

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 4 October 1984

## ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

**Chairman:**  
Mr Max Brown

**Members:**  
The Hon. H. Allison  
Mr H. Becker  
Mr D.M. Ferguson  
Mr T.R. Groom  
Mr J.H.C. Klunder  
Mr J. Mathwin

*The Committee met at 11 a.m.*

Community Welfare, \$39 820 000

**Witness:**

The Hon. G.J. Crafter, Minister of Community Welfare and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr I.S. Cox, Commissioner, Public Service Board.  
Mr C.E.M. Harris, Acting Director-General, Community Welfare.  
Mr W.H. Beattie, Acting Assistant Director-General.  
Mr G.R. Billett, Acting Senior Accountant.

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

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** When the Premier released the Budget papers he also released on behalf of the Minister of Community Welfare a document entitled 'Review of State Government Concessions' (a final report), on page 8 of which it is pointed out that one of the main reasons for concessions is the inadequacy of the level of pensions and benefits payable by the Federal Government. Will the Minister tell the Committee what special representation he has made to the Federal Government to try to alleviate the problems created as a result of the short-fall in pensions?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the member for Mount Gambier for his question which is very important. I do not think anyone involved in the field of welfare would deny that the number of poor people in our community (those who are living below the poverty line) has increased in the past decade. As I said to this Committee last year, and as I have said in the House many times, the redistribution of wealth against those who are disadvantaged occurred dramatically in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The States have been asked, as has the community as a whole, to carry a greater burden financially and socially for the care of that group in our society. I think the figures that were revealed by Captain Hollingworth, of the Brotherhood of St Laurence, about the number of children trapped in that cycle of poverty are illuminating. The State has had a working party for some time that has been making suggestions to the Commonwealth about ways in which we can improve the lot of that group in society, and much of that attention has been aimed at the Federal budgetary process.

So, I will ask Mr Cox to indicate some of the effects of those State representations that were evidenced in the Federal Budget. Of course, it did not go as far as we wanted or

perhaps as the community as a whole wanted, but I think that some progress has been made in those Commonwealth-State discussions to care for those most in need in our community.

Also, the State Government does not just see the welfare budget as the only way to provide programmes for that group; that must occur through Health, Housing, Education and other departments. Indeed, some of the work that Mr Cox will be doing for the Government in the next year or so will try to improve the delivery of human services and targeting them more effectively for that group. If you like, the concessions report was a micro-study of that group in our community with respect to the direct financial assistance that is given by the State. I will ask Mr Cox to indicate some of the specific results of those Commonwealth-State discussions.

**Mr Cox:** The committee that was set up by the Ministers Council in co-operation with the Commonwealth was to look at the specific way in which certain people who come for emergency financial assistance can be helped. The committee came up with various options that would change the nature of the immediate demands of those most in need. Proposals were taken to the budgetary discussions in the Commonwealth this year, some of which were acted upon and some of which are still to be considered by the Commonwealth.

A further meeting is to be held this year in relation to what will happen to the rest of the recommendations of that committee. However, there have been increases in the pension (as honourable members would be aware) in the Budget from November. Children's supplements have been increased by \$2 a week and the guardians allowance will be increased by \$10 a week. These sorts of things were tackled at the time of that committee. Of course, we hope that they will make inroads into the whole emergency financial assistance area to give people who are in the greatest need immediate access to more continuous funding, rather than having to depend on emergency funding.

There was some action in relation to total emergency assistance to be provided by non-Government organisations: \$6.1 million was made available. The committee strongly supported its continuance and urged that it be increased. Those are the sorts of things that have happened within that committee, and its recommendations to the Commonwealth.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I suppose that the specific question was what representation has the Minister made to the Federal Government. I simply point out the removal of the Medicare levy from the consumer price index has made a reduction in pensions generally of the order of \$2.80 or \$2.90 per week. Pensions themselves have increased under the CPI at a diminishing rate: 18 months ago it was \$4.50, the next was \$3.50 and the next was \$2.50, so there is a declining scale.

One only has to look at one State charge—electricity alone—which has gone up some 45 per cent or 46 per cent in the past 20 months to realise that a \$10.50 pension increase over that same period makes very little difference to the standard of living of the impoverished. The South Australian Council of Social Services made submissions to the Premier earlier this year and at the end of last year (there was very little difference in statistics) showing quite clearly from Commonwealth sources that South Australia has the highest percentage of social security pension benefits of any State in Australia in almost every single category. There are seven or eight different categories of welfare benefit recipients. SACOSS was looking for an extra \$1 million in the present financial year for voluntary agencies to help all those people who were even increasingly underprivileged. I believe that the Minister would have made

available somewhere about \$350 000 or \$360 000 over and above last year's allocation towards those voluntary agencies.

However, Mr Cox has drawn attention to the grants that have been made available to South Australia. Close perusal of the Grants Commission figures shows that in fact South Australia had the lowest percentage gains on almost every count of any State in Australia, and when one bears out that South Australia has the highest proportion of needy of any State but is receiving the lowest percentage assistance of any State, I get back to the original question: what special representation has the Minister and indeed the Premier made to their Federal counterparts to highlight the fact that South Australia is particularly disadvantaged in this area of community welfare, social security assistance, and we are close to becoming a mendicant State?

I ask this without being particularly critical of the State Government. I ask simply to highlight the problem that faces a substantial number of people in South Australia who are becoming part of a divided community. There is no doubt about it: on almost a weekly basis more and more people are looking around for assistance from that socio-economically underprivileged group. So, has the Minister made any special representation to highlight the acute needs of South Australia compared with those of other States and, if the Minister has made representation, when did he do it and in what form did he do it?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** First, as Mr Cox has explained to the Committee, as a result of a Commonwealth and State Ministers meeting (and all Ministers share similar concerns in this area), we formed a working party of officers to look at these issues, and it is through that committee that I believe the most effective way of influencing Commonwealth Government policy and budgetary policy in particular has been effected. However, I have had the Department prepare a series of reports, particularly in relation to the social effects of unemployment, because I believe that that is one of the most crushing areas that can catapult individuals and families into poverty in our society.

When the Minister for Social Security was in Adelaide at the time that that report was released, I had a press conference. I presented it and discussed it with the Minister for Social Security. That was done in a very public way: that report was released publicly also. However, at Ministers meetings and private meetings that I have had with the Minister for Social Security and indeed in concert with my colleagues in other States of all political persuasions, we have had very open discussions about these issues. There is no walking away from this issue by the Federal Government. It is aware of the needs of the community.

Anyone who holds a Ministerial office in this area is acutely aware of that, but it is a matter of what can be practically achieved in the circumstances. I must say that there is no doubt that the period from 1975 to 1983 was a period of great hardship as a direct result of Federal Government policy, and I refer to the decision not to increase pensions six monthly but to extend it to a year as just one example of the many policies that really crush so many poor Australians. The decision not to increase the single unemployment benefits during that period and the hardship that that has caused for young unemployed people in this country are still being felt and will be felt for a long time to come. This State has had to try to pick up those pieces. I think that it is not a matter of contest that South Australia has the best welfare department structure in Australia, and on all the indicators that is readily accepted.

We have been fortunate to have the most experienced and respected senior administrative officers working for this Government now for a long time. On a per capita basis expenditure wise we may have the highest number of social security recipients, but those recipients who require welfare

services through the Department of Community Welfare are better served in my judgment than are those in any other State in this country. I am unable to answer the question about the Grants Commission and grants that are provided to the State. I need to refer that matter to the Treasurer, but in relation to specific purpose grants South Australia has over the years taken advantage of every opportunity that we have had the Commonwealth funding for programmes that were of priority to the State.

For example, in the crisis youth accommodation area, additional funding was sought out of Budget during this year to match Commonwealth money so that we could provide additional resources in that area. This State has a well known reputation for taking advantage wherever Commonwealth money is available for such programmes. Whilst the South Australian Council of Social Service has provided very valuable information to the Premier, which has obviously assisted the Government at important Commonwealth forums, the Premiers Conference, Loan Council meetings and EPAC meetings (at which this State is fortunate to have the Premier represented), is also true that SACOSS sees the welfare needs of our society being met through an increase in job opportunities. Fortunately, that is occurring in our community.

A provision of adequate public housing is now occurring at record levels in this State with adequate health, education and loan programmes. So, whilst the figures that the honourable member has quoted are illuminating, they must be taken in context with what is happening in the community. I will ask Mr Cox to explain to the Committee the position of the South Australian Department of Community Welfare *vis a viz* other States.

**Mr Cox:** To put it into context, a national meeting of administrators will be starting here on 15 October. All participants will come to view various programmes on the day before or after the conference. The New Zealand people are coming for 10 days to look at what we are doing.

In relation to grants, the South Australian Community Welfare Department is unique in the money that it has had from the Commonwealth. Any reduction of that money is related to the way in which the Grants Commission debates our formulated offer and in which it compares how much grant money each State gets along with the quality of its services.

The Community Welfare Department is seen as being unique in its decentralised services. That is readily seen by the number of community welfare centres and by the way in which we have been able to spread accessible centres over so many communities. Our staffing is considerably more than any other State—sometimes three times that of the big Eastern States, yet it is under tremendous demand. It has been able to fulfil a real purpose in giving additional services to beneficiaries. We have been seen as the State with unique programmes: for example, budget advice and crisis care are constantly being studied by other States, which wish they could do the same sort of things.

Our maintenance programme, which has been going for some time, is seen as unique, as the best in Australia and up with the rest of the world. These sort of programmes are additional and available for beneficiaries. It is well known that our young offenders programme is equal to or better than anything in Australia because of the nature of the deinstitutionalisation that we practice. Programmes such as family day care have a universal application throughout the community. These sorts of programmes are adding a dimension of support to the people to whom the honourable member has referred this morning.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Once again, I refer to the review of State Government concessions. At page 97 of the final report, the recommendations are divided into two areas.

Once again, I return to the Federal Government aspect. Recommendation 1 is in fact that a submission be made to the Commonwealth Government on income support with the, I think, pipedream prospect of savings to the State of \$77.6 million. I cannot see the Federal Government being so generous as to accede to any submission of that sort.

Also, at page 98, recommendation 17, is a submission to the Commonwealth—it states 'or' but I think it should be 'on'—for Housing Trust rent rebates, which involve estimated savings to the State of \$25 million; that would be the Minister of Housing. Altogether, there is a \$100 million potential saving to South Australia. For the time being, I would discount those as possible major sources of income and saving.

On the State side (and this highlights for me the possibility that this report may have been a year delayed and a year illspent rather than well spent), under the recommendations for estimated savings to the State is a figure of \$4.7 million. Under the column 'Estimated costs to the State' on pages 97 and 98 there is a figure of \$3.4 million with the final paragraph stating:

The excessive savings over costs amounting to \$1.3 million with respect to recommendations which can be decided upon by the State Government could be available for an extension of concessions or for other welfare purposes.

When the Minister handed down this report at Budget time, two recommendations were not approved. Recommendation No. 13, which was to save the State \$2 million was related to an alteration to STA concessions—that is the pensioner fare level (and I am not at all critical of that being deferred; I do not think I would have considered it); and the other was recommendation No. 14 (the seventh of a small group) regarding ex service motor vehicle rebates—a relatively minor one, saving very little. Those recommendations were discounted and were not going to be considered by the Government.

So, one is really looking at a report with the vast majority of savings accruing from the Federal Government's initiatives, and unlikely. The other savings have been literally wiped out by a decision which was handed down when the document was handed down. So, once again, we are in the invidious position where we have to go cap in hand to the Federal Government for substantial funds to help us or there are the relatively minor savings which we are not going to make under this list of recommendations.

Those concessions will not be extended because the recommendation is 'What you save, you transfer to the other needy areas.' In other words, we have waited a year until the report was handed down, and we are not going to save anything so there is nothing to be handed over to the really needy groups in society, such as the single male unemployed group which receives very little by way of additional assistance. What will the Minister do? It is fairly obvious that nothing specific has been done on behalf of South Australia. It has been a collective representation with all Ministers saying their piece and getting a small share of the Federal Government cake.

Will the Minister undertake to make special representations to the Federal Government on behalf of the underprivileged in South Australia who are in a higher proportion than any other State and who are literally going backwards at a very rapid rate because of this very small increase in CPI indexation, with a small increase in pensions and, yet, a rapid escalation in costs which are partly within State control but certainly not at all within the control of those people who are looking for assistance? It is a group that has to be helped.

I think that the Minister has evaded the central question that I keep coming back to: what has he done? Recommendations have been made. We have known about these underprivileged people for two or three years now, even if only

through the agency of SACOSS, which was kind enough to provide me with copies of submissions at the same time that it presented them to the Federal Government. The statistics that SACOSS presented are Federal Government statistics; they are not subject to any rigging and are trustworthy. The Federal Government's statistical collection and analysis is second to none anywhere in Australia.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I have explained to the honourable member some of the specific actions that I have taken as a Minister. It is not simply a matter of going to Canberra, sitting in front of the Federal Minister and asking him what he is going to do about the poor in our community. We have tried to develop structures to facilitate change.

As members of the Committee would be aware, Federal Government policy is applied across the nation. With income maintenance and social security programmes we must work in unison with the other States on those representations. During the 18 months that the present Federal Government has been in office, progress has been made. Although it is not as much as we would all want, the Hawke Government has been in office for only one full year during which time progress has been made. I must reiterate (and I find it interesting that the honourable member raises this matter in the context that he does) that we have so many poor people in a wealthy society such as ours because of Federal Government policy over the years. The Party to which I belong has been in office federally for only four and a half years since 1949. If there had been a different spread of Governments on the Federal Treasury benches, there would have been many fewer people suffering deprivation than there are today.

The task of turning around that inequality of opportunity and wealth in this country is not an easy one. But, believe you me, that is the intention of the Federal and State Governments and of my Party. I believe that there is great hope that we can do that. However, it will not be achieved in the narrow and traditional social security or welfare context but will include a continuation of massive amounts of expenditure on public housing programmes. I refer, for example, to the expenditure that has already occurred in the health area. The Liberal Party was very critical of the additional expenditure in that area the purpose of which is to ensure that the poor can obtain adequate health care. It will also involve similar humanitarian programmes.

With respect to the two recommendations to which the honourable member referred, he would be aware that the Government announced in the Budget that an ongoing committee had to be formed to monitor and advise the Government. I was pleased to hear the honourable member say that he supported the Government in the recommendations that it made straight away not to bring down a fee structure for concessional travel on public transport. In fact, that was an initiative of the previous Administration. The Department for Community Welfare looked at that proposal in great detail. It was considered that such a measure would harm those who could least afford to be harmed, and I refer to the imposition of a fare structure on those who do not now pay for use of public transport. It was estimated that there would be a reduction of up to five million trips a year of the 15-plus million trips a year undertaken by people in that category on public transport.

That would have a dramatic effect, and the Government did not therefore approve of that proposal. The committee is considering the first point, the matter of the Commonwealth accepting what we consider its responsibility is, and that accounts for the figure of \$77.6 million for income support. There will be ongoing representations and discussions with the Commonwealth on that matter.

With respect to the second recommendation to which the honourable member refers, the Commonwealth-State Hous-

ing Agreement does embody this matter. The honourable member will be aware of the discussions that took place in the House on this matter, and agreement has been reached in principle on that sum of \$25 million. Considerable progress has been made in that area. I would have to refer the honourable member to the Minister of Housing for the full details of that, because that is within the Housing portfolio. This is the first time that this Government has tried to come to grips with the whole question of State concessions and the State income support structure that has been established. It is a bold initiative—it is something I remember putting to the previous Minister of Community Welfare and he candidly explained that this was a complex and difficult area. We have tried to come to grips with it. Change will not occur quickly but I think all members would agree that we must have a policy in place so that we can provide these benefits for those most in need in the community.

**Mr GROOM:** My question relates to the line 'Office—Commissioner for the Ageing'. It is well known that initiatives of this nature always come from Labor Governments, and I want to congratulate the Minister on being responsible for this initiative. I would like—

**Mr MATHWIN:** Now he's going to spoil the whole morning.

**Mr GROOM:** I am going to keep going like this all day.  
*Members interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Chair called the member for Hartley and not the member for Glenelg.

**Mr GROOM:** He is going to move to Bright soon. There is a budgetary allocation for this office; will the Minister say when it is expected that the Commissioner will be appointed, and will he outline the proposed role of the Commissioner for the Ageing?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his question on this matter, which is an important initiative of the Government. It is the first office of this type to be created in Australia. It is expected that the Commonwealth Government will also create a similar office in the Commonwealth sphere, and it is hoped that we can work as closely as possible with the Commonwealth in providing—

**Mr MATHWIN:** It was on the books of the previous Government.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I did not see the books of the previous Government. This position will be filled I hope (I have said this in the House) by the end of this year. The position will be advertised soon and the legislation proclaimed. That appointment will then allow for the office to be established, and the Commissioner will appoint subsequent staff to that office. In the early stages support will be given by the Department for Community Welfare for the establishment of that office, and funding has been provided on a part-year basis for its establishment. It is expected that some clerical and research staff will be provided in due course for the Commissioner's use.

The honourable member will be aware that Parliament has provided a wide range of functions and objectives for the Commissioner to fulfil. The creation of the office has been widely accepted throughout the community, particularly by aged persons organisations in this State, and a series of consultations were held with the community on its establishment. The response to those consultations was really quite outstanding. Over 200 written representations were made to the Government about that office and I believe that it will help the Government and indeed the community to focus in on the special needs of those who are ageing in the community, helping bring together disparate Government programmes and also helping us in relation to not just other spheres of government (the important spheres of Commonwealth and local government) but the important non-

government sector in this area. It is a daunting task facing the person who will be appointed as Commissioner but nevertheless it is one that we must get on with, and I am sure there will be great interest generated by the work of that office.

**Mr BECKER:** On pages 141-2 of the Estimates of Payments the line for 'Emergency Financial Assistance' shows the actual payments for 1983-84 to be: Central Northern Region \$286 126; Central Southern Region \$169 280; Central Eastern Region \$149 495; Central Western Region \$209 870; Northern Country Region \$126 974; and Southern Country Region \$128 746; making a total of about \$1 070 000. Can the Minister tell the Committee the number of persons who received emergency financial assistance during the 1983-84 financial year and how many applications for assistance were received by the Department?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think the honourable member has asked a question about this, and I know I have just answered two Questions on Notice about it. In 1983-84, 34 209 applications for emergency financial assistance were received by the Department compared with 29 271 for the previous year. The average payment was \$31.29 and \$33.43 respectively, and 90.9 per cent of those persons who received emergency financial assistance were social security pensioners and beneficiaries.

**Mr BECKER:** There is a growing need for this type of financial assistance. Can the Minister state how many people received assistance on more than one occasion during the financial year?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Emergency financial assistance at the State Government level needs to be monitored carefully so that a social security system is not established at the State level as well as at the Commonwealth level.

The questions the member for Mount Gambier asked were very much related to the honourable member's question, because how does the State respond to need when a person is there on the doorstep obviously in desperate need? The Commonwealth does not have a system that responds to that: I believe that it should. Do we develop a system of cash payments, bearing in mind that the Victorian Government does not have anything known as emergency financial assistance at all? Do we develop that, or do we develop through the whole package of State concessions, and indeed in our whole human services area, a different approach to the provision of services and assistance to those in need?

The two criteria that are most prevalent, as I understand it, in the emergency financial assistance are, first, cost of rents in the private sector. The honourable member would be aware that the State Government and now the Commonwealth Government has developed quite an extensive rent relief programme. So, that is a direct cash assistance to those who are paying very high rents beyond their capacity to pay. The second area relates to electricity charges. I think that some \$5.6 million is provided for, in effect, cash payments for electricity concessions. It is true that electricity charges have increased rapidly, but it is interesting to note that the New South Wales Government has just last week announced a concession scheme similar to that which we have had operating now from the first week that we came to office. So, we have tried to tackle in a very responsible way, I believe, some alternative provisions to the actual cash hand-out.

Also, the comments I made previously about the social effects of unemployment need to be borne in mind here. As I understand it, in the past 12 months 5 000 fewer people have received a unemployment benefits in this State. That must have an impact in this area. Some 22 000 new full and part time jobs were created, and that often has an impact in this area as well. It could be anticipated that some of the economic upturn will rub off in this area.

I acknowledge that we have a problem with longer term unemployed. I think our figures are quite disturbing there, as they are in many other places in this country. People become locked into a social security welfare structure. However, it is not an easy area of administration to provide a net to catch those that fall through from the larger net.

**Mr Cox:** A study was done involving the Commonwealth working party. I cannot give the actual percentage because I would probably be incorrect, but the majority of people in South Australia come only once, and 80 per cent of the people who come, in fact, come for food assistance, so that is an indication of the sort of need and the immediate need. It is not people repetitively using the system.

**Mr BECKER:** That is what I wanted to hear, because all members have many callers to their offices seeking assistance. One feels a little guilty about referring people to community welfare if local service clubs cannot help them with food parcels. That is a tendency that is happening. I read out the amounts paid to various regions: the Minister could take that on notice and supply me with the figures of applications in each region. I will use that as a supplementary question, because I want to get on to another area that concerns me involving the provision of welfare services.

Page 31 of the yellow book and page 54 of the Auditor-General's Report refer to a subprogramme provision of secure residential care at the South Australian Youth Remand Assessment Centre and the South Australian Youth Training Centre. The amount expended in 1983-84 was \$4 710 000; this year \$4 846 000 is proposed—an increase of \$136 000. Employment levels proposed are 203.1 full-time equivalents in 1983-84, actual staff numbers were 196.4 and in 1984-85 it is proposed that the level will drop to 193.1.

Anyone reading the Auditor-General's Report would become alarmed at the figures provided, because there is always comparison with the last financial year plus the previous two financial years. We see that the average annual net cost per offender at the South Australian Youth Training Centre in 1982 was \$48 000; in 1983 it was \$57 000 (or about \$1 096 a week); and in 1984 the amount increased to \$73 000 (or about \$1 403 a week).

For the South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre in 1982 the average net annual cost per offender was \$57 000; in 1983 it was \$73 000; and in 1984 it was \$104 000 (or about \$2 000 a week). I accept that the numbers have reduced and that in the South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre the average occupancy was 18, yet the capacity is 51. It appears to me that the average occupancy is around 50 per cent at the Youth Remand and Assessment Centre, and at the South Australian Youth Training Centre it is about 55 to 58 per cent. What can be done to contain the costs of those two centres, if that is possible? What action is being taken by the Department when these figures throw up those types of averages?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It is unfortunate that the Auditor-General's Report cannot go into the detail that that comparison table really justifies, because this is quite a complex area. The more the Department succeeds in reducing numbers in those institutions, the higher costs go up. Therefore, the simplistic view that the honourable member has expressed is understandable, but there are dangers in such a view. It opens up criticism for over-expenditure, waste of expenditure, or the like, but that is not the case.

First, we are really working with very outdated buildings and structures that limit the style of programmes we provide there. There has been a dramatic change: if one considers the Brookway Park institution, which was closed down a number of years ago, one sees the folly of building it in the 1960s, given the need for facilities provided today. I would most certainly like to see the Department have alternative programmes. We could then provide much better pro-

grammes and also be more cost effective. However, as I said, it is not quite so easy to say that, because there is this number or even an average number, on any given day there is less need for that number of staff. We have shift workers, and the like, and obviously the community requires those young offenders to remain in a secure custody situation.

The Committee may not be aware that a substantial amount of work has been done within the Department (including the Public Service Board) on staffing and future directions of secure institutions. As a result of that, task forces have been established within the Department that are actively working on the issues that concern the honourable member. I ask Mr Harris to give the Committee further information about the work that is going on.

**Mr Harris:** It would be obvious to most members that the two secure centres—The Youth Remand and Assessment Centre at Enfield and the Youth Training Centre at Magill—cater for some of those youths who are most in need in our community.

Broadly, we have tried to maintain the capacity to accommodate those we expect to come into those centres each year. We cannot completely determine that. We try to maintain it for those who are a risk to themselves or a severe risk to the community, and we try to make recommendations to the court that will enable most of the other youths to be placed in appropriate placements and appropriate programmes within the community. Nonetheless, we have to maintain secure centres—there is no alternative to that. I think that we have in this State reduced the number of young people in those secure centres to the minimum—certainly lower than most other States of the Commonwealth, and proportionately lower than most other Western countries have been able to maintain in detention or secure care.

The difficulty of this, as the honourable member has I think indicated, is that once one reduces the number, given, as the Minister has said, the outdated buildings that were not built really for the purposes for which they are being used at present, the cost per head increases and the cost per head includes public buildings and other charges, of course, do make it appear very high because one has a large complex set of buildings in both cases to maintain. Also, we have to maintain security in those buildings, and with the exception of one fairly secure unit at Magill they really were not built for total security purposes. That means that both night and day one has to maintain in any detention centre a full staffing complement to make sure that the youths are properly cared for and that they are maintained and contained in those centres, and this presents difficulties.

Because we were concerned, as was the honourable member, about the rising costs, the Public Service Board appointed a working party to look at the staffing in secure and community residential care centres in the Department, and a report was submitted to the Public Service Board. The way in which our programmes are operating to maintain young people in the community as against placing them in detention was strongly supported by that committee, which looked at the objective evidence of our success in reducing the number in residential care, particularly in secure care. The report concluded that, if the numbers of children in care had been projected from the 1973-74 figures with the current offending rates and without the alternative programmes that we have maintained in the community, there would have been something like 690 young people in departmental residential care with an annual cost of \$10 million or thereabouts on estimate.

That was a comment of that committee, which, while it had departmental representation, certainly was not a departmental committee: it was a committee appointed to look at this question of rising costs and staffing arrangements in those centres. The sort of programmes we have maintained

in the community include youth project centres, the Intensive Neighbourhood Care scheme, which maintains young people both on remand and on detention orders, and the Intensive Personal Supervision scheme that enables mentors to supervise young people in the community and support them through their process at school, work, or in the community as the case may be. All those steps have had marked success, as I said, to the extent that we probably have proportionately the lowest number of young people in secure care.

The rising costs are of concern. We are continually looking at them, and while some of the staff from those centres have been deployed into community programmes during the course particularly of this year to continually support and maintain those community programmes, as has been recommended by that Public Service Board committee, the costs of that staff are still showing against the institutions themselves at this time. So, while the costs of the staff are showing there, some proportion of their time is spent maintaining young people in the community and, of course, that means that the cost per head still increases. We are cognisant of those issues. We are continually looking at them. We are continually maintaining and supporting the community programmes as recommended and we will be looking at ways in which some of the staff during the periods when there is a lesser number in the two centres can be further deployed into maintaining community programmes and supporting those programmes.

Additionally, the warrants default programme has again reduced the number in care, because young people are either encouraged to pay up or work out their warrants rather than serve them in secure care. The community service order programme is set up not as a nice programme for young people but as a clear alternative to secure care and this, too, is progressively increasing the number of young people, who, while they are on a form of detention order from the court, can clearly be maintained in the community.

**Mr FERGUSON:** I refer to the 'Office of Aboriginal Affairs' line on page 143. I understand that there is a new programme called the Aboriginal Young Offenders Programme. Can the Minister give the budgetary details for that programme and say what the actual programme is designed to do?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his question. I think that members should be made aware (if they are not already) that there is a disproportionate number of young Aborigines in our institutions, and that has caused me and my predecessors considerable concern. While we have been successful in deinstitutionalising non-Aboriginal young people, we have not been successful to anywhere near the extent we would like in providing alternative programmes for Aboriginal young offenders. We have fought long and hard for this and in this financial year we are trying a special young offenders programme.

We have a complex situation here because young offenders coming from remote communities in the State need to be dealt with in a different way from those young Aborigines living in urban situations or even as opposed to those living in fringe situations in rural areas. So, we need to use the limited resources that we have to try to look at diverse programmes. We know that there is a lack of recreational facilities in many Aboriginal communities, and one of the key thrusts will be to develop recreational programmes for young people who have very little structured activity provided for them in communities. More importantly, though, we want to try to understand the kinship in family structures that exist in Aboriginal communities so that we can build on that and those natural supports and legal procedures that already exist in Aboriginal communities so that we can come to grips with our response to offending in terms of the Aboriginal culture.

It seems that very little benefit is obtained to either the offender or the community by bringing a young person down from Amata or one of the remote communities to one of our institutions. That is most distressing and it certainly distresses me to visit one of those institutions and see a young person with language difficulties, cultural difficulties, difficulties with food, etc. One of the side effects, I am told, is that even the experience of coming to a city to see television, eat different food and have an opportunity, for example, to pursue some new recreational pursuits in an institution is often an incentive in itself to offend, so that situation is intolerable.

So, we are proposing to employ four additional staff this year to work amongst the community at Yalata, in the Pitjantjatjara lands and in the central northern region, particularly Salisbury and Elizabeth, as well as the central western region, based at Port Adelaide. This is very much a pilot project, but we want to try to develop some recreational and personal development programmes to reduce offending. One of the key targets in the remote areas will be to try to combat petrol sniffing, which is related to offending and certainly is destructive of the health of young Aborigines. Staff will be selected in conjunction with the respective communities, and the programmes we hope to develop to combat petrol sniffing will include significant community involvement and will be aimed at facilitating programmes that the community itself runs rather than programmes being developed externally and implanted in those communities.

In the metropolitan area the programmes will focus specifically on Aboriginal youths at risk to try to work out ways in which we can prevent them entering secure and institutional care. All of the programmes will utilise existing resources within our Department. As honourable members would be aware, we employ a number of Aboriginal community workers who work through our normal community welfare workers in district offices and the like. It is a very real attempt on the part of the Government to try to come to grips with the problems that we have had in providing programmes outside institutional care for young Aboriginal offenders. This phenomenon is translated into adult prisons, where there is a disproportionate number of Aborigines. I have had discussions with my colleagues the Minister for Correctional Services and the Attorney-General about ways in which we can reduce the number of male and female Aborigines in prisons.

**Mr FERGUSON:** I refer to the Community Welfare regional offices, as shown on page 141 of the Estimates of Payments. I understand that inquiries are being undertaken on the provision of services to people of non-English speaking background. When will this inquiry be completed and what areas does it cover?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** We established a task force to look at migrant welfare and also the refugee programme, which is having an impact on welfare services in this State and, indeed, right across Australia. A similar task force was established in the areas of health and education. The task force that we established has on it a majority of people outside the Department of Community Welfare and, indeed, has a strong representation from ethnic communities and persons working in welfare programmes in the non-Government sector. It does include representation from the Federal Department of Immigration and Affairs and also, of course, from the Ethnic Affairs Commission in this State.

It is anticipated that the task force will report to the Government in December. It has carried out an exhaustive inquiry into the provision of welfare services to this important sector of our community. Four public meetings have been held in the metropolitan area and in four country centres, and those with a particularly high migrant concen-

tration have been visited. Fifty written submissions have been received from the community to assist the task force in its work. Interviews have been conducted with 15 selected district offices of the Department of Community Welfare and all major Federal and State Government departments have contributed to the work of the inquiry. Numerous oral submissions have been received and some members of the task force have visited ethnic welfare initiatives that have been established in both New South Wales and Victoria. A survey of the staff of the Department of Community Welfare has been conducted and a major survey of welfare workers in Federal Government departments and community and ethnic based agencies has been undertaken. So, a substantial amount of work has been done in assessing the problem. Obviously, the document will be of great importance to future planning.

The honourable member asked for an indication of the terms of reference of the committee. It was to identify the welfare needs of migrants and refugees; to make recommendations to the Department concerning the meeting of these needs; to examine existing departmental programmes and services in relation to their representativeness to the cultural backgrounds of departmental clients; to examine staffing policies of the Department in relation to its meeting the needs of vocation of non-English speaking people; and, to make recommendations on the role of ethnic organisations in relation to providing welfare services to migrants.

**Mr FERGUSON:** I refer to the departmental line on page 141 and to comments made in the House in recent times about the reduction in the number of children in institutions. Can figures be provided on the number of children in residential care three or four years ago compared to now? Why has there been such a reduction?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The question relates to one asked by the member for Hanson. It has been a matter of substantial review within the Department. As at 30 June 1978, 181 children were in care within the Department and, as at 30 June 1983, 63 children were in residential care. Total admissions for the financial year 1977-78 were 301 and, for the year 1982-83, 163. That was, as has been explained by Mr Harris, as a result of deliberate Government policy to reduce programmes requiring institutional care and to provide that form of care wherever possible within the community, particularly within family settings.

**Mr MATHWIN:** In answering a previous question Mr Cox said that the programmes offered in South Australia were the best in Australia. I would like to be convinced of that. I was in Western Australia five years ago and they were miles ahead of us. I refer in particular to community service orders, which we all agree is a far better way of treating some offenders than others. How many staff do we have in that area and how many offices are operating successfully in that area at the moment? I understand that there are two offices, and certainly one in the south. How many young people are we dealing with and how successful is the scheme?

Regarding alternatives, the intensive neighbourhood care scheme was set as one programme and the personal supervision programme another. They were the only two mentioned and, if that is all that we have to offer, we are in a pretty bad state. I was disturbed at the very poor progress in this area (and this applies under my Government, as well as the Minister's) of the advancement in community service order work. I believe that it is very good: it is a very successful scheme. It has been proved to be successful for the past 12 years in Germany and for about the same number of years in England.

Whilst I would not wish it to go overboard, as it has in some States in America, it is still one of the best ways of handling this grave situation. When one looks at the figures

in the Auditor-General's Report in relation to the cost of people being kept in institutions and the South Australian Youth Remand Assessment Centres, one realises that the Minister and other members of his staff must be upset as much as I am by the staggering cost of \$104 000 per head, which is rather frightening. Although, in answer to a previous question, one of the Ministers's staff said that these people are doing other jobs, it is still a colossal amount of money. Surely, the Minister could reduce some of that massive figure in the Auditor-General's Report. So, in relation to community service orders, what is the position, how many persons does the Department have, and how successful is the scheme?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his question. I think that he asked a similar question last year about this matter. This is one of a series of alternatives that is available to the courts when considering the best programme that is available to treat, if one likes, the problems confronting a young offender.

I will ask Mr Cox to give some specific details about the community service order scheme, but I must caution the honourable member about using, in a very simplistic way, the figures that he used with respect to the cost per head of people in institutions. One could say that the cost of maintaining Government House is outrageous because there are only two residents there and a whole cost structure is associated with maintaining that property and providing the services there.

**Mr MATHWIN:** Is the Minister suggesting maintenance costs of an institution—

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** No, I am not, but I am saying that it would also be simplistic and offensive to the Governor to say that those costs should be lumped in and attached to him and Lady Dunstan in the way in which it can be done to each young offender who is in one of those security institutions.

It is a much more complex situation than that and Mr Harris has tried to explain that to the Committee. It is dangerous to quote the figure that the honourable member has quoted without putting proper references and explanations on it. I will ask Mr Cox to provide answers to the honourable member's comments about community service orders.

**Mr Cox:** The number of community service orders in the past year increased, but the conditions in which we use community service orders is related when there is an alternative to a short term detention order or an alternative to a long-term detention order where there is no risk to the community. Last year's average for detention in the State, including short term detentions, was 48.

The court must decide what risk exists of that person being in the community carrying out a community service order. It is not a matter of staffing the community service orders at question—it is the question of risk and support that can eventually be given. One of the choices that we have in replanning community service orders is to take some staff who are competent from the South Australian Youth Training Centre and to see with additional supervision whether we could get more people on community service orders or recommend it without a risk to the community. The honourable member mentioned the alternative programmes. He may not have been in the Chamber when we were talking about the supervision which is part of an order that the court uses very generally in South Australia.

**Mr MATHWIN:** I was upstairs listening.

**Mr Cox:** Intensive personal supervision is the other order that is used and is growing: it is a mentor scheme. There was the INC scheme, which has been used by 70 to 80 young people as an average at any time in the State. There is also the warrants default programme and the community

service order. Those are all orders that are going, and we also have the youth project centres, which have been established in each region and which give another alternative to detention. Statistics around Australia show that we have the lowest number of young people up to the age of 18 in detention in the State.

**Mr MATHWIN:** That is not what was said before: it was said that we had the best schemes, the best alternatives.

**Mr Cox:** I am not arguing that point.

**Mr MATHWIN:** That is why I set it straight.

**Mr Cox:** We have the lowest number of young people in detention up to 18. We have no young people up to 18 in gaol. If one compares that with the position interstate, one will find that in Western Australia there are a number of children under 18 in gaol. I made the assertion because of the visits of other Directors and overseas visitors that the programmes were as good as or even better than anything in Australia. There seems to be some possibility if there are no young people in gaol, that it means that the programmes are working fairly satisfactorily. Last year there was an average of 48 young people. To extend the community service order without putting people unnecessarily on a community service order, it must come from that 48 or, as that reduces, the number that are in detention. With some changes and additional supervision to our system, maybe we can get another 12 people on community service orders. However, there are always groups who have committed violent offences and need to be in secure care. In a population of 1.25 million, we seem to have got to a very low figure at present.

**Mr MATHWIN:** I take it from that that, when it was explained about the workings and how it is the responsibility of the courts, it is being put back on the courts and away from the Department's door. In other words, Mr Cox is saying that there is an abundance of programmes that these young offenders can be put on, but that the courts are not taking advantage of the number of jobs that these people are able to do out in the community.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** What we have achieved, as Mr Cox has said, is the lowest number of children in Australia in secure care. The problem that the courts have is that there is a minimum number: there are in any given community a number of young people who must be maintained in secure care. Whilst we do have a range of programmes, they are just not suitable for some young offenders unfortunately, but that is the situation. The courts are, I believe, well aware of the programmes that are available, but there is a limit to how far they can go in using those programmes for some young offenders.

**Mr MATHWIN:** There are a number on the books not using the programmes. The availability of work to be done in the community is there, but there are not offenders available and able to do it and the courts are not taking advantage of it. Is that what the Minister is saying?

**Mr Cox:** Numerous recommendations were made to the courts that community service orders could be used. When we make recommendations to the courts, we know that it is a court decision in relation to the nature of offence on what it wishes to do. I understand there were about 45 referrals and 26 community orders taken up by the court. The courts are independent about its decisions on these matters. We can make suggestions but they make the decisions.

**Mr MATHWIN:** I appreciate that, and that is the way that it ought to be, of course. No-one would wish it any different from that. In relation to the cost to the community of the remand centres, the Auditor-General's Report indicates that for the past three years the occupancy at the South Australian Youth Remand and Assessment Centre was 29 in 1982, 25 in 1983, and 18 in 1984. However, a full staff

complement of 51 is still maintained. Quite obviously those figures will remain low: something terribly unusual or pretty well impossible would have to happen before the centre would be full to capacity. I would suggest that reference to the figures for the three years previous to 1982 would indicate that there has never been anywhere near a full complement at the assessment centre.

Would it not be wiser to consider retraining some of the staff so that they would be able to take on some of those other alternative programmes for young people? An ideal situation would be to have some smaller institutions spread out over the State. Perhaps people could be given some outback training, as occurs in California with great success in some cases. We all know, probably no-one better than I, that programmes in relation to children can be very difficult: a child participating in a scheme can do very well whereas it will not appeal to the next three or four children. I know of the difficulties in trying to get suitable programmes for children. I appreciate that, but I am concerned about the full staff complement being maintained at the two big institutions. Although emergency situations must be considered, a colossal emergency would have to occur for those institutions to have a full complement of remandees. I think we ought to be looking at ways of better utilising the staff of those institutions.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Had the honourable member been listening in his room previously he would have heard Mr Harris explain what is happening in regard to utilisation, and he would have heard my comments about the difficulties that we face in providing programmes within the geographic and physical restrictions of the outdated buildings in which we provide those programmes. The honourable member referred to average occupancy: occupancy oscillates on a daily basis, and staff is required on a 24-hour basis. It is not possible to provide the type of ideal programme that would reduce some of that number of staff because of segregation problems and the like that must be considered as a result of the physical limitations of those buildings. Perhaps Mr Harris and Mr Cox could go over some of those points raised again, because I think it is worth while having a complete explanation given in regard to this oft quoted section of the Auditor-General's Report.

**Mr MATHWIN:** Is the Education Department staff at the institutions included in that total number?

**Mr Cox:** One of the major issues which we are facing at present and which has involved a great deal of study concerns the matter of which children can be put together. The total number comprises, say, 13 year olds, 17 year olds, those who have committed different types of offences, involving different degrees of offences, and so on. We have been able to keep young people below the age of 16 out of institutions. The experience indicated recently was that no child under the age of 16 had experienced placement in an institution previously in South Australia. Sometimes there may be a young child, particularly a child charged with arson, who must be kept. We also have girls charged with various offences, and it must be remembered that at SAYRAC we must cater for both girls and boys.

It is very difficult to provide the numbers of units required that can be handled with reason and with community acceptance. Every time that a unit is run, we must ensure that the staff have adequate support and that there is security, and we must guard against assaults. The total number of children comprises girls and boys, young offenders, and older ones, some who are there for violent assaults and others who are there for property offences. The combinations are enormous and, in terms of protecting a child against himself and his friends in an institution, we have to take some very careful decisions about how they are combined. Some of the children have been remanded without yet being



proved guilty, and they need to be given special care in terms of what should happen in an institution. This is one of the most complicated programmes that we have faced.

It must also be remembered that even children who are not to be institutionalised may be desperately disturbed, may need specific help and may require some separation. Therefore, the costs remain high, even if there may be only two children who need to be separated. The decision must be made to provide that sort of assistance or to overlook their needs and put them in with another group and close the section. We have taken on board the matter raised by the honourable member. We are looking at the matter of retraining staff and of trying to regroup them, having regard to ensuring that the children are not put at risk. We are trying to find the best answer to that question. One of the reasons for the very high cost is the need for segregation of certain offenders. Low numbers of people still does not militate against that need having to be met.

**Mr Harris:** In relation to the general staffing of the centres I point out, as I did earlier, that a Public Service Board Committee compiled a report on ways of deploying some of the members of the staff into the community. It was intended to support and strengthen the support available within the community for young people who would otherwise be in secure care. Each of the two centres has a liaison unit for young people who are placed in the centres on detention or who are held there for a short term remand. Alternative placements for those children are found as quickly as possible to keep the numbers down. It is important that those liaison units continue. It is equally important that we follow the recommendations of the Public Service Board Committee, which considered the staff matter and that strengthening of community support. In regard to people placed out in the community, who present some risk either to themselves or to the community it is essential that some support system be provided in the community to help the young people maintain themselves; the community must recognise that young people are not placed in the community and left there unattended.

The retraining proposal is in process. We have a programme lined up to get that underway. Also, we have deployed some of the people from the centres to work on the community support system for young offenders. That has represented quite a strengthening of the community support system for them. That will continue, but we will still have a need to maintain secure centres. We will still have to maintain a minimum number of places, which probably will not be filled (and I hope they will not be filled). We do not determine who goes in or who goes on a community service order. That is for the courts to determine. We may make recommendations and suggest placements; we may recommend against a detention placement, although that does not necessarily mean that a court will accept such a recommendation, when it takes into account the nature of the offence, the circumstances of the offender and the possible risk to the community.

In some cases the court may decide to order a detention period. We must have the capacity to meet the potential need. Therefore, there is an irreducible minimum below which we are not able to go. Our task is to keep exploring the possibilities available to strengthen the community programmes (which is supported by the Public Service Board Report) and to maintain and develop further programmes that will keep young people in the community. We have looked at the Outward Bound type of programme, and sometimes young offenders who need to be in detention centres have, by agreement with the Training Centre Review Board, been placed in the community and allowed to go out on camps on a leave period under supervision and to

partake in some of these Outward Bound type of activities and courses.

I think that does mean a higher staff component if they are sent out in that way. As to maintaining these services throughout the country areas, it is believed that it is not desirable to send young people to the country, because it is important for most of them to maintain the links they have with their own community and their own family to the extent that is possible. The farther away from their homes that they are sent the greater the difficulty in maintaining those links.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The cost of the Education Department staff is not included in that figure. I will provide some statistical information about numbers of children in institutional care and prisons in Western Australia.

**Mr FERGUSON:** Can the Minister explain the role of the Children's Interest Bureau and say who are the members of that body?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Children's Interest Bureau was established following amendments to the Community Welfare Act. They were passed during the term of the previous Administration but they were in fact conceived in the term of the Administration prior to that. Once again, this is a new initiative in Australia. It was strongly felt by many people in the community that there should be a statutory and independent body that would make it its special concern to look at the needs and provision of protection for the special interests of children in the community.

The functions of the Bureau are set out in section 26 of the Community Welfare Act. They are quite broad, including increasing public awareness of the rights of children in matters relating to the welfare of children by the dissemination of information and other means; to carry out research and conduct inquiries into such matters involving the welfare of children as the Bureau or the Government thinks fit; to develop within the Department of Community Welfare services for the promotion of the welfare of children as the Minister directs; to monitor review and evaluate the policies of the Department in relation to children; to carry out other functions as the Minister may assign to the Bureau and to report from time to time on those matters.

The Bureau has been fortunate in having as its initial composition 10 persons of quite outstanding qualifications. They are:

**Chairperson:**

Ms Anne Deveson, who is well known as a former member of the Royal Commission into Human Relationships and is a well-known writer, film-maker and author.

**Deputy Chairperson:**

Ms Gillian Waite, who is an employee of the ABC and a well-known broadcaster who is involved in many community activities in South Australia.

**Members:**

Mr Brendan Burns, Senior Magistrate, Adelaide Children's Court.

Ms Rosemary Fisher, Co-ordinator, Camden Community Centre.

Mr David Meldrum, Director, Department for Community Welfare.

Sister Patricia Pak Poy, who is the former Principal of the Convent of Mercy St Aloysius School in Wakefield Street, Adelaide, and a well-known person involved in education and many welfare programmes within the Catholic Church in the community.

Mr John Paleologos, Principal, Cummins Area School.

I was recently in that district and members of that community are very proud of the appointment of the Principal of their school to the Bureau and have taken a keen interest in its work. The other members are:

Ms Ann Pengelly, Health Worker, Department for Community Welfare.

Dr Michael Sawyer, Director of Psychiatry, Adelaide Children's Hospital.

Dr Neil Wigg, Director of Special Services, CAFHS.

The Bureau has the services of a full-time staff member, Miss Sally McGregor, from the Department. It has embarked

on a wide range of initiatives, and I am hopeful indeed that great benefits will flow from its activities, not only to the children in the State but indeed to parents and family life, and will help build strong community structures.

**Mr FERGUSON:** What are the other issues being examined by the Children's Interest Bureau?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am not aware of all the issues but they include the problem of divided jurisdiction in the area of family law (a point the member for Light raised in Parliament recently which does have substantial influence on young people who are caught in a family conflict situation); the matter of corporal punishment in schools; video pornography and X-rated videos (and it has made representations on this matter to the Attorney-General); respite care for autistic children; psychiatric services for disturbed adolescents (it has been involved in some Health Commission work with parties in that area); child sexual abuse and legal processes.

The Bureau has considered some of these matters in greater depth than others, given the restraints that it has had in the short time it has been operating. There has been discussion on the need for a children's legal centre (there is international precedents for that) and also on the matter of children's rights and the media (I have spoken about that recently), involving media ethics and reporting and the use of the media in promoting children's viewpoints. They are some of the issues, and I think members of the Committee would see the large scope and the potential there is for the work of the Children's Interest Bureau.

**Mr FERGUSON:** My next question relates to a matter concerning many people in my district. How many have been employed under the Community Response Team programme, and how will established programmes be continued?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Community Response Team programme is an innovative one indeed. It was designed specifically to provide short-term funding for many projects that would employ or would in an important way relate to those persons who were not easily finding their way into the more traditional CEP and State unemployment relief programmes. I think the Committee would agree that the value of the Community Response Team is already being felt in the community.

It may well be that some of the programmes do find themselves coming into the established funding areas, whether it be within the Department of Community Welfare (for example, the community welfare grants fund) or some other funding source such as local government, the community, or the like. The basis on which funding is provided is that it should not as of right attract continued funding. In the main, that has been to the fore in the planning of those important services. Some will fail, and that is only to be expected, but it is my view that many of them will develop into very valuable services in the community.

The need is always evident in the community for flexibility in establishing community structures that provide key services. One of our difficulties is in being flexible in that area. Once organisations are established they become almost set into concrete and often then absorb funding. In some cases they become inward looking and have a limited effect in penetrating the original desires of that organisation.

One of the values of the Community Response Team programme, in the widest possible sense, is that it does show us that new programmes can be established and that maybe existing organisations should become more flexible and more open to meeting some of those needs. So, there is potential for continued support from a wide variety of sources for those programmes to continue. However, many of them may not require additional funding. It is often the first response in establishing a community programme to look for financial assistance, which may not be the essence

to the success of that programme. In fact, that is the experience of people to whom I have spoken in a number of programmes. They want them to remain dynamic, un-bureaucratic and certainly within community control. So, they are actively seeking ways in which those programmes can be established without that dependence upon some funding authority. I ask Mr Cox to give some statistics on the Community Response Team programme.

**Mr Cox:** I think that the honourable member was interested in knowing how many people were likely to be employed: it looks as though 120 people will be employed, which is equivalent to about 81 full-time positions. There is an element of employment, but there is also a very strong element of training. We are asking them to initiate and help with community groups, but we believe that our job (and it is part of the whole programme, of course, that we provide training so that the people we put on become more confident) is to encourage them to seek work. From their experience they will become more employable in the community. Something of which we are proud is that these people are becoming more employable in various jobs. The programme has two responses: they get immediate work (it helps with the community group) and they become more available for employment.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I was somewhat surprised to hear the Minister's response to my third question in the last question session: he virtually accepted that Federal Government's policies and whatever it decided by way of financial allocation were all right; it was not really his field of responsibility or the Premier's responsibility to make special representation.

I wonder whether the Minister has lost sight of the fact that there are plenty of examples in South Australia where Premiers, and indeed Ministers, do make representations in cases of emergency to the Federal Government and where they have been very successful. South Australia is some tens, if not hundreds, of millions of dollars better off as a result of such approaches, even in the time that I have been in Parliament.

I refer the Minister to the problem emerging two or three years ago with regard to the South Australian rail transfer. Details of the financial agreement had not been included in the arrangements between the State and Federal Governments. Based on a single page of correspondence, the Treasurer of the day made representation to the Prime Minister, as a result of which South Australia received substantial additional help during that year. I believe that that is still current. I recall Premier Bannon (then in Opposition) registering with some mirth in my local newspaper the fact that I was in Canberra trying to change Federal Government policy. I was much more amused than he was, I think, when I came back with \$25 million for the Adelaide TAFE college (which is currently under discussion) and for the South-East College of Rural Studies (which is also a TAFE college).

We also made special representation to the Federal Government on repayments for Monarto. Of course, Monarto's funds were not given to the State: they were only loans, so we made special representation to the Federal Government asking it to accept a much reduced payment provided that we got that money back quickly. Those are just three examples within the past four or five years that I recall, and there are certainly a number of others. Once again I ask will the Minister prevail upon the Premier and his Federal counterpart to make representation, because I believe that on evidence provided by the Federal Bureau of Statistics alone, South Australia is disadvantaged? We are almost approaching the position where we could become a mendicant State. If we do not make strong and urgent representation we will be on the neglected heap again.

I base that request upon the fact that already we have also been told by the Federal Government that next year the Eastern States will be better dressed as a result of the Federal Grants Commission's firm recommendation to pay more money to the States on a per capita basis. Therefore, the more highly populated Eastern States (which are already receiving a bigger share of grants) will get an even greater proportion of money which South Australia, by virtue of its very large size and very large proportion of disadvantaged, should be receiving.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think that the honourable member has somewhat battered the truth of what I said earlier in very clear terms—that I am constantly making representations to the Commonwealth Government. I think that what the honourable member must realise is that the railways agreement, the TAFE college building programmes and loan repayments on Monarto (and the reduction provided there) were all specific purpose programmes.

The honourable member is referring to the provision of social security services. He referred specifically to the SACOSS report, which indicated that there were a large number of social security recipients in this State. When we were talking about providing additional Commonwealth financial assistance to those most in need in this State, we must argue it on the basis of an understanding of the constitutional and legal framework within which we run this country. It is not possible to say that pensions should be increased for persons in South Australia or that special financial assistance should be provided to a category of social security recipients in this State as compared with other States.

If we have more social security recipients, they receive as of right those benefits from the Commonwealth Government and, therefore, more money does flow into this State. That is not the way in which I have approached this matter. We have approached it on the basis of funding for specific programmes, particularly where there is unmatched funding. I refer specifically there to the youth accommodation programme. Certainly, within the area of Aboriginal affairs, this State has taken advantage of specific purpose programmes with the provision of welfare services for aged persons and others. As a result of a special case within this State, representations have been made at a personal level (an officer level) to get that story across.

I have been to Canberra to see not only the Minister for Social Security but also the Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, for example, with respect to the disproportionate number of refugees in South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria compared with other States, so we three Ministers representing those States had discussions with the Federal Minister about special budgetary allocations for that responsibility that rests with the States, and so on. So, there has been no doubt a very active endeavour to secure funds in that way for those most in need in this State.

Therefore, quite contrary to the inferences that the member for Mount Gambier drew from my earlier comments, I simply clarify that position. As I said, we have in place working parties. The working party to which Mr Beattie referred and the working party that has been established are now specifically looking at State concessions so that we can as a matter of overall Commonwealth Government policy transfer some of the responsibility that has rested with the States by default, in my view, so that that can be returned very squarely back to the Commonwealth Government.

I refer to the instances Mr Cox mentioned earlier, where in the first full year Budget of the Hawke Administration a number of improvements were made. I am not saying that that is the ideal situation: of course it is not. The Commonwealth Government does not accept it as the ideal position either. However, I am saying that we are making

progress and we are making a darn sight more progress than was ever made in the very unfortunate years during which the poor particularly suffered under the Fraser Administration.

I anticipate that progress can be made with respect to programmes, but I repeat that one should not rest solely a case on Federal budgetary allocation or even specific purpose programmes in the social security and welfare context, but should look at the incredible reallocation of funding that there has been in health, housing and the area of employment incentives. The way in which we will help those who are suffering as a result of poverty will be by making jobs available for those who are able to work and by providing adequate education, health and housing facilities.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** In response to the Minister, I was not asking that he make special representation for pensioners just in South Australia to be beneficiaries. I thought that he might, for example, have made representation to the Federal Government to reinstate Medicare where it rightly belongs: back in the CPI. Everyone is paying it. It is certainly an important part of CPI and it would have been part of it had the previous Government remained in power. So, virtually the free medical care that pensioners are receiving is costing them \$2.80 per week because the Medicare levy is not included as part of the CPI. That is hardly magnanimity on the part of the Federal Government, and if the Minister did make representation and said, 'Look, put that back so that our pensioners will get \$2.80,' that is so many times \$2.80 per week that would go into the State and to all pensioners across Australia.

That is just one example. Another one that I expected he would have picked up would be that the tens of millions of dollars being spent on Community Employment Projects are just missing almost completely that desperately needed target area of people who are chronically unemployed and who have no skills other than those at their fingertips. Yet, one would have to look around the State to find a few hundred thousand dollars being spent on that chronically unemployed target area. Instead, we are waiting for unemployed tradesmen to come along in the South-East so that they can go ahead with the aquatic centre—a wonderful project in my view: I am not knocking it from an electorate point of view. However, it seems crazy to think that we are looking around for tradesmen to become unemployed so that they can start building a CEP project when there are people in my electorate who have been unemployed for one or two years and who are just waiting around for work.

They can see \$3 million sitting around for people who are not yet unemployed. If we looked around for money to be spent on the target area, that is the sort of representation I would hope the Minister would make on behalf of all people in Australia. Let us be realistic about it.

Another thing that does worry me is whether my mathematics are slipping. I refer the Minister to page 144 of the Estimates of Payments and page 10 of the Estimates of Receipts for this financial year, both documents released by the Treasurer on Budget day. If we look at the 'Minister of Community Welfare and Aboriginal Affairs' Estimates of Receipts on the first line, 'Child care services,' we see that the estimated receipts for 1983-84 were \$2.2 million, the actual receipts \$2.505 million. I now refer back to page 144 under the same line 'Child care services'.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Chair cannot allow the member for Mount Gambier to go to page 144.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** We are on 'Miscellaneous', sorry.

**The CHAIRMAN:** We are not dealing with that.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I will take that up separately. Once again on the same tack that I have been following all day, I refer to the review of State Government concessions and the fact that contained in that report is a recommen-

dation that the Minister should make representation to the Federal Government along with his housing Ministry colleague for special assistance. Will this be simply another example of the tactics of delay we have had for a year in the compilation of this report? The only recommendations that have been acted on are negatively to save a little over \$2 million and they have been thrown out the window.

The rest has been put back to the public and we have yet another committee that will look at it, which could take three, six, nine, or 12 months before it comes up with anything. However, the same people who are highlighted in this report as being in urgent need of assistance are still waiting. They know that they need help. I know that they need help. SACOSS knows it; the Minister knows it, but here we have the report farmed out to another committee to which the Minister referred a few minutes ago. Will the Minister give an undertaking to the Committee that at least that proportion of the Government concessions report that refers to groups in desperate need, such as the single unemployed adult male, will be given some attention, or will the Minister simply acknowledge that this report has so far been a dead loss and will be a dead loss until the next report is received on the report?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! I wonder whether the Minister might like to reply to that question after lunch. I think that it might be better if we adjourn for lunch a little early. I am sure that the Minister will come back with an outstandingly constructive reply to the member for Mount Gambier.

*[Sitting suspended from 12.59 to 2 p.m.]*

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** In his preliminary remarks, the member for Mount Gambier raised a number of issues on which I should comment briefly. The first concerns the exclusion of Medicare from consumer price index assessments. In the Australian Bureau of Statistics bulletin, which explains the CPI for the June quarter 1984, the Australian Statistician comments on this matter and explains that health and personal care costs were reduced by 12.8 per cent in that quarter. He states:

Prices of hospital and medical services decreased significantly again this quarter as a result of the index reflecting for an entire quarter the changes associated with the introduction of Medicare. He then refers to the index of the appendix for details and explains that the decrease in Queensland was smaller because that State already had free medical attention.

The Medicare programme is designed specifically to bring health care within the means of the poorest in the community and for the very group referred to by the honourable member the whole thrust of Medicare is to reduce the financial burden of illness. I also refer members to the CPI assessment as the basis for the inflation rate during the June 1984 quarter, when the CPI rose by 3.6 per cent in Adelaide. That is the lowest increase in Australia, except for Sydney (3 per cent) and Darwin (3.2 per cent). The increase in all other capitals was greater than that in Adelaide; therefore, the argument advanced by the honourable member would find short shrift with the Federal Treasury with respect to the specific needs of this State.

When I appeared with Mr Malcolm Gray for the State of South Australia before a national wage tribunal some years ago, the then Fraser Commonwealth Government made submissions to the Full Bench on that matter. The Commonwealth representative advanced the argument that the then Medibank levy should be excluded and in that way the wage increases being sought before the tribunal should be reduced proportionately. So the argument used by the honourable member is in that sense hypocritical.

The honourable member's point about CEP programmes should be treated similarly. The Tonkin State Administration rejected out of hand any form of job creation scheme and

closed down SURS. The Fraser Government repeatedly rejected calls for job creation programmes within Australia. I am pleased to hear the honourable member say now that there needs to be an extension of job creation programmes, especially those reaching out to the chronically unemployed. The Community Response Team philosophy is aimed at reaching the chronically unemployed. Indeed, the reason why the project to which the honourable member refers in his own district, as well as other projects, is having difficulty now in getting off the ground is the great success of the Government's employment policies especially in the building industry, and there are not enough qualified tradesmen available to work on job creation programmes.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** There were not even at the time—

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** There may be special circumstances in the South-East. That indicates that the Commonwealth-State job creation policies as a whole are working. As well as the Community Response Team, which operates in a relatively narrow sphere, there is a chance for much creative thinking so that we can use job creation moneys to help the long-term unemployed and those who do not fit easily into the existing programmes.

Regarding the honourable member's comments on the review of State concessions, this is the first review of its type. It is a comprehensive review. We are not dealing with matters on which decisions that can be made on an *ad hoc* basis: a decision in this State may well cut across representations which we are making and which the honourable member is imploring me to make to the Commonwealth Government. We should not be readily fulfilling areas of responsibility that are not normally ours. We have said that any savings made within the recommendations of the original committee will be returned to those most in need in the community. Obviously, that sort of decision can be taken as a result of recommendations received from the working party on this matter. The working party and the Government have already taken initiatives and action in certain areas and I believe that, during 1985, we will see the beginnings of a substantial change in our capacity to apply to those most in need the enormous amount of State Government revenue that is involved in State concessions. However, that will take much planning, putting policies into place, getting the support of the community for such programmes, and then implementing them.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I thank the Minister for his acknowledgement of my comments, although I do not know that there is much in substance for which to thank him. He said that the review of State Government concessions was a comprehensive review, but I take issue there: the review is not comprehensive because, by its own admission, it leaves out certain areas of taxation which it regards as more likely within the Treasurer's field of responsibility. However, one has only to consider the Education Department, for instance, where there are Government assisted scholars, transport assistance, and other forms of assistance. If one went from Government department to Government department, I do not doubt that one would find additional areas of concession that might well have been considered in the 12 months during which the committee covered the fields that it did cover, and that would result in a much more comprehensive overview of concessions that are made to South Australia's community that would be of use to the Government. After all, if one is giving concessions in South Australian schools through the Government assisted scholar scheme, obviously the families of the more sociologically disadvantaged are being affected by an important Government decision. In certain areas there is a transfer of funds from one Government department to another which might well be reflected in this review of State Government conces-

sions. I referred to that when speaking on another line earlier this week and the Minister of Education acknowledged the omission or oversight and said that there were probably other areas.

It is an incomplete document and certainly from the Government's viewpoint it gives nowhere near an accurate idea of how much money is being given by Governments in the form of concessions of one kind or another. The Government could have made itself be seen to be far more generous than it is had the other issues been taken into consideration. The other subsidies, such as Government assisted scholarship moneys, have been under review for the past 12 months in their own right. The Minister of Education acknowledged that. Whether the review resulted in more or fewer people being brought into the scheme was not elicited by way of question. We did not get a satisfactory answer, but it would have been relevant to the findings of this Committee. I hope that the committee that the Minister has appointed will take into consideration issues like that which affect the every-day lives of the underprivileged.

I will pursue a matter raised by the member for Hanson. I refer to moneys paid out for emergency financial assistance. Has the Department any record of what proportion of that very considerable amount of money was paid out to assist Electricity Trust of South Australia and Engineering and Water Supply accounts? Mr Cox said that the majority of funds went out by way of food assistance.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member has made a number of statements of a general nature, but I refer him to the report of the proceedings of this Committee in 1982 when I asked a similar question of the previous Minister, the Hon. John Burdett. The reply recorded in *Hansard* at that time was:

The Government has not yet been able to decide on a proposal for making concessions on a better basis. It is a difficult problem if one takes into account the question of rate concessions and rental concessions for people paying rent, and so on. It has proved to be most difficult. We have not been able to work out a formula. I think the honourable member was addressing his question to the broad subject of concessions of all sorts, including transport. That is true, I was. This Government has had a go at it. We have tried to grapple with this complex area in the concessions that are of most direct impact in the income security area. True, we have not been able to embrace every form of concession. I suppose that one could delve into the health, housing, education, and so many other areas of Government, but we have limited it in that respect. This is a serious effort and a realistic attempt to grapple with a matter on which the previous Minister said it was too difficult to formulate a policy.

We must formulate policies and try to tackle this amount of money. It amounts to some \$85 million *in toto*, as the report reveals. We need to have a monitoring facility to ensure that it is delivered to those to whom we believe it should be delivered. It is not simply a matter of taking it from one group and giving it to another because it is built into the budgets of people, particularly those who own their own homes. We have encouraged the elderly to maintain ownership of their residences for as long as possible. It is dovetailed into a whole series of other Government policy-making areas. Mr Cox will provide the specific information for which the honourable member asked.

**Mr Cox:** About 81.5 per cent of the EFA applications were for food for utilities, including ETSA. There were 918 applications or approximately 2.8 to 3 per cent of applications—for those sort of things. It is not a high proportion of the whole. I do not have other percentages worked out. Clothing amounted to about 1.5 per cent, accommodation about 4 per cent, transport was about double the amount for accommodation, and medical was a smaller amount again—about half of those who applied for electricity

concessions. Food takes priority, with transport second, accommodation third, utilities fourth, medical fifth, and clothing sixth. A miscellaneous group makes up the balance. We could obtain percentages if required.

**Mr BECKER:** Yes, because we can monitor that area and it will give all service providers a good guide as to priorities. The figure of 81 per cent for food worries me.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will make that chart available to the honourable member with the figures calculated in percentages. The non-Government sector, such as organisations like the Salvation Army, has a vital role to play.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I refer to page 141 of the Estimates of Payments, the line 'Co-ordination and Licensing—State-wide services'. There has been a substantial increase in the proposed amount, with \$325 500 being voted last year and \$582 900 being voted for this year. Will the Minister explain the tremendous increase of over \$260 000 on last year?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** There are specific explanations for that increase, and I ask Mr Beattie to outline them to the Committee.

**Mr Beattie:** The increases relating to co-ordination and licensing of the State-wide services include the Childhood Services Branch, Community and Planning Services, the Re-housing Committee, women's affairs, residential care, aged care co-ordination and special policy projects. The increases are made up of a carry-over of salary increases, \$20 000; additional project staff in the office of the Assistant Director-General, \$96 000 (that is related to childcare); a new project officer position for the adviser on women and welfare as from 1 January 1985, \$12 000; and a number of various staff adjustments related to CEP planning, \$27 000. There are \$44 000 worth of operating costs relating to the Community Welfare Act amendments and expansion funds provided to establish the poverty inquiry.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** That is \$199 000. What made up the remaining \$60 000?

**Mr Beattie:** The total expansion was \$199 161.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** That is correct, as \$56 000 is for contingencies.

**Mr BECKER:** I refer to page 25 of the yellow book, which shows the figure for burials. I am quite alarmed at the extent of poverty in our community. I noticed that for 1983-84, \$51 000 was provided for burial assistance. This year the amount is to be increased to \$63 000. Is the Minister able to advise the Committee of the number of burials involved and whether there is an increased demand on the Department in this area?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** No, we do not have the actual number of burials. This is now dealt with on a contractual basis with the Supply and Tender Board through various funeral directors who tender for this work for the Department throughout this State, and they obviously do this work for a set fee.

The honourable member will recall that in days gone by this was known as a pauper's funeral. We have taken steps over recent years in the Department to take that stigma away from that funeral. We all know of instances where people have been horrified to find at a later stage that their relative—whom they may not have been close to at the time or with whom their family had lost contact, interstate or otherwise—has been buried by way of a pauper's funeral; this has caused considerable distress. Work has been done to remove, as much as possible, that stigma. Of course, it is not possible to predict how many there will be in any given year. Sorry, we do have a figure: 174 funerals were arranged in 1983-84 at an average cost of \$274.

**Mr BECKER:** Does the Minister have any comparison with the previous year?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** No, but we will provide that information.

**Mr BECKER:** Page 40 of the yellow book and pages 53 and 54 of the Auditor-General's Report refer to the Magill Home. I am again concerned at the comments of the Auditor-General. At page 60 of his report of 30 June 1983, the Auditor-General says:

**Staffing Costs—Magill Home**

The review of the staffing costs of the Magill Home revealed that—

- the amount of overtime worked was significant;
- the number of nursing care hours per resident in hostel accommodation appeared to be disproportionate to the number of nursing care hours per patient in infirmary accommodation;
- advantage was not being taken to fully utilise infirmary beds funded by the Commonwealth.

Following referral of these issues, the Department advised that a review of the organisational structure of the home and the level of overtime would be undertaken.

The Department further advised that the vacant Commonwealth funded beds are held aside to ensure immediate availability of a nursing bed to other Magill Home residents and for emergency admissions.

Then in the Auditor-General's Report for 30 June 1984 attention has been drawn again to Magill Home. At page 50, in relation to staffing costs, the report states:

Consideration is being given to the transfer of the Magill Home to the South Australian Health Commission which is conducting studies into various aspects of the Home's operations prior to the transfer being effected. As a result, the Department has not undertaken a review of the organisational structure of the home.

At page 54 the Auditor-General gives some statistical data. The average annual cost per person maintained was \$23 000 in 1984 and \$24 000 in 1983. The average daily number of persons maintained in 1984 was 94 compared to 103 for the previous year. The number of staff as at 30 June 1983 was 143 and at 30 June 1984 it was 140. Can the Minister advise the Committee when action will commence to transfer the home to the Health Commission, and will he say what other action the Department is taking following the Auditor-General's comments?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for the question. When I first became Minister, I had discussions with the Minister of Health about the future of the Magill Home, and then we both met with the representatives of staff and unions to discuss the future of the Home. I do not believe, nor does the Minister of Health, that it was appropriate that that home should remain a function of the Community Welfare Department. It was more appropriately a health function, and many of the problems that have arisen in the past with respect to administration, industrial relations and absorbing a number of the programmes in the wider sphere had resulted in the Department's, rather than the Health Commission's, being responsible for it. That affected staff morale and staff opportunities for progress and the like. So, a considerable amount of work has been done. It is not a simple matter to transfer such an institution from a Government department across to a statutory body such as the Health Commission. I ask Mr Cox to outline to the Committee progress in this regard and where we are at present.

**Mr Cox:** In relation to the number of clients at Magill Home there have been a number maintained in the community and that is not shown in the Auditor-General's statistics. Where we cannot take people into beds or the hostel, we try to maintain them with the occupational therapy unit, which is a very good unit out there, or with other sorts of care, so that people just do not get a negative answer in relation to support. The numbers do change in relation to the costing that is not taken into that. We have a problem in some areas of our costing, particularly in the youth area and this area that is not taken into account.

Two working parties have been established by the South Australian Health Commission: one is on the industrial relations aspects and another is on the future use of the site and buildings. We are attempting to do the transfer so that it happens without a disturbance to the residents and with no industrial trouble, and so that we get access support by the staff as it is transferred. We were hoping that it would happen at the start of the financial year, but there are matters that are not yet resolved. However, we still hope that it will happen this year. The South Australian Health Commission is looking at the options in terms of the running of it and that is a fairly complicated process under its regulations and Act. It would look like being about the end of this year when, we hope, the transfer will occur. At that stage I think there will be results from the working parties that have been set up.

**Mr BECKER:** Page 56 of the yellow book refers to 'Welfare Services Adoption', the expenditure for which last year was \$234 000 and the proposed this year is \$237 000. The staff ratio will go from 10.8 to 10.3 full-time equivalents. Can the Minister advise the Committee of the number of applications that the Department has for persons wanting to adopt children, the waiting time for male and/or female and whether the Department has experienced any difficulties in the past 12 months? I am mindful of a claim interstate where someone is taking action against the Government, which absolutely staggers me, because I know of a case where people, having adopted children, find that they have a disability and, to the full credit of the parents, they have given the child just as much love and care as they would a normal child. Has the Department had any similar experiences?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for raising this issue. I find that this is one of the most difficult areas of the work of the Department, because an enormous number of people are wanting to adopt children and fewer and fewer children are available for adoption. In fact, we are operating in a climate of very rapidly changing community attitudes towards adoption, anyway.

Nevertheless, we are dealing with a community where many children have been adopted in conditions of secrecy, and the like. So, it is a matter that we must treat carefully, and the interests of all parties involved must be respected, bearing in mind that that often results in a situation of anxiety for one party or another. I shall provide to the Committee some details in regard to matters referred to by the honourable member. It is important that these matters be understood by members and by the community. During 1983-84, 238 couples applied to have their names placed on the Prospective Adopters Register, compared to 254 in the previous year: 157 (compared to 175 for the previous year) for an Australian born child, and 81 (compared to 79 for the previous year) for an overseas born child.

Obviously there is some understanding in the community of the difficulties involved. Before a person or a couple place their names on the Prospective Adopters Register obviously they think carefully about whether or not they will be able to adopt. In 1983-84, 69 (compared to 94 for the previous year) Australian born children and 71 (compared to 51 for the previous year) children from overseas countries were placed for adoption. It can be seen that there was a dramatic reduction in the number of children available for adoption. Of course that is the crux of the problem.

In 1983-84 the average waiting time before an Australian born child was placed was 40.2 months, while the average waiting time for an overseas child was 24.3 months from application to placement. In 1983-84, 324 applications to adopt a child were received from parent/spouses, foster parents and relatives. There are a number of different family situations where adoptions take place. In 1983-84, 167 (com-

pared to 164 for the previous year) adult adopted persons and 143 (as compared to 117 for the previous year) natural parents, brothers and sisters placed their names on the Adopted Persons Contact Register, bringing the total to 1 401 for 1983-84, compared to 1 061 for the previous year; 45 adopted people made contact with their original families. This is another important role that the Department has played (and I think it is leading in this area) in trying to bridge the gap between the relinquishing parents and the adopted child, particularly in adulthood.

A drop in the number of healthy babies relinquished for adoption occurred (from 94 to 69). A result of this is that the waiting time for prospective adopters has increased to about four years. This has meant that several couples who sought to adopt a newborn baby for a second time have been informed that placement under present criteria (no more than four years of age difference between children) is no longer possible. The number of couples who first sought to adopt an Australian born child but who subsequently transferred their application to be considered for an overseas born child has increased. Most applicants wishing to adopt a child from overseas have nominated the Department as the agency to arrange the adoption.

Subsequently, the Department arranged the adoption of 60 children from overseas. The ASIAC Adoption Agency, sponsored 10 children and the ICA Adoption Agency one child. The number of handicapped children placed with respective adopters was 12. Although the number for the year was down, the resources employed in this area were increased from 20 hours a week to a full-time social work position to enable the branch to provide continuous support for the parents even after the adoption had been granted. This is a very important trend of more people being prepared to take into their families and to make a permanent commitment to children who are severely disabled. A table which I seek to have incorporated in *Hansard* gives details of the number of handicapped children adopted in the past three financial years.

#### HANDICAPPED CHILDREN ADOPTED

	1981-82	1982-83	1983-84
Remedial physical	8	—	—
Permanent physical	1	2	2
Mental	—	6	5
Multiple	1	3	2
Emotional	—	7	3
Different race	—	6	—
<b>Total handicapped</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>12</b>

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** A Government member raised matters concerning the establishment of the office of the Commissioner for the Ageing. I do not recall the Minister stating in his response the actual size of that office, details of the number of staff or the classification of the staff members. As the amount allocated for salaries is only \$55 000, as well as contingencies of \$20 000, there is every indication that this will begin as a very small office. Will this be one of those paper tiger types of establishment with little opportunity available for carrying out all of the tremendous range of initiatives demanded of the office of the Commissioner for the Ageing under the terms of reference that the Minister has supplied. I cannot see how an office with an establishment cost of \$75 000 can fulfil all the requirements of those terms of reference.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for that follow-up question. As I explained earlier, the amount provided in the Budget is a part-year payment. The Government will not make decisions in regard to staffing of the office prior to the appointment of a Commissioner. It is

thought that the Commissioner should be the person responsible for the establishment of the structure of the office and the type and quality of staff that should be employed in that office.

It is envisaged that it will not be a large office. It is not the aim to set up either a service delivery function in regard to that office or a large bureaucracy. Its success is dependent upon the effective and efficient staff placement, and I do not see that its size will limit the effectiveness of the office. The Commissioner will be appointed in the executive officer salary range of the Public Service. Initially one of the staff will be in the administrative officer range and another in the clerical officer range of the Public Service. Following the appointment of the Commissioner, discussions will be held with the Public Service Board and me about adequate staffing and the ongoing staffing requirements of the office.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** When will the Minister advertise for applications for the office of Commissioner for the Ageing?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I would hope within the next few weeks.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** A matter of concern across rural South Australia has been brought to the notice of the Minister on a number of occasions. It was brought to my attention again recently by the South-East Regional Accommodation Forum. The relevant part of a letter from that organisation is as follows:

The South-East Regional Accommodation Forum is a recently established community group concerned with the problems of housing in the South-East of South Australia.

The forum is constituted of representatives of a wide range of helping agencies and interested groups. This group has undertaken the role of co-ordination and overseeing of housing initiatives in the region. We, the board of management of the forum, wish to bring to your attention the problems faced by low-income families and individuals endeavouring to acquire private rental accommodation in this region. The absence of Emergency Housing Office assistance with the payment of bonds and advance rent poses a great burden on the already limited financial resources of these people. In many instances, people are denied access to otherwise suitable accommodation by virtue of their inability to meet this expense.

Many requests are received by welfare agencies for assistance in this regard. However, a lack of funds and/or mandate within these agencies prevents these requests being met.

The availability of the services of the Emergency Housing Office, services which currently exist only in the metropolitan area, would assist these people immeasurably and would alleviate some of the pressure on other agencies. The current situation blatantly discriminates against people living in country areas.

That letter was signed by Ms Rea Angus, Chairperson of the South-East Regional Accommodation Forum, who has an intimate knowledge of the problems associated with people in low socio-economic situations, because she is in charge of the women's shelter in Mount Gambier. Could the Minister advise the Committee whether funds for bonds and rent will be made available more readily for rural areas in the current financial year?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The provision of assistance for the homeless I think refers also to a particular case the honourable member raised with me which highlighted the inability of people within the city of Mount Gambier to obtain financial assistance in connection with a bond and access to private rental accommodation. That is obviously a weakness in the provision of emergency housing services.

I took that matter up with my colleague the Minister of Housing and Construction, and he undertook to have that matter further considered. I am not aware of the outcome of those representations or whether the honourable member has raised that matter with the Minister of Housing and Construction since that time. Primarily that is the responsibility of the Housing portfolio, and I would hope that funding can be made available so that the services provided by the Emergency Housing Office, particularly financial

assistance with respect to the payment of bonds and rent relief, can eventually be made available to those who require them and live in country areas. The more general matter of emergency housing assistance, which is administered by my Department, is the subject of review at the moment with respect to Commonwealth-State funding of the emergency housing programmes, and the advisory committee that has been established to advise the Government on this is currently looking at proposals and new projects for the coming year.

The Commonwealth-State agreement in this area has not yet been finalised, and we are not yet aware of what funding will be available from the Commonwealth for such programmes. This is a matter of current discussion at officer level, and then it will be referred back to Ministers for final agreement in this area but additional attention is being paid by both State and Commonwealth Governments to the provision of emergency housing services particularly for youths.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** My next question, which relates to Aboriginal affairs, results from a response the Minister gave to an earlier question from the Government bench with regard to petrol sniffing particularly in remote outback areas. Has the Minister approached petrol companies regarding the possibility of placing additives in petrol such as the additives that are placed in methylated spirits to make anyone drinking it nauseous and vomit?

I understand that an experiment a few years ago resulted in the fumes from the petrol being so noxious as to make the people dispensing the petrol just as sick as the people who would be sniffing it, so it was a self-defeating experiment. The Minister has acknowledged that this is an extremely serious problem and the seriousness, as the Minister will recall, is highlighted by the fact that, while Aboriginal communities are extremely anxious to receive assistance in this area, parents seem equally reluctant to punish children in any way so that, when children are removed from petrol pumps and taken into more remote outback areas, the long succession of complaints from the addicts causes parents to take them back again into the very situation in which they were under great stress and danger. Has the Minister made any progress in discussions with his health colleagues or business people involving this matter?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his question. It is a worrying area for everyone concerned with the welfare of Aborigines. I have had discussions with my colleagues on this matter, and an enormous amount of my time has been spent in trying to fathom out how the Government can and should respond to this problem and which parts of the Government could be more effectively coping with it. I have had discussions with a world authority who was in fact sent to Australia by one of the chemical companies to discuss with Government authorities this whole question of additives. His conclusion, having looked at the situation among the Inuit and North American Indian communities and in the Australian Aboriginal context, is that there is indeed a greater risk to the health of Aboriginal children in particular by using additives than by not using them, so that is not the course of action currently being recommended.

It has been tried, and it has been found wanting. It is a simple solution, and it obviously stopped many people from consuming raw methylated spirits, but unfortunately it is not a simple solution to this problem. The honourable member would be aware that successive Administrations have tried to limit the number of petrol driven vehicles that are used by Government officials in the Aboriginal communities of this State, and that has helped to some extent, but there are still many petrol driven vehicles, and petrol is required in those communities. I have explained to the

Committee the programme within the Department for Community Welfare which we hope will give some practical assistance directly and to the communities to tackle this problem. I think one of the great difficulties is in coming to grips with how the Aboriginal mentality copes with this problem. I think it is true to say that many of the older men I speak to do not see this as being a problem as serious as alcoholism, whereas many Aboriginal women do, and therein lies a difficulty in treating this problem.

I have asked Judge Lewis from the District Court, who has had a long association with the delivery of judicial services to the remote Aboriginal communities, and an anthropologist, Mr David Hope, to examine this matter. They are in the process of reporting to the Government on some recommendations that they are going to make in this area. They have had a look at the Angatja programme concerning which outstations were developed to take petrol sniffers away from the communities (after all, many of these communities are artificially created, although established over many years). I am referring to outstations where they may develop new interests and take new approaches to life; where they have opportunities for learning horse riding, cattle mustering or generally to spend some time taking more interest in cultural and family life.

In fact, families are encouraged to go with the young people as well. That is one approach to that problem. It has had a range of success. The Department for Community Welfare has been involved in encouraging that as well. I have now had many discussions with the Commissioner of Police about policing remote Aboriginal communities. We in this State are very fortunate indeed to have a Commissioner with such understanding and commitment to provide a policing programme policy that is relevant and effective within Aboriginal communities.

The communities themselves are asking for an upgraded policing programme. The answer is not, I am sure, to take petrol sniffing into the criminal justice arena, although one suggestion is to make it an offence in that way. However, I believe that it is interesting, as I have told the House on a previous occasion, that there is a Senate inquiry into this phenomenon as well at the moment so that hopefully we will get programmes that are more effective in reducing the incidence of this extreme malady amongst Aboriginal young people.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I ask a supplementary question: the Minister referred to the fact that a further inquiry was now under way regarding the dangerous nature of petrol sniffing. I was under the impression that by comparison with alcoholism (which has a long-term potential for damage to liver, kidneys and possibly brain damage) with petrol sniffing there is a relatively short-term danger of serious brain damage. Can the Minister confirm or deny that, in light of the fact that he seems to have some doubt about the relative damage caused by alcohol and petrol, with alcohol being the more acute of the two problems?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I do not have any doubt that both are devastating to the health of the people involved. I explained to the Committee that in my experience, and obviously it is limited, there is a different perception of those two problems within Aboriginal communities themselves. If one goes to Yalata, one hears that the people there obviously say that alcohol is the problem. They have to come to grips with that. We have to provide some legislative support for the community in those circumstances. It is true that people in the Pitjantjatjara lands want to ban alcohol from those lands as well. They say, 'We want your help and support, police back-up and the like, to do that.'

However, once one talks to communities one finds that there are different perceptions of the problem, its nature and how one does something about it. The men have been



saying, 'Why doesn't the Government fix it up?' whereas the women seem to have a different perspective. As I said, therein lies some of the difficulty in responding to that. I hope that we can develop programmes like the one I explained within the context of this Budget whereby we can support individuals, families and communities to develop programmes that will divert young people, and particularly their idleness, away from spending their time stealing petrol and then setting up apparatus to sniff it.

**Mr BECKER:** I ask a supplementary question (relating to a question of the member for Mount Gambier) regarding emergency financial assistance for bond money. I was told this morning by one of my colleagues that it has come to his attention that some people could be approaching the Department for bond money to help them obtain accommodation, then taking that cheque (made out to the landlord) to the bank, opening a bank account, then withdrawing the money. I thought that the Department's cheques would be marked 'Not negotiable' for a start. I cannot see how anyone could just walk into a bank and open an account in someone else's name, then withdraw the money (after the cheque is cleared, which I think is 48 hours). Has the Department's attention been drawn to any misappropriation in this way?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Is the honourable member talking about bond money from the Emergency Housing Office or emergency financial assistance through the Department for Community Welfare by way of cheque?

**Mr BECKER:** I believe that they get it by cheque from the Department for Community Welfare. Has there been any case of fraud using this scheme to obtain money? I find it hard to believe that that could be the case.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will ask Mr Beattie to explain the accounting procedures.

**Mr Beattie:** First, all Department for Community Welfare cheques issued for EFA are not negotiable, which is a form of security. There is certainly accountability in the process of issuing that money. I am not aware of any fraudulent acts in relation to bond money. If we give out bond money it would be a very small amount. As honourable members are aware from the statistics given earlier this afternoon, most of that money is for food. In those areas where I am aware that people have misused money, we have followed that up and put the matter in the hands of the police. If we were aware of something like that, certainly the police would be called in.

**Mr BECKER:** If anyone sought bond money it would be through Emergency Housing, because that is where larger sums are likely to be involved.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The overall bulk of money provided through emergency financial assistance is used for purchase of food for families who have the care of children. The circumstances in which our funds could be used in a conversion type of way are very limited indeed.

**Mr BECKER:** I refer to the yellow book (page 62) relating to the amount of financial assistance and funding made available to women's shelters, another area of continuing demand. In the preamble (page 61), one sees under 'Need being addressed':

The crisis forcing women to a shelter usually has a component of physical danger as well as financial and emotional components. The number of women and children seeking emergency accommodation has steadily increased and it is estimated that approximately 5 000 women and children will seek shelter during the next year.

Can the Minister give a further breakdown of those figures, particularly for the past two years? What is the number of women and children who have sought and been provided with shelter, how many women's shelters do we now have in the metropolitan area, and what is the standard and quality of accommodation provided? Is the Government

satisfied with the number of shelters and the accommodation?

A number of years ago I was asked to look at a shelter on Prospect Road. I was rather appalled at the conditions. In those days it was a matter of crisis: the need was there but the accommodation was not. The shelter provided protection. Some sisters from a Catholic Church run a shelter at Elizabeth: the comparison between the two was unbelievable. The Elizabeth shelter is well run, clean and first-class, compared to the one on Prospect Road. After a few years, has the situation changed in regard to shelters?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member referred to the time when shelters were first established, which was a volatile one. Many personalities were involved and there was resistance in the community generally to establishment of that style of service. I am confident that that is now well behind us. We now have established a very valuable service within the community for those women and children who are suffering from domestic violence and whose only remedy is to leave their place of residence and seek shelter.

What is now being established around the shelters is a package of services to help rehabilitate (if I can use that expression) into the community people who suffer as a result of domestic violence. Some have satellite housing programmes. The North Adelaide shelter has a housing co-operative. Some 50 houses are now in the umbrella of that shelter and its administration. For example, I was in Port Lincoln the other day and there is a house alongside another house where people can stay on a longer term basis. Also, many shelters have developed well established programmes with the Housing Trust to place families with well established criteria for priority housing. In that way the shelter is dealing not just with families in a crisis situation but it is the beginning of a new life for many of those people and, of course, that is very valuable.

There are shelters now at Whyalla, Mount Gambier, Port Lincoln, and Port Augusta, and I think there are seven shelters in the metropolitan area. The Government would like to see established a shelter in the Riverland and also a shelter or a facility for psychiatrically disturbed women. That is one of the very difficult areas of work for the staff of women's shelters. Funding for shelters has increased now. This State has made a major commitment to the funding of shelters over recent years, and the Commonwealth Government out of the Budget context last year announced that it would once again accept responsibility in this area and provided some additional financial support for the shelters that were in existence in South Australia. It also provided funding for a programme called the ethnic workers programme for migrant women who it was found were not availing themselves for cultural and other reasons of shelters to the extent that perhaps might have been expected. So, this programme has now been established as a bridge for women who were born overseas, who are suffering domestic violence and who are unable to leave the family home in those circumstances or find it very difficult to leave the family home. So, that is a basic round-up of that situation.

**Mr BECKER:** The Minister has not completely answered the question. I asked for a breakdown of the figures in regard to women and children. That was just a rough estimate for this year of 5 000. Does the Minister have a comparison for, say, the last two financial years in that regard and was the Government satisfied with the standard of the accommodation offered?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will ask Ms Wighton to explain that to the Committee. We have had difficulties for many years getting statistics for obvious reasons from the shelters. We do receive information that assists us to account for the funding provided, but the Women's Shelters Advisory Committee has been reluctant to provide some of that

information. I will ask Ms Wighton to explain what information we have.

**Additional Departmental Adviser:**

Ms R. Wighton, Acting Deputy Director-General, Women's Advisory Unit, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

**Ms Wighton:** I cannot add very much to what the Minister has said. The women's shelters are required to put in regular returns of the occupancy and rate of occupancy in the shelters. It is a very hard thing to administer and some of them get behind. We do not have those figures in our papers here, but the honourable member can be provided with such matters as we have. They are always full and they all have a high rate of refusal—turning people away—at any given time. I am sorry that I cannot say how many beds are available.

**Mr BECKER:** That can be taken on notice. There is a rule off date for the Committee to receive additional information. I am fully aware that it is easy for us to ask for statistical information. However, in the case of women's shelters the need is to meet the crisis and steady everyone down, and I fully appreciate that. I think that that was one of the problems in the earlier days: they were not able to draw on volunteers to help them do basic bookkeeping and collate statistics. Like everything else, it takes time for us to gradually get around it and provide funding. We will need that sort of thing and I do not want to burden anyone with a lot of mundane work. The real work, of course, is dealing with people in crisis. However, I think that at some stage we will have to start looking at this and planning.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** We will provide that information as soon as it is available.

**Mr BECKER:** I now refer to page 143 of the Estimates of Payments in relation to the 'Evaluation, Research and Projects Branch', where the amount provided this financial year will be some \$464 500, compared with about \$429 000 last financial year, an increase of some \$70 000 over the previous year. Can the Minister inform the Committee how many research projects were undertaken in the last 12 months by this section and in what work the Evaluation, Research and Projects Branch is involved in assessing applications for the community welfare grant programme?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I take it that the honourable member is inquiring not into the specific expenditure in that line but the actual work that is done in the Department. I will ask Mr Cox to give the Committee a run-down of the work that it does. I might say that it is not simply a matter of a group of people sitting down and writing reports. Mechanisms are established in the Department for a review of programmes at regular intervals and that section of the Department is involved in that process as well.

**Mr Cox:** The Department has been attempting to evaluate programmes and we have evaluated every programme with outcome and output measures. The evaluation part of our branch is attempting to check that our programmes are hitting the targets that they should be and improving each year. Recently we have done an evaluation of our young offenders programme. We are constantly trying to upgrade it. One of our biggest evaluations has been of the INC scheme, in co-operation with the Institute of Criminology, which came through very well in terms of the work that was done there. Reviews of the Department are done every year of every programme by the executive, and every programme has to have a goal that is measured and definable.

Everyone has to set their goals, tell us how they achieved them last year and what they will do to meet them. All of the 60 programmes in the Department are built into that sort of process. The research projects have increased and we have done some additional family research projects in

that area. We also support outside research on the Department's matters. It seems that it is important in human services to have outside research. We have an inter-departmental research committee which includes some academics and which verifies and looks at research before our figures or files are touched and that ensures confidentiality of the work it has done.

This year we updated our social indicators programme. We have forecasting, attempting to understand what will happen in the future in terms of our demand for services. We have spent money on migrant welfare issues for the task force and supported that. Our research, while limited in funds, is very wide ranging and one of the most satisfying research exercises is the one we do in the local area which has been very useful in discussions because, whilst it takes into account a small sample, it is very descriptive and very helpful in the development of services.

The Projects Branch itself develops many plans for the Department, advises on the way in which guidelines should be developed for various programmes, including grant programmes, and administers those in general. So, it has a wide responsibility in that area and is constantly performing that sort of task.

**Mr MATHWIN:** Have there been many escapes from the two major institutions in this State? If there have been, how many recoveries have been made? Speaking from memory, I believe that, while Mr Robin Maslen was Supervisor of the South Australian Youth Training Centre a couple of years ago, he reduced the number of escapes. Has Mr Maslen been replaced as Supervisor? What are the future initiatives in that institution?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Having been Secretary to a former Minister for Community Welfare, I am aware of the honourable member's historical interest in this issue because I spent much time preparing answers to his questions. I am pleased to say that abscondings from the security institutions are now rare. I do not have figures on abscondings with me, which may be an indication that it is not an issue now. I will get the information and advise the honourable member. The present officer in charge of the centre (Mr Michael Barrie) is continuing the work that has been done by previous heads of that institution, especially the work of Mr Maslen. Obviously, the diminished number of inmates has resulted in fewer abscondings. I believe that the programmes that are provided now and the circumstances in which young people are placed have diminished the desire of those young people to abscond. From memory, I believe that after the last absconding the young absconders returned to the institution of their own accord. I will obtain statistics, but they are certainly nothing like they were in the early 1970s.

**Mr MATHWIN:** In reply to an earlier question, the Minister said that he would give me the Western Australian figures on juvenile offenders. I hope that I do not get merely the figures of offenders in institutions because such figures would not tell us much, because it is easy for such figures to fluctuate in accordance with whatever scheme is operating. Professor Miller, who was in charge of a similar situation in Massachusetts, USA, opened all the juvenile institutions and allowed all the inmates to flock into the street, with the result that it took about six years to restore the previous stability, although I suppose that it could be argued that at least the Professor got new institutions built. However, it was a dangerous exercise.

I have since read that someone was singing the praises of Professor Miller but, from what I gleaned when I was there and from information that was given to me, his action caused a colossal problem. So, the figures that the Minister gives me should not cover merely the number of offenders in institutions. To go to the other extreme, in Poland and Romania the rate of recidivism is good. Indeed, it is probably

far better than we would wish ours to be, possibly because in those countries a greater degree of authority is exercised over young people and conditions generally are far different from those in Australia.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Mr Cox referred to the number of young people in prison. That is also an important indicator. I understand that the Western Australian Department for Community Welfare has responsibility to the age of 17 years, whereas we have responsibility to the age of 18. That point should be understood. The Western Australian Department for Community Welfare has recently been the subject of a review, and the report from that review has just been released. The review carried out a comparison between the treatment of young offenders in that State and those in this State. That sort of information may help the honourable member to form a conclusion as to the merits of the programmes in the respective States.

**Mr MATHWIN:** How many staff and volunteers are directly involved in community service orders? I appreciate that those figures may not be readily available and, if they are not, I should appreciate receiving the information later. I assume that the Department must rely on volunteers to a certain extent. I should appreciate details of assistance that have been supplied to the Juvenile Court but not yet taken up. The departmental head explained that for obvious reasons certain young offenders and adults should not be released into the community. In asking my previous question, I was not referring to that area but, if that was the inference to be drawn from the Director-General's remarks, it would suggest that the only ones in institutions at present are those who would put the community at risk if they were released.

If there are only 48 persons in institutions at present, that is interesting, and I take it that the rest have been released on community work orders and the like. I do not blame anyone for being proud of the figures. That is good, but at the same time we must consider the matter in a wider perspective. These juveniles are screened by the Children's Aid Panel and a streaming panel before they reach the court, so obviously they have been sifted out and vetted before they get there. So, it would be natural to assume that we would not get as many as we got in the past.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will ask Mr Cox or Mr Harris to give what information they can on that subject. Some young offenders do not go through the filtering process to which the honourable member referred because they are committed for trial on serious indictable offences such as murder, rape, armed robbery and serious drug related offences.

Some of them are heard before the Supreme Court for those offences. A good number of those young people are committed to an institution until the age of 18 or a similar order is taken. I advised the Committee earlier that there was a disproportionately larger number of Aborigines in those institutions and that there were deficiencies in our ability to take those young people out of institutional care. That probably gives an extra component to that understanding of the number in institutions.

**Mr Cox:** The work order scheme is run with a senior residential care worker and two assistants. At any one time there are four to 12 people on the orders giving the sum total of people involved over a period. The co-ordinator is responsible for the day to day administration of the scheme and the two residential care workers are responsible to the co-ordinator for the supervision thereof. The sort of work done involves Apex Clubs, service groups; the Croydon Church of Christ with the pensioner firewood project; domiciliary care with volunteers for aged care hospitals; the South Australian bicentenary ketch *Failie* assisting in the restoration; Goodwill Industries of South Australia involved with the warehouse, nursery and truck drivers assistant;

KESAB involved in three areas including litter control, survey work and packaging of school project material; Meals on Wheels; the National Trust of South Australia, which is involved in various places, such as Coromandel Valley and so on; RSPCA Dogs Rescue Home; South Australian Community Recreation Association; South Australian Railway Modellers Association; Woorabinda campsite; and the Youth Hostels Association.

It is a wide ranging enterprise, and we have been attempting to get an Aboriginal community worker to do something on the Aboriginal side. That could make a difference in terms of people who are currently in detention. There are two types of schemes: one supervised by our staff for young people who are more at risk, or those who could be supervised by the people concerned. As to the number in the institution on detention, the use of this in future depends on how much more we can do to supervise them while they are doing it, and how much more we can support the place in which they are living while they are doing community work orders. I would think that the numbers could come down as we start to adjust our residential care and continue to work on the project. There is no shortage of staff on present numbers but, if we are going to go into another group of young people in terms of their offending, we have to increase in a different way their supervision and accommodation.

**Mr GUNN:** I refer to land rights. Will the Minister give an indication of when the Maralinga land rights legislation will be proclaimed? Does the Government intend to bring in complementary legislation to amend the Pitjantjatjara legislation to bring it in line with the Maralinga legislation? The Minister is fully aware of the anomalies and difficulties that have been created with the Pitjantjatjara legislation. Any reasonable citizen would expect the Government to iron out those anomalies. I am fully aware that a vocal group of people will jump up and down if any attempt is made to amend the Pitjantjatjara legislation. However, it was clearly demonstrated before the Maralinga Select Committee that problems existed and that they ought to be addressed. It is the responsibility of the Government to address them in the interest of all South Australians. Will the Minister respond to those two matters, as they are very important to the welfare of this State?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** First, with respect to the Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act, I would hope that it could be proclaimed as soon as possible. I see little purpose in delay for the sake of delaying it. There is, of course, the matter of those areas that are dangerous in those lands to be excised, and that matter has to be resolved. There have been discussions with the Maralinga people and with Commonwealth and State officers involved to try to delineate those areas that should be excised. In the preparation of this legislation and in its passage through the Parliament we always envisaged that there would be excisions around section 400, including the Maralinga area and an area around Emu.

I understand that the information available from the health authorities can quite accurately determine those areas that are dangerous for human habitation, and the necessary safeguards will have to be established so that those areas can be adequately protected. I believe that that is possible of resolution and that we can go ahead and proclaim that piece of legislation. I would hope that that will occur later this year. There are not many very difficult matters to be resolved as occurred with the Pitjantjatjara proclamation in the process with respect to the activities on those lands. So, that is my hope regarding the proclamation of that legislation. It is certainly the wish of those people who have waited for a long time to return to the lands that they be able to do so without undue delay.

The Pitjantjatjara legislation was passed by the previous Government of which the honourable member was a part. I have said, as has the Minister of Mines and Energy, that the Government will amend that legislation only at the request of the Pitjantjatjara people. I am hopeful that the matters that have been the subject of criticism in this Parliament and in the community on that legislation, particularly in regard to mining, can be resolved. Statements have been made by all parties which will allow for mining or certain exploration to take place on those lands. I hope that will occur in the near future.

**Mr GUNN:** First, I was not a member of the Government. I sat behind the Government but was not a member of it. Some of my counsel was not accepted, or we would not have had these problems. I make clear that we on this side made it very clear at the time of the Maralinga legislation that there were grave anomalies that had to be altered. I find it amazing that the Minister will act only if he has complete agreement with the Pitjantjatjara people. It would appear that he is prepared to allow a situation to be created and say that it is bad luck for the rest of South Australia and that that 11 per cent of South Australia is in a completely different category. It is unfair to the Aboriginal people to lead them to believe—

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is the honourable member directing his question to the Minister?

**Mr GUNN:** Yes, and I am about to come to my question. It is an important subject, and this is the only forum in which I will have the chance to clearly bring the matter to the Minister's attention. He has probably heard me before, but it is my obligation to ensure that there is no misunderstanding. I also point out to the Minister that, if he is not prepared to bite the bullet, action will be taken so that the Parliament will debate the issue. Will the Minister give early consideration to those problems that arose in relation to access of ordinary citizens and also to amendments to bring the mining situation up to date so that the problems that BHP experienced in its application do not occur again?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his question, which is something that he has discussed with me on a number of occasions. In giving the explanation I gave, I want to explain that I accept and, indeed, respect the position in which the former Government worked towards the achievement of the Pitjantjatjara legislation, and that is by consensus. There was consensus within this Parliament, within the community generally and particularly within the Aboriginal community that that piece of legislation met the needs of all the respective parties and, importantly, it was acceptable to those for whom it was written.

To a large extent that was also achieved with the Maralinga Tjarutja land rights legislation. I do not want to see the Parliament coming into the area of Aboriginal affairs in the role of a policeman, in a partisan way or taking the view of one particular section of the community, particularly when it is a section of the community that has a clearly defined vested interest in having the legislation changed. I believe that the resolution of disputes that have arisen in the past can be achieved by round table discussion with the respective parties. I am very confident that that will happen with the Pitjantjatjara lands, and I think there is the will on all sides for that to occur. If, as a result of practices that develop, changes to legislation are required, obviously they will be considered by the Government.

To come to this place with a package of measures to unilaterally change the legislation would lead the Parliament and the community into a situation of conflict, based upon not only vested interests but also racial grounds, and it would give rise to a most unsatisfactory situation in our community. That must be avoided at all costs, particularly in the current climate that exists in this nation. We have

led Australia in land rights legislation. Other States and indeed the Commonwealth Government are looking at what has been achieved by successive Governments in this State and we have achieved that, as I have said, by consensus, by a willingness by all parties to get around the table to compromise and sort their way through these issues. That is the framework and the substance on which we should work towards any further changes in the law.

**Mr GUNN:** My next question involves what I regard as an important area, and it concerns a proposal for uniform land rights across Australia. Can the Minister advise the Committee whether the State Government has been involved in discussions on or supports this concept of uniform legislation on an Australia-wide basis? Adding to what I said in response to the Minister's reply to my earlier question, I ask whether it is correct to assume that the Government is not prepared to lead or initiate any changes to the Pitjantjatjara legislation, even though there is a considerable difference between the Maralinga and Pitjantjatjara legislation, in view of the fact that the Maralinga amendments were put in after considerable public discussion and are, in my judgment, far more realistic than the Pitjantjatjara legislation.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** On the latter point, the Government is prepared to consider amendments to the legislation but upon the request of the traditional owners of that land. Concerning the matter of uniform land rights legislation, there has been no formal discussion with either me or, I understand, the State Government about a proposal. There is a proposal being prepared: it is at a preliminary stage. However, I would welcome some opportunity to discuss the merits of uniform land rights legislation. It is in the interests of the Australian community to have a uniform set of rules with respect to the ownership of traditional Aboriginal lands.

I cite here the Pitjantjatjara lands themselves where those lands extend into the Northern Territory and are covered by legislation applicable to that Territory. They also extend into Western Australia, where they are subject to a different set of considerations, and that causes considerable problems. It causes considerable problems, for example, not only in the delivery of services but also to mining companies that are interested in carrying out exploration or mining on those lands; they are subject to different Mining Act considerations and different negotiating proposals under the respective land rights legislation.

Further, there is then a disparity between the rights and privileges of Aborigines in one State as compared with another. No-one is satisfied that the situation is satisfactory, for example, in Queensland or in Western Australia, where there are severe deficiencies in the current state of the law in that State. So, there is merit in developing a uniform land rights structure, and that is not an easy course to follow. Indeed, I suspect that it will be a rocky road, but I also suspect that the legislation that exists in this State will form the basis for any national proposals. I have suggested to the Federal Minister informally, and indeed to a number of other interested parties, that perhaps mirror legislation might be appropriate; that is, to allow the State legislation to stand but to stand it alongside Federal legislation which in fact embodies that State legislation. That would then form the basis for national land rights legislation. While we still have six or seven different laws in Australia relating to ownership of traditional lands a less than satisfactory situation will exist.

**Mr GUNN:** All I can say is that it appears that the stage is set for a full-scale debate on this. If the Government is not prepared to approach realistically the problems of the Pitjantjatjara, it appears that Parliament itself will have to consider the matter in the very near future, perhaps following some action taken by a private member, to try to redress

the situation. I take it that the Minister is not prepared to introduce a measure to put both sets of legislation on a uniform basis to overcome the complete nonsense that took place on the previous occasion.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** First, I note that one member dissociates himself from the legislation of the previous Government—in a very clear manner. I think that is unfortunate. I have said that the Government is prepared to consider amendments, but it will be on the basis of the traditional owners requesting such amendments to be embodied in legislation. As I have said, I hope that we will not see the Parliament acting in a heavy handed or unilateral manner in this regard.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** On page 1 of the yellow book reference is made to Acts administered by the Minister of Community Welfare. I refer to the Community Welfare Act, 1972, and the 1981 amending Act. An initiative in the Community Welfare Act Amendment Act, 1981, is community welfare consumer forums. Section 21 (1), under Part II—Division V, provides:

The Minister shall, at such intervals as he thinks fit, cause a community welfare consumer forum to be held in each locality served by a community welfare centre of the Department.

How many consumer forums have been held so far, and how many are planned for the 1984-85 financial year? Further, in which regions will they be held?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The amendments to the Community Welfare Act were drafted by the Dunstan and Corcoran Governments and were enacted in the early stages of the Tonkin Administration. In the three successive Budgets of that Administration no funding was provided for the implementation of that legislation, although it embodied some very important changes in regard to the fundamental rights of children in conflict situations, as well as a whole range of other new initiatives, one being the consumer forums to which the honourable member referred. The present Government has now acted according to priority on the whole range of provisions in that amending legislation. To date, consumer forums have not been held, but two pilot programmes are planned for this financial year. One will be at the Parks and the other at Mount Gambier. I call on Mr Cox to elaborate on the Department's proposals for these consumer forums.

**Mr Cox:** There is no precedent from which we can gain experience as to how these can be conducted. Therefore, we consider that to start with pilot projects would be the most satisfactory way to do it. We have established two committees to look at this matter. We have also sought information about how this has been tackled in America. There will be much to learn from the first two forums. Money has been provided for this in the Budget. Once we have conducted these forums we will have a pattern to follow which will enable us to set up a schedule of consumer forums for the next 12 months.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Section 80 (1) of the 1981 Community Welfare Act Amendment Act provides:

Where a child who is under the guardianship of the Minister pursuant to this Act or to Part III of the Children's Protection and Young Offenders Act, 1979-1980, has been placed by the Director-General in the care of an approved foster parent and has been in the care of that parent for a period of not less than three years, the Minister may, by instrument in writing, upon the application of the foster parent, delegate to him such of the powers, functions or duties vested in or imposed upon the Minister as guardian of the child as the Minister thinks fit.

This provision is in relation to long-term foster caring, and I wonder whether the Minister can tell the Committee what progress has been made in regard to that provision.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think that two requests have been made for delegation to people in a long-term fostering situation. I must say that I have been very cautious, and

on each occasion have taken advice, with respect to the delegation of those responsibilities. The requests were of a substantial nature and were obviously important in the family context and to the individuals involved. I can assure the honourable member that those matters were treated with the utmost caution. Perhaps Mr Cox or Mr Harris can explain to members of the Committee the nature of those delegations.

**Mr Harris:** The provision for this delegation of powers by the Minister states that before it can be made, first, there should be a request from the foster parents (and the child involved should have been under their care for three years); and, secondly, there should be assessment and consideration of all the factors involved and consultation with the various parties concerned. Following that, a schedule of recommendations is made. The types of things that may be delegated (of course, the Minister does not delegate full guardianship, as that is not provided for in legislation) are things such as the right to arrange for a child to have medical treatment of various kinds, anaesthetic treatment or dental treatment. Sometimes it may be a request that is acceptable to the parent or the parents of the child as well. This involves things such as changing a child's religious observance, or matters in relation to schooling, and so on. These are significant things in the life of the child and of the foster family. Although they may not seem like big things in some respects, they are certainly important matters to the people concerned. That is the type of thing that is delegated.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** The matter of appeals is contained in section 250b of the principal Act which provides:

Any person who is aggrieved by a decision made in relation to him under this Act by the Minister, the Director-General or any other officer of the Department may appeal to the Minister in the prescribed manner against the decision.

We were advised during the past 12 months that the Minister had set up what appeared to be an alternative mechanism under the State Ombudsman's Office. Could the Minister comment on whether this is in effect an acknowledgement of the failure of the provisions of section 250a, that the appeals mechanism was inadequate, and whether people who were considering appealing were invariably now sent to the Ombudsman's Office as a first means of seeking assistance or whether in fact the two are working effectively in tandem but quite separately?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I believe that an appeals structure was necessary but I believe that it should be outside of the Department for Community Welfare and, rather than appealing to the Minister or Department, and the Minister referring it to an internal tribunal (although that tribunal might comprise persons other than those employed by the Department), the investigations as well would be done within the Department which I suppose is similar to the debate that occurs in relation to complaints about the Police Department. I believed it was important, as we were dealing with very important decisions with respect to liberties and rights of children and families in the community, that there should be an objective appeal and it should be seen to be objective as well.

I had discussions within Government and then with the Ombudsman, and we then decided to vest in the Ombudsman that function within his Office. I also had an opportunity to speak with an Ombudsman from Sweden who did investigate welfare complaints within that country. That helped confirm my views of the validity of the action that the Government took. The Ombudsman does have powers within the Ombudsman Act to conduct investigations, report to Parliament and carry out a number of things that the amendments to the Community Welfare Act do not provide. Additional powers are vested in the Ombudsman which can be used in that way.

I suppose we had a hybrid situation, hopefully taking the best of both of those proposals and implementing them. Although it is early days, I think we have seen within the Department, and hopefully within the community, the value of the work of the Ombudsman. It has been estimated that his office has received 200 inquiries and as a result of that he has received 40 formal complaints of which seven remain still under active consideration and 33 have been dealt with. As a result of that there certainly have been changes within the administration of the Department for Community Welfare and guidelines or within various other activities and certain other safeguards have been established, and I think many of the clients of the Department have been able to gain a new insight into the way in which the Department operates and some of the limitations on its role. I believe we now have an effective investigatory and appeals structure for those people who are aggrieved of decisions of the Department.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I have a supplementary question that relates to section 250b (2) which provides:

This section does not apply in relation to a decision made under any section of this Act that may be prescribed.

Is there any area of this Act which exempts the Ombudsman also from making inquiries and recommendations or is the Ombudsman's field wide open?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The limitation placed on the Ombudsman is the limitation that is placed on him in other inquiries. He does not look into matters currently before the courts and of course many of the controversial matters with which my Department deals are matters currently before the courts. So he lets the court proceedings determine those matters, but there are no areas of the Act that are prescribed or made out of bounds for his inquiries.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** On pages 54 and 55 of the yellow book, in relation to adoption, reference is made to the increasing use of the Adopted Persons Contact Register. The Minister will be well aware of the problems that this matter has caused over the years. I believe this matter has been raised, particularly in Victoria (a State with which I have had much correspondence in the past few years), and the real issue is the pressure for open adoption and for details to be made available to the adopted person when he or she reaches the age of 18 years. I suppose all members would have had contact from the Jigsaw organisation which has been pressing for greater access to the names of natural parents being made available to adopted children. Can the Minister comment on how he sees this matter and whether he proposes any legislative change to make the whole question of information to adoptees more readily available?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his question which is supplementary to an earlier question asked in a general way by the member for Hanson. I am concerned that our adoption laws are kept up to date, because this is a rapidly changing area with respect to community attitudes and practices. A situation is arising where there are now few children available for adoption. I think we have to come to grips with the difficulties with which we are confronted but at the same time we must respect the contractual arrangements and the privacy of arrangements made in the past. I see great merit in developing uniformity of laws throughout Australia in this regard and it is to this end that I am looking with interest to see what will happen in Victoria. I will raise the matter with my colleagues in other States when the legislation is settled in Victoria.

I have already made some minor changes to adoption regulations and I think they are currently sitting on the table of the Parliament. I propose some further relatively minor changes to adoption regulations after discussion with the Adoption Panel which advises the Government on these

matters. Changes of a more substantive nature will have to wait until the situation is clarified in Victoria and until we see what is proposed in the other States. Of course, the other States are in a similar position to us: they want to keep abreast of the situation but not create uncertainty in the community in doing so.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** My next question relates to welfare services to handicapped persons, referred to on page 63 of the yellow book. It is a general question that highlights the need which seems to be increasing in the community for some form of residential care for parents: for example, sole supporting mothers with children who are difficult to handle, for instance, a Downs Syndrome child who might be physically or intellectually handicapped but can fend for itself to a certain extent but because of the constant pressure of looking after a child like that the mother might need a break. Is any provision envisaged within the Department for Community Welfare, or has the Minister negotiated with his colleague, the Minister of Health, about the need for some sort of respite care to be made available?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is an important matter. The programme to which the honourable member refers deals in the main with disabled persons who are also young offenders. Programmes have been developed for those young people. The broader issues of respite care are more appropriately those vested in the Intellectually Disabled Persons Council under the Ministerial control of the Minister of Health. However, from time to time, particularly through the Human Services Subcommittee of Cabinet, those general issues are discussed. This is an area to which Mr Cox will give particular consideration in the months ahead, because bodies such as the Intellectually Disabled Services Council touch on both health and welfare aspects. Obviously, there is a need for more formal consideration by both those arms of government in dealing with problems to which the honourable member refers. I ask Mr Cox to give some more specific indication of the work of the Department in this area.

**Mr Cox:** Last Friday an Intellectually Disabled Services Council conference was held at which respite care was highlighted. The Department for Community Welfare about three years ago ran a national conference in South Australia on respite care, because we believed we should encourage it for all sectors of the community, and not just the intellectually disabled. In our Department foster care and emergency foster care are constantly being used as respite for some families who have a member in this situation. However, the Department has been mainly involved with young offenders who are also intellectually disabled. The practice of using foster care and the emergency foster care system will grow in co-operation with the Intellectually Disabled Services Council.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** My next question refers to the budget advice service mentioned at page 54 of the Auditor-General's Report. Last year I asked a question on this line and referred to the fact that at that stage the need for an increased amount on that line was very acute. I believe that towards the latter part of that financial year the Minister increased the allocation from about \$120 000 or \$125 000 to \$150 000. At the time that fairly nominal amount was added to the budgetary line the number of requests for assistance had more than doubled. Can the Minister say to what extent requests for assistance have continued to rise in the light of obvious difficulties faced by so many people?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Most certainly this is a very valuable service of the Department. Perhaps I can provide some details to the Committee about it to put the honourable member's question into context. The primary object of the programme is to provide free budget advice to people experiencing financial difficulties or seeking information about

budgeting. This is a preventive measure rather than what was experienced in the past where people found themselves before the courts, facing warrants of commitment or execution, or being locked into a situation from which it was very difficult to extricate themselves (legal proceedings that resulted in bankruptcy, imprisonment or loss of property). This service is linked very closely with the work provided by the Department for Community Welfare through its normal welfare services or other agencies.

It is now well known amongst creditors in the community as well. The budget advice service has only one full-time and one half-time officer, but it does use 59 part-time budget advisers, which is the equivalent of 8.3 full-time staff. In that way the service can be provided by particularly well qualified people throughout the State. Total salaries paid in the 1983-84 financial year were \$165 836 with contingencies amounting to \$5 500. There is an increase in salaries for the current financial year to \$173 400 and a slight increase for contingencies. The number of clients increased by 10.3 per cent in the last financial year over the previous year. In addition, part of the work of the office, as I have explained to the Committee previously, is the educational component of the work of the budget advisers and the Department. Some 5 500 free budget kits were distributed to persons throughout the South Australian community.

We now have established an advisory panel comprising five budget advisers who monitor what is occurring in this area: they can advise Government on the wider issues that arise out of their work. The first State-wide seminar of budget advisers was held in December last year and a further seminar will take place next week. This reflects an increasing focus on training to help ensure the maintenance of the high standards that have been established in providing the budget advice service.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Supplementary to that question, can the Minister tell the Committee whether there is a much higher usage of Community Welfare budget advisers having to appear in courts to represent people who come to them for advice? I know that quite a number of requests have been made within my district for budget advisers not only to make financial arrangements between clients and others but also for them to go to court to represent clients. If people are insecure they are overawed by the courts and the system. They seem to have arrived at some position of trust between DCW advisers and themselves, which makes them feel more secure in court appearances.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Is this in the debtors court?

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Yes.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I have checked with the officers at the table. We know of only two instances where it has been brought to our attention that budget advisers have attended court proceedings with the client, although that may occur more often and we would not know about it. I can understand the circumstances that the honourable member describes in which that would be necessary. I suppose, as I said in my introductory remarks to this question, that this is a system devised to keep people out of the debtors courts if that can possibly be achieved. However, not all persons come to us at that early stage.

It is true that there are still far too many people in our prisons simply as a result of their inability to pay for goods or services, or for contempt of court as a result of proceedings brought about by their inability to pay, whether it is a fine or a debt owed. I know that the Attorney-General is actively pursuing ways by which we can take those people who are in prison as a result of poverty out of the criminal justice system and deal with them in a more appropriate and humane way.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** My next question relates to community welfare and its effect in Aboriginal affairs, to some extent. I refer in part to a comment from the Honorary Secretary of the Aboriginal Educational Foundation of South Australia Incorporated, Mr Laurie Bryan, a person well known to many people in this House for his very philanthropic approach towards looking after Aborigines in South Australia. In his report at pages 3 and 4 he was unusually critical of the Department for Community Welfare. I refer to one or two of the statements made. He was regretful that the Foundation found the distribution of blankets very unsatisfactory. He referred particularly to remote outback areas and said:

All communities were then asked to let us know their requirements of the very young and elderly, but we were able to obtain approximately only half the number requested, and after discussion with the Director-General of Community Welfare it was agreed that those in the outback, who had not previously shared in a distribution, should have a higher priority. In all, nearly 700 blankets were distributed.

He then quoted from a letter of thanks he received from Oodnadatta. Extreme gratitude was expressed for the provision of blankets. At page 4, he said that the total cost of transporting blankets to Oodnadatta was \$381, and this involved areas in the Far West, Port Augusta and Oodnadatta. The Department for Community Welfare at first refused to pay, but did so after pressure. The Deputy Director-General of Community Welfare wrote, stating that the Department for Community Welfare would not pay this cost because the account was not approved prior to the dispatch of the blankets.

That is obviously a departmental provision. However, Mr Bryan said the following, that even though the Director-General's version differed from his own version (and I do not propose to enter that debate: it is the opinion of two people):

What staggers me is the lack of concern, the lack of compassion, the apparent indifference to the welfare of those who needed the blankets so urgently by the Department whose duty it is to care for them.

Obviously, Mr Bryan was very incensed. He said:

The matter was later referred to Mr Moriarty of the Office of Aboriginal Affairs and I quote the final paragraph of this letter of 16 August:

As you are aware the Department for Community Welfare's reluctance to pay the funds were because they were approached after the event took place and, secondly, because they do not have any funds provided in their budget for this purpose.

Mr Bryan then goes on to attack the Department quite roundly. He says:

The Department for Community Welfare receive annually \$777 400 for special welfare programmes yet objected to paying \$381 for transport of blankets. I think this is scandalous and, with such conditions existing, is it not timely for an independent commission of inquiry to investigate just how effectively these funds are being used?

As it is a public document that has been circulated (I do not know whether it has been circulated among members, but I certainly received a copy), would the Minister or his Director-General care to respond and tell the Committee whether it is necessary for a commission of inquiry to investigate just how those very substantial funds are being used? Alternatively, is there some way in which we can ensure that the needs of the Aboriginal community and Mr Bryan are more effectively met next year so that a criticism of this sort does not have to emerge?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think it is most unsatisfactory that matters of this detail should be raised in a report from an urban based organisation of well meaning people who commit themselves to improving the lot of Aborigines. The amount involved was some \$390, and Mr Bryan must have spent more than that writing letters to me and other people, abusing us roundly. In fact, we have paid that amount, but

the process whereby a proper accountability was reached and an understanding of the nature of the payment required has obviously offended him. I do not resile from that decision at all. What was done by the Department was done most properly, and I think that the community and the taxpayers would agree with that.

It is unfortunate that Mr Bryan took to writing the report that he did. I have agreed to discuss this with him and members of his organisation, and I think that that will take place next week or very soon. Nevertheless, he rushed into print and gave everyone a most unjust bucketing. Mr Bryan's organisation (and I suppose he alone) undertook to buy blankets, and I suppose that it is the simplest way in which the white community feels that it can help the Aboriginal community or that it is the most publicly evident programme that can be developed. Mr Bryan had some difficulties in having those blankets delivered to the communities to which he promised them. It was suggested by our Department when Mr Bryan sought help that he do it through the traditional transportation methods to the remote Aboriginal communities. The organisation chose not to do that but to do it by some sort of commercial delivery process and then sent us the Bill. That was the situation with which we were faced, and obviously that is just not on: that is not the way in which the Department operates. Indeed, it is not the way in which services should be delivered, either, to those in need in the community.

So, it is important that I am able to sit down with members of Mr Bryan's organisation and sort out the way in which he operates and, indeed, the way in which the service clubs and the Aboriginal Education Foundation operate as well, and we will do that. With respect to his call for an inquiry into the Department, I think that I can explain to Mr Bryan how the Department operates and how its funds are expended in the same way as I am explaining it to this Committee. The activities of the Department for Community Welfare with respect to Aboriginal communities are the subject of review and of a Commonwealth Government audit as well as a State Government audit. The Aboriginal Co-ordinating Committee and other bodies all take an interest in those programmes. So, the evidence that Mr Bryan has referred to the honourable member really results from our questioning him about the way in which his own organisation operates rather than the way in which the Department for Community Welfare operates.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** Page 50 of the Auditor-General's Report of 30 June 1984 refers to the staffing costs at Magill Home. This matter has already been raised by the member for Hanson. Does this mean that there has been absolutely no investigation at all of the organisational structure, staffing and the costing? It seems to me that once again there has been the politics of delay, the excuse being made that this is a transition period while the home is going from the Department for Community Welfare to the Health Department. That will mean that the matter which was raised in the 1983 Auditor-General's Report as a relatively important issue has just been ignored. It would appear that nothing has been done for a couple of years. Is there in fact no departmental inquiry as to how it might be better administered?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It was explained to the Committee earlier that the Health Commission, which it is anticipated will assume full responsibility for the Magill Home in the near future, has established two working parties, one dealing with industrial relations aspects and the other with future uses of the site and buildings. Both of those have administrative implications. They are the most pressing of the issues at present and they both relate to the efficiency of that institution and its management.

The future uses task force has consulted intensively with staff, residents and key agencies. In fact, the report on that is currently being prepared. The staff of the home will obviously be involved in discussions on the implementation of that report. So, within the activity that has been occurring to transfer the administration and responsibilities for the Magill Home to the Health Commission, those issues have been under review.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** The Auditor-General, at page 50 of his report for the financial year ended 30 June 1984, refers to the control and utilisation of motor vehicles in the Department for Community Welfare. His 1983 report referred to the need for control of vehicle usage and costs, and the Department's response has been that it proposes to develop a system to provide management with information on vehicle usage and the cost of such usage. That seems to be a rather vague statement. Has anything specific been done in this regard or will the Auditor-General have to comment on this matter for the third time next year?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I ask Mr Beattie to comment on that.

**Mr Beattie:** Officers from the Audit Department commented on the system which we used and which was referred to in the previous report, because it was a manual system and reasonably outdated: it comprised a ledger in which we kept a record of motor vehicles. We are now 75 per cent of the way through the process of developing a computer based system for managing our motor vehicles, and we hope to have that system in full operation by the end of this calendar year. The Auditor-General's staff have investigated the system and, after consultation, they are satisfied with the progress that has been made in developing it.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** The Estimates of Payments, at page 143, refers to the Office of Aboriginal Affairs. Can the Minister say how many staff there are at present in that office and what is the current status of the former Secretary, Mr Nayda, who appears to be an itinerant?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** No, not at all. The Aboriginal Affairs Office, which is attached to the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, has received additional funding for staff as a result of an inquiry by the Public Service Board into its operations. The Board recommended that the position of Director be created in that office, and the former Secretary of the Office (Mr Nayda) was appointed Acting Director. Subsequently, he was invited to join a 12-month executive training course that was being conducted by the Board, and at present he is one of 10 persons who have been chosen throughout the Public Service to participate in that training programme. His place has been taken by Mr Moriarty, who was previously Director of the State office of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. A new position of Community Liaison Officer was created in the Office of Aboriginal Affairs, so the staff establishment at present is five officers: four positions relate to the delivery of services and the fifth is that of stenographer attached to that Office. In addition, provision is made in the Budget for a half salary for a person to assist the Aboriginal subcommittee of the Jubilee 150 Board with development projects for its 1986 activities.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I believe that Mr Moriarty is a university graduate. What other experience does he bring to the position?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** We are indeed fortunate to have had Mr Moriarty seconded to the State at this time, because his expertise at the Federal level has proved invaluable to us, especially at a time of important Commonwealth-State discussions and negotiations in the Aboriginal affairs area. Mr Moriarty has been a Commonwealth public servant for a long time. A university graduate, he is at present Chairman of the National NADOC Committee. He is highly regarded by the Secretary of the Commonwealth Department of



Aboriginal Affairs and by successive Ministers. He has travelled extensively overseas on study tours to attend conferences and also to inquire into comparable programmes in Europe, Africa and North America. He brings that wide range of expertise to that office.

**Mr BECKER:** At page 63 of the yellow book, under the heading '1984-85 Specific Targets/Objectives', appears the following statement:

The Director, Services for Handicapped, to establish a research programme to identify the extent of the demand for welfare services for the disabled and to make recommendations for the inclusion of 'the disabled' as a category in the client data collection system.

What will such a programme achieve?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** As the honourable member has raised a matter of detail that I cannot answer, I refer the question to the Director-General.

**Mr Cox:** There has always been the question why we are getting so many referrals in this area when we are not the agency that provides the major emphasis in the area of the intellectually disabled. The number of people applying for residential care at Lochiel Park was increasing and we developed an outreach plan to support those. Some of those young persons referred to are minor offenders. We have also developed a day centre operation in occupational therapy. We run Kandarik, which is a small unit for looking after very intellectually disabled children. This is also being seen as an excellent unit for its purpose.

Our problem is that we want to assess whether all this should be transferred to the intellectually disabled services, whether we should try to establish more services of this nature, or whether in our sphere of activity we should take on new responsibilities. We will become deeply involved in the use of foster care. The problem is that we do not have a picture of the demands, and we have been discussing the matter with the Intellectually Disabled Council to try to clarify who will provide services for these people and how we should support the system. I believe that there is much work for this department to do in respect of foster care and respite care in that area. Our Director was trying to assess that so that we could make plans for the future.

**Mr BECKER:** This is a terribly complex situation in some respects, and in others I can see that it should not be. The Intellectually Disabled Services Council is under the care of the Health Commission, and I question in my own mind whether this whole issue should be under the Health Commission or whether the Community Welfare Department should take it all away from the Health Commission. We could argue on this matter to all hours of the night if we wanted to. However, the area I am concerned with is called the grey area, because we have clear lines as far as the intellectually disabled are concerned, but then we get into the next area of people with a disability plus a minor intellectual problem; then, of course—and the Director and Minister know of my involvement with the Epilepsy Association—it becomes even worse, with the problem of trying to place people into some kind of care, whether it be respite care, needing almost constant assistance or supervision. On the other hand, the ultimate idea, of course, is to deinstitutionalise—for want of a better word—people who have been locked up in those sorts of situations in the past.

So, the whole thing is becoming one huge complex question of pressure in all areas within the Department for Community Welfare, including the service providers, social workers and psychologists. We cannot seem to come up with a happy medium as to what should be done. I am hoping that this situation will not go on much longer, but the incidence seems to be increasing rather than decreasing.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member raises a vexed issue but nevertheless a very important one. We are

very lucky that the Federal Minister for Social Security (Senator Grimes) has taken a deep personal interest in the problems of the disabled and has given a lot of thought to many of the issues that the honourable member raises. They often do link in with the whole social security system and Commonwealth responsibilities in this area as well.

The member for Fisher has raised a matter with me and in fact brought to see me one of his constituents who is involved in one of those situations within his own family: the care of a child, in that case. The Human Services Subcommittee of Cabinet, as I said earlier, has this matter under consideration as well, because that is where the Health, Community Welfare and Education Ministers and the Attorney-General, who has other responsibilities for the disabled, can sit around the table and look at some of these issues. The Senior Administrator of the Intellectually Disabled Services Council came in to talk to us and raised one issue, which is obviously known to the honourable member and perhaps to others, involving the numbers of adult disabled persons who are being cared for by very aged parents. If, when their aged parents depart, we as a Government and the community are going to prepare for the inevitable dependence of those people on someone other than those who have provided for them throughout their lives, we have to prepare very soon for that to occur.

There are several hundred aged disabled people in that dependency situation, and obviously the very ageing of their parents is of concern and worry to them. That is one of the many problems that we have to confront. That is not simply a health matter, and it is not simply a housing matter: it is a welfare matter, and it is also a community concern to see what resources there are in the community. It is one of the reasons why the Government has asked Mr Cox to give it advice on the future direction of human services in this State. I will ask Mr Cox to comment briefly on some of the issues that the honourable member has raised.

**Mr Cox:** This area has been on our minds, as far as the Department is concerned, because of the notable increase in demand for foster care and respite care. As we become more wise or aware of new ideas, we see that there are ways in which families will maintain the care of their disabled persons if we give enough support in the community. In the final analysis, support has to be there practically by right, rather than expecting that one should ask for it and then not get it. People can then plan their lives and the security of their lives on that basis. Our Department has been very aware of that, and the opportunity I now have of trying to look at the linkages and expertise in the State in developing this is quite exciting.

It is one of our major needs to combine the expertise in the Department for Community Welfare with that in the health area and the Intellectually Disabled Council to try to ensure that respite care has the broadest base: it may be in one's own home or someone else's home; it may be in another family situation or a cottage home, and it should involve locals in the community. We should maintain normality and the strength of the relationships that any of those people have, and that should be supported at all times. So, I think that some of the linkages of respite care ideas and foster care ideas will develop to the stage where we can facilitate this matter in a different way. It is one of the most urgent problems that we have to tackle.

**Mr BECKER:** Staffing numbers within the Department have increased. At 30 June 1983 there were 1 093.4 full-time equivalents employed under the Public Service Act, 176.3 weekly paid and 22.3 others, giving a total of 1 292. As at the end of June 1984, there were 1 323.9, and 1 335.5 proposed. I understand and appreciate the immense pressures and demands on the Department. I know that at one stage we supported a call for more social workers to assist within

the Department. What concerns me is the following line on page 3:

The above totals include a full-time equivalent level of 14.5 persons on workers compensation but for purposes of the programme structure this component of the Department's average staffing has been excluded.

Is the proportion of 14.5 on workers compensation normal or unusually high? I am a little concerned, and it is the first time I have seen it appear on any programme. Is that par for the course, or are there problems that the staff are experiencing in a situation where they can be subject to injuries?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his interest. The figure of 14.5 persons is at a static point in time, and we need to look back at our average figures over a period to give the honourable member that information. It has certainly not been brought to my attention that there is some particular abnormality with respect to the taking of time off as a result of illness or accident. I will ask Mr Beattie to give a summary or brief explanation of the breakdown in the statistics where days are being lost in the Department.

**Mr Beattie:** We have fairly comprehensive workers compensation statistics for the years 1982-83 and 1983-84. The largest area of workers compensation in terms of management unit in the Department is Magill Home. The number of claims involving days lost and costs incurred in the two-year period dropped from 47 to 37. At, say, SAYTC it increased from 21 to 31; at SAYRAC it increased from eight to 14; at Lochiel Park it increased from five to six, and in regard to community residential care it increased from eight to nine. It has been fairly static in our other offices. I do not have specific details but most of the workers compensation claims at Magill Home are related to bad backs from lifting patients. The Department is concerned about that, because the cost to the Department of workers compensation premiums increased enormously over the two-year period. I can provide the figures for workers compensation premiums and the costs related to that. We are looking at ways of reducing workers compensation and of rehabilitating people on workers compensation as quickly as possible.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The number of claims with days lost and costs incurred in metropolitan district offices was seven for both the previous years, and for district offices in the country it was one and two respectively for those years. For head office it was nine and nine—obviously that is where the pressure is. For Youth Project Services it was three and two, and for other sections of the Department, seven and 14 respectively. But the bulk (perhaps in excess of 75 per cent) of claims with days lost relates to the institutions of the Department.

**Mr BECKER:** What were the premiums paid for workers compensation, and how does that amount compare to that paid for the previous 12 months?

**Mr Beattie:** Advice we have received from the Government Workers Compensation Office in Adelaide is that the premium in 1983 for clerical and similar workers was \$92 658, and for all others \$620 815. The total was \$713 473. On top of that there was a levy. We can provide more up-to-date information than that, because it has increased.

**Mr BECKER:** Perhaps statistical data could be provided in relation to that. There are areas in the health field where pressures are also being felt. There are similar types of institutions and homes in the health area. I know that the Government has a responsibility to try to share the cost or the load of workers compensation premiums. We must have that insurance to protect our employees, but I do not know how the cost can be reduced.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Injuries occur particularly in regard to institutions like Magill Home where staff are lifting aged people, some of whom are quite heavy. Although there is

equipment to help in those circumstances, injuries can be expected. Unfortunately they are all too recurrent in those types of institution.

**Mr MATHWIN:** I believe that people applying for the adoption of an overseas child must have been married for a minimum period of three years if prior to that they had a stable *de facto* relationship for two years (making a total of five years), and that there is a certain age qualification as well. I understand that the same rules do not apply in relation to adoptions of Australian children, in which case, irrespective of how long people may have been in a *de facto* relationship, they must still have been married for a minimum of five years before their adoption application can be considered. That, as well as the age qualification, could cause hardship in some cases.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I have had discussions on this issue with the Adoption Panel as well as with officers of the Department. There are restrictive rules so that the Department does not receive applications from a very large number of people who would otherwise have to be told that they have no hope of adopting a child. This is because of the limited number of children available. In regard to the five-year requirement and variations concerning the length of marriage, that does have some undesirable effects. For example, people who marry later in life and who turn 40 during the first five-year period of marriage are ruled out from being eligible to adopt a child. I think that that is undesirable, and those people often experience great trauma and problems associated with being unable to have children of their own.

Perhaps there is a need to review the guidelines in that area, and I propose to discuss this matter soon at a meeting with the Chairman of the Adoption Panel, who is Mr Eriksen, an Adelaide barrister. Perhaps Mr Harris and Mr Cox can explain the specific rules that currently exist in regard to the stipulation of three years of marriage and two years of a stable relationship to comprise the five-year period. While the age of 40 is the barrier for being able to adopt Australian born children, I believe that that is extended to age 47 with respect to overseas born children. So there are two categories of adoptive parents.

**Mr Harris:** In regard to the length of time as suggested by the advisory panels and then adopted by Government within the framework in the regulations, the real problem that has been faced in this area is that the delay is now nearly 42 months. We are concerned about the extra time required to investigate each adoption application which is tremendous in terms of the staff work load. A problem arises when matters have to be investigated 3½ years in advance, because further investigation must be undertaken later. A real problem has involved the list of people who might be eligible to adopt, because the expectations of those on the list are raised.

If their names are put on the list and they are accepted on the Adopters Register, they believe they will eventually get a child. If the time extends beyond five years, that is too long. The dilemma is in how to ensure that people are not hurt after their names have been placed on the list but do not get a child. If the rules are indicated at an early stage people must then face up to the problem when they apply. I have taken note of what the Minister has said about applicants on the borderline, in which cases some unjust treatment may exist. A lot of heart searching has gone into these matters. It is very difficult to deal with the matter logically other than to cut down the list. The same situation applies in regard to adoptions of children with physical disabilities. In everything in this regard there is not a great deal of supportive logic, except that the work load required to investigate all the applicants, even though some of them will not receive a child, is great. If the list is too long many people can be hurt. The Minister's views will be taken on board.

**Mr MATHWIN:** Perhaps some decision will be made to broaden the limits in regard to the adoption of Australian-born children. I can understand that problems will occur, because these days there are not enough children to go around. I know of one case in particular where the couple have been married for a long time and the woman thinks that it is unfair that under the Australian standards because of their previous *de facto* relationship they are unable to adopt a child. They have proved that they are suited to each other because they have lived together for a long time and they have been happily married for some years. They have proved beyond doubt that they have an excellent relationship and they believe they are qualified to adopt a child. I suppose without understanding the quota system, which is the only explanation the Department can give, it does seem unfair. It is hard to understand that the situation is controlled by the number of children available for adoption.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Adoptions Panel is looking at this matter so perhaps it might be of assistance if the honourable member wrote to me so I can refer the case to the panel to see whether that would come within the purview of the relaxation of some of those guidelines that I perceive as being necessary.

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

Minister of Community Welfare and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, Miscellaneous, \$39 657 000

**Chairman:**

Mr Max Brown

**Members:**

The Hon. H. Allison

Mr H. Becker

Mr D.M. Ferguson

Mr T.R. Groom

Mr J.H.C. Klunder

Mr J. Mathwin

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr I.S. Cox, Commissioner, Public Service Board.

Mr C.E.M. Harris, Acting Director-General, Department of Community Welfare.

Mr W.H. Beattie, Acting Assistant Director-General.

Mr G.R. Billett, Acting Senior Accountant.

Ms R. Wighton, Acting Deputy Director-General, Women's Advisory Unit, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

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

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I refer to the apparent discrepancy

between Estimates of Payments at page 144 and the Estimates of Receipts at page 10 in relation to Child Care Services. For 1983-84 the vote for payments was \$1.372 million and actual payments was \$1.835 million and for the same period estimated receipts were \$2.2 million and actual receipts totalled \$2.505 million. There is quite a difference between the estimated receipts of \$2.2 million and actual receipts of \$2 505 475 and a difference between actual payments of \$1 835 779 and actual receipts of \$2 505 475. There is a similar discrepancy in that line for the 1984-85 Estimated Receipts of \$2.902 million. The Child Care Services have now been divided between two separate lines which give a total of \$2.4 million, so there is \$500 000 difference. Can the Minister explain how that short-fall occurred? According to the Commonwealth Government we seem to have received more in 1983-84 and have been allocated more for 1984-85 than we have provided for in the Child Care Services Lines.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think that explanation will require a little additional calculation. Child Care Services is only one aspect of the sum that is provided on page 10 of the Estimates of Receipts on the Consolidated Account as money provided by the Commonwealth Government, and child care is the substantial part of the range of programmes that are included under Child Care Services generally. We will do the calculation to arrive at the figures that relate to the Commonwealth payment figures. I will get Mr Beattie to explain the figures to the Committee.

**Mr Beattie:** The total sum of \$2.902 million has to be considered in terms of everything that appears under those lines of grants for Child Care Services. The Child Care Services line cannot be looked at individually. The line on page 10 of the Estimates of Receipts on the Consolidated Account for the year ending 30 June 1985 shows a difference between \$2.200 million and \$2.505 million (\$305 000) which is reflected in the other lines for Child Care Service grants. Similarly, the difference between the \$2.505 million and \$2.902 million is reflected in those lines. I could provide a written explanation which would be easier to understand.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I would like to have that. I am less worried about the difference between one line and another on page 10 than I am between the figures on page 10 of the Estimates of Receipts and the figures on page 144 of the Estimates of Payments. There appears to be a short-fall in expenditure of \$700 000 in 1983-84 and a proposed short-fall in expenditure of \$500 000 in 1984-85. Between Estimates of Receipts and Estimates of Payments for Child Care Services there appears to be a difference of \$1.2 million, unless there are other areas of substantial payments.

**Mr Beattie:** I have three pages of figures which I could go through for the honourable member but I think it would be easier if I had them inserted in *Hansard*.

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITY WELFARE  
MISCELLANEOUS

Payments (as per Estimates of Payments Page 144)

	1983-84			1984-85					
	Cwth	Voted State	Total	Cwth	Actual State	Total	Cwth	Proposed State	Total
Child Care Services Grants									
Child Care in Women's Shelters	198 000	—	198 000	191 309	—	191 309	231 000	—	231 000
Child Care Services	1 331 000	41 000	1 372 000	1 743 109	92 670	1 835 779	—	—	—
Community Based Children's Services	48 700	165 300	214 000	70 198	152 635	222 833	134 600	202 400	337 000
Day Care Services	81 400	7 600	89 000	81 793	7 698	89 491	—	—	—
Family Day Care Services	—	—	—	—	—	—	2 048 900	22 100	2 071 000
Family Support Services	450 000	—	450 000	438 275	—	438 275	487 000	—	487 000
<b>Total Child Care Services Grants</b>	<b>2 109 100</b>	<b>213 900</b>	<b>2 323 000</b>	<b>2 524 684</b>	<b>253 003</b>	<b>2 777 687</b>	<b>2 901 500</b>	<b>224 500</b>	<b>3 126 000</b>
Receipts (as per Estimates of Receipts page 10)	*2 200 000			2 505 475			*2 902 000		

\*Treasury adjust the proposed receipts in line with Federal Budget figures. Actual receipts are based on expenditure during the year with any adjustments required being made in the following year.

**The Hon. H. ALLISON:** I would like to refer now to community aides, who have been widely used within the Department. In 1982 the Department employed about 1 000 registered community aides and in 1979 that figure was about half that; it would have been about 500. Can the Minister say how many community aides are currently registered with the Department and in what areas they are generally used?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Community Welfare Act provides for community aides to be involved in the work of the Department. They form a very valuable adjunct to the services provided by the Department and, of course, an important link between the Department and the community. Whenever I visit district offices of the Department I meet community aides who are often keen to discuss their perceptions of what is happening in the community. I find that very helpful. In 1982-83, 509 community aides worked with the Department; on the most recent figures for 1983-84 there were 537 community aides. I will ask Mr Cox to explain their role.

**Mr Cox:** When the community aide provisions were introduced in the Act they were seen as in some ways the way in which volunteers worked in many agencies. They did things that were not so specific: they helped to facilitate activities rather than take responsibility. Recently they have been recruited to carry out specific activities relating to specific people or jobs. That has been an interesting development. We have been very careful that their assistance has related to their very special skills. We have a far different approach now towards community aides.

We attempted to develop training and use them in support for young offenders when a particular relationship was required. We have used community aides as a support mechanism for parents with children who are likely to be abused or have been in any way abused. We use some for transport where a relationship is involved. Sometimes we have some really difficult family matter where we find intervention can be very useful. It is that sort of adjunct to the service of our professional staff that they carry out. It gives an autonomy, but it is a relationship that gives far more satisfaction. There has been a deal of change in the way in which they have been used over past years.

It seems to be growing in strength. We also help to provide aides to other agencies. Of course, a volunteer centre has been established in Adelaide. It is quite unique and does a first-class job in developing volunteers for other organisations. Some people who go to work with agencies would like to be registered under our umbrella: we help in that way, too.

**Mr BECKER:** What progress is being made in investigating the establishment of the United Way system for South Australia? I have mentioned this previously. The Director-General had undertaken or was to study that scheme. On my recent study trip I called into Hawaii because I wanted to see the epilepsy organisation there and compare it with ours. I found that it was housed in the United Way building. I learned more about that scheme there than I did anywhere else. I did not have to go further. I was staggered by its size: it was established in 1919 and has operated in Hawaii from about 1940. It has a 75 member board of directors, eight volunteer standing committees that support 62 voluntary agencies, 23 paid employees, and can use only 9 per cent of the money raised for staffing.

In 1983 the United Way organisation raised \$10.8 million from 170 000 contributors. The scheme was supported by 12 495 volunteers: it is a massive organisation. The population of Hawaii or Honolulu would not be much bigger than that of Adelaide, although it has a huge floating pop-

ulation because of tourism. However, there is no doubt that this method of raising money on an organised basis within the community would supplement welfare payments made by the Department to various voluntary groups.

Such a scheme could probably help many voluntary agencies with fund raising problems. What has the Director-General found and what does he propose so far? The only drawback I found was that it could be difficult if a voluntary agency wanted to bring in new programmes or extend them. People felt they were locked into the support for the United Way and could not move. After talking to the Director of the Aloha United Way in Honolulu I believe that could be overcome. Certainly, if we set one up here we could include expansion in the rules. There is no doubt that it is an extremely successful fund raising method. Employees' contributions are taken out of their pay packets and companies donate money to the organisation. It has the full support of all employers and various unions. In fact, union officials play a very active role on many of the committees and board positions. What stage have we reached in South Australia when we can get together and start putting forward something positive?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his question and I hope that the proposal on which we are currently working will be a bipartisan project, and I think that that is very important to its success. I would look for a letter or a joint proposal from all political Parties that could be given to employer and employee groups of the support in the Parliament for this concept. I believe that it is very important that we look for additional funding for non-Government welfare and similar organisations that are providing important services. They are interwoven in with the whole fabric of service delivery in the human services area in our community, and we all know that they desperately need additional funding.

There are limits to how much a Government can provide from its taxation revenue. Also, I think that there is great value in members of the community practically assisting those in need and being given an opportunity to do that. There is great value in the community as a whole being involved. I have also been able to visit a number of United Way projects in the United States and had that similar experience.

I think that we do not want to develop it nor even have it known as a United Way type of concept. I think that we have to develop our own type of scheme but certainly base it on some of the principles that apply to those schemes. We must also realise that in the United States the provision of welfare programmes by Government is very much diminished from those that we enjoy in South Australia and indeed in Australia. In many ways the success of those programmes is a result of the lack of Government programmes. Nevertheless, the need is still clearly evident in our community.

In February this year Cabinet approved the establishment of a Community Welfare Advisory Committee to report and make recommendations to the Government on the development of a United Way type of method of fund raising in South Australia. The terms of reference of the advisory committee are:

- Consult widely with business, union, community people and welfare organisations on the feasibility and acceptability of a United Way programme for South Australia.
- Report and make recommendations on the establishment, organisation and structure of a scheme in South Australia, including an appropriate management structure, and administrative and funding arrangements.
- Investigate and report on the issue of tax deductibility for donations made through the scheme.

The final point is regarded as quite important to the success of the scheme as well. It is hoped that the group will report, if not by the end of this year, by early next year. The members of the group are: Mr Glen Broomhill, former Government Minister (Chair); Mr Bernie Lewis, General Manager, Adelaide Permanent Building Society, who has agreed to be a member of the committee; Ms Elaine Martin, Lecturer, School of Social Administration, Flinders University and a former Chairperson of the Community Welfare Grants Advisory Committee; Mr Peter Baker, former press officer with the Tonkin and Corcoran Administrations and now a public relations consultant; Mr Lange Powell, Executive Director of SACOSS; and Ms Mary Beasley, Commissioner, Public Service Board.

In forming that committee, we have kept in mind the need for consultation with those organisations that represent employees, employers, persons involved in the public sector, persons involved in the delivery of welfare services in the non-Government sector, and the advocates for those groups. I think that it is a very good committee. I have met with it on a number of occasions, and the committee is certainly looking into matters in considerable depth; it has had discussions with the Chamber of Commerce and trade unions, and is now talking to individual major employer groups and organisations in South Australia.

The committee has had discussions in relation to a similar project that exists in Geelong, Victoria. It will also have discussions with those organisations that represent professional fundraisers, because it is not intended that this programme should cut across either existing private or public funding sources. It is obviously very important that we maintain both the public and private fundraising efforts and commitments that are already made. I was disappointed to see some of the early publicity that this was a tax or indeed that one could give up donating to charitable groups. That is not the aim of it, but it is to reach those who would like to, but who do not already, have an organised way in which to contribute to the welfare needs of those who are less fortunate than themselves in the community.

As I said, I hope, either by letter or if necessary by legislation, that we can when this feasibility study is completed and if it is satisfactory in a bipartisan way to proceed to implement such a programme. I would also hope that should that situation arise it could be dovetailed in some way into our 1986 celebrations as a State, because I think it is fitting that in that year we should remember those who would benefit from such a scheme; this could give an added incentive to the establishment of such a programme. It is staggering to see in a city that I visited (Des Moines) with a population of about 700 000 people that \$7 million was contributed annually to the scheme in that city.

Whilst I think that that figure is beyond our wildest expectations, it is certainly not unreasonable to think in terms of at least \$1 million per year as a capacity in the initial stages for a scheme of this nature in South Australia. I might ask Mr Cox, who did the preliminary studies in the Department, to make some further comments on this matter.

Mr Cox: I take up the point raised by the honourable member in relation to the way in which sometimes the money gets fixed into or stops new initiatives. In some of the projects that I visited there was project funding, and certainly those involved overcame some of the problems in relation to the fact that one could not have new initiatives. I think that the evidence of what the committee is coming together with, the experience that we have had and the reports that I brought back from overseas will enhance what the committee is dealing with. However, there is no doubt that they are finding ways to keep innovating, because one of the problems of all these funds is that, if one is supporting

things that are slightly out of date or not as useful as they could be, by project funding for five years, there is a full evaluation of how the money was used, the new initiatives and how creative they can be to establish a better service. Several examples of that have been established in the United Way.

Mr BECKER: There were about eight funding panels or budget review panels that worked very closely with six or seven agencies. So, it is a very small group, and there are about 16 people on the budget review panel. So, one has first-class accountability to the community and contributors. One has a team of 16 people who are expert in their field and who are available to look after a group of voluntary agencies and to give expert advice.

It is the greatest way of bringing in the largest number of volunteer people—something like 12 500—who really are not only giving something but also physically making a contribution and can see the end result. There is no doubt that it can really snowball into something well worth while. It should be supported by the Government and it should be bipartisan. I would be disappointed if the Liberal Party was not 100 per cent behind it; certainly, I would support it. It could give the initiative and the lead and help people who cannot make up their minds when approached by many agencies for donations. On the Honolulu example it works out at about \$1.25 per week or \$60 a year. Most people would pay that for raffle tickets or in badges and not know where it goes. This scheme would simplify the whole process. People could still give to individuals if they wanted to.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It may not be widely appreciated that on a minor scale some schemes already exist in South Australia. For example, 85 per cent of employees of the Savings Bank of South Australia contribute to a scheme that assists employees and former employees of the bank, as well as charitable organisations. So, there is some experience of that operating here. It is a matter of whether it can be applied across the community.

The other thing that I found very interesting was the ability in the administration of the schemes to use, on a loan basis, executives from corporations. The major corporations saw that as value to the training and career structure of their employees; that reduced considerably the overheads for the scheme. That is something that the committee is certainly looking at here. Already, a number of the larger corporations do encourage their key executives to spend some time in community-based organisations. Often it is service clubs or other organisations. Certainly, there is institutional support by many businesses for specific programmes, and that is something that also will be considered by the committee.

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

Mr FERGUSON: I move:

That the draft report, as circulated, be the report of the Committee.

Motion carried.

## ADJOURNMENT

The CHAIRMAN: I would first like to thank the Minister and particularly his officers for their co-operation and assistance in today's proceedings, and adjourn the Committee *sine die*.

At 5.34 p.m. the Committee concluded.