equipment costs, \$1 million for the museum east and north wings and the Fullarton Road annexe alterations, due to be completed in 1986.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I appreciate that, but is any work to be done on the major museum building before the end of 1986, which I think is stage 4?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The major building to which the honourable member refers is the one I mentioned—the museum east and north wings—on which some work has been done. I had the pleasure of meeting with the museum redevelopment team only a fortnight ago, and one of the engineers told me of the initial work that he was carrying out in the east and north wings, so everything is going according to plan. I appreciate what the honourable member says about the Public Buildings Department expertise in respect of the Sir Samuel Way building and the South Australian Fire Brigade building, as well as the accolades that are falling on the members of the museum redevelopment team. That type of work is a credit to the Public Buildings Department and to South Australian craftsmanship, which will be of real benefit in the Jubilee 150 year when the general public can see what has been achieved in that area.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am delighted to hear that. Some of the skilled tradesmen in the Department show a standard of excellence that would be hard to find anywhere else. One has only to look at the Constitutional Museum

next door to realise that. What major work will be done for the Department of Correctional Services in addition to the projects outlined on page 196 of the Estimates? Are there any projects that have been referred to the Public Works Committee that cannot be included in the docket?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The projects include the new administration facilities at Yatala Labour Prison, the alterations to B Division, and work at the Hillcrest Security Hospital, which is with the Public Works Committee at present. I can give the complete Correctional Services programme, which refers to Cadell, Mount Gambier, Adelaide Remand, and Yatala. It is a fairly extensive list and I will have it included in *Hansard*. The list is as follows:

CORRECTIONAL SERVICES PROGRAMME

Residences—Cadell	11 houses to be constructed 1984-85
Adelaide Gaol—Fire Protection	Extent of work being assessed by P.B.D.
Cadell—Fire Protection	
Mount Gambier Prison—Alterations	Design in hand: Some works associated with health requirements to commence shortly
Adelaide Remand Centre	Contract recommendations to Cabinet, 8.10.84. Target completion September 1986
Hillcrest Special Hospital	P.W.S.C. site inspection and public hearing 5.10.84. Target completion March 1986
Mobilong Medium Prison	Design review anticipated end October 1984
	Services external to the site to be documented by December 1984
	Establishment of prisoner numbers—D.C.S. have set up a joint committee and hope to have indicators November 1984
Yatala Labour Prison—Exercise Yard	Site start October 1984
Department Electrical Service Upgrade	Completion date January 1985
Visiting Centre	Continuing programme through 1984-85
	Tender Call 28.10.84
Muster Room	Completion December 1985
Landscaping Visitor Zone	Completion May 1985
Conversion Old Administration	Completion April 1986
Temporary Administration	Completion November 1985
Staff Amenities	Completion January 1985
South-East Sallyport	Completion July 1985
Staff Car Park	Completion June 1985
'B' Division	Completion April 1985
	Continuing discussion to resolve needs vs \$. Hopeful of submission to P.W.S.C. November 1984.
	Staging of construction will limit number of cells to approximately 140
	Construction may run through to March 1987
	N.B. This project may require separate briefing session
Concrete Products Industries	Completion June 1985
Complex—road upgrading	Completion May 1985
Tower alterations	
	Having difficulty in establishing policy vs operating requirements
Remainder of projects in 1985-86 programme.	

I obtained the list from the Department of Correctional Services only this week, so it may show some slight discrepancies.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Adelaide Remand Centre is to have \$4.4 million spent on it this year, making a total of \$18.7 million. Is the latter figure the total estimated cost of the remand centre, and is the work running both to schedule and to budget?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The revised cost is \$16.6 million. Demolition commenced in August 1984, and the

expected completion date is September 1986. It could be earlier because, as the Committee is aware, the Government places great priority on the completion of the Adelaide Remand Centre as soon as possible so that we can remove prisoners who are currently held at the Adelaide Gaol.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I appreciate that. Having decided not to proceed with a remand centre at Brompton, the Government has had to push the project back a year or two, so it is important that it be completed as soon as possible. I am reassured to hear the Minister say that it will now be finished by September 1986, if not sooner, and I presume that occupation will occur in September or thereabouts.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The completion date to which I have referred is completion by the Public Buildings Department and associated contractors. I am not saying that that will be the date on which the first prisoner or remandee walks through the door. We are talking about the handover date.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I notice that there is provision here for a communications tower. Can the Minister indicate what is the state of negotiations for the communications tower at Mount Barker? Has the site for that tower now been determined, and when does the Minister expect that tower to be constructed?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The situation regarding the Mount Barker tower is that a group of Aboriginal people has claimed that there are sacred sites in that vicinity. When that was established, I, as Minister of Public Works, received a request from both the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and the Minister for Environment and Planning to cease operations on the site to enable the Heritage Unit from the Department of Environment and Planning to undertake some investigations as to whether there were Aboriginal sacred sites in the area. I understand that the initial examination led them to believe that there were Aboriginal sacred sites in that vicinity. Since then, the trade union movement has decided to support the pickets that have been set up by a group that is sympathetic to what the Aboriginal people claim.

As yet, I do not think that there has been a full application by the Aboriginal people to the necessary body to establish a site. However, at present there are pickets there which are being honoured by the appropriate unions concerned with building the tower. Some initial work was carried out prior to the picket being set up, and that is the situation. I have visited the area and talked to the pickets, and I am presently trying to negotiate another meeting with the Aboriginal people to put to them the need for the site. An alternative site is being put forward, and I understand that the Police Department is undertaking investigations as to whether that alternative site can be used. If it is used, it means that the tower will be a lot larger, a lot wider at the base and will probably have to have some other repeater station close by. However, at present I feel personally, as one of the Ministers involved, that there is perhaps still a chance that through further negotiation with those concerned we may be able to reach some satisfactory agreement or compromise. It is my personal opinion that the door is not shut and we should proceed with negotiations.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: If I could just finish this section, could the Minister indicate where the other site is?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I cannot give the exact location. It is fairly close down the mount, but, talking in layman's language, to achieve the height to receive a signal over the top of Mount Barker it would need to be a much taller structure. As such, it would have to meet the requirements of the Department of Civil Aviation, that is, it would have to be painted and have a flashing light on top of the tower.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the additional cost of that other tower?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That is yet to be established. Working on the assumption of simple arithmetic, if it had to be twice the size of the proposed tower, I imagine that it would be twice the price.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Is that view as to its being twice the price shared by the professional engineers surrounding you? I should have thought that it might escalate by more than twice.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Near enough to twice the price.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: So, it might cost twice as much?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes.

Mr PLUNKETT: My question relates to primary and junior primary schools and new schools, which are referred to on page 179. I see that \$100 000 has been voted, actual payments were \$55 445, and that nothing is proposed. Could the Minister enlighten me in relation to that line?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The variations were due in part to three schools. For Aberfoyle Park Primary School, the additional costs were incurred because of a protracted settlement of a contractual dispute with extra supervision costs of \$54 000. On Craighburn Primary School, an unexpected adjustment was caused by the liquidation of an earlier contract, which saved \$51 000. With the Mount Gambier North West Primary, an unexpected adjustment was caused by liquidation of the earlier contract, which involved a saving of \$44 000. If one takes the two minuses against the plus, one will see that the actual cost was \$55 445.

Mr PLUNKETT: There are on the Committee three members who are also members of the Public Works Committee, and most of the things there have been approved by that Committee. So, I have asked questions only on projects that have not come before the Public Works Committee, and that was one of them. My second question relates to Aboriginal schools, for which \$636 000 was voted; actual payments amounted to \$653 856; and proposed expenditure is \$152 000. Would the Minister enlighten me on that matter?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We do not have the precise details, but there is the Mimili Aboriginal School, which was completed in September 1983 at an estimated total cost of \$268 000. Then there is a series of schools in the North-West area totalling \$564 000, and that would give the sum total for the whole project and the proposed expenditure, which is \$152 000.

Mr PLUNKETT: Special rural schools show a nil amount voted; actual payment \$9 792; and proposed expenditure \$260 000. Could the Minister enlighten me on that matter?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The honourable member is referring to the Elliston Special Rural School. The design expenditure incurred in 1983-84 was \$9 792 and it is proposed to spend \$260 000 this year on that school.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Public Buildings Department has been involved in the construction of an industrial complex at Yatala Labour Prison: I think there were four stages involved in that complex. Could the Minister inform the Committee as to the total cost of those stages?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I do not have that information, but I can obtain it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Has that work now been finished?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Can the Minister indicate when it was finished?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The concrete products building needs to be finalised and then the whole complex is complete.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: So, basically the major stages have been completed now for a number of years?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Yes.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Has the Minister been consulted on what that industrial complex might be used for? I understand that although parts of that complex were finished 2½ years ago, it is still not being used.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That matter is for the Minister of Correctional Services to answer. As a Minister at one time in this portfolio, the honourable member would be well aware that it is the prerogative of the appropriate Minister to decide to what use that building will be put.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: You, Minister, have not been consulted by your colleague about this in trying to turn that building into some other use as it is not currently being used for what it was constructed?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I thought that it might be painted white and called 'elephant' or something like that. You have not been consulted on that, Minister?

The CHAIRMAN: That is not on the line either.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I am just asking whether they were asked to provide the paint to paint it white.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: If that is a question as to whether we have been asked to supply white paint and paint it white and call it 'the elephant', no, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! That remark is not in the line and, if there is any painting to be done, I understand that it is supposed to be red and blue, anyway.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: There is an allocation of \$500 000 this year for the purchase of computer equipment for the Public Buildings Department. Has that purchase been approved by the Data Processing Board and, if so, what type of equipment has been purchased? This appears at page 199 of the Estimate of Payments.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The purchase has been approved and approval will be sought from the Board. The purchase programme provides for the upgrading of Honeywell equipment, the purchase of a VUE project management package, the upgrading of the MICOM communications controller, the purchase of proven product in application development methodology, miscellaneous software purchases, the provision of new terminals in various locations, electrical wiring of new terminal locations, installation of terminals at Netley for office automation, replacement of Data General Nova 830 by Data General S/130, upgrading of word processor, purchase of equipment for district offices, replacement of Data General equipment, and relocation of Honeywell DPS-6. The justification and need is for the continuing development of the Department's management information systems, further implementation of the Urwick International consultant's recommendations, replacement of outdated Data General equipment—some of which is eight years old and with ineffective technology—and departmental moves to office automation techniques.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What will be the total cost of the removal of asbestos from Government buildings for the current financial year, and how much was spent in 1983-84?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I will have to take that question on notice because the cost of that concerns many client departments. I will have to obtain that information and those details can be incorporated in *Hansard* later. As members would be well aware, the Department of Labour is in control of the monitoring unit. That information can be made available.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What was the original estimated cost of the police tower at Mount Barker?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That tower was one of a group of three: the estimated price for the Mount Barker tower was \$90 000.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Where were the other two towers to be installed?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Mount Burr and Gawler.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Is the Minister expecting sacred site problems at those locations?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: One does not know. In relation to the Mount Barker tower, it seems that there is a group of people with genuine concerns about the Mount being a sacred site. I accept, as I would think that most members in this Parliament would accept, that if a group of Aboriginal people feel sincerely that an area where the white man proposes to build a tower and associated buildings is an area containing sacred sites we should respect their views and at least undertake some investigation. I was rather disgusted to read in the Estimates Committee report the other day that the member for Mitcham referred to the Mount Barker site as just a group of sticks and stones. I would not like to think that that is the line of questioning that the member for Davenport is pursuing.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I do not think I even suggested that.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The honourable member asked whether it was possible that there would be sacred sites at Mount Burr and Gawler. I inform him that the erection of towers is completed in those areas but that they are not operational at present.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I notice that in this financial year \$102 000 has been allocated to stabilisation of internal columns in Parliament House. I presume that they are the columns in this Chamber. Is the Department now satisfied that those columns have been stabilised? I compliment the private painter who did the painting work; it certainly looks magnificent. However, is the Department now satisfied that the columns are now stabilised, or is further work involved?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I would not say that we should all be sitting here with our fingers crossed. The work carried out involved the latest techniques. Anyone in the Parliament who took any interest in the progress of the renovations would have seen that a new process of adhesion was used, especially in the ceiling area, where we had established that there was only 25 per cent adhesion in most of the plasterwork. The process used was considered to be the best. We are hopeful as regards that area that everything will be fine.

As far as the columns are concerned, all the indications are that they will be stabilised, but this is one thing that we cannot guarantee. Hopefully, we will not have another situation like the vast cracks in the Festival Plaza appearing later. We are quite pleased with the work carried out. Members may recall that I made a statement in the House that it was completed well within time and price and, apart from a few minor touch-up jobs that need doing, the next time we are in recess there is no more work to be completed. I am sure that everyone will join with me in congratulating those people concerned with renovating this Chamber.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: As part of that touch-up work, is it intended to carry out the correction of mistakes to which the member for Semaphore drew attention—the four floral patterns that have been reinscribed incorrectly in relation to the rest of the ceiling? Two happen to be sitting above the Minister's head at the moment.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I noticed them the last time the member for Davenport was making a speech, when I was dreamily looking up at the ceiling.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister was looking for heavenly guidance.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Perhaps to give this place some historic significance we should keep them as they are. For instance, at Gawler one clock face is the complete reverse, and tourists go there in droves to see it.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister raised the matter of the Festival Plaza: was that constructed under supervision of the Public Buildings Department during the 1970s?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In the first instance, emphatically 'No'.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a good answer, too.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: No doubt the Minister had his fingers crossed while he was waiting for that response.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No. I knew beforehand.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Is the Public Buildings Department involved in any investigations that are being carried out?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We are putting a proposal before the Public Works Standing Committee.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: What is the proposal?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: In November 1983, when it was first established that there was a problem, the Department was engaged by the Department of the Arts to provide project management for repair work at the Adelaide Festival Centre Plaza. The Department's responsibility is to investigate the cause and extent of the leakage and cracking problems and to devise and implement an appropriate solution. The Department's brief does not include the resolution of legal matters associated with the existing construction. I am reading from a report.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister could make that available to the Committee later?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: That report will be made available to the Public Works Committee, but the final three paragraphs will complete the information that members of this Committee need at this stage. The proposal is to undertake repairs, and the matter will be recommended to Cabinet for submission to the Public Works Committee. If approved, the repair work is programmed to be completed by February 1986. The Public Buildings Department is not responsible for the work currently proceeding on the plaza. This work has been arranged by the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust as part of its investigation to ascertain whether anyone can be sued in respect of the failure of the membrane. The Department of the Arts has been fully informed of current progress and a draft of the Public Works Committee submission has been forwarded to the Premier as Minister for the Arts.

Mr MATHWIN: What stage has been reached on planning the proposed medium security prison at Monarto? I commend the Government for its programme in correctional services, which includes a high security prison at Yalata, a low security prison that has been built adjacent to the women's prison at Northfield, and a medium security prison at Monarto. Work on the medium security prison is about to start. The Public Works Committee is at present inquiring into the construction of a new psychiatric ward at Hillcrest. Although the programme is a good one, we need the prison that has been suggested at Monarto. How far has work gone on planning that prison?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The design review on the Mobilong medium security prison is expected to be completed this month and services external to the site are expected to be documented by December 1984. It is hoped that a joint committee that has been set up by the Department of Correctional Services to report on prison numbers will submit indicators by November 1984. The Government will then decide as to the overall prison system, which will include Mobilong. Despite some comments made in Parliament about the Government having shelved Mobilong, we are still proceeding with the design review of prison services so that, if we needed to, we could proceed with Mobilong almost immediately, subject to a report from the Public Works Committee.

Mr MATHWIN: That prison is an integral part of the whole system, and I am sure that the Government has it in

mind. I now wish to refer to a school in the district of my colleague the member for Mallee, on whose behalf I ask this question. The Public Works Committee looked at the Kingston school a long time ago, approved the work, and submitted a report to Parliament. As I understand it, nothing has happened, and I remember visiting there. I thought that it was rather important (and that was borne out by the findings of the committee) that this should continue and that some sort of progress ought to be made on it. I wonder what is the situation in relation to your programme for the Kingston school. In other words, how far down the pipeline is it?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It has rather surprised me. I hope that we are talking about the same Kingston school. The honourable member is talking about the Kingston Area School?

Mr MATHWIN: Yes.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I am sure that I heard him correctly when he said that nothing is happening down there.

Mr MATHWIN: I said that it has not proceeded as one would have expected, because it went through the Public Works Standing Committee quite a long time ago. Indeed, I think that it was before the Public Works Standing Committee during the previous Government's term of office.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I was there on a tour of inspection of all Government schools and Government buildings in my public buildings portfolio, and I was very impressed with what has happened at the Kingston Area School to date. I am sure that the member for Victoria is aware that it is the pride of the people living in that area. The facilities are out of this world.

We are dealing with stage 2 of the replacement, which provides, in solid construction, specialist accommodation for administration; community school library; technical studies; science; humanities laboratory; business studies and art; general learning areas; associated support spaces for reception to year 5 (years 10 to 12 are also included); and home economics for years 6 to 9. Also, general learning areas are to be re-established in relocated timber buildings from the existing school. The establishment of the Kingston Community School will replace current inadequate facilities and will result in considerable benefit for community use.

For those people who are aware of the use of the Kingston Area School (I am sure that this is not news to the member for Victoria), it will not only service the students in that area but will also be an integral part of community life in Kingston. It is something of which people in the field of education are very proud, and the PBD has done a magnificent job in that area. Stage 2 is currently under construction for completion by March 1985 at a total cost of \$3.740 million. I advise the member for Glenelg to pay a visit to that school to see exactly what an area school should be doing in providing not only educational facilities for children but also facilities for the entire community. I am sure that he would be very impressed.

Mr MATHWIN: I will be impressed. However, I understand that relocatable timber buildings are being used there. I take it that they are timber buildings from some other schools. That is what you said, Minister. Of course, that comes after some of the reports we have had from previous schools to which you have referred earlier. The high cost of those buildings would be worrying for us, as mentioned by the member for Davenport, and one wonders whether they are really worth it when one has to take them so far.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: No, they are from the existing school. The timber buildings will in effect be transferred in some cases 100 metres or 200 metres. It will be a part of the existing school. In line with current Government policy or even the previous Government's policy, they are catering

for a downturn in the number of children using that school, so it appears that it is right and proper to use two timber buildings.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The Minister of Education has given an undertaking that, if one of those buildings is surplus (and I understand that there could be a number surplus; I am thinking of a surplus wooden building from Kingston), he will sell it to the Aboriginal community. I hope that the Minister has heard of that and that, if it is surplus, the Aboriginal community could buy it at the end of this year.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: It is to go to Meningie, I understand.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That is right.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: We are well aware of that.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: I hope that the Minister will look favourably on that request. I now ask a question in relation to what the Minister said regarding the Mobilong medium security prison near Murray Bridge. Do I understand from what the Minister said that the Government is going ahead with the full detailed design and documentation, but then putting the project on ice with no commitment as to when it might be started?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: The work that is being carried out, which I detailed earlier, is sufficient to enable the prison to be built if the Government so desires.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Could the Minister explain to the Committee why the Government is going through the process of spending that money but not proceeding with the building? Is there a problem? Is it a lack of funds or technical problems, or is the Department of Correctional Services uncertain whether it is needed?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As I said earlier, design review is anticipated at the end of October 1984; services extended to the site are to be documented by December 1984; and it involves establishment of prison numbers. The Department of Correctional Services has set up a joint committee and it hopes to have indicators by November 1984. The idea is that, if prison numbers are such that it is necessary to proceed with the Mobilong medium security prison, all the necessary work has been carried out by the Public Buildings Department, so we can then immediately go in and proceed to build. However, that depends on prison numbers and a decision by the Government.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: On page 180, there is the final line 'Preliminary investigations and design', to which \$195 000 was allocated, whereas the allocation for this year is \$3 million. Could the Minister indicate what work is being carried out under that allocation?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: I am sure the member is well aware of where we make some allowance to cover future Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works allocations. As the member knows, at the moment they cannot be reported. That is a figure to cover future reports from that Committee.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: That involves projects that have gone to the Committee this year. Could the Minister, without taking the time of the Committee, now inform the Committee what projects they will be?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Adelaide Festival Centre Plaza Repairs, Parafield Cultural Research Centre Laboratory, Woodville Community Welfare Office, Adelaide Magistrates Court upgrading, West Beach Fisheries Laboratory, and the Treasury Building restoration.

Mr RODDA: In relation to the Lucindale school stage 1, can the Minister say what is happening there?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Tenders have been called. We are not quite sure, but they have been called and my officers think that the tenders close this Friday.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: Concerning the purchase of new motor vehicles, I understand that there has been some criticism, I think by the Auditor-General and by Treasury, of the excessive number of motor vehicles within the Public Buildings Department. Is it planned this year to reduce the number of vehicles and, if so, by what number? I am talking not about trucks and vehicles of that kind but specifically of motor cars.

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: As far as I can establish there has been no criticism of the vehicles purchased as replacement vehicles. Where necessary within the metropolitan area we use the Central Car Pool. The provision of \$1.29 million for 1984 relates to the purchase of replacement motor vehicles in terms of the agreed Government replacement criteria.

The Hon. D.C. BROWN: The number of vehicles will remain the same this year as it was for last year?

The Hon. T.H. Hemmings: Some vehicles will be returned to the Central Car Pool—the exact figures I cannot give the honourable member but there will be a slight decrease. Since taking over this portfolio, this is something in which I have taken quite a considerable interest, because everyone realises that there can be cost savings by using the Central Car Pool, and we have been doing that. However, the sum of money referred to by the honourable member concerns only the replacement of motor vehicles under the agreed Government guidelines.

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

Minister of Housing and Construction and Minister of Public Works, Miscellaneous, \$1 076 000—Examination declared completed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.58 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Thursday 4 October at 11 a.m.