

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 20 September 1988

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chairman:

Mr D.M. Ferguson

Members:

The Hon. H. Allison
 The Hon. J.L. Cashmore
 Mr M.R. De Laine
 Ms D.L. Gayler
 Mr K.C. Hamilton
 Mr E.J. Meier

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Education, \$757 865 000

Witness:

The Hon. G.J. Crafter, Minister of Education.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr K.G. Boston, Director-General of Education.
 Ms H.H. Kolbe, Director of Resources.
 Mr J.D. Christie, Director of Personnel.
 Mr R.G. Boomer, Associate Director-General of Education (Curriculum).
 Mr B.W. Treloar, Acting Assistant Director (Finance).

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination. There being no indication of opening statements, I refer members to pages 73 to 79 of the Estimates of Payments and pages 262 to 289 of the Program Estimates.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: The Minister will be aware of concerns that have been expressed about the new staffing formula for schools. On 30 August his Director-General appeared on the *7.30 Report* and gave four unqualified guarantees to parents and teachers about the new formula. Does the Minister support unequivocally the guarantees given by the Director-General that the continuous intake of 5-year-olds on or soon after their fifth birthday will be maintained, and that vertical grouping of junior primary classes will be maintained where schools require it? If so, what is the additional cost of that guarantee?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for raising this issue at the outset, because it is important that the background to the staffing arrangements for schools next year be placed on the public record. There is no new staffing formula. It is the existing formula that is being applied in schools for 1989. However, it applies a different student count to the schools. That is the change: the staff is applied to the actual number of students in the schools rather than the estimated maximum number of students. That number then is the basis for staffing from the outset of any school year. I emphasise that there is not a new staffing formula but a new application of the existing formula.

This arrangement has come about as a result of very long and difficult negotiations with the South Australian Institute of Teachers with respect to the 4 per cent second tier productivity claim. South Australia was the second State in Australia to make that payment. Indeed, in some States in

Australia that full 4 per cent has not yet been provided to those in the education community. South Australia engaged in those discussions from the outset. They have been difficult—it is very difficult to apply the 4 per cent second tier productivity criteria as brought down by the Federal commission to the human services area, particularly to areas like education.

Therefore, those negotiations led to a number of criteria that would provide for that increase in productivity. This is a classic case of where there can be an increase in productivity without affecting the quality of education in our schools. It is disappointing to see now some withdrawal by sections of that union because of the agreement that was reached, ratified by the Industrial Commission and will now be applied in our schools next year.

With respect to guarantees, yes, they are accepted. They came about as a result of meetings that I have had with interested groups in education in South Australia. Those meetings culminated in the peak organisations—parent organisations, principals organisation, and the Institute of Teachers—meeting with both the Director-General and myself. Arising out of that meeting we undertook to take on board the issues raised by those representatives. As a result of that the Director-General was able to provide those very substantial undertakings, which have been widely disseminated in the community and, particularly, in schools.

Those undertakings have been the basis upon which a small task force of seconded principals from the junior primary, the primary and secondary area have now been working to advise schools on the appropriate way in which they can staff their schools for the 1989 school year.

Those four undertakings were: firstly, all five-year-olds will be able to begin schooling on or soon after their fifth birthday, as is the case now; secondly, schools that currently group years one, two and reception children together will still be able to do so—the so-called vertical grouping arrangements for junior primary schools which have proved very successful; thirdly, no child will be forced to change teachers during the year because of the new arrangements. Obviously, teachers come and go because of long service leave, illness and other arrangements, but they will not be required, or forced, to change teachers during the year because of these arrangements. That is a matter that I know has caused great concern to many parents throughout the State. Secondary schools will be able to provide the same range of curriculum choice that the 1988 staffing formula arrangements would have provided.

They are the four fundamental guarantees that have been circulated to schools. It is disappointing to see that some of the debate still ignores those undertakings. With respect to the first of those, that is, the intake of five-year-olds into our schools, the South Australian tradition has been far more generous than that in the rest of Australia. Indeed, in some other States, there is only one intake of students per annum. It varies from State to State, but our system is regarded as being a very generous one. There is a cost factor and that will not be known finally until every school has been analysed and assessed and the staffing arrangements determined for next year, but we have provision (and that has always been the case) for a cushioning factor built into these staffing arrangements for 1989.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer the Minister to page 262 of the Program Estimates which shows 17 876 estimated average full-time equivalents for the Education Department in 1988-89, and 18 372 estimated full-time equivalents as at 30 June 1989. Will the Minister provide a breakdown of these figures into the three customary classifications as shown on page 105 of the Premier's Financial Statement 1988-89,

that is, Public Service, Other, and Major Non-Public Service? Will the Minister explain how one estimate of employment (average full-time equivalents) shows an increase of 45 (from 17 831 to 17 876) and yet the other estimate (full-time equivalents as at 30 June) shows a decrease of 103 (that is 18 475 down to 18 372)?

Ms Kolbe: The second estimate refers to full-time equivalent as at 30 June, so that gives a snapshot idea at a particular point in time. The figure for average full-time equivalents is the average of full-time equivalent people who we employed throughout the year. They are quite different measures and they relate to different time frames. The variation of 45 between the actual average of full-time equivalents for 1987-88 and the proposed average for 1988-89 relates to a large variety of factors. Downturn, for instance, relates to 4 per cent reductions to which the Minister previously referred. There was also an administrative officer/executive officer reduction of two. There is a carry over effect of timing differences between the two years, and we encountered a decline in the previous year because of the enrolment decline and the subsequent reductions. There are also some changes in Commonwealth programs which would affect various categories of staff. That leads finally to the net figure of 45.

We have an additional 100 ancillary positions, which is one of the major factors. We also have a change in workers compensation and in the carry over effect of the 1987-88 allocation for the 100 ancillary positions. They are the major aspects. If detailed analysis is required we can certainly provide that.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer the Minister to page 105 of the Premier's Financial Statement 1988-89 and page 87 of the Premier's Financial Statement 1987-88. The 'other' classification of Education Department employment which includes ancillary staff and other weekly-paid employees shows that for 1987-88 there were 2 544.8 full-time equivalents and for 1986-87 there were 2 672.6 full-time equivalents, that is, a drop of 127.8 full-time equivalents. Will the Minister explain the reasons for the decrease of 127.8 full-time equivalents in that classification, especially when the Minister has been stating that the Bannon Government was appointing 100 new ancillary staff for each year of this Government?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will undertake to find the relevant explanation for that. We have been increasing the provision of ancillary staff in schools and that sum has been allocated as a result of widespread discussions within the education system about the placement of those additional salaries. I do not have at my fingertips an explanation of those figures but I will obtain it for the honourable member.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer to page 268 of the Program Estimates under the heading 'Minister and Minister's office'. This shows that the proposed 1987-88 staff numbers were 11.2 and the actual staff numbers for 1987-88 were 15.5. What were the reasons for the increase in staff numbers over budget and what was the nature of the extra positions? How was the increase in staff of 4.3 full-time equivalents achieved with an increase in the current expenditure of only \$36 000, that is, from \$696 000 to \$732 000? Were these staff members appointed very close to the end of the financial year? Can a detailed breakdown be provided of how the \$760 000 will be spent in the Minister's office this year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There has been no increase in ministerial staff in the ministerial office. That is a transfer of numbers. In fact, that is the ministerial staff component which is now added into the overall cost of the Minister's office. In previous years, those non Public Service staff

were not included in that staff number. There has been a considerable reduction in staff in the office of the Minister of Education, although the work has increased substantially. More than 25 staff were in that office when it was a department in its own right in the early part of the 1980s. That high staff number was in the period of the previous Administration. My predecessor reduced the size of the office and restructured it and I have proceeded further down that path.

The Director of that office is no longer one of the most highly paid officers in the department. The work of the Minister's office has changed. There is much greater involvement of the areas of the department in answering of correspondence and attending to the volume of material that comes into the Minister's office. In fact, there has been a very substantial reduction in the overall staff of that office. They are a hardworking group of people who are often under great pressure from the enormous numbers of schools and education programs that they service throughout our system. Simply, there is no increase in staff; it is a different way for those staff to be accounted for.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I want to check that we are referring to last year and what actually happened. The proposed was 11.2 and the actual was 15.5 full-time equivalents: am I correct that that is nothing more than the result of a transfer of the Minister's staff into a different category in terms of the budget papers?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: That is correct.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: There is no additional staff: it is simply a different book entry?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Will the Minister provide a breakdown of how the \$760 000 will be spent in the Minister's office this year in terms of staff categories and purposes?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will obtain that information.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: At page 268 of the Program Estimates under 'Executive, professional, technical, administrative and clerical support', the proposed full-time equivalents for 1987-88 are 378.8, with a 1987-88 actual of 404.5, an increase of 25.7; and a proposed figure for 1988-89 of 412.9, an increase of 8.4. What is the reason for the increase of 25.7 full-time equivalents in this line over the budget last year? Will the Minister provide a breakdown of the new positions and explain the reasons for the proposed increase of 8.4 this year? What are the reasons for the proposed \$6 million in recurrent expenditure this year? It may be the full year's cost of last year's new positions as well as the 8.4 extra full-time equivalents this year, but it is not clear from the figure.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I ask Ms Kolbe to explain.

Ms Kolbe: The change between the years, which is 26, is exclusively related to the 1986-87 budget strategy where we reduced 50 positions: 26 of those on average full-time equivalents—26 of those remained in the department but were being paid for from the Education Act budget; we mentioned that last year, out of the seconded teachers budget. The appropriate head count, as well as the appropriate dollar saving, has been made. Because the people cannot be redeployed in the public sector at this time, we are funding them from other sources. At the end of the year that adjustment is made to the books and is reflected between the proposed and actual. We still have a leftover which is part of the eight between the 1987-88 actual and the 1988-89 proposed, but there are also some other changes which relate to changes in Commonwealth funding, in particular, because it is a cumulative figure that relates to all categories of employees.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: What about the \$6 million?

Ms Kolbe: That would partly be a transfer. It involves salary increases throughout the year and they would be broken down and transferred into the budget each year through Treasury certification.

Ms GAYLER: Can the Minister indicate projected student numbers for next year and give a comparison with previous years? Will he outline what has been the effect of the change in student numbers on staffing levels in recent years? By way of explanation, it is clear that parents are particularly interested in the staff/student ratios and inadequate staffing of primary and secondary schools. I refer to a news report of 5 September this year when the Leader of the Opposition said:

There have been improvements in teacher/student ratios, class sizes and funding levels over the five year period of the Bannon Government.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I table the following chart, which details the actual February enrolments in South Australian Government schools for the period 1979 to 1988 and enrolment projections for the period 1989 to 1996. It provides an overall picture of the student population in our schools and shows what has been occurring over the past decade and what is likely to occur in the first part of the 1990s.

Actual February Enrolments 1979-1988 and Enrolment Projections 1989-1996
South Australian Government Schools

Year	Primary		Secondary		Grand	
	Total (^{'000})	Change (^{'000})	Total (^{'000})	Change (^{'000})	Total (^{'000})	Change (^{'000})
1979	142.7		82.5		225.2	
1980	139.3	-3.4	79.9	-2.6	219.2	-6.0
1981	134.1	-5.2	78.5	-1.4	212.6	-6.6
1982	128.7	-5.4	78.8	0.3	207.5	-5.1
1983	122.7	-6.0	81.5	2.7	204.2	-3.3
1984	117.9	-4.8	83.0	1.5	200.9	-3.3
1985	113.6	-4.3	82.4	-0.6	196.0	-4.9
1986	111.7	-1.9	79.7	-2.7	191.4	-4.6
1987	109.1	-2.6	77.4	-2.3	186.5	-4.9
1988	108.8	-0.3	75.4	-2.0	184.2	-2.3
1989	109.3	0.5	72.9	-2.5	182.2	-2.0
1990	111.0	1.7	69.9	-2.9	181.0	-1.2
1991	115.3	4.3	66.7	-3.2	182.0	1.0
1992	120.1	4.8	63.9	-2.8	184.0	2.1
1993	124.2	4.1	62.6	-1.3	186.8	2.8
1994	127.1	2.9	63.1	0.6	190.3	3.5
1995	129.3	2.1	65.1	1.9	194.3	4.1
1996	131.1	1.9	68.1	3.0	199.2	4.9

I think it is important that any discussion about the provision of staff for our schools and the level of services provided to students is prefaced by a factual analysis of what is occurring in South Australia. At present there are 39 000 fewer students in our schools compared with a decade ago. That figure of 39 000 students is the equivalent of the combined enrolment at 40 of the largest high schools in this State. We all know that there have been very few closures or amalgamations of schools in this State over the past decade, particularly with respect to high schools. It is expected that in 1999 there will be a further decline of 2 000 students.

The State Government will retain all teacher positions that have been freed up as a result of the enrolment decline over the current financial year. They will be placed, and will remain, in our schools next year as additional resources for schools. They will join the teachers already retained in our schools as a result of the enrolment decline. That will mean that about 830 teaching positions freed up in that way over the past six years of the Bannon Administration will be returned to our schools during this period of very substantial enrolment decline.

Those teaching positions will be used in many areas of the department, predominantly to improve pupil/teacher

ratios which are, apart from Victoria, the best in Australia. Other important areas in which they will be used include Aboriginal education; strengthening and broadening the secondary curriculum; and, in this period of enrolment decline, maintaining in our secondary schools the breadth of curriculum offering required. They will also be used to offer primary curriculum opportunities; as primary librarians (which has been very much appreciated by those in library administration in this State, and particularly by school communities which see libraries and resource centres as so important); in the provision of additional long service leave opportunities for teachers; to teach in the important languages program that has been established in this State; for release time scholarships (for the retraining of teachers); in the field of special education; for behaviour management, which involves a policy of strengthening the discipline procedures; and for various other initiatives of the department. Those freed up teaching positions have been put to very good use and have not only improved our teacher/student ratio to a very admirable level but also have allowed a number of very important initiatives to be achieved.

Ms GAYLER: Has the Government kept its 1985 election promise to increase ancillary staff by 100 per year? How has this assisted schools and teachers to ensure a higher quality of education in South Australia?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Government has provided, in each of its past three budgets, additional resources for the employment of ancillary staff. This has been regarded as an important area of education. I think South Australia has the most generous allocation of ancillary staff of any State in this country, and they are used in a very creative way in our schools. It is interesting to compare the number of ancillary staff and the roles that they play in State schools with those in non-government schools. It is an area that has very much enhanced the education opportunities of young people and has also assisted staff—teachers in particular—in schools in focusing on the very real role that they play as teachers rather than aggregating a number of other associated duties to their function. In the area of special education, for example, the role that ancillary staff play is very important.

It is interesting that the majority of the additional positions in the past two budgets have gone into improving primary schools (that is, R-7) throughout this State. Many positions have gone into improving special education programs and some have been placed into our agricultural schools for the maintenance and development of grounds and properties. Many positions have gone into Aboriginal schools and to improvements generally in area and special rural schools. Other positions have gone to school community libraries in country areas, and provide a very important community service. Also, many positions have gone into high schools and others have gone into bilingual programs in key schools. The honourable member will see that these positions have been put to good use.

Ms GAYLER: How many teaching positions are available outside the normal allocation to each school under the staffing formula? How are the positions made available under the negotiable arrangements being used in schools?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am pleased that the honourable member has raised this issue because the extent of negotiable salaries (that is, salaries allocated to schools on top of the staffing formula) is generally not known. There are some 1 326 negotiable salaries (if I can use that broad definition) in South Australia and bearing in mind that we have some 700 schools, that number is very substantial. The salaries to which I am referring will be available in the 1989 school year, and that is the year for which this budget is providing.

It might be interesting to note some of the categories for which schools negotiate to achieve those additional staffing resources to develop particular programs. A very well established and sophisticated process is conducted to achieve the establishment of those programs. In relation to primary schools it concerns languages other than English; in special education for the development of programs surrounding libraries and the staffing of libraries; special needs programs that may be determined by the socio-economic status of a particular school or some other factor (isolation or whatever); and for curriculum development, for innovative and creative work that has been going on in so many schools where new frontiers of education are being reached.

In the secondary area, once again a program has been established for determining special needs and the program surrounding those needs; for specific projects (and these are many and varied, where once again a new dimension to education is being striven for); and a tutoring system to assist students, particularly in their senior secondary years, to achieve the outcomes that they desire. In recent years there has been established a system of counselling and advice to students apart from the advice they receive from their teachers, and that has now been provided in the primary years. (This also plays an important role in the development of our school discipline strategy.)

In other areas there are key centres for maths, physics, primary maths, and support programs for Aboriginal students. We have a program to provide additional staff for schools that have a number of newly arrived migrants. That perhaps gives an overview of how the application pans out for that very substantial number of so-called negotiable salaries in our schools.

Ms GAYLER: I have a supplementary question. The Minister mentioned, amongst those negotiable teacher salaries, provision for staff undertaking special needs programs in schools. I am aware that some schools in my area, having accepted the feasibility of the new staffing arrangements, are concerned about how they will continue their special needs programs. What resources are being provided to assist children with special needs and disabilities, particularly in relation to extra assistance in areas such as literacy and numeracy?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I have detailed in a sketch form the provision for meeting those particular needs within those negotiable salaries, although within the formula itself there is some account made of the particular needs of a school. So, this is in addition to that. Certainly, in areas of special education and the like, that is assessed very carefully. One of the difficulties is when staff is built around a particular student and that student transfers to another school. Very difficult management strategies have to be arrived at in order to provide staffing around students rather than around the schools. Nevertheless, it always amazes me how the department—and such a huge department—manages to get down to the individual and resource that, particularly for some of the students with special needs in rural areas, where it is much more difficult to provide the staffing that is required in those particular circumstances. The actual staffing allocation proposed for 1989 for special needs programs is 315 teaching positions in the primary years and 217 positions in the secondary area.

Mr MEIER: I refer to page 61 of the Auditor-General's Report. The Minister would be aware that on a number of occasions since 1984-85 the Auditor-General has been critical of the lack of uniformity in clerical procedures used by the Education Department and the need for adequate procedure manuals. In this year's report the Auditor-General states that he still has a number of concerns regarding

limited work in the drafting of financial procedure manuals; limited maintenance of the existing procedure manuals; and, lack of compliance with procedures when introduced. Will the Minister outline what procedures have not been complied with in the view of the Auditor-General and why it has taken so many years to do anything about his criticisms?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I very much appreciate the function that the Auditor-General plays in the public sector generally and in departments such as the Education Department in particular, because that external and objective analysis of the administration of the department is very valuable and appreciated, and it is interesting to read throughout the Auditor-General's Report that he rightly acknowledges that the department is dealing with the issues that he raises. It is simply not possible to turn around systems within the period of a budget cycle. However, it is important that they be assessed year by year to see what progress is being made and whether that progress is adequate.

I believe that the department has come a long way in a relatively short period. Our administrative structures were, and to some extent still are, very seriously outdated. It requires a good deal of mechanisation in terms of how we deal with the huge number of records in the department. For example, last year the department issued about 30 000 group certificates. So, the consequent need for staffing records is very substantial. About 200 000 children pass through our schools during a year. The department is the largest single employer in the State. Therefore, all of those factors mean that the administration of the department is a major exercise. It is in that context that the Auditor-General can highlight particular areas of administration in the department where he believes that we can make some improvements that will lead to savings. That certainly is taken very seriously by the department, and the Auditor-General's Report shows that it is being attended to.

Ms Kolbe: After the reorganisation was established we created a procedure manual writing team which worked to a particular schedule of priorities which were actually discussed with the Auditor-General and progress reports were forwarded to him at regular intervals. The intention, which has been carried out and implemented, was that we would concentrate on procedure manuals for procedures which did not exist at the time. That relates to most of the staffing manuals, for instance, teachers, ancillary staff, as well as public servants and also some of the administrative functions which were decentralised and for which procedures were not in existence. I refer to transport, school administration in general, legal matters and Government assisted scholars. Those procedure manuals have been written and have been implemented.

As far as maintenance is concerned that particular team is actually creating the manuals but the maintenance of the manuals is undertaken by the central directorates, which are actually the policy directorates, and that is continuing. As an example of this procedure, the public servant manual is in its third edition at the moment because of changes in the Act and also because of changes to procedures issued by the Department of Personnel and Industrial Relations. The only procedures which have not been rewritten because the ones that were in existence at the time in terms of priorities were seen to be sufficient, if not highly desirable, were the financial procedures. Some of those relate to computer systems that are actually being rewritten at the moment. We have undertaken to begin work on those procedure manuals in 1988-89 and we hope that next year we will be able to report significant progress in that area.

Mr MEIER: In relation to salary payments, the Auditor-General states:

In the past two years, I have expressed doubt on the reliability of financial information produced at department and, more particularly, project level.

The Auditor-General also notes that:

In July 1987, the department conducted a review to check on the accuracy of allocation of salary costs in relation to all staff who were not in the ordinary school situations.

The Auditor-General is highly critical of this review and states that a number of problems rendered the exercise ineffective. What were these problems referred to by the Auditor-General and what was the cost of this review? The Auditor-General then notes that in a second survey an error rate of 3 per cent was noted. Will the Minister outline the implications of this finding and say what action is being taken to improve the situation?

Ms Kolbe: The Auditor-General is referring to one of his own reviews where he attempted to assess the degree of inaccuracy at the program level. In the development of our various systems, at the program level we presently do not track the dollar value but rather use a head count. Therefore, some of the inaccuracies that the Auditor-General may refer to relate to that, because we simply do not track salary at that degree of detail but rather at a higher aggregate level.

The review was undertaken within the responsibility area of the Auditor-General and the methodology that was applied was abandoned three-quarters of the way through the review. During review time of the review methodology it was seen that the way the sampling was undertaken was not relevant to that particular exercise.

So far as inaccurate debiting is concerned, staff moving from one project or one location to another involves quite a lot of work and the accuracy level stated in the final sample taken internally, and verified by the Auditor-General, has dropped very significantly. In relation to the current operation, whilst there is still some work to be done, the accuracy level has increased very substantially and an enormous amount of work has gone into that particular area of management.

Mr MEIER: It was stated by the officer that the review was his own review and yet the Auditor-General's Report states that the department conducted the review. Can the Minister clarify that?

Ms Kolbe: We have undertaken several reviews. Indeed, it is one area on which we are constantly working because we are developing a system of officer responsibility for particular areas. We allocate charges and expenditure within that responsibility portfolio. We have started from the aggregate of the organisation towards each Director responsible for particular programs and projects, and the individual project level to which the Auditor-General refers is being monitored by our officers on a regular basis. The external auditor has made use of some of the reviews, although the first one, which was disbanded, was his own review.

Mr MEIER: My third question refers to page 62 of the Auditor-General's Report; he notes that overpayments per fortnight now average \$28 000, down from \$31 000 per fortnight in 1986-87. The balance of overpayments as at 30 June 1988 was \$196 000. How many area officer full-time equivalent positions are involved in the task of retrieving overpayments and what has been the level of write-offs of bad debts after overpayment for each of the past three years?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I believe it should be stated that the Auditor-General acknowledges in his report that the position in the year he reviewed (1987-88) has improved further and that each year this figure is diminishing. The current level of overpayment is well below that of previous years. The figures should be put into the context, of the enormity of the Education Department's payroll (approximately \$700 million). The department has an ongoing strat-

egy directed at further reducing the instances of overpayment but where there is a demand for payment to be made very quickly (for example, in the area of temporary relief teaching) and with some 30 000 employees during a given year, obviously errors will occur. I believe that the extent needs to be clarified.

Particular area offices have implemented strategies to closely monitor overpayment, trace the source, take corrective action, and wherever possible eliminate the causes of the overpayment. I emphasise that a very high proportion of overpayment is recovered and only a very small proportion written off by the department. The actual amounts written off over the past three years were \$8 936 in 1985-86, \$15 274 in 1986-87, and \$31 464 in 1987-88.

With respect to the numbers of staff involved in following up this matter we would have to conduct an assessment in the department to calculate that. It is a responsibility that is built into the positions of the payroll staff in the department but we would need to assess the situation and provide the honourable member with that information.

Mr HAMILTON: On page 6 of the supplementary information to the 1988-89 Program Estimates, it is stated:

The Adelaide area has been involved in languages other than English for the first time to coordinate both mother tongue and second language programs in schools. An Adelaide area reference group is being formed to provide advice and direction for the future development and planning in languages other than English.

Can the Minister expand on that as I would certainly like more detailed information as to the manner in which this has been received and those schools in which languages other than English have been implemented, particularly in the western suburbs? I would be most interested, for example, in how this program has been received in schools such as the Hendon Primary School.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not have specific information for that particular group of schools but I could certainly obtain that for the honourable member. I acknowledge his interest in these programs, particularly in the suburbs to which he refers, where I know that the languages policy of the Education Department has been very well received. That policy supports the maintenance of community languages reinforcing the first language of the family. Since 1982, the department has had an ongoing commitment to provide additional teaching salaries for our languages program. In 1988, 93.8 full-time equivalent staff were approved as teachers of languages other than English and that will be added to with additional staff next year for the continuation of that program. While we have a well established commitment to the teaching of the more classical languages of German and French in our schools, we now include many other languages, particularly Greek, Italian, other European languages and the languages of South-East Asia the first languages of the families of these children.

We also have a very strong commitment to teaching languages of economic importance and South Australia has more children learning Mandarin Chinese than any other State in this country. Yet we acknowledge that there is still enormous need for additional teachers, particularly in Japanese, Chinese and those languages that are important for the economic wellbeing of this country as well as for the improvement of trade and cultural relations. An additional 20 full-time salaries will be added to that number next year and I will ascertain the allocation of those languages in the western suburbs for the honourable member.

Mr HAMILTON: I would also appreciate information on those schools in which Mandarin Chinese and Japanese is being taught, because there is considerable interest, in my patch at least, in that regard. The Minister would be aware that just prior to the sitting of this Committee I drew

attention to an article in the Messenger Press in which criticism was directed at the Education Department by Mr Neil Bertram, Chairperson of the West Lakes Shore School Council. Can the Minister respond to that article? He would be aware that it has been the subject of some correspondence. A similar article appeared in the *South Australian Teachers Journal* on 7 September. Can the Minister respond to that?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I spoke of this matter in the House some weeks ago and put on the record the Government's position with respect to the important role that principals play as leaders not only within the school community but within the community as a whole, the responsible office to which they have been assigned, and the manner in which they are expected to conduct themselves in the exercise of those important duties. I believe it is unfortunate that an attempt was made to mislead the community with respect to this matter in a most devious way by the use of a document that the Education Department had circulated to a number of groups within the education system for comment on ongoing amendments to the Education Act. This is a routine procedure; it certainly was not anything that involved me as Minister.

As I explained to the House, there was a recommendation from the Commissioner for Public Employment about bringing the Education Act into line with the GME Act. This matter had been discussed over many years and it just so happened that Dr Boston, shortly after being appointed as Director-General, signed the minute that went out to those organisations. The signature was then used to link another series of incidents arising out of the application of the 4 per cent staffing arrangements for next year. I have clearly put on public record the mischievous nature of that allegation and the convoluted way in which it was put together to try to raise it as a political issue. The way it has been used to downgrade the important role of principals and to cause instability in our primary schools, in particular, is to be deplored.

The Director-General has met with many principal organisations throughout the State since his appointment and has explained in great detail to those present his feelings about this matter. There can be no doubt amongst principals about the right of principals to speak to school communities and to the broader community on education issues. Indeed, that is a very important part of their role. As the Director-General and I have said, principals are required to do that in a responsible manner and those procedures have been well established in the department over many years. At risk is the standing of the State school system and education generally in the community. There has always been and will always be overwhelming adherence to that important responsibility and function of our principals.

Mr HAMILTON: One of the criticisms that has been levelled at the Bannon Government is that there is a lack of discipline in public schools. I have a particular view that discipline does not necessarily start at school, that it starts in the home. It is unfortunate that some people in the community believe that, once a child goes to primary or secondary school, he or she should be disciplined by school staff, but fail to take into account that the child attends school for a maximum of eight hours a day. I would like the Minister's views on the record so that when people come into my office or approach me in public, I will have the Minister's response on this matter.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the Committee that we are dealing with the budget and the Estimates and that questions should be directed at the budget lines.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: For the benefit of the Committee, I point out that additional resources have been provided in this budget in relation to discipline in schools. I have referred to that previously. A substantial sum of money has been provided to the Health, Education and Welfare Departments under the social justice strategy for the management of young people with severe behavioural problems in our schools. Important work is going on in the human services area of government generally.

There is a very clear commitment to provide in our schools an environment which is conducive to orderly learning. Part of that is to ensure that proper behavioural strategies and patterns are established in those schools. It is important that young people know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable, what is right and what is wrong, and the consequences of not adhering to those policies must be clear and effective. Unfortunately, in the past, many people have relied very much on the deterrents which have had some immediate modification of behaviour but which, in the longer term, have not been effective and have not addressed some of the underlying issues that cause young people to misbehave and to be very destructive influences in the classroom and in the school. A great deal of work is being done in the Education Department to deal with this problem. That is in clear contrast to a number of other States in this country where, for example, the decision to abolish corporal punishment as a means of discipline was taken overnight and no additional resources were provided to develop alternatives to corporal punishment as a means of modifying student behaviour.

The South Australian Government has taken a difficult path to develop, over a period of five years, a range of strategies to modify student behaviour and to reach out for the root causes of that misbehaviour, to identify them and to do something about them, either within the context of the schools or outside the schools. The Government also realises that this is a problem that schools cannot address alone. In many cases, they require the assistance of other professionals, such as those in the health, welfare and mental health area. That is now being addressed.

It is interesting to note that the latest survey of approximately 500 schools in South Australia revealed that 76 per cent did not use corporal punishment in the last year or did not permit the use of the cane as part of their established policy for discipline within the school. Of those schools using corporal punishment, 40 per cent used it on fewer than six occasions during the year. Thus, corporal punishment is being used only to a very small extent in State schools and many other strategies to provide for discipline are already established. Those are very effective methods of ensuring that schools function as centres of learning, that classrooms operate in an orderly fashion, and that students are encouraged to learn through a greater understanding of their own actions. As I said, that is not the easiest path to follow but it is one that the Government is committed to embark upon.

Discipline strategies are being strengthened to support schools in overcoming behavioural problems and in encouraging more orderly learning. It has always been said that additional resources are required and those additional resources are being provided. They are very costly, but we believe that it is money well spent. Education, health and welfare agencies will be provided with an additional \$1 million to strengthen the first primary school network of school counsellors, to establish a State-wide network of school support teams to assist schools in working with children who have social and behavioural problems, and to

enhance teacher skills in managing student behaviour in classrooms through professional development programs.

I recently attended a seminar on show day, when many young people had the day off to attend the Royal Show. Approximately 500 teachers from the Southern Area of the Education Department attended that seminar to talk about enhancing their professional skills in this area. Generally under this scheme, children are asked and encouraged to think more about their behaviour and its consequences. In the first instance, 17 primary schools have been nominated as focus schools for the new behaviour strategies. The details of those 17 schools have been announced publicly. These schools will be used to highlight how classroom behaviour can be improved and maintained by tackling the problems causing misbehaviour. School counsellors have been appointed to work with teachers in managing student classroom behaviour. By targeting primary schools, children can be encouraged to adopt positive attitudes which not only improve the learning environment in those schools but which will be carried on into the high school system. I ask the Director-General to also comment on this very important matter.

Dr Boston: The key to the success of the South Australian Education Department in dealing with the discipline problem is in the development of school behaviour management plans at school level. The system's success is largely the sum of the successes of the individual plans. Those plans are tried in all our schools, and they are being developed in all of them, by clear statements of behaviour which are not acceptable to the school community, in that they disrupt effective learning environments. Clear statements of the penalties which will be applied if those behaviours occur, or the strategies which will be adopted when they occur, are known to all parties: parents, children and the teachers. It is clear what the consequences of infringements are.

Those behaviour management plans have been developed collaboratively by the teachers, the school council, the school community and in most cases also the children, and they are applied firmly. It is the rigor with which that approach has been adopted that has led to the situation where other draconian forms of punishment, which really do little to change behaviour, have been largely set aside in this State with positive educational impact.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister indicate what assistance will be provided to speech and hearing centres in South Australia? I refer to the Woodville Primary School and the wonderful work carried out at the school, including the dedication by teaching staff.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Some time ago I visited the Woodville Primary School and experienced its program, which is indeed a constructive program, not only providing for a very innovative approach in terms of educational opportunities for that group of young people but also influencing the whole school. That is the crucial thing: young people who suffer from a hearing impairment should be in the mainstream of education opportunities, their education needs being understood by the community in which they are going through the learning process, involving not only the staff but also other students. I was pleased to see other students in the school who can use sign language, and the like. That is most encouraging.

As to the programs, they are all being maintained in our schools, and where possible—for example, in the provision of additional ancillary staff for special education programs—new opportunities are created for the development of programs of that type, further extending and developing them, in addition to the freed up salaries that are provided as a result of enrolment decline. Some of those salaries are

provided for special education programs. We have a commitment to the training of teachers of the hearing impaired. That also is being maintained, and there is now a well established structure for release time scholarships for training of teachers in this area.

We are fortunate that many teachers have made a substantial professional commitment to the teaching of the hearing impaired. There is strong co-operation with the department in the tertiary sector in the provision of training programs which are so essential for that group of our staff.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: At page 62 of his report the Auditor-General comments that a review by his officers highlighted problems in the management of temporary relieving teachers and indicated variances in sick leave experienced by schools. He says that that warrants a critical examination. The Auditor-General states:

The review noted:

- little or no management reports dealing with the use of TRT's, together with inconsistencies in the method of data collection;
- while average sick leave taken per teacher in 1987-88 was 5 days overall, it ranged up to 11 days per teacher in some schools.

First, why has the department decided not to develop a management system at departmental level? What will be the effect of what would seem to be the alternative of having school level basing of expenditure? Is the ratio of funding allocation to individual schools taken into consideration to make sympathetic allowance to those schools with a high level of teacher absenteeism, say, 11 days per teacher, or is there going to be some across the board rationalisation? I suspect that in some cases there would be schools where teachers were under considerably more stress than at others, for a variety of reasons.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The department has not decided not to develop a management strategy: on the contrary, we are and have been developing precisely a management strategy in this area. I would also say that the cost of workers compensation in the department reduced by \$2.5 million in the year reported on by the Auditor-General. He commented on that in his report. One cannot draw the conclusions that the member—

The Hon. H. ALLISON interjecting:

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member is implying that the working environment in schools is leading to a greater use of sick leave, whereas the indication is to the contrary: workers compensation is diminishing and the facts will show that time off for one reason or another is not in the category of being alarming. Any employer wants to minimise the number of days lost through illness or for other reasons. The total cost of TRT days rose from \$7.593 million to \$7.744 million from 1986-87 to 1987-88, which is an increase of 2 per cent in that cost.

The actual number of TRT days fell from 66 625 in 1986-87 to 66 025 in 1987-88, a decrease of minus 1 per cent. The areas over which schools have some control, that is, sickness, professional development time and special leave days fell from 55 664 days to 54 626 days, a minus 2 per cent factor. The balance of days are used for curriculum, area sporting associations, external bodies and Schools Commission purposes, and those are not controlled by the schools themselves.

Professional development and observation days replaced by TRTs in 1987-88 totalled 10 300, approximately .7 of a day for each full-time equivalent teacher. The cost was \$1.21 million, and it is worth noting that the Director of Resources has indicated to the Auditor-General that \$1 million will be saved on TRT use in 1988-89. There is a clear management strategy in place there.

With respect to management reports, the Auditor-General refers to school by school budget reports which will be controlled by the areas of the department. The potential for school by school reporting exists within the accounting system, but their accuracy depends on modifications to the current debit system mentioned by Ms Kolbe earlier. During 1988 the department is reviewing TRT debiting in order to establish a budget reporting system for individual schools. However, there is accurate reporting of TRT costs by schools and accurate control of the total TRT budget, and expenditure in that area has been maintained within the budget for 1987-88.

It is a huge area to manage, and the department is very much committed, as the facts show, to ensure that these very large budget areas are administered carefully down through the systems of the department. I think it is interesting to look at the situation in some other States. In Victoria, for example, there were very real difficulties with the administration of this budget line, which blew out quite considerably over a number of years.

Ms Kolbe: The average age of teachers in the rural areas is rather less than it is in the metropolitan area. Therefore, there is quite a discrepancy with respect to sick leave because it is a well established fact that older people take more sick leave. I repeat that we have undertaken to produce an automated leave system and, in fact, the team that will be doing that has been established. We have looked around the market and at one stage we thought we had the right system.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Is this to give people leave on a roster system?

Ms Kolbe: No, it is to provide automatic recording of leave so that we can monitor what is happening. It will give us a better method of managing leave school by school. At the moment we have manual leave systems which relate to the individual. It is very difficult to undertake policy initiatives because we cannot profile 24 000 people in the system at any one time to see where the changes are occurring. With respect to the Auditor-General's Report, it is useful to note that our leave rate is relatively low compared with those of some other departments.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Has the department estimated the potential savings possible through the exercise of tighter controls which, as you say, the department is working on? I am comparing that with the Auditor-General's comment about the Department of Health, where the potential saving was about \$1 million, and I point out that the Education Department is much larger. In view of the problems being experienced with the manual system, my questions are probably more relevant to the automated system, so I will place them on notice. What was the total amount of sick leave taken by employees last year? How many of those leave days were not covered by medical certificate? How many sick leave days not covered by medical certificate were taken on a Friday or Monday or the day immediately before or after a public holiday? I assume that the Minister would want that information anyway to monitor peak and trough demand throughout the year. In other words, it is probably the sort of information that would be available in any case, even through a manual system.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: With respect to the first question, I do not believe that the Auditor-General has indicated—as he has in some other areas—how much money he believes could be saved in the education portfolio. That may be an indication of the accuracy of Ms Kolbe's comments about the level of sick leave taken in the Education Department compared with some other public sector areas.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Is the Minister saying that the Auditor-General will be responsible for this rather than the department?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: No, the department accepts responsibility in this area, and we have the systems in place. As Ms Kolbe said, we would like to see a lot more mechanisation of the recording system so that individual schools which are experiencing difficulties can be pinpointed quickly so that remedial action can be taken. We undertake to try to obtain the very specific and detailed information sought by the honourable member. Given the nature of our recording system throughout the State and the precise detail required, I am not quite sure whether all the information can be supplied. As the honourable member said, I am interested in knowing whether it is available.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I refer to page 63 of the Auditor-General's Report. A consultant's review of the department's strategic computer plan was submitted in February 1988. The review concluded that most computer based systems are old, complex and generally unable to provide timely and relevant management information to meet current requirements. In fact, the Auditor-General said that in some cases, notably in leave processing—which is the area that Ms Kolbe referred to—student records and statistics, there is almost total dependence on inefficient and ineffective manual systems. Who conducted the review and what did it cost? What is the estimated cost of implementing the recommendation to correct this situation?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The consultants were Miller Simon and Associates, and the consultancy cost about \$75 000. However, obviously the cost is still being assessed with respect to implementation of the recommendations.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: That is for the one system that has already been mentioned, that is, the automated leave computer system?

Ms Kolbe: Yes. That will be an in-house system which will be developed by our staff. A project team comprising three people will do the systems analysis and the programming. Some of the people in the areas which use such information will work as reference people to the system. The estimated cost of the system, apart from the computer running time, is for five full-time equivalents for about 12 months.

Mr De LAINE: In relation to school buses, I refer to page 62 of the Auditor-General's Report which identifies a potential saving of \$3.8 million. Why have these savings not been made and, if they were to be made, what would be the impact on students who use this service?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There has been a suggestion that students should be charged for the use of school buses. The Education Department has a large fleet of buses and also uses many private contractors to transport young people to schools throughout the State. There are many remote areas in this State with quite a few isolated communities. By law, every young person must attend school, and we are obliged to provide transport for many young people.

We also provide financial assistance to metropolitan students who use public transport. This is a very large line of budget expenditure. Although from time to time the Administration has looked at charging fares for students, the Government has not been prepared to adopt this as policy for many reasons, the substantial reason being equity—the lack of opportunities for young people in rural areas to obtain the same educational opportunities as those who live in the metropolitan area.

This is seen by the Government as being one direct subsidy that can be given to those young people and their families to enhance their educational opportunities. It has

been suggested that revenue forgone in relation to transport fares would amount to some \$3 million per annum. The Opposition has stated many times that savings of \$3 million can be made in the provision of buses for students in schools. If that is the \$3 million that can be gained from charging fares to students, that may be the Opposition's policy but it is certainly not the Government's policy and we do not intend to achieve those savings in that way.

The department has an ongoing strategy with respect to maintaining efficiency not only in the maintenance of our school bus policy (that is, for those students who are eligible to receive this assistance) but also in our employment policies for drivers in the maintenance of our bus fleet and its renewal, and indeed our relationships with those non-government providers of the services with whom we contract.

There has also been ongoing and close discussion about the provision of these services and how we can achieve this most efficiently, for the benefit of taxpayers as well as students. It might be interesting for the honourable member to know that the direct cost of school transport includes payments to bus drivers for fuel, lubricants, repairs, etc., and to private bus contractors. In 1987-88 the cost for bus drivers was \$2.4 million, and bus operating costs, including contractors, totalled \$10.9 million. In addition, the department provides funds for other transport related costs: costs of transporting disabled children amounted to \$1.3 million and transport for the conveyance of other students amounted to \$639 000.

During 1987-88, 12.8 million concession trips were undertaken by students of 14 years and over who possessed student cards, and payment to the STA for transport of students on buses in this budget will amount to \$9.6 million. So, there is a very substantial provision of funds for student travel in both the city and in rural areas.

Mr De LAINE: The Auditor-General's Report (page 66) makes some criticisms of school cleaning. What measures has the Education Department taken to meet those criticisms?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The department has a very substantial bill for the cleaning of schools. Members should bear in mind that it is not simply a matter of vacuuming classrooms. The many technical laboratory, workshop and home economic areas are expensive to maintain and clean. Over many years now a disparate system of providing cleaning services has been established. That has been the subject of comment by the Auditor-General, and the department has spent a good deal of time addressing it.

The department has embarked on a strategy (and there have been discussions, in which the Minister of Labour has been involved, with the appropriate industrial organisations) to provide a more updated provision of cleaning services which we believe will provide improved services and efficiencies for the system as a whole and a much better system of employment for those who clean our schools.

There have been many criticisms of the contractual relations of many of those employees with their employers. Indeed, in some unfortunate situations cleaning firms have gone into insolvency and staff have not been paid, and schools have not been cleaned (or cleaned properly) for periods of time when disputes have arisen; and those matters are being addressed. It is not possible to change the policy overnight because we have established contractual obligations with petty contractors in our schools and in the other forms of cleaning contracts that we have entered into.

As contracts expire we are transferring them to industrial contracts. In that way we are putting in place a long-term strategy that will not only provide those savings and effi-

ciencies that we seek, but also the better delivery of service to schools.

Ms Kolbe: We are continuing to reduce whenever contracts elapse. The Auditor-General's Report on the same page quotes two figures which show a reduction of 42 contracts in the petty contract area to industrial contracts between 1986-87 and 1987-88. I think that that is a reflection of the policy we are pursuing and implementing.

Mr De LAINE: The Auditor-General's Report (page 68) indicates that 102 schools were reported for overstating enrolments. What action has the Education Department taken in this matter?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: A good deal of attention has been paid to this. If each of our schools overestimated its enrolment by only one student then the overestimation would be some 700 students. On the basis of the formula, when one allocates staffing for the additional 700 students (which is the equivalent of quite a large high school or the largest of the primary schools) one can see that it is important to accurately estimate the enrolments and to provide accurate actual statistical returns of students enrolled at any given point of time. Unfortunately, the department found that that information was not provided accurately in relation to a number of schools. This resulted in substantial overpayment to a number of schools and, as a consequence, three principals were disciplined and many others have been counselled as a result of some inaccuracies in the reporting of the actual student numbers. Often reasons are given for the numbers provided, and that is considered in each case.

Of the 544 enrolment audits conducted in 1987-88, 294 were based on 1987 returns and 250 on 1988 returns. The Auditor-General's Report indicates that 102 schools were reported for overstating enrolments. In fact, that figure was incorrect and the Auditor-General has since contacted the department and amended that statement in his report. The correct figure is in fact 67 schools: 55 relating to the February 1987 census and 12 relating to the February 1988 census. So, the level of accuracy for the 1988 census was of a very high order, with most instances of overstatement involving relatively minor discrepancies. In each case the principal of the school has been counselled about census reporting responsibilities. As I said, disciplinary action was taken in a number of cases.

Mr De LAINE: How is it possible to accurately estimate enrolments, especially in an area such as mine (Price)? For instance, in the Pennington school with its close proximity to the migrant centre, how is it possible to accurately determine next year's enrolments?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Auditor-General is referring to actual school numbers; that is, the students actually in the school at the time the audit is taken and the discrepancies with the actual enrolments: that is, counting the students in the school community as those appearing on the roll of the school. That is why the school rolls are very important documents indeed; any attempt by a school community to alter or destroy its roll is a most serious offence in the eyes of the department, because the department and the Auditor-General rely on it as a base document.

If this matter is left unattended it is possible to overpay schools over a period of time by amounts involving hundreds of thousands of dollars. Naturally the department retrospectively adjusts the amount of money provided when an inaccuracy is discovered. I am confident that there is now in place, within the department's own internal audit processes, and with the objective supervision of the Auditor-General's Department, a structure which will minimise this problem.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer to my earlier question about the staffing formula which is covered in general on page 262 of the Program Estimates. Whilst I accept the Minister's earlier statement that a precise final cost estimate of the four guarantees cannot be given, will the Minister confirm that the cost of the four guarantees, based on the average enrolment staffing formula, has already been established by the department to be at least \$2 million and perhaps even more?

Dr Boston: No figure has yet been put on the amount required to meet the four guarantees. The Principals Advisory Group that the Minister referred to earlier has been meeting with principals who come in to seek advice and opinion on the strategies that they can adopt to deploy their staff under the new arrangements. That group has been keeping a running total of the top-ups which have occurred. It may be .2, .3 or .4 of a staff member for each school.

I understand that they have seen about 30 to 40 per cent of principals, and the rough indication is that that is about 20 to 30 staff in broad terms to meet the guarantees with that sample of the school population. I do not know whether that has been a fair sample of the total school population—it is very hard to project forward. However, I certainly would give a clear assurance that we have not set any ceiling, nor have we identified in total the amount required to meet the undertakings.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer again to page 66 of the Auditor-General's Report in relation to workers compensation costs. The report notes that the premium paid to the Government Insurance Fund for 1987-88 was \$12 million and the expected premium for the current year will be about \$9.5 million. Can the Minister confirm that the \$12 million for last year was in fact, an overestimate of what was actually needed? And, if so, what is the accurate figure for 1987-88? Pursuant to that, page 130 of the Auditor-General's Report notes that 53 per cent of all South Australian Public Service claims based on stress come from the Education Department. Is the Minister concerned about this figure, and what action has been taken to reduce it?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, the Education Department pays to the Department of Labour a workers compensation premium which is credited to the Government Insurance Fund. Therefore, the cost of workers compensation, both salary and medical expenses, is met from the fund.

Details of the position of workers compensation costs relating to teacher stress over the past five years are not available. The department actually has been collecting information and putting a lot of effort into this area only in more recent times. The figures that we do have available relate to the period 1983-84. We did not have the figures analysed in terms of teachers, ancillary staff and public servants but the total in that year was 73 claims. In 1984-85 the total was 170. In 1985-86 the total was 161 teachers, 11 ancillary staff and three public servants—a total of 175 claims. In 1986-87 that number reduced to 132 teacher, seven ancillary staff and one public servant, the total reducing to 140 claims. In 1987-88 that figure reduced further to 130 teachers, 10 ancillary staff and six public servants, totalling 146 claims. Therefore, anxiety and depression reports constituted 11.4 per cent of all new claims in 1987-88 and 14.9 per cent of claims for teachers in the department as a whole.

So, when one talks about stress, it should be put into the context of the overall claims, bearing in mind the number of staff in the department and the nature of work in which our staff are involved. Indeed, the overwhelming majority of claims are of a physical rather than a stress-related nature. However, even to have 11.4 per cent of new claims and 14

per cent of claims by teachers in the anxiety stress area is of concern and the way in which we manage those claims is of very deep interest within the department.

The department has established a services unit which is playing an important role in this area. It is obtaining the best available advice on the way in which the department can manage the staff, bearing in mind that the ability of the department to rehabilitate teachers who are spending extended periods away on stress-related illnesses is limited. That is because a teacher often cannot easily be employed in another area of the Public Service. The department is trying to grapple with this issue in a number of ways. Mr Christie may comment further on the steps the department is taking in dealing with this issue.

Mr Christie: There are two counsellors at present in the central area of the department, which is undergoing a trial with the appointment of a further counsellor for each area. That is a further five. This trial will continue for the next two years to see whether we can make a significant impact on this area of the department's operations. One of the major aspects is to be much more pro-active about the problems and issues in the area of management, so that we can undertake more management awareness and training programs to overcome some of these problems that are creating stress before they occur. This trial is being funded, with Treasury approval, against the Education Department's workers compensation premium for two years. In addition, the employee services unit has undertaken numerous professional development activities across the department to raise the awareness of managers and employees about personnel in organisational management issues. So a lot of effort has gone into professional development and a lot more is proposed in the future.

An assessment or a trial is also being undertaken where we are using a particular person to develop a series of questionnaires and instruments to find out more about the sorts of things that create stress for teachers, the stressors if you like, and that is well under way. We hope to get some valuable information from that which we can use to develop programs.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I was also asked whether we had overestimated that amount of \$12 million. I am not sure what the attitude of the Treasury was during the honourable member's period as Minister, but Treasury is not prone to overestimating payments of that type. That was based on very accurate projections of claims which were in the pipeline, and those claims were anticipated. It is quite a sophisticated analysis. The outcome for that year, as it appears in the Auditor-General's Report, was substantially less than that outcome. The actual outcome was \$8.831 million, a very substantial reduction, and I believe it was due to a number of initiatives that have been taken within the department. There are also some intangibles, for example, the four term year. It is suggested that that has had an impact on the claims for workers compensation and the like. That is an intangible which is very difficult to assess in real terms, but it is one of the factors which, it has been suggested, is responsible for that reduction. But a number of strategies have been developed, as Mr Christie has explained, and we anticipate that that reduction will probably stabilise to a much lower level.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer the Minister to page 119 of the Auditor-General's Report which indicates that in 1986-87 vacancy rental costs paid by the department for teacher houses totalled \$254 000. It is difficult in this year's papers to track down the equivalent figure for 1987-88. On page 119 in the accounts for Housing and Construction, there is a reference to Government employee housing and

payments in lieu of rent totalled \$351 000. Is any of that sum related to Education Department costs and, if so, how much? If it is not, where are the vacancy rental costs listed for 1987-88 and what are the costs?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The 1987-88 expenditure on rental of vacant teacher housing was \$367 000. I will try to ascertain where that figure appears in the documents for the information of the honourable member. The honourable member will be aware that the administration of teacher housing is now incorporated into the Government Employee Housing Authority, which is vested in my colleague the Minister of Housing. The alternative to retaining temporarily unoccupied teacher housing (that is, buying and selling houses or the use of hotels and motels as required) would be very impractical and even more costly than the current methods used to secure housing for our staff who are transferred to country locations.

The existing policy which requires the holding of a minimum level of teacher housing is an essential ingredient in the provision of an effective and efficient country education service and the elimination of that expenditure item in the budget (which in a way is a subsidy to those teachers who serve in the remoter parts in South Australia) would, I suggest, not only cost the department a greater sum but also cause considerable hardship and dislocation to those teachers who are serving in the country.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Is the \$367 000 directly related and comparable to the \$254 000 of the previous year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not have the previous figures with me but I will obtain that information for the honourable member.

Ms GAYLER: My question concerns one of the key initiatives of the department, namely the primary education review referred to on page 270 of the Program Estimates. What action has the Government taken to date to implement the recommendations of the review, and which areas of the review are to be pursued in the coming year? I note that a number of recommendations are to be implemented in the 1988-89 financial year and further plans are to be devised for other areas of the review.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is a most important review, which has been conducted in a very unique way because it has involved some 4 000 members of the education community around this State. It took a number of years to complete the 20 volumes of the report in its various forms under the leadership of Ms Marilyn Gilbertson. That report is a very valuable base document for us all in the education system of this State wherever we reside. It is now the base document for a good many initiatives in the primary area, some of which are already being implemented and a number of which I have already referred to this morning. There are also strategies and plans ahead.

By way of overview, I point out that the importance of the primary years is now being realised particularly the inter-relationship between primary and secondary years. This includes the areas to which I have referred this morning, the area of discipline and management of behavioural problems in primary years. In the key curriculum areas of maths and science there is the problem of lack of participation by girls in those so-called hard subject areas. The root causes that lead to that lack of participation have been identified as stemming from the primary years and remedial work has already begun. The special focus schools which have been established in maths and science and literacy skills are part of the outcome of the primary review.

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

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I ask the Director-General to detail the implementation strategy for the primary education review.

Dr Boston: Substantial progress has been made with the major recommendations of the primary education review, although it must be recognised that implementation of the review in its entirety is a matter for the long haul. However, we have made substantial progress already and I will refer to the principal recommendations and report briefly on what has been done in relation to them. The major recommendation was that primary education be recognised as an important and distinctive period in its own right. Consistent with that assertion, we have regarded the revitalisation of primary education as a major priority in the three-year plan for the Education Department which is currently being developed. That plan will set out priorities for primary education and strategies to be employed in revitalising primary education over the next three years.

The Primary Education Committee has proposed and has begun planning for a national conference on primary education to be held in Adelaide in January 1990. We are hoping to be able to provide assistance and financial support from within our resources to promote that. Similarly in relation to that recommendation, regular editions of the *Primary Curriculum Bulletin* and the *Early News* promote thinking and practice in relation to issues affecting the education of children in primary schooling. So primary education is high on the agenda.

The second recommendation was that advocacy for primary education be strengthened by improving the primary presence at senior administrative levels. I am very pleased to report that we have recently appointed a former junior primary and primary school principal (Rosemary Gracanic) as Area Director for the Southern Area, so a substantial step has been made in relation to that recommendation. We have also accepted the recommendation that a Primary Education Board be established, an elected and representative body, which provides advice directly on primary education to the Director-General. That proposal is being furthered. We hope to be able to put the Primary Education Board in place within a matter of months.

The third recommendation was that primary schools be resourced with personnel skilled in counselling. We have allocated 10 salaries for the appointment of student counselling support personnel to primary schools. With respect to the recommendation that all teachers receive professional development with regard to equality of opportunity and inclusive practices, our response has been that action research projects in various areas are being supported by the Early Childhood and Primary Section personnel of the Studies Directorate with a view to defining and describing inclusive practices in relation to poverty, Aborigines and gender. The Early Childhood Education Committee is also working with the education of girls team to produce a pamphlet on sexual harassment in the early years.

There was also a recommendation on curriculum that 'Our Schools and Their Purpose', that is, our principal curriculum document, be stated in R to 7 terms consistent with R to 12 views, taking into account the nature of the primary child. Our progress towards the implementation of that recommendation has been to produce materials to support the implementation of 'Children and Their Learning in the Primary Years', a key booklet that comes out of the primary education review. The Early Childhood and Primary Section of the Studies Directorate has described the three-year curriculum development plan to identify essential learnings for the primary years, to develop strategies to identify indicators of student achievement and to develop

organisational frameworks for the curriculum in primary schooling.

In the Northern Area an action research project is concerned with computers and learning in primary schools, and Early Childhood and Primary Section personnel are working with the language other than English team in the development of the languages curriculums to further our commitment to have languages other than English available to all primary children by 1995. The recommendation that the Education Department endorse the concept of specialisation and develop a policy for the use of specialist teachers is receiving attention, with preliminary planning being undertaken in relation to physical education, music and other areas.

There was also a recommendation on leadership, that a statement about the role of the principal be developed. We have taken action to further that. We have also begun an examination of existing leadership training programs with a view to developing proposals for further leadership activities along the lines suggested by the review. Reconfiguration of superintendency as a result of the implementation of the Cox review and the establishment of a new position—District Superintendent(s)—in each of the areas will provide support for leadership development.

There is also an important recommendation in the review that focus schools be examined to further particular curriculum initiatives and to act as seeding grounds for the development and spread of innovation in different areas of the curriculum. Proposals are being implemented in science where we have one science focus school in each of the 24 districts in areas. A science grant of \$500 000 for the provision of science materials and schools with years 5, 6 and 7 has been made.

In mathematics, we have a mathematics focus school in each of the 24 districts primary schools to build teacher confidence and competence in the teaching of mathematics. In 1987-88, grants totalling \$152 000 were made to launch that program. It begins the first phase in term 4 of 1988 with 24 key teachers in those schools undertaking a development program at the Sturt campus of the South Australian college and concentrating on maths, on children's learning theory, and on adult learning.

We have also established plans and processes to assist the implementation of the recommendation on parent participation. We have imminently the establishment of a primary board and we also have professional development of teachers, one of the key recommendations throughout the primary board report, as a major priority for the total department.

Ms GAYLER: Regarding equal opportunity and the community problem of sexual harassment, which also impinges on school students, I refer to page 270 of the Program Estimates, which in part touches on that subject when talking about child protection. Can the Minister say what action the Government has taken, first, to increase representation of women in promotional positions in schools and, secondly, to overcome sexual harassment in schools? I note that in my own region a report of a survey on sexual harassment between students has been released today and that that report has found that protective behaviour programs and staff development are important elements required to address the sexual harassment problem.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: In education there are well established guidelines for sexual harassment grievance procedures that are widely circulated and available in each work place throughout the department where that policy has been implemented. That policy and its implementation throughout the department emanated in 1984. The policy is mod-

ified from time to time. It is important that clear guidelines exist for handling these problems, especially in human service agencies and in the school environment.

The policy is in the main directed towards employee-employer and employee-employee behaviour, but it covers other aspects of sexual harassment. A review of this policy, undertaken in 1987, was published earlier this year. It examined grievance procedures and school policy developments as well as curriculum implications of sexual harassment. Many schools have developed their own policies for dealing with sexual harassment through behaviour management policies and curriculum programs which examine the causes of various forms of behaviour. Extensive professional development has been occurring in each directorate of the department and in schools on this matter. Teacher confidence in dealing with the issues has increased dramatically through these professional development programs.

Regarding the honourable member's latter statement concerning a child protection policy, much work is being done in South Australia in this area, and the Education Department is very much involved in that systems-wide work. We have a draft policy that we hope will be established and settled by the end of this year. Areas of the Education Department have been trialling protective behaviour programs, and hopefully that will also see, as with sexual harassment, increased confidence in students to deal with risk situations. Inter-agency problems in the main have been resolved, and there have been barriers because of the various *modus operandi* of departments, the different approaches taken to resolve these issues, and the different functions that have been traditionally fulfilled by Government agencies.

In 1989, we will see the increased development of child protection curriculum in the relevant curriculum areas: for example, legal studies and health education studies. So, in that way the department is embracing this difficult but nevertheless important element of management of both staff and schools.

Ms GAYLER: Regarding overall student population trends, the supplementary information provided shows that, although overall the decline in student population is occurring, in some areas there is now, and is projected to be, significant enrolment growth. Can the Minister say where these areas of growth are likely to be and what measures are being taken in the light of that and, more particularly, will he refer to some of the new initiatives in education facility development and planning that are being taken in my district, for example, in the Golden Grove area, where there is much cooperation between the various education sectors both within the State system and its various tiers and between the State and private education sectors?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member has asked a broad question. Although earlier in the Committee we talked about the decline in enrolments, we are each year providing a substantial amount of our capital works program for building new schools. Substantial demands are being placed on the department in the growth areas, predominantly in the outer suburban areas. There we are required to build new schools and to establish new strategies to meet the growing demand.

At Golden Grove, a unique program has been developed in conjunction with the non-government education providers. The Catholic Education Office and the Independent Schools Board have combined with the Education Department to ensure that the three secondary schools established there are developed, on the one site, that they have a common component to their program and that they share the education resources, physical and human in that school

community. That brings about an enhanced curriculum offering for those students, enables savings to be made by all the education providers, and provides an integrated education facility for the benefit of that community. It is the only secondary school complex of its type in Australia. Indeed, there are probably few in the world, and I have not heard of many. So, everyone is watching it with great interest.

In the primary area at Aberfoyle Park we have a primary school that is based on a similar concept. It is a much more complex measure to create that at a secondary level. I must compliment the developers—the joint venturers—on Golden Grove who have provided substantial financial assistance and other forms of assistance for the development of this complex. I am sure that we would not have been able to embark on it with the speed we have, and indeed with the breadth of the program that we are providing there, if it was not for the assistance of the joint venturers. In a way, a new precedent has been established for the provision of education services in newly developing areas, whereby there is also a financial contribution by the developers. That is to be contrasted with some other developments where, unfortunately, the human service facilities lag the actual residential development.

For example, in the area of Burton, in Salisbury, we are now having to provide facilities which hitherto were not planned in conjunction with the developers for a number of reasons which are probably well known to members. It makes that process much more difficult, and we now have to take steps at times after the event and after decisions have been taken with respect to the physical placement of schools that we would have liked to take if we were involved in the planning process at a much earlier stage. Nevertheless, we will be providing school and preschool facilities in that community as they are greatly needed. However, there are great advantages if we are involved within the early stages of a new development. Much can be learnt from the Golden Grove exercise, to the benefit of all similar communities.

The CHAIRMAN: The member wandered into the capital line with that question. If the Committee has no objection, I will open up the capital line for discussion, and we can range across the two areas until 6 o'clock.

Works and Services—Education Department, \$6 500 000

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to page 179 of the Estimates of Payments and pages 262 to 289 of the Program Estimates.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Before the luncheon break the member for Coles requested information about vacancy rental costs. That information is included on page 265 in the third major subprogram 'Personnel Services' under the line 'Assistance for teacher housing'. The figures for vacancy rental costs are as follows:

1982-83—	\$338 000
1983-84—	\$314 000
1984-85—	\$404 000
1985-86—	\$444 000
1986-87—	\$302 000
1987-88—	\$367 000

Mr MEIER: I refer to page iv of the Auditor-General's Report where, in regard to processing invoices, the Auditor-General states:

A fundamental and common process within public sector organisations, which could return substantial benefit from such an evaluation, is the payment of accounts. The overall public sector cost of staff and computer processing committed to this process is not readily identifiable and calculable—but it represents a sizable administrative support service cost and could run into

millions of dollars a year. For example, 23 officers (full-time equivalents) are engaged on processing invoices in the Education Department.

Has any estimate been made of the potential cost savings resulting from greater computerisation of the accounts payable section of the Education Department? If so, what is the estimate? Why has not the department taken action earlier to correct the problem?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, I clarify that the millions of dollars that potentially may be saved are not in the Education Department but are across the system. Whilst we have a substantial number of officers engaged in processing invoices in the department, we also have many invoices to process, as one can imagine. It is an automated process that we use but, as the Auditor-General notes, the verification tasks are required under the Audit Act. The Auditor-General goes on to say:

The verification tasks represent requirements of traditional standing, embodied in regulations under the previous Audit Act (effective in 30 June 1987) and more recently included in Treasurer's instructions under the new Public Finance and Audit Act (effective from 1 July 1987). The performance of those tasks by public sector organisations in relation to all accounts has been reinforced over time through the external audit process.

There is an actual requirement at law that that function be done in the way that it is done. The Auditor-General suggests that that be reviewed and that there may be a different way of processing it. That would require a systems-wide approach to be adopted. There would need to be a change in the law—a change to the Public Finance and Audit Act—and to the role that the Auditor-General plays in this matter. This is another of the valuable insights that the Auditor-General has to offer in respect of the overall efficiency of the administration. It is something in which we would want to participate as we automate and improve the efficiency within our administrative structures.

Mr MEIER: As a supplementary question, I take it that the Minister does not have any estimates of the potential cost savings?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Auditor-General goes on to state:

... it would seem desirable to consider the development of an appropriate risk management strategy in order to eliminate (or at least reduce) the detailed verification process with respect to the payment of some invoices ...

One has to calculate the risk factor and what that means in money terms, because we are really talking about the reduction in a number of salaries of people working in that area and the cost of the additional equipment that is required to implement that new strategy. At this stage, no assessment has been done of what the likely savings would be. Obviously, that will be taken into account when this matter is reviewed because of the Auditor-General's highlighting this. Obviously, it will be done not only within the department but systems wide.

Mr MEIER: How many cars permanently or regularly available to employees for travel between work and home have been or are to be fitted with private registration plates?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Only one vehicle, namely, that in the possession of the Director-General.

Mr MEIER: Would that be the case for the rest of this financial year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes. Only one decision has been taken. The Premier explained that in response to a question in the House some weeks ago. He explained that it was a decision taken by the Government at that time.

Mr MEIER: Although a member opposite has asked a question concerning principals and teachers being restricted in relation to what they may or may not say, my question is significantly different. Does the Minister still intend to

introduce amendments to the Education Act to place restrictions on the ability of principals and teachers to speak on education issues this year? Is legislative change to be considered in this coming year?

The CHAIRMAN: Before the Minister responds, I point out that I will apply the same philosophy to all members of the Committee. Honourable members are drifting away from the Estimates in the budget into the general political area. I will allow the Minister to answer the question, but I ask the Committee to come back to the Estimates.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Obviously the honourable member believes the rhetoric of those who want him to create mischief in this area. There has not been any intention, by legislative means or otherwise, to do what the honourable member suggests. I will wait to receive responses from the various constituent elements of the education system which have been asked to respond with respect to the desirability of proposed amendments to the Education Act which have been sought to bring it into line with the GME Act. I will then consider the merits or otherwise of acceding to that request.

That is a normal process and we will assess it. That process is going on within the department and eventually it will come to me for consideration. It has nothing to do with the right of principals or other officers of the Education Department, whether employed under the Education Act or the GME Act, to speak out on public issues or other matters relating to the Education Department. To try to link the two together and fabricate some sort of strategy to denigrate the leadership of the department or the department itself simply does not hold water.

Mr MEIER: Do I take it from the Minister's response that there could be amendments to the GME Act in the present session?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: In the Education Act. Every year or so the department carries out an internal review of the Act. A school, the Institute of Teachers or some other group may ask, for one reason or another, for consideration to be given to an amendment to the Act. These issues are gathered by the department as part of a normal ongoing process, and that is what occurred in this case. To link that with a strategy to silence certain groups of people in the education system is nonsense. That has never been the intention and it is not intended in the future.

Mr HAMILTON: How much does it cost to educate a child in South Australia, and why does this cost continue to rise? What payments are made to the Catholic Education Office for students attending its primary and secondary schools and how do such payments compare with those of previous years?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The cost of educating a student has risen in each of the past six years of the current Government. That has been as a direct result of the provision of additional education resources in our budgets. Under this Government education has been given a very high priority and, as I explained earlier, because of declining student enrolments we have been able to free up resources that otherwise would not have been available for the development of a number of very important programs in our schools. I am aware that that is very much appreciated by the community, and it gives us the very high standard of education that we enjoy in South Australia.

Indeed, it gives us the ability to provide the leadership in curriculum areas and in a number of other areas that now is the hallmark of South Australian education compared with education in other Australian States. The specific recurrent expenditure per student in real terms is detailed in the information provided on education when the budget

was released. This year an average of \$4 100 will be spent on each student in South Australian State schools, and in real terms (that is, after taking inflation into account) it is an extra \$60 for each student compared with last year.

I refer now to the provision of funding to the non-government school sector. Funding is provided on the basis of a well established formula and pattern. The Government receives advice from the Non Government Schools Advisory Committee, which is a body representative of the non-government sector. In accordance with established policy, it allocates funds to schools in the non-government sector. The funding for the non-government sector is based on 23 per cent of the average cost of educating a child in a State school. That is the basic formula that is applied. Within the Non Government Schools Advisory Committee there is an established policy for distributing that money according to criteria based on the needs of students and the needs of schools. That needs based policy is being implemented and is certainly serving the non-government sector very well so that those funds are being applied efficiently and with equity.

The Catholic education sector has two types of schools—systemic and non-systemic. Funding is provided on a different basis to each sector. Funding for all non-government schools comes not only from the State Government but also the Federal Government. As much as 90 per cent, or even a fraction more, of the cost of running a Catholic school comes from Government sources, depending on the needs of the school. In other schools with lesser assessed needs the funding is less. It is up to the Non Government Schools Advisory Committee and Federal education authorities to allocate those funds.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to a review conducted by superintendents of the Education Department of South Australia and its report dated September 1987. One recommendation is that the curriculum authority and responsibility procedures should be revised to incorporate a process leading to the development of a school achievement plan. What progress has been made in this area?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It arises out of the Cox report on the role of the superintendency in the Education Department.

Dr Boston: The school development plan is developed by a school council, the teachers, the principal and the whole school community. It defines the needs of a school and its aspirations in educational terms and establishes priorities and strategies for achieving them. It takes the form of a printed document detailing the school development plan for a particular school. The plan will be developed within the framework of system guidelines, priorities and objectives as defined within the three-year plan now being developed by the Education Department. School development plans will be nested within the broader framework of system priorities and will show how system priorities are achieved locally with a particular local expression.

The development of the plans will be assisted by the district superintendents who are working through the areas with clusters of schools and have essentially a curriculum function. The school development plans will be reviewed, we anticipate, on a two-year basis by the Education Review Unit, which will work with the school to assess how successful it has been in meeting its objectives and to make suggestions about how it might adapt its plan and approach in order to further achieve the objectives it has defined.

Mr HAMILTON: Page 274 of the Program Estimates under '1987-88 Specific Targets/Objectives' states:

Encouragement of parent participation in school activities, with special emphasis on parents of non-English speaking background.

Like most members of this House, I find that many people in my electorate are from non-English speaking backgrounds. I would appreciate some elaboration on this from the Minister.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The thrust of the Government in this area has been very substantial to involve parents in the decision-making processes at the school level and in the policy levels of the department. There is a great willingness by parents not only to have a say but also to accept responsibility within the structures and the governance of our education system. That is a very constructive role and one which I very much appreciate.

We are establishing very clear policies with respect to parent participation in the education system and that includes looking at who presently participates and who misses out, and why those who miss out do so. Since the year of Parents and Students in Schools we have established a permanent Parents and Students in Schools (PASS) committee. A development officer works with that committee, which allocates, amongst other work it does, grants totalling \$55 000 to develop that partnership between parents and schools. It also supports the State Council of Students.

We have targeted a number of programs of a training nature, to encourage those people who, for reasons of language barriers, the nature of their employment or the structures of the school community, are inhibited from taking a greater part in our schools, to break down those barriers to the extent that it is possible or, indeed, to alter our structures so that they can provide for a greater accommodation of that group of parents who want to participate but who, for some reason or other, cannot do so in our school communities or in other aspects of the work of the department. That work is going on under the supervision of the PASS committee and, as I said, is very much appreciated and is very effective work.

One of the other strategies that the department has developed is to communicate directly with the parent body as a whole, and often information goes to those people who are active in school communities, and certainly to teachers and staff in our schools. A large number of parents may receive a school newsletter, but often those newsletters contain information only in respect to that local school community. To obtain information about the wider education issues we have developed *School News*—a broadsheet which goes out to each family that has a child in schools throughout the length and breadth of this State. About 200 000 copies of that publication go out each term to parents to bring information and news which, hopefully, is of interest to them.

It is also their right to know what is going on and to know what policies are being established and what strategies are being developed to improve the education opportunities for their children. Altogether, quite a lot of work is being done in this area to include more and more parents in the work of our education system.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I recall that during the early 1980s South Australia used to take about 10 per cent of the Australian total of about 500 Malaysian students on a subsidised basis. Are there any subsidised or fee paying students currently in South Australia? Have representatives of the department been involved in discussions with Asian countries?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This question is quite important because a growing number of students want to study in Australian secondary schools. To obtain tertiary entrance in Australia their qualifications must be very high, and it is seen as a very attractive learning environment to come to Australian schools and complete that level of education.

The South Australian Government has taken a decision to provide for full fee paying students in four secondary schools from next year. Representatives of those schools have recently visited a number of Asian countries in conjunction with other education providers in South Australia—that is, representatives of TAFE and of the tertiary institutions that are also involved in this program. We are hopeful that in the coming years we will see a rising number of these students coming to our schools.

As the honourable member indicated, there has always been under various Commonwealth programs a flow of students to Australian secondary schools by way of subsidised places, and indeed some privately placed students as well. That program is still in place, but the ability of schools to accept full fee paying students is a new initiative that we have decided on. It is something which has been established in Western Australia now for a number of years and a number of other States have well established programs in either the Government or the non-government sector for fee paying students to attend those schools.

At the Australian Education Council there has been now a number of discussions about a uniform policy across this country with respect to this group of students so that we can provide some guarantees for them with respect to the quality of education and, indeed, the educational environment in which they will participate. In another State there have been some unfortunate experiences with respect to the welfare of this group of students, who are very vulnerable and who have come here and are spending very substantial amounts of money to achieve these education opportunities. So, at the national level we want to develop strategies to ensure that high standards of education are provided for this group of students.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: In relation to the capital works assistance scheme (page 69 of the Auditor-General's Report), during 1987-88 an amount of \$1.7 million was paid from State capital funds to school councils to assist in the repayment of loans obtained under the scheme (which I think used to be called the SLAC scheme—the School Loans Advisory Council scheme). As at June 1988, 91 projects were being funded under this scheme at a total cost of \$18.6 million.

I have recently been made aware that some schools have been affected by that sharply declining enrolment and are having increasing difficulty paying commitments made to the department several years ago. Can the Minister indicate whether or not this scheme is under threat? In fact, has any decision already been made to abolish or restrict the scheme, or is it simply kept under annual review?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is a highly successful scheme and it is providing facilities in many schools. As the honourable member has stated, 90 such projects have been established throughout the State since the implementation of this scheme and many of those facilities are used not only by the school community but, indeed, also by the broader community. In that way we have been able to access substantial financial support from the broader community so that these facilities could be established, and they include gymnasias, community halls or community facilities of that type.

There is certainly no intention of winding down that program. In fact, there is provision within the budget for its continued operation. There is a long list of schools which want access to the funds and which have programs awaiting approval. They are imaginative programs that will enhance the quality of education and community facilities in many locations throughout the State. For example, in this budget we anticipate that \$5.1 million-worth of school and com-

munity facilities in 19 schools will be provided under this cooperative scheme and \$530 000 is provided in the recurrent budget, which subsidises the interest payments to the schools, to facilitate these developments. A sum of \$2.2 million is provided in the capital budget. That is the contribution the department makes towards the building. There are two components to the scheme: one is assistance with the building of the facilities, and the other is the ongoing assistance with respect to subsidising the repayments of the loans that are provided under the scheme.

With respect to the other aspect of the honourable member's question about schools with declining enrolments having to continue to meet fairly hefty repayment commitments, obviously there is a limit to the extent to which the department can pick up the tab where schools become less and less efficient or less able to pay for the outgoings on commitments made in better times. Therefore, all of this needs to be taken into account when looking at the reconfiguration of schools and the restructuring of our education programs. Indeed, that helps to bring a note of realism into the discussions within schools, between schools and between the Education Department and the individual school communities. In my experience a great deal of sensitivity is shown as to the difficulties that a number of schools are experiencing in meeting those repayments.

From time to time adjustments have to be made. However, that is a result of enrolment decline, that is, there are fewer parents to raise funds to support programs, fewer students to use them and a different age profile of young people in the community. Therefore, we must be continually aware of other uses that might be made of those facilities and other avenues to meet the financial commitments that have been entered into with respect to the initial establishment.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Perhaps the Minister will take this question on notice. In relation to overseas students, can the Minister give the Committee the names of the four schools involved, the level of fees (whether they are at or about the cost of educating a State school student), and the estimated number of students for 1989 and will he say whether the funds will revert to the school or the Education Department?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The four schools are Marion High School, Campbelltown High School, Glenunga High School and Daws Road High School. Those schools have been chosen because of the geographic pattern which can link those programs. It is believed that residential accommodation would be available to a greater extent in those localities. Therefore, the school communities that are very keen to offer those programs have the capacity to do so. The school communities themselves are very keen to see this project succeed.

As I said earlier, the principals of Campbelltown High School and Marion High School have recently been overseas to explain this program and to offer it to students in a number of South-East Asian countries. It is interesting to note that the services provided by SAABSA—the accreditation services for tertiary entrants have been long established in Malaysia. Therefore, the South Australian education system is well known in Malaysia. In fact, we market SAABSA services throughout Malaysian schools. Therefore we already have an advantage and an established reputation on which we are hoping to build. However, TAFE has offered places at the senior secondary level. Kensington Park TAFE college has provided these services for the past several years and some of the tertiary institutions now have well established programs.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: With regard to educational facilities (page 282 of the Program Estimates) can the Minister provide, on notice, for each of the Adelaide northern and southern areas of the department, a summary of schools that are involved in any stage of discussions about closures, amalgamations or cooperative arrangements?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will undertake to provide that information to the honourable member.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to 'Aboriginal education' (page 275 of the Program Estimates); what provision has the Education Department made to increase the participation rate of Aboriginal students in senior secondary education?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member raises a very important issue for our secondary schools. The department has been doing a great deal of work to encourage participation of Aboriginal students in the senior secondary years. That work has been based on a research program conducted by Sister Deidre Jordan of the education faculty of Adelaide University. Sister Jordan undertook very extensive studies and, in fact, interviewed every Aboriginal matriculation student in the State. She gave very sound advice to education systems in South Australia about how they could improve the participation rate of Aboriginal students. We must bear in mind that the statistics reveal that the participation rate of those Aboriginal persons who leave school but later return to formal study is very much higher than in the remainder of our community. Indeed, their success rate is very high as well.

South Australia is fortunate in that the National Aboriginal Task Force is located at the South Australian Institute of Technology. Also, we have the focus centre at the South Australian College of Advanced Education Holbrooks Road campus. That provides an excellent opportunity for and, indeed, a milieu of participation by many members of the Aboriginal community as adults in the formal education process.

One of the other achievements of the department this year has been the release of our Aboriginal studies curriculum, which is a substantial series of curriculum documents for the teaching of Aboriginal studies in our schools. Whilst that program is aimed at all students, the greater understanding of the Aboriginal culture which will emanate from the study associated with those curriculum materials and the strategies that are developed within those curriculum materials for the understanding of the Aboriginal people and their special needs in our schools, hopefully, will bring into place in the long-term attitudinal changes that are also necessary to support Aboriginal students participating to a much greater extent than at present in our schools.

With respect to students in the remote Aboriginal communities, a series of programs is currently being undertaken in most of the communities in the Pitjantjatjara lands to provide some secondary and TAFE opportunities for students. There is provision in this budget under the social justice strategy for the development of a secondary college on the Pitjantjatjara lands, and that will be undertaken in conjunction with TAFE so that secondary opportunities will be provided for young people in the Pitjantjatjara lands, in an innovative and, hopefully, effective way. The only opportunity at present for those students to progress to senior secondary education on the lands is to travel to schools in the metropolitan area or in other country areas.

In the main, they would participate in structured programs at two high schools in the metropolitan area which provide special facilities for those students. Whilst they are very valuable programs and whilst the staff, Aboriginal families in the metropolitan area and others associated with those endeavours have shown a great deal of commitment

to them, it is seen as most important that we establish a structured secondary presence on the Pitjantjatjara lands. We now have the funding to begin that process in the current financial year.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to page 276 of the Program Estimates, 'Special Education'; what resources are being provided to assist children with disabilities and special needs?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: When I detailed the additional teaching and ancillary staff salaries that have been provided in this area, I also commented on one of the specific programs, that is, the program with respect to the hearing impaired, and the continuation of those programs. A whole range of initiatives are ongoing in this area. I guess with such a complex system we find schools throughout the State developing their own programs and taking initiatives to meet the needs of children with special needs. There is also a very strong link between Government and non-government providers in this area. To further enhance and stabilise those programs we have established, at the State and Commonwealth Government level, a Joint Advisory Committee on Special Education. There has been some uncertainty about the provision of Commonwealth funding for non-government schools. It has fallen on my shoulders to negotiate with the Commonwealth Government a continuation of that funding, both this year and now it has been secured for next year. That committee is advising on the longer-term strategies that we adopted to maintain and further expand these very important programs in the non-government sector.

We were recently able to announce new initiatives in the area of special education technology and additional library support through the employment of librarians. In that way hundreds of children with disabilities their teachers and families will benefit from those new programs. The programs amounted to a sum of \$1.15 million and they established the first teacher/librarian network in our special schools. That will provide resource-based learning support for children and their teachers. We have appointed for the first time a permanent teacher to the Special Education Technology Service based in the Special Education Resource Unit, and that will enable children to gain new skills and learn, through using specially adapted computers and other technology including page turners, electronic switches, touch-sensitive computer monitors, computers linked to telephones and the like. A host of new technologies are now available to give a completely new dimension to the learning opportunities and the quality of life of the severely disabled students in our schools. That is a very exciting new development which we need to access to the maximum extent.

In addition to that we are providing extra teachers and support staff to assist children with disabilities in regular school settings. Many more students than in the past have entered into mainstream educational opportunities, and the new technology equipment to assist children in those regular schools has been boosted by a \$150 000 grant to enable those schools to borrow expensive equipment when it is needed for individual children. More and more young people are able to take their place in a normal school setting than has been the case in the past.

As I said, we have been able to convince the Commonwealth to maintain its funding for special education services to those non-government agencies which complement and provide very important programs. These are the Autistic Children's Association of South Australia Inc.; the Crippled Children's Association of South Australia Inc.; the South Australian Oral School; the Spastic Centres of South Australia Inc.; St Ann's Special School; St Patrick's Special School; and Suneden School. We are particularly concerned

to ensure that those agencies are able to continue their programs and that we can secure the very important Commonwealth funding that they have received in the past.

This situation arose because the Commonwealth has received a number of reports which state that the provision of services in South Australia is far in excess of the national average and that, therefore South Australia should return to the national average and that the Commonwealth has a responsibility to fund only to the extent of the national average so that funds will be provided to those States which in the past have not accepted that responsibility and have not funded up to what are regarded as acceptable standards. That has applied in other areas of Government activity whether in relation to nursing homes, other elements of education, or whatever. We have strongly resisted as a State and I will continue to negotiate with the Commonwealth in this area.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to page 278 of the Program Estimates, 'Socio-economic Disadvantaged'. Regarding school fees, in my electorate there are a lot of low income families. What assistance does the Government provide to these low income families?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I understand the problems that the honourable member has raised and I also have received representations about the many impoverished families who find it difficult to meet the outgoings that are required for the daily participation of students in our schools. Whilst the average cost of expenditure on a student is \$4 100, many people in the community find it difficult to meet those small but ongoing costs associated with paying for excursions, some book costs, materials costs and general contributions to programs within the school community.

It is for this reason that, for the past two years, the Government has provided an additional grant to schools based on the number of Government-assisted students in those schools, using that as the determinant for need. The Government has provided very substantial additional sums of money to relieve that burden on those particular families, so much so that it is interesting to note that, in 1982, payments to Government-assisted students were \$30, compared to \$77.50 this year. In the past two years, the amount has been increased by 10 per cent, which is well above the inflation factor.

There is ongoing consideration, within the Government's Social Justice Unit of the Education Department, of other ways to redirect resources to those students most in need in our system. Some of the existing programs—for example, the capital works assistance scheme and the computer loans program—take into account the needs of particular school communities in providing those forms of monetary and other assistance. The social justice package contains a number of important elements that will provide assistance targeted at those young people most in need in our schools. That must be put into context with what is occurring at the Federal level, particularly in the area of social security but also Austudy payments, which now provide very substantial cash payments, to the equivalent of unemployment benefits, for a group of students in our schools to encourage their continued participation and to give their families financial assistance.

The family assistance scheme package, which was announced last year by the Federal Government, also provides substantial cash payments to those low income families in our community. By targeting those families and their children most in need from both the State and Commonwealth angle, it is to be hoped that we can provide them with a package of assistance that will not hinder the

chances of those young people to continue down their education paths.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: My question relates to the Program Estimates (pages 270 and 271 'Primary and secondary education' and page 281 'Personnel services'). Does the Minister believe that evidence is available to show that the regionalisation program of the Education Department, under which there are now five major area offices in the State, has been cost-effective? More importantly, has it provided education benefits to schools? What is that evidence?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This hoary chestnut is trotted out from time to time by groups in the community who, for one reason or another, want to attack the department and its management. The decision to restructure the department was taken under the previous Liberal Government when the member for Mount Gambier was Minister. It was a wise move and has been followed by other States with much more pain than in South Australia. The Director-General might like to comment because he was responsible for some of the restructuring in the Victorian Education Department, where 21 floors of the Rialto building in Collins Street, Melbourne, were filled up with education bureaucrats.

It is a very difficult exercise to evaluate in the terms that the honourable member and other people would like. It is the most responsible managerial approach to take. However, it must be kept under review, and that is what the department has done. We must make sure that those aspects of the department that need a central structure with respect to their administration should be assured of that, and those sections that need to be 'area-ised' should be put in that direction. We do not need to establish a structure that is so inflexible that it causes hurt or division between areas and harms the quality of education rather than improves it. Some of the criticisms have been directed at such issues. This matter has been the subject of very careful scrutiny within the Education Department and also by the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee. I can add little except my belief in all of the evidence that I have seen that it has improved the quality of education in this State.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Can you indicate what the evidence is?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: They are amorphous concepts in terms of outputs. With the structure to which the Director-General has referred involving school development plans, we will have some factual basis on which to judge these sorts of issue in future, when we can look across the system and make some objective assessments of outcomes in our schools.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer to pages 270 and 279 of the Program Estimates. Page 279 refers to 'Trial the assessment of students policy'. A recent report in the *News* stated that the Director-General of Education said in a speech that the Education Department was introducing a literacy test for year 6 and year 10 students. Will the Minister provide details on how this test is to operate? Will all students in all schools be tested each year? What will be the annual cost of this new test? Does the Minister stand by his promise last year that the Education Department will not introduce standardised testing of students?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: In that press article, the Director-General referred to qualitative assessment of student outcomes. I can continue to give the assurance that the department is not interested in a simplistic approach to the assessment of education outcomes which has been embarked upon by those administrations that want to get into standardised testing at various age levels. That has been discussed at length and introduced to some extent in England.

It has also been discussed and introduced to some extent in New South Wales, and it is the policy of the Opposition in Victoria. In contrast, the South Australian Government believes that something can be achieved that is much more valuable—much more valuable to those of us responsible for the delivery of education services as well as to individual schools, students and their families. A lot of work has been done in the Education Department, in the Victorian Education Department and other places in terms of qualitative assessment.

We hope soon to be able to make further announcements about the strategy to be adopted by the South Australian Education Department in this regard. Present today we have the Associate Director-General of Education (Curriculum), Mr Boomer, and I shall call on him to explain the thinking of the department in this matter at this stage.

Mr Boomer: The assessment that will take place next year will break new ground in Australia in checking literacy performance. The system will be based on a sample: it will not be a test applied to all children. It will be based on a statistically valid sample of students from which we shall be able to generalise about the performance of the system as a whole. So, it could be seen as a check on the Education Department which will report to the public on how the system is going in years 6 and 10.

The details of the actual checking mechanism are still to be worked out, but in broad principle it will be as follows: we will set some assignments for all children based on the curriculum documents so that this will not be the kind of testing applying elsewhere in Australia: that is, it will not necessarily be related to the curriculum statements but to what we expect year 6 children to be able to do. We will set some assignments. We will also collect from that sample of 10 per cent work actually arising from the classroom in writing samples and samples of what the students have been reading.

From this data check we will have a rich sample of the performance of students and we will then bring in a group of examiners to look at those texts and, according to certain criteria, to assess the work. We shall look at measures, certainly at items of public interest such as control of language and of conventions, and the range of writing being done. We shall be able to provide by the end of 1989 an interim published report which will be in the form of an examiner's report saying to the public, 'This is the range of performance occurring in South Australian schools.'

We shall be able to give not only qualitative data but also quantitative data about the percentage of students achieving certain levels. The most important feature of the scheme is that the people brought in as examiners will be teachers who will be specially trained, so it will be a professional development exercise. We shall not only have teachers from within the system looking at the books and data: we shall have people from the tertiary sector suitably qualified, and we shall have checks to ensure that we are not rigging the results in any way.

Also, importantly, reports will be fed into the schools to improve the quality of teaching and learning. So, it will not just be saying, 'Here are the results': it will be saying, 'Here are some of the teaching implications.' We shall be able to point to areas of weakness where teachers will need to improve their performance, as well as to areas of strength. We shall be able also to repeat the exercise in following years, so that we can say to ourselves and to the public on which dimensions we are improving. So, the whole exercise will not get into simplistic minimal competency testing: it will give us a full and rich report on the full range of performance and it will be diagnostic. Therefore, it will be

able to be fed back to improve the teaching and learning in South Australia.

Concerning cost, we are considering cost sharing with other systems. It will be an inter-systemic exercise, if this can be successfully negotiated with the other systems. The estimated cost would be between \$200 000 and \$250 000.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: When you say 'inter-systemic', do you mean between the States?

Mr Boomer: No, I mean between the public, Catholic, and independent schools systems in South Australia. That is only tentative because we have not opened negotiations, but we would wish this to be a collaborative enterprise. It is in the early stages and will be shaped up between now and the end of the year. I recently returned from a meeting of directors of curriculum and there is considerable interest in other States in coming along with us in this venture. It is not beyond possibility that it will become the basis for some kind of national audit.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Turning to page 281 of the Program Estimates, concerning selection panels, what changes, if any, does the Minister intend to introduce this year to the composition and method of operation of selection panels for promotion positions?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member would be aware that this year we have included a parent from the school community where the appointment is being made for the position of principal. We have also included a principal on each of those selection panels if that normally happened, but it was not of right as such. I believe that this has been very much welcomed by schools throughout the State and that it will help lead to a more appropriate system taking account of the needs of the community where such staff are to be appointed. We are providing assistance by way of training for the role that parents will play on the selection panel, so that they are not disadvantaged by not being a part of the education system as such and not having had as much experience as many other people who serve on those panels in the selection process. I call on Mr Christie to comment further on this matter.

Mr Christie: I am currently chairing a task force that is considering the whole area of selection for promotional positions. This started from a recommendation in the Yerbury report, a report into personal management requested by the Minister a year or so ago. The review of selection was one of the major recommendations in that report, which recommended a review of both policy and procedures. The report also recommended that we consider development of job and person specifications for all positions, the training of panel members and parent representatives, and the feasibility of developing the work report associated with selection.

That task force has almost completed its work in terms of coming up with a redeveloped policy and selection guidelines. I suggest that the report should be available in the system within the next month or two. The changes would not be major: rather they are changes in emphasis. I hope that less emphasis would be placed on the application form and interview than in the past and that there would be more emphasis on track record and referee checks into the performance of the individual.

Past policy has been basically not to make referee checks unless two or more applicants were seen to be relatively equal. We would also hope that track record would become a larger part of the process. So, there would be changes in emphasis. We also hope to see the process streamlined significantly. At present, there are two SAIT representatives and two Government representatives on the panel and we would hope to reduce that to one SAIT representative and

one Government representative plus an equal opportunity representative. So, rather than having a five-person panel we would hope that it would be a three-person panel provided that the scheme passes all the tests by way of consultation with SAIT and the rest of the people involved. We hope to see it streamlined, much more relevant and more objective in the way in which it operates.

Ms GAYLER: The program 'Provision of general secondary education in schools' refers to the post compulsory years, but does not specifically mention school retention rates. The retention rate in the high school in my area is 86 per cent, which is good. Can the Minister indicate the improvement in retention rates in the South Australian education system in recent times?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This area has been placed under close scrutiny in recent years. The Commonwealth Government, through former Minister Susan Ryan, established criteria so that by 1990 about 60 per cent or a figure in the low 60s would be the number of students retained to year 12 in our secondary schools. That was a target to which we all aspired some years ago, and South Australia has surpassed it. We estimate that at the end of this year our retention rate could be as high as 68 per cent. At least in one State the rate is still in the 30 per cent grouping and in other States it is inferior to that of South Australia. There are a number of reasons why it has expanded in South Australia. One is the age profile of students in our schools. There is now a much greater acceptance for students to stay on because in the main they have been younger than students in other States. There have been the initiatives in the Commonwealth social security system, as I mentioned in the previous question, with respect to the provision of Austudy and the elimination of unemployment benefits for 16 and 17 year-olds. There has been a financial incentive to stay at school rather than to leave.

The other factor is the willingness of so many school communities to embrace a curriculum that is less academic or more attractive to a certain category of students who simply cannot hack the traditional curriculum structure within many schools. That has changed dramatically. Also, there is a greater degree of articulation between education and TAFE courses and the ability to transfer qualifications between systems opens up different approaches to study.

Many specific programs encourage young people back into education after they have left school for a period and the number of those young people and adults returning to schools is substantial and encouraging and is part of the strategy of the school amalgamations and clustering of schools to enhance that curriculum offering, so that it is attractive to many more of that group of students who would otherwise have left school.

There is now a strong perception by employers that they want young people to have a good, sound broadly based general education and they also encourage young people to stay on at school, so that opportunities for those young people who leave school before year 12 to begin lasting and satisfying employment are becoming fewer and fewer. That realisation is very much abroad in the community. For all of those reasons and more, retention rates are increasing. It is interesting to note that the actual figures in South Australia vary markedly across the State. The July retention rate to year 12 in the Adelaide area is 68 per cent; in the northern area it is 58 per cent; in the southern area it is 73 per cent; in the eastern area it is 53 per cent; and in the western area it is 51 per cent.

At that time the overall total was 62 per cent. Last year the outcome for the year was 53.5 per cent. There is nearly a 10 per cent increase already this year over the outcome

for last year and, as I said, we expect that to perhaps increase even further during this year, because there is a drop of students during the last months of year 12 as many young people find employment or drop out of year 12 studies. That is an encouraging figure.

However, international comparisons, whilst we may take comfort from national comparisons, show us in a poorer light. Japan has a retention rate to year 12 of formal education of about 90 per cent, and it is about that figure in North America and many European countries, the countries which are major trading partners. We still have a lot of work to do in that area.

Ms GAYLER: Also related to secondary schools, can the Minister indicate the progress being made on the Gilding report into post compulsory education and any initiatives undertaken so far? What is planned in the near future?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The work of the Gilding inquiry has been constructive and valuable. Almost every State had a formal review of the post compulsory education sector. South Australia has benefited from those studies which published their reviews. We were able to develop a strategy which took into account all that valuable information but also embraced broad community consultation about the post compulsory section of education, and there is a good deal of energy within Government and non-government school communities about that area of education, similarly in TAFE and tertiary institutions.

The initial phase of the Gilding inquiry came about as a result of the Adelaide and Flinders Universities plans to change their tertiary entrance requirements. We were concerned about the proposals put before the university senates with respect to those changes and asked them to defer that until we had a chance to engage in community consultation about tertiary entrance requirements. Coming out of that we struck an interim policy which provided that status be given to a year 13 program in our schools by those tertiary institutions, so there could be an aggregation of credits given to students who completed two years of study at the year 12 level, the first year being the *bona fide* full-time year of that study. That has been received in the community with a great deal of support.

It is very encouraging to see so many young people staying on to improve their marks at year 12 level, but also to engage in a broader choice of subjects in that area and enhancing their opportunities, not only to gain tertiary entrance but also career opportunities further down the track.

The second phase of the Gilding report has been published and the Government has accepted those recommendations in principle. Mr Gilding is now carrying out the implementation strategy with the various education providers in South Australia and the assessment authorities. There is a particularly important role for SSABSA to play in this area, and that process is now proceeding.

Ms GAYLER: Referring to page 266 of the Program Estimates, I note that the combined recurrent and capital expenditure concerning travel for students is of the order of \$20 million. I also note that the New South Wales Liberal Government has introduced a \$50 a term travel fee for over 100 000 students. Does the Minister intend to follow in that direction?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: No, it is not the intention to introduce that fee. Earlier I also explained that it is not our intention to ask students travelling on buses in country areas to pay fares. When one reads in the press that \$3 million can be saved from the Education Department's expenditure by restructuring of the bus program that means that that \$3 million will be obtained by charging fares for

bus travel. That estimation has been provided by the Auditor-General on previous occasions, and the Government has resisted that for the reasons I gave. Certainly, we do not intend to do what the New South Wales Administration did with respect to those urban transport charges, which I think are very destructive for a particular section of students who, as I said earlier, have a right and an obligation at law to attend school.

I believe that there is another agenda with respect to that particular strategy, and that is linked to other policies with respect to the de-zoning of schools and competitions between schools (which is another way I guess of restructuring by stealth the education system in New South Wales). Obviously, some matters need to be attended to with respect to the administration and reconfiguration of schools, and one way to do it is by such means. I think that that is a most unfortunate strategy to adopt.

Mr MEIER: I refer to page 281 of the Program Estimates. The Minister would acknowledge that there are still problems in getting teachers to complete four years of country service and, if they have completed it, getting them to spend more time in the country because bringing them back to the city is not always easy. Is the Education Department reviewing the operation of the equitable service scheme? What changes are likely to be made this year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Many teachers in our system accept that the teaching service is a service across the State. In fact, they enjoy teaching in country areas and, indeed, have made their careers in the country towns and cities of South Australia. One of the greatest strengths of our education teaching service has been the opportunity for diverse teaching situations. I think many teachers believe that they have gained much more than they have given in teaching in country centres throughout this State.

The Government does not propose to open the equitable service scheme to review in totality. However, it is acknowledged that there are strains on the equitable service scheme and certain components must be reviewed. Indeed, there are already structures in place in the department for those specific areas to be reviewed. It is a scheme that has served the department well in providing staff for schools throughout the State. However, circumstances change and we must make sure that the policy is flexible enough to meet those changing needs. As I said earlier, the strength of our teaching service has been those opportunities to teach across the State. Also, over the years there have been many teachers who have chosen to spend a substantial part of their careers teaching in country areas.

Mr Christie: Each year as a standing agreement the equitable service scheme is reviewed jointly by the South Australian Institute of Teachers and the department. At the moment we have a committee undertaking an internal review before we discuss the matter with the Institute of Teachers.

However, there is also a Yerbury recommendation suggesting the concept of tenure, in fact, seven year placements for teachers. We are also investigating that at the moment. Both of those areas need to be investigated by a joint committee of SAIT and the department under the 4 per cent agreement. The agreement with the Institute of Teachers was that three or four committees be set up to look at various areas of the department where improvements or efficiencies could be made.

One area was the mobility and transfer provisions in the department at both the teacher level and the principal level, that is, people in promotional positions level. Therefore, all of those issues—the seven year proposal, the equitable services scheme and the transfer provisions for people in promotional positions—will be reviewed by the joint committee

to be set up under the 4 per cent agreement. That committee should commence its work fairly soon.

Mr MEIER: I agree with the Minister that it is certainly rewarding to teach in the country. I taught in the country for 11 years and I will not deny that. In fact, it amazes me that the department does not have people who want to teach in the country lining up, but the position seems to be the reverse.

Will the Minister confirm that Cabinet has given approval for the sale of the Raywood in-service centre, that a committee is currently considering the proposals of two or three interested parties and that one of the proposals involves fee paying overseas students undertaking tourism and hospitality courses? What guarantees have been given to the staff at Raywood about their future and when will a decision be announced?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, Cabinet has agreed that certain parts of the Raywood property can be sold under terms and conditions that are acceptable to the Government. As the honourable member would be aware, advertisements have been placed in the press, and the community has been invited to express an interest in that property. For all the reasons that are publicly known, the Education Department has decided to dispose of its interest in that property and to relocate its in-service program primarily at the Goodwood Orphanage and also at other conference centres throughout the State. As part of that decision-making process the Department of Lands has undertaken the responsibility of negotiating with prospective purchasers and reaching an agreement that is satisfactory to the Government.

That sale of property will involve only the parcel of land that includes the Raywood homestead and the accommodation block, and it has been defined publicly. The Arbury Park School will remain. There is more than 100 hectares of land. Consideration is currently being given to the transfer of that land to the National Parks and Wildlife Service; it will remain in public ownership. Discussions are also occurring with the Stirling council with respect to the land that comprises that area. It is a very valuable parcel of land for a number of reasons: it has particular heritage value and it incorporates the pathway of the Heysen Trail. The integrity of the Heysen Trail will be guaranteed. It is obviously of great importance to the local community. All of those matters have been taken into consideration and, I believe, met. This process has been a long one involving consultation and consideration of all the interests expressed to the department over the years. As promised the department has taken into account all those considerations.

The resources that accrue to the department through the sale of this property will be applied to professional development purposes for the benefit of the teachers, staff, parents and students in our schools, and also to the renovations that will occur at Goodwood Orphanage. The plans for that renovation are currently before the Public Works Standing Committee of the Parliament. Therefore, I believe that all of those processes are in train and will result in improved outcomes for the Education Department.

With respect to the staff, there have been discussions with the appropriate industrial organisations and that matter is being dealt with in the traditional way with respect to changes of programs and sales of properties of this type.

Mr MEIER: I did not hear the Minister give a specific answer as to whether one of the proposals involves fee paying overseas students undertaking tourism and hospitality courses, and what guarantees have been given to staff at Raywood about their future?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not have any knowledge but I will find out whether there have been specific undertakings given to staff or negotiations about their entry into those programs. I know that there have been discussions with staff at Raywood over an extended period. I am not sure of the detail of that but I undertake to obtain that information for the honourable member.

Mr MEIER: The Estimates of Receipts (page 39) indicates that actual receipts for 1987-88 for the sale of land and buildings in the primary and secondary education area totalled \$2.7 million. What land and buildings were sold in 1987-88, where were properties located, and what was the sale price and the name of the buyer? Was the sale conducted by auction, advertised sale or private negotiation? Certainly it is acknowledged that that information might not be available now. I also note from that page that receipts for 1987-88 for the sale of land and buildings of the Office of Government Employee Housing totalled \$1.6 million and the estimate for 1988-89 is \$1.2 million. Does this refer to Education Department assets or teacher rental houses?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I undertake to obtain that information for the honourable member.

Mr HAMILTON: What is the future of the Westlakes aquatic program? Will there be a division of responsibilities between the Department of Recreation and Sport and the Education Department and, if so, how will that division occur? How will the funding for those programs be divided, and to what extent will the Education Department fund this program? There is some concern amongst people in that area as to the future of this aquatic program. As the Minister would be aware, about 25 000 students per year undertake aquatic education in this area.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First of all may I say that I have visited that aquatic program on a number of occasions and I very much appreciate the services that it provides. I know that the honourable member feels the same way about the program. It is a valuable program which has developed over a period of time and it receives substantial private sponsorship. The real question that the department must face is, 'What part of that program is an educational component and what part is a broader component and perhaps more appropriately the responsibility of the Department of Recreation and Sport?' This is one of a number of similar programs in the Education Department that embrace those broader components.

The department has established a working party with the Department of Recreation and Sport to look at those sorts of programs and consider how their long term development will be managed, to which department they should ultimately be responsible, and to what degree support should be provided from the respective authorities. I guess questions of accountability as well need to be resolved for those constituent parts of the overall programs. They must be put into some sort of categorisation of priority with respect to the various Government programs that fund them, and they seek funding from a number of disparate programs.

All of those things are the subject of an appropriate review between those respective departments, and some of that has come out of the work the department has already done on a specific analysis of its swimming programs. The department has a very extensive swimming program not only in vacation time but also in term time, and it is certainly the most comprehensive swimming program of its type in any Australian education system. It is appropriate that the expenditure for that also be reviewed and assessed, and some work in that regard, has been done in recent years.

In the early part of my ministry there was substantial over-expenditure in that program and that caused me to

have the program reviewed. We have managed to rein in the administrative structures which resulted in over-expenditure. That also has led to the consideration of the broader issues. The actual program is not under threat; it is a valued program. The question is how it should be administered and to whom it should ultimately be responsible, and that is currently under review.

Mr HAMILTON: Supplementary to that, when is that review likely to be completed. It is obvious that those part-time employees would ask that question?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not have any information before me, but it is quite a substantial task and I imagine that we would see some results from that next year.

Mr HAMILTON: I, like many of my colleagues, have received correspondence from the South Australian Debating Association Incorporation which, in part, states:

The Education Department provides the SADA with an annual grant, currently valued at \$1 100. This represents only 14 per cent of the SADA's current annual funding, nor is the grant an ongoing commitment.

What assistance will be provided to the South Australian Debating Association Inc., given the request that has been made to members of Parliament for additional funding of the school debating competition? It is further stated:

The SADA believes it is required to provide every South Australian secondary student with the opportunity to debate. The Education Department has consistently failed to recognise debating as a legitimate sport or recreational pursuit. We therefore seek a commitment from the department to foster the participation of all secondary schools in competition debating.

It goes on at length in an eight page submission. What additional funding, if any, will be provided, and how does the Minister view the correspondence from the association?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I have not received that correspondence. It may have come to my office or perhaps the associations is sending it to all members so that they can write to me in order to secure ongoing funding for the debating association. It is proposed in the budget to once again provide that funding for the debating association, although I must admit that many organisations compete for funding for these types of activities. Debating has, in the past, been regarded as worthy of that support and it has been funded for many years by the Education Department. It provides a valuable service to our school communities by organising debating competitions and the like.

I was a member of the debating society at the university when I was there and I guess that many of us have been involved in debating in one form or another. That is one of the few structures in our society that provides those opportunities for young people. In fact, student competitions organised by the debating association have been conducted in this Assembly Chamber. But there are many other organisations that also provide debating opportunities for young people. For example, the JCs organisation is very heavily involved in this area and provides support and encouragement for schools to participate in that way, as does Rostrum and many similar organisations. Indeed, many schools have highly structured debating societies. All in all a good deal of emphasis is placed on debating skills within our education system but, nevertheless, the debating association has been seen as a peak organisation which ought to receive a degree of financial assistance for its activities. I will await receipt of the correspondence and the representations before deciding whether additional funding is required.

Mr HAMILTON: My next question relates to the supplementary information under the 'Curriculum: Equal Opportunities' section on pages 5 and 6. On page 6 it states:

Adelaide area five year achievement plan for women is being developed in draft stage and has an extensive input from a wide range of women across the area.

How extensive has that input been? What sort of involvement has there been from ethnic communities, in particular, in the Adelaide area?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not have specific information about the nature and extent of the consultations, but it is for employees of the Education Department that the five year professional development plan for women has been developed. Since the beginning of 1987, each of the directorates of the Education Department has been developing five year professional development plans for women. They have involved considerable consultation and the involvement of teachers across the State. They have been completed and implementation has commenced this year. The plans vary in detail for each directorate and area but, in general, each one represents a planned approach to increasing the skills and experience of women by increasing opportunities for them in terms of professional development.

Whilst the department employs a very large number of women, the participation of women in the senior levels of management in the department is of very real concern to me, so strategies of this type are important to enhance those opportunities for women to progress into more senior management positions of the department. As the senior bureaucracy of the department has been reduced and those resources have been transferred to the schools, to some extent that has exacerbated the difficulties that women face in gaining those career paths. That is certainly not a desired outcome from the restructuring of the senior levels of the department. It is important that these strategies be developed in this form.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I refer to page 68 of the Auditor-General's Report concerning the enrolment audits covered by the Auditor-General. Can the Minister provide details of the maximum and minimum overstatements of enrolments detected in 1987 and 1988? Does the Minister have details of either the cost to the system in 1987 or the estimated saving to the system in 1988-89 as a result of much more accurate reporting?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will undertake to obtain as much of that information as I can. I do not propose to have printed in *Hansard* the names of the schools because the information is open to misinterpretation, as I explained earlier. There may well be a legitimate reason in some remote communities where it is not possible to ascertain accurately the number of children in the school because of the movement of children within Aboriginal communities, for example.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I asked the question because principals who have spoken to me in the past few weeks have been at great pains to point out that the accuracy of estimated enrolments for this year and for next year is as great as it has ever been.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will have a look at the figures and see what conclusions can be drawn from them.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: My next question relates to health, welfare and safety aspects of education (page 270 of the Program Estimates). Does the Minister agree with the view that it would be a breach of the South Australian Equal Opportunity Act if SAPSASA were to organise separate boys and girls events in sports such as swimming for primary school competitions?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We must start from first principles with respect to discussion of the application of the Equal Opportunity Act to primary school sports. Bear in mind that we are talking here only about primary school sporting activities.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The Equal Opportunity Commissioner seems to be slightly at variance with the decision made by the Directors-General of Education.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The discrepancy that has been raised publicly is between a decision of a member of the Human Rights Commission interstate and the approach taken by the Directors-General of Education and by the Equal Opportunity Commissioner in this State. I believe that the decision that has been brought down by Mr Burdekin will not stand the test of the law upon review and it is not applicable to the situation in South Australia. Nevertheless, that interpretation has been placed on the law and, as I said, we must start this discussion from first principles.

The equal opportunity legislation is an Act of this Parliament and has received substantial support in the past from both sides of the House. It is disappointing that this issue has been reduced to a political debate, because it is much more serious. The aim of the legislation is to improve the opportunities for disadvantaged groups to participate in sporting activities, and in this case it is girls, but it may also include boys. We are very concerned about the lack of participation and the continuing participation of girls in sporting activities in our schools and the general level of fitness of children, particularly girls. The work done by experts indicates that we must respond to this in a very real, practical and effective way.

For the first time, we have embarked on an exercise to improve those opportunities within our sporting program. We have also embarked on programs to improve the participation of girls in other aspects of the curriculum—for example, in maths and science—and to build into those primary years the structures, attitudes and opportunities that will stay there for the secondary years and later in life. We have embarked on the application of this policy in consultation with those people involved in providing sporting opportunities in our schools through associations and others interested. There have been exhaustive consultations, and it is disappointing that this process has been sabotaged through the first year of its operation. Before even one year of the sporting cycle can proceed, people have brought up information which will see us jettison the important work that has been started in so many schools across the State.

So, the politicisation of this and indeed the misuse of information and the lack of veracity of some of the information brought forward is of real concern to the Government. We have indicated that, at the end of the first year of this five year strategy that has been developed for the enhancement of opportunities for primary school children in sporting activities, it will be reviewed. We shall do that and set up an ongoing review structure over the first five years.

This will not happen quickly: it requires attitudinal change and a transfer of resources. Further, it requires that people with strong feelings and vested interests change some of their attitudes. Some people have been opposed to this policy and the strategy developed right from the outset, and I presume that they will oppose it at every step of the way. Indeed, many people are vocal on this issue, but I believe that they are a minority and representing a minority of people. Concerning organised interstate sporting competitions, around which much of the debate has occurred, only .03 of the primary school population participates in such events. That is, a small minority of primary school children participate in such organised sporting activities, so there are many other children for whom we must provide programs as well.

When one moves around the schools it is encouraging to see teachers, school councils and parents interested in sport

developing new sporting opportunities for children. New games and new approaches to sports days have been devised so that all primary students may participate actively in sports throughout the State. All this is tremendously encouraging, and to set that all aside would simply be to turn back the clock, not to face realities and to abandon all our fundamental responsibilities for the health, and well-being and life opportunities of young people in this State.

So, I do not accept the conclusion about the interpretation of the Equal Opportunity Act that the honourable member has advanced. We need to interpret that law with great sensitivity, flexibility and understanding so that the fundamental tenets of that legislation may provide greater opportunity for disadvantaged groups.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: School security is referred to on page 63 of the Auditor-General's Report, where it is stated that a departmental review has considered all aspects of the security function of the Education Department. What recommendations for change were made in that review and what action, if any, has the Minister taken in this regard? Alternatively, what action does he intend to take?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: A substantial review of security operations in the department has been carried out, and already we have undertaken a number of new strategies to provide additional security for our schools. Some of these have been able to be taken within the Education Department itself and, for reasons of security, I do not want to enumerate them. However, they are obvious to people involved in the management of school communities.

A number of initiatives have also been taken external to the Education Department. We have a sophisticated monitoring structure established now at the State level and, indeed, many of our school security facilities are linked with that central monitoring service. When inspecting those facilities recently, I was advised that on one weekend seven arrests had been made of persons illegally on school property, causing vandalism, or committing some other breach of the law.

I believe that, although this is a never ending problem that is difficult to eradicate and occurs in cycles that unfortunately seem to breed on each happening, we are better placed than we have ever been to deal with this problem. It is hurtful when vandalism or arson occurs in our school communities. Vandalism is destructive of our programs and causes great heartburn to school communities.

Any attempts that we can make to minimise vandalism we take seriously. It is an area in which much responsibility has been shown within communities themselves, not only school communities but the broader community interested in securing our school properties. Indeed, much information that we receive comes from that broader community. The review contains a number of other recommendations that are currently with the core agencies of the Government to consider, because many of the recommendations need to be considered across agencies. Also, some involve substantial staffing and/or financial obligations, including the training of specialist staff within the agencies and within the Education Department itself. So, all these aspects are being considered at present.

Mr De LAINE: My next three questions relate to staff. I refer to 'Personnel services—significant achievements' on page 281 of the Program Estimates. Can the Minister indicate the Government's strategy for paying the 4 per cent pay rise to Education Department employees and how this compares with the procedure in other States? Further, can he describe the movement of teachers' salaries over the previous past 12 months and their projected movement over the next 12 months?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is interesting to consider the application of the 4 per cent second tier productivity award across Australia and to see the substantial differences in the approaches of individual States and indeed of the various sections of education. The actual cost of the increase in South Australia is \$20.5 million in additional salary payments. I table a document showing the application of the 4 per cent second tier salary increase in all States except South Australia.

INTERSTATE TEACHERS—4 PER CENT SECOND TIER

New South Wales

- | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|
| (i) Government | |
| Package agreed | Late November, 1987 |
| Ratified | 3.12.87 |
| Date of Operation | 27.11.87 |
| (ii) Non Government | |
| Package agreed | 1.12.87 |
| Ratified | 2.12.87 |
| Date of Operation | 2.12.87 |

Victoria

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| (i) Government | |
| Package agreed | 25.3.88 |
| Ratified | 7.4.88 |
| Date of Operation | First pay period commencing on or after 27.3.88 |
| (ii) Non Government (Catholic) | |
| Package agreed | N/A |
| Ratified | N/A |
| Date of Operation | Primary—2 per cent from 1.6.88 with a further 2 per cent to be argued before 1.2.89
Secondary—not paid as yet—agreement reached on offsets—date of operation to be discussed |

Western Australia

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| (i) Package agreed | 6.4.88 |
| Ratified | 14.4.88 |
| Date of Operation | First pay period commencing on or after 14.4.88 |
| (ii) Non Government | |
| Package agreed | N/A |
| Ratified | 24.6.88 |
| Date of Operation | 2 per cent from 2.5.88 with a further 2 per cent to be paid no later than 1.1.89 (some schools paying the further 2 per cent immediately, others will delay it until 1.1.89) |

Queensland

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| (i) Government | |
| Package agreed | May 1988 |
| Ratified/Date of Operation | Industrial Commission approved 2 per cent from 1.12.87. The other 2 per cent to be approved to operate from 1.3.88 if the Commission can be satisfied re: the implementation of the package at a review of the situation to be undertaken in July 1988 |
| (ii) Non Government | |
| Package agreed | 13.4.88 |
| Ratified | Awaiting Commission's decision |
| Date of Operation | Agreed date for whole 4 per cent is 1.4.88—However, as noted above, still awaiting Commission's approval |

Tasmania

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| (i) Government | |
| Package agreed | Early March 1988 |
| Ratified | 28.3.88 |
| Date of Operation | First pay period on and from 24.3.88 |
| (ii) Non Government | |
| | Private schools usually follow the Government Schools in Tasmania.
I have not been able to obtain any additional, useful information re: Non Government school from this State.
Please advise if you wish to pursue this. |

A.C.T.

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| (i) Government | |
| Package agreed | 2.6.88 |
| Ratified | 3.6.88 |
| Date of Operation | First pay period commencing on or after 3.6.88 |
| (ii) Non Government | |
| | Negotiations continuing |

In New South Wales, the first State to grant the 4 per cent increase, it was granted in late 1987. Victoria ratified the package on 7 April 1988, although I understand that in the non-government sector the full 4 per cent has still not been paid in that State. In Western Australia, the award was ratified on 14 April in the Government sector, and 2 per cent was awarded in the non-government sector in June with a further 2 per cent to be paid in 1989. In Queensland, only 2 per cent was awarded, with a further 2 per cent subject to further negotiation. In Tasmania, the award was ratified in March 1988, and in the Australian Capital Territory in June 1988. In South Australia, the award was ratified on 14 March 1988.

The additional impost for teachers' salaries for the arrangements reached by industrial tribunals to apply in this year, or resulting from decisions that have been brought down this year, amounts in the full year to \$63.7 million, which will be the additional impost on the department's salary bill for teachers' salaries this year. It includes the still to be negotiated second tier of the current national wage decision that will take effect next year. It is a substantial additional impost that has been brought down during the year. I believe it provides teachers with a substantial increase in their salaries and a total element to their wages in this 12-month period which is much greater than the inflation rate.

Mr De LAINE: In respect of occupational health and safety, can the Minister provide an up-to-date account of the effect of recent legislation on the level of workplace injuries and strategies for dealing with them?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will ask Mr Christie to comment.

Mr Christie: A number of things have happened. A management structure has been established incorporating the essential requirements of the Government's code of general principles. A draft policy as required by the code of general principles was negotiated with all unions *via* the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Advisory Committee. The Institute of Teachers is seeking further negotiations prior to agreement and publication of the policy. Throughout the department the requirements of the Act and code have been introduced to managers and health and safety representatives at a total of 175 sessions across the State. There has been a significant training program. The total number of participants in the introductory and later sessions on health and safety representatives and committee functions was about 4 500 as at 30 June 1988.

Health and safety representatives have been elected to represent 503 work groups at this stage. This number is expected to increase to about 800 or 900 by the end of 1988. In June 1988 the Education Department paid \$265 000 in registration fees to the Department of Labour for the three year registration of its employees, and to meet the requirements to advise workplaces on health and safety matters and their experience in accident and injury an occupational health safety and welfare newsletter has been distributed to each of our 950 registered workplaces. An accident reporting system has been operating in the Government mainframe system for about 12 months. A number of preventive programs have been introduced, as well as significant training of health and safety representatives. There

is a comprehensive program in support of the introduction of that Act and new legislation.

Mr De LAINE: What impact has technology had and what impact is it having on school curriculum?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The impact of new technologies on school curriculum is substantial. Almost every school that I visit has much activity revolving around new technologies, particularly computers and the use of other technology as well. Last week I was at Fremont High School looking at the accessing of information beamed through a satellite to that school with respect to monitoring weather patterns around the world. That school is keen to use that information within the curriculum for a number of areas of the senior school program, including maths, science, geography, and so on. It has also developed a relationship with the Department of Lands. It is able to provide information to the department when it embarks on surveys in the Far North of the State, in the form of up-to-date and accurate information on cloud cover in those areas.

Those journeys do not need to be abandoned when additional resources have been expended. It is that practical edge as well that is leading schools into exciting and creative programs that can expand their curriculum and make the studies more exciting and relevant for students. We have invested substantial sums of money, directly and indirectly, in school technology programs, particularly the provision of computers for schools, and that is an ongoing commitment on the part of the Government. Substantial work is being done to provide professional development opportunities for teachers to improve their skills in those areas. Often teachers have not had the opportunity at tertiary level to receive skills and qualifications in this area and opportunities are being created for further development of the enhancement of their skills through professional development.

It is interesting to note a significant increase in the number of students taking the year 12 SSABSA course in technology studies, and results provided by SSABSA have increased from 1 705 in 1986 (the first year of that new subject being offered) to an estimated 3 970 students who this year will undertake the completion of that course. That is indeed encouraging. We are acutely aware of the lack of science graduates from our tertiary institutions. One reason why we are enhancing our offerings in the primary years and in secondary schools for the learning of science was explained by the Director-General earlier is to encourage many more graduates in the sciences from our tertiary institutions.

The other area of technology in our schools relates to the provision of equipment. The member for Mount Gambier has corresponded with me on occasion about the need to upgrade metal lathes in schools. There has not been provision of funds for this to occur in the past and we have now provided \$200 000 for the replacement of obsolete metal lathes in schools. We will be working on an ongoing strategy to upgrade technology studies equipment. We have well established programs in dealing with metals, plastic, woodwork and the like. It is appreciated and is a growing element of our post compulsory curriculum offerings.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer to page xix of the Auditor-General's Report, in which he comments that he is not satisfied that full benefit is being obtained from the function of internal audit units in some public sector agencies, especially given the area of savings identified in recent years by external audit. He concluded by saying that the scope of work undertaken by some internal audit branches needs to be considered to include systems review, value for money reviews, as well as transactional auditing. Does the

Minister accept that the Auditor-General's comments apply to the Education Department's internal audit unit and, if so, what action has he taken or does he intend to take to correct the situation?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is not a matter that I have had specifically reviewed as a result of the comments of the Auditor-General. The internal audit section of the department already embraces a number of those broader functions and whether or not they should be further broadened is obviously a matter for further review. I believe that we have in the department a very effective internal audit structure that has, with respect to the matter of accurate reporting of enrolments, for example, been a very effective mechanism.

In a whole range of areas it provides valuable information to the department across the system as well as looking at specific areas. I appreciate the Auditor-General's comments. Obviously, we will consider them in looking at the effectiveness of our internal audit procedures. The honourable member will recall the comments made earlier today by the Director-General about the Education Department's approach to school audits, the establishment of the school development plans and the new role of superintendents in this regard, and the description of the assessment procedures which Mr Boomer outlined.

From a number of angles we are approaching the question of public accountability and the broader auditing function that we accept as a department so that we can tell the community with a good deal of accuracy what is occurring in our schools, what are our outcomes, and how they are established against certain base standards over a period of time. Possibly there is a limit to what the currently structured internal audit department can achieve in some of the broader goals, but already we have put and are putting in place other audit-type structures to achieve some of those outcomes to which the Auditor-General is referring and which obviously we, as a Government, are also seeking.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Reference was made by the member for Albert Park to behaviour management and discipline and the Chair alerted the Committee to the importance of the financial aspects of it. My question refers to page 263 of the Program Estimates and has certain financial implications, particularly in terms of departmental liability. I will briefly outline the background to my question which, I am sure, the Minister would be aware of. Some three to four weeks ago a student at a metropolitan high school deliberately pushed a teacher into a tree and, as a result of the incident, the teacher sustained considerable facial injury requiring 10 stitches. I am advised that the principal suspended the student as a result of this assault and that the parents then issued an injunction against the principal to prevent that suspension. That is the first point on which a financial question will be based.

Subsequently, the Education Department suggested that the student be re-admitted and the suspension was cancelled on the basis that it had not been carried out in the proper fashion, namely, the parents had not been advised in writing. I understand that the parents were orally advised of the decision to suspend and were informed that the letter was in the process of being written to confirm that advice. Because of the clear financial implications in terms of assault, what is the legal position with respect to the suspension of students from schools and the apparent capacity of parents to issue injunctions preventing such suspensions? Why did the Minister take the action he did, namely, to re-admit the student, in relation to this incident?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is very difficult to draw broad conclusions, as the honourable member may seek to do, from a particular instance. I think the instance to which she

refers is really quite rare. The facts as I understand them indicate that there is some doubt about the conclusion that the honourable member has drawn with respect to the intention of the student. The circumstances as I understand them were that a group of students was playing football on an oval during a recess period and that the teacher was also participating in that activity. In those circumstances I think that the action of the parents in this case in seeking legal advice and then in also seeking a Supreme Court injunction against the actions taken by the school might indicate that there was some doubt in their minds as to the true nature of the incident. That obviously is a matter of which there would need to be much more investigation to determine the true nature of the facts and the intention of the student.

Under the Education Act and its regulations a procedure is established for the suspension of students. The leadership of the school chose to suspend that student. It was the belief of Crown Law that the court would not uphold the actions taken by the leadership of the school and that scrutiny by the Supreme Court would indicate that that procedure was not followed in these circumstances. That then required the intervention in this issue of the Area Office of the Education Department and this matter then had to be resolved. A decision was taken that this student, while not being suspended from the school, should be suspended from classes of the school but could remain on site and would receive instruction from another teacher during that period of suspension. That was how the matter was resolved, given the complexities of the application of the law in those circumstances.

There still remains some doubt about all those matters which I guess would not be determined until the matter was determined by a court of law. Undoubtedly, there was a good deal of anxiety on the part of staff and the leadership of that school about the behaviour of that student and action, which was supported by the department in relation to the actions it took, was taken by the school community. Obviously, the relationship that student has with teachers, other students, his parents and the school has been the subject of very substantial discussions between all parties during this most unfortunate process. To conclude that this incident is a regular occurrence is quite false.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I am not suggesting that, but it certainly could act as a precedent.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not believe that such instances occur very often. Obviously, the department will need to ensure that its procedures for suspension are reviewed and that very clear instructions on their application are given to schools throughout the State.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: I refer to page 179 of the Estimates of Payments. Will the Minister indicate what use is to be made of the present Fulham Primary School when it is vacated and, in particular, will some of the site be used by Education Department officers as office accommodation? Given that most of the present students will not attend the Henley Beach Primary School, as I understand it, what decisions have been taken with respect to the distribution of school assets, including funds raised by the parent community?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I think there is now an established practice that some school resources follow the students, and that certainly was the case in a number of similar situations. It should be borne in mind that it is not the closure *per se* of the Fulham Primary School; it is an amalgamation with the Henley Beach Primary School. So a new educational entity has been created. The school has a new identity and it will be located on the Henley Beach Primary School site. I understand that the majority of Fulham Primary School

students may well attend the Henley Beach Primary School. It should be borne in mind that only two classes of students would be attending that school next year, so we are not quite sure what decision will be taken by those families as to where the existing small number of students will go.

The department is currently looking at the future use of the Fulham Primary School property, but no decision has been taken. In fact, no firm proposals have been advanced with respect to the future use of the property. In relation to Education Department programs being located there, our first priority is to place those programs in existing viable schools. Where we have programs which support schools, we would prefer to locate them in a school community with vacant space—and we have many schools in that situation—rather than in a school with no students. I think there is much to be gained from non-school based staff working in a school environment. So that would not be the highest priority for the future use of that school property.

Ms GAYLER: I refer to the professional development of teachers, particularly with respect to page 281 of the Program Estimates, although I notice that professional development is also mentioned under 'curriculum services'. On page 281 it is stated that one of the key objectives for 1988-89 is the implementation of the South Australian School In-service Program (otherwise known as 'professional development'). What is the financial commitment to the professional development of teachers in this State, and what are the key elements of the South Australian School In-service Program?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The acronym for that program is SASIP. SASIP was established as an advisory body to the Director-General of Education. When the Commonwealth Government chose to withdraw funding for professional development programs two years ago that sum of money (about \$750 000) and some resources which went to professional education centres in the country areas of the State were either removed or reduced. The State Government then took ownership of the professional development program and established that advisory committee, which has representation not only from the Education Department and the users of the program but from the business community and the tertiary education community in South Australia.

Professional development is very clearly a high priority within our education system. Our teaching service is ageing and, because of enrolment decline, we are not recruiting a large number of graduates. The skills of our existing teachers also need upgrading. Therefore, we need to place considerable emphasis on professional development retraining opportunities. A report on professional development prepared in April 1987 by the Director of the northern area (Mr Dennis Ralph) estimated that the department was spending about \$23.5 million per annum on professional development.

The education community is really quite unique in terms of its allocation of a very substantial sum of money on professional development. None of the other professions—medicine, law, accountancy, and so on—receive that sort of public subsidy for professional development. Traditional wisdom is that this is in the community interest so a substantial amount of money is spent on upgrading teacher skills. Many teachers change their career paths during their professional life. I do not know whether the figures have been done as to whether we are winning or losing because people often return to the education system, but there is a drift to the non-government sector and interstate, and certainly in maths and science there is a drift to business. There is also a drift out of schools and into administration,

whether in education or other Government departments, and we need to assess that on an ongoing basis, as well.

We are upgrading planning in the department to identify professional development needs and priorities and to help teachers establish career paths and assess what skills they need. The Cox report, which was referred to earlier by Mr Christie, emphasises greater professional development effort at the school level and defines the role of district superintendents and advisers within the department. There are some 230 advisers in the Education Department who all have very strong roles in the field of professional development. As the Director-General mentioned earlier, the Education Review Unit will play an important role in this area.

The department has established a central function to create development policies and procedures and systems-wide professional development initiatives. Mr Christie referred to some of those initiatives earlier. I have already mentioned the refurbishing and upgrading of professional development services that will be provided from the Orphanage. That matter is currently before the Public Works Standing Committee. The restructuring of those support programs for schools and teachers dotted across the metropolitan area will receive a much sharper focus over the next few years as a result of the sale of the Raywood and Wattle Park properties. Those key programs will be located at the Orphanage or in selected school locations. There is also the work of the SASIP committee, which is a very valuable focus for the department's future direction in establishing priorities in this important area.

Ms GAYLER: I turn to another important Education Department asset—education facilities. What is the total value of departmental assets with respect to buildings? How is the department managing the presumably massive task of asset maintenance and replacement?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Before dealing with that question I should complete my response with respect to the question of professional development. The Government is currently funding several retraining programs which were announced in recent months, and they are in primary school mathematics, professional development in the area of physics and the key centre mathematics programs. There is also the ongoing teacher exchange program which is quite extensive in South Australia.

Release time scholarships are available for teachers and it is hoped that the number will be increased next year. Leadership programs are being conducted at numerous venues across the State and professional development committees have been established in each area to determine area and local priorities and approve expenditure of professional development funds which have been allocated to the areas. The \$670 000 that the Commonwealth provided has been made up by the State and is then allocated for those areas and central programs, including those of the studies directorate.

Ms Kolbe: The honourable member referred to three matters: the value of assets, asset maintenance and asset management in general. The value of assets was established by the Public Accounts Committee in its fifty-second report as \$2 billion at 1984-85 prices. We are working from that base. The 1987-88 maintenance funds made available to the Education Department through the budget of the Department of Housing and Construction totalled \$18.3 million. New arrangements have been put in place for 1988-89 for management of the maintenance funding available for the Education Department through the Department of Housing and Construction in that the Education Department will have greater input into the setting of priorities and what is actually done. Henceforth, the individual schools and par-

ents of students, through the school council, will have a greater say as to what can be done in the school and, indeed, how the money can be integrated with the funding that is available from the Government through this source.

As far as asset management is concerned, following the Public Accounts Committee report and the instruction from the Under Treasurer the department is putting together a strategy for asset management. That proposal is reaching its final stages at the moment. It will include a proposal to update the standards currently in place for education facilities. It will also look at a review of policies that are in place and it will create an inventory on the assets information system. That will then act as a reporting system to the Minister as to the state of the assets, which assets are in existence, how old they are and their economic state. It will also address over time (because that is a fairly time-consuming exercise) the economic life cycle of the assets involving not just the buildings but also the equipment in the buildings and, in accordance with the instruction from the Under Treasurer, we will look at the accounting mechanisms that would need to follow, namely, parts of accrual accounting, to properly provide for replacement of assets in the future.

Ms GAYLER: How is it envisaged that school councils will be involved in what is now a greater role for the Education Department in the prioritising and programming of school maintenance? How soon will that begin?

Ms Kolbe: In each area office, which link the individual schools, there is a facilities manager who is in constant contact with schools and who would know what the school needs to have done and what the school council would have to have done. That officer, through the school development plan, would get a better idea of the facility requirements of curriculum changes and therefore we can plan properly. Facilities are of course one part of that. Because the school council is involved in the structuring of the school development plan and, indeed, the curriculum plan, we will have a better idea of what is required not just to maintain the assets but also to provide for desirable curriculum changes.

Ms GAYLER: In light of the asset of well over \$2 billion that the department has to distribute very widely across the State, what, if anything, is the department doing in conjunction with schools to promote after-hours use of this most valuable community and local asset? In particular, has any thought been given to promoting the use of those assets after hours by groups such as elderly citizens in local areas who could, for example, pursue various hobbies and/or educational interests or make use of library facilities in schools after hours? Already one example of a very valuable contribution to the local community is the before and after schools hours care program. However, even that operates over a very limited number of hours. Can that concept be extended to make good use of those facilities for a wider range of local community groups?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There is already very substantial use of Education Department physical resources. That is encouraged by the department. I have certainly encouraged it during my ministry. It is also encouraged by the individual schools which obviously receive financial benefits from the letting of their facilities. The member for Mount Gambier asked a question earlier about the ongoing program for the support of school gymnasias and resource centres. As well, there are many spin-offs for the schools not only financially but also in terms of security and the general satisfaction of the taxpayers knowing that those very substantial expenditures are used throughout the year.

The question of scheduling of school use of facilities over more hours of the week has been raised over the years in

Estimates Committees. This utilisation occurs in many other countries. It is interesting that, particularly in the senior secondary levels, a number of programs now begin early in the morning and go on into the evening. In fact, the use of school facilities after hours, particularly in the latter parts of the year, for private study and small group tuition of an evening is a very strong trend.

With the transfer of many of our school support programs from centralised office accommodation and, in the institutional settings of the department, to schools and school communities, we will see the extent, nature and importance of those programs, often for the first time. We will also see some of the incredible commitment to that work by those persons, many of whom are teachers working in non-school settings but nevertheless supporting school programs and teachers in particular. That program, as I have just explained to the Committee, is proceeding.

Encouragement of community use occurs at the school level but the department also receives many requests each week for accommodation of short or long-term programs in school facilities, particularly when people know that there is vacant space in many schools. Each area determines the appropriateness of those requests in conjunction with the schools. Many programs can be accommodated, although others cannot. The highest priority for permanent use must go to our own programs, particularly when the school rationalisation program has advanced to its current position.

We do not want to cut off options we might have which would enhance our primary responsibility, the education of children. Concerning the issue you raise of pensioner groups and others, the university of the third age is a classical example, where I believe that we can conduct many programs in our schools which will be of benefit to the whole community. So the education ethos established there is very much a broadly based ethos, and I believe that in the next decade or so, with the benefit of our access to satellites and the use of television, it is possible that we could develop, as in England, an open university or just enhance the educational opportunities through the use of television in particular. If that occurs I believe school communities would want to be part of that, particularly those in strategic locations in rural areas of the State but possibly also those in the metropolitan area.

Mr MEIER: My question relates to page 283 of the Program Estimates regarding school transport. Can the Minister confirm that a recently completed study by Travers Morgan, consultants commissioned by the Bus and Coach Association and the Education Department into school bus policy options produced the following figures for similar sized buses: private operator cost, 41.3c per kilometre, Education Department costs, 90.7c per kilometre. In that respect, I know the Minister commented about costs earlier today and I am sure he is aware of some of the discussions going on in schools, particularly in rural areas; he has probably also received letters, as I have, from concerned company bus operators about either their rationalisation or the taking over of one or more of their services by the Education Department.

There is another part to the story. Only yesterday, a letter came to my attention from a constituent who lives midway between Kadina and Wallaroo and whose child and another child are both in reception year. My constituent made appropriate arrangements for transport for both children by bus to Kadina Primary School. They are outside the five kilometre limit and, after three months of going to the Kadina Primary School, they were told that, because there was an alteration to the bus route, they would no longer be able to send their children to Kadina Primary School and

that they would have to go to Wallaroo Primary School. Understandably, the parents are both upset and have been taking their children to Kadina by themselves, resulting in travel of some 200 kilometres per week in their own vehicle.

Having apparently offered to pay the bus fare, my constituents were told that, although no action would be taken to prevent their son from travelling on the bus, they would not have departmental approval but that they could apply for approval. This they did, but were refused. So the second part of my question to the Minister is this: what is the policy of making children change schools a third of the way through a school year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Can the honourable member tell the Committee whether that particular family is paid for the use of their private vehicle?

Mr MEIER: From the information I have available, I would say not, but I am quite happy to make the letter available to the Minister.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: From the facts, it may be that that family falls within the policy which provides payment for the use of a private vehicle to transport that child to the most appropriate school. But I would appreciate looking at that case on an individual basis, because there are obviously numerous circumstances to consider.

The Travers Morgan consultancy was a valuable exercise in which the Government and the Bus and Coach Association were jointly involved. I have met with representatives of that association just recently, and there are ongoing discussions with the department and the association regarding some of the outcomes of that consultancy. I believe it should be pointed out, though, that only 11 of the 300 contractors that the department uses were involved in the consultancy. So, to that extent, the information provided is of limited value but nevertheless arising out of it, there obviously will be some improvements.

By way of example, I want to say that this sword cuts two ways, and the department must determine each of the situations on their own merits. It is, for example better for the department to provide bus services itself in some situations, where in the past they have been provided by contractors, and obviously *vice versa*, because situations change from year to year. Indeed, if one followed the wishes of the Bus and Coach Association directly, an enormous expansion in the budget would be required by this particular program. But they are in the market place; they realise that the budget provision for transport for students is not open-ended and, in the main, I believe they are a very responsible organisation and a valuable adviser to the department in this area, giving advice which I as Minister appreciate very much.

By way of an example of our responsibilities to review bus circumstances, I instance a bus service between two towns in a remote country area which was provided by a private contractor with a large bus. Bear in mind that many of the buses that private contractors use are bought from the department after the department replaces its bus fleet. It was established that there was no longer a need for a large bus on this route since the maximum number requiring transport over the next few years would be able to be accommodated in a smaller bus with a 21 seat capacity.

The department's school bus examiners reported that, because of its age the large bus would not be suitable for departmental school bus work after May 1989, it was 23 years old and it was generally in poor body condition, although mechanically I understand it was sound. In light of that situation, the contractor considered the purchase of a small bus but was advised not to proceed with such a purpose until a new contract rate could be negotiated. The contractor subsequently offered a price of 80c per kilometre

or \$55.20 per day and the department, upon an assessment of what it could provide, found it could provide one of its own small buses for a cost of \$42.50 per day, which represented a saving of \$2 540 per annum on that particular route. So, the department took that decision.

So, it is a matter that must be considered on the merits of each situation and what is occurring in those areas, and it is an open-market tender situation. We must look for the best outcome for the students, not only in financial terms but also in standards of service. The Travers Morgan consultancy is the basis for those ongoing discussions with the Bus and Coach Association.

Mr MEIER: Can the Minister provide details of Education Department or Government grants to the Family Life Movement for 1988-89?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Family Life Movement provides a unique service in the field of health education to school communities throughout the State and performs wider work in the community generally, such as support for parents, teachers and others. Obviously, the honourable member has had contact with that association, and I have known of its work for many years. It is proposed that funding be continued with a small increase in the coming year. I am advised that \$65 000 will be provided for that program this year. In the last financial year, the figure was \$57 200.

Mr MEIER: At the current rate of progress, does the Minister believe that it is still possible by 1995 to ensure that every primary school student has the opportunity of studying another language at school?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The department believes that it is well on the way to providing the resources to meet that commitment. Whilst there are a number of years to go, it is perhaps a little too early to say precisely when that target can be met and in what form. However, as I indicated to the Committee earlier today, substantial progress has been made in this area and South Australia has the best established and developed policies and provision of programs of any of the Australian States in this regard.

Mr MEIER: Is the Minister prepared to give a 'Yes' or 'No' answer?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: No.

Mr HAMILTON: On page 271 of the Program Estimates I note under the 1988-89 specific targets and objectives the 'Continuation of the educational interface between the Department of TAFE and the Education Department of post-compulsory age students': can the Minister or his advisers elaborate on that?

Dr Boston: Further development of a close working relationship between TAFE and the Education Department is one of the highest priorities for the department and, I believe, TAFE. The Director-General of TAFE and I are currently engaged in a series of discussions and have commissioned a number of working papers from people in our respective departments in relation to this matter with a view to preparing in the near future some briefing papers and recommendations for the two Ministers. The interface between TAFE and Education in South Australia has been explored fairly thoroughly and has had some successes, but it is important that we take it much further within a very short time frame, in particular, in relation to the urgency to provide enhanced curriculum offerings for people in the post-compulsory years and also to provide year 12 studies of an adult re-entry type along the lines of the school being established at Elizabeth West as part of the Elizabeth/Munno Para reorganisation.

It is important to share facilities with TAFE. It is important also to have curriculum networking with TAFE. The department's view is that the issue that will really put some

strength into the interaction between the two organisations is for the two of them to get into joint curriculum development for the post-compulsory years, and that is the objective at the moment. In the current budget, \$265 000 has been allocated for the item which is specified in this program to continue that interface.

Mr HAMILTON: On the same page I note the 'Implementation of the R to 10 framework for learning about human society': can the Minister or his advisers elaborate on that?

Mr Boomer: I have been in the seat for only three weeks and I am not fully on top of this issue. However, I have seen the document—the guideline framework for learning about human society—and I have talked with the Superintendent Manager of that area. As I understand it now, the department will be moving to implement the outcome of that policy discussion. It will lead to an integration of some of the formerly disparate areas that have gone under the name of social studies: history, geography, civics, curriculum, the world of work, etc. My understanding is that it will lead to a reconsideration of the whole primary school social studies area. My information is that that area has been overloaded and that the department has been demanding far too much in scope of our primary teachers in that area. A range of studies need to be integrated so that achievable goals can be set. Over the next few weeks I will look more closely into the matter and provide further information on notice.

Mr HAMILTON: I take it that there have been or will be discussions with the South Australian Institute of Teachers about the implementation of this new framework.

Mr Boomer: Yes.

Mr HAMILTON: Today I received from the Development Education Group a pamphlet entitled *Global issues: an audio visual guide*. I notice a photograph of the Minister on the back page of the pamphlet and wonder whether he can elaborate on the intention of the document.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The member for Albert Park has referred to the support given last year when a small grant was made available to the development education group for its work in disseminating information on a whole range of issues related to its programs. It brought together a number of aid agencies and similar agencies, such as Community Aid Abroad and Freedom from Hunger, that were anxious to prepare materials that could be supplied to students for projects or to those who were interested in these issues. Some valuable materials were provided and this flier advertises the availability of those materials prepared by this group in this State. A small grant was made by the State Government to that group, but it received funds from its own organisations and from other sources so that this information could be provided for the benefit of students.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: At page 263 of the Program Estimates there appear lines giving details in respect of classroom instruction and administration and instructional support in primary schools. Regarding the provision of teacher librarians in primary schools, an article in the most recent edition of the magazine of the South Australian Primary Principals Association states that consideration is being given to the forced transfer of teacher librarians from schools that have staffing levels above formula. The article goes on to claim that the Education Department had assured many schools that they would lose hours only if their teacher librarians sought voluntary reductions in time or transfer at their own request, or retired or resigned. Does the Minister accept that the department has given such a commitment to schools and are there any plans to start the forced transfer of librarians from library resource centres?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Before asking Mr Christie to comment on the whole subject of staffing, may I say that the Education Department has substantially increased the staffing of libraries in many areas of departmental work, not only through the additional ancillary staff time that has been provided in recent years, but also through the substantial increase in primary school librarian allocations. The librarians to whom I referred earlier today have been provided for special education programs and community libraries where most of the responsibility has been accepted by the department.

Ongoing discussions have been held with councils about broader local government or community support for those programs. In the main, however, the responsibility for many of these programs has been borne by the Education Department and we have provided additional resources for those in recent years as well. So, much opening up of library facilities and their expansion has occurred in recent times. Further, the library resource section of the department is continually available for culling library books and advising on purchasing books and the development of staff training for librarians and the like.

So, we have a growing input into this area of activity, which indicates the importance that we see in the provision of adequate library facilities. The member for Coles and I had another of these examples only last Friday when a new resource centre was opened at Stradbroke Primary School, and the whole school community obviously regards this type of facility as a high priority indeed.

Mr Christie: The question relates to the fact that because of historical factors 46 or 48 salaries have been overprovided in specific schools for some time. The present aim is to redistribute that surplus so that schools that have been under their provision now come up to their requirements according to formula. So, it is simply a case of redistributing that surplus equitably across the system. That can be done without moving teachers in some cases where a teacher librarian may be able to take up more teaching in the school to reduce the time spent in the library. There are a number of strategies that can be introduced to ensure that teachers are not displaced because of this requirement.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: My next question refers to page 98 of the Estimates of Payments. Assistance to non-government schools is predicted to increase by almost \$5 million this year. How much of that increase is due to changes in the formula for the allocation of money to non-government schools? Is it planned to charge non-government schools to a greater degree for services provided by the Education Department?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: In answer to the latter question, I have no proposals before me to provide for charges additional to those already existing. The increase in the allocation, which is a formula based increase, relates to a number of long established criteria on which funding is provided, one of which is the increase in the number of students in non-government schools. It is estimated that there will be about 1 390 additional students in the non-government sector over the period of calculation. That also contributes to the increase in funding provided under that line.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: My next question is probably one of which the Minister would prefer to have notice. Will he provide details of the remuneration packages for all members of the senior executive team in the Education Department and also details of the job specifications for all those positions, as well as an organisational chart for the revamped senior staff positions, including the areas of individual and/or shared responsibility?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There is no difficulty in providing the honourable member with a chart of where people fit into the senior administrative structure of the department. I will discuss with the Commissioner for Public Employment the possible release of information about salary packages.

Mr De LAINE: On page 13 of the Treasurer's budget explanation, under 'Budget priorities', it is stated that \$434 000 has been allocated for health education in schools, including funds for curriculum development and teacher training. What are the details of these important programs?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The basis of that expenditure is substantially in salaries for additional staff working in the provision of the health education initiatives. If the honourable member wants more specific information, I shall provide it for him.

Mr De LAINE: Does the Government still support multiculturalism in education and what support is provided in this regard?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The department has spent a good deal of effort over the past six years developing multicultural education policies. I am advised by the Multicultural Education Coordinating Committee (MECC) on the development of policies and strategies in this area. It is a very valuable and hardworking advisory committee. It is representative of our community and it has developed, I believe, outstanding policies in this area and indeed monitors the work that the department does across its system in providing for all students, but particularly for those who do not have English as a first language in their home, and it enhances the opportunities that students have to maintain their cultures, their languages and to see the broad role of the family in education as inclusive.

We have much to be proud of in the development of our multicultural strategies. As I have mentioned today, and just recently to the member for Goyder, the department has a very established program for the teaching of languages in our schools which is much appreciated by school communities. There are strong demands for language teachers throughout the State and there is movement of students across our system in order to access some of those language programs. We have some superb programs, particularly at the secondary level, at schools such as Adelaide High School, providing a magnificent languages program. Apart from that, we have a very extensive ethnic schools program and the Ethnic Schools Advisory Committee advises on those out-of-school hours programs that provide language opportunities, and also the broader cultural experiences for tens of thousands of young people throughout the State.

I refer to the main education programs related to multiculturalism, particularly the English as a Second Language program (ESL), which includes the new arrivals and the general support programs. The projected expenditure for this financial year is \$7.153 million, and that includes a staff of 218.7 FTEs. Major developments are under way in improving the operation of the ESL program. We have had extensive study done of that program, which is an area where the Commonwealth initiated many of the elements of the program and the State has now accepted some ongoing commitment with respect to the ESL program. The program, which is valuable and much sought after in our community, is appreciated by ethnic communities. It includes the development of comprehensive curriculum guidelines, the assessment procedures for the program and ESL in the mainstream in-service program. The State now funds nearly 40 per cent of this program.

In the general area of multicultural education the projected expenditure for this year is just over \$750 000, which

comprises 13.2 FTEs, including the MECC advisory committee staff, the MECC small grants and projects allocation, \$174 000, which was a new line last year for interpreting and translating services; and a \$50 000 grant in the form of project funds for the department's areas. The State funds all of this program, so there is a broad based and far reaching multicultural education commitment on the part of the Education Department.

Mr De LAINE: As to the back-to-school strategy, a program undertaken by the Parks High School of which I am a council member in my district, what is meant by this strategy and how successful is it?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This matter was also discussed in previous Estimates Committees. Much of what has been said today fits in with the strategy of basing more of our resources within school communities and turning the focus of the department to ensure that on every occasion it faces schools and school communities and students so that every service that is not school-based is designed to serve school communities. Where we have vacant space in schools and we can locate into those school communities those centrally based services, we are attempting to do that where it is the appropriate strategy, and also to develop an attitude within our system of service to schools.

In a large administrative structure such as the Education Department it is possible to live in one's own world to a large extent. Not only do we need to be servicing schools and supporting teachers and students but we also need to be seen to be doing that. This strategy highlights that. Where we have had to take decisions in the context of budgets, particularly in 1986, the decision was that we would reallocate resources from the non-school side of the department into schools, that is, we would protect the schools programs in preference to the non-schools programs and the strategy of the diminution of the senior administrative positions in the department was based on that strategy. That is one element of the formation of the back-to-schools strategy and I believe it has permeated throughout the department.

A young departmental officer working in the area office in Whyalla told me that she pays many people in the department who work in remote areas. She is unable to meet them, but I have asked all officers to spend time of each year in a school, to visit the school and talk to teachers, staff and students. No matter what they do in the department, I want every officer to make a point at some stage in each year of visiting a school. She said that she was not able to visit schools in remote areas and so she photocopied a photograph of herself and included information about herself and sent it to each person she pays, indicating that this was something about herself. She told these people, 'I want you to know me and know who it is you are contacting when you have queries about salaries and leave entitlements.'

It is that personal contact, the relationship and that sense of the department serving schools that is the essential point in the strategy. It is an all embracing strategy. It has many components. It is important to embrace that strategy in what we are on about in every element of the department.

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

[Sitting suspended from 5.59 to 7.30 p.m.]

Children's Services Office, \$42 094 000; Works and Services—Children's Services Office, \$480 000.

Chairman:

Mr D.M. Ferguson

Members:

The Hon. H. Allison
The Hon. J.L. Cashmore
Mr M.R. De Laine
Ms D.L. Gayler
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr E.J. Meier

Witness:

The Hon. G.J. Crafter, Minister of Children's Services.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr B. Wright, Director, Children's Services Office.
Mr G. Lewkowicz, Director, Resources.
Ms A. Howe, Director, Policy, Programs and Planning.

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

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Under the current policy 4-year-olds are able to attend four terms of preschool at a kindergarten, and kindergartens are funded on that basis. Can child/parent centres in the Education Department be funded to provide more than four terms for some 4 and 5-year-olds?

Mr Wright: The funding arrangements for child/parent centres are essentially the same as for kindergartens. They are intended to provide the same service. A child can have more than four terms in a child/parent centre and in a kindergarten if special circumstances exist to warrant that extra time. I refer to special learning needs, developmental problems, and children for whom there is a particular benefit in staying longer than four terms.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: The Program Estimates (page 300) refers to the establishment of a new access and participation unit in the central office. There are proposals to implement recommendations from the regional operations review and to establish a special needs database in all regions. What is meant by each of those references?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The services provided by the central office have undergone some re-ordering, and as part of that an access and participation unit was established as one of the four units of the Policy, Planning and Programs Directorate. This unit will be responsible for providing leadership and direction within the organisation on equality of access and participation for all groups in the full range of children's services. Some of the major areas covered by that unit will be the implementation of social justice policies, services for Aboriginal children and children with special needs, multicultural services and child protection programs. They are not exclusive; obviously other areas and needs will arise from time to time that will also be encompassed in the direction provided by that unit.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: The Program Estimates (page 302) refers to toy libraries. What recommendations of the Toy Library Review are to be implemented this year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There has been a long process of reviewing the operations of toy libraries, which have grown up very much in an *ad hoc* way in a number of human services agencies. The report of that review has recently been distributed to the Toy Libraries Association, the State Consultative Committee of the Children's Services Office, regional advisory committees and relevant employee organisations.

The recommendations of the report will be implemented progressively. The objective of the recommendations is to make most effective use of the available resources and

provide better coordination of toy libraries and other early childhood resources. The funding for toy libraries in the CSO budget is \$49 000 for the current financial year. In addition, funding is provided for the staff and operating costs of the CSO mobile toy libraries. The implementation strategy and the resources that will be available in relation to the recommendations of the report will depend, to a large extent, on the feedback that we receive from the various agencies that will be commenting on them.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: As a supplementary question, I have before me a copy of a letter addressed to the Minister from the President of the Toy Libraries Association and dated 22 June which expresses the frustration of the association about the lack of consultation. Why has the review, in the opinion of the association at least, encompassed only those toy libraries that are controlled by the CSO rather than the broad scope of libraries that come within the ambit of the association?

Mr Wright: I can understand the point of view expressed by the President of the Toy Libraries Association, but it must be understood that toy libraries are operated by organisations outside our area of supervision. In particular those operated by local government are quite major resources. There is no sense in which the CSO can control or direct those toy libraries, and we would not want to do that. They maintain their independence and in doing so constitute a fairly large segment of the toy library service provided in this State.

Ms GAYLER: I refer to page 299 of the Program Estimates and note that an increase of the order of 2 per cent in the 4-year-old population is anticipated annually until 1991. What plans does the CSO have to cater for that increase in the number of 4-year-olds? Where is that expansion likely to occur geographically? Will additional facilities be provided in the fast growing north-eastern suburbs, including Golden Grove, for example, where a population of some 30 000 people is expected by the early 1990s?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: From my perspective as Minister of Education, I point out that the increase in preschool numbers is certainly welcome. Indeed, as a result of the bubble in the preschool age group the enrolment that is in decline in the primary school population will perhaps be arrested much earlier than predicted and that will flow on into secondary schools in the middle and late 1990s.

The department has been working assiduously to achieve enrolment increases across the State. There is no area where the population increase is greater than in others; there is an interesting pattern across the State in this regard. Therefore, the department is working very carefully in relation to how it can accommodate that group of students in terms of provision of new facilities and, indeed, reallocations of staff across the system.

The department is also in a position to provide for that enrolment increase as it occurs during the year because there was a substantial increase in staff in the previous financial year, that is, in the latter part of 1987-88. We reviewed the Children's Services Office staffing allocations part of the way through the year and provided additional staff.

Mr Wright: The honourable member's question I think implies that the increase in enrolment pressure is in those expanding areas. We recognise that and our capital program allows for the construction of an additional preschool in Golden Grove in the next financial year. Similarly, we have capital plans in other rapidly growing areas like Golden Grove.

Ms GAYLER: What progress has the CSO made in providing services to children with special needs and what plans has the CSO for the next 12 months?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There is a very real advantage in the structure of the Children's Services Office under the Act, because it allows us, across previously disparate providers in this area, to identify those young children with special needs at the earliest stage possible and to marshal the resources that we have available within the structure of the CSO as well as the wider resources that are available for children in the community to ensure that the needs of those children are identified, assessed and attributed to appropriate programs and support structures.

Therefore, in recent years there has been major improvement in services for children with special needs. The office has a fully staffed network of specialist personnel in regional offices providing consultancy, advisory, assessment and direct services to children with special needs and their families. This staff includes psychologists, speech pathologists, social workers and special education teachers. There are 24.5 positions in these disciplines across the State at the moment, compared with 22.5 when the CSO was established.

The staff provide services to children in kindergartens, child-care centres and in family day care. In 1985, 2 016 children were referred to these teams for attention from all sources and in 1988 this figure had risen to 2 179 children. Of particular interest is the pattern of referrals from the various children's services sectors. In 1988 there has been an increase in referrals from the child-care sector, and a decrease in referrals from kindergartens. This would indicate an earlier intervention pattern being established. This is seen to be entirely due to increasing levels of competence amongst staff as a result of staff development programs relevant to the area that have been conducted over recent years. The increase in the child-care sector results from an increasing awareness within the sector of the capacity of the office to assist, and easier access to these services.

The second major program conducted by the office for children with special needs is the integration program. This program provides for a one-to-one relationship between the child with special needs and a specially recruited teacher. In 1985, 2.5 full-time equivalent positions were devoted to this task, and in 1988 this figure has risen to 3.6 FTEs. In the respective years, 47 and 60 children received assistance under this program. For the next 12 months the CSO will continue to develop these successful programs. Depending upon staffing pressures in other areas of the office's work, attempts will be made to increase the level of staffing in the integration program.

During the past 12 months the office has instituted a comprehensive special needs client database of children receiving special services from the office. This computerised system will enable sophisticated long-term planning as it will provide data on the nature of special needs, the CSO services provided and the outcome of these services. This new client database will continue to be refined during the next 12 months.

Ms GAYLER: I refer to child-care services (page 301 of the Program Estimates). I note that the Commonwealth Government in its recent budget again announced expansion of child-care services across Australia of about 30 000 places over the next four years. That is a major and important commitment. In my own district of Newland two new child-care centres are to open in the next couple of months and an expansion of family day care services will also take place. What is the new Commonwealth commitment and expansion likely to mean for South Australia?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We are currently awaiting advice from the Commonwealth on the nature and extent of the new program that was announced in the Federal budget.

The Commonwealth is engaging in discussions with each of the States to further explain its strategy with respect to this new program. The first stage of that program provided 20 000 places. That was announced during the first Hawke Administration. That has been a very successful program and it highlighted that there were other areas of children's services that also required special provision.

It is interesting to see that the Commonwealth has responded to those representations and the needs being felt in the community and has provided for a new 30 000 place program over the next four years. Of those 30 000 places 20 000 will be provided from out of school hours care places. That is an area that has languished to some extent in the past in terms of the established priorities determined by the Federal Government for its first program. The emphasis was on long day care. Therefore, 4 000 centre based long day care places, 4 000 family day care places and 21 000 occasional care places will be provided under that program.

One of the features of the national strategy is that places will be targeted particularly to child of low income families, including sole parents and parents training for work. The program will be based on new and extended partnership arrangements with States, local government and industry. Obviously we will need to learn of the Commonwealth's proposals in this area and then discuss that matter to see what commitments it is looking for from the other tiers of government and the community. One thousand of the 4 000 centre based care places will be earmarked for industry based cooperative ventures. There has been some public comment and discussion in the press in recent weeks about those places.

Industry in South Australia has already made representations to the Children's Services Office indicating a willingness to discuss the potential of this program for particular industries in this State. We very much welcome that initiative on their part. The program will also include provision for child-care for sole parents participating in new Commonwealth jobs, education and training JET programs, and I am sure members will welcome that initiative.

Administration of fee relief will now be carried out by the Department of Social Security rather than individual child-care services. They are the features of the national strategy as known to us at present. The share that South Australia will receive is yet to be determined but we anticipate about 8 per cent of the national total, since we have about 8 per cent of the children in Australia aged in the 0-4 years category. So, we look forward to further discussions with the Commonwealth with respect to that new program.

Mr MEIER: At what stage is the draft policy on rural service issued by the Children's Services Office in April or March this year? Will the Minister detail some of the major implications that would flow if this policy were implemented?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Ms Howe will explain the current position of that paper, which was a paper of the Children's Services Office Advisory Committee and has been widely distributed throughout the State. Many replies have been received to that draft policy.

Ms Howe: The proposed rural policy is aimed at a more equitable distribution of services in small rural towns. Presently, those services are patchy and we want to extend them. Many rural centres have insufficient children to warrant a full kindergarten and the rural policy is aiming at ensuring that those communities are not disadvantaged.

The process so far has been extensive consultation with each of the centres affected, that is, about 60 in South Australia. The regional advisory committees and the con-

sultative committee have considered this and agreed in principle that the policy should go ahead with some minor recommendations for change. At present the policy is being redrafted and we are hoping to implement that next year.

Mr MEIER: As Ms Howe indicated, some 60 centres have been approached regarding the policy, and I believe that it will have an effect on a greater number of those centres, especially when it is considered that directors of kindergartens in some cases will have their hours reduced considerably. Figures given to me include Ardrossan, where the Director would go from .6 to .4; Bute from .3 to .2; and Snowtown from .4 down to .2. Further, the morale of directors and teachers and possibly parents and students could also be lowered. I would be interested to hear the Minister's comments on whether he feels that such time reductions would occur and how he intends to combat lower morale problems if that does eventuate.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, we have to realise that there are changing enrolment patterns in the nature of services, and we cannot provide for static situations, because they simply do not exist. That means that some programs and the staffing provided for them will have to change from time to time, whether or not we have a policy to embrace the way in which that is achieved. So it is considered by the advisory committee and the CSO that it is much better for this to occur within the framework of a policy so that there is a degree of certainty, planning, and inevitability about the provision of staffing for these particular programs.

We are all acutely aware of the important role that many preschool programs play in the very small communities. In fact, in some communities they are the only public institution, and so they take on a different function and a different role. That has to be acknowledged, and the CSO is acutely aware of that in those small rural communities where there is no school and often not much more than a hall and a couple of shops.

So, all that needs to be taken into account, and I believe that the morale of staff would be more greatly affected if we had an *ad hoc* policy of making decisions without the framework of a policy. We are aware that that will cause some dislocation and will dash expectations regarding the type of employment that some of our staff enjoy, particularly those who are committed to living in a particular locality. This position is really determined to a large extent by their domicile or their other domestic arrangements.

So, we need to take some of those matters into account. Not all of them can be provided for but they most certainly will all be considered before decisions are finally taken in this area. Mr Wright has visited many of these centres in recent years and may be able to add something to what I have told the Committee about how the CSO will handle this obviously important and sensitive matter.

Mr Wright: I wish to make two additional points. One of the objectives of the policy is to redress what we see as having been a serious problem in the past, and that is kindergartens operating with a single staff member. We, and our staff for that matter, are very concerned about kindergartens operating with simply one person on deck, because there are obviously health and safety implications for children when only one adult is present. So, one of the key elements of the policy is to ensure that all kindergartens have two adults on staff at all times, and we look forward to being able to implement that policy. In relation to those centres which could, under the policy, lose employment time for staff, we have made a commitment to those centres that we will discuss their circumstances with them on an individual basis and decisions will be made on the basis of full consultation.

Mr MEIER: Supplementary to what the Director has just indicated, seeing that a commitment has been made to various kindergartens that they will be approached individually, I assume that that will occur between now and the end of November?

Mr Wright: Before final decisions are made in relation to 1989 staffing.

Mr MEIER: I know that the Director and Ms Howe would be well aware of three motions that I believe would have come from more than one regional advisory committee on what kindergartens saw as preferable options. The first one was to maintain the *status quo*, and the Minister has indicated that that will not be occurring. In that respect I have no disagreement with the Minister that a policy is needed: certainly a policy is required. My disagreement is with what the policy provides. So I will not go into the first one. The second one relates to adjusting for term by term variations and states:

If the rural policy is to be implemented, it must be constantly monitored to ensure that additional staff is provided when it is required due to increased enrolments.

Is that one of the factors that will be taken into account if the new policy goes ahead? The third motion from some of the committees states:

The rural policy should be negotiable regarding the number of sessions provided and the staffing formula in small kindergartens where sessions are in jeopardy.

I take it from the Director's reply that that will be attended to, so my question relates mainly to the second aspect.

Mr Wright: The practice of the Children's Services Office is to establish staffing allocations at the beginning of the year for the whole year. However, if significant variations occur during the year, the office can respond. It is preferable to establish a stable staffing arrangement for a whole year in order for the children to get a continuous program and for the staff to be able to work together as a team and to interact with parents on a stable basis.

Mr HAMILTON: On page 300 of the Program Estimates I note that a respite care program was established for families of severely disabled children. I also note on page 301 of the same document that it is proposed to consolidate administrative arrangements for the respite care program for children with a disability and negotiate additional funding. How successful has the respite care program been? What are the additional needs?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The provision of respite care has been a concern in the community for many years, particularly for welfare authorities. When the opportunity arose for the CSO to establish a respite care program for the parents of severely disabled children through funding provided under the Home and Community Care scheme (HACC), this opportunity was welcomed by the CSO and by those in the community who were concerned about that group of children and their families. The program commenced in April 1987. It is clearly achieving its aim of providing time-out for parents and it also provides high quality care for those children whilst their parents receive respite. It has succeeded in going some way towards filling a large gap in existing services.

It is not just the parents of severely disabled children who are affected, although on the priority list they rank among the highest. In many other situations, respite care is needed in order to assist those families under one form of stress or another. It is also important to provide other opportunities for the children themselves in terms of their relationships with others and also for them to benefit from the opportunities that the respite care program provides. The financial contribution of HACC, the support of the family day care structure, the Children's Services Office as

a whole and the dedication of care providers have all played a part in this achievement. The program aims to provide practical support and stress reduction for families with children with severe disabilities by providing a recess for the carer from the usual caring tasks. It enables carers to have time for other tasks such as shopping with other children, to pursue other interests and annual holidays. It also helps to prevent or delay long-term institutionalisation of these children which would otherwise eventuate. In June 1988, a questionnaire was completed by parents using the service and the following comments were made:

Respite care is an integral part of our decision to bring our disabled child home to an isolated area of the country from care in the Spastic Centre in Adelaide.

Another comment was as follows:

My child is now happier—she gets a break, too!

In addition to other expressions of confidence in the service, these comments were recorded:

We know our child is in capable, caring hands. Wonderful support from the field staff.

Parents also responded with repeated requests for more places and program expansion to meet the need for care. In the 1987-88 budget, \$304 000 was provided, and in the 1988-89 budget under consideration \$320 000 is to be provided. That allocation provides for 150 places at 250 hours per place per annum. Parents are able to have regular planned care on a limited weekly basis (approximately five hours per week) or block care for longer periods. The eligibility for care is based on the receipt of the child disability allowance. Care is provided *via* the 14 family day care schemes throughout South Australia and currently there are 107 approved care providers, 114 families using care and 126 children receiving care. At present, 49 children on the waiting list are being processed for placement.

Mr HAMILTON: On page 301 I note that there is a review to implement more efficient child-care licensing procedures. Can the Minister or his advisers elaborate on that? What have been some of the difficulties and how is it contemplated that these difficulties will be resolved and/or more efficient procedures will be adopted?

Mr Wright: The new procedures for licensing child-care centres were adopted when the Children's Services Office came into operation in 1985. Prior to 1985, child-care licensing was primarily a responsibility of the Community Welfare Department in cooperation with other agencies, including local government. The office has now had three years experience under the current arrangements and I believe that there are almost certainly better ways of licensing child-care centres than are currently utilised.

The review referred to by the honourable member will simply seek to identify more efficient, more supportive and more advisory methods of licensing child-care centres. The review has yet to be conducted, so I am unable to indicate what the outcome may be. The intention is to make our procedures more efficient and simpler for child-care centre operators and, at the same time, provide opportunities for child care centre operators to take advantage of the support that our staff can offer in terms of child-care programs, curriculum and the like.

Mr HAMILTON: What services are provided for Aboriginal children? How many staff are employed? What sort of programs are being implemented? How pressing is the need to assist Aboriginal children in this State?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is one of the areas in which the CSO structure has proven to be of great value indeed. First of all, it can identify those Aboriginal children in the community and can assist those children and their families in accessing services and in developing services that are

culturally sensitive and relevant to the needs of those particular children. Very few Aboriginal children in the recent past have had access to preschool services and it is believed that that is one of the difficulties that those children have had in participating fully in the education process. I am pleased to say that considerable progress is being made in this regard. Given that Aboriginal people are the most disadvantaged in South Australian and Australian society today, the CSO is addressing the special needs of Aboriginal children as a priority. That is clearly evident in the social justice strategy that the Premier announced along with the budget.

Many of those programs are targeted at members of the Aboriginal community who have specific needs that are not at present addressed with sufficient intensity. Current developments and initiatives have been taken by the CSO to address the needs of Aboriginal children. A CSO policy on services for Aboriginal children is currently being finalised. The development of the policy has been coordinated by Aboriginal staff of the CSO and has involved the CSO Aboriginal Consultative Committee. An Aboriginal Consultative Committee has been established by the CSO, and its membership is currently being broadened to ensure wide representation from the Aboriginal community and to link in with the Aboriginal Education Consultative Committee. That committee reports directly to me both as Minister of Education and as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

The CSO has appointed a senior project officer to coordinate planning and development of services for Aboriginal children and to consult with Aboriginal communities. This forms part of the CSO social justice budget allocation (\$22 000 for nine months of the 1988-89 financial year). Obviously, it is important to have that person who can provide the department with the relevant information that only an Aboriginal person can provide in respect of the development of programs and policies pertaining to development and staff training programs.

The CSO has gained a three-year exemption under the Equal Opportunity Act in order to specifically recruit Aboriginal staff. There has been an increase in the number of Aboriginal staff in children's services across the State over the past two years: currently there are 33 Aboriginal people employed in CSO services—preschools, child-care, regional advisory and clerical support. Particular emphasis has been placed on establishing more relevant services and programs for Aboriginal children.

Service developments include the Kurna Plains Children's Centre (combines preschool and child-care service) on the grounds of Kurna Plains School; two child-care centres for Aboriginal families set up under previous joint State/Commonwealth programs, at Whyalla and Coober Pedy; 11 Aboriginal assistants employed in CSO preschools in country areas; Kalaya Centre at Alberton provides preschool, child-care, before and after school care; 13 vacation and out of school hours care programs in Aboriginal communities; and child-care services established as part of the Kura Yerlo Community Centre at Semaphore (opened recently in NADOC Week) and at Koonibba, on the far West Coast.

Other initiatives being taken by the CSO across all its service areas include curriculum development to ensure that Aboriginal culture forms an integral part of Australian history and society, \$2 000 (as part of the CSO social justice allocation) to be allocated to purchase more curriculum resources with relevance to Aboriginal culture, for use in preschool services; additional resources to assist children (for example, with transport costs) to attend children's services where families are unable to do this consistently; staff development and in-service activities to incorporate a focus

on Aboriginal history and culture; Aboriginal staff in children's services to have access to support and training appropriate to their needs; the CSO to aim to ensure that services for Aboriginal children are predominantly staffed by Aboriginal people; and an increased intake of Aboriginal students into early childhood courses to be promoted. So, substantial initiatives are being undertaken in that area which hopefully will address some of the inequities experienced by Aboriginal children in our community.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: How many Aboriginal children are specifically provided for in these remote area programs and how many sessions would they have on average each week? The Minister said that 13 remote areas were provided for and that 14 schools were listed in the western area. Are all those schools except one also the home for a preschool centre or are they based elsewhere?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There may be some places where those programs do not coincide. If I can obtain that information for the honourable member, I shall do so.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: On page 299, under '1988-89 Specific Targets/Objectives', the following statement appears:

Review and make recommendations to tertiary training programs for children's services personnel.

To what extent is that objective linked with the commitment made by the Minister three or four years ago when the Federal Government first entered into the predominantly Federal funded Federal-State agreement whereby the Minister undertook to train staff for the new children's services centres? As I recall, the State was to be responsible for two years and the Federal Government for two years. How many personnel have been trained since the new Federal scheme started and what has been the cost to the State for those training programs?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Some of those matters may be in the province of the Minister of Employment and Further Education. TAFE provided the programs for the child-care workers. While the member for Mount Gambier was Minister, there was a downturn in the TAFE programs in this area and with the change of Government, both State and Federal, and the initiation of the substantial Commonwealth program, there was a need to train child-care workers. In fact, there was a shortage of trained child-care workers, which meant that special arrangements had to be entered into to upgrade those programs quickly. In the main, that is in the province of the Minister of Employment and Further Education.

Obviously, we have an interest in that area to ensure that qualified staff are available for the child-care centres that we are building and establishing. Indeed, the ongoing Federal commitment in this area is welcome, but it is important that we have in place those necessary tertiary training programs to provide for the bringing on line of those new services and the personnel to staff them. So, that is the role of the CSO. I shall have to take on notice the honourable member's request for the specific information that he seeks.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The Minister's estimates contain a reference to a review and recommendations regarding tertiary training programs for children's services personnel. What sort of review and recommendations would be relevant to such training programs?

Mr Wright: It is a continuation of a process already described by the Minister: that is, continuing to monitor the output of trained child-care workers by TAFE. Progress has been made over the past couple of years in restructuring TAFE courses so as to enable part-time students to complete their studies more quickly, for example, and there has been a slight increase in the number of TAFE trained child-care workers as a result. The reference made by the honourable

member to the estimates concerns the provision of funds to maintain that program of monitoring the output of trained child-care workers from TAFE.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: As I recall, it dated back to the middle to late 1970s. The child-care program was established at three or four centres: one at Panorama, one at Elizabeth, and two in central Adelaide. Extensive criticism was addressed both to the program and to the final qualification, which was not deemed acceptable generally to the Education Department and the Childhood Services Office. Since the Childhood Services Office has been established, has the Minister put a more specific requirement on TAFE to ensure that the qualification is generally acceptable? That was one reason for the breakdown of the old certificate.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will ask Mr Wright to comment.

Mr Wright: There is now a national core curriculum in child-care training, and South Australia is a subscriber to it. There is a consistency of child-care training across the country now, and we are part of that.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: At page 299 reference is made to the 'Have your say survey'. What initiatives from that survey have been implemented by the State consultative committee and are to be implemented?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will ask Ms Howe to comment. The final information has not come, but we will advise where it is in the pipeline.

Ms Howe: The results of the survey are being collated by members of the consultative committee, both parents and service providers, who have been steering that process. The results have been interesting, as they were about the sorts of things that parents value in kindergartens and what they thought kindergartens might provide. One interesting area in terms of flexibility was the provision of occasional care. Parents believed that that was an area that could be expanded and we are presently running four pilot projects in kindergartens until the end of the year to see how kindergartens may be able to do that, within their resources, what kind of fee levels would be required and what the demand is.

We have recently surveyed kindergartens and found in August that nearly 2 000 children were being provided with occasional care in kindergartens. As parents have identified that as a need we are interested in looking at how kindergarten services could expand to provide it.

Ms GAYLER: At page 302 of the Program Estimates reference is made to out of school hours care for children. In my district major advances have been made in only a couple of years in out of school hours care. The program note indicates that one of the key objectives for 1988-89 is the identification of areas of unmet child-care needs for school age children, negotiation with the Commonwealth about extra services and, most particularly, the aim of improved funding arrangements and cooperation with the Education Department regarding the use of school facilities for that service.

Because there is such a high and growing demand for that service, particularly in outer suburban areas such as my district, what is intended in that improved funding arrangement and cooperation? Can the Minister assure the Committee that the State Government will do everything it can to take up the opportunities offered by the Commonwealth's expansion of that program?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is an important area and it is interesting to see many individual school communities establishing on their own initiative these programs. It is a wholly Commonwealth funded program, although many of the associated resources are provided through the schools. This is an area of substantially increased demand. The opportunity that after school hours care provides is related

to the restructuring of our economy, to many employment, education and training opportunities, particularly for women. It has many facets to its importance and it does relate directly to the initiatives expressed by the Commonwealth in the recent Commonwealth budget.

I look forward to hearing from the Commonwealth more specific detail of how it is intended that that be applied to South Australia, bearing in mind that it is a four year strategy announced by the Commonwealth. I will be interested to see what plans the Commonwealth has for the introduction of the program in this State and other places in Australia where the provision of this is very patchy. We have here in the whole range of children's services perhaps a much more comprehensive and planned approach to children's services at large.

Ms GAYLER: As to the programs supported by the Children's Services Office (CSO) generally—I include preschools and child-care centres in this—in my own district in the north-eastern suburbs preschools and child-care centres have come together to discuss the issue of violence in the community, in preschools, and so on. They have agreed to try to discourage or preclude war toys from their centres and encourage them to develop protective behaviour programs, both with staff and parents. Does the CSO have a general policy of encouraging protective behaviour programs in centres over which it has some influence, and is part of that related to discouraging violence generally among children?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will ask the Director of the Children's Services Office to comment. This matter is of real concern to all people involved in the children's services area and education generally as to the level of violence displayed, for example, on television and the recent debate about violence in television news programs. Rightly, this should be the subject of public debate at the Federal level. The television tribunal is presently looking at a number of these issues across Australia and my own eight year old daughter the other night told me, when I was wanting to watch a news program and she was wanting to watch another program, that, 'On the news, Dad, they have the Government business first and then they have all the accidents next.' For an eight year old child to discern that each night we have a dose of some sort of accident (that is a nice way to talk about violence, whether it is in the context of the family or a war or whatever), to the extent that a child can almost set that aside as an entity within itself, is of real concern to all parents and people providing human services programs designed to help the development of young people. Obviously, the CSO is concerned about these issues, as we are in education. I ask the Director to comment.

Mr Wright: We take the view that our responsibility and the responsibility of our staff in this area is to work in conjunction with parents. The most interesting work we have done in the past year or so in the general field of children and violence has been undertaken in partnership with parents. To the best of our ability we encourage parents to become involved in protective behaviour programs. Recently an eastern suburbs kindergarten undertook a fairly major program with the full cooperation and involvement of parents whereby war toys were brought into the kindergarten, discussed and traded for non-violent toys.

That became a community exercise and was very successful simply because it was based on what the parents wanted to do and involved the home as well as the centre. Through our staff development programs in the next period we will try to encourage that sort of initiative, because it is something that the whole centre, including the parent body,

comes to own. That is the most effective way of producing that end result.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: In recent years the Department for Community Welfare has withdrawn funding from a number of worthwhile projects in schools, notably after school hours care at the Mansfield Park Primary School and the Norwood Project Centre. I am sure that the Minister is concerned about that, particularly the latter. What action has the Minister taken in relation to this changed approach by the department?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Those two programs must be considered in an historic context. They were long established programs and were the only two provided in that way by the department, so I guess that the provision of those programs had to come under scrutiny at some stage and they had to be put into the mainstream of similar programs. Both programs had a heavy community welfare involvement in terms of the placement of children into those programs, but they were also associated heavily with the provision of education opportunities.

Indeed, I think that 40 per cent of the children attending the Norwood Primary School also used the after school hours and vacation program, so it really was an integral part of that school community. The Education Department has accepted some interim funding responsibility to maintain both those programs, as their loss would be very detrimental to the schools, the children and their families. The funding cycle was reduced halfway through the year and this added to the complexity of the problems. Both those programs are in line for Federal funding support through the normal after school and vacation care programs. In the meantime they are receiving that support from the Education Department.

That has been a most difficult exercise for both those communities. It has resulted in reduced funding for those programs, staff having to be rearranged, increased involvement by parents in the provision of services, and a good deal of anxiety for everyone in the process. Hopefully, that once-off exercise is now behind us, and both those programs will now join all the other programs and be funded along with them. Given the scenario that the Commonwealth is now accepting that this is a high priority area, one would hope that there would be a substantial increase in the program in this area in the years ahead.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: In response to an earlier question by the member for Newland regarding the new Commonwealth commitment to child-care and its meaning for South Australia, the Minister indicated that some priority would be given to child-care for children of parents who were training for work. The students at the Magill campus of the South Australian College of Advanced Education would come into that category, and the Magill campus child-care centre has been in a very precarious position for 12 months or so. Will the new Commonwealth commitment ensure the continuation of staffing and other resources for the Magill centre? Will the Minister give an assurance that students will be able to continue to place their children at the centre?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I would like to be able to help the honourable member, but at present we do not know enough about the Commonwealth guidelines and how they will apply to know whether there will be that categorisation of the program provided on the Magill campus and whether it will fit into the criteria to which I referred earlier in response to a question from the member for Newland.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: If there is not, can the Minister give a guarantee that the whole thing will not collapse?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Obviously, we do not want to see established programs that people have struggled to maintain collapse. Our office is monitoring the situation.

The Hon. J.L. CASHMORE: Is there a contingency plan?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We would not like to see that program collapse and there is obviously now an opportunity for the provision of a substantial number of additional places in South Australia over the next four year program, and the maintenance of existing programs that have been battling along will obviously be high on the priority list. As I said, specific criteria are assessed and attached to the national strategy, and as yet we do not have the precise information on what that really means. Unfortunately, I cannot give the honourable member the absolute guarantee that she requires, but I can say that that service will be monitored by the CSO and will be given every consideration as soon as that further information arrives.

Mr MEIER: My question relates to the draft policy on rural services. One of my concerns is in relation to determining which towns will be classified 'metropolitan' and which towns will be classified 'rural'. I believe that one of a couple of towns in the Hills which are close together is to be classified as metropolitan and the other as rural. I am concerned that this might apply in other near metropolitan areas. How many of the approximately 60 kindergartens that were mentioned earlier will be detrimentally affected and how many will be better off in relation to staffing if the new policy goes ahead? How many additional centres will receive preschool facilities, especially in terms of staffing, if the new policy proceeds?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This question gives us an opportunity to put on the record our responses to those difficult situations that concern the definition of boundaries. Obviously, that should not prove a humbug to the establishment of appropriate services. Mr Wright will comment.

Mr Wright: The definition of 'rural centre' for the purposes of the draft rural policy was based on centres which have an enrolment of fewer than 35 children and which are outside designated suburban areas, and in that sense we mean the Adelaide statistical division and the generally acknowledged rural urban areas, such as the Iron Triangle and the South-East. We recognise that that creates some problems in some centres, particularly in the Hills, to which the honourable member referred. We are happy to talk to those communities about interpreting the policy in such a way as to disadvantage neither of them.

Ms Howe: As the honourable member would know, enrolments fluctuate throughout the year, although not quite so dramatically in rural centres. People tend to know of every child born in the past five years and likely to be born in the next five years. My understanding is that of the 60 centres only 12 will be affected through the loss of staff time. In fact, the situation in most of those 60 centres will either stay the same or there will be a gain. In the past two years 12 new services have been provided in rural areas and they could be considered to be the kind of area involving the number of children that this policy addresses so that we can increase those kinds of services. Therefore, most of the services will remain the same. I understand that 12 centres will lose, 14 will gain more sessions and a significant number of others will become two-person centres instead of one-person centres. They will retain their sessions but will get additional support.

Mr MEIER: Does that include the new centres that have not previously had any facilities?

Ms Howe: As I said, we have created 12 new services. The policy will enable us to identify those towns or small communities where services are needed, whereas in the past,

under the existing formula or process, they would not be getting a service. Therefore, I expect that they would be increased services.

Mr HAMILTON: Last Saturday afternoon I attended the Seaton Child-Care Centre, which is within my electorate of Albert Park. During the discussions that took place a number of issues were raised. Is there an intention to expand or upgrade the Seaton Child-Care Centre and, if so, when? Have plans been formulated? If so, can they be made available for inspection? Finally, I understand that for some time the centre has experienced difficulty in relation to progress on the erection of a fence for the protection of children. I do not expect the Minister to have that information available, but I would appreciate it later.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will take those matters on notice and obtain a report for the honourable member.

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

Minister of Education and Minister of Aboriginal Affairs,
Miscellaneous, \$55 478 000

Chairman:

Mr D.M. Ferguson

Members:

The Hon. H. Allison
The Hon. J.L. Cashmore
Mr M.R. De Laine
Ms D.L. Gayler
Mr K.C. Hamilton
Mr E.J. Meier

Witness:

The Hon. G.J. Crafter, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr D. Rathman, Acting Director, Office of Aboriginal Affairs.

Mr G. Knill, Office of Aboriginal Affairs.

Ms Janice Koolmatrie, Office of Aboriginal Affairs.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to page 98 of the Estimates of Payments.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I know that it might be drawing a slightly long bow, that the Minister's line is a relatively small one, and that the ministerial responsibility for a wide range of activities lies with other Ministers, but is the Minister of Aboriginal Affairs aware of correspondence from the South Australian Aboriginal Child-care Agency Forum? A letter has been sent to the Opposition which concerns the serious situation existing for young Aboriginal people in Adelaide in relation to accommodation, and two points raised in this letter involve, first, a property at Shepherds Hill Road, Eden Hills, requesting that it be financially supported by the State to develop a multi-purpose complex for the Aboriginal community in South Australia (that property being under the control of the Aboriginal Lands Trust); and secondly, the under-utilisation of the Lochiel Park complex currently under the Department for Community Welfare, and asking that it be made available to the Aboriginal community to enable meaningful and appropriate programs to be conducted.

Then the letter includes 16 areas of urgent and relatively urgent need within the Aboriginal community relating to drug and alcohol abuse, shortage of accommodation, shortage of accommodation for students, and so on. Is the Min-

ister aware of that letter; is his department supportive; and how would it react to a request of that nature being addressed to the Premier or other Ministers?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am not sure I am aware of that particular letter but I am aware of the issue of accommodation for young Aborigines in the Adelaide area, particularly those who have come here to participate in Adelaide-based education programs. I am also aware of the concern of the Aboriginal child-care agency and also other groups in the community. There is a difficulty in the provision of accommodation, that is, institutional based accommodation, when these programs ebb and flow in terms of numbers of young people coming to Adelaide and the length of time they are staying here to participate in those programs; so it simply is not possible to create new institutional arrangements quickly.

Also, I believe that there is some degree of confusion in the minds of some people in the community about programs that already exist and who is responsible for the development of these accommodation programs. Predominantly, a statutory organisation known as Aboriginal Hostels has accepted this responsibility throughout Australia, and they do that job very well. Miss Lois O'Donoghue is the Chairperson of that corporation on a national level, and we have referred correspondence similar to that to which the honourable member has referred, and I have made representations on behalf of those groups, to the Commonwealth and indeed to other interested organisations, about the problems being experienced by that group of young people in our community. I believe it is of little benefit if a whole range of organisations race off to establish those types of structures; indeed, we have a surfeit of institutional type accommodation available. What we do not have is staffing for it or the appropriate programs developed or indeed an integrated structure, and I believe there is some lack of understanding about what is available.

The letter to which the honourable member referred relates to Colebrook, which is really a piece of vacant land under the ownership of the Aboriginal Lands Trust, and I do not believe it is proposed that a hostel should be built on that land. I think there is simply a misunderstanding that maybe some premises could be made available for that purpose, so this does require a much more carefully planned approach, particularly by the statutory body, the Aboriginal Hostels organisation, which is vested with that statutory responsibility. To that extent the Office of Aboriginal Affairs is doing all it can to highlight the needs of the group and to ensure that the appropriate authorities are acting upon it.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Page 294 of the Program Estimates refers to a commentary on major resource variations between 1987-88 and 1988-89, and there is a very substantial increase in last year's budget. The variation—\$613 million—is mainly due to the additional funds for the Anangu Pitjantjatjara roads program and an increase in grants to Maralinga Tjarutja, Anangu Pitjantjatjara and the Aboriginal Lands Trust. I ask whether in the construction of those roads any progress has been made at all towards the provision of locally based equipment, whether Aboriginal people have been trained in the operation of the equipment, whether it rested within the community and alternatively whether the whole of the roads program is simply being conducted by the Highways Department as it used to be a decade or more ago.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: To put this into its historical context, the honourable member would be aware from his period as Minister of Aboriginal Affairs that, with the passage of the Pitjantjatjara Lands Rights Act, there was a withdrawal by the Highways Department of responsibility

for the care and maintenance of those roads, and prior to that piece of legislation the Highways Department did have a gang that worked on those roads on an annual basis, with an allocation for that. The Highways Department at that time took the view that, as that was a vesting of the title in an incorporated association, it became private property and, therefore, they then had no further responsibility. In retrospect that, I believe, was a tragic decision because the roads deteriorated very rapidly. There were no resources for the Pitjantjatjara people to maintain those roads and, indeed there were many quite serious accidents on those roads because in the main they were used by public servants and others who were providing important services for those people. I guess also it hindered some of the exploration programs that were going on with the consent and approval of the Pitjantjatjara people.

The Act was subsequently amended. The roads were declared public roads for the purposes of the legislation and that put beyond doubt the responsibility of the Highways Department to provide for the program. Since that time, substantial State Government funds have been provided for the upgrading of those roads and for the establishment of a locally based team and the development of a training program for local people. I ask Mr Knill to explain some of the workings of this important program.

Mr Knill: The roads program was initiated four years ago. It began as a Community Employment Program project with \$90 000 allocated in 1984-85. Since then, with the cessation of that program, the State Government has maintained funds to continue the work team and the training program that the project set out to establish. The road program was set up to build a road of reasonable standard to connect all the major communities in the North-West of the State from the Stuart Highway across to the Western Australian border, where the Pipalyatjara community lies. The thrust of the program was to create employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal people. This project was initiated, administered and managed by Aboriginal people themselves and it has maintained that thrust throughout its four year history. Over that time, nearly 50 Aboriginal people have been employed and received training on the program in road building, road maintenance, plant maintenance and plant usage. As a result, a number of people have had a unique opportunity to be involved in that kind of employment and training.

Last year, the road building phase was completed with about 550 kilometres of road being built. The funding for last year was geared towards the end of that construction phase and amounted to only \$150 000. This year, in consultation with the Highways Department, which has provided the technical and administrative support for this program, it has been decided to continue and maintain the program with the work team that is now an established working group and with the plant that has already been purchased for the project. The team will now maintain that road. It is important that roads are not only built but maintained, otherwise the money spent on construction is wasted. With careful consultancy with the Highways Department, the budget of \$462 000 for this year will ensure that adequate grading and maintenance of that 550 kilometre strip of road will continue into this year.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: With respect to the other additional payments to the Anangu Pitjantjatjara and Maralinga Tjarutja incorporated bodies, that is the result of the arrangements with the Commonwealth to fund both of those incorporated bodies on a shared arrangement. The Commonwealth agreed to increase its component of funding

this year and, similarly, the State agreed to match that increase in funding to further develop those programs.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Can the Minister say what has been the ratio of acceptances to refusals over the past two years for access by other than Pitjantjatjara or Maralinga residents? I recall that last time the Minister and I were in the area the Pitjantjatjara people provided a formal statement with regard to applications received but I do not recall seeing any report since that time. I understood that, as part of the legislative procedure granting the lands, there would be some notification to Parliament.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is a matter for the parliamentary committee, which was established under the legislation, to follow up annually, because it includes a visit to the lands. I can recall being with the honourable member on a previous occasion when the Pitjantjatjara people were very keen to put the record straight and give precise details of the number of applications received and rejected. Very few were rejected and the reasons were explained to us. Several years ago, well over 1 000 applications had been approved. More streamlined arrangements for approvals are in place, particularly for groups that travel through or to the Pitjantjatjara lands.

With respect to Maralinga, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs is not aware of any refusals concerning travel through those lands, bearing in mind that they are far more remote than the Pitjantjatjara lands and a different set of laws applies with respect to rights of access. There may have been refusals but I do not know of any and I presume that I would know if there had been. I suggest that, if the honourable member wants to pursue this matter, the opportunity will arise through the work of the parliamentary committee.

Ms GAYLER: I am interested in the Government's social justice package of \$25 million for this financial year. The budget document 'The Budget and the Social Justice Strategy' outlines programs that are to be of particular practical assistance to Aboriginal people. Can the Minister or his advisers highlight the main elements of those programs that fall under the social justice banner?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am pleased that the honourable member has raised this question, because the major thrust of the social justice strategy has been targeted at those groups most in need in the community and to provide additional funding to ensure that effective programs are developed. The group in the community that have been identified by the social justice strategy are Aborigines in South Australia. I ask Mr Rathman and Ms Koolmatric to comment on those programs.

Mr Rathman: The programs range across a number of areas and attempt not only to involve traditional departments but to bring in other departments that have responsibilities, particularly essential service departments such as the Electricity Trust, which has been provided with moneys to assist remote Aboriginal communities in upgrading electricity services; Employment and Training, to allow for grants so that people can increase their level of training skills; the E&WS, to ensure that Aboriginal communities are helped with water and sewerage services which impact upon health; the South Australian Health Commission, to help with drug and alcohol services and to establish sobering-up centres in a number of hospitals, particularly on the West Coast and at Port Augusta; and to allow for the introduction of community government so that the question of self-government can be attended to through existing processes to allow Aboriginal people to engage in greater control over their own destiny.

Regarding the Government's commitment in departments, there is to be an Aboriginal program to develop

more people within the public sector and also to allow for the protection of cultural needs, because that impacts on the health and the future of the Aboriginal community through the cultural institute. There is to be a major program of resourcing there. To allow the Government to increase its commitment to the Children's Services Office, money is to be committed. Regarding community welfare, there will be a similar program to pilot child-care services and to allow for financial counselling, because many Aborigines find themselves in difficulty in that area. Provision is being made to introduce an essential items program for Aborigines as well as to provide for Aboriginal welfare workers.

They are just some of the programs that have been introduced. It is important to note that the commitment to this area is to ensure that more departments are included in the servicing of Aborigines, to range across the whole gamut of services in the community, and to ensure that Aborigines are represented and that their needs are taken into account when servicing those communities. Miss Koolmatrie might like to add to my comments in terms of Aboriginal women.

Miss Koolmatrie: The Office of Aboriginal Affairs has consulted with Aboriginal women throughout the State and is working closely with the Minister's office, the Women's Adviser to the Premier and Cabinet, and the Aboriginal women's officers of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs in order to coordinate initiatives for Aboriginal women. Consequently, there has been a focus on the social justice strategy and the women's budget.

These initiatives have resulted in the appointment to the Office of Aboriginal Affairs of a State Adviser on Aboriginal women's issues; participation in the development of Government policy and programs related to the development of Aboriginal women; establishment of a reference group; identification of barriers currently operating against the achievement of equal opportunities for Aboriginal women; development of strategies to redress the effects of previous and current discrimination towards Aboriginal women; coordination of professional development programs for relevant Government officers and staff with respect to issues pertaining to the achievement of equal education, employment and training opportunities for Aboriginal women; identifying the professional development and in-service needs of Aboriginal women and develop and direct programs to meet these, and maintaining and strengthening links with departments, agencies and individuals who have an interest in, and are working within, portfolios that deal with women.

In consultation with Aboriginal women, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs will convene a Statewide forum, the aims of which will be to provide an opportunity for Aboriginal women to develop, maintain and strengthen links; to identify barriers currently operating against the achievement of equal opportunities for Aboriginal women; to develop and recommend strategies to redress the effects of previous and current discrimination towards Aboriginal women and to increase the development, access, participation and advancement of Aboriginal women within Government departments and community organisations and recommend strategies to enable these initiatives to occur.

Regarding specifically the social justice strategy and Aboriginal women, this Government recognises that Aboriginal women play a central role in the family, social and cultural life of their communities. The strength and positive nature of our involvement in the processes of government as advocates for our people is invaluable and it is important that this role is acknowledged and supported. However, Aboriginal women are one of the most disadvantaged groups within society.

Hence, the compounding nature of disadvantage is a central concern of this Government's social justice strategy. It represents a determination to ensure fairness in the distribution of resources at its command and to provide a philosophical and practical base that will underpin Government priorities and resource allocation in the years to come. Main themes of the social justice strategy will be to take account of the structural causes of poverty and inequality; to influence, initiate and coordinate action by Government to redress disadvantage; to guarantee fairness in the distribution of resources and services; and to promote public debate and consultation on major issues facing local communities.

Therefore, two important factors are to be taken into account. The first is the compounding nature of poverty and disadvantage and the need to encourage cooperative efforts across Government agencies in tackling relevant issues. Secondly, such a strategic approach is not about the provision primarily of new or additional funds, but rather about changing the way in which existing resources are allocated.

Emphasis will be on redressing the underlying causes of poverty and disadvantage rather than on nursing the symptoms. Illness caused through lack of clean water and sanitation, for example, will be tackled not only by health and welfare agencies but by adequate provision of these essential services. In this way, the health of the community is improved, the recurrent nature of the problem is diminished, a more equitable distribution of essential services is achieved and better use is made of the State's financial resources. That, in essence, is what the social justice strategy is about.

Consequently, the Government has been concerned to achieve a balance between the development of processes that will bring about fundamental shifts in policy and resource allocations and immediate action to address the most pressing areas of poverty and disadvantage. Priorities were established, taking into account the need to maintain assistance to people in crisis situations; the analysis of those in the community suffering multiple disadvantages; the desirability of developing programs that would move individuals out of poverty traps and on to the road to independence; and overall, taking into account the social responsibility of the Government to ensure the fairest, most effective and most efficient disbursement of resources to the community.

In particular, those with family responsibilities are most likely to be facing social and economic hardship. Caring for children and older or disabled relatives places additional strain on family resources and limits people's capacity to pursue economic rewards. Compounding factors such as housing costs and unemployment or low earning capacity, often related to lack of educational qualifications, push many families into poverty. In turn, this affects the functions; ill health increases, access to community services and facilities is limited; and most important of all, it reduces the opportunities open to children.

In recognition of these factors, a substantial proportion of the funding this year for social justice initiatives will be directed towards measures that aim to help families cope with such pressures. Aboriginal families are the most disadvantaged group of all in the community. Therefore, in this first specific budget allocation for social justice purposes there has been an intensive focus on major areas in which fundamental improvements need to be made. Initiatives that demonstrate a social justice focus to improve the health and economic prosperity of Aboriginal women and their communities include essential services, health, employment

and education, community services, legal services and community government.

Ms GAYLER: As almost \$1 million has been allocated to provide an improved water supply by the Engineering and Water Supply Department to Aborigines, can the Minister say which communities are likely to benefit from such improvement? Amongst the Aboriginal communities in the Pitjantjatjara lands which I have visited, some have periods of the year when they have no reliable water supply at substantial Aboriginal settlements. Will this allocation provide a more reliable supply for such people?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I cannot advise the Committee on the specific allocation of these funds, but the State has negotiated with the Commonwealth Government a transfer of responsibility for the provision of essential services. That will mean that, rather than the complicated process whereby individual communities had to go through both Federal and State authorities to get the funds and assistance to develop those programs, it will be simplified. It will be organised through the Aboriginal Works Unit in SACON and there will be a transfer to the State of the equivalent funds that were previously expended by the Commonwealth for the provision of essential services. Obviously the State, through the reading of the social justice strategy, is putting substantial additional resources into the provision of essential services. Together, we will have a substantial program.

In addition, the Commonwealth has also agreed to provide funds for training programs associated with the provision of those essential services so that there can be within the Aboriginal communities an element of training in those programs, in the works that are to be carried out. That will all be the responsibility of the Aboriginal Works Unit. There will be a consultative structure with respect to the priorities to be established for the expenditure of those funds. Obviously, the list of demands far exceeds the amount of funds available, but the priorities are fairly well known around the community.

Over the years all of us have been painfully aware of the acute need for better water, sewerage, housing, electricity, and so forth, in those communities. The tragedy of the people at Koonibba, who had their power cut off because of the unfortunate arrangements involving fraud within the community that saw their payments for electricity being defrauded from the community, was most unfortunate. The blame was placed on the Aboriginal people when in fact it was a non-Aboriginal person who had stolen the money. As a consequence, the people suffered and had their power cut off because they did not pay their bills; the money was not passed on to the authorities.

We want to establish situations where there is guaranteed provision of essential services so those sorts of things do not occur in the future, and indeed so that the benefits available to the community at large, including concessions and the like, are available to Aborigines. Hopefully, all those things will now be better attended to. This matter was the subject of Cabinet consideration yesterday and fuller detail of this new program will be made available shortly.

Ms GAYLER: Certainly, I do not pretend to be an expert on all the priorities concerning isolated Aboriginal communities, but I hope that the people of Indulkana receive consideration in regard to the provision for a water supply. The social justice strategy budget document on page 27 indicates that \$247 000 has been set aside for the establishment of the Aboriginal Cultural Institute. When will the institute be established, where will it be located, and how will it operate?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Indulkana is one of the communities on Pitjantjatjara land, but it is totally surrounded by

the Granite Downs pastoral lease, a leasehold property held by the McLachlan family. Under the provisions of the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act, parts of the lease do not expire until the year 2008, although small parts of the land do expire prior to that time. Just last week the Federal Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and I met with Mr McLachlan to discuss some of the difficulties being experienced by those people living totally surrounded by pastoral property. We discussed the conflicts that arise in respect of free movement of those people across their traditional lands.

I want to put on record that there is a very concerned manager of that property; his wife is very sensitive to the needs of Aborigines, and she teaches at the Indulkana school. That is not the problem. As long as there is a lease there will be a conflict as to the use and control of those important lands. Hopefully, given goodwill on the part of the parties we can negotiate some different arrangements over the next few years with respect to that property.

The Tonkin Administration, when the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act was being proclaimed, passed to the McLachlan family a consideration of \$300 000 so that those leases would be relinquished at the appropriate time in consideration of that. There has been substantial goodwill on the part of the State Government, and I believe the McLachlan family wants to resolve this issue as well. Obviously, it involves the Commonwealth Government, particularly the Aboriginal Development Commission, and so some of the problems—the physical problems—cannot be looked at in isolation; they are also cultural problems that have arisen as a result of the nature of that community. We want to resolve those as well.

The Aboriginal Cultural Institute received publicity some months ago. An enormous amount of work has been done by representatives of the Aboriginal community in South Australia to achieve in this State an Aboriginal Heritage and Cultural Centre owned, operated and controlled by Aboriginal people, but there for the benefit and enjoyment of the whole community. All of that work is now coming to a successful culmination. Yesterday, Cabinet approved the proposal's being referred to the Public Works Standing Committee for its consideration tomorrow. This matter goes before the City of Adelaide Planning Commission for its consideration. It is proposed that the old TAFE School of Plumbing in Grenfell Street be used for this purpose. The building was surplus to TAFE requirements and it has been the subject of Cabinet consideration.

Cabinet has agreed that this is an appropriate building for this purpose. It was proposed that it be placed in the ownership of the Aboriginal Lands Trust. An incorporated body has been established which will be responsible for the administration of what is to be known as the Aboriginal Cultural Institute, or Tandanya. There would be substantial involvement in this development by the Premier's office (the Premier being the Minister for the Arts), my own Office of Aboriginal Affairs and the Aboriginal Lands Trust.

Substantial funds have been committed by various authorities to this project. The Aboriginal Development Commission, the Bicentennial Authority, and the State Bicentennial Committee have all provided substantial funds in addition to the South Australian Government's investment in this project. I believe it is a project of national, indeed international, significance and that South Australia is clearly an appropriate place for a program of this type. We have very successfully provided for a workable and effective system of land rights in this community. In the main, I believe that we have a bipartisan political approach to the issue of land rights and generally to Aboriginal issues. I also believe that there is a good deal of goodwill in the

South Australian community to see programs of this type advance and the portrayal of the many and varied aspects of the Aboriginal culture to the wider community.

This very fine old building, which was previously an Electricity Trust substation, has a huge cavernous central area that is appropriate for the purposes of the Tandanya centre. It will lend itself to a range of activities that will promote the culture, history and art of Aborigines. It is envisaged that it will accommodate static displays of Aboriginal art and artefacts and be a venue for art exhibitions and live activity such as dance, drama and music.

I am confident that the centre will have an enormous attraction for the people of Adelaide and interstate and overseas visitors. It will link in well with the North Terrace precinct and the proposed market development for that area. It is anticipated that there will be an educational component and that students who visit the various institutions on North Terrace will also visit the Tandanya centre, where they will be able to meet Aborigines and see the many and varied aspects of Aboriginal culture.

The board of directors, as I indicated, has recently been set up with extensive administrative and management experience from the authorities. An interim director has been appointed for a contracted period of time. This person has national experience in projects of this type and has a brief to train an Aboriginal person to continue that role as the institute becomes established and as that person acquires the appropriate skills that are required to carry on that function.

Clearly, the major benefits of the institute will be to complement the State's cultural strength, providing a unique multipurpose cultural and arts facility. It will provide effective utilisation of a substantial registered historic building that was surplus to Government requirements. This involves the development of a cultural facility providing for the artistic expression of Australia's indigenous people, enabling interaction and growth of understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians. I think that our fundamental responsibility is to ensure that all Australians, particularly young Australians, have an opportunity to experience at first hand an understanding of Aboriginal heritage and culture which, in their own educational opportunities, has been absent.

The project will provide a tourism attraction that is unique in Australia, and will complement the East End precinct urban development. It will also adjoin the Grand Prix circuit. It is a significant enhancement of the skills and self management providing for the restoration of pride and identity for the Aboriginal people of South Australia and Australia. It is interesting to note that a recent display mounted by the Museum at the Hilton Hotel during NADOC week was almost completely sold out. I understand that much of the \$100 000 worth of art work displayed was sold whilst it was being hung; hotel guests were buying the art works as they were being hung in the foyer.

There is substantial international interest in our Aboriginal culture, particularly in art works. Indeed, the South Australian Museum is mounting a display, with the assistance of a number of other organisations, which will be staged in New York later this year. Members will be interested to know that the Museum has the largest collection of Aboriginal artefacts of any museum in the world. It is an enormously valuable collection and South Australia is looked upon by Aboriginal communities, anthropologists and others around this country as being the residual source of a great deal of very important information for Aborigines and the continuation and well-being of their culture.

That is a summary of the present situation. I am very excited about the potential. As I said, the project will be subject to parliamentary scrutiny through the Public Works Standing Committee and the planning processes that are in place in this State, and I am sure that it will be an important new aspect of the life of all South Australians.

Mr MEIER: Having seen the Yakima cultural centre in Washington, I applaud the development of an Aboriginal cultural institute. From what the Minister has said the institute will obviously be similar in many of its features. The institute has brought a lot of benefits to the Yakima Indians. However, I am concerned that the Aboriginal cultural institute has been located virtually in the middle of an urban environment which I believe would be totally foreign to the traditional lifestyle of the Aborigines. I hope that it is not a European idea that has been sold to the Aborigines. The Minister has explained the concept clearly but I can think of many ideal locations outside the metropolitan area.

I am still very concerned that since late May or early June there really has not been anyone in charge of the Point Pearce community. The Point Pearce community council has not been recognised by a significant sector of the community. Approaches have been made to the Minister and I know that he has sent representatives to Point Pearce. I also know that elections were held on the day that I asked a question in this Parliament quite some weeks ago. Subsequently I discovered that those elections were declared null and void because of irregularities.

It is a great disappointment to me, and also to many other people in the Point Pearce area, that nothing has been resolved. In fact, it has been put to me by an Aboriginal that the community has to hit rock bottom before it will realise the mess it is in and be able to begin anew. In 1988 that is a tragic statement to hear. Unfortunately, at this stage I cannot see that, if the community should hit rock bottom—and let us hope that that does not occur—it will make a new and much better future. The Government should be taking a much more positive approach and providing additional assistance, particularly human resources, guidance and advice. What is the current situation? What is the next step? And why has not more been done to date?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for his continued interest in this important community in South Australia, for his support for many of the struggles of that community, and for his representations not only to me but also to local government in the area and to other agencies that are capable of providing support during this most difficult time.

Mr Rathman: Two attempts have been made to hold satisfactory council elections at Point Pearce. However, we understand from the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs that workers have been paid. Therefore, there is an attempt to not disadvantage them or their families during this period of crisis. The concept of self-management dictates that people should attempt to sort out their own differences and try to overcome some of the troughs they go through.

This is a crisis period for the Point Pearce community and offers have been made and attempts made by members, officers of the Department of Aboriginal Affairs federally, and the Office of Aboriginal Affairs. The major problem is that the community group itself has to find a point of resolution and that appears to be the main area that has to be taken into account. I do not believe that at present it is the right of the Government both federally or State, or of their officers, to impose a solution on Aboriginal people. I think we have passed through that period and we should

attempt at all times to reach a point of conciliation and compromise so that the community can bring itself back together. That is a point at which the Aboriginal community must arrive itself and that is what is being attempted at the present time.

Mr MEIER: It sounds fine in theory to say, 'Look, the people have to sort out the problem for themselves and it might work.' I doubt it. I believe the approach that has to be taken here is similar to the one that the Government of this State has taken I believe on at least one occasion, where local government has not been doing its job properly. I will not mention specific names but I believe a whole council has been dismissed and the Government has come in and said, 'You have to straighten yourselves out and we will help get you on the way.' While we are talking about a group of people here that may have characteristics different from a group of councillors, I would urge the Government to give this due attention and I believe it needs more help than it is getting at present.

At page 294, the Program Estimates, under 'Issues and trends', refers to 'Increased Aboriginal involvement in the management and administration of Aboriginal communities'. That is fine, but it is my understanding that there have only been one or two non-Aboriginals who have been keeping things going during the time of this crisis. Does the Minister believe that perhaps non-Aboriginals are still necessary in Aboriginal communities, where it is felt that there is not sufficient expertise in 1988? If so, what percentage of the Aboriginal population would he believe it might be? In other words, are there a lot of European advisers or are they few and far between these days?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: With respect to Point Pearce, I believe the honourable member may have misinterpreted what Mr Rathman was saying about the approach that has been taken. There is certainly no shortage of intervention of people in order to resolve the dispute which is occurring in the community. In fact there is now the heaviest of intervention because the matter is before the courts, so there is the imposition of a legal resolution of that dispute. What Mr Rathman is saying is really the fundamental philosophy that all those organisations and departments involved in this take—to lead people to resolution of this dispute, which is a big dispute, for themselves. It may be that the court process and the sharpness of that process helps the community itself to want to resolve it rather than to go through that style of dispute resolution process.

I do not believe we can depart from what we have worked for for so long and that is to assist those communities to accept responsibility for their own decisions and to work their way through them. I accept the fact that they often need a lot of support in order to do that. The honourable member and I have been involved in many discussions, for example, about the maintenance of some of the facilities

within that community, and I believe that we have reached, after quite a tortuous process, a strategy whereby some of those facilities can be repaired, renovated, used by the community, indeed managed, in a different way from hitherto provided.

I am confident that, eventually, this matter can be resolved by the means that have been suggested to the Committee this evening. That is not an easy process and some of the honourable member's colleagues often say that it is far better for the communities to receive less intervention from non-Aboriginals than they currently receive. They say that it has a detrimental effect on many of those communities. There is a fundamental conflict in approach. We would all like to see these problems resolved, but how they should be resolved is a more difficult and complex process. Being sensitive to that, the Office of Aboriginal Affairs provides strong assistance and support in the resolution of that dispute.

Mr MEIER: Has the Minister been informed to what extent the sports centre and oval complex are proceeding in their development? Has the Minister agreed to an opening date for the Point Pearce school? I understand that two dates had been set but the Minister did not want to open the school until it was finished and operational.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I have not been involved in the decision-making process, so I will be interested to find out when the school is to be opened. It is probably wise that the project be completed before it is officially opened. There are some difficulties concerning the disruption to the local community when hosting that sort of function. It should be a very happy occasion, with a sense of great achievement for the community. It is a superb structure and the school and the community are very happy with it. A lot of people in the local community were involved in the building of that school and it uses very innovative construction techniques. A decision will be made by the local community as to the appropriate date for the official opening.

I do not have a current progress report on the use of the oval and the surrounding facilities, but that has now been substantially resolved. There is direct involvement of the school in the management of that facility in cooperation with the community. I understand that there is a good deal of commitment by the new principal of the school to see that the project succeeds and is used by the school and the wider community. I will obtain the information that the honourable member seeks.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.58 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 21 September at 11 a.m.