

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 2 October 1985

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

The Hon. P.B. Arnold
 Mr E.S. Ashenden
 Mr R.J. Gregory
 Mr G.M. Gunn
 Mr J.H.C. Klunder
 Mr K.H. Plunkett

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Engineering and Water Supply, \$125 698 000

Witness:

The Hon. J.W. Slater, Minister of Water Resources and
 Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr K.W. Lewis, Director-General and Engineer-in-Chief,
 E & WS Department.
 Mr R.C. Williams, Deputy-Director General.
 Mr A.N. Killmier, Director, Administration and Finance.
 Mr R.E. Mander, Senior Finance Officer.
 Mr R.J. Greatrex, Manager, Management Accounting and
 Budgeting.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination. In so doing, I draw to the attention of departmental officers that, if information is to be provided later in answer to questions asked today, it would be appreciated if it could be provided in a form suitable for insertion in *Hansard*, and not later than Friday 18 October. If the member for Chaffey wishes to make a statement before asking questions, he may do so.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: First, I want to indicate to the Committee that I will not be present after the luncheon adjournment and that my colleagues will be carrying on on my behalf. Early last week I sought the cooperation of the Minister to have the E & WS lines brought on after 4 p.m. so that it would be possible for me to attend my daughter's graduation at 2 p.m. That co-operation was not forthcoming, on the basis that it would be inconvenient and that luncheon arrangements had already been made. I thank the Minister for his lack of cooperation, and I will rely on my colleagues to carry on for me in my absence.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I point out to the honourable member for Chaffey and particularly to the honourable member for Eyre that it is not the function of this Committee to debate that sort of issue. It is not up to the Minister to arrange it.

Mr GUNN: We are allowed to take the point, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chair will not allow the Committee to enter into considerations of what the Minister may or may not arrange.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Having indicated my reasons for not being here this afternoon, I will outline the areas which are of concern to all South Australians and in respect of which I shall be looking for a clear response from the Minister. On 3 July, the Premier issued a press statement

concerning the increase in water and sewer rates of 3.5 per cent. The Premier then said that, despite these moderate increases for 1985-86, the E&WS Department would face an operating deficit of \$22 million this financial year. That is of grave concern to all South Australians, and I shall want to know whether the Government will continue to adopt this policy and this philosophy in future if it is returned at the next State election and where it is expected that the deficit will finish up in a few years time.

Secondly, the increasing interest costs of the E&WS Department are highlighted by the Auditor-General at page 96 of his report for the year ended 30 June 1985, where he states:

Interest recorded in the Recurrent Receipts and Payments Statement increased by \$15.8 million to \$103.7 million, up 18 per cent. Of this increase, 15 per cent is attributed to the interest rate and 3 per cent is attributed to the increase in outstanding debt. The above table demonstrates—that interest is a significant cost to the department. For the 1985 year, the interest cost was \$103.7 million compared to direct payments for operation and maintenance of \$114.4 million.

That means that the interest payment as a percentage of the direct cost of operation and maintenance is now 91 per cent. I believe that we need an explanation of the policy of the Government and the direction in which it and the department will continue in future and what will be the ultimate situation for South Australia with this ever increasing interest charge if we continue down the path that the Government is following at present.

Thirdly, I wish to delve once again into the area of water main replacement, especially in country areas. We have a massive length of pipeline (about 22 000 kilometres) throughout South Australia. Four or five years ago, the department told me that the replacement of pipelines was a real problem and that, unless something was done urgently, there would be a major breakdown in the system soon. I recall that, when I visited the West Coast, the Smoky Bay water main was highlighted to me and I was told that it was in a bad state of repair. I believe that there are many other pipelines like that throughout South Australia and that the capital cost of replacement is enormous. If the department is headed down the line of increasing the deficit by \$22 million this financial year, and if that is to be the pattern for the future, I have difficulty in understanding how the Government will come to grips with the replacement of country mains in particular.

Following on from that, I am looking for an indication from the Government as to whether or not the present surplus in 1984-85 of some \$15.8 million on the metropolitan water supply indicates a permanent change in policy away from the attitude that was adopted for many years of a roughly break-even point in the operation of metropolitan Adelaide water supply and of whether that will be a permanent feature in the future by the Government to offset other costs.

I would also look at the operation of the Engineering and Water Supply Department in relation to costs for domestic connections in metropolitan and town areas, and in irrigation areas. In broad terms, they are the areas that I want to discuss in some detail.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Before I deal with my preliminary statement, I refer to the matter raised by the member for Chaffey in relation—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I hope that the Minister does not want to delve into some sort of debate about the timetable and so forth. The Chair had better make it perfectly clear that the timetable of these Committees is set down by the House and that there can be a variation of timetables only if it has the unanimous agreement of the Committee, or the agreement of the Speaker. I therefore hope that we do not go into that debate.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That is exactly what I was going to refer to, but I will say no more. I wish to report that currently the metropolitan reservoirs are holding 120 000 megalitres or 63 per cent of capacity. This compares with 162 000 megalitres, or 80 per cent of capacity, at the same time last year. Whilst the situation is not quite as good as last year, it nevertheless indicates that no water restrictions are likely to be required this summer.

In relation to the Murray River, I am pleased to be able to report that the Dartmouth reservoir is at 62 per cent capacity and the Hume reservoir is at 71 per cent capacity; Lake Victoria is 66 per cent full and Meningie Lakes are 56 per cent full. For 1984-85, the total water consumption in South Australia was 209 315 megalitres, an increase of 10 344 megalitres on 1983-84. That no doubt indicates the prolonged dry spell that occurred in South Australia in 1984-85.

The net charge against consolidated revenue for water supply and sewerage operations for 1984-85 was \$7.1 million compared with \$12.2 million in 1983-84. The deficit bettered the budget of \$16.4 million due to operating costs being below budget of \$3.36 million and revenue exceeding the estimate, due to the dry summer conditions, of \$3.6 million, together with increased miscellaneous receipts of \$1.98 million.

In July this year I announced increases in sewerage and water rates, and the Statewide price of water for 1985-86 is 56 cents a kilolitre. The increase in the average water and sewerage rates was the lowest for 19 years. The Government believes that the increasing emphasis on payment for water used is the appropriate policy, and accordingly it increased the price for water from 1 July 1985 to a greater extent than the base rate. Notwithstanding the rises in water and sewerage rates that applied from 1 July 1985, the rates payable in Adelaide per head of population comparatively are significantly lower than those payable in the other capital cities of Australia. I announced in July that there would be no increase in irrigation rates in 1985-86, and I point out that that is the second year in succession in which irrigation rates have not increased.

I now refer to each of the budgets in turn. Total recurrent expenditure by the E&WS Department was \$111.6 million. This exceeded the budget by \$1.6 million, because of salary and wage increases of \$300 000 and electricity costs, \$1.3 million. The water resources miscellaneous budget of \$1.64 million was underspent by \$119 000. The proposed recurrent budget for 1985-86 is \$125.7 million. There is provision for electricity pumping, \$13 million, and that is the same sum as actual expenditure for 1984-85. The number of full-time equivalents employed under the Public Service Act will reduce by 10 positions, but the weekly paid work force will be maintained. Total payments proposed for works of a capital nature amount to \$69.6 million compared with \$69.4 million in 1984-85.

The financial results of the 1984-85 financial year saw the overall net cost to consolidated revenue of the operations of the E&WS Department decrease from \$35.5 million to \$30.1 million. Results with respect to the various undertakings were as follows: for metropolitan waterworks, there was a surplus of \$15.8 million; country waterworks, a deficit of \$27.6 million; metropolitan sewer operations, a surplus of \$10.6 million; country sewers, a deficit of \$6 million; and irrigation, a deficit of \$10.6 million. Other operations contributed to the overall deficit, including water resources management, \$4.1 million; South East Drainage, \$400 000; Murray River works, \$2.5 million; and Loxton war service land settlement \$700 000.

Significant trends identified in an examination of the financial results are a continuation of the increase in deficits for country water (which was referred to by the member

for Chaffey in his opening statement), sewer undertakings in the country areas, and perhaps a further actual increase in the irrigation deficit. The anticipated overall deficit for water and sewer undertakings in 1985-86 is estimated to increase by \$15 million. The irrigation deficit is anticipated to increase by \$500 000. With a view to containing the overall deficit of the department, an examination of costs has continued during 1984-85, particularly in irrigation areas.

Those reviews will continue in 1985-86. I place on record the fact that the 1984-85 results were extremely satisfactory to us. I pay tribute and give credit to the officers of the Engineering and Water Supply Department for what has been a pleasing result for the water resources portfolio during an extremely busy year. I note the comments made by the member for Chaffey in his opening remarks, and we will certainly deal appropriately with his questions.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Going back to the point I made in my opening remarks about a \$22 million deficit in the E & WS Department, as mentioned by the Premier, it is extremely important that we and the people of South Australia know whether this is the sort of anticipated increase that the Government will run up if we are to have a multiplier effect year by year. What effect will this have on the operation of the department? Is this just a one off election year situation?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Deficits, of course, are somewhat unpredictable, particularly in the E & WS Department. Last year's figures were much better than anticipated, but it depends largely on various seasonal conditions and also on the undertakings of the department.

It is interesting to note that this matter was mentioned not only by the Leader of the Opposition but also by the shadow Minister of Water Resources (the member for Chaffey) in his first question today. We should make a comparison here. The Opposition makes great play about the budgeted deficit of \$22 million for water and sewerage works. However, I draw some rather remarkable comparisons between the performances of the Tonkin and Bannon Governments in this area.

The Bannon Government has actually achieved lower deficits in every year, both in money terms and in terms of today's values, than the Tonkin Government achieved in any year during its term. I will provide some factual figures which show that budgets brought down by the Liberal Government in 1981-82 and 1982-83 resulted in a total operating deficit for water and sewerage works over the three year period of \$67 600 000 in money terms or, in actual monetary values for 1985-86, a deficit of \$91 600 000.

So, by comparison the budget determined by the Bannon Government during those three years of office resulted in a total operating deficit for water and sewerage works of \$40 500 000 in money terms and \$42 800 000 in 1985-86 values. That certainly gives the lie to the points raised by the member for Chaffey. In other words, in today's values the Bannon Government has achieved a result with less than half the Tonkin Government's deficit. That is the direction in which we are heading. Indeed, the estimated \$22 million appears much better than that, depending on the various conditions.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: The Auditor General certainly highlighted the fact that interest payments as a percentage of direct cost of operation and maintenance have increased. One only has to look at the table, which shows that in 1981 it was 75 per cent and today it is 91 per cent. What are the long-term implications for the department if it continues down that path? Next year we are going to have a situation where the interest payment outstrips the direct cost of operation and maintenance. If we go down that path indefinitely—no private operation or individual could run on that basis—we will be bankrupt very quickly.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Certainly I am aware of the comments by the Auditor-General. I recall reading the *Hansard* record of the Treasurer's Estimates Committee last week when the matter was raised by either the Leader or another Opposition member. I thought that the Treasurer gave a very clear and concise explanation. This question ought appropriately to be directed to him, even though the interest rate does impact on the department. Indeed, it is one of those problems that is really beyond the control of my department. As I said previously, this matter is more appropriately directed to the Treasurer, as was the case during the Estimates Committee.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: We have not heard what are the implications. Surely someone must know what are the long-term implications for the department if we continue down this path. That is really the answer that I am seeking.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The implications have some impact on the department's operations, but that is the situation that prevails in the market place. The question is more appropriately answered by the Treasurer, because Engineering and Water Supply is not the only department referred to in regard to interest on its debt. There are opportunities certainly for greater consideration of the matter by the department, but these things are decided by Government and Treasury. I am not in a position to tell the honourable member what impact it will have in the future, but certainly it has an impact on operations.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Surely the Minister must have some idea of the forecast for the next four or five years, otherwise the situation would be chaotic.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am not into looking into a crystal ball. The question ought to be directed to the Treasurer.

Mr PLUNKETT: The Minister would be aware that a big part of my electorate has the River Torrens running through it and I am very interested in what is happening in that area. I refer to page 8 of the yellow book, dealing with allocations for the River Torrens Linear Park and the flood mitigation scheme. Will the Minister give details of the progress made so far on this project?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, I am happy to do so. Work on the River Torrens Linear Park and flood mitigation is continuing. With regard to flood mitigation, the Kangaroo Creek dam is now complete, with modifications, and river structures are 35 per cent complete with property acquisition 60 per cent complete. Channel works at Flinders Park, Kidman Park and Torrensville are practically complete with the exception of a small section of Torrensville, which I believe is in the electorate of the member for Peake.

At Dernancourt (in the north-eastern suburbs) only a very minor part of the scheme has been attempted. I also point out that the Commonwealth Government has provided funding through the Natural Areas Enhancement Scheme, which is an element of the Commonwealth Employment Program. An amount of \$500 000 for construction costs will be provided for the scheme. Further, there is the work at Breakout Creek, West Beach, and at Pitman Park, Windsor Gardens—which is in my electorate. Total funding for the flood mitigation work package, to 30 June 1985 has been \$12.1 million. I will not go into all the details of the breakdown of that expenditure. Proposed expenditure for this year is \$3.5 million. The program is expected to be completed by 1988-89, at an estimated total cost of \$29.3 million.

I give credit to the previous Government for initiating this scheme. The present Government has continued with the scheme, which I think is one of the most significant to be undertaken in the metropolitan area of Adelaide. Anyone who takes the time to visit the areas where the work has been completed either in the eastern suburbs or the site where work has been undertaken, in association with the

STA, for the O-Bahn busway, will appreciate the considerable enhancement of the areas under the linear park scheme.

I believe that it is a tremendous project, and it has been undertaken for the benefit of all South Australians. The work packages completed in the member for Peake's area are certainly an acquisition for the area. The member for Peake has probably not had one complaint about the completed work, although I know that at one stage during construction a few complaints were made. At that time I received a deputation from the honourable member for Peake. However, I point out that it was not the E&WS that was involved but private contractors. Subsequently we were able to find a happy solution and the work was completed.

Mr PLUNKETT: My next question is relevant to page 18 of the yellow book. In view of complaints that have been made about odours from the Port Adelaide sewage treatment works, can the Minister give an assurance that all necessary steps have been taken to eliminate the problem? Will the Minister also say how much money has been allocated for the project at Port Adelaide?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: A total amount of \$150 000 has been allocated this year. Over the past two or three years a number of complaints have been made in this regard. This question has usually been raised by the local member for the district (Kevin Hamilton as the member for Albert Park).

Mr PLUNKETT: I might add that I am asking this question on his behalf.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Over the past two or three years there have been many complaints. One of the problems we have is that the area has developed alongside the buffer zone. The Port Adelaide Treatment Works I believe is the oldest such works in South Australia, but we have spent considerable sums in the last two or three years in an attempt to solve some of the problems that have existed.

To my knowledge the problem has been eliminated to some degree by the work that has already been done at the Port Adelaide Treatment Works. The installation of an additional chlorination plant to inject chlorine into the rising mains from Queensbury, Port Adelaide and Ethelton pumping stations has been completed at a final cost of \$95 000. No further work is planned for 1985-86. This work has been considered as one of the ways to effectively minimise or eliminate complaints about odour from nearby residents. I am not aware of any complaints having been received in the last eight or nine months.

Mr PLUNKETT: I have received a number of complaints in my electorate office about water rates. Does the Minister intend to introduce a new water and sewerage rating system that is simpler to understand and more equitable than the present system?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: In recent years the Department and the Government, more appropriately, have undertaken a number of reviews and investigations into the water rating system. I think it is generally agreed that the present system is as good, if not as equitable, as systems used in other parts of Australia. From personal observations and inquiries I have made overseas, it seems to be a difficult subject on which to reach a magic formula.

I believe there is much misunderstanding and confusion about the current rating system. I have commented that the department and the Government ought to be explaining in more simplistic terms to the public at large the way the system operates, even though every year the department provides a green pamphlet with the first rate notice for that 12 month period explaining how the system works. From the questions I have been asked and the question from the member for Peake today, it seems that that information is not readily understandable by the average person in the community. Therefore, if it is not readily understood, there

will always be an element of doubt about the way the valuation to determine quotas is made. About 65 per cent of consumers are currently on what we call the user pays system, they pay for the water they use. Also, the element of valuation included in the rates is complex.

Next year we will be eliminating the rates equalisation scheme but I want to see how it operates before I make any basic change to the system. I understand that the Valuer-General from 1 July 1986 will be able to value the whole State at one time instead of on the quinquennial assessment system being used now. If an annual valuation is introduced the system might be less complicated and less complex than the present system and people will be able to more readily understand their water accounts.

The Opposition makes great play of water charges and taxes and charges generally. I think it is worth recording that, in the three years of the previous Government compared to the three years of Labor Government, there has been a slight marginal difference in the increase in water charges. I believe that the present system is the most fair and equitable system and I would want plenty of evidence to put to my Cabinet colleagues that we ought to basically change the present system before we did so. Nevertheless, we ought to be able to refine the system so that it is readily understood by the public at large.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I refer now to the replacement of water mains across South Australia. In my opening comments I referred to the fact that it had been highlighted to me during 1979 to 1982 that it was necessary to provide funding for the replacement of mains, particularly in rural areas where many of the mains have been down for a long time and, depending on the type of soil in which they are situated, some mains have deteriorated much more quickly than others.

During that period of time mains such as the one servicing Smoky Bay were identified to me as being in urgent need of repair. I mention that area as an example of the situation that exists in many parts of South Australia. I believe a recent report indicated that the urgency was not so great. That may be so, but by the same token certainly the mains that were identified to me were in urgent need of repair.

How does the Government intend coping with this problem, and what progress has been made at this stage? I use the Smoky Bay line as an example of a main which is in a state of constant disrepair with the main bursting frequently. I ask the Minister what action has been taken, what program has the Government for the replacement of not only the main to Smoky Bay but also across South Australia where many other mains are in a similar situation.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The assets of the E&WS Department in actual value I understand total about \$750 million and they increase by about 1 per cent or 2 per cent a year. They have been built up over a considerable period of time so consequently we certainly could not replace them all in the short term.

The sum of \$5.7 million has been provided in the 1985-86 capital works program for the replacement and rehabilitation of existing assets. We must have optimum information in relation to asset management. This is a major problem for any government, whatever its political complexion, not only in respect of the E & WS Department but as regards government assets generally, although in the E & WS Department the problem might be the most pronounced. This problem needs our urgent attention.

One reason for the overseas trip taken by my officers and me earlier this year was to see how assets in various European countries were being replaced and what changes and developments were occurring in that field. After all, South Australia is not isolated as regards this problem, which

occurs over a period; so we are continually upgrading our methods and first establishing our priorities. Such a process requires considerable assessment of priorities. The replacement program is being supported by a works program in the Design Section of the department. That requires additional staff, and we have to cover some of these items in our recurrent expenditure budget as well as in our capital expenditure budget. On average, mains will be replaced at a cost of about \$7 million a year.

In many cases, major augmentation programs that form part of the capital works program may also be regarded as asset replacement programs, because each year we spend a considerable sum in upgrading and augmentation of current assets. Consequently, that could justifiably be regarded as part of our assets replacement program. Accordingly, it is estimated that current expenditure from all sources on asset replacement would be about \$10 million a year. So, the time to be taken for total replacement is a long time.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: You are talking about mains?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Not only mains, but about assets generally, whereas the honourable member was talking specifically about water mains.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: So that that \$10 million will not be spent on replacing only country mains?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That is so. Part of that sum would be spent for that purpose, but I am talking about asset replacement generally, and the replacement of country mains should not be seen in isolation when determining priorities in all areas. So, about \$10 million is being spent this year. In 1985-86, the capital works program of the department could be classified according to the following criteria: growth projects \$18.7 million; improvements (filtration, salinity control, and others) about \$26.7 million; actual straight-out replacement of assets \$5.7 million; and other \$10.8 million. This makes a total of \$61.9 million in our budget. The member for Chaffey may regard \$5.7 million as a minimal sum in the replacement budget, but I have explained that there are other factors to be considered. We are spending about \$10 million this financial year.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: The \$5.7 million relates to the replacement of existing mains and sewers in both metropolitan Adelaide and in country areas?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, total asset replacement.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: From information given to me, I was always under the impression that the value of the total assets of the E & WS Department, as regards both the water supply and the sewerage service, was about \$2 billion. If that is correct, and if only \$5.7 million is to be spent this year on the replacement of mains, the program will take 200 or 300 years to complete. The government of the day is responsible for maintaining the assets of the State on behalf of all South Australians, and I am trying to highlight the problem by showing that, if we do not come to grips with it and we simply pass it on for future generations, somewhere along the line it must be accounted for and the resources must come from somewhere at some future time. Can the Minister say what will be the time factor in respect of replacing those mains that need to be replaced over a period and what sort of allocation is being provided for that purpose? Is such an allocation realistic and will it effectively maintain the asset for future generations?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am being asked to foresee the future, but that is not easy. One can only make a guess. The assets of the department have been accumulated over many years and they will be replaced gradually over many years. One type of asset cannot be isolated from other types because whichever government is in power that government must determine priorities. In South Australia, the two major projects in hand, in my opinion, are the completion of the

filtration plants at Morgan and at Happy Valley. We hope that the Morgan plant will be completed in early or mid 1986 and Happy Valley is a little farther down the track. Those two projects are extensive and expensive in terms of government expenditure.

I do not disagree with the point being made by the member for Chaffey but, if the position were reversed (which I hope does not happen), I could ask him the same question and he could not indicate the time factor as regards replacement of those assets. We have to have detailed assessments of the life of our assets and consequent valuations.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: But those assessments and valuations are being made all the time, so we should have a picture at any one time.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The Director and I went overseas to investigate new methods and new materials being used in the replacement of assets. For instance, I recall seeing a method of replacing pipes *in situ* where synthetic materials rather than concrete or cast iron pipes were being used. Those experiments are being conducted in Britain particularly, and I find them fascinating. We have to really evaluate our priorities and the developments that are occurring in regard to new methods, materials and replacement of assets. Of course, the department is pursuing the development of these areas in integrated information computer system plans that are intended to facilitate asset management.

I am not able to give a time span (I do not think that anybody can) as to when assets are likely to be replaced. They are all under the ground and, particularly in relation to water and sewer pipes, it depends very much on a number of factors. I will ask the Director to supplement my answer, because he would probably know the more intricate details in relation to the asset replacement situation. My experience has been that we respond to replacement of water pipes after a very careful analysis of two factors, and they are, first, the cost involved and, secondly, the necessity for replacement. We are not able to respond unless there may be hazards to individuals or to the health of the community in general.

As I mentioned, programs are continually being undertaken to replace assets. Of course, when we replace assets, they also have a limited life, so it is a continual process. Some of the pipes in the metropolitan area have served their economic useful lives. As they do that, they are replaced. In the past couple of years a couple of examples have been the Port Adelaide and Wattle Park to Darlington trunk sewers, although the latter was also an augmentation scheme to improve the service. I do not think that I or anybody else could give a definite answer as to the replacement of all assets, because it is an ongoing process that occurs every year.

I do not disagree with the comments made by the member for Chaffey. It is one of our most difficult problems, and I suggest that the honourable member is quite right in saying that, as time goes by, it will probably become more difficult. However, we are taking every opportunity to find out about modern and newer methods that will assist us in our determination of replacements. I invite the Director-General and Engineer-in-Chief, Mr Lewis, to supplement my answer.

Mr Lewis: Naturally, the question of asset replacement is exercising the minds of all service organisations around the world. Of course, there is a concern in America and certainly in Europe, where people talk about this as being an infrastructure crisis. I think there was some estimation that, in America, there was a \$3 trillion backlog in asset replacement, in other words, the assets were running down. That has caused us to start thinking about the question of asset replacement in South Australia, particularly in respect of water supply and sewerage services and, I suppose for that matter, irrigation services.

I think that we have some advantage over the overseas people, in that a very large percentage of the infrastructure that has been put in place by the Government in the water supply, sewerage and irrigation areas has occurred since the war. I would hesitate to be precise about the percentage, but it would be of the order of 75 per cent of the assets that have been constructed in present day values since the war; so, that would mean that they have a life of less than 40 years. We have estimated that, across the board, our assets would have an average life of about probably 70 years, so the problem in many respects is well down the track. I would say also that many of the sewers will have lives of well over 100 years. I recall that the sewer in Hindley Street and Rundle Street has been there for over 100 years, and it is made of Royal Doulton clay pipes, which were obviously imported at that time.

Approximately 80 per cent of our assets are in the form of water mains and sewers, so they are under the ground and are not seen very much. I wanted to make the point earlier that, while some assets like dams and certain sewers, and so on, may have lives well in excess of 100 years, other assets like electrical switchboards and pumps may have lives of only 25 to 30 years, although the average is 70 years.

When looking at the situation overseas in determining our own strategy as a department to make recommendations to the Government, we have very much adopted the British approach, which the Minister and I looked at overseas earlier this year. Britain's approach is to concentrate on the critical structures, that is, one would make sure that structures like the Mannum-Adelaide pipeline and the Tod-Ceduna trunk mains are in excellent condition. The remainder would be replaced as the need arose. Obviously, it is very easy to deal with small pipes and to get in there and fix them up or replace them in the short term if there is a failure of that sort. However, it would not involve a great disruption to the overall service that the department provided.

The basis of continuing with that work requires some major surveys and monitoring of what we actually have in the ground at the present, and that work is being done. As you are aware, and as the Minister has already stated, there is a certain degree of necessary asset replacement going on straightaway, but we are looking very much towards the new materials and the new methods of replacement, particularly of underground pipes, without digging up the whole system again. Great advances have been made in relation to that in the United Kingdom. I imagine that, by the time we have to get very serious about this matter, the cost of replacing mains in the ground will be much lower than it is on the one for one type of replacement that is carried out at the moment.

After conducting the necessary investigations and having them recorded on our computer new information systems, we will then develop a careful program of asset replacement that I have no doubt will have to be increased beyond the level of replacement that occurs at the present time. However, it certainly could not be classified as a serious, pressing or imminent problem.

Mr KLUNDER: As indicated by the Director-General, assets have been around for some time, but they are either deteriorating or using up their asset lives, and there is still some time to go. However, under this Government and this Minister is it true that the E&WS has for the first time looked seriously at asset replacement on other than the traditional historical cost method?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, we have, and it is a continuing process. I think I answered that question when I replied to certain comments made by the member for Chaffey. I emphasise that this is one of the most important factors, even though the Director-General has said that a crisis is

not imminent. It is important to ensure that our major infrastructure is kept up to a standard. Procedures have been developed to establish a steering committee, investigations are proceeding on new systems for management and accounting, and appropriate methods of assessing depreciation will be determined in the process. This refers not only to assets in the physical sense: we are also considering appropriate methods of assessing depreciation, and that has not occurred before. The honourable member, as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, would be interested to know that.

I referred previously to a book value of about \$750 million. That was a bit of a guess but, nevertheless, notwithstanding costing methods and Government priorities, we must ensure that when we are replacing all the assets we continue to provide a service to the public, because that is the reason for our existence.

Mr KLUNDER: What is the extent of the subsidy provided for country water and sewerage rates, and would it be feasible to introduce a total user pays policy for these country services, as advocated by the member for Mitcham?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: If we did that, people in country areas would be paying considerably more for water than they pay at present. The figures in the Estimates of Payments show that for metropolitan waterworks there was a surplus of \$15.8 million but for country water supply there was a deficit of about \$27 million. For metropolitan sewers there was a surplus of \$10.6 million, but for country sewers there was a deficit of \$6 million. Because of the geography of South Australia, if we insisted on the user pays principle in country areas, we would this year have to find \$41 million, which is a pretty significant sum.

I do not expect that people in country areas should bear that cost, nor do I expect that people in the metropolitan area should pay it. Because of the topography of Adelaide, problems in relation to sewerage here have not been as horrendous as in some other cities. We are not really providing a subsidy—that is a misuse of the word. In general terms, the metropolitan area is footing the bill that results from the difficulties associated with water supply, and those difficulties are faced by any Government or any department that is providing a water service throughout the State. Most of the deputations and demands that come to me are from country areas in regard to expanding the main or providing a service.

There are 33 what we call uneconomical schemes which, if implemented, would further add to the deficit for country water supply. It is a difficult situation. Even though the metropolitan area is assisting (and I do not like the word 'subsidising', although we are paying for the services provided in the whole of the State), the present situation is satisfactory.

Mr KLUNDER: If current value, replacement costs or depreciation were charged to country users on a user pays principle, as advocated by the Liberal Opposition, would that add to the cost of water and sewerage services?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, it would add to the present deficit.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: The Minister would be aware that in about 1980 the then Government made a provision in the budget to clear the Murray River. I noted with some interest that in the *Sunday Mail* it was stated that Captain Veenstra made strong comments about the Government. It was stated:

SA's biggest private tourism operator has slated the State Government for negligence and ineptitude in its management of the Murray River ... 'There are 37 trees which obstruct or partly obstruct the navigational channel', he said ...

'We leave a million dollars a year in Renmark alone, just on wages and the provisions we buy,' he said. 'The Government last

year also made \$152 000 commission from Tourist Bureau bookings for our cruises'.

The Minister might be aware that in about 1980 there was a special allocation in the budget for clearing, dredging and desnagging the Murray River. Captain Veenstra believes that, if he was given the opportunity, he has the resources to cope with that problem. The article further states:

He said the Government was now to undertake another survey with about \$15 000 to be spent on the survey of river problems and another \$15 000 to spend on works. 'That's crazy,' he said. We have people working for us who have surveyed the river. Mr Veenstra said his company had offered to clean the river up if it was reimbursed by the State Government.

What work did the Government undertake last year to dredge and desnag the Murray River? If Captain Veenstra's operation is better situated to ensure that the channel is navigable, perhaps the Government should consider that seriously. Certainly, in the early days of river traffic the industry operated its own desnagging vessels to maintain the waterway. The valid point is made that if it can be done more economically by this private operator compared to the cost incurred by the Government, serious consideration should be given to it.

The Hon. J.W. SLATER: I am certainly well aware of the article in the press and of the strong comments made from time to time by Captain Veenstra. Nevertheless, I am pleased to advise the member for Chaffey that only last Monday Cabinet made a special allocation from the Treasury lines—not from the E & WS Department—for that work. I make clear that I am advised that the Government has no legal responsibility to dredge and desnag the Murray River. However, as the honourable member pointed out, it has become Government practice. I know that when he was Minister quite a sum of money was allocated for that purpose. Last year very little needed to be spent because of the high river flow. Consequently, I understand that no approach was made in that regard. However, because of the lower flow and nature of the river this year there are some snags.

Captain Veenstra asked if he could do the work if the Government provided the funds. I do not suggest that he might not have been able to do the job properly, but we have the equipment, so we will desnag, having first done a survey to make sure that we have located the snags because they are not always in the one spot. They move, depending somewhat on fluctuations of river flow. We will do some work to ensure that the *River Murray Explorer* and the *Murray Princess* can navigate the river. That is not only for Captain Veenstra's purposes but for other river users as well.

Captain Veenstra is the major user but other people besides Murray River Developments use that waterway. The member for Chaffey would also be aware of the proposed river ramble from Renmark to Wellington in 1986. Although the vessels involved are not as large as those of the River Murray Developments operators it is important that the river be navigable for their purpose as well. So we have decided to spend \$35 000 in the immediate future to clear up the snags in the river.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I hope that that is the most effective and economic way of dealing with the problem. Captain Veenstra has identified 37 trees.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That was the situation prevailing when you were Minister; you did the same.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: We took the initiative to do something about it. I am not saying what I did was the ultimate; there may be a better way and, if there is, that is the way we should go. I assure the Minister that the 37 trees identified by Captain Veenstra do not move down the river: they are of enormous weight and are extremely dense. They are locked firm and fast and will take a lot of power to shift. I trust that the problem will be dealt with quickly.

I ask the Minister to refer to the Estimates of Payments at page 222 at which the water filtration plant at Morgan and provision for funding is mentioned.

There is no mention in the estimates of the necessary work that has to be done on the Swan Reach to Stockwell filtration plant. I have always regarded the Swan Reach and Morgan mains lines as an integrated system, and both need a filtration plant if we are effectively to filter water not only for northern towns but for Yorke Peninsula.

Certainly, *naegleria fowleri* has been extremely common on Yorke Peninsula. It is more good luck than judgment that we have not had amoebic meningitis in the Yorke Peninsula area. I am concerned that there is no mention whatsoever of the Swan Reach to Stockwell filtration plant. As an example, the Loxton country lands (on page 222)—Noora rising main, replacement of gulleys—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Klunder): Order! I interrupt the honourable member for the moment. The question he has finished asking deals with a capital line. He is now asking a second question. I am prepared to allow the first question but I prefer that we keep the recurrent and capital lines separate. Is the honourable member prepared to let his first question go and perhaps come back to the second one?

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Very well; perhaps we can find out the situation in relation to the future of the program for the Swan Reach to Stockwell filtration plant.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I am prepared to allow the Minister to answer now but to keep the line separate.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: In the miscellaneous items there is a provision, at page 210 in the estimates, of \$2 890 000. Included in that is the Stockwell water filtration plant, preliminary investigations, \$591 000.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: What is the program commencement date?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: In 1985-86 we have provided \$591 000; in 1986-87 \$1 million; and construction is expected to commence in 1987-88. The forward program is \$4 500 000 in 1987-88; in 1988-89 \$6 500 000 and in 1989-90 \$5 million.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Is it appropriate for me to go on to the other question?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I would prefer that the honourable member did not. It is still a matter of dealing with page 222, which is on the capital line.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: The only reason I wanted to get it in is that I will not have an opportunity after lunch.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the honourable member could leave it for one of his colleagues to ask.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: A number of pensioners do not get the benefit of concessions on water rates because they are serviced by a private water undertaking. Is it the policy of the Government that all pensioners in South Australia should receive the benefit or is it just the pensioners serviced by the Government scheme? In some areas the Government does not have a water supply scheme and relies on a private operation to provide it. Pensioners in that situation are distinctly disadvantaged through not being able to get the concession.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: They will not be disadvantaged much longer, because I am pleased to tell the member for Chaffey that only a week or so ago Cabinet approved a submission under which people in private irrigation areas entitled to pensioner remissions will be eligible for the concession. Legislation is being prepared accordingly. I presume that the honourable member will support that measure when it comes before the House. An inequality existed, and the position will be remedied as soon as possible.

Mr GREGORY: What funding has been allocated and what initiatives are planned to ensure proper water quality

management for the River Murray, the Mount Lofty watersheds and the South-East?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: There are a number of initiatives in regard to water resources management. Strategies are being developed to ensure that every practical option is being considered in minimising the risks of declining water quality in the areas mentioned, because they are strategically important resources and principal areas for the integration of land use and water resources management. This will result in a capability to assess and formulate management plans for specific water resource areas and improvement of the performance of existing legislation by considering more anticipative management methods.

The Government has approved a five year program to address these concerns. It includes the establishment of nine initiatives, and specific tasks within the plan include River Murray salinity mitigation, allocation operation options to be investigated in detail for inclusion within the River Murray Commission and also a water quality plan for the River Murray. As members may be aware, we wish to finalise the supplementary development plan for water quality in the Mount Lofty Ranges. Detailed investigations of longer term water quality management options such as industry guidelines and land use capabilities are being undertaken. As to the South-East, a detailed assessment of the land use and ground water quality relationships involving both irrigated and non-irrigated ground water areas is being undertaken. They are the major initiatives or undertakings that we plan in the immediate future.

Mr GREGORY: Can the Minister advise on the recent program involving the Happy Valley water filtration plant and other work aimed at improving the distribution system?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The work in the Happy Valley filtration plant and associated distribution system, involving a cost of \$22.1 million, was recently considered by this Government. In anticipation, we are providing for expenditure, which in 1984-85 was \$2.9 million. Other costs involved were a 10 megalitre tank at a cost of \$550 000, a larger tank for a pumping main at a cost of \$1 million, and temporary pumping units and distribution mains of 2 580 metres costing \$790 000. Further, \$865 000 is budgeted for 2 300 metres of main from Blackwood to Flagstaff Hill and south to the Onkaparinga River, and we expect that work to be completed by October 1990. I believe the project is yet to be referred to the Public Works Standing Committee, and that will be done shortly.

Mr GREGORY: Can the Minister explain what steps will be taken to upgrade water supplies in some of the rapidly expanding suburbs south of Adelaide and can he provide details of planning for the new Morphett Vale East area?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, I can provide the honourable member with quite a deal of information on this recent innovation. Indeed, in this regard the department has an ongoing commitment also to the Golden Grove area. The Government decided recently to budget something like \$2.243 million for the Morphett Vale East development comprising land north of the Port Stanvac refinery and other areas from O'Halloran Hill to the Onkaparinga River. It is expected that that program will take from 1985-86 to approximately 1990, and features of the scheme include 50 kilometres of mains, one pumping station and three reinforced concrete tanks—one at Morphett Vale, one at O'Halloran Hill and one at Hackham. This subject has been referred to the Public Works Standing Committee.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: Is the Minister aware that the National Water Resources Program, as it has been constituted, has been terminated by the present Federal Government and in its place is a new Federal Water Resources Program? The significant difference between the two is that

much of the National Water Resources Program was funded by way of grants to the States.

I understand from a statement from Canberra that much of the funding available under the new program will be by way of loans. I believe that funding by way of loans rather than grants will have an enormous impact on the next work that must be undertaken. Has the department done an assessment of the effect that this change will have on South Australia?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The honourable member is quite right in saying that there has been a change in the method of funding by the Commonwealth Government. However, I point out that, in addition to the program that we have referred to, for the past two years the State has received specific or special grants for water quality improvements—relating to filtration plants. The grant for 1984-85 was \$8.25 million, and the grant for 1985-86 will be \$12 million. So, in relation to matters such as that raised by the honourable member, we must take that into consideration in assessing overall Commonwealth assistance.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I am looking to the future.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: In that regard, I point out that South Australia has received specific grants for the various programs, and there is no reason why we will not get that sort of assistance for our programs in future years. The 30 per cent assistance for the water filtration program in future will be in the form of a grant, with the remaining 70 per cent being provided by way of a loan. The maximum amount involved is \$5.6 million. We must consider the program in total rather than in pieces.

Projects under the River Murray Valley salinity and drainage program will be funded on a 50 per cent basis, to a maximum, I think, of \$793 000. Of course, the River Torrens flood mitigation scheme is funded on a 40 per cent basis, to a maximum of \$1 million. As I have said, we must consider the implications of the loan program. I am not happy about it. I do not think any of the States were happy about that.

There were discussions about this at the Water Resources Council meeting, at which time it was indicated to us that the proposal might be the form of funding used in future years. None of those present at the meeting accepted that with any great joy. Such a move might certainly have some impact on our program. But, as I have said, I believe that we have been very reasonably treated in the past by the Commonwealth in regard to special purpose grants, which have been advantageous for our overall program. I now invite the Director-General and Engineer-in-Chief, who was also at the Water Resources Council meeting in Darwin, to add to my reply.

Mr Lewis: Going back to the very early stages of the water filtration program and to when it started, the South Australian Government submitted that South Australia had done its work on the sewerage backlog program, which had been funded by the Commonwealth, but needed Commonwealth assistance for the water filtration program. At that point the Commonwealth provided 30 per cent by way of grants and 70 per cent by way of loans for a short period. Shortly afterwards, the Commonwealth discontinued the 70 per cent loans arrangement, and for most of the time until this year it has provided a 30 per cent grant, to a certain limit of funding, with the State providing State loan funding to go with that.

This year the Commonwealth Government has decided that it will only fund that 30 per cent by way of grants and loans. In effect, the Commonwealth has stipulated that 30 per cent of the amount it will provide will be by way of grants, with the remaining 70 per cent from Commonwealth loans. That means that under the federal water resources assistance program the Commonwealth Government is now

funding only 9 per cent of grants in lieu of 30 per cent, as it did in the past.

However, as the Minister has pointed out, in a separate program under 'separate special funding' the Commonwealth Government has provided this year for water quality improvement, an amount of \$12 million which effectively goes against the water filtration program.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: A 'deteriorating water quality in the River Murray' is referred to in the E&WS agency overview (page 5 of the Program Estimates). This matter has been highlighted on a number of occasions. In fact, the Director, as a Commissioner, has indicated that he believes that the water quality at Morgan is deteriorating at the rate of some 6 EC units per annum. Clearly, the situation is deteriorating. While the River Murray Commission has been working very effectively on developing programs to cope with this problem (the initial program estimate is some \$55 million, and it is anticipated that the salinity level at Morgan could be reduced by some 20 per cent, which would be a remarkable achievement), these can continue only if further funds are made available.

The initial program will cost some \$55 million. If funding for the River Murray works continues on the same basis as it has in the past, certainly it will be a very difficult exercise; and we are talking about a total salinity control program of perhaps \$400 million, the present work being only the initial stage. If the States are required to contribute at the same rate as in the past, I believe the program will stick. Human nature being what it is, I cannot really see Victoria and New South Wales putting in countless millions of dollars that would be required working under the old share arrangement largely for the benefit of water quality improvement in South Australia.

I suggest, on the basis of overseas experience, that a more equitable sharing arrangement would be on the basis of a 70 per cent contribution from the Commonwealth with a 10 per cent contribution from each of the three States involved. This is in light of the fact that we are talking about a national resource, as well as the fact that the problems with water quality in South Australia are not of the making of South Australia. I am wondering whether or not this approach has been considered by the South Australian Government and whether the Government has made any overtures to the other States for support for such an approach in an overall endeavour to convince the Federal Government of its worthiness.

In relation to this program costing \$55 million initially, with the total program costing some \$400 million, I believe that if we are serious the only way it will ever be achieved is on the basis of that sort of cost sharing between the States and the Commonwealth. If we cannot reach agreement on that I think that much of the excellent work done in the last year or so by the River Murray Commission will have been very much a waste of time. With all the best will in the world, if the project cannot be put into effect, then we will have just been playing with words.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I certainly do not disagree with the sentiments expressed by the member for Chaffey regarding the problems that exist. The cost sharing arrangements between the States and the Commonwealth are certainly not adequate. They certainly impose a burden on South Australia, specifically in regard to salinity interception works.

Over the last three years the Government has been working towards improved and coordinated management of the land and water resources of the Murray-Darling Basin. Even though we have been working through the River Murray Commission on improved water management particularly with respect to salinity and representations to my ministerial counterparts in the Commonwealth, New South Wales and Victoria, the member would be aware that the River Murray

Commission undertook an exercise during the past six months or so. All governments have responded, outlining certain courses of action to address the salinity problem.

Arising out of that exercise the River Murray Commission produced a document giving an interim salinity objective (and the member for Chaffey referred to this in his question) of 800 EC units at Morgan for 95 per cent of the time, which represents an estimated improvement of 300 EC units. The River Murray Commission proposed that participating Governments endorse the following actions: that the River Murray Commission proceed during 1985-86 with a program of investigation of preliminary designs, costing \$500 000; for a package of cost effective salinity interception works which go a long way towards achieving the interim objectives; and the preliminary estimated cost of the work is about \$55 million. Quite rightly so, and as I have said, and as the member for Chaffey has said, the cost sharing arrangements have always been, in my view, something that we ought to be pursuing. South Australia can be disadvantaged, because it is the State in which most of the works need to be done to mitigate salinity.

I believe the River Murray Commission has done a substantial amount of work, but there has always been a problem in regard to the three State Governments and the Commonwealth coming to some solution not only in relation to cost sharing, as mentioned, but in other matters relating to management of the Murray-Darling Basin overall. The South Australian Government strongly endorses the initiatives of the River Murray Commission and it even went further. The Premier has proposed a heads of Government meeting to give impetus to the proposals. That meeting is currently being organised and we anticipate a meeting not only of Ministers of Water Resources but Ministers of Agriculture and Environment, because we believe that water management does not stand alone: it is interrelated with land management. I recall the member for Chaffey saying exactly that many times in this House.

The four Governments have agreed that Ministers of each Government concerned will meet in Adelaide on 15 and 16 November this year to discuss arrangements for the improved and coordinated management of natural resources in the Murray-Darling Basin, and arrangements are well advanced. The officers of the various States have met and an agenda is being prepared. No doubt the agenda will include the identification and discussion of land management, water management, the environment, and financial and institutional issues, because they are important in the establishment of a program to deal with these problems.

I think that is an historic opportunity that has not existed before for the Governments of the three States and the Commonwealth to come together to establish ways and means of not only dealing with resources but I am sure of dealing with the financial implications relating to this matter. It will be the first time that the problems of the Murray-Darling Basin will be considered on a truly basin approach, and as such it is an historic occasion which I believe will be of benefit to everyone concerned, particularly South Australia.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I do not disagree with anything the Minister has said; in fact, he has repeated what I said in my question. However, what I am saying is that the key to this whole business is the funding arrangements. If the funding arrangements are going to remain on the basis of one-quarter each, I venture to state that there will be enormous problems with Victoria and New South Wales when it comes to spending the sort of money we are talking about.

I believe that because South Australia has most to lose if this work does not go ahead, the South Australian Government ought to be pushing for all it is worth to get a new basis for funding arrangements accepted, because the work

will not go ahead on the old funding arrangements: it is as simple as that. There is no doubt whatsoever in my mind that the commission has the ability to determine the works that are necessary, and, fundamentally, as far as the management is concerned, the States and the Commonwealth are in general agreement.

I believe that the intent of the new River Murray Waters Agreement, although it is not the ultimate, is being honoured by all parties and that the agreement is working extremely well. However, the whole thing will collapse in a big heap if we cannot resolve the financial side.

When one talks about many millions of dollars, I cannot see New South Wales and Victoria readily coming to the party to do the work to achieve that 830 EC units at Morgan 90 per cent of the time merely for the benefit of South Australian users. Certainly, considering the points at which metropolitan Adelaide water is taken from the river, during a drought period when the demand from metropolitan Adelaide is at its greatest, we are considering water of 1200 EC or 1300 EC units, so it is water that is well outside the World Health Organisation's standard. It is a matter of South Australia pushing for all it is worth and using all its skills to convince New South Wales, Victoria, and the Commonwealth to agree on a new funding arrangement, because it will not proceed on the old one.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I do not take that confrontationist approach to the other States and the Commonwealth, because that is not the way to go. The ministerial meeting to be held in Adelaide in November will present an opportunity for us to resolve any differences that may have evolved over a long period. We should be clear about one thing: regarding salinity mitigation, the cost of capital works is shared on a 50-50 basis between the Commonwealth and States, whereas the basis of the sharing of the cost of River Murray Commission works is a quarter from the Commonwealth Government and each of the three State Governments. So there is a difference.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: When one considers the total scene of the Murray-Darling Basin, the work must be done on a three States-Commonwealth basis, and whether the work that must be done to achieve the required salinity levels is carried out in New South Wales, Victoria or South Australia is totally immaterial. The commission should determine the priorities for the work and where it should be done. If that work is to be done in New South Wales that is fine by me. We must get away from 50-50 funding between the States concerned, because New South Wales and Victoria will not carry out work that is necessary to improve our situation, on a 50-50 basis with the Commonwealth, largely for our benefit, even if they are creating the problem. We must try to negotiate with the Commonwealth the acceptance of the concept of a national resource. Until the Commonwealth is prepared to pick up 70 per cent, leaving 10 per cent for each of the three States, I do not believe that the works program that has been identified by the commission will get off the ground.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I agree with the honourable member's comments, but I should like the Director-General and Engineer-in-Chief (Mr Lewis), who is the South Australian representative on the River Murray Commission, to address the Committee on the River Murray works and the sources of funding them.

Mr Lewis: I refer to the recommendation of the commission in respect of salinity interception works. There is a package of these, mainly in South Australia, because that is where they are most cost effective: taking salt water from the river in a small body of water is a better and more efficient method than keeping salt out of the water farther up. Most of the schemes in the package were in South Australia, although two were in the upstream States.

The recommendation from the commission to the four governments stated that the four governments should fund a program of investigation and preliminary design for those schemes, which would cost \$4.5 million.

The recommendation also stated that that sum should be funded through the River Murray Commission and shared on the basis of 50 per cent Commonwealth and one-sixth from each State in order to solve the problem that has been pointed out by the Hon. Peter Arnold: that is, that, although we are considering an objective, the major expenditure on investigation would be in South Australia. The Commission also stated that its preliminary estimates, which are only rough because the designs have not been completed, for those works would be about \$55 million. It further stated that it would come back to governments subsequent to getting a program finalised with recommendations for cost sharing arrangements. Clearly, that is a difficult area for the River Murray Commissioners to deal with. Some Commissioners are certainly given what could be called riding instructions on funding when they come to commission meetings and that is not uncommon.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Are you given such instructions?

Mr Lewis: No, we merely go for more money. A number of options would be presented to the governments on a very different proportion of payments by various governments both in terms of capital costs and of operating costs. This would get into the governmental area, which is right because governments would consider what cost sharing arrangements should operate.

One of the objectives of the ministerial meeting to which the Minister previously referred will be to set up mechanisms by which those sorts of cost sharing arrangements can be dealt with by governments. It is a very difficult system at the moment because the Murray River Commission's recommendations go out to four separate governments and we then wait on their responses. Obviously, governments need to get together to consider those recommendations.

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

Mr KLUNDER: I understand that the department has recently introduced pensioner remissions for water, sewerage and council rates for those who are beneficial owners of units within resident funded retirement developments. Of course, that is after they satisfy the general income requirements of the pensioner remission scheme. Can you indicate when this came into being, how it is being received by the people who are recipients of the scheme, and what is the likely cost to the Government of the water and sewerage rate remissions for a full year?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Approximately six weeks ago I announced that the pensioner remission scheme would be extended to include those pensioners who own and live in units and commercially developed resident funded retirement villages. The one to which I specifically referred was the Sturt Retirement Village about which the member for Brighton had, over a period of time, made representations to us in regard to treating those people in the same manner as pensioners who are eligible for those concessions. We decided to treat owners of those units in exactly the same way as an owner of a unit in a strata title development.

As with rate concessions granted at present, the extension of the scheme will apply to TPI disability pensioners and social security or veteran affairs pensioners who are eligible because they hold a pensioner health benefits card or a State concession card. It is necessary for those persons to apply for the concession, and forms are available from the local council offices or from the E&WS Department, which

actually administers the scheme. The scheme costs us approximately \$235 000 in administrative costs.

The remission scheme itself is in the community welfare budget, so we asked eligible people to apply. The actual development of these retirement villages has involved a new method of owning land in this State that unfortunately was not covered under present legislation to allow the granting of those remissions, so we intend to act as quickly as possible to amend the legislation. At the moment that procedure is in train. Mr Killmier might be able to assist, because I understand that there are some complications. It is the Government's intention to make it possible for those people to be eligible for those concessions in this current financial year. I invite the Director, Administration and Finance, to supplement my answer.

Mr Killmier: The difficulty that arose for administration in relation to this proposal was that, whilst it would be feasible to treat each separate unit similar to the manner in which strata title units are separately assessed in regard to water and sewerage rates, land tax is currently assessed as one total entity. Meetings were held involving the E&WS Department, as administrators of the pensioner concession scheme, and the Treasury Department, who are the collectors of land tax. The methodology that could be applied to ensure that concessions were granted in both cases was discussed.

In relation to land tax, persons who are occupiers of their principal place of residence are not obliged to pay land tax. I understand that people who had contributed, as in the case of the Sturt Retirement Village, or made contributions towards the total cost of the project, have imposed upon them quite high land taxes. This would really have placed those people at a disadvantage when compared with people who bought strata title units in a normal development, so it was just a question of sorting out the administration of it.

I believe that, once that has occurred, the necessary legislation to amend the appropriate Acts (and I presume they are the Rates and Taxes Remission Act, the Waterworks and Sewerage Acts, and the Land Tax Act) will be submitted and, subject to the passing of the necessary legislation, those people can be given the benefit of the remissions.

Retirement villages as such are a new innovation. If you like, they are halfway houses between age cottage homes and being an owner of a property in a strata title arrangement. Cottage homes are heavily financed by the Federal Government, whereas retirement villages are virtually self financed—they rely on contributions from the individuals.

Mr KLUNDER: Can you indicate when the flood mitigation scheme is likely to be completed in the Athelstone area and the likely cost of such a scheme?

The Hon. J. W. Slater: Essentially, all the flood mitigation work in the western suburbs will be completed this year, and residents in that area will have full protection against the one in 200 year flood prediction made by the original consultants, B.C. Tonkin and Associates. Some of the work in the eastern suburbs will be commenced this year and completed in 1986-87. The anticipated expenditure is \$551 000. The whole scheme, including the linear park work, will not be completed until 1988-89, and this includes work relating to the Athelstone area. There is no necessity for flood mitigation work at Athelstone—essentially, it involves the linear park undertakings.

Regarding the Torrens River-Athelstone channel, the capacity is considered to be sufficient to cope with flooding, so the only requirement is to acquire private land. This is programmed for 1986-87 and 1987-88 for the linear park in the Athelstone area, and it is proposed that it will be completed in the 1988 bicentennial year. In 1985-86, work on the scheme will be undertaken in the area between Darley

Road and the Paradise bridge, which coincidentally is in the new seat of Todd. That will assist in enhancing that area between Darley Road and the Paradise bridge. Essentially, the work package for flood mitigation will be completed this year, and work on the linear park, particularly at Athelstone, is dependent upon the acquisition of land in the future.

The department and the Government have experienced problems in regard to land acquisition, at least from a cost point of view, but the project director, David Farwell, advises that the work can be substantially completed. As I said previously, the Federal Government has assisted the State in the natural areas enhancement program, especially in Kidman Park, Windsor Gardens and Henley Beach. That has stepped up the program. No flood mitigation work is required at Athelstone, but land will be acquired for the linear park project.

Mr KLUNDER: Is the department's apprentice training program still operating and, if so, how many apprentices will be trained this year as compared with past years?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: This matter is one of public interest. It is proposed that 150 apprentices will be indentured to the department this year. Last year 112 were proposed but in actual fact 147 were indentured. This involves apprentices in various stages of their indentures. In the past three years I have been fortunate enough to be invited to the prize giving ceremony and presentation of indentures to apprentices at Ottoway. The workshop at Ottoway is magnificent, and the training that the apprentices receive is superb.

We train apprentices not only for the benefit of the department: under the Commonwealth Goyas scheme we train apprentices who are indentured to private employers. This is a one-year apprentice training scheme and is part of the Ottoway undertaking. In 1985-86, 40 additional apprentices will be trained under that scheme, so the total number of apprentices to be trained at the Ottoway workshops is 190.

Mr GUNN: I am appalled that it would appear that once again people in the isolated parts of the State have been treated with utter contempt. People living in isolated communities, such as those west of Ceduna or at Hawker, can read in the newspaper on a daily basis that the Government has millions of dollars to attempt to buy votes or to squander on projects which, to put it mildly, the community could do without. I can cite two examples. The Minister of Water Resources is also the Minister of Recreation and Sport, but he sits idly by while the cost of a project increases from \$4 million to \$8 million although he cannot provide \$1 million to extend the water service west of Ceduna, to replace the Smoky Bay main, to supply water to Denial Bay or to improve water quality at Hawker—even though Hawker is the gateway to the Flinders Ranges, one of the most important tourist areas of the State.

However, this week we see that the Government can subsidise loans from building societies to a total of \$3 million. The Government is subsidising the economic policy of the Commonwealth Government, which has allowed the value of the dollar to drop so low that interest rates must be increased to compensate. My constituents, who are hard working Australians and who only want a fair go, will not be provided with the means to cope. All the funds come from the one bag of money, and this Minister is a member of the Cabinet. The Government has provided at least \$3.5 million to subsidise the Festival Theatre. I am not against the Festival Theatre but those who use that facility should pay. It is well and good that big arts centres have been built at Port Pirie, Whyalla and in the Riverland, but they are subsidised—why should my constituents be left out on a limb? I cannot even get an undertaking. I was absolutely

horrified this week to receive a letter dated 18 September as follows:

I refer to your letter of 15 July 1985 requesting that water be carted to the tanks at Charra. As the district has not been declared 'drought affected', I do not consider it appropriate for the Engineering and Water Supply Department to cart water to replenish conservation tanks. I would point out that there is no obligation on the part of the Government, either under the provisions of the Water Conservation Act 1936-1975 or the terms of the respective leases for the tanks, to maintain a continuous supply of water to the tanks.

I wonder what would happen if some of the big tanks at, say, Mitcham were empty. I bet that the Government would have an obligation then. It was further stated:

Water is available at a cost of 56 cents a kilolitre from the Engineering and Water Supply Department's standpipe at Ceduna. Alternatively, water may be available from other water conservation tanks in the district, some of which still hold a reasonable supply.

I point out to the Minister and whoever wrote that letter that one of my constituents west of Ceduna came to see me yesterday and said that for the first time in 36 years he has not sown crops west of Ceduna. Previously he has sown and sold grain, but he will not sell one bushel this year, even though, it has been said, there are no drought conditions. I am appalled because I have to speak in these terms to try to get a bit of justice. The budget is for \$3 500 million. I can give examples where my constituents are being absolutely discriminated against: I would be failing in my obligation as a member of this Parliament if I did not express these views in the strongest terms.

I often drive past that great white elephant for which the Minister is responsible at North Adelaide, the cost of which has overrun by \$4 million. If that was a private enterprise project, the head of the organisation would have been sacked—and that is what should happen. But when I ask for \$500 000 for one financial year so that water can be supplied to Denial Bay and Penong, one would think that I was asking for the Crown jewels. Not only has the Government adopted an unreasonable attitude because it will not extend water or give an indication in this matter but also it will not agree to cart water.

I guarantee that, if the Government thought that the 500 votes out there would make a difference to its winning Government, we would have it gold plated. One sees what it tried to do over the years at Mount Gambier: it spent millions of dollars trying to get back that seat. Yet, my electorate has been discriminated against. Those are the oldest settled areas of this State. The people there get little or nothing from the Government, yet they work hard and are entitled to a fair go. I read from a letter I received on 20 September, as follows:

Due to the severely drought affected areas west of Ceduna, we are applying to have water carted to Government tanks—namely Marla, Wire Gate . . . The amount we will be needing is approximately 250 000 gallons per week as from mid-October. This application follows only six inches of rain in the past 12 months and as a result little or no run off has occurred.

Those are the facts. Is the Minister prepared to rescind the letter he wrote on 18 September? I sent him a telex on 26 September, which reads:

Would you please initiate the necessary action to have water carted to Government tanks west of Ceduna due to the extremely dry conditions? Would you also consider having water carted to some private tanks or arrange for a subsidy to private land holders? This is an urgent matter. I have been contacted by the Charra branch of the UF&S.

I am not asking for millions of dollars. Money can be found to subsidise the metropolitan transport system and various other projects—no problem at all. It is amazing where the Premier can get \$3 million to subsidise building society interest. He knows he is within three months of an election!

I feel very sorry for those people slugged with unreasonable interest rates, but why can we not find \$1 million to

assist my constituents? What about the shocking quality of water at Hawker? It is well below World Health Organisation standards. I could go on at great length, because I feel very angry about what has happened to my constituents. It is all right for members opposite to think it funny, but if it affected their electorates it would be different.

On a daily basis we have to put up with people getting up and asking stupid Dorothy Dix questions about minor matters when we are talking about a program that would create long term jobs for people and would do something for industry. Two industries have made this country: one is the rural industry and the other is the mining industry, but they have to take damned second place in relation to Government spending. I have an obligation, and I do not intend to take one pace back from it. I was elected to represent these people. Until I get some justice for them I will raise these matters on every occasion, as often and as long as is necessary.

Mr KLUNDER: The Liberal Government did not fix it for you.

Mr GUNN: Do not worry about the Liberal Government. In the 15 years I have been in this place it has been dominated by socialist Governments. Do not come at that old trick. That is the sort of thing I expect from the honourable member, but he will not be here after the next election. The responsibility is right here with the State Government. I look forward to the Minister's response. He will need more than his press secretary to help him, too.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I find it quite difficult to answer what I describe as a series of questions—a broadside about problems of the member for Eyre. I suggest that he has criticised me personally, and I take exception to some of his remarks, which I do not think are quite warranted, because I am always fair and just. Any Government or Minister must on economic grounds consider whatever is sought to be provided for any part of the State. I will deal with one thing at a time. I sent a letter to the member for Eyre in regard to the Charra branch of the UF&S and, as stated in that letter. I have since referred the matter to our Minister of Agriculture. I asked that he or his officers advise me on their intention in regard to declaring a drought-stricken area. If that advice is received, I am prepared then to reply in the affirmative. This has been the way in which it has operated in the past, whether it be myself as Minister or somebody of the same political complexion as the member for Eyre.

I have received numerous deputations asking for extensions of water mains and services, almost without exception from members of the Opposition. I am always pleased to receive such deputations. Honourable members cannot deny that I have always given them a fair hearing. If the opportunity is there and we can do something economically, I have responded. However, we have 33 uneconomic schemes throughout South Australia. Almost invariably, those representations come from members of the Opposition. We have to determine priorities.

I will not go into the argument, but this morning I mentioned the cost to Government—no matter whether it is Labor or Liberal—of country water supply or sewerage compared to the metropolitan area and the return to Government that accrues from those operations. I will not repeat that, but in order to carry out at least some of those schemes we look either to the Commonwealth Government for assistance or, alternatively, to those people who will benefit.

I cite the example of Penong, west of Ceduna, and the proposition which the member for Eyre has referred to me and has mentioned almost continually in this place during the past three years. I respect his viewpoint and admire his tenacity of purpose, but I cannot justify it economically for about 17 farmers at an approximate cost, depending on the

type of scheme provided, of \$5 million or \$6 million. It is not just to supply water west of Ceduna: it is to upgrade the system to enable that to occur. That is not a simple black and white equation.

I would like to be able to provide the service, but I also have to consider one other aspect which affects Government—recurrent costs which can occur in supplying additional water. The Opposition cannot have it both ways. We were criticised this morning in regard to the proposed deficit of \$22 million, yet at the same time we are besieged by representations from the Opposition—including the member for Eyre—for increased services in country areas. I find it quite perplexing and difficult, even though, as I said, I respect the honourable member's tenacity of purpose and the fact that he is representing his constituents and trying to do the best he can for them.

Basically, it is to provide a stock watering system to assist in improving and maintaining properties. Unless we have considerable Commonwealth assistance or some program can be arranged where beneficiaries or participants at least provide some capital, I am afraid that the Government is not in a position to carry out that work. I cannot give an undertaking, despite representations by the honourable member, to provide that service because it is not economically feasible.

Mr GUNN: Let us get one or two matters very clear. It is the responsibility of every member of this House to bring to the attention of the Government projects which they believe are in the interests of their constituents. The Government has trotted out from time to time the theory that the Opposition is advocating extra expenditure on behalf of the Treasury. The Ministers set the priorities and we could go into a general economic debate about the directions in which the Government has taken the finances of this State. We could at length go into areas where money could justifiably be pruned from the budget. That is not the purpose of this Committee, except to say that there are areas of Government from which funds could be pruned.

The Minister says that I am talking about 17 farmers: that is not correct. I do not know who did the calculation. I did not have a very adequate education, but I can calculate better than that. The water scheme would be designed to serve the people of Denial Bay, the community at Koonibba, and gradually go through to Penong. A lot more than 17 people are involved in that exercise. Those people are asking not for a gold-plated scheme but for a reasonable supply of water. They do not mind if they have to have tanks for on-site storage as most already have them.

I happened to turn to page 243 of the Auditor-General's Report, which refers to the financial position of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust and showed an operating deficit of \$6 million for the year. The State Government made a contribution of \$4.8 million in grants towards the deficit. That money has to be found. Let us give a few examples to let people know that I have not made an unreasonable request. For the Jam Factory, \$130 000 loss: I do not know the position, but I would assume that there was a considerable subsidy in that operation.

Mr Gregory: Don't you think we should give that subsidy to the Jam Factory?

Mr GUNN: I am simply saying that, if it is a matter of priority, it is a matter of necessities of life. We can find money for all sorts of projects. I have been given the responsibility of representing 84 per cent of this State—the most isolated part of it—and I am going to see, to the best of my ability, that the people in those areas get a bit of justice. They have not had it to date. Some people say that, in round figures, \$100 million is put towards subsidising the STA. We can find \$130 million to bring the O-Bahn

into this city. Under the Minister's lines for the E&WS Department—

Mr Gregory interjecting:

Mr GUNN: I am not saying that we should not have an adequate transport system in this State, but if the people in Adelaide are entitled to all this money, why cannot the people in outlying areas have a reasonable cut of the cake and a bit of fairness and justice? I thought the Labor Party and the honourable member stood up for justice and equality. There is no equality in the way funds are presently disbursed. I defy the honourable member and his colleagues to detail that the money is being distributed on a fair and equitable basis. I could go through nearly every department in the State Government and cite examples of where people in isolated communities have not been given a fair go. I would be failing in my duty if I did not bring up these issues.

According to the Auditor-General's Report, we spend \$29 million on the River Torrens. My constituents want only about \$1.5 million of that to fix the problem. That money can be spent elsewhere, and everybody claps their hands and smiles. We have a few openings, people pat one another on the back and say 'Jolly good show', have a great time, have a few noggins, and everybody is happy. I have seen all that—Ministers tap one another on the chest and say that it is a great show, but my constituents and I want something done. We go through all the rigmarole and we are told that it is not going to give a return on investment. What sort of return on investment are we going to get from the Linear Park development to the value of \$29 million? We have all patted one another on the back and said what a fine lot of fellows we are and what a great thing we have done for the people in filtering Adelaide water. Great stuff! Half of it goes onto lawns and half down toilets, but at least the people have got water.

My constituents not only west of Ceduna, but in Venus Bay, Port Kenny, Hawker, Terowie and various other spots in my electorate have problems—they do not get any running water. The exercise that took place at Coober Pedy was a scheme that could be put in well below the cost that the E&WS Department estimated. The Minister ought to look closely at such schemes. Those people are asking only for a reasonable scheme, not a gold-plated one. I look forward to the Minister's response, as his answer was not adequate.

I am not here to make personal attacks on the Minister, but my criticism of him has been as Minister—one of the 13 people who currently have responsibility for expending the money that the Parliament approves. I have to make such comparisons as the Aquatic Centre. I would be derelict in my duty if I did not do so. We have an overrun of that magnitude whilst we are told that there is no money. Money can flow out of Treasury quicker than water runs out of Mount Bold. I find it difficult to comprehend that the Minister considers that I have been unreasonable or that the requests of my constituents do not deserve better treatment than they have received.

I do not care who is in government—they are heading for a real fight with me. I have had some experience in using the processes of this House, and I intend to continue using them. I will keep members here all night if necessary until those people get justice. People said that they would never get the 10 per cent surcharge, would never see the road sealed to Western Australia or see the Stuart Highway. These things have now come into being, thank God!

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Thanks to a Labor Government.

Mr GUNN: I could go on until 6 p.m. if the Minister would like me to. People said that we would never get water to Kimba, but the money was found after one or two of us talked to the Prime Minister of the day. The State Govern-

ment can find the money for these other projects, but I suppose it depends on whether the Minister can get the ear of the Premier. We have an urbanised Government that does not understand the problems of country people.

Membership:

Mr Ingerson substituted for the Hon. P.B. Arnold.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The honourable member's comments, rather than constituting a question, formed more a policy statement for the West Coast. The member for Eyre mentioned two projects. I point out that we are dealing with the E&WS budget. One of the projects referred to was the Linear Park Flood Mitigation Scheme, and I remind the honourable member that that project was initiated by the former Liberal Government. The present Government has run with it because we believed that it was a good initiative. Accordingly, the total Government investment in that scheme will be very substantial. I put to the member for Eyre and the Committee that Governments decide on priorities which do not always please us individually or our constituents.

For example, the suburban electorate that I represent is basically a Housing Trust area, and there are many things I could jump up and down about concerning the need for various facilities in the area. However, in trying to do the best that I can for my constituents, I tackle matters of concern in a much quieter way perhaps. One matter of concern is the lack of open space and recreational areas. In years gone by the Housing Trust was somewhat remiss in not providing sufficient open space for recreational use. However, that was 20 to 25 years ago, and now one must do one's best to remedy such situations to the best possible extent.

I understand that the West Coast has a problem in relation to water. That problem will not just be resolved by an extension of supply to Denial Bay and west of Ceduna to Penong, Koonibba, or anywhere else. If a water supply is extended to places of that nature, what usually happens is that the population grows and some two to six years later (or even more) it is found that that water supply needs to be upgraded or supplemented.

I think that the achievement of Governments and of the Engineering and Water Supply Department in providing a service to the West Coast, to a difficult geographical location with a severe climate, is nothing short of marvellous. The member for Eyre should appreciate (and I mentioned this this morning) the costs involved. If the system were privatised and a 'user pays' system were implemented, water would cost something like \$4 a kilolitre. As I said, you cannot have your cake and eat it, too.

It is all very well to make comparisons between projects: indeed, as I have said, the Government has priorities. In relation to the Aquatic Centre (and it has water in it—and it does not leak as has been suggested by members of the Opposition), the previous Government also put forward a proposal to establish an Aquatic Centre, but at a different site to that which we finished up with. I will not go into the details, as no doubt the matter will be raised in questions on the recreation and sport lines, but I believe quite honestly that, had the project proceeded at the proposed Hindley Street site, it would have cost much more than has the centre established at North Adelaide, and probably would have been much less appropriate.

To some extent country people are disadvantaged because of the very nature of South Australia's geography. However, no Government can be blamed for that. I am aware of the needs of 33 areas of the State, and no doubt there are others also. Representations were made by the member for Flinders on behalf of people from Coffin Bay, and through the CEP scheme we were able to provide a service. We believed

that that was a priority. I think the scheme will be completed in the next few months—sometime before the end of this calendar year—and will provide a much needed water supply to Coffin Bay.

This work has been undertaken, first, for health reasons and, secondly, because the Commonwealth Government, through the CEP scheme, was able to provide us with funds and, with a contribution by the department to supplement those funds, we were able to provide that service to the residents of Coffin Bay. Over time, that is how we must attack such matters. The cost of all these schemes would amount to some \$55 million to \$60 million, and that is only capital costs. As I have said before, one must take into consideration recurrent costs, which place a further burden on not only metropolitan ratepayers but country ratepayers.

Mr GUNN: I appreciate the information that the Minister has given me. I am delighted that the Government saw its way clear to finance the projects at Coffin Bay and Coober Pedy. I am delighted: no one could be happier than I about that. I am fully aware of these schemes. My family has lived on Eyre Peninsula for four generations, so I know something about the area. The Minister said that the Coffin Bay work was undertaken in part for health reasons, and that is excellent.

However, I point out to the Minister that the Building Act stipulates that people living at Denial Bay must have septic tanks. The only difference between Coffin Bay and Denial Bay I would think is that rainfall at Coffin Bay is 17 or 18 inches, while at Denial Bay it is 12 inches. There is no possibility of getting underground water at Denial Bay. Further, people cannot build dams; they must have concrete tanks.

I put to the Minister that the criteria that he used in relation to Coffin Bay are certainly sitting there staring him right in the face for Denial Bay. I put to the Minister in the clearest possible way that in the year of 1985, for a town 10 or 12 kilometres from Ceduna, one of the fastest growing country towns in South Australia, it is beyond understanding that the Government says, 'No, we can't do it.' One has only to look around the State: within eyesight of this building that we are sitting in we can see evidence of millions of dollars having been spent. I find it hard to understand why one must continually be butting one's head against what appears to be a brick wall. The Minister said a little while ago that there were 33 uneconomic schemes.

Can the Minister provide an up-to-date list and the approximate cost of those schemes? I further hope that he will be happy to allow me to have discussions with his senior officers about these matters so that I can attempt to explain how it might be possible to provide schemes to these areas at perhaps less cost than the original costing. The Coober Pedy project proved that an adequate scheme can be provided at cost. I understand that the Minister is restricted by legislation in relation to setting certain standards, but perhaps funds could be provided by someone other than the Government.

I cannot make the point too strongly in my judgment that it should be a high priority of the Government to provide these people with a reasonable supply of water. I have a series of other questions that I wish to ask in relation to this matter, but I have already asked my three questions.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I think the member for Eyre has repeated what he has asked in his two previous questions, but this question also refers to Denial Bay. I will be happy to provide the requested list and the updated costs of the 33 uneconomic schemes. I will also be happy to give him the opportunity to have discussions with my officers. I know that on previous occasions he and people from the West Coast have had an opportunity to discuss the provision of what he called 'less than gold plated schemes'. We do not

have 'gold plated schemes', because our schemes are to a standard required by legislation. However, I will certainly provide him with an opportunity to meet my officers.

I want to make clear to the member for Eyre and the members of this Committee that, regardless of whoever is the Minister, priorities must be assessed, and it is not always easy to make such assessments in relation to uneconomic schemes. We rate such schemes in order of economic return, and the criterion is to attain a return of 15 per cent or thereabouts. In some cases, I am not sure exactly which ones, the return is only 5 per cent. It depends on the type of scheme we provide, but west of Ceduna the return is minimal. I will be happy to provide the list, and the member for Eyre will be provided with an opportunity to discuss it in detail with my officers.

Mr ASHENDEN: My question relates to the pumping stations that service the Houghton-Paracombe-Inglewood-Hermitage area. The Minister has received much correspondence from me about this matter, I have raised it in Parliament, and he has received a deputation about it. I am sure he is well aware of the concern felt by residents of that Houghton-Paracombe-Inglewood-Hermitage area about water supply during a fire in the area or when a fire is threatening.

At the moment, the pumps that service this area are electric, and the Electricity Trust's latest decision to disconnect power to any area threatened by fire means that the pumping stations will be inoperable not only when a fire is in the area but also even if one is threatening. A member of the ALP has told residents in that area that the situation is not as bad as I have painted it because another electricity connection now comes in from the eastern side of the area to which I am referring rather than from the city side. However, it does not matter whether the electric power comes from the eastern or city side of that area if the electricity is to be disconnected when a fire is threatened or when a fire is in the area, because no power will be available to those pumping stations.

I have long advocated the installation of diesel auxiliary pumps. I have had detailed discussions with a person who has great expertise in this area, and he will be providing me with written details and plans for diesels to be installed cheaply. The Minister has always argued that the main reason for not providing diesel pumps is their cost. It has been put to me that the cost could be very much reduced by using smaller diesel motors that would be able to operate the generators. In the past it has been believed that the diesel motors that would be installed would have to be of sufficient power to pump the water through their own capacity.

It has been put to me by a constituent who is an engineer that, by the use of gearing and belt drives, the present electric part of the pump could be used with belt drive from much smaller capacity diesels. They would still provide water and the cost would be greatly reduced. Has the Minister's department considered that type of installation and, if not, what will be done, bearing in mind the representations that have been made to the Minister in writing, personally and in the Parliament?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Certainly I am aware of the question that has been raised by the member on a number of occasions. He would be aware of the ministerial statement based on a report that was produced by the E&WS Department in respect of the provision of auxiliary pumps not only in the Houghton-Paracombe-Inglewood-Hermitage area but also in fire risk areas throughout the State. That report, which is supported by the CFS, indicated clearly that there were other more cost effective ways of fighting fires than the provision of auxiliary pumps.

Cost is not the only consideration, although it is a significant one. A point made specifically in the report is that we

have a number of high fire risk areas. An unfortunate circumstance in the Adelaide Hills, which is also a fact of life, is that the greater the development the greater is the risk of damage, loss of life and loss of property in the event of a major bushfire. I am convinced that in a situation such as that which prevailed on Ash Wednesday no number of auxiliary pumps would serve a useful purpose because of the nature of the day and the extent of the damage that would occur.

Having received a deputation from the ALERT Group and residents of the area, I promised them that we would investigate perhaps other means of supplying water. They contended that water should be available in the case of fire, and I do not disagree with that. Although I am not entirely familiar with the whole area, I have a vague knowledge of the geography of the district. We are still conducting a study of a number of means of improving the water supply by providing extra fire hydrants off the mains, thus enabling the CFS and firefighters generally to fill their tanks much more quickly, because it is important to stop the fire as quickly as possible before it becomes a major fire.

Let us hope that the situation that we experienced on Ash Wednesday never recurs because, whether we had portable or stationary auxiliary pumps to supplement the power supply or to maintain power for pumping, it would not make one iota of difference in that situation. Nevertheless, I am conscious of the position, and I want to do as much as possible to minimise the effects of fire not only in the area that has been referred to but throughout the high fire risk areas of South Australia. The E&WS Department is responsible for providing water not only in that sort of area but also for domestic purposes, as well as in the unfortunate instance of a fire. We are conscious of the whole problem, and I wish to provide the greatest chance possible to minimise the effects of loss of property and life.

I do not believe, however, that that is the full answer. Either the honourable member or his colleague the member for Kavel has raised in this place almost every year the suggestion that the undergrowth be cleared. Indeed, that is a far more effective way of stopping a fire, because the fire is stopped before it gains momentum. Therefore, it is a far more effective method of fire mitigation than auxiliary pumps would be. Speaking from memory, I believe that about \$300 000 was allocated to provide pumps in specific high fire risk areas. However, it is not only a matter of providing pumps; they must also be maintained to ensure that they are in a workable condition because, in an emergency situation, it is no good having them there if they do not work correctly. Certainly, the matter has not been forgotten. We are surveying the area to see whether we can improve the supply of water for firefighting purposes.

Mr ASHENDEN: The Minister raised a number of points which I would like to take up. I accept the fact that, when a fire burns as the Ash Wednesday fire burned, it would not matter how much water was available at the time of the fire. On Ash Wednesday, however, most of the property damage in the Houghton, Paracombe, Inglewood and Hermitage area occurred after the fire had passed, because the fire moved extremely quickly on that day. The people living in the Houghton township said that it was only a matter of less than a minute from the time the fire was at the top of Ansteys Hill until it had passed and was in Inglewood. It was a crown fire which, fanned by strong winds, moved extremely quickly.

Some of my constituents lost their homes and, when I spoke to them afterwards, they all said that their house had been burnt down after the fire had passed. For example, one householder told me that the eaves of his house were on fire and that, if he had had water, the fire in the eaves could have been put out and the house would have been

saved. In other words, had water been available at that time through the mains, which it was not, he could have put out the fire. Another householder on Range Road South told me the same thing. Small sections of his house were on fire and, if he had had water available, he could have put out the fire and saved his house.

Therefore, I dispute the Minister's statement that the provision of mains water would not help save properties. I am asking that these pumps be installed, because it would mean the protection of a house by the owner, as he could then use mains water not only to hose down the house before the fire arrived but also to put out spot fires after the main fire had passed.

My constituent's proposal would reduce the cost markedly. It is not only my area that has this problem, and I could not expect the Government to provide protection in my area and not in other high fire risk areas. I accept that, but this is my area and, as the local member of Parliament, I am concerned about it. The costing of the scheme which I first suggested to the Minister and on which the Government has based its calculation involved the provision of a large diesel motor and pump, so that there would be two pumping systems: an electric pumping system and a diesel pumping system. That is where the cost is involved. I believe that, if we cannot have a Rolls Royce, let us at least look at a good Holden which will probably do just as good a job, anyway.

By having two sets of motors (one cutting out automatically with the diesel motor cutting in when the power was cut off), my constituent says that we could set up a diesel motor which, through a belt drive, could be manually connected to the existing pumps which are normally driven by the electric motors.

In other words an E&WS officer, or someone else, on a day of high fire risk or when fire was threatening, would go to the pumps, switch off the electric motor, get the diesel motor running, connect the belt drive, and so on. This could be done on any day of very high fire risk, because diesel motors can go and go. New diesel motors are able to operate even with high smoke density, although in the past that has been a problem. In the past smoke would have been sufficient to stop diesel motors from running. Diesel motors are now available that operate even when there is smoke and there would be no need to put an officer at risk on any day of high fire risk. If the diesel motor was started in the morning, the switchover could be made, connected and away it would go. It can still put the same volume through as the existing arrangement.

My constituent has told me that this would reduce substantially the cost of the original proposals that we were considering, and he believes that, for between \$30 000 and \$50 000, every pumping station could be provided with a diesel motor that would be powerful enough to drive the existing pumps. I am sure you would admit that that is a huge reduction when compared with the original cost that we were looking at in relation to putting in a motor, pump and automatic switching gear.

Could the Minister or his officers investigate this matter, and if they contact me I am only too happy to provide the name of my constituent, who has said he would be more than willing to work with Government officers to explain the matter. As I said, he is an engineer and he knows what he is talking about. Could that be investigated?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: It sounds like a good marriage between the private and public sector. If the gentleman concerned is prepared to offer his plans to the department, we would be happy to look at them. I am concerned about protecting the lives and property of people in extreme fire areas where we have a responsibility to endeavour to provide a service. I am well aware of the problem, because the

filtration plant at Ansteys Hill was in imminent danger. I visited that location some time after the fire and I do not doubt the magnitude of the fire. The high winds helped to combust material such as the eucalypts. The damage to the filtration plant and its surrounds had to be seen to be believed. We had a number of fires in that area last year.

One of the unfortunate things is that the greater the population it seems more fires occur. Some of the fires were deliberately lit, and I think that the culprits ought to incur as severe a penalty as possible, because as far as I am concerned it is a major crime. I am happy if the honourable member can provide us with any alternative. Although cost is a consideration, it is not the only one. We want to provide as much as possible. I am not an engineer, so I do not understand the ramifications of these auxiliary pumps which can be run from either electricity or diesel power and can be switched from one to the other. I might ask one of my officers, who is a qualified engineer, whether that sounds a reasonable proposition and to comment on the remarks made by the member for Todd.

Mr Lewis: I cannot say that I am a mechanical engineer either, but my understanding of the proposals upon which the department based its estimates is that it would have been on the installation of diesel electric stations that would have auto start on them, so that when the power goes off they automatically start again. Of course, that would involve engines of a significant size in order to generate the same sort of power requirements that were being supplied by the Electricity Trust. Irrespective of how you supply that directly, by belt drive or electrically through a diesel electric system (in other words, a belt drive off the engine or diesel electric off the electric motor), one would still need the same sort of energy. I am surprised that the same size diesels are not required to run them.

I am willing to discuss this matter with your constituent, because it would be interesting to see what the savings were. I think one of the things we are always interested in is having auto start, because it is very difficult: the CFS will often just simply tell us, 'I'm sorry, you cannot go in there,' for some time afterwards because the fire is still burning in the area, but, even if it was switched on manually, you would have to run it manually well before the fire ever arrived at the location. However, I would be pleased to look at that matter.

On the last occasion one of our problems was that the power went off, and then we got the power back and the pumps also running, only to find that we were making no headway in storages or anywhere else. When our line people looked at the pipe systems, they found that a lot of the fire services were open and the water was pouring out of them. We believe what happened was that the CFS was looking for water at some stage and they were going from fire plug to fire plug. In their haste to try to get water, they left them open. Of course, we could pump all day and all night and we would not make any headway. If they had been closed off and water came back on, some houses might have been saved.

My understanding is that the Electricity Trust is looking very closely at those areas that it will consider for shutting power off. Clearly, it is the trust's intention to try to keep all the systems which serve our pumping stations on line during bushfire periods. It may shut off other sub-areas off those main lines, but it will attempt to keep our pumping stations with power so that they are not cut off deliberately but could be cut off as a result of fire activity in the area.

Mr ASHENDEN: The Minister mentioned the clearing of undergrowth, and again I agree that this is one of the major steps that can be taken in relation to fire protection, but the main problem with undergrowth in that area is the hills face zone, which of course is under Government con-

trol. I realise that it is not the Minister's department, but could he put all the pressure he possibly can on his colleague the Minister for Environment and Planning to allow steps to be taken that would remove that flammable material from the hills face zone?

I appreciate that there is a very fine balance here between environmental protection and fire protection. Much of the area at Ansteys Hill has been cleared and was previously used for grazing purposes. In fact, really, none of it is in its natural state, because the Ansteys Hill area is not being held as a national or similar type of park. It will become a recreation park, so I think that is an acknowledgment that it has been so much affected by human interference that no way in the world can it be regarded as natural environment.

However, there is a tremendous problem in obtaining permission to allow grazing in the area, although there is already grazing in some parts of it. I believe that the area for grazing could be extended, and funds will be required for fencing. In view of the Minister's comments, will he assist by raising this matter with the Minister for Environment and Planning? I can assure him that the removal of flammable undergrowth in that area would be very well received not only by the residents of Houghton, Paracombe, Inglewood and Hermitage but also by the residents of Vista, Tea Tree Gully and Banksia Park, where there has been a very real danger from gully wind fires (and I do not refer to Ash Wednesday). Fire can be swept down from the hills to the plains. Had it not rained on the night I refer to, the area from Banksia Park to Magill would have been hit by fire. In fact, people in parts of Highbury along the Torrens Valley were evacuated because of the threat. I ask the Minister to use his powers of persuasion to support what the member for Kavel and I have been trying to achieve.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I was referring to those areas, both private property and land owned by the Government, particularly recreation parks, when I commented previously. Prevention is always better than cure. I am not entirely familiar with the area around Inglewood and Houghton but, because I have a relation who lives in Redwood Park, which is adjacent, I know a little about the area. I recall the fire to which the member for Todd refers. The matter was referred to me.

I am sure that the Minister for Environment and Planning and his department would be well aware of this matter, as it has been referred to that Minister previously by other members of Parliament, but I have no objection to making it known that this is a way to minimise the risk. I will certainly bring the matter to the Minister's attention once again. I do not know the cost involved, but I believe that in some cases grazing would destroy the natural environment, and it might not be a practical solution: mechanical means might be required.

Mr Ashenden interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I do not know. I am not an expert in that field. If grazing destroys the environment completely, I suggest that other means to clear up the area considered to be a fire hazard might be more appropriate, but what they would be I am not quite sure.

Mr GUNN: Have departmental officers given close attention to some of the more outrageous claims being made by a group of people who, one might say, are leftovers from last year's Roxby Downs demonstration and who have moved their attention to the Mound Springs area and the Great Artesian Basin? Those people are making all sorts of claims, purely, it seems, to put a barrier in the way of the Olympic Dam/Roxby Downs project. I have no doubt that what the company is doing is correct and that it is following correct procedures, but it is important that departments such as the E&WS Department reassure the community

from time to time that these sorts of outrageous comments lack credibility and that the companies are doing everything that is required under their licence.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The Minister of Mines and Energy and I issued a licence to the joint venturers under the terms of the indenture. In regard to Mound Springs, I have had representations from individuals, but I do not know whether or not they represented groups. We issued a licence on the advice of the Water Resources Council, which has representation from government and the private sector. A tour of the area was conducted so that people could assess the impact, if any, on Mound Springs and other sensitive areas. Mr Lewis, who is also Chairman of the South Australian Water Resources Council, will provide further information.

Mr Lewis: The South Australian Water Resources Council looked very carefully at the impact on the Mound Springs area of ground water pumping in the Great Artesian Basin. Based on extensive hydrogeological modelling, it is quite certain that bore field A, the first bore field, will have virtually no significant effect on Herman Hills Springs, which is the closest, I recall. That does not mean that when we start pumping there will not be differences from what was predicted. Hydrogeology is a precise science in theory but in fact it is difficult to be precise about ground water profiles.

However, there are provisions in the agreement to allow for monitoring of the position as the pumping starts and settles down. It will be some time before the full impact is known. However, there is provision in the agreement to monitor and to take account of any environmental impact so that modifications to the pumping arrangements can be made to accommodate a change that is foreseen. I have every confidence that the outcome will be as predicted by the Department of Mines and Energy and the water resources branch of my department. This matter was carefully considered because of the concerns regarding the impact on the natural springs in that area.

Mr GUNN: I refer to a lease that has been negotiated between the department and the Andamooka Progress and Miners Association. I understand that negotiations have continued for a long period. Has the matter been resolved so that the concerns of the people at Andamooka may be removed as soon as possible?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am not aware of the details of the lease between the E&WS Department and the Andamooka Progress Association in relation to water supply.

Mr GUNN: There is a dam leased from the E&WS Department: that lease is subject to renewal. Unfortunately, I did not bring the correspondence with me, but if the Minister does not have that information will he take the question on notice with a view to having the matter resolved? These people help themselves considerably. Although it is a small matter, it could make things easier.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I will take the question on notice. I believe that the honourable member is referring to Chilpuddie Hole, Glendambo Dam.

Mr GUNN: There are two or three.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I will provide the information to the honourable member as soon as possible. We will investigate his question as to negotiations on the lease.

Mr GUNN: Can the Minister or his officers tell us the current position in relation to underground basins on Eyre Peninsula? I refer to Uley Vanilla Basin, Polda Basin, Capawonta Basin, Robinson Basin that supplies Streaky Bay, and Italia Basin. Are the water levels holding in those basins and is it anticipated that they will meet long-term future needs of residents of Eyre Peninsula?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I do not think we have the immediate information. I understand that they are providing and holding for the long-term future of water supply in that

area. I will get the precise figures and supply that information to the honourable member.

Mr GUNN: I understand that the Commonwealth is keen to pass over the administration and financial responsibility for providing water to Woomera. As the pipeline is not in 100 per cent condition, I hope that, before the State agrees, the line will be renewed or brought to a standard that will not cost taxpayers money. I also hope that a financial arrangement will be entered into with the Commonwealth to ensure that the State is not required to meet any expense.

I am very familiar with the situation and know that negotiations have taken place. I asked a similar question of the Minister responsible for electricity. I could ask the same question of the Minister of Health, because the Commonwealth is attempting to normalise Woomera and is keen to hand over some of its responsibilities. I would like to see favourable financial arrangements for South Australia. I have already nominated other schemes that could well and truly do with money being spent on them.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: We have found an area of agreement at last. I could not agree more with the member for Eyre, if we are to have approaches by the Commonwealth for the State to take over the Woomera pipeline, which I understand is about 40 years old. I have seen the pumping station at Port Augusta.

Mr GUNN: There is one at Hessa.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: If it is anything like the pumping station at Port Augusta, the honourable member is so right. Before we took it over we would want to be sure that we were not lumbered with a system needing upgrading and repair. If no decision has been made to take over the system, the member for Eyre can rest assured that this Government is not interested (although it would depend on the type of agreement) if it will cost the State and its taxpayers (including the member for Eyre's constituents) money which will substantially add to our country deficit.

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

Works and Services—Engineering and Water Supply
Department, \$69 426 000

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

Mr E.S. Ashenden

Mr R.J. Gregory

Mr G.M. Gunn

Mr G.A. Ingerson

Mr J.H.C. Klunder

Mr K.H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. J.W. Slater, Minister of Water Resources and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr K.W. Lewis, Director-General and Engineer-in-Chief, E&WS Department.

Mr R.C. Williams, Deputy Director-General.

Mr A.N. Killmier, Director, Administration and Finance.

Mr R.E. Mander, Senior Finance Officer.

Mr R.J. Greatrex, Manager, Management Accounting and Budgeting.

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

Mr GUNN: The member for Chaffey asked me to point out what appear to be anomalies where some projects due for completion this financial year have amounts voted far below the total estimated cost of the project. I refer to pages 221 to 223 of the Estimates of Payments. It appears that insufficient funds are proposed for some projects due for completion this financial year. Will the Minister or his officers explain the situation?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Possibly the honourable member is referring to 'Stirling/Aldgate/Bridgewater Sewerage Scheme, Stage II', where there has been an expenditure to 30 June 1985 of \$3.7 million, with a proposed expenditure of \$111 000 for 1985-86. The honourable member may also be referring to the Port Augusta East sewerage scheme, which is substantially completed, with an allocation of \$707 000. I will ask Mr Killmier to explain the reason for those allocations.

Mr Killmier: From time to time schemes are done below the estimate, in which case the expenditure to 30 June of the previous year, added to expenditure for the current year, is less than the estimated total cost, which is the original estimated total cost figure at the time the scheme was proposed. Port Augusta is not significantly below, according to the figures, but the Stirling/Aldgate sewers have certainly been considerably cheaper than was proposed in the Public Works submission.

Mr GUNN: I refer also to the line 'Wallaroo—Upgrade North Beach Water Supply' at an estimated cost of \$380 000 and a proposed expenditure of \$101 000 with the project due for completion in December 1985.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: We received representations from the Leader of the Opposition about his electorate.

Mr GUNN: That is not the question.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: No, but the scheme will be completed this year and part of the expenditure would have been for the purchase of pipes prior to the end of the financial year in anticipation of carrying out the scheme, so the \$101 000 will be labour costs, the pipes having already been purchased.

Mr GUNN: Again on page 222, I refer to 'Country Waterworks', the line 'Tank Reroofing Program' with a proposed expenditure of \$898 000. Will the Minister advise whether this money will be spent on country tanks west of Ceduna in reroofing or improving the tanks, or what is envisaged in relation to this significant amount of money?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: They are mainly water supply tanks. There is a long list under 'Miscellaneous Extensions and Minor Works'. The intention is to replace the White Hill and Minnipa tanks. If the member is agreeable I will take the question on notice as under this line about \$3.61 million is to be expended on minor works. Some of them cover questions being asked by the honourable member. Full details are not all available to us, and I would prefer to obtain the information and advise the member for Eyre accordingly. Undoubtedly he is interested in the reroofing of tanks, particularly in the electorate of Eyre.

Mr GUNN: I refer also to the amount of \$53 000 for the Chilpuddie water supply and the miscellaneous extension of minor works to the value of some \$3 661 000. Can the Minister indicate whether some of these funds are available to replace the Smoky Bay main, which is in very poor condition? What will happen to the Chilpuddie water supply?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The Chilpuddie water supply will be upgraded at a cost of \$53 000. Tanks in the Minnipa area are now remotely monitored. It is proposed to install an automatically controlled electronically operated booster to reduce operating costs during the coming summer. There

is no provision in the estimates for work on the Smoky Bay program. I point out to the honourable member (although I am going to supply the information about tank reroofing programs) that the total expenditure will be \$898 000. I do not have details with me of the break-down of that figure. However, there is no provision for Smoky Bay.

Mr GUNN: The capital program is extensive, and, in view of the continual representations made about the inadequate supply of water to Streaky Bay in the summertime, can the Minister see his way clear to reallocate some of these funds in an endeavour to alleviate some of the problems in relation to the Smoky Bay water supply?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Certainly I will investigate the matter.

Mr GUNN: When the Morgan-Whyalla water filtration plant is completed in July 1986, I take it that a fully filtered water supply will be available to Whyalla and all the towns through which the Morgan-Whyalla pipeline runs.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes.

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

Works and Services—South-Eastern Drainage Board,
\$198 000
Minister of Water Resources, Miscellaneous, \$1 761 000

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

The Hon. P.B. Arnold

Mr E.S. Ashenden

Mr R.J. Gregory

Mr G.M. Gunn

Mr J.H.C. Klunder

Mr K.H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. J.W. Slater, Minister of Water Resources and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr K.W. Lewis, Director-General and Engineer-in-Chief, E&WS Department.

Mr R.C. Williams, Deputy Director-General.

Mr A.N. Killmier, Director, Administration and Finance.

Mr R.J. Greatrex, Manager, Management Accounting and Budgeting.

Mr R.E. Mander, Senior Finance Officer.

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

Mr GUNN: In relation to the South-Eastern Drainage Board vote, can the Minister briefly explain to the Committee in which areas the allocated funds will be spent during this financial year?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The funds will be used mostly for the replacement of bridges and for work on the maintenance of drains.

Mr GUNN: In relation to the Minister of Water Resources Miscellaneous vote, I understand that certain drilling operations are taking place: can the Minister advise whether the E&WS Department has been involved in work to try to find alternative sources of supply of water for the people of Glendambo, a little township on the Stuart Highway? The Minister and his advisers would be aware that, unfortunately, the existing supply at Glendambo has run out. The water in the basin appears to be depleted, causing real

concerns about the possibility of finding an alternative supply. I wonder whether the department, in cooperation with the Department of Mines and Energy, is looking at this problem.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: As far as I am aware, there is no proposal in relation to a water supply for Glendambo. I shall obtain further information and advise the member accordingly.

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

Recreation and Sport, \$5 912 000

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

Mr S.J. Baker
Mr R.J. Gregory
Mr G.A. Ingerson
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Mr I.P. Lewis
Mr K.H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. J.W. Slater, Minister of Water Resources and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr G. Thompson, Director, Department of Recreation and Sport.

Mr L. Watson, Manager, Management and Support Services.

Mr S. Wise, Finance Officer.

Mr P. Morrissy, Secretary, Betting Control Board.

Mr D. Harvey, Manager, Racing and Gaming Section.

Mr D. Hamilton, Chairman, South Australian Totalizator Agency Board.

Mr B. Smith, General Manager, South Australian Totalizator Agency Board.

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

Mr INGERSON: On page 72 of the yellow book it is stated that the department's apparent increase in average full-time staff equivalent from 60.9 to 71.1 is clouded by the bringing to account of five staff members seconded to outside community organisations. Can the Minister explain where the extra staff are being used and what their requirement is within the department because the rest of the sentence in the yellow book seems to be gobbledegook, but obviously there is a simple explanation.

The CHAIRMAN: I accord the member for Bragg and the Minister the same opportunity as I have done earlier today for either or both to make a general statement if they so desire.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Before I answer the question, I would like to make a brief preliminary statement, because I think it is important. Certainly we have had in the past 12 months a departmental reorganisation, not only from a staffing point of view but also in regard to programs that we have undertaken.

The total recurrent budget for 1985-86 is \$5 912 000, which is an increase of \$1.6 million over 1984-85. The injection of the additional \$1.6 million is made up of \$1.1 million from Government funds and an additional call on the Rec-

reation and Sport Trust Fund of \$.5 million, which makes a total of \$1.6 million. The additional \$1.6 million will fund an increase in grants and advances to sporting and recreation associations of \$.6 million, the installation of a computer costing \$.4 million, and to meet increased costs in the provisions of the department of \$.6 million. The major components of the increased costs are: 5 per cent inflation allowance of \$81 000; increased accommodation charges \$77 000; and shown in the budget this year which has not been shown in previous years is an allowance for a 9 per cent superannuation cost of \$138 000. The total operating cost in 1985-86 is estimated to be \$1 320 100, compared to the 1984-85 budget actual cost of \$445 659.

On the surface this may seem to be a significant increase, but several factors must be taken into consideration. It is considered that the 1984-85 level of expenditure did not reflect normal operating costs of the department in a full year. The major factor contributing to this was the total reorganisation of the department, and this has had some initial unsettling effect on normal staff programs.

The estimated cost of operating the department for 1985-86 basically restores the level of expenditure similar to that anticipated in 1984-85 after allowing for the effect of the installation of the computer. The 1985-86 operating budget of \$1 032 100 less computer operating costs is \$691 100. The 1984-85 operating budget is \$618 000, and the increase of \$73 100 over the 1984-85 voted level of expenditure relates to an increase in program I expenditure. This increase is for operating costs of various seminars, courses, producing directories, etc., which have a direct benefit for outside organisations rather than staff support costs which are contained within program III management support.

Within program III management support, the budgeted operating cost of \$76 600 reflects an increase over the 1984-85 budget level of expenditure of \$324 500 and, after allowing for the cost of installing the computer, \$341 000 is actually a decrease in real terms of \$16 500. The total capital budget for 1985-86 is \$4.8 million, which is a reduction over the level of expenditure in 1984-85 of \$5.6 million, and the reduction is directly attributable to the completion of the State Aquatic Centre.

Whilst the amount of funds provided in 1985-86 is reduced, the department has, however, an exciting capital works program which will take it into the next two or three years. The highlights of that capital works program include the start on the Glenelg project, which will house a hockey and lacrosse complex and a small bore rifle range. It also includes planning for a velodrome and laying of the track at the Olympic Sports Field. The 1985-86 capital works program also includes \$750 000 for a local level facilities program which will assist local authorities and community groups to develop new and additional recreation sport and fitness facilities.

The program performance budget estimates include funds from all sources. Recurrent funds in terms of p.p.b. include those provided through the line estimates, deposit accounts and trust accounts. The increases in funds provided by the line estimates of \$1.6 million is offset by a fall in expenditure of \$600 000 in trusts and \$400 000 in deposits.

Total expenditure within the department in 1985-86 from all sources of funds, including capital, is expected to be \$14.4 million compared to the expenditure of \$14.7 million in 1984-85. In 1984-85, trust expenditure by the Racecourse Development Board was above normal expectations and there will be a fall, in 1985-86, of \$.6 million, which will see the board's expenditure return to normal levels. The fall in deposit account expenditure of \$.4 million is primarily due to the finishing of the community employment schemes that were in the program last year and were completed early in 1985-86.

Turning to the question asked by the member for Bragg concerning staff, the department's apparently large increase in staff from 60.9 to 71.1 is clouded by bringing into account five staff members seconded from outside community organisations who were not recorded last year. Three new positions have been created in 1985-86: a computing systems officer; the secondment of a staff development officer; and a secretary for the Racecourse Development Board. However, I point out that the board's secretary will be funded by the three codes out of the funds of the Racecourse Development Board.

Mr INGERSON: It appears that, if it is ever decided to reorganise the department and perhaps streamline it, there is a considerable cost that has been clearly highlighted by the Minister, as well as a significant increase in staff to do basically the same sort of work. I refer to page 82 of the yellow book, which deals with the program of the Department of Recreation and Sport. There is an increase from 21.7 to 27 in the number of full-time equivalents employed. On what projects will the extra 5.3 full-time equivalents be employed?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: This is not an increase in actual numbers: it refers to the transfer of staff between areas. In my opening statement, I referred to five people who were involved in Commonwealth employment programs, for the purpose of which staff were seconded for a period. However, they probably should not be included in the 5.3 referred to because those programs ended some time ago. I would ask the Director to answer the specific question, because it relates to the change consequent on internal reorganisation in specific areas.

Mr Thompson: The increase from 20.5 to 27 in the proposed program for this year relates to the total of program I. During the past year the Government approved the appointment of Mr Walsh and Mr Turtur to the Sports Institute. The department seconded an officer to the world three-day equestrian event as an executive officer to organise the event next year. That person still stays on our books, although the salary is paid by the equestrian organisation. However, we had to employ a person to cover that position, so that adds to the number.

We have moved a policy person from program III to program I. There are four camp positions on the Government's books, but they have been seconded since 14 August last year to the organisations to which we have leased the camps. That accounts for the difference between 20.5 and 27.

Mr INGERSON: On page 86 of the yellow book, under the heading 'Intra-Agency Support Services', appears the line relating to facilities management in respect of which there is a reduction in recurrent expenditure of \$86 000 for professional and technical support, whereas there is an increase in full-time equivalents in that area from 3.9 last year to 7.7 this year. Can the Minister explain that apparent anomaly?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I think that this question requires a similar answer to that given concerning staff transferred from one section to another. We propose to spend \$270 000 in this area this year, but the honourable member has pointed out that there is an apparent increase from 3.9 full-time equivalents under the heading 'Outcome 1984-85' to 7.7 under the heading 'Proposed 1985-86'. I do not have the details of this increase with me, but I will get them for the honourable member. Perhaps Mr Watson might be able to supply some further information.

Mr Watson: Previously, facility management (and it did not talk about camps or anything else) really related to the recreation/sports centre, where we have three people (at that time four people), and what we now have is a rearrangement of staff within the resources, so that there are now seven

people who each give some time. Our whole program involves some work on the camps, some work on the recreation/sports centre and there is some internal work from head office in which we are involved. I can list the people and the decimals of their time, if you wish.

Mr INGERSON: I think we have something of a hurdy-gurdy, and we have ended up with seven more people on the staff. That appears to be the situation, and there has been no direct explanation to show anything different.

Mr GREGORY: I refer to page 8 in the estimates: can you indicate what part of the \$334 000 allocated for specific population programs will go towards the Women's Recreation Advisory Group? Can you also give details of some of the areas in which this group has been active and some of the initiatives that have been planned for the future?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Over the past 12 months the department has placed emphasis on what we call specific population groups, and the Women's Recreation Advisory Group is one of them. There are others that I will not refer to in detail, but there is an allocation of \$50 000 to various aspects in that sub-program. The salaries and related payments amount to \$30 000, the Women's Advisory Council \$2 000, an information service \$5 000, equipment and program seeding grants \$6 000, \$5 000 for a Women's State Conference, and regional meetings involving \$2 000, which totals \$50 000. As I said, we have paid particular attention to women, and within the department we have Monica Redden, who is the women's consultant and Barbara Mattsson, who is in charge of the creation and development unit. An amount of \$50 000 has been set aside in the specific populations group for women in the coming year.

Mr GREGORY: Can you say whether or not the State Government plans to go ahead with building a cycling velodrome in South Australia and, if so, is there any funding allocated for this project in the current year? Is any contribution expected from the Federal Government, and could you explain also whether this will encourage female bike riders?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: As to your last question, the answer is 'No': it is for the whole population. In relation to the velodrome an amount of \$300 000 has been allocated for planning purposes. I am not in a position to answer that part of the question relating to Commonwealth assistance. My colleague the federal Minister for Recreation and Sport, John Brown, has not made a commitment. Although he has made promises to a number of States, whether South Australia will receive any assistance I do not know, but we are undertaking a study in regard to a facility at Ansteys Hill, and that is proceeding at present. When that study is completed we will decide whether or not that is the appropriate site, but there is an allocation in this budget for the initial studies.

Mr GREGORY: Can you explain why a small bore rifle shooting complex has been included in the Glenelg North proposal when the Government has already purchased the Virginia complex? For the benefit of the Committee, I point out that some of the most famous small bore rifle shooters in this State are females.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: We gave an undertaking to the small bore rifle shooters in relation to a facility. The previous area used by them was Castambul in the Adelaide hills, which was burnt out in the Ash Wednesday fire. Following that, the association did not have any housing, and we gave an undertaking that we would do something for them in that regard. Owing to the circumstances at Virginia involving the shooting complex at that site, it was believed that it would be more cost effective to have the shooting disciplines housed in the one complex. That idea was pursued but it was not received very favourably by the Small Bore Rifle

Association for two reasons, the first one involving the distance from Adelaide.

Many of the shooters reside in the southern suburbs of Adelaide, and they did not view the proposal very favourably; so, rather than pursue that Virginia complex for their headquarters and have to share with the pistol shooters at Virginia, we decided to include them in the complex at North Glenelg sharing with the hockey and weight-lifting people. A management committee was set up to ensure that the rights of each group in regard to the management of that facility are protected. That is why the small bore rifle club was included in the facility at Glenelg.

Mr INGERSON: It has been put to me by a couple of professional shooters that there are significant safety problems in relation to the facility at West Beach. The diagram that was published in the local press showed that the small bore rifle range will be located right on the sea. The Minister would probably be aware that in some instances the ricochet level is half a mile to a mile, so I wonder how high the baffles will be. Will there be a danger to people at Jubilee Point? As the range will be right in the flight path, will it affect aeroplanes?

The ranges at Williamstown, in Victoria, and Malabar, in New South Wales are built amongst sand-dunes, and there are significant wind problems. Airport employees at West Beach have said that there is hardly a day when wind direction does not change significantly. There is also a problem in regard to corrosion. Have those factors been considered? These are concerns that have been put to me in a serious manner, and I hope that they will be considered seriously.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am not aware of any safety problems in relation to the small bore site at North Glenelg, but I would be happy to accept information to that effect. From our discussions with the administrators and members of the club, we believe that there is minimal risk (if any) from a safety or any other point of view. Members shoot from under cover into a bank over a distance of 25 metres to 50 metres. If the member for Bragg has specific information that might assist us, I would welcome it.

Mr INGERSON: I asked whether the Minister has considered those matters. If he has considered them, I will accept that. In fact, this is the third announcement regarding the small bore rifle site in that area. Will this be the final announcement, or will there be a fourth or fifth announcement?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I do not agree with that. Who announced those sites?

Mr INGERSON: The Minister; initially, it was announced that the site would be south of the West Beach Trust area, approximately at the end of the extended main runway; secondly, it was announced that the site would be north of the driving range on Tapleys Hill Road at the site of the proposed second runway; now a so-called final site has been announced, and that is in the new Glenelg complex. I have been advised that the range at Virginia is among the top 10 in the world. Initially, it was built to include small bore rifle shooting as well as pistol shooting. The Government paid \$502 000 to purchase that centre. Was that the total cost or were other moneys paid in purchasing that site? I note from the yellow book (page 86) that the Minister of Public Works is referred to. Did the Department of Recreation and Sport purchase that facility or was it purchased by the Minister of Public Works? Perhaps I have asked the Minister too many questions.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I would prefer to answer questions one at a time.

Mr INGERSON: Was \$502 000 the total cost to purchase that facility or were other significant sums of moneys paid out—for instance, in paying out debts?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Before I reply, I would like to outline the background. The Government purchased that facility. The Department of Recreation and Sport and I, as Minister, are not a corporate body, and that is why there is a reference to the Minister of Public Works. During the office of the previous Government, a loan was guaranteed for the Adelaide Pistol Club. I was a member of the Industries Development Committee when the committee made that decision: the member for Todd was also a member of that committee, the Chairman being the Hon. Don Laidlaw from the Legislative Council. We made a decision based on the information supplied but, unfortunately, the predictions did not transpire. An increase of membership was expected. However, pistol shooting is not the most inexpensive sport and the expectations of increased membership and use of the facility by members did not come to fruition.

Consequently, the club had difficulty in meeting its commitment to the bank. The Government, having guaranteed the loan, was responsible. That was one of the few decisions taken by the Industries Development Committee that did not work out to the benefit of all concerned. The Adelaide Pistol Club was in a very difficult financial position. It approached the Government, making representations to me and the Premier. It did not appear that the club could trade out of its difficult financial situation, so the Government decided to purchase the property.

The member for Bragg is right in saying that that is one of the best complexes for that type of shooting in the world. We did not want to see it fold up and, therefore, a management committee was set up. I understand that Mark Peters, an officer of my department, is Chairman of that committee. I believe that the committee is working satisfactorily, although there were certain problems to overcome.

The member for Bragg raised the matter of sites for the small bore rifle club being announced. They were not announced; they were considered. There is a substantial difference. I assure him that the site I announced is final. They were considerations only and were not acceptable.

Mr INGERSON: Does the Minister expect the centre to be in a deficit funded position, or is it expected to be self supporting reasonably quickly?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Is the honourable member referring to the Virginia shooting complex?

Mr INGERSON: Yes.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: It has outstanding debts, but I do not think they are insurmountable. The management committee structure has been changed. I am informed that they are in a position now from which they will probably be able to trade out. They certainly have more substantial use of their social facilities. One problem is the location.

They are not alone, and I think the honourable member would agree that some clubs are facing problems because of liquor sales. Hotel opening on Sundays has substantially affected sporting and social clubs. I do not need to say more about that. Also, greater community awareness of the hazards of drinking and driving and the fact that the only way to get to the Virginia sporting complex is by car have also had a deleterious effect on their trading situation. Despite all those things I am told that they expect, as we do, that they will be able to pay all outstanding debts of \$150 000.

Mr INGERSON: That tends to support the comment that, if the small bore and pistol area were combined, perhaps running costs and numbers required would make the centre viable.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Previously, we encouraged them to do that but that was not acceptable to them.

Mr PLUNKETT: Will the Minister explain why there is an increase of \$43 000 in the department's publicity and information budget for 1985-86?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The department has allocated \$30 000 to cover the costs of providing a new series of publications to be sold by the department. These include a series of cycling tour atlases and guides to canoeing on the Murray River. Also, \$12 000 has been set aside for a review of the means by which the department communicates with client groups and the general public.

The department is concerned not only with ensuring that clients are fully aware of the range of services offered by it, but also with feedback on the value of those services and what new or alternative departmental services clients might want. In other words, we are attempting to provide to sporting groups in the community at large an input into the range of services offered by the department. Consequently, that is why the publicity and information budget has risen by \$43 000.

Mr PLUNKETT: Can the Minister advise whether the Government has decided to support an application to hold the World Enduro Six Day Event in South Australia in 1988? If so, can the Minister provide some details?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I thought that this question would be one of the first asked by the Opposition.

Mr INGERSON: Only three at a time—

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I understand the system, but this was the subject of a discussion in this Chamber only a few weeks ago. The Leader of the Opposition made it a lead question and seemed to infer at that time that the Government was not taking any action in regard to the matter. That could not have been further from the truth, because at that stage we set up a working party to investigate whether or not the World Enduro Six Day Event would be commercially or financially viable.

Consequently, the working party reported back to the Government. My Director was Chairman of that committee, on which there were representatives from tourism and other government departments. As a result of that recommendation from the working party, the State Government decided in Cabinet this week to provide support to the Auto Cycle Council of Australia for the conduct of the Six Day Enduro in South Australia in 1988.

Mr Alan Wallis (National Secretary of the Auto Cycle Union of Australia) is now overseas bidding for this event, because there is no guarantee that we will be successful. That still has to be determined by the international body. However, if we are successful the event will be conducted in South Australia. Initially, the Government has decided to accede to the request of the Auto Cycle Union for provision of \$25 000 as a direct cost against the preparations necessary for the event.

We were also apprehensive—as mentioned previously in the House by one of my colleagues, either the Premier or the Minister of Transport—about some aspects of the proposal which were prepared by a private consultant. We were concerned with some figures and aspects of that consultancy. Nevertheless, we decided to take the risk and provide the necessary support. Government has approved it subject to certain conditions and I am informed that those conditions are acceptable to the Auto Cycle Council of Australia.

Mr PLUNKETT: Will the Minister provide details of the recreation and sport administration centre opened last year? What is the estimated budget for the centre in 1985-86? How many permanent employees are there? How many various groups are using the centre? Is the continued funding of such a facility justified?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The current Recreation and Sport Administration Centre has been a remarkable success. There are 25 full-time and 17 part-time administrators who occupy those premises. The previous accommodation involved difficulties with location, parking and the number of tenants that we could accommodate at the centre on the corner of

Goodwood Road. I believe that the accommodation provided at Sturt Street certainly has been tremendously advantageous to what I might call 'minor sports', and has provided them with a magnificent facility of which I am particularly proud. The new centre contains double and single private offices, an open office area and, more importantly, to overcome the big problem at Goodwood Road, it provides on site and undercover parking. Also provided are meeting rooms, printing facilities, key access photocopying and facilities for the disabled. The centre was opened on 8 June 1984. I will give more detail, as it is important for the record.

The total cost of commissioning the new centre and relocating existing tenants was \$160 000, of which \$86 000 was expended in 1984-85. We have a permanent staff of three full-time officers providing support. The centre is currently also providing training experience for one disabled person, who provided additional support service while on placement. The total subsidy provided by the Government for 1984-85 was \$156 200, including rental, cleaning, car parking, salaries and operating and electricity costs. We set leasing and car parking rates for 1985-86 and tried to maintain the subsidy level equivalent of 1984-85. We recharge tenants for car parking. It is not necessary for me to give any further information. If the member for Peake desires a full list of persons in residence as tenants, I can certainly provide those details.

Mr PLUNKETT: Can those details be inserted into *Hansard*?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I will provide them privately for the honourable member rather than insert them in *Hansard*, as there are a number of alterations. We keep a list of executive officers of the various sports, who change from time to time. It may not be up to date, but I will give a list of people who are resident in the centre.

Mr INGERSON: While the Minister is in a conciliatory mood, perhaps he could send out the list of sporting bodies for which we have been asking for a couple of months. I refer to page 85 of the yellow book where it states that a further \$75 000 was made available for inflation and unavoidable. I have never heard the term 'unavoidables' used in accounting. Is it for late lunches or getting in before the entertainment tax? Can the Minister explain?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: It is made up of superannuation, \$42 000, which is an unavoidable cost.

Mr Ingerson interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I did not write the book: I only have to explain it. That figure also comprises the Recreation and Sport Administration Centre, \$25 000; provision for terminal leave, \$21 000; workers compensation, \$5 000; awards for salary increases, \$11 000; and an inflation allowance of \$10 000, giving a total of \$74 000.

Mr INGERSON: Did the Minister refer to salary increases?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, they are flow on salaries awards.

Mr INGERSON: I refer to page 71 and to the grants system now introduced by the department. Since the change from the system used last year, there has been some significant confusion and concern by almost every sporting association. One of the major areas of concern is the fact that they have had to put in two or sometimes three applications for their three-year plan. As the Minister would be aware, some associations are very small. They are receiving administration grants, and almost all of the administration's time in the last three to four months has been taken up with answering, resubmitting or correcting applications in this area. Would the Minister explain why the department is having so much difficulty with not just one or two submis-

sions but with almost every association having to submit applications at least twice?

The other concern is the time taken to allocate funds. It is now 1 October, and I understand that some of the associations have only just received their grants, whilst others have not yet received them. As the Minister would be well aware, most of these associations survive from month to month on the grants that they get from the Government.

The other area of concern involves a principle which seems quite illogical, namely, that we encourage associations to take on professional administrators and, the minute that we do so, we tell them that the grant next year will be less and the year after less again: so, within three years an association is expected to pay out between \$15,000 for a part-time administrator to \$30,000 for a full-time administrator. They are rightly being encouraged to do so by the Government, as good administration will significantly help these associations.

However, we have the ludicrous situation of grants being significantly reduced. I know that this was done by the previous Government, but it seems quite ridiculous to ask a sporting association to professionalise its administration and then immediately set about making it very difficult for that association to maintain that professional staff. Can the Minister explain the changes, why the delays have occurred and say whether there have been administrative difficulties? Could he also shed some light on why the Government is insisting on reducing administration grants?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The member for Bragg has referred to our three-year development plan. The concern that has been expressed to him by various organisations is news to me, because my information is that it has been accepted invariably.

Even before the plan came to fruition we had a seminar to which we invited all the groups involved, and it was explained to them thoroughly exactly what the intentions of the three-year development plan were. We are endeavouring to improve the quality of their administration and consequently, flowing from that, the benefits to the respective organisations. We are aware that the smaller groups might have difficulties with the forms, but we must go through that process.

I refer now to what the member described as 'delays'. All groups have been advised either in writing or verbally and have known about it for some time, but for a number of reasons some of them have needed to seek advice from my department. That advice was readily given and it may be that in some cases they needed to adjust or to make another application. I have had no correspondence or any verbal complaints from any organisations. Sometimes these problems are expressed by members who perhaps do not readily understand what the plan is all about. However, I believe that the majority of people who administer the particular sport are pleased with the program.

Mr INGERSON: They are not.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: If they are not, I would like to know who they are and what are the problems. I have been told by my Director and departmental officers that it is thoroughly acceptable to those groups that what we are trying to do is for the benefit of them all and that it will, at least to some degree, make them self-sufficient.

They realise that, when they accept the development plan, before they get payment (that may be one of the reasons for delay but that has not been intentional), they need to understand fully that the contract needs to be signed. It is news to me, because I thought that the development plan was not in the interests of the Department of Recreation and Sport. The program has been evolved to assist what we call minor sporting groups, and it is different from the

programs that existed in the past. It is a real step forward for those groups.

If the member for Bragg or any group wants to give me or my department examples of difficulties which they have experienced or which they might experience in the future, I would like to know about them, so that we can adjust the program.

Mr INGERSON: When the department sends out a letter to an association stating 'Sign here: we will send you the money on condition that you increase the numbers participating in your sport or you do not get the money,' it is like holding a gun at the head of the association by saying 'Unless you increase the number of participants in your sport, you will not get the money as an on-going exercise.' That is clearly spelt out in the letter that has been sent to all associations. Because the money is required by them, the smaller associations will not come out clearly and criticise the Government: they need money to exist.

The other major area of concern involves the duplication of effort all the time. Unquestionably, many associations have been required to resubmit their development plans to the department for approval. Although I will not name them here publicly, I am willing to talk to the Minister about them so that he can advise me. However, for obvious reasons those associations do not want to have their concern made public, although they will let me tell the Minister about it, and I will do that.

It seems to me that there has been a significant backlog, and we have had what many associations have described as bureaucratic bumkum just to get a small grant. This locking in of associations merely to increase numbers can only create a situation where associations will be forced to falsify their numbers or not get the grant. That is the reality of the exercise. No association, if asked to increase its numbers by 10 per cent but only achieving a 9.5 per cent increase, will not make sure that it achieves 10 per cent.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Certainly, we try to minimise duplication of effort as much as possible, and the real purpose of the exercise is to ensure that under the three-year development plan, depending on the association, it increases its membership and improves its overall performance in the interests of a specific sport. The member for Bragg has overlooked an important aspect: this involves the grant of Government money, so the question of accountability arises. If I did not consider accountability, the honourable member would take me to task for not looking after taxpayers' funds. This is a grant, and accountability to the Government is important whoever is in Government.

I am sorry that some associations feel the way the honourable member has indicated, and I will ask my Director to supplement my reply because he has been directly involved and it is news to him to be told, as the member for Bragg told the Committee, that some associations are not satisfied and are unhappy with the scheme. That is news to me, too. I stress the aspect of accountability for Government money, and I invite my Director to supplement my remarks.

Mr Thompson: In 1984, the department reviewed its existing grants policy and, arising from that review, a couple of things concerned the department. First, we were not convinced that there was a high enough degree of accountability for the expenditure of Government funds. Grants made to associations were clearly made with the aim of getting maximum value from the dollars spent. The department has two primary objectives in the recreation and sports fitness area: to increase the number of people participating in recreation, sport and fitness activities, and to increase standards of performance.

Secondly, most grants made by the Government required matching funding by sporting associations, and we had a number of grant schemes in respect of which sporting asso-

ciations felt obliged to apply for each sum available in the registered area schemes.

In many circumstances they had skipped a number of their high priority projects and had put in an application for a low priority project in their terms to ensure that they received Government funds. The new system enables organisations to indicate the priority of projects submitted, and the department funds and matches their priorities.

For the very first time for many State sporting associations they were required to think 12 months, and in most cases three years, in advance: they were required to document their specific objectives and proposed strategies. Many associations found that very difficult for the first time. The department provided the necessary assistance to complete the forms. In cases where organisations had not thought matters through properly, departmental staff had suggested that, in order to maximise the grants received, proposals should be reorganised. As a consequence, reasonable proposals were put forward. We did not tell organisations that they needed a 10 per cent, 5 per cent, or whatever, increase: it was up to them to decide what they could achieve within the programs available.

All these things were negotiated between the staff and the organisations prior to the recommendation going to the Minister. So, the information in contracts that went out after the Minister had approved the funding was based on the information put in the submissions from the State associations; it was not new information. All we are trying to do is ensure a higher degree of accountability of expenditure of Government resources.

Mr INGERSON: I refer now to the Recreation and Sport Trust Fund. Last year the budget allocation was underspent by \$399 000. Can the Minister explain that? Further, what is the expected income for the fund this year from both Footypunt and Soccer Pools?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Income for the Recreation and Sport Fund comes mainly from Soccer Pools, or 6 from 38 as it is known. In future, because of the success of Footypunt the fund will be substantially boosted.

Mr INGERSON: By what amount—for both of them?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The turnover for Footypunt is some \$1.2 million, realising a profit of about \$150 000, \$75 000 of which goes to recreation and sport and \$75 000 to the South Australian National Football League. At this stage there has been a rather dramatic increase in interest in the 6 from 38 draws. Until a few months ago about \$9 000 was received weekly: it went down to \$9 937, but for week 12 (which was some time in August) it was \$59 448. So, it has really reached somewhat the expectation expressed by the former Premier, the Hon. David Tonkin. He used to embellish the situation considerably, saying that we would certainly make a fortune from Soccer Pools. The situation has improved quite significantly, and the receipts will certainly improve the overall fund available for this year.

In relation to the honourable member's question, in 1984-85 the opening balance in the fund was \$640 000. Receipts from Soccer Pools for 1984-85 were \$674 000 which, as I have already said, will significantly increase this year. Loan repayments amounted to \$13 000. Therefore, the total fund amounts to \$1.327 million. Payments from the trust fund were \$500 000 for the State Aquatic Centre and a payment into the Recreation and Sport Fund of \$399 000, making a total of \$899 000, and leaving a carry over of \$428 000. We predict that receipts from Soccer Pools next year will certainly exceed those from this year.

The indications are that income will amount to \$11 000 a week. This will mean that the fund will certainly be increased, by some \$59 000. Therefore, we will get a bonus from the fund this year. Footypunt is another source of revenue for the fund. That was not included last year.

Therefore, once again we should do fairly well. I do not want to pre-empt what might happen in the near future or make an announcement now, but members would be aware that the Government is considering another form of sports lottery.

Mr INGERSON: I was going to ask you about that later.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: In that case, I will not go any further. We believe that that will be an opportunity to improve the fund also. We underspent last year: carry-over amounts were still showing in the accounts anyway. Distribution of money from the fund is at the discretion of the Department of Recreation and Sport and ultimately the Minister. The additional funding this year will be advantageous to the department. I assure the member for Bragg and other members of the Committee that the funds will be spent in the best possible way to assist recreation and sport.

Mr INGERSON: Some statistical information was provided for us by the Minister last year, and I wonder whether that could be repeated? Last year \$20.6 million in gambling tax was collected, and it is proposed that \$20 million will be collected this year. Can we have the breakdown expected in those areas? In relation to the Hospitals Fund, money is also collected from the lottery, TAB and other racing areas, totalling \$43 million and I request a breakdown of that also. Last year we also received some information on the trust and deposit accounts: could that information also be supplied by the Minister, either now or later?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: It is a rather large statistical table. We have the basic but not specific details. In 1984-85 it was \$21.152 million from all sources, and we anticipate in 1985-86 to recoup \$20.74 million. In relation to the TAB and the Racecourse Development Board, I think it is best if I supply the figures in detail rather than read them into the record at this time.

Mr KLUNDER: Will the Minister advise whether or not the summary of proposed income on page 75 includes estimated revenue from a sports lottery, and does the Government plan to introduce one form of lottery with another?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: No, there is no provision in the estimates for receipts from a sports lottery. My jurisdiction does not extend to the Lotteries Commission, because that falls to the Premier. That situation has applied since the Lotteries Act first came into operation in 1965 or 1966. Rather limited discussions were held with the Lotteries Commission about the format of the sports lottery, and that was tried some three or four months ago. At that time it was my view that we would face some difficulties, because the normal \$4 lottery and lotteries generally have been overtaken by other forms of gambling. It was certainly obvious that it was not acceptable to the public and, as a consequence, it was discontinued. There was a considerable loss in the first lottery and, in relation to the second one, nobody won first prize, so it showed a considerable profit. I think we might come out in front from that venture, but only slightly. We are going to try another form of operation, and that will be announced probably within a couple of weeks.

Mr KLUNDER: Turning to page 80 of the yellow book, under the program title 'Recreation, sport and fitness' there is a sub-program 'Specific populations', and the components are listed as being management, policy and research, women, the disabled, and Aborigines. Can you indicate why there has been a specific avoidance of youth as a component of that sub-program?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: My colleague the Minister of Youth Affairs handles that responsibility for youth. Even though recreation and sport has specific populations in various areas, I suppose that our programs and policies are generally oriented towards younger people, anyway. The department

has requested that funds be made available to create a position in the area of youth and youth unemployment but, as we have a Minister of Youth Affairs, it could be seen as some form of duplication. Insufficient funds were available for the Government to agree to that request, and that is why we do not have a specific population group in our department devoted to youth.

I again make the point that, in the main, quite a lot of our programs are devoted to junior sports. When I say 'junior sports', I am referring to the teenage group and younger, so our major thrust in recreation and sport is towards the younger generation.

Mr KLUNDER: With the components for that sub-program of specific populations, 'Veterans' is a possible heading for future use, or is that already covered?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: On page 81 the component 'Elderly' appears, and this is an appropriate question to ask in Seniors' Week. The Recreation Association for the Elderly makes quite a substantial input into the aged population and has done so now for the past two years.

Mr KLUNDER: If I can ask a supplementary question, I play sport as a veteran, and I am not sure that I really like being classed as elderly.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I misunderstood the question. I know exactly how the member for Newland feels, because in the sport in which he is involved, that is, swimming, I think one is classed a veteran when one reaches the age of 30, whereas for athletics it is 40 for men and 35 for females. The veterans do not have any specific programs, but they are usually covered under their association anyway, because in my experience veteran cyclists are all included under the cycling group. The State associations usually cater for their needs and, if they do not, I am sure that the veterans would take them to task. Two of the growing areas in sport involve junior development and the veterans aspect. Over the past few years the number of veterans has increased in comparison to the number of juniors. That is the significant trend in many sports, but there are no veteran weight lifters.

Mr BAKER: We have been informed that there is a discrimination between male and female veterans in regard to age. When will the Minister take action to remove that discrimination? The Minister said that in athletics female veterans are 35 years and over and male veterans are 40 years and over.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That is a fairly flippant question.

Mr BAKER: I think it is serious.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am not in a position to redress the difference between the sexes.

Mr BAKER: I thought that the Minister would uphold the equal opportunity legislation.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: It is not appropriate for a State association to decide at what age and where people compete. It does not make a great deal of difference. No-one has complained that women veterans are a particular age in comparison to males. We might compare that situation with the retirement age. This has nothing to do with me. I would like to know the honourable member's view.

Mr BAKER: I would have thought that the Minister would uphold the new equal opportunity legislation and seek to reduce discrimination. I was appalled to hear that there is a difference in the ages. The yellow book (pages 77 to 81) provides a breakdown of the subprograms, but there is no further information, and the preamble fails to explain. What is the breakdown for 1984-85 and 1985-86 for each of those components? I realise that the Minister may have to take that question on notice.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I can give some information on specific items, but it is well nigh impossible to provide all the information now. It will take some time to obtain this information because it covers program 1, which relates to

recreation, sport and fitness. It would be extremely difficult to obtain facts and figures at present, because all the activity of the department is covered in that one question. Members usually ask questions about a specific program.

I do not know whether I should give an undertaking to provide all the detail, but I can say that very shortly the department's annual report will be issued. Unfortunately, it is not available today. I had hoped that it would be available. A lot of the information that the honourable member requires will be contained in that report. I hope that that will be sufficient for his needs, but, if it is not, I would be happy to supply that information later.

Mr BAKER: To help the Minister out I will be quite specific.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The honourable member will be helping the Committee out, not me. I can supply that information on notice, but not now.

Mr BAKER: I am particularly interested in the relationship between administration costs and grants, including salaries, wages, and so on. Further, given the large number of sporting organisations that receive grants from the department, will the Minister provide a distribution breakdown (for example by size criterion, that is, under \$500, under \$1 000, or under \$2 000) of the grants issued in 1984-85?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: There will be a complete list in the annual report.

Mr BAKER: When will it be available?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: In the next couple of weeks. I am sorry that it is not available today. It is being printed at present.

Mr BAKER: Is the manuscript available or does the Minister prefer that I wait until the annual report is completed?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The manuscript is available to me. It will be printed and distributed to all members within the next week or two. I have only a proof.

Mr INGERSON: Last year in reply to the Hon. Michael Wilson, the member for Torrens, the Minister said that he intended to reconvene the working committee of the AHA, involving the Australian Institute of Fundraising, the Department of Consumer Affairs, the Police Force, and the Department of Recreation and Sport, to reassess the total position in relation to small lotteries. Has this occurred and, if so, what were the findings and what action does the Government intend to take?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That review was undertaken by the previous Government three years ago and the position has been monitored continually by officers of the Department of Recreation and Sport, Racing and Gaming Division. Under the reorganisation there is now a separate section. We are continually monitoring lottery activities generally, and we respond to complaints about malpractice. There are a lot of complaints, but informants are unwilling or unable to produce the necessary evidence. Questions have been asked in the House from time to time about certain organisations involved in small lotteries and whether or not a licence has been issued.

We are faced with the big question in regard to the lotteries licence for hotel social clubs. However, I do not accept totally the information and some of the recommendations contained in that report. I do not want to denigrate the work undertaken by departmental officers, people from the AHA and others on the working party. Nevertheless, I do not intend to take any further action, because that is being done internally by the department. If any evidence is provided as to malpractice, appropriate action is taken or the matter is referred to the police.

A number of meetings have been held with Government and industry representatives in an endeavour to find a

means of rationalising the method of disbursement of proceeds derived from hotel lotteries. There is no simple solution. A concerted effort by inspectors of my department is now in progress in relation to all hotel activities, particularly instant lotteries. That operation will play a significant role in combating many alleged fraudulent practices.

I do not intend to do any more at this stage, but we are constantly monitoring to ensure that those alleged malpractices do not continue. Of course, we need evidence to prove malpractice, but the accusations have been around for some time. As to its extent and the amount involved, one is never quite sure: it is similar to SP bookmaking. That is the basic information in regard to the current status of lotteries in hotels.

Mr INGERSON: Has a suggestion that prize tickets are not being supplied with other basic lottery tickets in this small area been reported to the Minister?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: No, not to me particularly. Perhaps one of the officers in charge of the Racing and Gaming Section can supply information.

Mr Harvey: It has been alleged to us on very limited occasions that people purchase tickets in instant type lotteries. They might have invested \$200 themselves. A lady came in the other day and said just that—there were no \$50 prizes there. We went to a ticket supplier and commandeered a series of tickets that had not been put aside for a particular hotel. We went through them and found that every prize was there.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: For every series.

Mr Harvey: Yes. So, there are allegations from time to time, but that is another instance where the claim has not been substantiated.

Mr KLUNDER: I take the Minister to page 77 of the yellow book under the subprogram title, 'Sports development'. A number of components and activities are shown, yet the financial information given is under one single line. That shows an increase in the recurrent expenditure of some \$300 000 intended for this year over the outcome of last year, and also an increase in full-time equivalent employment levels. Can the Minister indicate within that whether there is an increase in the budget for the South Australian Sports Institute and can he also give breakdown figures of expenditure for that institute?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: There is a minimal increase in the budget for the Sports Institute: the grant to operate the institute is increased by \$25 000 from \$475 000 to \$500 000. Payments incurred but not charged to the institute in total in 1984-85 were \$131 000; anticipated this year \$177 000; making a total in 1984-85 of \$606 000; and in 1985-86 a total of \$677 000.

Increases in salaries and related payments allowed for the full year, because of full effect of 1984 award increases and the full year effect of achieving the improved full-time staff equivalents. New positions were created in 1984-85: a sports development officer (Michael Turtur); and a conditioning and cycling coach (Charlie Walsh). The 1985-86 salaries and related payments figure also includes a 9 per cent superannuation cost not charged in 1984-85. A report from the Sports Institute is available. If the member for Newland would like a copy I would be happy to supply it because it contains all the details. This is only an overview of the amount of funding money available to the institute this year by comparison with 1984-85.

[Sitting suspended from 5.58 to 7.30 p.m.]

Mr GREGORY: Will the Minister advise the Committee that the emphasis on women's sport has been improved by the appointment of the women's adviser in the Minister's department and what action has been instigated to make

further improvements, that is, facilities for training resources, and other matters for female sport.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The short answer is 'Yes'. The aspects of women's sport have been improved by the appointment of not a women's adviser but rather a consultant for women. The person concerned is Monica Redden. I am not sure whether she is a relative of the tremendous North Adelaide ruckman, but, if she is, I am even more pleased that she is in my department, as it is a fairly red and white type of department. It is certainly advantageous. There has not been time to really assess all the advantages that have accrued, but some of the programs that have been instituted will certainly come to fruition in this current year. The answer is 'Yes', and it has certainly been advantageous to sport generally.

Mr INGERSON: I refer to the South Australian Sports Institute. I have been informed that grants received from the Department of Recreation and Sport by the Sports Institute have been used to assist interstate cyclists. The amounts range between \$3 000 and \$4 000 and have been paid to interstate cyclists who take up temporary residence in this State for a month—the minimum period required to obtain a licence for racing purposes. Is the Minister aware of this practice which discriminates against our local riders and, if not, will he undertake to investigate the matter and advise me accordingly?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am aware that a rider from the Northern Territory, Shane Bannon (and I understand that he is not a relative of the Premier of South Australia), has been a recipient of a scholarship from the Sports Institute of South Australia simply because there were no facilities for Shane Bannon in the Northern Territory. It was at his request. I point out to the member for Bragg that the decision was made not by me but by the Sports Institute Board.

The other person mentioned from New South Wales I am not aware of, and I take it that he also is a recipient of a scholarship under the South Australian Sports Institute. I do not think that that takes anything away from the activities of the Sports Institute, because we have a wide diversity of opportunities for up and coming athletes to take advantage of the facilities and training at the Sports Institute. I was aware of Shane Bannon, but I am not aware of the person from New South Wales. I do not object to it, personally because no doubt Charlie Walsh, who was recently appointed to the Sports Institute, has made the decision. There may be reciprocal exchange between Western Australia and States that have an institute. There are intentions in this respect based on the model of the South Australian Sports Institute. I had a visit from Brenden Lyons, the Sports Minister in Tasmania, and we are only too happy for him to visit our Sports Institute. I understand that he will implement a similar program in Tasmania. I do not have specific information; it is not referred to in the annual report. What is the name of the person referred to?

Mr INGERSON: I do not know: no names were mentioned, but I have been advised that two grants were being given to interstate cyclists.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The person would no doubt have been a well known up and coming young cyclist. He would have been well known to Australian coach, Charlie Walsh, who may have encouraged the person to come to South Australia and, as a consequence, he is the recipient of a scholarship. We need to think Australia wide, even though the funding comes from the South Australian Government. Why should we be parochial in stopping Peter Shane Bannon? It was a good move, as he had no opportunities in the Northern Territory, and the same applies to the person from New South Wales.

Mr INGERSON: My major concern was that it be investigated and that we get further advice on who else and what other sports, if any, are using interstate personnel at the Sports Institute. The question is not loaded but is a simple one.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The Northern Territory Government made a contribution to the \$4 000 scholarship for Shane Bannon. I do not think that that is the full extent of it, but there was a contribution from the Northern Territory Government.

Mr INGERSON: I refer to the Olympic Sports Field. Could the Minister comment on his statement in the press yesterday that one of the major purposes of setting up a management committee was the running of a viable facility. As no athletic facilities within Australia have been able to be managed in a viable form, how does he see the Olympic Sports Field in this State being made viable?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I ought to provide, for the benefit of the Committee and the member for Bragg, some historical facts in regard to the Olympic Sports Field. It is important to take this issue in context with what the Government proposes to do to provide a synthetic surface at the considerable cost of about \$800 000 to the South Australian taxpayer.

I want to return first of all to some comments that have been made by the Executive Director of the Athletics Association, both publicly and in discussions that we have had with him, in relation to Olympic Sports Field. In the first instance, the Tartan track was opened in 1975. There were contributions from the State and Federal Governments of \$100 000 each and, from memory, the Athletics Association provided about \$43 000.

As a consequence of that, they built a Tartan track. It was probably the best available synthetic surface at that time. I have some personal memories of my relationship, because at that time I was actively involved in athletics as President of the Enfield Harriers Athletics Club and, as such, I recall that the money that was raised by the Association was raised in the main by the constituent clubs.

I recall the social activities. Indeed, I remember the fun run, in which I, as President of the club, felt obliged to participate. Who knows if I would ever have made it to this place if I had run an extra mile. However, the contribution was made by the club through its constituent clubs, and that is appreciated.

Unfortunately, that track has deteriorated to the extent where it is important to renew it, and this was emphasised to us after we had applied to the Federal Government for the Commonwealth facilities grant, and the Athletics Association had made an approach to us previously.

After that occurred, a submission was made to me and the Premier. I have it with me at the moment and, although I do not intend to read it in great detail, I want to provide some excerpts from this document. It shows very clearly that it was an imperative situation; it was important to upgrade the track at the very time that we are doing it now.

Mr INGERSON: How long ago was the letter sent? Was it six months?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: If the honourable member will be patient I will give him all the details. The submission was made on the basis that it was absolutely urgent for the track to be upgraded so that the federal body, the Australian Athletics Association, would hold the 1986 national track and field championships in Adelaide. The story conveyed to us by the Athletics Association was that, if the track was not to be upgraded, the federal body would allocate the track and field championships to another State.

Mr INGERSON: In March this year.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes. The delegation came to us in March this year and, as I said, we considered the matter

very seriously on the basis of the information provided to us at the time. The Premier and I and our departmental officers had to consider their request, and it had to be considered by Government in association with all the commitments that had been made, particularly from the Commonwealth, in regard to assistance for sporting facilities in this State. We find that currently, in accordance with the statements that I understand were made by Mr Rogers, the Executive Officer of the Athletics Association, over the last few weeks, they now feel that they do not want the track, for a number of reasons.

First of all, the excuse or reason is that the surface is not to a particular standard. That is absolutely incorrect. We had six tenders in regard to the surface, and all the advice and information given to us indicates that the regupol surface, which is a West German product (and the contractors or their agents in Australia are Superturf Holdings), has been tried and tested and, indeed, is on 107 athletics tracks throughout the world.

Mr Ingerson interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Superturf I am sure can speak for itself in regard to its product, and I have no doubt that it will do so. However, it has been the successful tenderer. The other excuse or reason put up by the athletics people for not continuing with the resurfacing of the track at present is that it will interfere with some of the training and preparation of people—the elite athletes—for the 1986 track and field championships. That was known when they made the submission.

Mr Ingerson interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I might tell the honourable member that at certain times of the year (and the most appropriate time, because of prevailing weather conditions and other factors, is from now to December) the synthetic surface needs to be placed, and we also need to prepare the base. One of the problems that existed in the first place was that the base was found to be not—

Mr Thompson: It is not level.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Not level, but not up to the standard that one might have considered in the first place. However, as I say, I make allowances, because techniques and improvements in these sorts of things have taken place over the 10 years since the track was first laid. I find it quite remarkable that the association, which said that it was urgent and imperative to have the track upgraded for the national championships, should now do an about-turn, a complete about-face, and say, 'Look: we do not want the track because of those reasons.'

However, that is not the real reason. I do not know whether the member for Bragg has a copy of the fifth annual report of the Athletics Association of South Australia Incorporated, for 1984-85. If not, I want to refer to the Treasurer's report at that meeting. I will not quote the whole report, because some of the items are not relevant. This is from the Treasurer, who on 25 May 1985 said:

One of my first observations on taking office was that the sport see directions, having fragmented into mainstream elite, veterans, little athletics and road runners. The fragmentation is national and local. On inquiring, the sport had no development plan but seemed to use crisis management techniques to overcome its problems.

I suggest some improvements based on what I observed at national and State level in gymnastics. Much nodding of heads and little action until a Department of Recreation and Sport shocked the sporting fraternity with a development plan concept. Obviously, we were not the only local sport which was perceived not to think past next Saturday's events. We commenced this year with a commitment to resurface the eastern track. Reports vary, but my understanding of the situation is that the board of 1983-84 was not kept financially aware of the association's position and that this commitment was entered into with, at best, incomplete knowledge.

That shows the attitude of an officer of the Athletic Association and the problems that exist. The member for Bragg would be well aware of this matter. I know that he has had contact with the association, and perhaps some political motivation was involved. We can always have a game of politics, but in the long term the prime reason remains for upgrading the track. The track is not being upgraded just for the Athletics Association; that organisation is not the only user. A number of problems and complaints have been raised by other users of the facility over the past 10 years. I have letters and evidence to prove that the Little Athletic and Sports School Associations (involving both independent and public schools) are the main users of the track.

I also point out that there has been a running dispute with the Adelaide City Soccer Club which for part of the year is a lessee of the facility together with the Little Athletic Association and the Athletic Association. I think that it is fair and reasonable, after 10 years or more, to give those users a say in the development of the facility. The Government would be remiss if it ignored the fact that the association is not making a contribution to this upgrading. I accept that over the years the association has done some work and provided finance for the track. On this occasion the Government is providing \$800 000 of taxpayers' money. I think that the situation that has pertained for the past 10 years cannot go on. Both the Burnside council, which owns the property, and I believe quite sincerely that that is the case.

The Burnside council has not had a particularly happy association with the Athletic Association. I do not want to apportion blame or exacerbate the situation in any way. However, the question has been asked and I believe that this is the place to put the cards on the table. The Burnside council has decided that the best method of administering the facility is by way of a management committee where all users of the facility have an equal say.

The real difficulty of the association is that it has been leasing the property for a number of years. Until last year the lease cost \$2 000. In general terms that is a fairly small sum, and it certainly cost the Burnside council much more to look after the grounds. I think that the council has a groundsman to assist in the upkeep of the facility. The Athletic Association has sublet the facility to other organisations, as a result of which disputes have occurred in relation to the use of the facility and the costs involved in hiring it.

A major problem is that the South Australian Athletic Association in subleasing the property to other users has made a substantial form of income from that practice. This was all right in the situation where it was acceptable to other users, but it is no longer acceptable. I find it quite remarkable that that practice was allowed to occur.

Some 12 months ago I received in my office a deputation from the Burnside council asking for the Government to take over the facility, and the Athletic Association wanted exactly the same thing. Therefore, out of it all, I find it difficult to comprehend the attitude that prevails at present. Really the only reason for the Athletic Association's opposition to the management committee proposal is the association's belief that it will lose its autonomy. However, the association has been invited (and it is welcome) to be part of the management committee. The association is certainly a major user.

The proposition is acceptable to all other parties. The only reason why the Athletic Association does not want it to occur is that it will lose a form of income and its opposition is prejudicing all the other users. This year the cost of the lease was increased to \$8 000. That is still a realistic figure. If the present situation was maintained the

association could sublease to other users and reduce its costs.

I think the Little Athletics Association, the Adelaide City Soccer Club, the Independent Schools Association and the public schools have a right to utilise the facility. It is a State facility, and it is not just for the use of the Athletic Association. I am saddened by the dispute. The Government is offering to resurface the track and indeed the Burnside council is agreeable to that. However, we are having difficulty with the association. I hope that the matter can be resolved. My officers and I have tried to amicably resolve the situation but, unfortunately, the association has been intransigent. I feel that the real reason is related to the question of income; I can think of no other reason.

As I mentioned this afternoon, the management committee aspect prevails generally: it is nothing new in regard to the shooting complex; it is proposed for the State Aquatic Centre (indeed it is set in place); it will apply to the project at North Glenelg; and it ought to apply to the Olympic Sports Field. That is the proposal designed by the Burnside Council, and I thoroughly agree with it.

Mr INGERSON: That was the greatest cop out that I have ever heard since I have been in this Parliament. First of all, the Minister selectively quoted the involvement of the Athletic Association. He conveniently forgets that two years ago when the track was upgraded \$30 000 was provided by the State Government and \$62 000 by the Amateur Athletic Association.

He conveniently forgets that, when the whole track was floodlit, \$28 000 was put up by the association, and he also forgets all the volunteer hours that have been put in by the association since 1974. The Minister then expects the association to accept his heavy-handed approach, having asked him back in March if he would have a look at the project. In the letter of June the association asked the Minister to make a decision, because it thought it would have trouble in the early part of next year with the national championships.

Yesterday the Minister said in a press release that he would do it, having that same morning had a letter hand delivered to him from the General Manager of the Amateur Athletics Association asking him to resolve four simple questions. The Minister talks about cooperation, but he would not know what it is all about. I believe that the Amateur Athletics Association has a reasonable grievance with the Government. It has been talking to this Government about upgrading the track since early March this year. It has communicated continually with the Minister and, up until recently, has received very few written replies to its letters.

It has continually asked the Minister to make a decision, but it was only when the Minister, unfortunately through ill health, was in hospital that the acting Minister (Hon. Jack Wright) actually made a decision that the work would be carried out. Since then, some two to three months ago, we still have had no action, and yet all of a sudden there was the development yesterday at the behest and approval of the Burnside council. That is also very interesting, because on Monday afternoon I was approached by one of the senior members of the Burnside council asking if I would have any objection to this being hurried through council that night, as the Minister needed to make an announcement on Wednesday.

There was no discussion with the people who hold the lease and, if the Minister would like to talk about the lease, it is currently being disputed legally. In 1984 the Amateur Athletics Association wrote to the council and asked for a renewal for 10 years. Within two days of writing that letter it received an acknowledgement from the Burnside council and was offered a continuation of the lease for 10 years.

That was on 4 May 1984, so it has a lease until 1994. It is interesting that the Minister should make the statement yesterday that the Burnside council will terminate that lease. I know that the Burnside council has made that statement, but legal action will be taken in that matter.

With respect to the time delays, there is no question that the Amateur Athletics Association, being the principal user of the track and the only lessee currently involved, should approach the Minister. There is no question about use of the track by the Little Athletics Association or the schools. I support completely the need for involvement of those associations, representing the major user. What I object to is the complete lack of commitment by this Government and then, all of a sudden, a bludgeoning move within the past 24 hours just to make sure that it gets its own way.

It is interesting that the Minister said that six people put in submissions for the track. A recent study was carried out on the polymeric surfaces for sports and recreation and it was done by a head engineer, Graham Tipp, in the Greater London Council testing laboratories. He made some interesting statements on the type of track proposed. The two types of track are on prefabricated sheets, of which regupol is one, and the other type is cast *in situ*, elastomer track, which is the existing track that is laid throughout Australia and the southern hemisphere. It is my understanding that no other type of track has ever been laid in the southern hemisphere. I believe that the study has been vindicated by the Australian Institute of Sport as being a fairly valid study.

The report goes on to recommend that it is best to use the prefabricated sheets indoors; that is the regupol or the system that is being recommended by the Government. It is interesting that the Minister or his department should make a final decision without consulting the technical officer as to the type of track that is required.

The second one (plastic surface that is put down *in situ* and allowed to develop over the track similar to the tartan track out there) is mentioned in this report as the most recommended and obvious track to put down outside. This morning, in discussions with the Victorian Director who runs the Olympic track in Melbourne, the comment was made that they investigated the prefabricated track and found that there were two major concerns. One was that, with any sheet, there have to be joins. Over time there are significant problems in the joining of the sheets. There is no question that, in the short term, the first two years or so, there may be no problems, but over the long term there are significant problems associated with the joins.

The second area of concern with any pre-stuck or stuck down material is that there are problems associated with ultraviolet light and the lifting of the track. One of the major concerns in South Australia is the effect of the ultraviolet light. Those sorts of questions were matters that the Amateur Athletics Association wanted to discuss with the Minister and the department, but it has not had an opportunity to do that. I understand that the association's technical officer is currently in Canberra and the advice that I have received is that he has not been approached to discuss this type of track, nor has the Amateur Athletics Association in South Australia been asked whether or not that type of track is suitable. I find this situation quite incredible, and I hope that the Minister can comment on it.

As far as the management committee is concerned, I have never had and do not have any hangups about the need for proper management. With my sort of background, having worked in my own business, I know that management is the key to any success in business, but I question the comment made by the Minister yesterday in his press release that this management committee will be able to walk on water and be the only single athletic stadium in Australia that will suddenly become viable, because this Minister has

decided to have a multi-purpose management committee. The Bruce stadium in Canberra is well and truly behind the eightball in finance. The advice I received this morning concerning the Victorian stadium was that it is only breaking even because of the contributions made from the profits from the entertainment centre, which happens to be on the same site and under the same management. So the opportunity for viability in those two States, which have significantly larger potential numbers than we are likely to have, makes that sort of comment from the Minister quite unreal.

I ask the Minister to further explain, particularly in relation to the track, why the decision was not made earlier; why are we in a position where the Amateur Athletics Association up until yesterday had to write to the Minister and ask him to state what sort of surface the track would have and when it would be completed? This letter was dated 1 October, the same day as this magic press release that was made in cahoots with the Burnside council. I would also like the Minister to explain the reason for lack of use of the track for the rest of the season and to say whether there are any guarantees that it will be finished in December. I read about the aquatic centre last night: the Minister told us four times that it was going to be finished in 1984.

There is only three months to go in 1985 before the track must be finished. The Athletic Association will not use the track in January—it will be used for the national wheelchair games, involving a totally different group that is not at all aligned with amateur athletics. Regarding the resolution of the management control situation, the Minister wonders why a group of people in a voluntary organisation, who put thousands of hours into developing the track, are getting uptight when, first, the Minister cannot make up his mind about when he will take action and, secondly, belts them around the ears and says, 'You will have a minor vote on the committee'.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: There is no doubt that the member for Bragg has been briefed by the Athletic Association. I point out that many of his comments are substantially incorrect.

Mr INGERSON: You'd know about that.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I certainly would. I have already commented at length on the situation. My officers have been involved with the users of this facility, and in particular with the Athletic Association. Despite all the comments made by the member for Bragg, I point out that one of the unfortunate things is that I have found Mr Rogers to be totally unreliable. Indeed, I am rather perturbed that a person in such a position should prejudice a sport in which a substantial number of South Australians have proved themselves over the years. I think he has been something of a disaster for athletics.

As I said, the association approached us and, after due consideration of all the factors, this Government decided to put about \$800 000 into the Olympic Sports Field. The association has now done a complete somersault, and that is totally unreliable. My officers have been dealing with all the matters referred to, and I will give the Director an opportunity to reply to some of the points raised by the member for Bragg.

Mr BAKER: We now have a little lamb for the offering.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member's comment is definitely out of order. It is a reflection on the officers who are about to reply and that conduct is very unbecoming in this Committee.

Mr BAKER: I wish to clarify the position. Do you, Mr Chairman, believe that the Minister's description of an office bearer in the Athletic Association was a bit uncharitable? That is what I was referring to.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will not be involved in that point of order. The Chair has said that officers of depart-

ments who come before this Committee with any Minister come at the invitation of the Parliament and at our convenience. Any reflection on those officers I take as a definite affront to the officers at the table. The officers have no right of reply or explanation.

Mr BAKER: Point of order, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I leave the matter at that. I point out to the Committee and to the member for Mitcham that this is the first time, and I hope the last time, that such a matter has been brought up at a Committee meeting.

Mr BAKER: Point of order.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the officer to reply.

Mr BAKER: Point of order, Mr Chairman. I would like to clear up the matter right now. I was referring to the Minister's statement. I did not reflect on the officers at all. When I was talking about the sacrificial lamb, I was talking about the fact that the Minister had offloaded: he had used someone else—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I suggest that the honourable member goes no further. I simply point out that the honourable member's remarks were made, rather strangely to the Chair, immediately after the Minister asked his officer to explain the position to the Committee. As far as I am concerned, there is no point of order. I am simply pointing out that it seemed very strange to me at least that that statement was made, and I hope that such a statement is not made in the future.

Mr Thompson: Information relating to the material has been tabled. We were aware of concerns expressed about the type of material to be used. There are two types of regupol material. The surface that we intend to lay will be welded together in the factory. Delamination will not occur in these circumstances, which was the point made in the article. The material has been developed since the report was written. We have talked at length with Superturf Holdings about the application of this material in an outdoor environment, and the company assures us that there are many examples to indicate that it has been satisfactorily laid, such as in Saudi Arabia where there are extremes of temperature and conditions, with heat and dryness, and in Europe, where it is cold and wet, and so on. Therefore, we are confident that the material will be satisfactory.

We involved the Athletic Association in the talks. On 19 June departmental staff and Mr Rogers worked through what was to be changed or replaced at the track. There were further discussions on 5 August and 7 August with Ian Rogers and Ian Boswell. We called tenders, tenders closed and we discussed what was the most appropriate tender, involving Athletic Association officers. About half way through we became concerned that some of our discussions with those officers, which were confidential, might be having a slightly wider audience and thus we wished to keep the matter within the department. We continued on that basis.

We considered other options very seriously. We believe that regupol is the cheapest facility that meets international standards. A letter from the International Amateur Athletics Federation indicates that the proposed track will be satisfactory and will certainly meet requirements. There is a five year guarantee. One of the problems with the existing track is that there are varying degrees of depth. The international standard is 13 millimetres, but in some sections it is as shallow as 3 millimetres. When we lay a surface on a base that might not be absolutely flat, there are varying degrees of depth. By laying a sheet, as is proposed (like a carpet), we can guarantee that there will be a depth of 13 millimetres all over. We were concerned about the joins. Given the experience with a number of other tracks where this facility has been laid, we were convinced that there would be no long-term problems in regard to the joins.

It is feared that ultraviolet light causes delamination in some surfaces. In this case, the base and the top layer will be welded together and baked in an oven, so there is little chance of delamination. The problem with ultraviolet light will be minimal, if not non-existent. The annual report of the Athletic Association for 1984-85 states that \$17 445 has been received in hire fees with a profit of \$7 945.

The Government believed that the users of the track should make a small contribution to its replacement when that is required. Obviously, athletics tracks wear out. We hope that this track will last between 10 and 15 years, but there will be a time further on when the Government will have to replace it.

We hope that the users and funds taken from hire fees will contribute to that whole operation. As to the time that it will be laid, Superturf indicated that it can put the track down and that it will be ready for use in a 12 week period. All other major tenderers indicated a 12 week period to lay it down, so we are very confident that it can be achieved in that time. That means that the track will be down before Christmas.

Had Superturf indicated 12 weeks and all other major tenderers 16 weeks, we would have been concerned. As I indicated, they were going to use, to a large extent, the same South Australian subcontractors to do much of the work, so we were confident that the track would be laid in that time. As to the timing, it was always envisaged that this would be about the time in which the track would be laid. One needs very warm weather to ensure that one gets a bonding between the track and the base.

When the Athletics Association came to us and argued that they required a new track, it was always envisaged that it would be laid in this period of time. They knew that there would be a period about this time that they could not get their athletes on to the track. That was discussed, and they indicated that they could cope with it, although it was an inconvenience. We accepted it, because they needed the track in order to hold the national titles here in 1986.

As to whether it is done this year or next year, if we did it next year we would have to do it at about the same time. One cannot put it down in winter. One could certainly lay it after Christmas, but that is smack bang in the middle of the athletics season. So, you put it down as early as you like in the athletics season, but in the warmer summer months.

Mr INGERSON: A couple of comments made by the Minister need to be corrected. In a public forum like this members of the public do not have the opportunity to defend themselves. The Minister made an unreasonable comment in relation to the Executive Director of the Amateur Athletics Association. Those sort of comments were deliberately pointed and unreasonable.

As far as the letter is concerned, the Minister has been implying that the Amateur Athletics Association has been opposed to this current track. That is not correct, and I will read the letter of yesterday's date, in case the Minister has not seen it:

May I suggest delaying the upgrading of Olympic Sports Field until the end of the current season to allow more discussion and research into the most suitable track surface to be laid and allow more time for negotiations over the management and control of the athletic facilities to continue, might be an acceptable solution.

There is no question in that statement that the Amateur Athletics Association is suggesting they do not want it. All they are saying is that time is running out and that they are very concerned. As I said earlier, I am concerned because we have had projects in this State that we have been told will be finished in 12 months that have not been finished in anywhere near that time.

I am concerned, and I expect guarantees to be given to the association that that can be carried out. It is important that those comments are placed on the record, because there was never an inference and there never has been by the Amateur Athletics Association that they did not want the Government to upgrade the track. That very important factor needs to be brought out. It is important to comment in relation to Mr Rogers, because the Minister has used this forum unfairly. Mr Rogers does not have the opportunity to defend himself.

My next question relates to the TAB. Whilst in Opposition, the Minister clearly stated the need for fixed percentages between 65 and 72 per cent. During its three years in Government, the Labor Party has had one major report on the distribution to the codes—a report initiated by the department, sent out to the three codes asking them to comment on the particular recommendation.

Because the recommendation was not accepted by any of the codes—in particular the trotting and greyhound codes—the Minister then initiated a further subcommittee with representatives of the three codes to attempt to come to some sort of agreement. As everybody knew and suspected, the chance of that committee ever making a decision on which everybody would agree was almost beyond belief. It is now back in its rightful position.

The Minister is now required at some stage to make a decision which he recommended. He called upon the previous Minister (Hon. Michael Wilson) to get on with the job and make a decision because the two minor codes were being disadvantaged: the longer the galloping code got a higher percentage out of the TAB, the bigger the problem would get.

That was put forward very strongly by the Minister when in Opposition. Some three years later we still have it. As I said, it is almost like the Minister for non-decision. We have a hard problem, so we put it off. It is a bit like what we were talking about earlier. The Olympic Sports Field problem could have been solved if the decision had been made three months earlier. Here we have exactly the same situation: the racing codes are now wondering and waiting for the Minister to make his decision. When can we expect a decision on the distribution of moneys from the TAB?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Since the inception of the TAB in South Australia in 1967, the present form of sharing profits of the TAB has been maintained. There is no magic formula. Have the member for Bragg or his Party any suggestions for a formula in regard to percentage distribution of TAB moneys?

Mr INGERSON: Every time you have to make a decision you flick pass.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am not flick passing.

Mr INGERSON: Of course you are; you flick passed—

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am asking you.

Mr INGERSON: You switch off. You ask everybody else. You have never made a decision in your life.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That is not true. That may be the honourable member's opinion; he is entitled to it. Over the past three years in this Government moneys obtained have far exceeded moneys available under the Tonkin Government in its three years—

Mr INGERSON: Come on; stop playing with facts. Michael Wilson made the decision.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: No, as a matter of fact we had an unfortunate experience during those three years in this State. I know many people do not forget it, particularly the racing industry. The galloping code was in very dire financial circumstances.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I will answer the question in the way—

The CHAIRMAN: It might be better if we dealt with one question at a time.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I will answer the question in my own way in my own time. I do not think that Opposition members really want to hear, otherwise they would not continually interject.

They are trying again to play a little bit of politics as they did with the Aquatic Centre, which has fallen on their heads. The Olympic Sports Field and a lot of other projects have been initiated by this Government. Opposition members can stir as much as they like. In the final analysis the determination will be made by the electors. If the TAB is going to bet on that, members opposite will not be able to get on the Labor Party because it will be odds on.

I return to the distribution of profits for the TAB. Every State has difficulties finding a formula that is satisfactory to the three codes. Probably there is only one exception, namely, Western Australia, where the greyhound racing code is not a participant in the sharing of the profits. I believe that 60 per cent goes to the gallopers and 40 per cent to the trots. In South Australia and the other three States, this difficulty exists, and the formula in the other States has been changed from time to time. In fact, only very recently, in Victoria legislation relating to a fixed percentage was determined. There is no guarantee that that is acceptable or will be acceptable over a period of time to one or other of those codes. So, there is no magic formula, and the Opposition can criticise and carp, as it usually does.

Mr INGERSON: You are in government.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, and we will be here for a long time and must eventually make a decision that is fair and equitable to all parties concerned. So, the important thing is to ensure that, if the system or formula is to be changed, it is acceptable, fair and equitable to all parties.

In view of that, I asked my department to do a study, which was undertaken by the Manager of the Racing and Gaming Division. It involved a background discussion paper in relation to the distribution of TAB profits. I pay tribute to the Manager publicly for presenting that report. It provides a deal of statistical information, and recommendations were made in regard to the TAB distribution. As I wanted to provide the opportunity to all the codes to participate and evaluate that study, we set up a working party of representatives of the three codes and the TAB. That working party has met on a number of occasions, and it is my understanding that it has now concluded its meetings, with recommendations to be forthcoming shortly. That is presently the state of play. I also remind members opposite that, whatever decision is made to change the percentage, it requires an amendment to the Racing Act through this Parliament. I have certain views—

Mr INGERSON: We would like to hear them.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I will not express personal views for the benefit of the honourable member. I will make a decision based on information and not on personal views even though I hold views that might be a solution to the problem. The question is a difficult one. I agree entirely that a need exists for impetus for the night codes to improve stake money.

Mr Baker interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I can tell the ignorant member for Mitcham, who continually interjects, that, although he has a fair knowledge of trotting and owns half a horse, which makes him an instant expert—

Mr BAKER: One-fifth—do not exaggerate.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We are talking about the TAB, which does not pay out on a fifth of a horse. If we return to what the Minister was saying, we would be back on line.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: All codes have been recipients of a far larger share of money from TAB profits and, indeed, from some of their own initiatives in the last three years than ever before.

Mr INGERSON: TAB turnover has improved.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, TAB turnover has gone up. Why has that occurred?

Mr INGERSON: Good promotion.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, along with good marketing, good management and indeed some Government initiatives. I also point out that money that is available to the codes through the Racecourse Development Board by the sharing of fractions and unclaimed dividends has also significantly increased the opportunity for funding in that field.

Mr Baker interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The honourable member would not know because he was not here in 1979—he just blew up on the scene in the last couple of years. So, he is no instant expert. His knowledge of racing, like that of most members opposite, is fairly limited. I pay tribute to a Liberal member, Don Laidlaw, who is no longer in the Parliament. He was Chairman of the Industries Development Committee when the Tonkin Government sought that committee's assistance in regard to problems then associated with the South Australian Jockey Club. The initiatives undertaken by the Industries Development Committee precipitated what occurred later. I do not want to go back in history, but it was apparent that the Government of the day had little or no knowledge in or sympathy for what was required of the racing codes.

TAB turnover has increased significantly. We have had record turnover; that is great, and we hope that that situation will maintain. But, out of it all the money available to the three codes has significantly improved, and certainly we want to be able to provide impetus for them to carry on in that way in future. The distribution of the profits is the recommendation of that working party, and I understand that it will be with me next week. The Government will decide whether there will be any alteration to the distribution or whether the *status quo* will remain.

As I said, I would like to hear the views of the experts from the Liberal Party, because they know damn well that there is no magic formula. They have been very conspicuous by their silence in relation to this matter. This question arises this evening simply because members opposite think that they can gather some political kudos. I am not seeking political kudos, but I want what is fair and equitable for a very important sport and industry in South Australia.

I do not believe that we should play politics with the racing industry. We should be able to find a solution which is non political. If the member for Bragg wants to provide any input, I welcome his advice. I point out that the member for Bragg is not the shadow Minister of Sport and Recreation, anyway; he is the *de facto* shadow Minister. I think I should take more notice of the other expert—the Leader of the Opposition—who goes to the races once a year.

Mr INGERSON: I refer to the current percentages received by the codes. What are the latest percentages for galloping, trotting and the greyhounds?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The latest information for the year ending 30 June 1985 is that galloping received 74.22 per cent, harness racing 16.89 per cent, and the greyhounds 8.89 per cent.

Mr INGERSON: Did those percentages change in the first quarter of this financial year?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I have given the total percentages for the year.

Mr INGERSON: What are the latest figures available for the first quarter of the current financial year?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The distribution of TAB profits is made on a quarterly basis. The latest information for the first quarter of this financial year is that 70.6 per cent was paid to the galloping code, 18.225 per cent to trotting, and 11.09 per cent to the greyhounds. That fluctuation is rather remarkable. The point that I continually repeat is that that fluctuation is why a fixed percentage is a rather dangerous formula. No-one can predict with any degree of certainty what will happen from time to time in regard to the respective codes. That is why I have some apprehension about making it a fixed percentage rather than having a degree of flexibility written into any distribution of profits should we change the existing formula.

The latest figures are very interesting. They have just been given to me; I was not aware of them. They show quite a diminution for the Jockey Club and an increase to both the night codes, and more significantly to the Greyhound Racing Control Board. As I have said, an important factor is the fluctuations that have occurred over the years. Indeed, the trend until now has been towards an increase for the Jockey Club. There may be a hidden factor, because the member for Bragg looks a bit pleased with himself, and obviously he was aware of the figures—I was not. The figures appear to substantiate my argument about the danger in having a fixed percentage.

Mr INGERSON: I think that most people would expect turnover percentages to vary over a season, particularly when the heaviest betting time for galloping is during the spring carnival. Do the percentages given for the first quarter this year parallel the figures for the same quarter last year? I suspect that that is the case, which means that it is highly likely that the final result achieved last year will be achieved this year.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am advised by the General Manager of the TAB that a similar pattern was apparent in the first quarter of last financial year. In the first quarter of this financial year there may be an additional percentage for greyhounds because of additional Friday night meetings. As I have said, a number of factors determine the amount of money available for distribution to the respective codes. I will not go into detail, because I know the honourable member wants to ask further questions. I believe we need to assess the situation very carefully before we change the Act to provide fixed percentages. I point out that legislation has just been passed in Victoria to provide for fixed percentages. To my knowledge the actual percentages involved would not be acceptable to the three codes in South Australia.

Mr INGERSON: I think the discussion we have had in the last half hour clearly shows that there is only one way to solve the problem, and that is for the Minister to make the decision, which we had hoped he might have done tonight.

I would like to ask a couple of questions about 5AA, another area for which the Minister is responsible, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of TAB. Was any finance from TAB given to 5AA for the purchase of the two country radio stations, and are some of the accounts—for example, air-conditioning or electricity charges—being paid by TAB on behalf of 5AA?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I understand not, but I think the General Manager of TAB would be more equipped to give the details, so I will ask him to comment.

Mr Smith: In answer to the first question, Festival City Broadcasters is funding the purchase of the two country radio stations wholly and solely from its own funds—borrowings. In answer to the second question, the only TAB expenditure involving 5AA concerns the relocation of the radio station from Fullarton Road to the first floor of the headquarters premises at 153 Flinders Street, as outlined in

the annual report. It is common business practice that an owner of a building provides certain services for a tenant. In providing these services, I can assure this Committee that we are getting above prime rental rates for the area that Festival City Broadcasters is leasing.

Mr BAKER: There has been considerable comment over the last few months about failures of various TAB outlets, and I understand that the mainframe has gone down on a number of occasions. To what does the Minister ascribe the major problems with the introduction of the new computer system, and what is the estimated loss of turnover as a result of downtime on the computer?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: There is a reference to this particular matter in the annual report of the TAB. The new computer came into operation only on 22 July of this year, and my information is that there were some initial problems which, I understand from those persons with knowledge of computer technology, is nothing unusual. The position has since stabilised, and in a moment I will ask the General Manager of TAB to give more detail; but the uptime—if one could describe it that way—of the TAB computer is something like 99 per cent, and I understand that the breakdowns that occurred in the first week of July have been attended to.

They were for a certain duration, and it is not possible to determine with any degree of certainty just how much revenue might have been lost, as a result, to the TAB and consequently the Government and the racing codes. Nevertheless, the incidence of increasing TAB turnover certainly indicates, to me anyway, that that loss of turnover is minimal.

Mr Smith: For 1984-85 the uptime was 99.6 per cent, which is considered an acceptable standard within the computer industry. TAB introduced the new central site computer system on 22 July 1985. In the first week we were not without our serious problems, which is only natural when a new computer system is being introduced. They were not entirely the fault of the new development system. One of the leading South Australian service utilities was a major contributor to our fault. Then, of course, there were some software problems on race day—Wednesday—at Strathalbyn. Since then, over the past four weeks to 18 September, the uptime of the new computer has been 99.76 per cent, and for two weeks it was 100 per cent. On 9 September, we installed our new uninterruptible power supply which will overcome the problems experienced with the service company.

Obviously, any computer downtime means a loss in turnover, and in an industry which must maintain credibility it is difficult to quantify such losses. Naturally, the loss of any turnover is something that the board of management is conscious of.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: One of the remarkable things is that punters who have been unable to place a bet always complain about that because it prevented them from backing a winner: they maintain that they have been deprived of such a result simply because the computer broke down. The public certainly gets a magnificent service from the TAB, not only due to the increased number of agencies and sub-agencies in South Australia but also because of the opportunity to subscribe to a telephone account. As the General Manager has pointed out, very rarely are the computer facilities not available to place an investment.

Mr BAKER: I refer again to the track at the Olympic Sports Field. The Minister referred to an accountant's report of May 1985 and a commitment made during 1983-84 to upgrade the eastern track. However, the Minister said that he was not aware of any problem until about March 1985. I find that surprising, and it is even more puzzling in view of the seriousness now placed on the timing of the work—it is now maintained that the work must be undertaken without delay.

Also, comments have been made that the new track developed in Saudi Arabia has withstood the test of time. Yet it was also maintained that the new welding device was a recent innovation—so, one could presume that that has not been around long enough to determine whether it has stood the test of time. What information did the Minister receive from Saudi Arabia as to how long the track had been down? How many joins were needed (because a circular track cannot be made on a machine; it must be cut and welded right the way around)? I presume that that is the case, with my limited engineering knowledge. Some of the explanations provided seem a little inconsistent with the acceptance of a tender. Can the Minister give a further explanation of this matter?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: All the information provided to my department and to the Government through departmental officers has indicated quite clearly that the West German company Regupol has a record equal to, if not better than, the other tenderers. Indeed, in all tenders cost consideration is important, as is compliance with specified requirements. The Regupol company complied exactly. Perhaps I should take a trip to Saudi Arabia and to other parts of the world to examine in detail this surface that has been developed. From the information given to me I am confident that it is acceptable. A guarantee has been given by the company that the surface will be of a standard suitable for our requirements at the Olympic Sports Field.

I am rather surprised that the Amateur Athletics Association is quibbling about this matter. I do not think that that organisation is sincere. The director has referred to the technical aspects of the surface involved. This type of surface has been tried in other parts of the world under severe conditions, and as far as we are aware there is no reason to doubt that it has the qualities necessary for the Olympic Sports Field at Kensington.

Mr BAKER: I feel that the Amateur Athletics Association is quite justified in being concerned about the provision of a surface that has not been proved in Australian conditions. The Minister has given me his assurance, so I suppose that we will have to wait and see the outcome.

Does the Minister have any distribution costs as far as the running of the TAB is concerned? One of the elements in any operation is the fact that you pay a certain cost for a service and receive a certain return. It is my observation that the gallops codes, particularly on the Saturday, enjoy a service from approximately 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., some six hours. In relation to the trotting and greyhound codes, except for those minor midweek meetings, their major meetings rely in most cases on a coverage of two hours and, in some few cases, three hours. It is also my observation that during the peak times on Saturday the number of operators engaged is significantly higher than in the more modern codes, if you like, in terms of distribution.

Given that there is an inherent bias, in my view, towards the cost of servicing the various codes, what information can the Minister provide to this Committee as to where those cost biases lie and how much they involve?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: If I understand the question correctly, the honourable member is looking for the cost involved to the TAB in providing a service to the respective codes. The General Manager informs me that we have information in regard to that, but the report gives collective figures rather than differences in turnover by the respective codes. I think that the honourable member is looking for the cost of servicing the particular operation for the respective codes. I cannot understand why that information is required, but nevertheless I will ask the General Manager, Mr Smith, to provide those figures if possible. If they are not available at the present time, they will be provided in due course.

Mr Smith: The TAB completes weekly cost benefit analyses on every cash betting outlet in South Australia, including telephone betting. From a management point of view, as the Minister would be aware, we watch the profitability of every agency throughout South Australia and, if they go into a non-profitable situation, we inform the Minister of that fact.

In general terms, the fact that there is more staff evident in galloping sessions than in night sessions is because more turnover is taken during those periods, so therefore, generally, as a ballpark statement, the cost of operation from a staffing point of view for each session is rather consistent. I would like to also clarify one point. Mention was made of the fact that night codes have a session, I think, of approximately 1½ to 2½ hours, but that is not quite true. On Saturday, if we open at 10 a.m. we open all day and we operate on the night meeting, so in fact the night codes enjoy a longer period of investment than the day codes.

Mr LEWIS: When will the casino open?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That is not under my ministerial jurisdiction—it is the prerogative of the Premier. As I said, I can only provide information relating to those matters that come under my jurisdiction, so I am sure that the member for Mallee could ask that question, even in the House, or by way of a letter to the Premier of the State.

Mr LEWIS: In light of that information, and in light of the information which the General Manager of the Totalizator Agency Board has just given, would the Minister incorporate in the record of the Estimates Committees an up-to-date breakdown of the figures which were contained in the tables of *Hansard* on 11 May 1983 from page 1524 through to page 1538?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: What are the figures?

Mr LEWIS: A breakdown of turnover and profitability in the various forms of gambling and the attendances at race meetings. The initial pages were lengthy, because historically it was necessary to incorporate the information going back a decade. My interest in those figures is to now bring them up to date so that, with the impending opening of the casino, we will be able to determine if there is an effect on turnover in terms of dollars in the forms of gambling available to the betting public and also attendances at the race meetings and the like to which people who wish to gamble go, and it will thereby enable us to make a judgment as to whether or not the casino has any effect by undertaking a regression analysis. As all this information is on computer, I am sure that it will not take the departmental officers very long to obtain it for us. I do not want the Minister to give me the details now, but could he indicate if he can provide it to the Committee?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The information that I have available to me is that which is contained in the TAB annual report and it relates to TAB turnover from 1976-77 until last year.

It shows the market share of the TAB in line with the total legal gambling turnover, but it does not give a breakdown for the other forms of gambling, although I am advised that there is a table showing information in regard to the TAB, on-course totalisators, bookmakers, Lotteries Commission, Soccer Pools, bingo and small lotteries. I take it that that is the information that the member for Mallee requires. This table also gives figures for total legal gambling and the percentage movement from 1966-67. I can provide the honourable member with a copy of this table.

Mr LEWIS: I will not ask the Minister to insert that table in *Hansard*, because he is referring to the first table that I mentioned. If the Minister looks at the record, he will understand that what I ask is not an outrageous request.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I have that information in the form of a table.

Mr LEWIS: That information was available to me when I incorporated those tables in *Hansard*. I would like an update. The first table appears at page 1524 of *Hansard* of 11 May 1983, and further tables continue until page 1538.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Klunder): I remind the Minister that any information must be forwarded to the Clerks of the Committee no later than Friday 18 October.

Mr LEWIS: Does the Government intend to resume night motorbike and sidecar racing on the circuit around the arena at Wayville?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Not to my knowledge. The department is not aware of any approaches regarding motor-cycle racing on the circuit at Wayville. I believe there will be one night event in association with the Grand Prix, but we are not aware that the Wayville Showgrounds will be otherwise used for that purpose.

Mr LEWIS: Would the Minister countenance an application for regular night meetings there?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Such applications are not made to me as Minister of Recreation and Sport. No doubt there would have to be an application to the Government, perhaps under the Places of Public Entertainment Act and, because of the noise factor, to the Department of Environment and Planning.

Mr INGERSON: The annual report of the Betting Control Board stated that a retirement age for bookmakers would be introduced. What is the Government's policy?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The board is recommending in its annual report that bookmakers who have attained the age of 70 years should retire. This matter has been considered by the board over a long period. Even though I agree substantially with the comments made in the report, we do not have a particular policy, simply because the Betting Control Board is the statutory authority that determines this aspect and other aspects affecting bookmakers.

Mr BAKER: If there is to be a statutory retiring age, legislation would have to be introduced.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: No, I do not think so. It is up to the board, and it could do that without legislation being amended.

Despite the fact that it is to be implemented on or before 31 July 1986 (the end of the racing year), I understand that the board considered the matter again at a meeting only last week, and that, as a consequence of that meeting, the matter has been deferred.

Mr INGERSON: The Minister said earlier tonight that he would receive the report from the TAB subcommittee early next week. When can we expect a decision on distribution of codes?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: As soon as possible.

Mr INGERSON: Before the election?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I do not know when the election is; do you?

Mr INGERSON: I now ask a question in relation to the Racecourse Development Board. In the Auditor-General's report at page 344 appears a capital grant made by the South Australian Government Financing Authority to the horse racing section of the Racecourse Development Board. Can the Minister advise what that grant of \$41 200 was for? It is not in any of the other accounts in relation to greyhounds or trotting. Why is it in only the galloping code section? What is the grant for?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I have not got the information immediately available to me. I thought it might be referenced.

Mr INGERSON: It is not referenced.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I will obtain the information for the honourable member and advise him accordingly.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! If the Minister has not got at his immediate disposal an adequate answer, he has merely

to get it—so long as we have it by 18 October so that it can be inserted in *Hansard*.

Mr INGERSON: I have a further question relating to page 344. In the same accounts there is shown a motor vehicle of depreciated value for \$3 583. That also appears in the other two accounts. Who uses the motor vehicle?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The motor vehicle is used by the Chairman of the Racecourse Development Board, Mr Brian Taylor.

Mr INGERSON: Can the Minister advise whether the Racecourse Development Board is contemplating a major investment in the Angle Park raceway?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes, I am aware of a submission from the Chairman of the Racecourse Development Board. I have arranged for him to have discussions with me, one day next week from memory, on the venue at Angle Park. I do not know the contents of submission yet, but I have made an appointment for him to come and see me. I am aware that that is the subject for discussion.

Mr INGERSON: I have a further question in relation to greyhounds and TAB meetings at Strathalbyn and Port Pirie. Why did the Minister change his mind about TAB coverage of those meetings, which were supposed to go to the end of December? Is this part of a rationalisation program approved by the Minister?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I did not change my mind. At the beginning of the year, I have to approve or otherwise the racing dates submitted to me by the respective controlling bodies. If they are changed throughout the year they are changed by the controlling bodies, and it is necessary for me under the Act to formally give approval and have them gazetted as such. So, that is what occurred. The controlling bodies decided not to change that situation and referred it to me. I approved it accordingly.

Mr INGERSON: So, it has been done with the approval of the Minister?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: Yes.

Mr BAKER: Returning to the Olympic Sports Field track, the Minister mentioned a figure of \$800 000. Can the Minister inform the Committee from where that money is coming?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: It will come from State Government funds; there is no contribution from the Commonwealth.

Mr INGERSON: Is it Recreation and Sport Department money?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: No provision was made in the budget as it was being evolved, but, following the budget determination, Cabinet decided to go on with the project. So, there will be an allocation from Treasury to provide the necessary funds.

Mr BAKER: Can the Minister say that, if the matter had not suddenly achieved some urgency, that is, that it was not necessary for the 1986 athletics season or, alternatively, the application had come in earlier, it would have been possible to get Commonwealth money?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: It may have been possible, because we had to submit early in the year our plans for the Commonwealth capital facilities program over the next three years. We did apply for the hockey complex and a number of others, which I cannot remember in detail. I believe it involved small bore, weight training, baseball, and one or two other applications. The application in relation to the Olympic Sports Field is such that, even though we were aware of some deterioration, we were not aware of the extent of it all.

The first real approach was made by a deputation from the Athletic Association to me and the Premier. It came into this House and we discussed the matter. They put very strongly to us the necessity and urgency to provide the money. I have with me the submission, which I will not go

through as we are battling against time. It happened in between the process of applying for Commonwealth assistance and the determination of the State budget. Cabinet made a decision after the expiry of that time, I think on 8 July, just after the end of the financial year. So, it was a special allocation from funds towards the Olympic Sports Field.

Mr BAKER: So, you did not have any correspondence or approach in 1984 to upgrade the track—is that what you are saying?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: In October 1984 we had an approach from the Burnside council, and, as I am relying on memory somewhat, I am not absolutely sure whether athletics made a written approach. They may have done so, but it was not significantly important, as we believed, anyway, because we believed that the track might have had another two or three years of useful life. Unfortunately, that is not the case because it has deteriorated significantly over the past 12 months or so. Indeed, the decision to provide the money and upgrade the track was taken after long deliberation about funding and, of course, in relation to our priority in regard to sporting facilities in this State.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Works and Services—Department of Recreation and Sport, \$4 800 000

Chairman:

Mr Max Brown

Members:

Mr S.J. Baker
Mr R.J. Gregory
Mr G.A. Ingerson
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Mr I.P. Lewis
Mr K.H. Plunkett

Witness:

The Hon. J.W. Slater, Minister of Water Resources and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr G. Thompson, Director, Department of Recreation and Sport.

Mr L. Watson, Manager, Management and Support Services.

Mr S. Wise, Finance Officer.

Mr P. Morrissy, Secretary, Betting Control Board.

Mr D. Harvey, Manager, Racing and Gaming Section.

Mr D. Hamilton, Chairman, South Australian Totalizator Agency Board.

Mr B. Smith, General Manager, South Australian Totalizator Agency Board.

The CHAIRMAN: The expenditure is open for examination. Are there any questions?

Mr INGERSON: In this particular line the total budget is \$4.8 million. So far this year within and external to the budget the Minister has committed \$2.075 million to the Aquatic Centre, \$895 000 for local level facilities, \$650 000 to the Small Bore International Rifle Range, approximately \$3.75 million to the International Hockey and Lacrosse Association, and \$1 million to Olympic Sports Field. This totals \$8.37 million, and bearing in mind the budget line of \$4.8 million, can the Minister explain how he will achieve that expenditure?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The capital works program provides, as the member said, a total of \$4.8 million, and we estimate that that is what we will spend this year. Please appreciate that these projects go over a continuing period. Some of them, particularly the South Australian hockey complex, will run into next year, so we are estimating that perhaps \$2.7 million of that will be spent in the 1986-87 year. There are a few others in regard to that as well, including the small bore rifle range, which is associated with the same complex. As I said, they run over into the 1986-87 year. Of course, the \$800 000 that we are talking about is not included in this.

Mr INGERSON: So, an amount of \$800 000 for the Olympic Sports Field will be extra money to be obtained from Treasury in some form.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: An amount of \$250 000 has been allowed for in the budget, and the remainder will come from next year's budget.

Mr INGERSON: If the track has to be paid for by December the money will be paid from this year's capital works funds and the amount will be taken out of next year's capital works funds. Is that what you are saying?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I ask the Director to explain in more detail exactly what is intended. We have a proposition from the tenderers in regard to payment for the track.

Mr Thompson: It is proposed to spend \$1 million this year on a new hockey complex, with the remainder of the cost to be met next financial year. We propose to spend about \$300 000 on planning the velodrome and construction costs next year (if it is to proceed). We propose to spend \$280 000 on the small bore rifle range this year, and the remainder of the necessary cost will be met next year. In preparing the budget we had to obtain information as to how much the track would cost us. We had an indication from a possible tenderer that the cost would be of the order of \$1 million. We knew that if that tender was accepted we could negotiate a payment this year of the order of \$250 000, with the remainder to be paid next year at 9 per cent.

As the Committee would be aware currently the Government borrows money at about 14 per cent. Therefore, a rate of 9 per cent in that area was a quite attractive offer, making it worth deferring payment. As it turned out, the Government has accepted a tender for a fraction over \$800 000. There will be a deferred payment of about \$181 000 in the following financial year. We have got it at 8 per cent which, again, is a very good arrangement for the Government. We have a commitment for the Government that if we run short of capital works funds we will be topped up to the tune of the difference between \$180 000 and \$250 000. The remainder of the capital works budget is for the following purposes: \$25 000 is for walking trails development; \$750 000 is for local level facilities; \$90 000 for the Memorial Drive complex; and a contribution of \$30 000 towards an indoor sports complex in association with a school at Penola.

Mr INGERSON: Is there any agreement as to the type of surface to be used on the hockey field? Will it be the same type of surface as that proposed for the Olympic Sports Field?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The work will go out to tender at the appropriate time. We will decide on the basis of the tenders received who will provide the synthetic surface for the hockey field.

Mr INGERSON: What is the final cost of the Aquatic Centre? How much money was contributed federally and from the State and, further, from what accounts did the money come? In relation to the operating costs, for the second year in a row the Auditor-General's Report pointed out that no agreement had been made between the Adelaide City Council and the department. The Auditor-General was especially critical of the fact that that had occurred. When will details of the operating costs and the corresponding deficit be made available by the Government?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: The latest estimate of the final cost is \$8.25 million. The estimate has been provided by the Department of Housing and Construction. The Aquatic Centre has now been handed over to the Adelaide City Council. That was done officially on 24 August, although there are minor works there still to be completed on the northern wing and other services. Although the centre is in limited use at present it will be officially opened on 13 October.

The Government has a formal agreement in regard to the management and operation of the complex. The arrangement has been negotiated and prepared by the Adelaide City Council for discussion with the State Government. One of the difficulties in coming to a satisfactory arrangement with the Adelaide City Council concerned the availability of information regarding previous costs involved and in determining the likely deficit, if any, in relation to the cost of running the centre.

The arrangement that has been made with the Adelaide City Council is that we will meet a deficit of anything more than \$100 000, which will be adjusted in accordance with the CPI. We expect that situation not to apply.

Part of the question related to federal money and the total amount from Consolidated Revenue, as far as South Australia is concerned, is \$3.64 million, the Recreation and Sport Trust Fund \$1.01 million, and the Commonwealth has provided \$3.6 million, making a total of \$8.25 million.

Mr INGERSON: On page 71 mention is made of local level facility grants. Could the Minister explain what those grants are? There is a difference between the Estimates and the yellow book of \$140 000; from \$750 000 to \$890 000. Can the Minister explain what that \$140 000 is for and can he quickly advise us how much capital expenditure is being spent in country areas?

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the Minister of the time.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: That is three questions.

The CHAIRMAN: Because time is a problem, I wonder whether the Minister could provide the answer?

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I think that I should take two of the questions on notice, particularly that relating to the differential between the country and metropolitan area. As to local level facilities, that program is to assist local councils and the community to develop facilities over a wide range of sporting and fitness activities. Applications for local level facilities are currently available, and they will be assessed probably at the end of October. Explanatory notes and application forms are available. I would have expected the member for Bragg to be aware of this program, but, if he is not, we can certainly supply both of those documents which explain in some detail the criteria in regard to local level facilities. The other matter—

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister will have to be very, very quick.

The Hon. J.W. Slater: I am sorry, I will provide the information to the honourable member rather than dealing with it now.

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

The CHAIRMAN: Before adjourning the Committee, on behalf of the Committee I thank the officers from the E&WS Department, the TAB, and Department of Recreation and Sport.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Thursday 3 October at 11 a.m.