

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 14 September 1989

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chairman:

The Hon. G.F. Keneally

Members:

The Hon. H. Allison
 Mr M.R. De Laine
 Mr S.G. Evans
 Mr T.R. Groom
 Mr K.C. Hamilton
 The Hon. D.C. Wotton

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: We will follow a relatively informal procedure. There is no need to stand to ask or to answer questions. Any changes to the composition of the Committee will be notified as they occur. If the Minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be in a form suitable for insertion in *Hansard* and two copies submitted no later than Friday 29 September to the Clerk of the House of Assembly.

I propose to allow the lead speaker for the Opposition and the Minister to make an opening statement, if they so desire, of about 10 minutes, but no longer than 15 minutes. There will be a flexible approach to the call for questions based on about three questions per member, and it will alternate from side to side. Members may also be allowed to ask a brief supplementary question to conclude a line of questioning before switching to the next member. I think it is important if a line of questioning is proceeded with to finish that line of questioning.

Subject to the convenience of the Committee, a member who is outside the Committee and who desires to ask a question will be permitted to do so once the line of questioning on an item has been exhausted by the Committee. Indications in advance to the Chairman are necessary. The member for Flinders may be interested in that. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure as revealed in the Estimates of Payments, page 9. However, reference may be made to other documents, such as the Program Estimates, the Auditor-General's Report, etc.

Yesterday reference was made to a recent publication by an ex-Minister. I do not regard that as an official document, although members can refer to it if they wish. Ministers will be asked to introduce their advisers prior to commencement and at any changeovers. Questions are to be directed to the Minister, not to the advisers, but the Minister may refer questions to his advisers for a response.

Education, \$796 294 000

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 (Curriculum).

Mr T.M. Barr, Director of Administration.

Mr B.W. Treloar, Assistant Director (Finance).

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to pages 83 to 87 in the Estimates of Payments, and pages 183 to 210 in the Program Estimates. Does the lead spokesperson for the Opposition want to take advantage of making an opening statement?

The Hon. H. ALLISON: No, I do not.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the Minister wish to make a statement prior to questions starting?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I also do not wish to make a preliminary statement except that I have been advised by Treasury that there is an error in the information that the Committee has with respect to the capital works budget statements that I have been asked to correct by the Treasury. In the Program Estimates and Information 1989-90 document, both the Estimate of Payments, that is financial paper No.3 and the capital works program, financial information paper No.3 for 1989-90 indicate correctly that the total of \$60.873 million will be expended on the Education Department's capital program. This comprises \$39.5 million (page 205 of the Estimates of Payments, Department of Housing and Construction education buildings) and \$21.373 million (page 203 of the Estimates of Payments, Education Department) and that totals \$60.873 million which is shown on page 73 of the capital works program, primary and secondary schools.

The amount of \$21.873 million represents total estimated expenditure within the Education Department finance from \$14.790 million appropriated from Consolidated Account from 1989-90 and \$6.583 million from sale of properties, totalling \$21.373 million. On page 190 of the Program Estimates and information paper the amount shown as appropriated from Consolidated Account to Education Department payments of capital nature is \$7.5 million. This is incorrect in that it excludes \$13.873 million comprising the estimated 1989-90 payments by the Education Department for the 'Back to school improvement program' sum of \$10 million, and the relocation of curriculum units, \$3.873 million shown on page 203 of the Estimates of Payments financial paper No.3.

The total proposed 1989-90 capital payments is therefore \$60.873 million for the Education Department rather than the \$47 million shown on pages 183, 189 and 190 of the Program Estimates. The additional \$13.873 million is distributed between the programs as follows: provision of general primary education in schools, \$6.3 million; provision of general secondary education in schools, \$3.73 million; intra-agency support services, \$3.73 million; totalling \$13.873 million. The total actual outlays on capital works in 1988-89 were \$41.948 million for the Education Department as indicated in the capital works program financial information paper No.3 at page 70, rather than \$49.272 million shown on pages 183, 189 and 190 of the Program Estimates.

The \$49.272 million figure includes payments of funds in a deposit account to fund a proposed relocation of curriculum units in the 'Back to school improvement program' which should not be included as actual expenditure on the works program. Replacement pages 183 to 190 of Program Estimates papers reflecting the above changes are available to the Committee.

I have been asked by the honourable Treasurer to correct those records, and that may have been the reason why the Opposition were concerned about the capital works program. I certainly apologise for that misunderstanding.

The CHAIRMAN: I know the Minister said that pages 183 to 190 be made available if required, but could those Program Estimates papers be circulated?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will do so.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: This will change the line of questioning on some of our questions during the whole day.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the Minister have the figures with him?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: They will come from Treasury as quickly as possible.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I refer to fire safety in schools as referred to in Program Estimates at page 203. The provision of appropriate facilities and services in primary and secondary education is dealt with. Under the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service Act the MFS has the authority to establish codes of practice for buildings. It has drafted a code of practice for fire protection and safety in schools, a copy of which I have with me. If it is implemented it will involve significant costs for schools. Information we have, leaked from within the Education Department, indicates that the costs for each secondary school in South Australia would be \$800 000 and for each primary school \$250 000. The code will obviously also apply to non-government schools and there is considerable concern in that sector.

I am further advised that the reconstituted schools fire-safety committee is to meet on I believe 27 September to discuss the matter. What action other than re-forming a committee has been taken since the Minister became aware of the problem and what action does he now intend to take?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Obviously the matter of fire safety in our schools is an important issue and something the department has been working on for some years. Whilst there has been considerable improvement in the year just passed, one cannot rest assured, because of the cyclical nature of fire, arson and vandalism in schools, which is quite unpredictable. With respect to the proposed code to which the honourable member refers, active discussions are occurring between both the non-government education sector and the Government sector. We have had a good deal of cooperation in that regard.

The concerns we have in the Education Department for not only providing safe environments for our teachers and students but also, on the other side of the ledger, the cost of adhering to codes can be very expensive and beyond the existing means of the schools system if the matter is not handled sensibly and appropriately with a forward planning strategy to ensure the proper standards are adhered to and maintained. That does not mean undesirable effects for schools. Those discussions encompass local government authorities and fire services. We are having active discussions with the relevant authorities, and have taken advice from an independent specialist who has been included on the appropriate working party to advise us. He is an engineer with considerable experience in fire safety techniques. We will have to develop new and appropriate technologies to deal with these issues as time goes on.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Page 198 of the Program Estimates refers to 'Isolated education—primary and secondary education'. The information provided to the Opposition in recent days indicates that the Government is about to make a major announcement on the future of the Correspondence School and distance education. A document entitled 'Open Access—Strategic Plan' recommends that an open access college be established with three separate sections that would cover: R to 10; year 11 to year 12; and curriculum matters. Each section would be headed by a principle with the director of the new college overseeing everything. The new college would be located in an existing secondary school site

and, therefore, away from the current Flinders Street site. The School of the Air at Port Augusta would be made part of the new college. Staff will be appointed for 1990, but the college will not operate until 1991. Will the Minister indicate how this new college will relate to the work currently done by the Adelaide College of TAFE in providing senior secondary courses by distance education and will the new plan involve extra expenditure in recurrent or capital funding?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, a review of distance education conducted by the Education Department is nearing completion. As I understand it, it has not yet reached the stage where it is to be considered by the senior executive of the department. Whilst the honourable member may have information of the preliminary recommendations, I must caution him on seeing those as the conclusions of that review. However, I suspect that the matters the honourable member has raised are in line with the current thinking of those working on this review of distance education.

It is erroneous to link the Correspondence School solely with distance education. In its traditional form, correspondence education is seen as serving rural and geographically isolated students but, indeed, the majority of students associated with the Correspondence School actually live in metropolitan Adelaide. That means that the school must provide a quite complex range of programs. The location of the Correspondence School at the Education Centre in Flinders Street was intended only as an interim measure. I believe that we can provide a better location for that school—which employs over 100 teachers and it is one of the largest schools in the State—preferably in a school setting where students attend the school. I believe that would be a more realistic environment for those practitioners working in the school, often in quite difficult circumstances in terms of their relationships with students. In addition, it may also be appropriate for the department to provide accommodation in a suburban school setting for those students who do come from the country and, who, for periods of the year, want to attend that school and have contact with the teachers and the service provided.

A lot of work is being done in the department to give consideration to those matters. But, of course, with the broadening of the curriculum, particularly in the senior secondary years, and with increasing retention rates and the greater opportunities that are available to geographically isolated students, we must rethink our distance education modes. It is very encouraging to go to Adelaide High School, for example, to see students from quite remote schools in the State being linked. For example, they are linked to language classes at Adelaide High School and, using new technology, they are able to participate fully in those learning programs. That is something we want to see encompassed much more in the remote areas of our State. We know that the retention rates in our country areas are still low compared with metropolitan retention rates, and we ought to bridge that gap as quickly as we can. The restructuring of distance education will involve some of the issues that have been raised within our curriculum guarantees, that is, the right of students to gain access to a comprehensive education, and that has been provided for. We must ensure that the additional resources provided by the guarantee are accessed by those students disadvantaged by geographic isolation. I call upon the Director-General of Education to comment further on the issues raised by the honourable member.

Dr Boston: A review of distance education services has been undertaken by a committee headed by Mr Hewton, Director of the eastern area, and there has been widespread

consultation with parent groups and communities generally on the way that is shaping up. It is part of our response to try to provide the best possible educational service to children and students in rural areas at a time when they need an increasingly enriched curriculum. It is interesting to look at the figures and see that South Australia reached its maximum number of schools in 1935, when there were 1 123 schools. Since then there has been a reduction, as the rural population has declined, to a little over 700 schools now—about the same number of schools as there were at the turn of the century, but with a much greater student population.

We now have an immense capacity, through technology advances, to offer a greatly enriched curriculum to students, not only in rural areas but also in the metropolitan area. That is why we are calling what might emerge from this inquiry an 'open access college' rather than a 'correspondence school' because, for example, AUSSAT technology could be used to teach Japanese just as well in the southern and eastern suburbs of Adelaide as it could be used to teach the same subject in schools around the Mount Gambier area, which is currently occurring. The current proposal establishes a multi-campus open access college, which retains within it a restructured correspondence school and school of the air and creates a new senior secondary school of distance education within the open access college. That is currently the proposal but, as the Minister has said, it has not yet been fully considered by the senior executive. Fortunately, we are able to obtain a lot of comment on it from community representatives, and that is proving very helpful.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The curriculum guarantee package provides a formula for open access teacher salaries to assist students in some small secondary schools which are unable to provide access to a broad range of curriculum options. These salaries allow the creation of additional classes or instruction delivery through distance education techniques. However, we find that the formula does not provide support for schools with fewer than 50 students in years 11 and 12. For example, schools with 50 to 61 years 11 and 12 students, have .7 of a teacher allocated and those with 62 to 74 years 11 and 12 students have .6 of a teacher allocated. This means that schools such as Snowtown, Lucindale, Allendale East, Kangaroo Inn and East Murray will miss out on the allocations. Why has the Minister provided no assistance to the schools that really need it most, that is, those with fewer than 50 students in years 11 and 12 and is he thus placing pressure on those schools to try to force amalgamation or closure?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for raising this issue. I know that a good deal of concern has been expressed, particularly in the smaller area schools, about staffing. From the outset, I think it must be said that the emphasis must be placed on the needs of the students and their ability to access the appropriate curriculum. The department must then determine (and indeed those small communities need to be intimately involved in that decision process) how we can best provide these learning opportunities for these students. At times the debate has centred around other primary issues, rather than those particular needs of the students.

In its discussions with the Institute of Teachers, the department has been discussing precisely the concerns that the honourable member has raised. This has also of course been discussed with a number of those schools involved and with the Area Schools Principals Association. As to the matter of staffing of those schools and, indeed, their ability to provide the curriculum that is required, it is proposed that that will be the subject of a study that will look at each

of those schools on an individual basis, to see how we will meet the requirements of the curriculum guarantee.

The situation is not quite as black and white as the honourable member has portrayed. However, one cannot say that it will not be in the best interests of some schools to consider accessing, to a greater extent than has occurred in the past, distance education modes. In looking at the figures pertaining to some schools in the community which have a very small number of students, one can see that there is quite generous staffing compared with some other circumstances. However, the students involved in country schools are spread across the whole spectrum of schooling which we provide in a much different setting and in a much different way than in the metropolitan area.

We need to embrace the new teaching technologies, and also look at how practical it is to access other schools. Indeed, this is the issue that the communities at Pinnaroo, Lameroo and Geranium have been grappling with, where we want to enhance the learning opportunities for secondary students in those three communities. The decision was taken that we should bring together those three secondary schools into one school, physically, and to provide it with substantially additional resources so that curriculum could be enhanced and so that we could improve retention rates and the ability of those young people to access further education should that be required—and most certainly encourage students to proceed through to year 12, which is the destination we want for all students. For those reasons and in that way we will work our way through the issues raised by the honourable member. Perhaps the Director-General might like to comment further.

Dr Boston: It is proposed that in relation to the area schools we will have a group set up that will examine each school in turn and look at its staffing structure and its disposition of staff and, where necessary, recommend that additional staff be provided. The absolute guarantee which we give is that, at worst, no school in the State will have a curriculum that is more limited in range than is the case at present.

In other words, the guarantee is that all schools will be able to offer at least their existing curriculum. That group will consist of probably three people. It will be chaired by a principal with experience in area schools, and it will include SAIT and EO representation. Where it finds that additional staff will be needed, they will be provided. This will occur in exactly the same way as the guarantees given last year in relation to the introduction of the staged staffing process, which led to 105 salaries being put back into schools under the guarantee.

Mr S.G. EVANS: Are you saying the guarantee is that the schools will have no less than they have now, but that over a period a lot of schools may have much more than they have now, but these schools are being given the guarantee they may retain the minimum.

Dr Boston: The guarantee is that the school will be able to provide the same curriculum as at present. That does not necessarily mean that it will have exactly the same number of staff as at present. We would look closely at precisely how the existing staff were being used. For example, in the case of one particular area school we believe the staff could be better deployed than they are at present, and we would negotiate with the principal to have that achieved before any additional staff were employed. It is a curriculum not a staffing guarantee. The absolute guarantee is that each child will have access to, at worst, the same curriculum that is currently available.

Mr S.G. EVANS: There is a guaranteed curriculum, which will be as it is now and the worst for these schools: will

some other schools gain significantly in their curriculum and will at least some of these schools be left behind? In other words, there will be a guarantee for these schools, and it could be left at that; some of the other schools with larger numbers in areas nearer the city may have a significant increase in the availability of curriculum but others may not.

Dr Boston: It is true that there is a greater potential to provide an enriched curriculum where the numbers are larger. The process of aggregation provides a capacity for us to give a broader range and a greater depth of curriculum. That is precisely the situation that has occurred at Lameroo, where we have been able to bring the Pinnaroo and Geranium secondary programs together to create one larger group, which will be able to provide the same range of curriculum as, say, a high school in Adelaide. In the case of small schools where numbers remain low—but we must offer a secondary program—we will need to look at not only additional staffing but also other strategies, particularly technology, if we are to provide the range and depth of curriculum necessary.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Each year I provide the Committee with a statistical summary; on page 28 of that, there is some information about the staffing of area schools. It will be noted that schools with an enrolment at the beginning of the year of, for example, 48 students have 10 staff members; a school with 17 students, 11 staff; and a school with 23 students, nine staff. We are required to provide staffing to meet the needs right across the spectrum of years of students attending these schools. We are concerned that we cannot provide for the growth in curriculum and, indeed, the breadth of education opportunity that those students deserve to access. That is why we have to consider the use of new technologies and every other way we can to provide that. It is not simply a matter of providing more and more staff in those schools: that simply will not overcome the problem we have in those smaller schools.

Mr De LAINE: The member for Davenport in his supplementary questions touched on the area of staffing under the curriculum guarantee. I am interested more in a broad coverage, so I will ask the question and hope that the Minister has not covered too much of it. What will be the effect of the new staffing formula under the curriculum guarantee?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The curriculum guarantee package is designed to provide students with a fundamental access to a breadth of curriculum in our schools. That undertaking has not been given in the same way, so our approach to staffing follows the establishment of that curriculum guarantee.

One difficulty that we have had in recent years, particularly during the period of substantial enrolment decline, has been a destabilised staffing process within our schools. It has been of concern to us in recent times that we should provide a more stable staffing structure. One of the great benefits coming from the curriculum guarantee package has been our ability to come to grips with many of those staffing issues, many of which have been on the table for discussion for up to a decade and have not been resolved. Now they have been.

The staffing formula provides a school with staff so that they can again provide a guarantee of certain class sizes. That is a decision that the school itself will take on the deployment of those resources. There is the flexibility within a school to decide how best it will use the resources that will be provided. No school, if it so desires, need have classes over 25 in junior primary schools, 27 in primary schools, 27 in secondary schools in the eight to 10 years,

25 in secondary schools in the 11 to 12 years, and 16 in practical classes in secondary and area schools. For the first time we have been able to articulate those issues with respect to the staffing of schools throughout the State. This will allow schools to use existing staff and their abilities in many and varied ways. For example, some schools in the senior secondary years conduct very large lecture-type classes and use the staff for tutorial-type processes, and they do so effectively in that way. It is possible that class sizes in certain situations could be greater than those that have been recommended and, indeed, guaranteed, but that is a school-based decision. The Director-General might like to add to this important and fundamental issue as to what is occurring in our schools. It puts us in marked contrast with other States.

Dr Boston: We see this as a significant step forward. Not only does it have the benefits described by the Minister, but we believe that it lays a foundation for greater predictability and stability in staffing schools, which is obviously desirable in educational terms and something that the teachers union has been anxious to achieve. Our view is that this package is very important in achieving both those things.

Mr De LAINE: Where were this year's ancillary staff used, and where will next year's ancillary staff go?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Ancillary staff have been used in schools to great effect. In this current term the Government has provided additional ancillary staff for our schools. We have added 100 ancillary staff to our numbers each year over the last four education budgets. That has meant that a number of the concerns and programs that schools have wanted to enhance have been able to be improved by the provision of these staff. We have been able to improve the formula (the general application of general ancillary time) to our schools, particularly to primary schools. In the current school year 53 of those positions were allocated to primary and junior primary schools and seven to area schools. There is another area of growing importance as more and more young people with special needs come into mainstream educational opportunities. We have been able to provide 25 of those salaries to special education programs in our schools.

At Sims Farm at Cleve, an area in which the Opposition has shown considerable interest over the years, an ancillary staff person has been provided for a specific program. Another salary has been provided for the many curriculum associations' support. A salary has also been provided for one that I know you, Mr Chairman, are concerned about—the work of the School of the Air at Wadlata Interpretive Centre at Port Augusta—to assist with the many community demands that are made on those programs and to integrate educational programs with that impressive centre.

We have been able to provide 10 positions for the work on student achievement records in our secondary schools. South Australia leads this nation in the provision of reporting not only on the academic achievements of young people but on their broader achievements, which are encompassed in a student achievement record. I am pleased to note that a number of other States have adopted that procedure, which enhances the opportunities for many young people to secure employment and to enter further studies. Other salaries have been used in training and development programs and special needs programs within the department. That is an indication of how those additional ancillary support staff have been applied in our schools.

Mr GROOM: I congratulate the Minister on the fine way in which he handles this portfolio. The continuing progress that is being made in education in South Australia is a

credit to the Minister and the State Labor Government. With that out of the way—

Members interjecting:

Mr GROOM: At least it is not objected to: it is clearly agreed to by the other side. I notice that in the issues and trends section of the curriculum services program there is reference to cooperation with other States and systems in the implementation of the common and agreed national goals for schooling in Australia. Will the Minister explain this scheme and its implementation and the benefits to South Australia?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for his kind words. I will be out visiting schools in his electorate next week. I have also been in many schools in the honourable member for Heysen's electorate: schools with which I have quite a friendly relationship.

The issue of national goals is one that is very important indeed for the well-being of education in this country, and I was concerned that the Federal Government was not stating publicly its commitment to schools' programs in this country. The Federal Government has perhaps been dominated in the education sphere by a tertiary restructuring and the enormous amount of work that is being put in to ensuring that our educational output is very closely linked with the need of this nation as we restructure our economy and face the real challenges that we face as a nation as we move into the next century.

I was pleased that the Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Mr Dawkins, issued a discussion paper, strengthening Australian schools, into the Federal Parliament some two years ago and, as a result of that, the Australian Education Council, at a meeting of Education Ministers, agreed to establish a working party, for the first time in the history of this nation, to determine a set of goals which would be the basis for schooling in this country.

The South Australian Director-General of Education, Dr Boston, was the Chairperson of that working party. In Hobart in April this year, at the Australian Education Council meeting, there was agreement amongst Australian Education Ministers for a common, agreed set of national goals for schooling in Australia: that was a very historic decision. It is interesting to note, and bearing in mind my previous concerns, that the Commonwealth Government's interest and commitment to schools in this country has really only been of recent times. It was only in the 1960s that the Commonwealth was actually accepted as a member of the Australian Education Council, and funding to schools from the Commonwealth sector has only occurred in more recent times.

I think it is important that it is not seen as the States versus the Commonwealth, but indeed the Commonwealth and the States as the partners in determining and ensuring our responsibilities to provide adequate educational opportunities for young people in this country. There is, I believe, huge potential for sharing of resources and information in a collective manner in this country, particularly with respect to the development of curriculum. It is a tragedy that for so long we have tolerated each State in a colonial mode developing education systems apart from each other.

The fact that we all have different handwriting styles, the fact that we teach quite fundamental subjects such as maths, science, English and the like in different modes, I think is something that should concern us all. We need to retain our individuality. We need to retain those matters that are relevant and pertinent to each State, but there is an opportunity for a great deal more sharing and cooperation amongst the education providers in this country.

It is for that reason, at the Hobart meeting, that there was a decision to establish the Curriculum Development Corporation of Australia, a curriculum development authority that would have as its partners the States and the Commonwealth plus the non-government school representatives and representatives of parent bodies. We will have, I believe, a structure that can provide the mechanism where we can achieve that greater degree of cooperation in schools in this country. I think we will be hearing much more about the Curriculum Development Corporation and about the application of the national goals.

I know that in some non-government sector quarters there has been a little concern that those goals will be used for some mechanism to achieve political influence in funding programs. Assurances have been given by the Federal Minister that that is not the case, but I think, on the other hand, the Federal Minister intends to provide each year to the Federal Parliament a report on schooling in this country, and that would be welcomed by all responsible Australians.

There is much interest in this country about educational outcomes, and if that can be translated into a commitment by the Australian nation as a whole to what is happening in our schools, and commitment to ensure that not only is there adequate funding provided, but there is that community interest in what is going on and participation in the well-being of those schools, then the future is a very bright one indeed for us in the education sphere.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I refer to page 200 of the program entitled 'Curriculum Services'. I have a copy of a blue paper 'School Values' which was produced to be sent out to schools by the Education Department. This 16-page glossy has a foreword written by Mr Garth Boomer, the Associate Director of Education, Curriculum. There is also a covering letter by Mr Boomer. I also have a copy of a green-coloured discussion paper also dealing with 'School Values'. This document is the same as the previous blue paper with one exception: this paper now has a foreword written by the Director-General of Education, Dr Boston, and a covering letter from Dr Boston. Education Department sources have revealed that the first blue paper signed by Mr Boomer and packaged ready to be sent to schools was ordered by Dr Boston to be removed and destroyed because he was unhappy that Mr Boomer had written the foreword.

Will the Minister indicate how many copies of both papers were produced; at what cost; and how much money has been wasted in this futile exercise? Will the Minister also indicate what action he has taken as Minister on this particular matter?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am not quite sure of the source of the honourable member's information, but it is quite erroneous. The first booklet was prepared. I must admit that the Education Department is a large organisation and that certain sections of it, in fact, have established practices and precedents which obviously need to be reviewed from time to time. The first document to which the honourable member refers was not a document that had been approved at the highest levels of the department for distribution and, in fact, had not been a document that had been considered for consultation prior to its being promulgated as the policy of the Education Department.

Any cost incurred in ensuring that that process has occurred is in my view money that is well spent because, in such an issue as that to which the document refers, it is quite important and in line with our existing practice that it should be discussed by the broad education community in this State so that people have an opportunity to put their

views forward before we reach a final policy position on matters of that type.

I welcome the work that has been done. It is an important issue which for too long has been set aside as being too difficult or, in some cases, too controversial for schools to embrace. Nevertheless, the issue of values in education is quite fundamental. As was done in New South Wales several years ago, it is appropriate that we have a policy in this area and that it be properly enunciated. There must be a consultation process and that was not occurring in the form previously envisaged within the confines of the department. I do not have the costs before me of changing that strategy and preparing the document in a different form but will obtain it for the honourable member. It was not, as has been portrayed, some sort of dispute between officers of the department. It is a matter of process. That matter has been clarified and I assure honourable members that it will not occur again.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I am not questioning the value of the discussion paper or the cost of printing it. My concern is that we have two identical, or almost identical publications and I am concerned about those costs as well as the wastage as a result of two identical documents being prepared. I would like those figures to be made available to the Committee.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I undertake to obtain that information. I accept that there was a breakdown in the process, but the end result I am pleased to stand by, namely, that a document of this type needs wide consultation with education communities in this State before reaching a final position.

Mr S.G. EVANS: Was the Director aware that a discussion paper has been prepared and, if so, why was not a proof prepared instead of an actual document that is of greater cost?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not know all the processes, but if the Director-General had known of the extent to which the documentation had been prepared, that would not have occurred.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I also have a copy of a six-page document entitled Curriculum Bulletin No.1 with a front page article by Mr Garth Boomer, Associate Director of Education Curriculum. I understand that this bulletin was also produced and ready to be sent to schools. However, as I understand it an order was given for the bulletin to be withdrawn and destroyed. Will the Minister outline the reasons for this decision and the amount of money wasted by that action?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will undertake to find out the costs of such, but this similarly is a matter of process in the role that units within the Education Department have traditionally played and who they have consulted about the information disseminated from them. Indeed, there has been substantial change in the programs provided by several of the directorates of the Education Department. The information that was to be disseminated is not in line with the responsibilities now provided within the directorate of the department. The information it contained was simply no longer relevant to its function. In that sense it was not appropriate that it be sent out in that form and for those reasons the decision was taken.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I hope this is not a continuing saga, and I will be most interested in the figures that the Minister will provide. I refer to page 189 of the Estimates of Payments, which relates to the senior executive. Will the Minister indicate who are the members of the senior executive and whether any of these members are unlikely to be in these positions as at June 1990.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Director-General advises that he knows of no proposals to alter duties now established or to alter the persons occupying those positions in the near future. We have directors for each of the five geographic regions of the State. In addition is the Director-General (Dr K. Boston), the Associate Director-General (Mr G. Boomer), the Director of Administration (Mr T. Barr), the Director of Resources (Ms H. Kolbe), the Director of Personnel (Mr J. Christie), the Equal Opportunity Officer (Ms E. Ramsay), and the Director of Education Review Unit (Dr P. Cuttance). The Area Directors are Mr Ralph, Mr Hewton, Ms Gracanin, Dr Were and Mr Cusack. Those persons comprise the senior executive of the Education Department.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Is it likely that there will be any changes?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: No, I do not know of any proposals to change the composition of the executive. The Director-General has advised that he has no proposals to change its composition. However, people at that level can change with positions outside the Government and the like as it is the most senior area of the department. I omitted to add that Mr Edwards recently rejoined the Education Department as Director of Special Projects.

Mr HAMILTON: How much does the Government pay to help children from poor families with educational expenses, and how does this compare with previous years? How many students receive this kind of support?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The ability of some children in our schools to participate fully in the life of that school on the basis of their inability to pay for certain services is of concern to us in the Education Department. We have taken steps in recent years to provide support over and above the inflation provision so that schools and students receive additional support. I know that it is of concern to many school communities, not so much on the part of those who can simply not afford to pay the costs associated for all parents with children attending school but more so on the part of those parents who for one reason or another do not want to pay all or part of those costs embodied in a school payment.

That is a matter on which we have had discussions with parent organisations and on which we are taking steps to help school communities to ensure that there is appropriate and responsible methods for receiving those payments, and that the provisions are equitable. We have provided grants to schools at a much earlier stage in the financial year so that school communities can invest those funds and earn income. We have also given schools access to the South Australian Financing Authority for investment purposes. In recent years, we have provided additional grants to schools based on the number of Government assisted students attending those schools and, in addition, we have increased, above inflation, the Government assisted payments.

Therefore, a substantial effort has been made in this area. Grants to those Government assisted scholars increased from \$77.50 in 1989 to \$85 for the 1990 school year; that is an increase of 9.7 per cent. It is interesting to note that in 1983, these payments were only \$33 per eligible student. In dollar terms, we have increased that amount by 158 per cent, while the CPI has increased by 51 per cent. So, we are catching up. The concern was that in 1981 and 1982 there was no increase in those payments. It is a matter that requires constant vigilance within the education system and within particular schools. As it is now encompassed in the Government's civil justice strategy within the education system, we are ensuring that more and more of those students receive appropriate resources.

Mr HAMILTON: I would like to place on the public record my thanks to the Adelaide area and, indeed, the Minister, for the assistance given to a child with a particular disability at Hendon Primary School. I was absolutely delighted with that assistance, as indeed, was the school, and the tremendous support given by the Minister and his staff in relation to transport for this child. The Program Estimates indicate a proposed expenditure on transport of \$15 million. Can the Minister give more details about these costs? How many buses does the Education Department own and run? What are the associated costs? What special transport provision is made for children with disabilities? Who receives the \$761 000 shown as 'student' allowances?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is often been said that the Education Department has more buses than the State Transport Authority. Bearing in mind that the Chairman had ministerial responsibility for this area, I am not sure who is right. This issue is determined year by year, but the Education Department has a substantial fleet of buses, and rightly so. Therefore, it can provide access to many children throughout the State to compulsory schooling. However, the department also provides a substantial sum to the STA to provide concessional transport for students on STA buses. This very important service and support is provided to young people across the State to ensure access to the education that they desire. The department also provides transport for disabled children in the community, and about \$1.5 million was spent last financial year. A similar amount already has been spent this year for the transportation of disabled children, primarily through access to taxis. We now have the Access Cabs as well, which provide additional facilities for young people with special needs to attend the school of their choice in the Adelaide area.

In 1988-89, the operating cost for departmental buses was \$6.895 million. Children with disabilities are provided with free taxis or bus transport to and from school, in addition, payment of costs on public transport or assistance with car travel may be provided. Each form of assistance is subject to assessment of the learning needs of the child for attendance at the most appropriate school. Grants or allowances are paid to parents or guardians of students who meet the eligibility criteria for some form of transport assistance. The main criterion is one of distance: all students living more than five kilometres from the nearest Government school or school bus service are eligible to receive that assistance.

With respect to the concessional transport passes for scholars, the actual expenditure for 1988-89 was \$9.65 million, and for the coming year, the expenditure will be \$10.68 million, an increase of over \$1 million. That increase reflects an adjustment in payments to the STA for the previous year which has been carried over, and the inflation adjustment for the private operators, who similarly receive that payment, and an increase in the number of concessional tickets purchased by students. It is interesting that the projection this year is for about 5 million concession ticket purchases. The number of tickets purchased translates into an increase to 11.232 million trips this year from 10.726 million trips last year. Therefore, the department provides a very extensive service to the community.

Mr HAMILTON: The proposed expenditure for multi-cultural education in schools is about \$1.3 million. Has the Minister some details about this very important program?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: South Australia has very proud tradition of commitment to multi-cultural education in a wide variety of spheres. This tradition is the result of much work done during the 1980s in several areas of human services but, particularly, in education. For example, the Multi-cultural Education Coordinating Committee has

worked within the structures of the Education Department languages program and a whole range of other areas, in the establishment of the South Australian Secondary School of Languages and in the work of our ethnic schools.

In view of a report recently received encompassing the roles of ethnic schools, our languages policy is very comprehensive indeed. South Australia's commitment to providing a second language education to each primary school child by the year 1995 is on track and, indeed, is the envy of other States. I have noted the recent statements of the New South Wales Minister of Education, which indicate just how far ahead South Australia is in this regard. Nevertheless, we realise that this country has a long way to go in providing language education.

It is disappointing to know that only 7 per cent of tertiary students in this State—and it may be a lower number in the whole of Australia—are studying a second language. We have traditionally been a monolingual nation, and our education system has accepted a huge responsibility to turn that around, so we support those students who have non-English speaking family backgrounds to maintain their community languages. We want to ensure that the traditional languages are still taught in our schools and provide an important role in the curriculum but we want also to add languages of economic importance, particularly Asian languages, to that category. This commitment has grown each year as additional language teachers have been placed in our schools. This year, 264 languages other than English programs will be operating in 212 primary schools, involving 21 different languages. To achieve these programs, 113 additional salaries have been provided during the period of the implementation of this policy.

Mr S.G. EVANS: The Karrara Residents Association recently conducted an extensive door-knock survey of most of the Karrara subdivision to gauge future needs for primary education. The survey shows a clear need for a new school. Why does this year's capital works program not include expenditure for a new school, other than making provision for planning for a new school, with timing dependent on demography? Does the Education Department accept the validity of the figures provided by the Residents Association?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Provision is made in the capital works program; there is a footnote in that regard. It is dependent upon a number of factors. I have spoken to a representative of the community who came to see me about this matter and it is accepted that another school facility will be provided in that locality. The Education Department is committed to providing that, and that information has been relayed to the community. Additional developments are occurring in that area that we would be foolish not to take into account before making the final decision. The department has secured property on which to build the school and the time lines have been indicated to the local community but, before the final decision is taken, discussions are ensuing with respect to two other potentially major developments in the area. Once they are determined and understood, a final decision can be taken.

A school will be provided and it will be provided in the most appropriate area. Of course, the community will be consulted on that decision and, if the proposed new developments do not proceed or do not proceed at the projected pace, the school will be placed on the acquired site. Therefore, there is no cause for concern within the community, and I refer the honourable member to the capital works budget papers, which specifically mention that the program also includes provision for planning new primary schools at Aldinga South and Karrara. The timing of construction

of these schools depends on demography, which is precisely the situation which I have outlined to the honourable member and which I have explained in some detail to the community representative whom I met and who was accompanied by the local member for the area, the member for Bright (Mr Robertson).

Mr S.G. EVANS: Would the Minister agree that, since money has been made available only for planning and not for construction, it seems unlikely that the school could be completed and ready for occupation in February 1991? Is the site on Koala Avenue?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, that is the site and it is believed that the deadline can be met. As I said, it depends upon consideration of those other external factors.

Mr S.G. EVANS: As the Minister would be aware, the present Aberfoyle Park Primary School site is to be vacated once the students have moved to the new school. That has just been built. (Program Estimates page 192.) The facilities at Aberfoyle Park High School, on an adjoining property, are fully stretched, and it was always intended that Aberfoyle Park High School would expand into the primary school site when it became vacant and if it became necessary. Will the Minister give a commitment that the high school will be able to expand into the vacant site as promised?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I have never heard that that would not be the case.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I was on the school council and I assure the Minister that that was to be the case; the school was always intended to take over the primary school site when it was vacated.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Why would that not occur?

Mr S.G. EVANS: I am no longer on the school council; I seek confirmation that that will happen, because nobody seems to know.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will obtain precise information about that matter. I have assumed that the move would take place and that is why we are spending an enormous amount of money building a new primary school. We have increased the solid core of that primary school because of the projected increase in numbers in that district. As to future plans, I will obtain information.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I ask, because the same uncertainty seems to prevail with the Minister as with the community and me, and it seems foolish to have a school empty if the high school needs it. In the rapidly developing southern suburbs of Woodcroft, Woodend Estate, Trott Park, Sheidow Park and Hallett Cove, there is continued discussion about the need for a second school in the area. What are the department's plans for the possible expansion of the Hallett Cove R10 to become R12, and does it consider that there is a need for another secondary school in that area?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Once again, I understand that that matter is being monitored carefully by the department and it depends to a large extent upon demography, population growth and where in that area it is growing. It needs to be considered in the context of the curriculum offering in senior secondary years and how it can best be provided to those students. Whilst it is attractive for some students in senior secondary years to have access to a school close to where they live, it may not be in their best interests if they cannot have access to the range of subjects that they require in order to pursue their career paths.

The simplistic answer expressed by many is simply to create that senior secondary top within that school context. As I understand it, that is not an option that has been ruled out by the department. Once again, I have discussed this matter with a group of people living in the locality con-

cerned and have heard their views—indeed, their varied views—on this issue. I think we need to look at the population growth in the area and give very real consideration to what is in the best interests of the students in that location before making a final decision as to whether that school should grow in the manner that the honourable member is suggesting.

Mr De LAINE: How many students do we have in our primary and secondary schools? Will this number increase or decrease next year, and by how many? What is the general trend in relation to enrolments, and are they likely to increase in the future?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am sure that members are aware of the difficulties that we have had in this State in providing education in the community due to declining enrolments. From the very accurate projections that are now available to us we know that this is a continuing decline. It has continued now for some 10 years in this State. At present, there are 43 000 fewer students in our schools compared with a decade ago. It is expected that in 1990 there will be a further decline of some 2 000 students in our schools, despite rapidly increasing retention rates.

As we have said, the State Government will retain all of the freed up teaching positions; those resources will be retained within the education system. That forms, of course, part of the curriculum guarantee package. It is interesting to note that those teachers will join the already retained positions that have occurred as a result of enrolment decline over the past seven years. This involves some 860 positions that have been retained over the past seven years in our schools.

Despite that enrolment decline, we have been able to very much improve the pupil-teacher ratios in our schools. It is interesting to compare this position with the figures for the other States—although these are 1988 figures and a little out of date. However, South Australia has an overall pupil-teacher ratio which is significantly better than the national average. It was some 13.41 in 1988. That has improved again this year and will improve again next year. The national average is 14.76. Of the other States, only Victoria has a better ratio. Because of recent decisions in Victoria, it is believed that our position in South Australia has been enhanced compared with that in Victoria. In relation to the other States, the pupil-teacher ratio figures for 1988 are as follows: New South Wales, 15.64; Victoria, 13.2; Queensland, 15.92; South Australia, 13.41; Western Australia, 16.43; Tasmania, 13.59; Northern Territory, 13.08; and the Australian Capital Territory, 14.19—with a national average of 14.76.

Mr De LAINE: As referred to at page 192 of the Program Estimates, a specific target for secondary schools in 1988-89 was to increase further retention and participation rates in years 11 and 12. Has this been achieved? What is our year 12 retention rate? How does it compare nationally?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This relates to a matter in relation to which all South Australians can be justly proud. Since the Bannon Government took office in 1982, we have progressed from a 40.6 per cent retention rate to the present position in this State of some 60 per cent, and maybe even higher than that, with the finalisation of figures for this year. South Australia does lead this nation now in this area. It would be wrong of us to conclude that what we have done is sufficient. We have a lot further to go in improving retention rates. As I said in response to questions asked earlier in this Committee, we remain concerned about the low retention rates of young people in the rural areas of South Australia and indeed in some of the lower socioeconomic areas of metropolitan Adelaide.

Steps are under way to reconfigure our schools—restructure them. The work of the Gilding review into post-compulsory education provides one such avenue to improve our structures so that we can enhance opportunities for those young people who are at present leaving secondary school prior to completion of 12 years of primary and secondary education. This is quite fundamental if we are to give these young people the opportunities that they deserve to take their place in the broader community and in the work force, as well as encouraging an increased participation rate in tertiary education. This is a primary goal that we have established in the Education Department.

Mr De LAINE: A specific 1989-90 target/objective referred to at page 191 of the Program Estimates concerns developing support for the management of student behaviour. How is the department supporting school discipline?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The department is concerned about ensuring that each school has an adequate policy, and resources, to maintain a responsible behaviour management structure and an orderly learning environment. Not only do we want to achieve that but we want the community to understand how that is being achieved, and that it is being achieved. Unfortunately, I think that many people in our community still have quite simplistic attitudes towards how we achieve responsible behaviour management of pupils in our schools. A good deal of work has been done in this area in South Australia.

I note that in Western Australia, New South Wales and Victoria decisions were taken by the administrations to abolish overnight, for example, the use of corporal punishment in schools. That policy was changed (in Western Australia, by order of the courts). In my view a proper strategy was not developed and resourced to provide for a policy in each school to ensure that discipline was not only established and maintained, but understood. That is very important. There are still many people in our community who are critical of discipline in our schools. When questioned, one finds that very often they have a remote relationship with the school of which they are critical or with the group of students involved.

The Education Department has now established a draft policy, subject to discussion, on behaviour management in our schools. We have for the first time introduced a network of counsellors in primary schools. We already have them established in our secondary schools. In the phasing out of the use of corporal punishment, we are replacing that with something which is much more effective, we believe, and something which is much better understood by the student body and indeed by the wider community. It is interesting that, in New South Wales, where the policy of abolition of corporal punishment was reversed by a new Government, in fact, very few schools (indeed, one of the reports I read said that the authors were not able to find a school) have reintroduced corporal punishment.

There is little use for corporal punishment in schools around the country. However, we do not want to create a void. It is perceived that there is a lack of effective discipline in our schools. I can assure members that that is not the case, as a visit to a school would show. It is certainly not the wish of teachers or parents; I believe there have been rapidly changing attitudes within the community about this matter.

I visited a large high school yesterday where the principal told me that there were no problems at all with classroom behaviour. He said that the motivation of students in that school was high. The school has behavioural and human relationship problems, but mechanisms are in place to deal with those, and they can be isolated from the disruptive

behaviour that unfortunately pervaded some classrooms in the past. Indeed, dramatically changing attitudes amongst young people themselves on this matter have occurred. I believe this to be an important issue, and one that has been taken very seriously in the Education Department planning and resourcing. I will ask the Director-General to add to what I have said about the specifics of our programs in this area.

Dr Boston: We anticipate that the new school discipline policy will be launched in October of this year. It takes a tough stand on schools being safe, careful and caring and providing orderly learning environments in which students and teachers can get on with the job of teaching and learning. It is based upon a system of responses to good and bad behaviour, which are implemented, without any exception, when they occur. They are graded responses, so that students know that, if they infringe a rule of the school, a penalty will follow. Those rules are made collaboratively with the students and parents. The program involves close parental involvement in the implementation of discipline. The department will provide a policy document with a good deal of supporting information; an implementation kit to assist teachers; and a directory of schools with good practices in the area of discipline which will provide a listing of the many Government schools which have been working in this way for some years and which have achieved a great deal of success.

The latest survey indicates that 83 per cent of schools have not used corporal punishment at all in the 1988 school year. The schools did not experience any increase in disruption at all; in fact, they reported that the climate and culture of schools changed and that examples of poor discipline diminished greatly.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Referring to the Program Estimates (page 197), 'Special schools program', I note that special schools are meant to be staffed on the basis of one teacher per eight children. However, for a variety of reasons—including the fact that, overall, more children are in the difficult to handle category in those schools now, compared with 10 years ago—many special schools have been staffed on a more effective basis of one teacher per six children. A recent decision by the Government to force schools to adhere to the one to eight formula appears to have caused alarm amongst staff and parents. A memo from Mr Mark Schiller, Assistant Director of Personnel in the Adelaide area, dated 22 August 1989, indicates that the formula is non-negotiable. The Riverland Special School summarised its view, as follows:

The rights of students in this special school do not seem to have been considered and there is a real possibility that existing programs will take a backward step.

Schools such as Ashford and Minda have advised us that they will lose between one to two staff members. Their loss of staff will be even higher if the Government does not honour its promise of providing some allowance for non-contact time for staff. Why is the Minister cutting staff allocations for some special schools, and how does this decision comply with the Government's supposed social justice strategy?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: A decline in the enrolments of special schools has occurred as between 1986 and the estimated enrolments for 1989-90. That decline of 128 students from the 1986 figure of 1 441 represents a 9.7 per cent decrease on the 1990 figures. A reasonably steady and substantial decline in the number of students in special schools has occurred. I believe we canvassed the reasons for that previously. In the same time between 1986 and 1989, the number of staff allocated to those schools has been increased from 382 full-time equivalent teaching positions to 391.8

for the current school year. A further increase in the 1990 school year will occur. The staff target for 1990 will be finalised when current discussions on the curriculum guarantee package are concluded. The curriculum guarantee package provides that teachers in special schools will have the time actually spent in classroom instruction reduced by 4 per cent in line with teacher conditions in primary and junior primary schools. So a 4 per cent increase in non-contact time for those teachers will occur.

The formula for allocating staff to special schools has not been altered for the next financial year. Clearly, the explanation for any diminution in staff in any of the schools to which the honourable member refers is linked with enrolment decline. However, the Director-General may be able to add further to the staffing process currently under way.

Dr Boston: The staffing process comes out of the curriculum guarantee package, which, we anticipate, will be agreed to shortly. If that is accepted, over 100 new leadership positions will be put into special schools, which will be a tremendous fillip for their leadership and operations. Over 1 000 teachers in special schools have their salary pegged at the moment at step 10 of the automatic salary scale. The curriculum guarantee involves withdrawing that barrier from the beginning of the 1991 school year. That will lead to special school teachers obtaining an increase of \$3 500 per annum each. Ancillary staff have also been placed in schools: ancillary staff appointments worth more than \$900 000 have been made during the past three years. Additional support will be provided during the 1990 school year.

In addition to the increase in both teacher and ancillary support for students who require additional support because of physical or intellectual impairment and who are enrolled in traditional schools. An increase in that area has occurred, and is involved in what is called the 'integration program' in traditional schools—we have allocated one full-time equivalent teacher for every 550 primary students and one FTE for every 500 secondary students enrolled in our Government schools. That approach involves the allocation of 372 salaries in this area, which again is a substantial improvement in the position of integrating students in traditional schools.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I think that the Director-General's comments about teachers in special schools who have their salary pegged at step 10 level should have been 100.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I refer again to special education in the Program Estimates at page 197. Principals, teachers and parents have in recent weeks been contacting my colleagues and expressing concern at cuts in special education in their schools. For example, in the eastern area of the department we have been told that there were 90 special education and special needs salaries. However, the eastern area has been told that next year it will have only 33 special education salaries, plus an as yet unspecified number of additional salaries to be distributed under tier 2 of the curriculum guarantee. However, the criteria for the distribution of those tier 2 salaries—for example, Aboriginality and the numbers of Government-assisted students—will mean that a significant proportion of those tier 2 salaries is unlikely to go to country areas. A number of schools in the South-East met only this week to consider their positions. Seven of those schools will lose 3.4 special education salaries next year, even though the number of students needing help—I emphasise 'needing help'—has increased. Will the Minister explain the reason for schools losing special education staff when they have more children requiring assistance?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, the contacts that have been made to lobby for additional resources for schools are not

only irresponsible but premature in every sense of that word, because the staffing process has not been concluded. As the honourable member said, there are a number of stages in this process. People are wanting to predict the worst scenario for their particular circumstances without looking at the system as a whole and what is in the best interests of our system. We are trying to allocate salaries on an equitable distribution according to criteria which have been established to ensure that those most in need receive resources which are above the standard formula provision.

We need to consider these matters in an environment that goes beyond the circumstances of each school. We must look at the system more as a whole and our responsibilities within that system. There are many people in the Education Department and parents who welcome these new ways of approaching the staffing of schools. I am confident that the staffing that we are able to provide, given the fact that we are able to retain resources in a period of declining enrolments, can provide us with an adequate structure for our schools.

There will always be some who want more. Some can never be satisfied with respect to those resources, particularly the staffing that is provided. Some simply do not care about those in need. I was at a school the other day where representatives of the school community were asking for additional resources for that school. I said, 'You might like to visit other schools with me and then help me to make a decision as to which school is more deserving.' They said, 'We do not care about other schools. We want more resources for our school.' Fortunately, such conclusions and statements are rare in our system. Many of the fears expressed to the honourable member and his colleagues will not eventuate, but I will ask the Director-General to explain the process which is taking place this year and which seems to have caused concern to some school communities.

Dr Boston: The staffing formula for next year in the curriculum guarantee package has two tiers. Tier 1 is based on the allocation of staff to schools according to certain specified class sizes, to which the Minister referred in response to an earlier question. Tier 2 is the allocation of at least 550 staff to support the educational needs of disadvantaged students, including country students, students in small and isolated schools, students who are physically or intellectually impaired, socio-economically disadvantaged students, students from non-English speaking backgrounds and students in schools with a significant gender imbalance. Broadly, that is made up in the following proportions: special education, 372; GAS and Aboriginality, 100; non-English speaking backgrounds, five; significant gender imbalance, about 3; other social justice areas, 52; and open access, 40. That totals about 572. As I said, the figure would be somewhere in excess of 550. The actual amount depends on what is allocated in tier 1 according to class sizes, but the figure allocated in tier 2 will be of that order.

The information currently going around in schools is, as the Minister said, quite premature. Because we are only just now closing on the curriculum guarantee agreement, we are running late with the staffing of schools for next year. It has been necessary to make a later start in an attempt to get agreement with the union on the package itself.

We were not able to start earlier than at the present time. Information about tier 1 is being interpreted among some principals as information about the whole formula. There is still tier 2 to be allocated and we have officers working on that at this very moment in order that information can be provided to schools as quickly as possible. We will be looking very closely on a school-by-school basis, once that

allocation has been made, to determine where changes have occurred and, where those changes involve a reduction in staff, we would want to know why and to see whether that was creating any difficulties in curriculum terms. Where reductions are occurring because of reduced enrolments, that is one matter, but where reductions look as if they may occur for other reasons, that is an issue that we will need to address.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I refer to the question of country school closures, referred to page 198 of the Program Estimates. As the Minister would be aware, there has been heated opposition to his decision. Although I detect some effort on the part of the Minister and his Director to give us the impression that the Geranium, Lameroo and Pinnaroo issue had been readily accepted locally, there has still been heated opposition to the decision to close the secondary component of the Geranium and Pinnaroo schools.

On 22 August Dr Boston spoke to a protest meeting at Pinnaroo saying, from the meeting transcript, that the situation in Pinnaroo, Lameroo and Geranium is not one which will be restricted to this area. The Minister himself has conceded today, in fact, that a number of schools are under review. For example, Lock is being reviewed and Tintinara is to be reviewed next year. It is noted that the Education Department has quite a number of schools under review. For example, schools like Snowtown and Lucindale have contacted us expressing some fears for their future.

Will the Minister provide a list of all those schools in country areas which are being reviewed or are soon to be reviewed, and will he list the schools, such as East Murray which have been reviewed and which are, in fact, to be kept open—so, being reviewed; to be reviewed; and reviewed and being kept open.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The issue of school closures is a difficult one, of course, and the example the honourable member mentioned with respect to Lameroo, Pinnaroo and Geranium schools, the secondary component of those schools combining in the one location, undoubtedly has caused concern in the community. I have met with a deputation representing the community. One needs to look carefully at the community as a whole—as an economic unit and also as a local government entity and education community, and sometimes those sections have differing outlooks with respect to the provision of an adequate education for young people, particularly in the senior secondary years now that, as I have said, retention rates are increased and the importance of those years is being understood. It cannot be overlooked that the school council at Pinnaroo did, in fact, pass a motion to support the aggregated campus, and most certainly there has been a good deal of discussion in terms of the deputation I met which included the Mayor. Those opposing views were expressed to me.

The issue that the Education Department needs to address as being of fundamental importance is: what is in the best interests of those young people? I have had it said to me that the educational offering is not important to those young people; they are simply going to work in rural settings, on farms and the like, and therefore it is more important to leave that secondary component within the town, with the economic pluses and the status that it brings to the town. Now, that is an argument that I must reject. The local economics of the community are important but we must be guided by what is in the best interests of those young people—not just within the division of their own environment, but the potential that those young people have. That must be extended to the fullest extent that we are able to achieve and we indeed have a duty to do that. It is a difficult

process but I believe that there is a good deal of understanding of that agenda within that local community.

This discussion is going on in a number of other places throughout the State. It is not a decision-taking process whereby the Education Department, as expressed by the Minister or senior management of the department, simply decides that a particular school or group of schools shall either close or be reconfigured; it is in partnership with those local communities developing a better educational offering for them.

I shall be pleased to obtain a list for the honourable member where there has been some expression of interest by those school communities, or indeed, where the matter has arisen as a result of discussions by other school communities which touch other schools, so that there is some indication of discussions that are going on. Of course, many of those may never involve an actual school closure but could involve the adoption of clustering or distance education between groups of schools and particularly sharing of staff and other resources and the like but that is something that is going on indeed with many schools across the State.

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

Mr HAMILTON: I understand that the Brighton High School redevelopment has cost about \$7 million and will be officially opened shortly. How efficiently has the redevelopment been controlled at that school, and has it caused any disruption to students? Has it affected their studies, particularly senior secondary and music students, as this school is a leader in those areas?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Brighton High School redevelopment will be officially opened this Saturday by the Premier. It is a great tribute to all who have worked over such an extended period to see that the school has the physical environment that it so richly deserves. It has resulted from both an enormous amount of commitment within the school community and its desire to secure those resources within successive capital works programs. The staging of the development has meant that there has been physical dislocation for the learning programs within that school, but the school has managed it successfully. It has a music focus and attracts many students from across the metropolitan area because of it. A redevelopment of this scale is not easy in the context of a special music focus school, so that much is owed to all in the school community for their tolerance.

The expenditure in that school will see it now well established for many years to come. Its enrolments have remained high, and the offerings within that school community are comprehensive. Last week I launched a book written by a former headmaster, Mr Farrow, on the history of Brighton High School. It has a proud history, as is accurately portrayed in that book. That focus element of the school serves all southern and south-western suburbs in Adelaide. It sets standards of education for all to follow, as is clearly evident in the publication to which I have just referred. It is another example of a fine State school in South Australia, and offers a standard of education equal to any school in this State.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to a reshuffle of campuses. Seaview High School is reshuffling its two campuses to create a senior centre on the Dover campus. Will the Minister elaborate on the progress of that reshuffle and its success?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The decision to amalgamate those two schools into the dual campus of the Seaview High School was as a result of the Newberry report into the

reorganisation of schools in the south-western corner of Adelaide. That study involved not only the school communities but also the broader community. It took difficult decisions. The closure of Vermont High School and the establishment of the dual campus at Seaview was part of the recommendations.

I opened the new senior campus earlier this year. A tremendous spirit is abroad in that school. The school can offer a broader curriculum, and will make a substantial impact on not only the lives of the students but also on the district generally. There is much energy and renewed interest in what can be achieved within a school of that size and potential. It is difficult operating over the two physical locations and bringing it all together. I pay a tribute to the staff and parent body, and particularly to the students, who have worked their way through the exchange magnificently.

Mr HAMILTON: What action is the Education Department pursuing to ensure that playgrounds and playground equipment are made safe? The Minister would be aware that many primary schools have taken remedial action to ensure that playground equipment and their surrounds are made safe for students. I congratulate all parents and volunteers involved in this rehabilitation. I am sure that the Minister will agree that this is important in view of the possibilities of children being injured and the question of insurance and compensation is uppermost in everyone's mind.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Much more information is now known about what is safe and unsafe in children's playgrounds. Indeed, the whole area of child's play has become much more important in curriculum for our schools and pre-schools. Because of new information available, it has been necessary to remove from schools obsolete equipment which we now know to be dangerous and ineffective in child's play and the learning elements of it. Substantial costs are involved not only in the provision of new and more appropriate equipment but also with the removal of existing equipment.

There has been some controversy on new standards being established for playground equipment. Because of the new administrative arrangements and professional support now available to schools and because of a much more enlightened private sector, many of those problems are being worked through. Traditionally this has been the preserve of parent bodies within schools. Schools have had to raise funds to provide for those additional pieces of equipment that are seen as an adjunct to schools and traditionally have been provided for play periods. We have provided in recent years some funding from our works programs for the development of these facilities.

Great opportunity existed when unemployment relief funds were available as much was allocated to the development of playgrounds in schools. In more recent times minor works grants have been provided in necessitative circumstances, but in the main it still continues to be a role that parents have accepted.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I refer to page 183 of the Program Estimates and to page 193 of the Financial Statement. I go back to 1987 when the Minister stated that average employment levels were regarded by Treasury and the Education Department as the most relevant measures of employment. Average employment levels were seen to be in preference to 30 June statistics.

Page 193 of this year's Financial Statement shows that in 1988-89, 14 252 teachers were employed, whilst, page 71 of the equivalent paper of 1985-86 shows that 14 938 teachers were employed—a difference of 686. I am aware of the Minister's statement about retaining freed-up teachers, but

will the Minister now concede that there are 686 fewer teachers in schools today compared to the 1985-86 level?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The simple reality is that, because of the decline in enrolments in our schools, we have been able to retain substantial additional teaching positions. Those resources have been retained to improve programs. The number of teachers—given this budget and the decision by the Government to retain those resources for the 1989-90 calendar year—has meant a retention of almost 1 000 teaching positions, despite a decline in enrolments.

I know that the Opposition prefers to paint this matter in a negative light, and see this as an overall reduction in teacher salaries, but I can only refer honourable members to the period from 1979 to 1982 when there was a huge reduction in teaching positions in line with a decline in enrolments. I well recall the Cabinet meetings held at the end of 1982 and at the beginning of 1983, when we assumed Government in this State. There were 231 teaching positions unfunded for the 1983 school year. As a Government, we had to make a decision on how we would find the funds to retain these teaching positions. As a Cabinet we did that and each year we have continued to retain within the system the teaching positions that we could afford and that were appropriate.

Presumably the Opposition is arguing that all of the freed-up teaching positions should have been retained over that period, but the Government stands by its record that almost 1 000 were retained. I notice that in a recent article in the *Melbourne Age*, just before the Victorian budget was brought down, the Liberal Party in that State outlined its attitude with respect to the State budget and to what that Party would have done if it held Government in Victoria. It stated that:

Apert from reducing teacher numbers in line with falling student numbers over recent years, the Liberal education strategy would reduce . . .

And then it went on to indicate the other elements of the education budget that it would reduce. Clearly, there is a substantial difference in the approach with respect to staffing numbers between the Parties in Australia on this issue, and the record shows that to be more so in South Australia.

Earlier this year, I quoted in Parliament an article in the *Melbourne Age* on 20 September 1988, which referred to the official costings prior to the last Victorian State election and the Liberal Party's promises to that State. Its promises with respect to education, were very negative. The article showed that over a four-year period, a Liberal Government proposed to reduce education expenditure by some \$355 million. Of course, when budgets are comprised almost solely of salaries, the only way reductions can be achieved is by reducing the number of staff. This Government has not been a Government of reduction. Indeed, we have retained substantial staff numbers in our system, despite falling enrolments.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: This is not a matter of difference in approach; it is not a matter of painting anything in a different colour. If it comes to that, it is not really what the Opposition states. I have referred to and quoted statistics in the budget papers, both this year and in previous years. Either those statistics are wrong or somewhere in the Minister's calculations a mistake has been made, because the figures I have quoted clearly indicate a difference of some 686 teaching positions. When looking at similar calculations, the Minister must concede that there were 178 fewer teachers in 1988-89 compared to 1987-88. Again, these comments are based on statistics contained in the budget papers.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Opposition may like to portray this issue in that light. However, honourable members

are being selective in the figures they are questioning. These figures must be considered alongside the level of enrolment, because we do not have teachers in isolation; we have teachers to teach students in schools. Whilst it might suit the purposes of the Opposition to portray these figures in some abstract sense, I should state for the record that in this State in 1983 there were 122 738 primary school students and 81 459 secondary school students, a total of 204 197 students.

In 1989 it is estimated that we will have 112 050 primary school students, a reduction of 11 488, and 68 900 secondary school students, a reduction of 12 559. The overall number of students will be 180 150, that is an overall reduction in the period from 1983 to 1989 of 24 047 students. During that period, we have retained almost 900 teaching positions. The Opposition might like to argue that there has been a reduction in teacher numbers but, there has been an improvement in teacher numbers as measured by the pupil teacher ratio. It suits the Opposition's purpose to argue from a negative point of view. If it wants to do that, I think the community should understand the parameters of the argument, and particularly the record of the Opposition when it was in Government from 1979-82, when it cut teacher numbers quite dramatically every year. If that is to be the basis of the debate then it should be put into its proper and true context.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Under normal circumstances in Parliament the Minister might be subject to a point of order for imputing improper motives to the Opposition. The essence of this question lies not in the Opposition's wishing to denigrate the work of the Minister and his department, but in the commitments made by the Premier and the former Minister of Education (Hon. Lynn Arnold) during the 1985 election campaign.

At that time, the Premier said, 'Not a teacher will be lost; all resources will be returned to the department for the betterment of the overall student population.' The Minister has really admitted that he could have lost 1 500 teachers: in fact, he has lost nearly 700 but retained 800 teachers. I do not question the Minister's motives, but to impute improper motives to the Opposition is to deny that the Premier and the former Minister made the commitment not to lose any teachers from the department. I simply point out that you can win elections that way and you can lose them by not keeping promises.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will address his questions to the Minister, through the Chair.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I have explained the position. I have not gone into the precise numbers of teachers lost during the Tonkin administration but I quoted those 213 unfunded positions that the Government was left with at the end of 1982. The Government then funded these positions, as it has continued to fund positions throughout the past seven budgets that it has been involved in, because the Government believed that it was proper and appropriate for this expenditure on education to be given that priority during some very difficult financial years, when some people complained of having to pay increased taxes. They can be reassured that there was additional expenditure in education as a result. I believe that that money has been well spent; every one of those seven budgets has provided for an increase in the amount of money spent per pupil in this State and the pupil teacher ratio has been enhanced in each of those seven years. Those are the true measures of this Government's efforts in education.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I am not concerned with policy but with statistics as they are recorded, and promises. It may be that the Minister will wish to reconsider my

question and provide the detail that has been requested. I refer to teacher numbers: Program Estimates page 183 and Financial Statement page 193. The estimated number of average full-time employees for 1989-90 is 17 770. Will the Minister provide a simple breakdown of that figure into the usual three components: the GME Act employees, the Education Act employees, and others—ancillary staff? I point out that an identical question was asked of the Minister last year and, at the appropriate time, on 7 October last year, that information was not made available and has not been provided to the Opposition. I specifically request that, if the Minister is not able to provide that information now, it be provided by the appropriate date so that it can be incorporated into *Hansard*.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: That was the subject of a telephone inquiry to individual officers of the Education Department, and it was not addressed to me. There are proper ways of getting information from Ministers and the department. I would be very surprised if a question was unanswered; the department is quite rigorous in answering questions.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: For the Minister's assistance, the identical question was asked by the member for Coles in the Estimates Committees last year. Admittedly, while another question was being asked, it got a bit mixed up, but that question, asked by the member for Coles, has not been answered.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The operative words are that it 'got mixed up', because I am informed by my officers that an attempt was made to answer that question, which resulted in some breakdown in communication, certainly not on the part of my officers. However, I will undertake to get the information sought by the honourable member.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member for Price.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Mr Chairman, I have asked only two questions.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member has had three. In any event, there is no mandatory number of three questions, but we try to give members an opportunity to ask three questions. When there is a whole series of supplementary questions, the Chairman will make a judgement. I assure members that, by the end of the day, all members will have had the opportunity to ask all their questions. I am attempting to ensure that both sides get a fair crack of the whip.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I have had two questions and a supplementary.

The CHAIRMAN: No Standing Order states that the Chairman has to provide specifically three questions and any number of supplementary questions. The Chairman will make the judgment on what he (in this case) or she sees as a fair thing. I assure the honourable member for Heysen that, by the time the day is finished, he will have had all the opportunities he needs to ask his questions. I call on the honourable member for Price.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I disagree with your ruling, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member can disagree, but I call the honourable member for Price.

Mr De LAINE: How many floors of the Education Centre in Flinders Street are used by the Education Department and what are the main functions of the various parts of the Education Department based on them?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Before I answer that question, I will try to clarify the previous question of the honourable member for Heysen, about a question asked by the member for Coles in this Committee last year. *Hansard* shows that the honourable member did ask me the question about

teacher numbers. I provided the honourable member with some information then, and one of my officers stated that, if a detailed analysis was required, we could certainly provide it. That offer was made but the information was never requested from the department's officers. If it is required, we can provide the statistical information this year, and I make the offer again that, if further information is required, the honourable member may approach me and I will ensure that the request is responded to.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I have already asked the question, and I have asked for the information to be made available.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Chairman and the Minister are aware of the honourable member's question. Will the Minister respond to the member for Price?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, Mr Chairman. During the past five years the Education Department has vacated four floors of the Education Centre as part of a strategy to free up that accommodation for more appropriate and efficient uses of the property, and also so that we can locate education services close to schools and in an education environment. The best environment is within a school setting. It is also desirable to use the vacant space that we have in many of our metropolitan schools because of the decline in enrolments. We believe that, in this way, the Government is not only serving an educational purpose, but is also providing a better working environment for its staff as well as using very expensive central business district accommodation more effectively. About 210 Education Department staff have moved out of the Education Centre in the past five years, which means that staff have moved from six floors of the Education Centre, either wholly or in part. Indeed, this is an ongoing process, and about another 100 departmental staff will move from the building in future years.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to the multicultural education program (page 195 of the Program Estimates). In relation to the languages other than English program, will schools be provided with extra language teachers where necessary for the maintenance of this valuable program?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, each year the Government has added further language teachers to our schools to further develop our language policy. In answer to an earlier question I indicated the extent of our languages other than English program in primary schools across the State. It is interesting that more and more demands are now being made in this area, as schools see the very real benefits derived by students, and indeed by the whole school, from the teaching of languages other than English. The current language policy requires all reception to year 7 schools to introduce a language other than English as part of the school curriculum by 1995. There are several aspects to the program. The mother tongue language maintenance program was referred to earlier as was the introduction of a second language for students. There is a changing profile of the languages offered, particularly those languages of geo-political importance. This includes many of the Asian languages that are being taught in our schools.

Some 110 salaries are involved in the support of these programs, which provide instruction in a variety of ways. In the main, however, the strategy involves teachers in the classroom imparting their knowledge to students directly, although, as I said, we have been experimenting with distance education modes in a number of areas to enhance the opportunities for some students, although predominantly that has been in secondary schools. It means that all schools will be able to introduce or commence the planning for a language other than English for this coming period, as we

move down to the time line for the implementation of this policy in our schools.

As I said earlier, this is also linked in with other languages policy strategies, particularly with the role of ethnic schools, perhaps more commonly known as 'Saturday schools', in our community. We accept that those schools provide opportunities for many young people that would not otherwise exist, particularly in relation to some of the languages that we cannot offer within the traditional school curriculum. It is for that reason that the recent report we received on ethnic schools recommends a much closer relationship between those schools and our State school system generally, so that we can include those offerings, formalise them and give them accreditation in the development of our overall languages policy.

Mr GROOM: I recall the publicity some time ago about proposals for establishing cottage homes for students. There appears to be no specific reference in the Program Estimates: will the Minister explain this scheme to the Committee and outline the progress that has been made?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Once again, I have been particularly concerned to see that students in rural areas of South Australia are given enhanced opportunities to continue their secondary education. This is to relate first of all to country areas. Our proposal is to encourage schools to develop cottages, where there will be house parents and a small number of students. This relates to the major country centres, where there is a secondary component and a broad curriculum offering. It is interesting that at Burra this year for the first time an accommodation facility has been provided, at the initiative of the school and with the support of the local community. We would like to see that emulated in a number of other areas. We would also like to provide cottage homes in the metropolitan area. For example, one-third of Urrbrae High School students board, and some of those students find that quite difficult. In fact, there are some disincentives to students on economic grounds and their families have concerns about students having to find digs in this way.

We believe that a much better non-school environment can be created in this way. The Commonwealth Government has indicated in its budget that a small amount of financial support is available for the development of programs of this type. With the support of school communities, I believe that we can get this program off the ground in the latter part of this year. Certainly, as we go into the 1990s an increasing number of cottage homes will be available.

We have one home in the metropolitan area on a trial basis this year. I understand that it is progressing quite smoothly. A number of matters have to be resolved with respect to management, legal relationships, the rights of school councils, and the like. A working party has been involved in this. In addition, we have established in the city a clearing house of information for students from the country who want to continue their education. Information is available on boarding options, and also there is a whole range of other information that is necessary for students who want to further their studies and more accurately control their paths into tertiary studies, employment opportunities or, indeed, training. This is an important new initiative. It has been very much welcomed by rural South Australia, and a great deal of interest is being shown in it. I hope that it will be successful.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: My question relates to school assistants, referred to at page 183 of the Program Estimates. Many parents and staff have contacted the Opposition in recent weeks expressing their anger at what they see as being highly misleading and deceptive statements made by the

Minister in what purports to be a summary of the education budget, circulated to all schools. For example, the Minister states:

An extra 100 ancillary staff positions will be allocated to schools in 1990, at a cost of \$1.4 million. This will bring to 400 the additional support staff positions provided to schools, in line with the State Government's commitment.

The fact is that it is shown at page 193 of the 1989-90 Financial Statement that there has been an increase of only 65 average full-time equivalents in those four years, and not 400 as claimed. Will the Minister concede that the budget papers show that there has been an increase of only 65 ancillary staff?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I think it is important to explain the facts before jumping to the conclusions that some people might want to jump to in relation to this area. I guess they do it for their own particular reasons, but it is quite destructive in relation to what is being achieved in State schools when people selectively quote statistics to denigrate the achievements of our staff, particularly of our ancillary staff. The reality is that this Government promised that it would provide 100 additional ancillary staff per year, during this term of office—and it has done that each year.

In the first year, it provided more staff than that because the average ancillary staff person works about 25 hours per week, and this was based on the average ancillary staff hours worked across the education system. The numbers of ancillary staff in our schools have declined—apart from the additions that have been provided each year (and I previously explained how they have been allocated)—for two reasons during this period of our history. The first reason is the decline in school enrolments generally, which are formula based, so we have been able to counter that enrolment decline by putting on additional staff. Secondly, when the Government took office it found itself in quite a parlous state with respect to the employment of ancillary staff because decisions of the previous Government had led to strong industrial action with respect to clause 13, which is now quite a famous clause with respect to the employment of ancillary staff under their award and which allowed the department to transfer ancillary staff from overstuffed schools to schools where there was a demand for more ancillary staff. That arrangement was frozen as a result of that industrial reaction.

As a result of negotiations I entered into with the various unions, we were able to reallocate those staff in schools where there was an excess allocation of ancillary staff hours to schools where there was an under-allocation of staff. That equation meant that there was a greater over-allocation than under-allocation, although there is still a tolerance factor involved in that. That is now, over a period of time, righting itself in our system, so there is now an equitable distribution of ancillary staff hours. That was not the case in the early 1980s for the reasons that I have explained. I believe this has to be put into its historical context, rather than taking the raw statistics and drawing the conclusion that the honourable member has drawn.

Mr S.G. EVANS: While I understand that SAIT has still not signed the new agreement, senior education department officers have been visiting schools in recent days and have given indicative staffing levels for next year. As a result, many country schools have expressed concerns about the proposed cutbacks in teacher numbers. The following schools will lose staff under that indicative proposal: Allendale East will lose 2.3; Keith, 1.2; Kingston, 1.4; Bordertown, 1.4; Lucindale, 1.3; Penola, 0.7; and Kangaroo Inn, 1.8. Other schools, for example, East Murray, Lock, Snowtown and Ardrossan will also lose staff. Some of these schools will actually lose an even greater number of staff as a result of

declining enrolments. The department has now promised to assist these schools to offer the existing 1989 curriculum to each student in 1990, either through structuring their program or by providing additional staff. Why will the Minister not guarantee curriculum beyond 1990? Why are most country schools having to fight to retain their present curriculum, rather than being able to look at expanded options for students?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This matter was answered in detail this morning when we went through the circumstances. Indeed, it was stated clearly that not only the honourable member but also the communities are misinterpreting the early staffing discussions. I believe I used the word 'premature' regarding the concern that was expressed at the time.

First, the curriculum guarantee package is a matter that encompasses not simply the staffing provision for year to year. As I explained earlier, we are trying to achieve a degree of stability in our staffing process, so it has been negotiated in order to achieve structural change in our ability to provide a curriculum so that we can make that guarantee to students, which is the essential component. I am aware that many people want to bring it back to a discussion about staff, and individual staff in individual settings, yet we must return to the essential nature of it, that is, the students and their ability to obtain the curriculum which has been promised to them and which is their right.

I repeat that the concern the honourable member is expressing is out of place. That staffing process is still under way. For future years, the guarantee has to be developed as we go through the period of this agreement and the reallocation of resources, and as the additional resources that are to be provided are brought into effect. Someone now wants us to make those sorts of decisions on precise staffing matters several years in advance. We are simply not able to do that at this stage in what is a very substantial reshaping of the way in which we provide education services in this State. I ask the Director-General to comment so that the record will show the department's attitude to this matter clearly and, indeed, our concern that there is this agitation by some in the community at this premature time.

Dr Boston: The figures the honourable member has been given are, in the case of each school mentioned, tier 1 figures alone. To each of those figures the supplementation under tier 2 is to be added, taking into account students in small and isolated schools, country students, socio-economically disadvantaged students and so on. In each of those schools supplementation will occur, so the figures at present are not final: they cannot be final because they are still being worked through today. At present, there is no way that those schools can have accurate information on staffing.

I mentioned that a working party was to be set up to examine each of these area schools. That party is not after band-aid solutions simply for 1990: its charter is to make recommendation on a longer term process for staffing these small area schools which will lead to predictability and stability in staffing in the longer term, ensuring that they will not lose staff numbers unless and until the numbers decrease. Then we have another situation to deal with. We are not simply patching up the situation: the job of that committee is to settle something for us in the long haul, and not simply for 1990 alone.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I believe I should ask a supplementary question in relation to what the Director-General said about the curriculum guarantee area.

The CHAIRMAN: The Chair will make the judgment as to whether questions are supplementary or otherwise. The Chair may think otherwise, but I will listen to the question.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I know that is your right, Mr Chairman, but I have at least to try to ask it as a supplementary question. I know that, given your comment, that will be more difficult now than it was 10 minutes ago, but I will continue.

The Director-General referred to the special groups and the extra staff that might be achieved because of isolation or special needs. I ask about the final offer that will be included in the curriculum guarantee area. There was a statement that, over and above this allocation, at least 550 staff will be provided to support the educational needs of disadvantaged students, including country students, students in small and isolated schools, students who are physically and intellectually impaired, socio-economically disadvantaged students, students from non-English speaking backgrounds and students in schools with a significant gender imbalance (and I am not sure what that means—whether or not it means transvestites—but I will not go into it that). Of these a minimum of 100 salaries will be targeted for allocation to schools on the basis of the number of Government assisted scholars and Aboriginal students. Is 550 the level of staffing incorporated into these budget estimates? If not, what figure is used? Will the Minister provide some detail on how each of the criteria will be interpreted in practice?

The CHAIRMAN: That is a new and separate question, of course.

Mr Christie: There is a separate formula for the allocation of each of those areas of disadvantage for this year. That will be in operation for 1990, not this year. There will be a more comprehensive method of allocating staff in terms of social justice for 1991. However, there is a formula for each of those separate areas—special education and so forth.

Mr S.G. EVANS: Are the 550 included for this year?

Mr Christie: The 550 are the salaries we are talking about which will be allocated through these formulae.

Mr S.G. EVANS: For this year?

Mr Christie: For the 1990 school year.

Mr HAMILTON: The phrase 'school development plans' occurs several times in the Program Estimates. For example, it occurs three times in relation to general primary education and twice regarding secondary education. Can the Minister explain this concept? What are these plans and what will they achieve?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is important that schools are capable of explaining to the broader community as well as to themselves what they are about. The achievements, goals and, indeed, the ethos of a school will be articulated in a school development plan. This concept is quite unique in Australia. We have allocated substantial senior staff and resources to assist in having each school provide a school development plan for its ongoing assessment. A review of the school development plan and its fulfilment through an action plan will form a significant component of school reviews, that is, the regular review of the life of a particular school and the reporting back to that school community.

School development plans will reflect the objectives and policies of the Education Department as expressed in the operational plans of the area directorates. So it is with each of the directorates of the Education Department. Each will have a plan of its activities and be subject to external review.

The Education Review Unit, which has been established to carry out the supervision of this work, is developing guidelines for school development plans. It has established a working party of district superintendents and school principals whose task is to ensure that they are appropriate and useful to schools. Officers of the Education Review Unit have visited many schools throughout South Australia, dis-

cussing this matter and assisting schools to develop their responses to this initiative. The school reviews will be commencing early in the 1990 school year.

Systematic reviews of other aspects of our education system will also commence next year. Indeed, some commenced in the latter part of the 1989 school year. For example, the first four programs being reviewed by the unit relate to the primary science focused schools program, the Year of Industry and School Links and two other areas. One is on the matter of homework being required of our schools and students and curriculum authority and responsibility. A good deal of work has already begun in those specific areas.

The overall outcome that we want from the work of the Education Review Unit, and specifically of school development plans, is to be able to communicate to the broader community the degree of excellence that we are achieving in our schools. In that way, students and their families and those connected with the daily life of our schools will have a better understanding of what our schools are doing and their outcomes. We believe that there will be not only a better understanding of the role of education in our society but a great deal more understanding of and support for it.

Mr HAMILTON: I turn to the descriptions of the two programs relating to the provision of general primary and secondary education. Under 'Issues/trends' there is mention of a revision of the document 'Our Schools and Their Purposes' in order to provide an education system which will prepare students for life in the twenty-first century. I note also under 'Curriculum services' a reference to the curriculum charter to be developed from the OSTP document. Will the Minister expand on these intriguing references? What is the proposed charter, how will it be developed, what status will it have and how will it affect our schools?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member refers to an important initiative in the department that has been occurring in recent times to review the fundamental document for schools in South Australia, 'Our Schools and Their Purposes.' The department has released a response to the review of OSTP, which has been circulated throughout South Australian schools. It is important and timely that we have this review to ensure that the purposes of our schools are brought into line with current educational practices so that we can be confident that we are providing the most appropriate and responsible direction that we can for our schools. I will ask the Director-General to outline the structure of the document that has now been circulating throughout South Australia.

Dr Boston: Our schools and their purposes have served South Australia very well but clearly it is timely for it to be reviewed with a view to establishing and producing a new sort of document, a new sort of charter which will take the State into the twenty-first century in educational terms; hence the title 'Educating for the Twenty-First Century: A charter for Government Schooling in South Australia'. We are very much aware of our responsibilities in this area. We now have the first young people of the next century currently in our reception grades; the children who finish their South Australian certificate of education in the year 2001 are already with us and we need to be giving a great deal of attention to the sort of education which those people require in order to live, to have their careers, to have children, to lead worthwhile lives in the first part of the next century.

The document we have produced sets out a charter for Government schools which has an over-arching statement and a mandate which gives the broad direction of schooling in South Australia. It specifies the expected outcomes. It

defines certain essential skills and understandings and certain required areas of study in compulsory schooling, pre-compulsory schooling and post-compulsory schooling. The mandate is the key part to it. It follows from the overarching statement that all young people of South Australia have a right to gain, through the State schooling system, an education that will help to prepare them for effective participation in our society.

The mandate specifies the key things we believe should underpin that sort of education, such as, intellectual and academic development of every student in a balance range of culturally and economically valuable areas of study. We want to foster a spirit of enterprise in students. We want to help them approach change and unforeseen circumstances in a positive and constructive way because one of the things we know about the first half of the next century is that it will continue to be a time of exponential technological change. We place high value or respect for learning and enjoyment of learning. We place high value on encouraging close communication and partnership with parents. We want to continue to place high value on community participation in education, on partnership with business, industry and trade unions to prepare students for the world of work, and so on.

The charter can be made available to members if they wish to consider it in more detail. It is a document which we want to finalise in consultation with our clientele, and for that reason at the moment it is going out in draft form as a consultation document which specifies the goals, outcomes, mandate, and so on, and seeks responses to each element. Those responses will come back, and on that basis we expect to be able to achieve a blueprint for education in South Australia which has the agreement and support of the parents and the teachers who are so critical to making it effective.

Mr HAMILTON: The Program Estimates, at page 192, under 'Specific targets/objectives', refer to a continuation of the extension of the School Industry Links Program. Can the Minister advise what progress has been made in this program to date and say what is planned for the coming year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The School Industry Links Program has been the focus of schools this year and similarly in 1986 which was declared the Year of Parents and Students in our Schools. We have seen that year grow into an important, now formal, relationship between parents and students and the life and governments of our schools. This year is also shaping up to becoming the basis for a new and emerging relationship between the schools and the world of work, and industry in particular. The responses that our schools have received from work places to cooperate and provide those formal links, has been overwhelming.

It is our objective that every school, both primary and secondary in this State, should develop a formal link with a place of work, and that is a link not only between the students and the place of work but for staff as well as our teachers, principals, ancillary staff, and the like that has very clearly been emerging from this year. A substantial amount of work has been done within the Education Department. We began the year with the presentation of a report prepared as a result of a consultancy undertaken by a retired principal, an eminent principal, Mr Joe Laslett, and Mr Paul Rosser, a senior executive of the South Australian Gas Company. They advised on how we should tackle this year and indeed establish the basis for a long-term change in our relationship with the world of work. That has spawned many programs. In fact, even in this morning's press I notice two articles of links between schools

and industry that have resulted in really very exciting programs.

I should acknowledge that over the years individual schools, individual officers of the Education Department and individual industries have undertaken initiatives in this area, and programs are being developed through organisations such as the Secondary School Principals Association. Less formal links were developed between some of these groups and big organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the United Trades and Labor Council. That has now been brought together quite formally: a tripartite delegation representing employers, trade unions and the Education Department visited England and Scandinavia and studied school industry links in those countries and brought back very valuable ideas and bases for use in South Australia.

So, as this year evolves it is proving a very exciting new dimension to education and opportunities for young people, and I know that it has been welcomed very much both by the trade union movement and by employer organisations. It has resulted in the need to provide additional resources, and just recently I announced that \$250 000 had been provided to allow teachers to be released from their schools for periods to take part in programs which enhance their schools and provide them with the ability to develop this program on a longer term basis.

I would also like to acknowledge the Schools Industry Advisory Council which comprises representatives of big organisations and the key groups involved, and that has guided the work throughout this year. As I said earlier, it is one of the programs that has been examined by the education review unit, so that we are having available to us some objective assessment of the educational outcomes, as well, from what is happening this year. This year is not the be all and end all; it is just the beginning of this program, and I confidently expect that it will become a vital part of education in this State in years to come.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I will take up the offer made a few minutes ago by the Director-General to provide members of the Committee with copies of *Beyond 2000* as the implications of that document would seem to be many-fold. In part it follows on the work of the Karmel Committee and Keeves Committee and provides another decade of inquiry into education needs. If the report comes down with radical changes, obviously the implications will be widespread for teacher training colleges and for the retraining of existing teaching staff. The implications sound both exciting and complex. Perusal of the document by members of the Opposition I hope would prove constructive to the department. I refer to the curriculum guarantee as mentioned on page 184 of the Estimates of Payments. The final offer made included the following statement:

For secondary and area schools from years 8 to 10, all students a guaranteed a full program of face-to-face teaching in the required areas of study in each year as set out in 'Our Schools and Their Purposes'.

That is quite unequivocal. It continues:

Schools will be assured of the capacity to offer elective studies each year in addition to the required curriculum pattern and a capacity to offer alternative courses within the required areas of study to meet student needs. All schools will be guaranteed the capacity to offer at least 8 PES and 8 SAS subjects.

Will the Minister outline how the guarantee will work in practice? I relate it particularly to an earlier answer from both the Minister and the Director-General who implied, in a manner that I would consider to be contradictory to the statement contained in the curriculum guarantee, that alternative technological teaching practices may be utilised. I immediately envisaged an increasing use of possibly tele-

phone/television on-line facilities which may obviate the need for face-to-face tuition as appears to be guaranteed. Will the Minister elaborate on the practical intentions and perhaps, on notice, provide a list of those schools which in 1989 do not offer at least 8 PES and 8 SAS subjects?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: With the document 'Educating for the Twenty-First Century', I will ensure that copies are made available to the Committee. It is an updating of OSTP rather than a Keeves or Karmel inquiry. The nature and purpose of the document will become evident once the honourable member peruses it.

Dr Boston: The words of the guarantee are quite explicit, and it is intended that that should be met—8 PES and 8 SAS subjects. The provision of the required areas of study, as set out in 'Our Schools and their Purposes', and the provision of that minimum by face-to-face teaching is what the guarantee is about. The additional areas of study which might be offered in other schools in addition to that bare minimum might well be capable of being offered using open access techniques and technological approaches to education. However, the bare minimum (the guarantee) means what it says and that is what we will achieve under the tier 2 staffing. With smaller area schools, that is what we will achieve through the work to be done by the working party referred to earlier.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I refer to the original pages and amended pages of the Program Estimates at page 183, to the Estimates of Payments, page 4, and to the education line on page 82. Page 4 of the Estimates of Payments shows the total recurrent education budget for 1989-90 as \$854.977 million. Page 183 shows recurrent expenditure of \$846.608 million. Obviously the difference has not been explained. In the leaflet sent out on the education budget the Minister lists education expenditure as being \$873.11 million. Will the Minister explain the reason for the difference between the leaflet sent out to schools and the discrepancies in the two budget documents? Has there been a round sum allowance included in the schools figure?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It may not be possible to give a precise explanation of those components of the budget documents, but I will take the question on notice.

Ms Kolbe: The Estimates of Payments show the amount voted to the Education Department with the disaggregation into the various programs whereas the Program Estimates, which shows \$846.608 million, include funding allocated to different organisations such as the CSO where we run the CPCs. They are funded through the CSO budget. We have in that amount various other charges such as the maintenance allocated in recurrent terms to Sacon. It is a combination of various budgets in terms of the vote.

The \$846 million, *vis-a-vis* the \$796.294 million as shown in the Estimates of Payments at page 82, varies in terms of whose budget the amounts are voted to. The \$846 million contains also the amounts absorbed in our programs but appearing in a different budget, namely, the CSO budget for child-parent centres. It also contains maintenance funding allocated to Sacon or the Minister of Housing and Construction. However, it is expended in our program. We can provide the honourable member with a detailed reconciliation.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I would appreciate a written breakdown.

Ms Kolbe: They are the major differences.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I now refer to occupational health, safety and welfare and page 203 of the Estimates of Payments. In 1986, when the new Act was passed, considerable concern was expressed about the impact of this legislation on schools. At that time it was agreed that a code

of practice for schools would be developed and would be subject to the approval of the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Commission. A committee was established by the Minister of Education to develop that code of practice. In the three years since the Act was passed, there appears to have been no code developed and approved by the commission. As far as we are aware, the committee that was asked to undertake this task has not met since last November—almost a year ago. The only progress we are aware of is that a code has been developed for Government schools, but has not yet been approved. Why has the Minister not ensured that a code of practice was developed and approved by the commission? Why has this committee not met since last November?

Ms Kolbe: The code of practice has been developed and folders have been forwarded to schools. However, the committee has not approved the code of practice yet, because it is not up to us to approve it: it is for the commission to give approval.

Mr De LAINE: The Auditor-General's Report states that the Education Department overpaid employees by about \$30 000 per fortnight during the past financial year: in the year before, the overpayment was \$28 000. What is the reason for these overpayments? What can, or does, the Education Department do to recover the money?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: First, I must say that the work of the Auditor-General is appreciated by the department. It is appreciated because a department the size of ours—which employs, on average, more than 22 000 people per annum at over 1 000 locations across the State, sometimes for very brief periods, for example, relief teachers who may be employed for a day and who require speedy payment for their services—must ensure that its system is extremely efficient. Nevertheless, there will always be some human error and breakdown in communication.

The overall effort made by the Education Department in providing for these payments over the year is a quite incredible performance. Whilst we pay almost \$600 million in salaries per annum, the actual money lost as a result of inability to recover incorrect payments in the past year was about \$10 000. That is an impressive effort. However, one must be very vigilant in this area, because it is in no one's interest for there to be errors in payment of salaries. Most overpayments are recovered very quickly—within a matter of weeks. However, the department recently spent about \$3.7 million developing a computerised administrative network system across our schools, so that there can be a more accurate and more coordinated process for the recording and transmission of information about school administration matters, including the employment of staff.

This is not a matter of just saving \$10 000; it is a matter of the work generated as a result of overpayments, and the anguish for those members of staff who have been overpaid. Each year the Auditor-General monitors and comments on the progress made in this area in developing new systems. The Education Department has come from a very crude administrative base. In the early 1980s many of the department's staff records were quite inappropriately recorded using outdated processes. Substantial progress has been made in recent years in relation to not only the computerisation of information but also the development of administrative training instructions to minimise their negative effects.

Mr De LAINE: On page 202 of the Program Estimates, under the heading 'Personnel Services—Objectives/Goals', mention is made of the implementation of occupational health, safety, welfare and rehabilitation policies. How is this implementation progressing and what are the staffing implications?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I think the answer to that question was just given in response to a question from the member for Mount Gambier and covers to a great extent, the honourable member's concerns.

Ms Kolbe: Much work has been done in the Education Department to implement the Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act. The code of practice mentioned earlier is only one part of that implementation. We have had elections for occupational health and safety officers at various work sites. We have undertaken all the training necessary under the legislation in locations across the State for management, senior management and middle management at all work sites. We have about 952 locations. The code of practice has been developed and printed, and negotiations have taken place. However, that code has not been approved as yet, because it is not our privilege to do so. We also have established a permanent unit following the proclamation of the Act, and in terms of implementation of the Act, we have done what is required. The unit works very much on the management model, and tries to identify the various risks in terms of individual safety and a number of preventive programs have been established in areas such as back injury. We have also established poisonous substances data base so that our work place will become safer, as is required under the legislation.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I refer again to the question from the member for Mount Gambier in relation to workers compensation in the Education Department. The department is an exempt employer under the provisions of the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act and is required to pay a workers compensation premium annually to the Department of Labour. The premium is then credited against the Government's insurance fund. All costs for workers compensation—salaries maintenance, medical, legal, lump sum, and common law costs—are then met from that fund.

The premium in 1987-88 had reached a peak of \$12 million and now, with the advent of the new legislation and the new unit in the Education Department to which Ms Kolbe referred, and the management practices that have been adopted in the department, it is interesting to note that that sum has reduced to \$9.5 million. There has been a dramatic drop in the cost of workers compensation in the Education Department, but this matter requires constant vigilance. The department operates in various work sites across the State in very diverse situations and deals with an increasing range of curriculum offerings and diverse uses of our education programs and facilities. This matter is moving in the right direction, but we need to watch it very closely.

Mr De LAINE: As a supplementary question, what are the staffing implications at individual school levels of occupational health, safety and welfare regulations?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There are no direct staffing implications for schools unless a rehabilitation program is undertaken for a particular employee who must then be replaced.

Mr De LAINE: The gap between primary and secondary funding seems to be widening, despite the fact that primary enrolments have increased this year and are expected to increase further next year, while secondary enrolments have decreased and are expected to decrease further next year. Will this situation change in future?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Yes, as a result of the implementation of the curriculum guarantee. Because primary enrolments are increasing and secondary enrolments are decreasing, the cost per secondary student is increasing and the cost is proportionately declining for primary school students. However, the overall cost per student is increasing.

That proportion is affected by enrolment patterns, but overall an enormous improvement has been made in resources provided to primary schools.

I have already referred to the student counsellors in primary schools, and to the establishment of focus schools. The curriculum guarantee provides for a 50 per cent increase in non-contact time for primary school teachers. The ability of teachers to break the step 10 barrier is predominantly an improvement in the career opportunities for primary school teachers—most of them women. Vast improvements have been made in that area. I am very proud of what is happening in our primary schools across the State. Very exciting programs are being implemented: the developments in science, maths, music, and a whole range of areas are quite superb.

I have no doubt that we have the best primary school structure in this nation, and I am sure that honourable members who visit primary schools can also vouch for what has happened in primary education during this part of the 1980s. No doubt much of that is due to the implementation of the primary review and the direction and focus that has been given to our primary school programs.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Proposed assistance for teacher housing in 1988-89 was \$2.5 million, whereas the actual expenditure was \$5.7 million. (Program Estimates page 186.) What are the reasons for the \$3 million increase over the budget? Will the Minister also provide figures for vacancy rental costs for 1988-89, and an estimate for 1989-90?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Teacher housing is now the responsibility of the Minister of Housing and Construction under the new administrative arrangements for public sector housing, but I will ask Ms Kolbe to comment from the perspective of the Education Department, as an employer very much reliant upon access to public housing to meet the needs of staff in the non-metropolitan areas. It is necessary that the use of those houses be flexible, which increases the vacancy rental component funded by the Education Department.

Ms Kolbe: The difference between the 1988 proposed budget and the actual outcome is due to the introduction of full cost recovery for teacher houses for the first time in 1988-89. The funding was added to the budget, because this was a recharge situation.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Is the Minister able to provide figures for the vacancy rental period, or an estimate for 1988-89?

Ms Kolbe: Yes, we do have an amount for vacancy rental here, and the vacancy rental for 1988-89 was \$418 127.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I note that there are 38 central committees of the Education Department with a total of 263 female and 245 male members. ('The Budget and its impact on women in 1989-90, page 75 and Program Estimates page 189, 'Intra-Agency Support Service.')

I do not require this information now, but will the Minister provide on notice the names of all these committees; their membership; the organisations they represent, if applicable; the number of meetings they held in 1988-89; their terms of reference; the work undertaken and achieved in 1988-89; and the fees payable to members?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will undertake to provide that information. I should point out that further to my earlier comments about the statements coming from Victoria about the Opposition's strategy with respect to education in that State, it is interesting to note that the same Melbourne *Age* article to which I referred, and which was published just before the recent Victorian State budget was presented, stated:

The Liberal's education strategy would reduce the number of committees and impose time burdens on teachers and scrap the State Board of Education and coordinating divisions.

I can only hope that the Liberal Party in this State does not require this information to achieve the same thing.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: What has that got to do with the answer, Mr Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister can answer as he sees fit any question that is directed to him. The Chair is not in a position to direct the Minister.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The Minister needs to concentrate on the State Labor policy rather than what is happening interstate.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We have been doing very well; we do not want the quality of the proceedings to deteriorate.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I refer to the executive and professional staff etc, referred to at page 189 of the Program Estimates. The proposed number of staff for 1988-89 was 412.9, while the actual number was 434.3. What was the reason for the increase of 21.4 staff last year, over and above budget? Why was no additional expenditure incurred?

Ms Kolbe: The 1986-87 budget strategy eliminated 50 senior positions. Because 21 of those have not as yet been redeployed into other Government departments or within the organisation, and as legally they still have the status of public servants, they are therefore counted as public servants. We were hoping that through the Redeployment Unit in the Department of Personnel and Industrial Relations the people would be able to be redeployed. That has not been possible. The surplus people are managed within our bottom line, if I may put it that way. Therefore, there is no additional costing for them. In essence, the head count is still there, because they have not been able to be redeployed. The dollar value has been absorbed in the bottom line of the budget, and was not included from the beginning.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: What is meant by the bottom line of the budget?

Ms Kolbe: Additional money has not been added to the budget. We have managed within the budget the surplus in terms of salaries that those people absorb, and we have found the money from other areas, which we have therefore not undertaken. It was intended that these people would be redeployed within the Public Service during the 1988-89 budget year. That was not possible, and because they still hold the legal status of public servants the number still shows up as public servants.

Mr HAMILTON: The Minister would be aware of my interest in the review of school enrolments in the western suburbs. Can the Minister give an update on the progress being made in this area?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There is a substantial enrolment decline in the western suburbs. The demographic information available to the department shows that it is important that we make decisions in the short term that will leave us with a viable education system for the next several decades. Several reviews have been undertaken—and these are continuing—into the future direction of secondary education in the western suburbs of Adelaide in particular. Some preliminary recommendations have come from that, and I understand that some further refinement of those preliminary recommendations is being undertaken for consideration by the department. Matters are not yet at the stage of coming to the Minister for some final decision.

At this stage there is possibly only one school about which some decisions will have to be made in respect of its operation for the 1990 school year. I understand that the matter is being pursued by the department and the school involved for resolution at an early stage, with respect to the 1990 school year. As to other schools in the area, clearly, although

much valuable work and consultation has been undertaken, other issues need to be resolved before final decisions are made.

I much appreciate the efforts made by those people from the community who have been involved in working with the school communities and the Education Department officers in grappling with these incredibly vexed and difficult issues—and often emotional issues as well. We must develop a system that is going to be better than one that we have and one which will further increase the opportunities for young people to stay on at school for longer and for them to make more accurate entries into tertiary education, training, and employment.

Mr HAMILTON: In regard to the correspondence that I handed to the Minister today concerning the desire by one of the school councils to meet with the Minister, is the Minister prepared to meet these representatives?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will certainly study the letter. It might be a little premature to meet with the school community, as these discussions are still continuing. Any response that I could give at this stage might be very limited. However, at the appropriate time I will be pleased to meet with the school community.

Mr HAMILTON: I thank the Minister for that. A specific target/objective referred to at page 192 of the Program Estimates concerns implementation of strategies to ensure equity and access for girls in education. Will the Minister elaborate on that point?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Australian Education Council has been involved in the development at the national level of strategies to ensure equity on access issues for girls in education. The poor participation rate of girls in maths and sciences, in particular, has been a concern right across this country. Much work has been done in South Australia and in other places in Australia to address the imbalance.

However, this matter pervades other areas—for example, in the area of physical education. Just yesterday I was at the Marryatville High School, where about 1 500 girls from Government and non-government schools were gathered to undertake a program specifically designed to encourage more girls and their teachers to develop programs to ensure that girls stay involved in physical activity programs and sporting activities in schools, to a much greater extent than is now the case.

It is fact that girls participate less than boys in sporting and physical activities generally within the school curriculum and that they drop out earlier in the secondary years, particularly from organised sporting activities. We want to redress that imbalance. We also know that girls are less physically fit than boys in general, and that also needs to be redressed. It is in that broad rush of programs that these expenditures are being placed.

The member for Heysen referred to 'The Budget and its Impact on Women'. Pages 71 and 72 refer to 'Specifically Targeted Allocation to Women/Girls' and the general allocations as well that are provided to meet these specific objectives.

Mr HAMILTON: On page 192, on the same specific targets and objectives, I note that increased emphasis has been placed on child protection and student management. Can the Minister elaborate on that?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The matter of child protection in our schools is particularly important. As Minister of Community Welfare, I was always impressed by the commitment and sense of responsibility shown by teachers and by those within school communities to see that there was adequate reporting and identification of situations where specific action was required to protect children. The degree of under-

standing within our schools—and schools that are being developed by teachers and ancillary staff—is very valuable indeed.

However, this is now complimented by our student discipline policies, for example, the appointment of counsellors in primary schools. Policies that are being developed in schools throughout the State are helping to focus on this issue. The implementation of last year's social justice strategy for the full year this year, in effect, has been a specific program to deal with those students in our schools who have severe behavioural problems.

Those relevant human services—professionals in health and welfare—are called in to assist the Education Department. In that way we are able to provide a more comprehensive approach to either assist that group of students either *in situ* in our schools, or by the removal of those young people from school settings and into special units that have been established for that purpose so that we can encompass a range of options to deal with those children who have severe behavioural problems.

Mr S.G. EVANS: The Minister has indicated that the curriculum guarantee will cost \$6.6 million this year and \$54 million for the four-year period until the end of the 1992-93 financial year. Will the Minister provide a breakdown for each of the four years of the estimated cost of the guarantee? That is, what will the \$6.6 million be spent on this year, and what will be the balance at the end of each subsequent year? If the Minister cannot provide that answer now, I am happy for it to be taken on notice.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will take that question on notice. We can only estimate that that is what the cost will be, because it depends not only on the final decision that will be taken by the Teachers' Salaries Board in bringing down a determination on this matter, but also the take-up rate of, for example, country incentives of the other components of this package. The estimate we provide must be taken in that context.

Mr S.G. EVANS: Referring to Program Estimates, (page 192)—and there was some mention by the Minister of this earlier—and referring to the Budget and its Impact on Women, page 73 shows a widening gap between boys and girls in retention rates at year 12 level. For example, in 1985 the retention rate for boys at year 12 was 47.8 and for girls was 54.8. There was a disparity of 7 per cent which favoured the girls. Yet, in 1986, it was 61.9 per cent retention rate for boys and 71.7 for girls and an equal retention rate for girls in 1988. It is now about 10 per cent higher than the boys, whilst in 1985 it was only 7 per cent. I believe that it is a pity that we have a widening gap where there are fewer boys, percentage-wise, compared to girls involved, and the gap is growing. What action is the Minister taking to address this inequity?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member raises an interesting point. I am not sure whether the conclusion he has drawn is valid. It may be accurate at this time, but whether or not it is a lasting comparison is a challenge the Education Department will have to face. It must be looked at over a broader period of time in order to study what has been happening with retention rates; where the increases have been occurring and why. It is something we are studying carefully within the department and around the country. It is linked with the work that has been done in the post-compulsory sector of the Education Department, under the auspices of Mr Gilding and his review of the post-compulsory education.

The curriculum guarantee provides the framework whereby we can use our resources in a more appropriate way to enhance the learning programs for those young people who

are on the verge of deciding whether to stay on at school or whether to leave. Together with the financial incentives now provided by the Commonwealth for those students who want to stay on at school for longer—the post-16-year-old student—we have a different group of young people who are remaining in our schools. The issue of boys and girls is related to those issues.

I will ask Mr Boomer, the Associate Director of Education, to comment on these issues to clarify them for the honourable member.

Mr Boomer: The issues raised are of considerable concern to the Education Department. We look at those figures and on the surface they look dramatic and worrying with respect to the participation rate of boys. When we look more closely at this, we find that, at the same time, there has been a dramatic increase in apprenticeships. If one looks at the proportion of those people taking up apprenticeships, one will find that they are predominantly male. If one takes apprenticeships and traineeships and put them alongside the figures being retained in the post-compulsory secondary school one will find there is about equal participation of boys and girls.

It is interesting to note that whilst girls are staying on, one should look at what they are doing when they do so. What we find is that they are not, by and large, opting for maths, science, physics, chemistry—the so called hard curriculum subjects. While we are pleased that girls are being retained in our secondary schools, we need to pay attention to the disparity between the number of girls and boys taking the so called hard subjects. The implications for the curriculum are, I believe, that we need to look at the relationship between TAFE and secondary schools. This is the subject of ongoing work at present between the Education Department and TAFE to obtain a better articulation of the roles of secondary schools and the roles of TAFE.

Over the next three or four years we will see an increasing involvement of adult re-entry programs in our secondary schools and an increase in vocationally oriented subjects with cross-credit with TAFE subjects. With that kind of articulation we will find that, with boys and girls being able to get credit for some of their senior secondary studies for TAFE courses, there will be a greater retention of both boys and girls. I suspect there will be a proportionately greater number of boys opting to stay on over the next few years, so that gap may be lessened. It is something that we need to monitor. It is tied up with the labour market. Boys, particularly in country areas, may be leaving at year 10 and going back onto the land. We need to look at many complexities in that area. By and large, the disparity can be explained through apprenticeships and traineeships, and the preponderance of boys taking those up.

Mr S.G. EVANS: To comment on that first before asking the next question, I hope all of us realise that it is important for apprentices to try to do year 12 because the rules that this place makes for plumbers, carpenters and all the others are such that no longer can one go out and be an ordinary plumber or carpenter; one needs to be an accountant and mathematician to fill out all the forms and keep up with the regulations.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Perhaps I can give a supplementary answer. What Mr Boomer has been saying is that the articulation between what is studied at school and in the apprenticeships needs to be focused more carefully as well so that credit can be given for students to stay on in years 11 and 12 programs and that can be counted towards apprenticeships.

There is a sense of vocational direction in years 11 and 12 that will help to carry through into apprenticeships, so

there is a greater degree of motivation to stay on at school, much more relevance in the studies undertaken, and they count towards something that is important to a young person. That is where a whole range of issues come in not only at the TAFE/ED relationships, but also industry schooling as well. Those things are all relevant to the honourable member's question.

Mr S.G. EVANS: My next question relates to the overall management of the department in the way of staff, equipment and salaries received. I shall be happy for the Minister to take the question on notice and to bring down the information later, except for one or two areas that he might be able to help me on.

Can the Minister provide an itemised run-down of the spending last financial year and budgeted spending for this financial year under the salaries, wages and related payments, administration expenses and minor equipment and sundries within the department? How many EO and AO level officers are employed in the department? What is the salary of the Chief Executive Officer as at 30 June 1988 and 30 June 1989? What allowances does the Chief Executive Officer receive in addition to salary, whether it be telephone and exclusive use of a motor car and whether it is restricted? What amount of sick leave has been taken during the past financial year? How much of that leave was taken on a Monday or a Friday and on days immediately before and after holiday weekends? Does the Minister have a car phone or a cellular phone which is rented and paid for at taxpayers' expense? When was it installed, what was the cost of acquisition and installation and what were the operating costs in the last financial year and in this financial year? Can he also provide a breakdown of costs to show local, ISD and STD calls?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Whatever the cost of the administration of the Education Department was for last year, it will certainly be increased this year in obtaining the information sought by the honourable member. We will obviously endeavour to obtain that information. I am not sure whether we have for our 700 schools information on who was away on a Monday, Tuesday or whatever it is, but we will do our best to try to obtain that information.

With respect to the salaries and conditions of employment of senior public servants, I will consult the Commissioner for Public Employment about the release of that information, as appropriate. I think that a similar question was asked last year on that matter. I do not have a car phone. The department has a cellular phone, which I have use of from time to time, but it is a matter of convenience with the Director-General and other senior officers when we are trying to contact each other when visiting schools or the like. I will find out how much it cost and how much it costs to run. The executive range of the department has been reduced in number quite dramatically in recent years. I was interested to see some comparative figures between departments recently. There is probably very little difference in the number of very senior management in the Department of Education and, for example, the Department for Community Welfare, a department which is probably a tenth the size.

The Hon. H. ALLISON interjecting:

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: That is comparing the Department for Community Welfare in South Australia with the South Australian Education Department. Comparison with Victoria might well be another story in South Australia's favour.

As Minister, I am impressed with, if one likes the word, the leanness of the senior management structure of the Education Department considering the size of the department, the staff that it employs, the programs that it delivers

and their complexity. For example, the area directors of the Education Department have much larger budgets than most heads of other Government departments, many of whom are on much greater salary levels. I think we are and have been very well served by the senior management of our department.

Mr S.G. EVANS: The only reason why I asked the question was to draw comparisons with others. I cannot do that unless I have all the information.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: We will get it for you.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The member for Heysen asked a question earlier on that precise issue. The proposed staffing, executive and professional, was 412 for 1988-89 and the actual number was 434, so there was a difference of about 21. While the Minister may be able to claim that it is a leaner, more economical department, the surprising thing about that line is that although we had 21.4 additional staff, no additional expenditure was incurred. That is a wonderful way to employ additional people. Does it mean that those additional staff were supernumeraries who were not paid, who were on leave or somewhere else, or were they being debited against another line whilst still showing up in the Minister's department? I press the point because during the Education Department reorganisation, the Minister was instrumental in instructing the department to lean off or reduce by a certain number of staff. Yet we have the line showing that, despite the best intentions, in 1988-89 there were 21.4 additional staff. The claim and the reality in the budget papers do not seem to sit comfortably together.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It certainly can be explained and one did not expect that we could bring about such a significant reduction of the senior management of the department instantaneously. Of course, this matter was negotiated with the staff involved and with their unions. Those positions are being held against other positions and, whilst those people are doing meaningful work in the department, they are still being held against other positions. It is not the most efficient way to manage our resources and, as soon as those officers are redeployed, we can increase our efficiency and enhancement of programs as a result. That is why they are recorded in that way.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The inference is that other departments are paying for staff held under the Minister's lines because no additional money was allocated for the retention of those 21.4 additional staff.

Ms Kolbe: The proposed level should have been considerably higher, because the surplus numbers at the beginning of the year would have been larger than 21 but at the end of the year we are still recording 21 surpluses being held against other positions, which are therefore not filled within the department in that financial year. In essence it is perhaps inaccurate reporting in this document. However, the wages bill is still held within the department and that transfer has been made so the people, wherever possible, are held against ongoing positions. There is no increase in the numbers but, in relation to this program, one should perhaps at the beginning of the year have included those persons as well. They are still within the Education Department and they are paid by the Education Department. Other positions adding up to the same value are kept open, but they do express themselves in that particular category of employee.

Mr De LAINE: The Program Estimates (page 199) refer to the establishment of triannual funding in a limited number of schools. What were the guidelines used to select these schools for triannual funding?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will take that question on notice and bring back a response. I do not have the information before me.

Mr De LAINE: The Program Estimates (page 191) refer to the key objective of implementation of the approved recommendations of the primary education review. What recommendations have been implemented so far, and what is planned for this financial year?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: As I said in answer to an earlier question, the primary review has been a very useful exercise for us in improving the whole primary education sector and our ability to allocate additional resources more accurately to those school programs. The recommendations that have been implemented include the developmental projects that have been approved and developed in 1988-89. That includes, 'Learning and early childhood: What does it mean in practice'; Supplementary material to support the primary review document, 'Children and learning in the primary years' has been or is being developed; an assessment brochure for parents; a video on assessment practices; a vertical grouping brochure; the curriculum framework's R to 7 document 'Programming for early childhood'; and the computer learning section will be addressed in the 1990 school year. A transition from primary to secondary is now being examined critically. The Primary Education Board has been established to advise the Director-General on primary education. The Personnel Director is preparing a statement on the role of the principal and systemic plans for training and development of principals, something that has been sought by principals in the junior primary sector for some time.

The focus schools in mathematics, science, technology, language and arts have been established, very successfully, to support the teaching of these critically important specialist areas. The specialist teaching issue is being addressed and the curriculum guarantee package has advocated two specialist curriculum areas, including the languages other than English programs. The number of specialist teachers in that languages other than English speciality is also increasing. A discussion paper on specialisation is being prepared at present. Long-term recruitment plans are being developed by the Personnel Director for primary schools particularly for areas of specialisation. Class sizes under the curriculum guarantee package are to be no more than 25 for R to 2 and 27 for years 3 to 7. The student free time has been increased now to 12 per cent, a 50 per cent increase, as a result, once again, of the curriculum guarantee package. The introduction of a second tier staffing formula to compensate for targeted disadvantaged students will help many of our primary school programs and additional sources are being made available for counselling of students. I referred to that earlier today. I have similarly referred to the increase in the Government assisted scholars allowance.

Mr HAMILTON: I note from page 210 of the Program Estimates that one of the specific targets and objectives for 1988-89 was the takeover of the department's purchasing supply function from the Department of Services and Supply. Can the Minister advise the reasons for that move?

Ms Kolbe: Following a review undertaken in cooperation with the Department of State Supply and the Education Department, it was recommended that the support of the supply function to schools should rest in future with the Education Department. That recommendation led to the establishment of the supply function within the Education Department and a proper transfer of resources from the State supply budget to our budget was undertaken at the time. The function is now established and is serving the schools.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: On page 10 of the 1988 Auditor-General's Report reference is made to invoice processing within the Education Department. The Auditor-General stated that there could be substantial savings in the accounts

payable section of the Education Department and highlighted the fact that 23 staff were engaged in processing invoices within the Education Department. Last year in the Estimates Committees the Minister indicated that the matter was under review. Are 23 staff still engaged in processing invoices and what has happened as a result of the review?

Ms Kolbe: I cannot say the exact number of staff employed in that area, but we are continually looking at efficiency measures. One of the matters to which the Auditor referred was the taking greater risk in the payment of accounts and the processing of transactions. At present the rules under which we operate require total checking. That would be one of the ways to reduce the number of staff employed on that function. We are looking through the strategic information plan towards greater efficiency through automation of that process, but in general terms we are still employing approximately the same number of staff.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I refer to page 203 of the Program Estimates. Will the Minister provide for each of the Adelaide northern and southern areas of the Education Department a summary of schools involved in any discussions about closures, amalgamations or cooperative arrangements? Will the Minister provide a list of schools that have sold or are considering the sale of portions of school land, along with the value of each sale for the years 1988-89 and 1989-90? The Minister claimed that \$10 million in disposed assets has been transferred back to the Education Department.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It is not a matter of claiming: it has happened. The money is in the budget for that purpose. I indicated earlier to the member for Davenport that I would provide a list of those schools currently engaged in discussions about clustering or reconfiguration in some form. I will be pleased to provide information about the disposal of surplus properties.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: On page 191 of the Program Estimates reference is made to the literacy audit. Will the Minister provide details of such? Is it still intended for years 6 and 10 and, if so, what percentage of students will be involved, what will be the cost of the audit, how will it be conducted and will the non-government sector be involved? Last year Mr Boomer, the Assistant Director-General, told the Committee that by the end of 1989 an interim report would be published giving the range of performance in South Australian schools. Are the literacy audit and that report related, and when will the report be published?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There is a good deal of interest in our schools in outcomes and a good deal of discussion on how they should be measured and what use is made of the information collected. There is a great deal of fear in our schools about the policies for standardised testing that have emanated from England in recent times and, even more recently, from State schools in New South Wales. It certainly is not the intention of this Government to embark on a form of standardised testing of the type used clearly for quite destructive purposes in restructuring State education systems. In South Australia we have embarked on something quite unique and it will be a useful tool in advancing the quality of education in State schools.

A good deal of interest has been shown in this program by the non-government schools sector. Mr Boomer has been working with that sector in the development of the program. There was an interest in this program from other jurisdictions. This week I met a visiting academic from Canada who was here to attend a conference and who believed it was the most interesting and potentially the most effective program of this type he has seen. He has extensive knowl-

edge in this area and his advice was that we should ensure that the intellectual property contained in it is firmly secured as it will be in strong demand as time goes by. We note an international trend towards assessment and increased accountability for the outcomes in schools. I ask Mr Boomer to comment further.

Mr Boomer: Since I commented last year, we have moved to establish the project and I am pleased to report on what has happened. We appointed three full-time project officers who, during the first two terms of 1989, developed the instruments for gathering the data. In so doing they consulted with the Australian Council for Educational Research to come up with a valid statistical sample of schools in South Australia on a random basis across Government, Catholic and independent sectors. The schools were informed that they would be part of the project. We have consulted with teachers and parent organisations about the program.

Whilst the union has not embraced the proposal enthusiastically, it is cautiously supportive. Parents have welcomed it as something that will help them to see how their children are progressing. It will make more explicit what our schools are achieving. The program goes ahead with strong community support and, contrary to most other occasions when testing programs are suggested, the unions are seeing that the project will feed back worthwhile information to the field. Years 6 and 10 have been elected, year 6 because the results of the program can be fed into further improvement in year 7 before children go on to secondary school and year 10 because it marks the end of compulsory schooling and will provide information to help us advise people on post-compulsory education.

The data gathering phase occurred during this term and went very smoothly indeed. Consultation has occurred with key officers and principals in the schools that will form part of the survey. Over a four week period comprehensive data has been collected on the writing children have been doing across all subject areas and also on their reading. In addition, common assessment tasks will be undertaken to allow us to evaluate the achievement of students across common tasks, so we are not simply gathering local data from school work.

Thirty teachers have been trained to investigate the data, to compile the report that will go to the public and also to compile reports that will go back to the field to enhance teaching. An interim report will be available early in the new year—by the time that we collate the data and get it into a publishable form, it will be the new year. It is important to see this as a three-year program (this is but the first phase) which will allow us to take yearly samples of this kind in order to track the progress of students.

The end result of this will be a massive in-service education program, because teachers trained to interpret the data will go back into their schools and help people to interpret what is coming out of their classrooms. This will also provide the public with information on a whole range of questions, such as how children are coping with the conventions—such things as full stops and commas—and will provide more interesting information such as the types of assignments that children are being asked to do, the forms of writing they are being asked to undertake and their capacity to cope with a range of writing tasks. In secondary schools, it is important to look not only at subject English but at students' capacity to handle the language of specific subjects.

As the Minister has said, there has been considerable national and international interest in this project. Mr Martell, the national expert who is out here at the moment, has asked to talk to me tomorrow about the possibility of talking

with authorities in Ontario about this program. The program will yield much more detailed information than the multiple choice question, quick answer tests that have tended to be set in the past; we will get a true indication of the complexity of achievement of children in South Australian schools. In addition, we will get a realistic indication of what are our strengths and our weaknesses. This will not be a white-wash exercise; we know that there will be areas where we will need to improve our performance. We will be looking not just to celebrate the excellent achievements of many of our students but also to establish areas where we need to lift our game.

Mr GROOM: I refer to page 186 of the Program Estimates—'Curriculum Services Program'. What is the relationship between the South Australian Education Department and the Curriculum Development Corporation of Australia and what is its purpose?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I referred earlier to the Curriculum Development Corporation in relation to national goals. It was at the Hobart meeting of the Australian Education Council earlier this year that an agreement was reached, with the concurrence of all States except New South Wales, to establish a Curriculum Development Corporation. The management of that corporation would comprise the States, the Commonwealth and the other organisations to which I referred earlier.

The corporation would be funded initially by the resources that were in the past provided to the Curriculum Development Council in Canberra, under the auspices of the Federal Government. In fact, this would be a curriculum development centre owned in partnership by the Commonwealth and the States. It would be available for collaborative efforts in the development of curriculum and, indeed, other associated programs in Australian schools. The Acting Director of the corporation—the previous Director-General of Education in South Australia, Mr John Steinle—has been asked by the Education Ministers of this country to establish this body and has been working quite assiduously to that end for some months. I will now ask Mr Boomer to comment on the curriculum component of this new centre and how it may assist South Australian schools.

Mr Boomer: The corporation will take on many of the functions of the previous Curriculum Development Centre. However, as the Minister has said, it will be a much more cooperative venture, with the States having a stronger say in what occurs. In fact, collaborative curriculum projects across Australia will not occur unless consensus and agreement exist between all States. There will still be opportunities for one or two States to get together but, in terms of national collaboration, it will be a corporate venture.

Work is already under way in anticipation of the establishment of the centre. This work is quite historic in terms of getting rid of what is sometimes called the 'railway gauge' problem in curriculum areas, that is, in ridding the system of unnecessary differences in such subjects as mathematics and literacy. For example, at the moment, there is a mapping project in the area of science, and another in the area of technology. Further work is being done to look at common entitlements in mathematics across Australia. It will be very interesting to see whether we can reach consensus on the entitlements of children to mathematics experience at various stages of their schooling.

Next year there will be a mapping of literacy, with the hope that we will arrive at statements of entitlements in literacy for the nation. It will be a matter of great interest to see just what we can achieve. Another exciting aspect of the corporation will be the capacity to share resources and materials; for example, distance education is an area where,

across a whole range of States, people are, in a way, reinventing wheels. The corporation will provide a mechanism for the States to get together to see where the gaps exist and then to commission one State to fill that gap, rather than repeating that exercise eight times.

The Australian language levels project has been a great success, providing a national framework for the development of curriculum in languages. In a potentially very divisive and complex area we now have a common framework—generated in South Australia but now available to the nation and endorsed by all States and systems. That is the kind of work that will be possible under the corporation. The continued sharing of resources should lead to savings and efficiencies in the development of curriculum without cutting across local determination and initiative.

Mr GROOM: I refer to the Education Review Unit. I think the Minister might have touched on this issue earlier in answer to the member for Price. However, I do not think he covered the issue fully. Is this a cross-project program and can the Minister give a more detailed report on the activities of that unit?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I did explain this to the Committee earlier and gave a brief overview of the work of the Education Review Unit. I should emphasise that the staffing of this unit has come about as a result of our ability to attract some very highly qualified officers of the Education Department within South Australia and officers from elsewhere to work in this very specialised and important unit. It is true to say that the concept upon which this unit was built has come partly from the work of the Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) in England. The group of senior education officers that form the inspectorate operate in a *quasi*-independent sense from the education authority. The group reports to the schools, to the broader community and directly to the education community in that country. The unit is highly respected in England, and its work is appreciated and understood by the schools and the broader community.

Its reports are often published in the daily press in England and the general comments that it makes on education, as the unit will hear from time to time, are also very much appreciated. There has been a lack in our education systems in this country, because we have not had an audit component or a group of highly regarded officers who can carry out this function with the degree of freedom and creativity that is required. Obviously, a great deal of work needs to be done to establish this program. We have been very fortunate to attract as the head of that unit, Dr Peter Cuttance, who has come to us from Scotland.

We have begun developing the work of the ERU in a number of schools now but also in a number of non-school based programs and the reports of the ERU on those programs will be coming back to us in the near future. In addition to that is the fundamental work of assisting schools with their school development plans in each directorate in the department, and in the ongoing review of activities in our schools as against those school development plans.

Mr HAMILTON: I note that improved access to modern technologies in the classroom in 1988-89 is a significant achievement referred to in the Program Estimates at page 192. What access to technology has been provided for South Australian students?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The introduction of new technologies in education has a dual thrust, both in the classrooms as part of the learning programs and in the administration of the Education Department's schools, which have all recently been given funds to purchase fax machines and the larger schools—

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: When will members of Parliament get fax machines?

The CHAIRMAN: That question may be on the member's mind but it is not on the Minister's line.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The trials and tribulations of members of Parliament today will obviously not be experienced by students in our schools because they will have access to these modern technologies, which will improve the learning opportunities of students. Traditionally, we have seen the introduction of computers as providing in themselves the wherewithal that students need to grasp the new technologies, and now we know that it goes far beyond that, to the ability to use the computer and other technologies as a tool for the learning process. That is being grasped by even the youngest students in our schools through to those in the senior years. It is interesting to see that, for example, last year every primary school received a grant to establish a science room and to purchase equipment. The department believes that that is very important for our primary schools.

Many of the schools have bought Lego which is being used by students in order to gain a basic grasp of technology, and it is being used also as an aid in maths and science teaching. Interestingly, Lego is now used not only in primary and secondary schools but in the engineering faculty of the university. Lego is capable of having computer chips placed within it that allow the Lego to be used in a number of applications of considerable importance, and it also can allow for a greater degree of creativity and the development of learning modes that are not otherwise available. In the School of the Future that has been established at Technology Park, a number of these new technologies have been put in place and are appreciated and utilised by students. The Director-General may be able to add further comments to this very broad subject.

Dr Boston: I would just comment specifically on computers in schools, which are very important. At the moment, approximately 8 300 micro-computers are being used in our schools. The Government has contributed \$634 000 towards the cost of purchasing that equipment through the computer loan scheme over the past four years and there have been direct grants for the same purpose of \$3.9 million over the past three years. In 1989-90, the amount available to schools through the computer loan scheme is to be increased by \$50 000 to \$300 000. South Australia is particularly fortunate to have the Angle Park Computing Centre within the Education Department. That has developed more than 100 software packages to meet the needs of our schools. Those packages are not only made available to South Australian schools at only the cost of materials and distribution, but they are now also sold around Australia, in New Zealand, in the United Kingdom and, we expect shortly, in other European countries. So, a substantial overseas export is emerging from the department.

The Angle Park Computing Centre also provides access to an electronic information system which has been developed in South Australia. That system, which is called 'Nexus', provides our schools with access to electronic mail, to data bases, to bulletin boards and the AAP news service. It is currently being upgraded to develop it as a commercially available product outside South Australia. As a technology then, computers are clearly important for taking our children into the twenty-first century in educational terms, and they are very prominent on our curriculum agenda.

Mr S.G. EVANS: Have all schools been provided with computer equipment and fax machines?

Dr Boston: Fax machines are being made available to all school sites; where junior and senior primary schools are

situated together, only one fax machine will be provided, but all school sites will have access to fax machines by the end of this year, and I understand that 300 of our 700 schools have already had them installed.

Mr S.G. EVANS: What about computers?

Dr Boston: Computers are being supplied to all schools with more than 100 students, under the schemes I have referred to. Alternative arrangements of various types are being made in relation to other schools.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I think that it is a great idea that schools have fax machines, but students will get a hell of a shock when they become politicians. I refer to adult re-entry schools (Program Estimates, page 192): Thebarton High School has recently been advertising six two-hour sessions of introductory adult classes, with no tuition costs.

As the Minister would know, TAFE has to charge students who undertake adult matriculation courses. Is the Minister concerned about the inequity that is apparent and, more generally, are we going to continue with a situation where a number of re-entry schools are competing for students in virtually the same market as TAFE adult matriculation courses?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I must say that we did not have a fax at our school when I went there, but I still got a pretty big shock when I became a member of Parliament. However, the crucial issue about re-entry schools and the people who attend them relates not to a matter of competition between providers but to how we can best accommodate and provide for those many people who want to access education programs. In the context of discussions about retention rates in our schools, it is interesting to note that 10, 20 or 30 years ago there was often simply no opportunity, for economic and other reasons, for young people to continue their senior secondary education.

In fact, in the main, secondary education is a post-Second World War phenomenon in this State. It was not universally available to all. In fact, it is only in the 1980s that there has been an expectation that the majority of young people could continue their full five years of secondary education. The figure has gone from 32 per cent in 1982 to about 60 per cent in 1989. There are many people in the community who were denied continuity of their formal education and who now see the need for it and who believe that their career opportunities and their general enjoyment of life can be greatly improved by accessing further education opportunities.

In a period when we have declining enrolments and where we utilise our school resources for only a fraction of the year, there are growth opportunities in relation to engaging in these programs. The Elizabeth West High School is a classic example of that; Mitchell Park High School also has a very important program; and the program at Thebarton is continuing. We need close cooperation with the Department of Technical and Further Education to ensure that there is not any overlap. That is certainly not our desire, and nor should there be competition. We want cooperation so that jointly there is provision for meeting the needs of the community. To this end, the Director-General of Technical and Further Education, Mr Kirby, and the Director-General of Education have been working closely to ensure that that goal is reached. I ask Dr Boston to comment further.

Dr Boston: We are working very closely with the Director-General of Technical and Further Education and his people. It is very fortunate that he is located on the same floor as the Director-General's Office of Education, enabling us to keep in close touch. At the moment we are defining a position in relation to the central core of the Education

Department's role and the central core of TAFE's role. It is clear that the job of the Education Department is to offer primary and secondary education to all students—regardless of age and mode of study in relation to secondary students. It is becoming clear that it is a function of the Education Department to assume responsibility for part-time and re-entry programs for adults, in due course, as satisfactory arrangements can be made.

The core responsibility of TAFE is in the vocational training area. Between those two, there is a considerable area of overlap related to pre-vocational training and vocational awareness. The example at Thebarton referred to by the honourable member relates to a matter that Mr Kirby and I discussed only yesterday. There seems to be a difficulty there in that the high school component has been advertising stream 1 000 programs (using TAFE's terminology), although it would appear that it would be more appropriate for TAFE to offer those on that site. Also, a difficulty has emerged in relation to the fee structure for those programs. We have that matter in hand at the moment and it will be sorted out.

As the Minister said previously in answer to a question about the membership of the senior executive, Mr Glen Edwards from the Office of Employment and Training (which has now been subsumed within the new Department of Employment and TAFE) has now come back to Education as Director of Special Projects. His key responsibility at the moment is to sort out the matter of the Education Department and TAFE interface. He is in the Education Department and he will be working very closely with Peter Kirby as well as with me. We expect to be able to make substantial advances in this area in relation to not only Thebarton but also the Elizabeth-Munno Para complex, the new Whyalla college, and the Millicent complex, where TAFE and the Education Department are working cooperatively, as well as in several other areas.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I refer to the primary education review on page 191 of the Program Estimates. Which of the many recommendations will be approved and implemented? Also, what sort of performance indicators will be developed?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: With respect to the implementation of the recommendations relating to the primary review, I refer the honourable member to the quite detailed comments that I made in response to the questions asked by the member for Price earlier in the day. I do not think I can add much more to those comments. As to the performance indicators, Mr Boomer has provided some details on that matter in respect of the writing and reading assessment project. I ask Mr Boomer to provide further details.

Mr Boomer: A number of things are in progress in regard to performance indicators. Since my return, the first task of the Curriculum Directorate has been to produce a primary curriculum digest, which brings together in a succinct form the present guidelines for each subject area. Superintendents in the Curriculum Directorate are now moving to the next phase, which will be to provide criteria for the examination of school curricula, to assess whether these are being provided in line with curriculum guidelines. Those documents will be produced progressively during 1990.

These documents can be used by schools in assessing their own curriculum performance, to prepare the school for whole school reviews to be undertaken by the education review unit. In addition, each superintendency will be looking at compiling exemplary assignments, to indicate the kinds of tasks that students should be undertaking in our schools. These will also be promulgated. At the level of student performance, we will progressively (and this will

take some time because it is a quite complex task) prepare booklets indicating levels or standards of performance, which we hope will guide the work of teachers in assessing the performance of students.

It will take some time to do this, but, for example, from our literacy survey, we hope to develop booklets that will show the stages in the development of literacy, which can guide the work of teachers and help them in assessing the performance of students. As to the full impact of this, it will take about three years I would think before we have a comprehensive set of indicators across the areas that I have talked about. However, these are things that will greatly assist teachers in their talking with parents about the performance of students and also in accounting to the system.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: In regard to 'betterment funds', referred to in the Financial Statement on page 177, in the 1988-89 year there was a deferred expenditure from the Minister's 'betterment' funds of \$1.7 million. Will the Minister explain this reference? Will he also explain where the betterment funds are found in this budget, and what purpose they can be used for?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The 'betterment' funds are found in the receipts from the Commonwealth. They are paid to the State as part of the payments from the Commonwealth to the State. They can be used in accordance with the agreement entered into between the Commonwealth and the State for the use of these funds, and they are determined in accordance with that agreement. Those funds to which the honourable member referred were carried over to be expended in this current financial year.

Mr HAMILTON: The Personal Services Program referred to at page 202 has, as one of its specific objectives, the implementation of a curriculum guarantee package. I understand that, as part of the curriculum guarantee offer, the Education Department decided to abolish the equitable service scheme. Why has this scheme been abolished? How will the department staff country schools in the future?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is an important element of the curriculum guarantee package. Indeed, that is why it is in the form of a package, because there are checks and balances in the package. To eliminate the requirement of compulsion with respect to serving in country areas of the State, obviously, we have to have the ability to provide career opportunities for those staff serving in the country to ensure that they can return to the city at a later stage in their career and back into school locations that will meet their career requirements and provide equity within our teaching service and, indeed, provide incentives which are realistic, practical and are able to be delivered to those teachers.

I believe it has always been true that part of a teacher's career has included a period of service in country areas, and I believe that most teachers who have undertaken that would agree that it has helped them in the development of their professional life. Whilst it proves to be a deterrent initially for some teachers, there are few who do not regret the time that they have spent in rural areas of South Australia. That may occur for many and varied reasons, but that is clearly evident to me.

However, because of the age profile of our teaching service, enrolment patterns and inherent difficulties with the equitable service structure, we have had to rethink that whole process and provide a different approach to staffing of country schools. That has been an important element in the curriculum guarantee package. We hope to enhance the opportunities for students in our country schools. We believe that this package will provide that outcome. I will ask the Director-General of Education to comment on the specifics

of the country incentives which are included in the curriculum guarantee package.

Mr Boomer: The Minister referred to inherent difficulties in the equitable service scheme. There are three that are important, which we now believe that we can overcome. One has been the loss of well trained, highly qualified and experienced staff from the Education Department for four years, or permanently when they take leave, because they do not want to undertake country service. That has been a real drain on the system. A second problem has been the low morale among teachers which is caused chiefly by this factor. There are perhaps other causes, but among the causes of teacher dissatisfaction or low morale has been the threat (as they see it) of compulsory country service at a particular point in their career. The third inherent difficulty in this has been the fact that it has caused a high incidence of use of contract teachers in country areas, because people who have refused to go to the country and have taken leave have had to be replaced in country areas by contract teachers. That has caused great difficulties in rural country schools.

We believe that we can achieve the same result of staffing country schools permanently by using a series of incentives, which have been provided through the curriculum guarantee package—both career incentives and financial incentives, but career incentives predominantly. For example, this involves periods of leave on full pay after continuous service in a designated country school. The curriculum guarantee package sets out those periods, including up to one year's leave on full pay after 10 years of continuous service in a designated country school. There is the extension of the benefits of the non-metropolitan award from seven years to 10.

That is an award that provides for the reimbursement of certain expenses related to medical, dental or chiropractic treatment. Mortgage compensation is to be negotiated for country teachers in specified schools or, alternatively, payment of an allowance equivalent to the cost of removal expenses to the metropolitan area if they stay in the school—a financial incentive which, of course, saves us removal expenses, because not only do we have to move the teacher back but we do not have to remove a replacement teacher into the country. And there are other sorts of allowances and leave.

Most importantly, a guarantee which we believe will assist teachers with career planning is a guarantee of placement at one of 75 nominated schools for a primary teacher, with 25 or more accrued transfer points, and guarantees of other sorts of capacities to select schools for people who stay in the country and come back after a given period of time. In other words, in brief, if one goes to the country and stays there for a specific period of time, one has a greater capacity to choose the area within which one will teach when one comes back to the metropolitan area or another part of South Australia of one's choice. We believe that this will be, in total, a more effective and better system which will lead to better staffing of country schools, and which will lead to an improvement in morale amongst teachers. I am happy to say that is not only our view but also the view of the South Australian Institute of Teachers.

Mr HAMILTON: What is the position where a teacher decides to go into the country and his or her spouse is employed within the CSO? What efforts are made to assist that particular spouse to be in a position to join his or her spouse in employment in that same town or city?

Dr Boston: I am not aware of the specific mechanism. My answer is that every possible effort would be made to accommodate a husband and wife team in a suitable loca-

tion. It may be that Mr Christie can make a better response than I can.

Mr Christie: I am not aware of any such case, but I will add a couple of points. We would be prepared to do anything we could to assist, but it would have to be within the concept of the merit principle. We cannot give advantage to someone because he or she is married to one of our teachers over somebody who has more merit in terms of the requirements for a particular position. It is a sensitive matter. We have to balance both things out. We would help as much as we could, but within those parameters.

Mr HAMILTON: This question relates to a somewhat sensitive issue. Last year there was considerable discussion about some schools overstating their enrolments. How does this year compare with the previous year and what steps have been taken to correct that situation?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: There were some problems raised in the Parliament recently about schools overstating their enrolments. An overstatement of enrolment means that additional resources are provided to that school. It was of concern to the department that there were considerable fluctuations in the reporting process for accurate projections of staffing requirements and other support that is provided to schools based on enrolment figures. In 1988, enrolment audits were conducted at every school. They revealed that reporting by schools was carried out with a high level of validity as opposed to the previous year. Due to the vast improvement, enrolment audits in 1989 are now conducted once again by school auditors.

In the case of schools with locally appointed auditors, enrolment audits are conducted at each audit, but otherwise on a more random basis. These schools are visited by auditors every two to three years. This year a number of schools were investigated. After investigation the incidents were regarded as requiring no action other than to make the necessary adjustments to support the grants for each school. It is now believed that that matter has been dealt with satisfactorily within the audit processes of the department and the external audits which are available to us. Practices have now been established which will ensure that that continues.

Mr HAMILTON: At page 197 of the Program Estimates I notice under the 1989-90 specific targets and objectives:

To review State-wide policy for students with disability.

To provide increased resources for students in their compulsory years. To increase coordination of activities between Education and TAFE Departments.

To reallocate resources to accommodate students with disabilities in their neighbourhood schools.

I know that is wide ranging, but will the Minister comment on those aspects that have been detailed in the Program Estimates?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: A good deal of work is being done in the sphere of education. I use that in its broader sense. It includes not only the Education Department, but also many other providers in the area of special education. The non-Government sector has traditionally, and remains, a major provider in this area. An advisory committee to myself, under the chairmanship of Associate Professor Cox and a representative group of members in the community involved in special education, has been working for some time to develop new policies and strategies and to advise on the allocation of resources in this important area.

Resources are provided by both the Commonwealth and State Governments. I was asked about this matter in the Parliament recently. We in South Australia have been involved in negotiations with the Commonwealth for several years. The Commonwealth has been reducing resources to this State in the area of special education as a result of

some studies that were conducted at national level which indicated that the level of services being provided in South Australia were in excess of the national average—the standards that the Commonwealth regarded as appropriate. For that reason, the Commonwealth decided to reduce funding to South Australia and to a lesser extent to Victoria and to reallocate those funds to other States where traditionally there has not been such a substantial effort.

That approach and philosophy was rejected by this Government, and we managed to defer decision-taking on that matter for several financial years. However, the effect is now coming through. This budget provides for additional funds on the part of the State to maintain a number of special education programs in the non-Government sector to ensure that those programs continue. However, we are still negotiating with the Commonwealth and I hope the Commonwealth may still place the effort in this particular area.

It might be of interest to honourable members if I provide the terms of reference of the committee that is now chaired by Mr Cox. They are as follows:

1. To advise State and Commonwealth Ministers of Education on matters relating to special education as required.

2. To make recommendations to the Minister of Education on ways to improve special education services in research, training and service delivery to ensure a coordinated approach between the relevant agencies and groups.

3. To facilitate adequate communication between agencies and groups dealing with special education.

4. To take such steps as will encourage a positive attitude in the community to education for children with disabilities.

5. To maintain regular consultation with parents, students and community groups.

6. To recommend to both Ministers criteria to be used for the distribution of grants which may become available from both government sources.

7. To advise the Ministers on the distribution of funding as required.

That is why the South Australian Education Department and those with whom it collaborates must provide improved services, and I have every confidence in the work of that committee to give us the relevant and appropriate advice.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I refer to enrolment in secondary schools at page 192 of the Program Estimates. I have served on the school councils of both Aberfoyle Park and Blackwood. I use this comparison to highlight a problem that I know occurs in other parts of Adelaide. Some parents may desire to send their children to a particular secondary school for various reasons. It may be because their children went to the same primary school as others who may now attend that secondary school, because of a language that may be taught in one school and not another, or because of a perceived difference in the quality or type of education in either of the schools.

I have respect for the quality of education in both of these schools even though they may differ in the way that they put that into operation. Some parents will sell their home and move to an adjoining suburb because they were deprived of the opportunity for their child to attend the school of their choice. In particular, some people in the areas of Aberfoyle Park, Flagstaff Hill and Craigburn will sell their home or they board their child in the Blackwood school area for the sole purpose of getting their child into the school of their choice.

Two or three years ago the Minister had the Education Act amended to remove the zones for secondary schools. However, I understand that the Minister now realises that this change has caused significant problems and has decided not to proclaim this section of the Act. I am deeply concerned, because another batch of people are knocking on my office door asking, 'Why can't my child go to that

school?" They might want to learn Japanese as their father is regional manager of a company that operates in South-East Asia and it would be an advantage to learn a particular language, or they might want to attend a school in a particular area because their mates go to that school. They might want to attend a school for its music course or for the perceived difference in the type of education offered.

I have written to the regional director saying there should be an inquiry into why some people perceive the quality of education in one school as different from that in others. We must know whether or not that is correct. If there is a difference, we must rectify it if people see it as a problem. I ask the Minister to comment on this Act and to indicate what he intends to do about the problems of selection in the public sector so that people are not forced to go to the private sector.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Whatever law is written, there will still be practical problems about how many children can actually attend a particular school given the size and location and the desirability of expansion of schools. Fortunately in our education system in South Australia, in contrast to the situation in other States, that degree of choice has been established for a long period. There is a good deal of mobility around metropolitan Adelaide, not just at the secondary level but also at the primary level, so much so that we have had to subject a number of primary schools to zoning because they just could not hold any more children, partly due to the demography of the location of the school but also partly due to the number of students travelling past other schools to attend a particular primary school.

There are fashions and trends in education and I guess it should be seen as a plus for our school system that is very attractive to many people. Specialities and traditions have been established within our secondary schools which have similarly attracted a large number of students who will make sacrifices in terms of travelling long distances or boarding near a particular school. Some families have even moved into a particular locality—that is an established fact. So manipulation of the law or the regulations is not the answer, but the honourable member has touched on a relevant question, that is, why do people choose a particular school. One suspects that sometimes those decisions are made on quite flimsy evidence or evidence that has never really been tested.

So the comments made earlier today about the work of the Education Review Unit and the school development plans, and the comments Mr Boomer made about the program in which he has been involved so closely—the writing, reading, assessment project—have provided objective, factual information, which will help students in the broader community and the families of students to make a more informed decision about educational opportunities and outcomes in particular schools. One suspects that similar decisions have been made with respect to many non-government schools, where students often travel quite long distances. Of course, in the case of non-government schools a very substantial financial sacrifice is made by parents as well. So we do need to know more about what schools are providing, and that must be assessed objectively and made available to the broader community.

Dr Boston: The South Australian education system is large enough to offer a diverse range of schools. They should all be of very high quality, but it is clear that, particularly given the importance of school councils in shaping what happens in schools, schools will be different from each other; we encourage them to be so and there will be some schools which appeal to some students and parents and

others which appeal to others. That diversity and richness is something which we seek. Having said that, I point out that it is very important that the total offering of schools complement each other, that is, that the schools complement each other rather than compete with each other.

We are not in favour of a sort of Darwinian approach to educational administration where schools compete with each other and the fittest survive. We are attempting to produce a diverse landscape of schools which offer a broad range of offerings and which provide a choice for all parents within the sorts of schools that suit their children best. All that, of course, must be within the constraints of the resources available. Clearly, if one school is incredibly popular, we do not have the capacity to expand the physical facilities and staff of that school but we can see from that that there is a need to develop similar sorts of schools and similar sorts of programs elsewhere. That is what we have set out to do.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I just hope that that action to which the Director-General referred happens fairly quickly in my area; that will save me or someone else in the future a lot of problems. The Program Estimates (page 195) indicate that as part of the curriculum guarantee package the Government has included in the basic staffing formula \$120 million for salaries for teachers of languages other than English to help provide for the increase in duties other than teaching time for teachers.

Many principals and staff have expressed alarm at the effect of this move on the LOTE program. One principal from a north-western suburbs primary school had this to say on the subject:

LOTE has always been a Government initiative. It is not sought by the union or the profession. It is however educationally valid and has been supported by schools because the Government has demonstrated its commitment to its own policy by providing the necessary resources to make the program work. Now that LOTE teachers will be providing DOTT time, there will be a slowing down of LOTE programs as some schools reduce their offerings and other schools resist the introduction of LOTE programs.

The teaching of language is largely an interactive process and it cannot be done effectively with 27 children from mixed backgrounds and with mixed ability. The various language centres around Adelaide have maximum class sizes of 15 and the teaching of English to children from non-English speaking backgrounds is done with very small groups. This would appear to be an acknowledgement that the teaching of a language warrants smaller class sizes. If LOTE teachers are required to take whole classes to provide teachers with DOTT time then it will inevitably mean that language programs in primary schools will degenerate into mere tokenism.

Does the Minister share the concern expressed in that letter (and by others) and, if not, why not?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I certainly do not accept that quite personalised criticism of the languages other than English program. It must be put into context. This State is by far the most advanced in Australia in the provision of language teaching in our schools. We are simply miles ahead of the rest of the country. We have a firmly established policy and we are providing additional resources to that policy every year. It is there for all to see. The correspondent to the Opposition has said that the program was sought neither by the profession nor the union. I dispute that, as many people in this State and within the sphere of education have been asking for us to provide additional resources for the teaching of languages for a long time. Certainly, that is reflected within the union. We are living in a multicultural society.

Clear statements have come from Governments and the community for a number of years that commit us to the introduction of the concept of multiculturalism not only as a broad slogan bandied around the community but in practical terms in our daily life. Nowhere is that more important

than in the sphere of education. We are fortunate to have a substantial report which provided a blueprint for the languages policy. A committee chaired by Professor George Smolicz reported to my predecessor, the Hon. Lynn Arnold, who implemented the policy and commenced the program in this State. Obviously in some residual quarters there is some resistance to the implementation of this program and to the concepts that it embraces, whether it be in the teaching of traditional languages, mother languages or languages of economic importance. It is radical to the extent that it concerns some groups of people.

Some people have always seen this as an add-on, something apart from the mainstream curriculum and something which, presumably, which when there is a change of political philosophy could be set aside quite readily. I reject that, because it is important that the teaching of languages is an integral part of the curriculum offering, that it is mainstream could and cannot be sidelined easily. That is why within the curriculum guarantee package the languages other than English provision has been included within the staffing formula for schools. That is not to say that those salaries have been lost in any way; they most certainly have not been lost and will be added to in the current budget. The potential exists in the staffing formula to provide additional resources for the teaching of languages other than English.

Regarding the provision of a 50 per cent increase in non-contact time for primary school teachers, we have said that in the teaching of languages other than English there is no requirement for two teachers to be in a classroom at the one time during that instruction period. It is a matter touched upon also in the honourable member's correspondence. A need obviously exists to readjust some of the teaching philosophies that have applied in this area in the introductory stages and within the staffing provision as applied in individual schools. They are school based decisions and responsibilities and must be attended to. Obviously guidance and support will be given by officers of the Education Department to individual schools where problems are being experienced in this area.

Mr S.G. EVANS: The writer of the letter was not attacking the programs; the writer was saying that, by including the 120 LOTE salaries in an area where teachers have to undertake duties other than teaching, it reduces their opportunity to spend as much time as they would normally spend in the area of languages teaching. That is what the writer is getting at: that is what the question is about and that is the concern. Does the Minister share that concern?

I refer to staff appraisal. The Program Estimates (page 202) states:

Development of a staff appraisal policy framework and implementation of trial programs in selected schools.

Will the Minister explain that reference?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I cannot add any more than I have said about the matter of LOTE salaries. However, to reinforce my statement: those salaries are there, they are dedicated to the teaching of languages other than English in our schools and they will be added to each year in accordance with our languages policy. This in no way diminishes our commitment as a Government to provide for that very important aspect of curriculum in our schools. Indeed, I would argue that it entrenches our commitment to ensure that they are in the mainstream of our staffing school structure. I will now ask Mr Christie to comment on teacher appraisals.

Mr Christie: The concept of staff appraisal or teacher appraisal or personal development review—it is given many names—has been around for some time and, of course, has been used widely in industry and throughout the public

sector. The Yerbury review, which was a very intensive review into personnel management, conducted two or three years ago at the request of the Minister, made a strong recommendation that teacher or staff appraisal should be introduced into the Education Department. As a consequence of that recommendation, a working party has been operating for the past few months, developing an approach to staff appraisal. That approach is to develop a policy and guidelines within which schools or other work units can develop their own programs, so that we would have some policy and some guidelines that all schools would be required to follow. We would require consistency across the system in ensuring that appraisal was related to teacher development and not to promotion or to the negative connotations often associated with appraisal.

This would enable us to target teacher development much more closely to the needs of teachers and the needs of the system. The first draft of that policy is almost completed. Of course, before any decisions are made, wide consultation would need to take place within the teaching community and, as the question suggested, there should be trials in selected schools. This is a very sensitive concept, because it requires considerable skills on the part of the people undertaking the appraisal and it also requires teachers to be aware, to understand and to have some confidence in the objectives of the scheme. As I said, this concept would work towards teacher development rather than promotion.

Mr HAMILTON: Further to my previous question about special education, which I posed in relation to the 1989-90 specific targets/objectives, can the Minister advise who is on the education advisory committee? How does the committee operate? And will the Minister provide any further information that could increase the understanding of this very important committee's operations?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: As I said in my more general comments a moment ago, the special education consultative committee has been established to advise both the Federal Minister and me. The membership of that committee includes nominees from organisations such as the Catholic Education Office, the Independent Schools Board, the Health Commission, the Education Department, community and parent nominees, as well as State and Commonwealth nominees. The consultative committee has embarked on a quite ambitious model of consultation through a well attended conference held recently; it has established three task groups; it has visited a number of centres, schools and groups involved in special education; it has established a rapport with those organisations that have newsletters in order to disseminate information; and it has met with all the major service providers in this State. It is developing a vision for special education. In the process of developing the policies that it will recommend to the Government for adoption, the vision focuses on children with disabilities receiving services in their own neighbourhood. This is in marked contrast to the centralised or more isolated and institutionalised base for the provision of services to this group of young people in our community.

As I have said, the Commonwealth resource allocation has been reduced in recent years. The State Government has allocated additional funds to support, in particular, non-government special schools. In addition, funds have been allocated to support new initiatives and to support service providers during this period of change in philosophy for these programs. The Commonwealth program operates under the Disability Services Act. Of course, that recommends a process of deinstitutionalisation, and the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health is working quite closely with our State agencies to develop these new

strategies and to provide access to curriculum in a way that has not been achievable before in this State.

Examples of this new development include the Christie Downs development, with the primary, junior primary and special schools collocated, plus the involvement of the Spastic Centres of South Australia in that program, providing an integrated and very effective program in the southern suburbs. The Elizabeth Special School has six annexes in neighbourhood schools in that area, including a secondary school, once again providing more localised and accessible opportunities for children with special needs in the northern suburbs. Finally, the special education project team within the Curriculum Directorate of the Education Department has just released the first draft of the policy for children with disabilities. This policy is the culmination of several years of reviews, reports and assessment of the legislation and, indeed, the passage of more recent amendments to the Education Act and a good deal of research; and, along with support documents currently being developed, it provides a range of opportunities for those in the community to come to grips with the policies emerging in this important area.

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

Minister of Education, Miscellaneous, \$58 683 000

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that the Minister has agreed to deal with this line contemporaneously with the line with which we were dealing prior to the dinner adjournment, and we will take the votes together in due course.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Dr J.V. Keightley, Executive Officer, Office of the Minister of Education.

Dr V.G. Eyers, Director, Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia.

Membership:

The Hon. Ted Chapman substituted for the Hon. D.C. Wotton.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: In the Miscellaneous line, the proposed expenditure for 'other organisations' is \$284 000. Can the Minister supply the Committee, on notice, with a list of those other organisations, and a separate list of expenditure for each one (page 88 of the Program Estimates)?

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

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Is SSABSA making changes to the assessment procedures of some public examination subjects, such as English and biology, so that in future less than 50 per cent of the assessment will be done by way of public examinations?

Dr Eyers: The level of assessment through public examination of these subjects is typically 50 per cent, with the remainder being moderated school assessments. That level remains in all subjects and in any subjects proposed for accreditation so far. The proposed new publicly examined English subject, which is not yet accredited, retains this 50 per cent external assessment requirement. However, the configuration of that 50 per cent could change if the proposal is accepted. Present arrangements for English provide for a three-hour examination and an additional two-hour examination which respectively contribute a 30 and 20 component towards the 50. In the new proposal the three-hour examination will remain and would cover the same 30 and, instead of the second shorter examination there will be a

folio of verified writing by students on their extended reading tasks, and that will receive a loading of 20, as with the present arrangement.

Both the examination and the folio will be fully externally assessed, using the normal double marking procedures, and the same stringent supervision will occur. The effect of the proposal will be to generate both valid and demanding assessments, retaining the 50 per cent level. In general terms, the SSABSA assessment policy now in place require that the most valid and appropriate procedures will be selected for every subject. In the case of biology, no significant changes have occurred; no accreditation proposal is yet before the board. There has been a minor change in the extent of the assessment weighting for a project in the school assessment component: it has gone from 40 back to 30. Apart from that, there has been no change.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Does the Minister consider that a number of subjects may be rationalised? One that springs to mind is the possibility of merging certain of the history subjects. Does that extend into other public examination subjects?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: That matter should be referred to Dr Eyers, as it involves the work being done by the board of inquiry.

Dr Eyers: Rationalisation proposals at year 11 level are currently before the Government on the basis of using frameworks where schools can use a smaller number of syllabus statements and generate their own programs within the confines of the framework proposals themselves. No significant move has yet been made to consolidate the number of accredited subjects presently offered at year 12. However, the so-called registered subjects have been consolidated. In the accredited subjects presently being reviewed, all groups are currently considering the form of rationalisation and consolidation that can sensibly be brought about.

In the case of history, instead of a number of quite disparate history subjects bearing little relationship to one another, there has been a move to bring about a common general structure. This means that the students can gain appropriate skills in history no matter whether they are studying Australian history or modern European history; the approach can be somewhat similar. It is believed that that kind of approach, where the whole group of subjects has been rationalised, still allows us to maintain the difference between subjects, but to overcome the somewhat uncoordinated fragmentation of those subjects, which may have been thought to be present in the past.

Mr HAMILTON: What assistance is the Education Department providing to children with a hearing impairment; and what work is being done to provide a program for cochlear implants for students who suffer such impairment?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I do not have the precise information before me with respect to hearing impairment programs that operate within our schools. However, quite an extensive program exists, not only for the provision of learning opportunities for students but also for the training of teachers in this area, and a structure has long been established to advise the Education Department on behalf of the hearing impaired student group.

I must commend the non-government school sector that also provides a number of specialist programs in various schools for hearing impaired students. That has allowed for much greater participation of those students in the life of schools and has certainly allowed many of those students to proceed quite normally through the schooling years and, indeed, to tertiary institutions. I shall be pleased to get some more specific information for the honourable member with

respect to the technology referred to. I know that that has brought new opportunities to a number of students.

In fact, I saw a student just yesterday in the physical education program to which I referred who had that hearing aid, which obviously meant so much to that child. It is interesting that the teacher concerned had obviously received training in order to communicate with that child to ensure that the child participated fully and that the class, in context, was one of accommodating the disabilities that that child experienced. It is interesting to note also that SSABSA has an accredited year 12 subject of communication for the hearing impaired which I think is particularly important in terms of the secondary school opportunities available for our students who have a particular interest and want to make some commitment in this area.

Dr EYERS: There is a small group of students who take this subject, typically four or five, each year. The aim is to develop the confidence of students in communicating, both in the English language and in the whole range of expressive and communicative means available to those with hearing impairment. The course has four main elements: reading, writing, signing and a drama element which is regarded as being particularly important to it. It is a subject which we regard very highly, even though the number of students involved is small, and it perhaps points to the need to keep a significant diversity of subjects available at the senior level for students with particular needs outside the mainstream areas. I would be happy to lodge documents about the nature of that particular course as need be.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I would ask Dr Boston to comment on the medical procedure that the member for Albert Park referred to.

Dr Boston: I recently had the pleasure of attending a meeting of parents at the Woodville Hearing Impaired Centre, and the meeting was addressed by a speaker who had had a cochlear implant, and she really was most impressive in describing the success of the operation, the way in which it works, with a speaker around her belt and electrodes in her ears. She described how she had first recovered her hearing, having lost hearing at the age of 11 through the mumps. It was very interesting, because there is a young man at Woodville Hearing Impaired Centre (if I am correct, he also is an 11-year-old) named Brenton Lillecrap who will be the first student in South Australia to have a cochlear implant. The procedure is going to be performed, I believe, in December this year, so we will be watching anxiously to see the success of that operation.

Mr HAMILTON: I attended that meeting also which was held in Deafness Awareness Week, and I was most impressed by the speaker, Shirley Ackehurst; it was very interesting to hear a woman of her calibre. Hearing her speak and seeing the way she related, I must say, was a very moving experience for me, particularly when one realises that it is someone who has lost her hearing and then regained it, and when one imagines how it has impacted on not only herself but her family. So it certainly was most informative. Mrs Lillecrap was very active in that particular area, too. I think the Minister will be well aware of her representations to many members in relation to the needs of not only her own child but, indeed, of other children in South Australia. As to reviewing of the condition of school bus contracts, could the Minister elaborate for the Committee?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The department has been engaged in a review of our relationship with private bus contractors and I have also had some meetings with representatives of the private contractors. They provide a very important service to students in the more remote areas of the State, and we have an excellent working relationship between

those providers and the Education Department which has been developed over many years. As I indicated to the Committee earlier in the day, the department has a very extensive bus fleet, and in this budget, there is substantial provision for improvements to our fleet of buses and also, of course, to their general maintenance. We are obliged to maintain those buses to the highest of standards as is quite proper, and that is a major expenditure for the Education Department. I ask Ms Kolbe to advise the Committee on the current status of the review.

Ms Kolbe: I actually chair the meetings which we have once a month with the Bus and Coach Association which is currently engaged in looking at the contractual situation between the department and private contractors. The reason for that is that, of course, in the early 1980s a transport review was undertaken and, following that review, we issued a policy manual, which is the first one of its kind in this State and probably around Australia, for school buses. One of the matters that came out of that particular report was also that the contract between the department and individual contractors was struck in the early 1970s, and some of the clauses contained in the contract document are really quite superseded. We have meetings to talk through not just the contractual situation from a legal point of view but also all other matters which may be of concern to the private bus contractors.

The outcome of the committee finally will be that we will have a new legal document which is agreed between the Bus and Coach Association, as the major representative body of private contractors, and that we will also have a relationship with them which is somewhat different, not just on the legal basis, but also we hope to incorporate into that particular contract an index mechanism that will provide indexation for the duration of that contract to maintain the real value of the contract over time. We are looking at various cost profiles and looking at other matters that may be of concern to the Bus and Coach Association, their members or the department, and those meetings are proceeding well and sorting out the problems that may have occurred in the past.

Mr HAMILTON: At page 203, I note, under 'Issues/trends', the item 'Involvement of schools and local communities in joint use agreements for school facilities'. Will the Minister elaborate on the success of undertaking and the success or otherwise of the curfew placed on people being in schoolgrounds after midnight (I think it is)?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for his interest in these areas. There has been a substantial increase in the community use of school facilities in recent years, and now almost every school would have collaborative arrangements with multiple users of school facilities, not only opportunities for recreational use of school facilities—gymnasiums, ovals, sporting equipment, and the like—but also the use of classrooms and halls and, as members may know, under the capital works assistance scheme, there is a very substantial program of building school and community gymnasiums throughout South Australia.

Some 17 have been built in the past financial year. The ability that that provides for income to schools is also very much appreciated. The school budgets receive a fillip through the hiring of that range of facilities. That enables the school to extend its own programs accordingly. However, there is a spin-off from this use, apart from the obvious ones. The use of school facilities in the evenings and at weekends provides an informal form of security around schools and a sense of ownership of that school property in the community.

The bringing down of the curfew between the hours of midnight and 7 a.m. has provided for a security structure and the legal enforcement of it during the hours when it is not envisaged that there would be community use of the facilities. However, in the remaining hours the use of school facilities has provided that informal security network.

It is interesting that the cost of fires in 1987-88, when there were 24 arson attacks on schools, was \$4.6 million. In 1988-89, when there were seven fires, the cost was \$927 000. In 1989-90 to date there have been three fires at a cost of \$71 000. We are not sure what effect the curfew has had, but there is a marked diminution in arson attacks on our schools. To some extent we can attribute that to the effectiveness of the curfew in conjunction with much greater community use of school facilities and a sense of community ownership of those facilities.

Mr S.G. EVANS: I have a question which is follow-up to the area referred to by the member for Albert Park regarding help to those who are impaired. Have we moved to the point of making available to blind students what I would call Braille computer printers? Recently I have heard of three blind business people running separate businesses. As they typed letters, the computer repeated them so they knew whether they were making a spelling error as they typed. They were able to hear their letter dictated back to them as they typed. Having provided computers to schools, I was wondering whether we have yet moved to making them available to blind students. I am very grateful for the action that has been taken regarding deaf people because, as I serve on the Royal Deaf Society Board, I know about their disabilities.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I cannot give the honourable member the precise details of what specialist equipment has been provided to specific schools. I was recently at the new Seaview High School where the program for sight disabled students was well established and has now been transferred to the old Seacombe campus. I was talking to a number of students who were using Braille printers. In fact, they printed out a message to me very quickly and effectively. They were highly proficient in communicating by those means and were able to provide written material for class use and the like. That is one school that I visited where that has occurred. I am advised, that Townsend House has recently received a grant of \$20 000 for a Braille printer.

Referring to the comments made earlier about the special education advisory committee, in our discussions with the Commonwealth we have asked it to allow us more flexibility in the expenditure of some Commonwealth funding lines so that we can purchase capital equipment in our integration programs for bringing young persons from institutional care into schools. We require the capital equipment to assist those young people, and Braille printers are important for that to be achieved.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Returning to the miscellaneous lines at page 88 of the Estimates of Payments, the handing down of the Gilding report will have some effect on SSABSA. Will this necessitate any changes in the SSABSA Act, particularly as the introduction of the South Australian Certificate of Education, involving years 11 and 12, will cross through the area which is currently covered by SSABSA—for example, year 12? How will that responsibility and the responsibility for year 11 subjects be devolved?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Clearly, the Gilding Report, which is currently before Cabinet, will bring about recommendations that will require amendments to the SSABSA legislation. I believe that South Australia is very fortunate to have a statutory body styled in the way that SSABSA has been styled. It has certainly facilitated this inquiry into post-

compulsory education and tertiary entrance requirements in a much smoother way than if we had to operate in the way that New South Wales does where there is an administrative structure to provide for public assessments in the senior secondary years. Under our legislation, that has been restricted to year 12. However, the Gilding report recommends that it be extended to years 11 and 12. In fact, those years form a cohort of educational subjects and the progression of them so that there is a more integrated senior secondary curriculum offering. Hopefully, one of the general benefits will be to take some of the pressure off the year 12 work load of students and get some more appropriate and relevant subject groupings in the year 11/12 cohort.

As a Government and community, we need to consider carefully the recommendations of the Gilding report. Work is already proceeding in a number of areas. The community will need time to digest those recommendations in their final form, although many of them have been discussed over the last two years in their original genesis and then in more formal papers as time has gone on. By the time that this matter comes to Parliament—presumably during 1990—there will be a widespread understanding of what we are proposing to do for senior secondary education in this State.

We also operate from a powerful base, because there is widespread acceptance of the SSABSA accreditation education process, not only from the education community, but also from employers and the tertiary sector. We now have strong relationships between all of those groups on which we can build these new reforms. It is a rethinking and broadening of the role of a public examinations authority, as such, to provide an accreditation assessment of the achievements of students across a much broader spectrum. It is not simply for those who are entering tertiary institutions, but also for those wanting training opportunities in the world of work, and indeed involving combinations of all of those.

Dr Evers: I think it is true to say that the education community—and we hope the students, too—eventually will welcome the general prescriptions of the Gilding recommendations which are now before Government for its consideration. It has been believed for some time that a general integration of year 11 and 12 activities would benefit all students. In South Australia we have a high retention rate of about 64 to 65 per cent; arguably one of the highest among all the States in the Commonwealth. We believe our national interests are served by that participation rate increasing still further. The union of year 11 and 12 will productively assist in that. It is true to say that SSABSA will want to play a very productive and facilitating role in this, in the sharing of responsibilities that will occur. We look forward to the eventual decisions that will be made. We believe, as a statutory body, that we will be able to manage an effective and enlarged role, and enjoy the increased cooperation between all the sectors which is likely to come about.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: In relation to the South Australian Association of State School Organisations, is that organisation actually included among the other organisations for a ministerial grant? I do not see it specifically listed anywhere under the miscellaneous lines.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: It does receive a grant each year, but not not only under the Minister's miscellaneous line. A number of parent organisations receive grants in that way. Last year it received \$19 500 from those lines, but SAASSO also receives funding from the PASS Committee, the Parents and Students in Schools Committee, which has an allocation of funding as well for grants for parent and student participation in our schools. The South Australian

Association of State School Organisations plays an important role in the parent education training programs throughout the State. That has been well accepted, and it receives funding from that source also.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Will the Minister provide details of payments made to SAASSO, by the Minister through his miscellaneous lines or by the Education Department generally, since June 1988, and, in particular, provide details regarding the amount of the grant, the purpose and the date the payment was made.

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

Mr HAMILTON: Referring to the Program Estimates (page 203), I note that under 1989-90 'Specific Targets/Objectives' reference is made to a further development of a major asset register and development of a minor asset register. Can the Minister provide further information on the progress of that matter?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Obviously, across the public sector, each agency is being asked to develop and contribute to the overall Government asset register. Stage 1 of the development of the asset register has been completed with the review of the asset information system which is maintained by SACON, and the generation of a data based system derived from data obtained from LOTS pertaining to property owned by the Minister of Education. Discussions have commenced with SACON with respect to the development of a new integrated system, whereby physical data relating to the buildings can be augmented by financial data relating to economic life cycling, replacement of cycling, maintenance costs, maintenance cycling, and perhaps linking the area work program in order to track improvements made to the asset base from this source of funds.

Stage 2, relating to the development of the minor asset register, is progressing with the final draft of the asset register *pro forma* which is nearing conclusion. Data from schools and other work sites will be collected via that *pro forma*, and then transferred to computer for analysis. The time schedule for completion of this exercise is within the current financial year. A good deal of work is going on within the Education Department, as indeed there is across the public sector, to ensure that all the relevant information is available to us on the management of our assets.

The Education Department has assets valued at more than \$2.5 billion, and it is an enormous task to maintain those assets and to develop programs and responsible management strategies for their ongoing maintenance of those assets, also for the disposal of surplus properties and the acquisition of new properties. A very extensive new school building program is being undertaken in the newer suburbs of metropolitan Adelaide, as well as the ongoing maintenance of our existing assets. All of that is being aided considerably by the development of the asset register.

Mr HAMILTON: Referring to Estimates of Payments (page 203) 'Completion of a building standards review', I ask: can the Minister provide further details in relation to that matter?

Ms Kolbe: The standards review began at the start of 1989, and it is well and truly on the way. Recommendations of the primary review have been incorporated into the standards review, and the first draft report which relates to primary schools and new standards proposed is in the area offices at present for comment, and we expect it to go through the approving processes once it comes back next month. The secondary schools review is well and truly underway and we expect that most of that work will be concluded by the end of this year.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Is the Minister satisfied with the accountability of the Department of Housing and Construction to the Education Department for work done? I know it has been a contentious issue between one Minister and another for over a decade, with the possibility that the Education Department might assume responsibility for its own spending. What sort of accountability is there from the department back to the Minister for all of the work that is done in repair and maintenance during the course of the year, if any?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member is right. There have been discussions between Ministers on this matter for quite some time and the Education Department is the client. It is the department's money that is being used to provide for these minor works or major works. As with any building or maintenance program, there must be a relationship that provides for adequate supervision, proper accountability and clear direction and instructions on the work to be done and the outcome expected. I believe the Education Department is getting more value for its dollars now than ever in the past, and that is due in large part to the rationalisation and specialisation of work undertaken within SACON within recent years and changes to the administrative structure of that organisation.

It must be said, of course, that the work done by SACON is of a very high standard in many of these areas as compared with acceptable community standards but perhaps not with acceptable standards within the public sector and within our schools. There is a general ethos in schools that often work can be done more cheaply, but on close analysis that work is not as effective or lasting as the work carried out by SACON. The issue has been to determine what SACON undertakes very well and to allow specialisation in that area. In some areas it is more effective to have work contracted out to the private sector.

That philosophy is more prevalent these days. Nevertheless, it is important that we remain vigilant, because this budget shows that we are about to spend \$60 million on development of our works programs in this current financial year, and that is a substantial expenditure indeed. We know that the end result of that expenditure is an improved working environment for our teachers and learning environment for our students, and indeed it affects the public perception of education in this State—the visible view of education. It is important for us; Ms Kolbe will advise the Committee about the new relationship between the Education Department and SACON with respect to some works programs.

Ms Kolbe: 1988-89 has been quite an important year in terms of the relationship between SACON and the Education Department in that, for the first time in the history of the two departments, we have actually created, with the help of Treasury, something that is called a single pool. The single pool contains the maintenance funding that is allocated to SACON, minor works money and asset replacement funding that is allocated to SACON, and also the minor works funding that is allocated in the education capital works budget.

The single pool operates quite differently in that the Education Department, through the Area Facilities Manager in conjunction with the SACON district building supervisor, decides the priorities for that year so that the Education Department has actually taken control of which buildings and which maintenance that available money is being spent on. That is a new way of going about one's business, because obviously as the owner of the buildings we have more knowledge of what is required and where our priorities lie. It has been a very successful exercise: 1988-89 has actually

been a trial year and the review is very positive. Indeed, many efficiencies have been gained through this process. However, the allocations are still under the two budgets, and that makes some of the reconciliations and the work of this Committee rather difficult.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Apropos that question, is there some means whereby the schools could police the payment of accounts? On the dockets there is no indication of the cost of a maintenance item; there is a broad invoice with an overall amount. Perhaps the schools themselves might be in a better position to decide whether the department has been treated fairly.

Ms Kolbe: We have quite a program of increases in efficiencies and accountability of the kind that the honourable member has just mentioned on our plate, and as the various systems progress, these accountabilities will be more strongly established. There is regular reporting to our areas about the work carried out and the costings, and work costing more than a particular sum must first be approved by the Education Department before being carried out. There are other measures, such as those just mentioned, which have not yet been implemented, but a lot of attention is being given to this area and progress has certainly been made.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I will cite one or two comments from individual schools to give the Minister some idea of the nature of the problem. When the 'Back to School Improvement Plan' and the minor capital works maintenance list for 1988-89 were sent out earlier this year, I immediately, as I always do, contacted all the schools in my electorate to ascertain the nature of the work required: it is an ongoing program to keep tabs on all the schools to make sure that they are all being looked after properly. I am very paternal and parochial in that regard. One reply stated:

It is difficult to estimate expenditure on routine maintenance committed to our school during 1988-89 as we do not control this expenditure and keep no records. SACON, Mount Gambier, are responsible . . .

That letter further stated:

. . . as well as regular visits by their building inspector, Mr Barney Larkin. If salaries, travelling time, administration time, etc., are included as part of the estimated expenditure then it is possible that \$13 557 has been spent on our school but as I have already stated I do not have the means to accurately estimate . . .

Another school replied:

. . . I am unable to reconcile the amount of \$31 999 expenditure to date under the 'Routine vandalism, break-down—maintenance for 1988-89'. This seems to be an excessively high amount when nothing major comes to mind beyond blocked toilets, pumping out septic, guttering replacement, minor painting maintenance, incinerator removal, etc., has taken place. However, I am aware that inflation is rampant . . .

A further letter states:

. . . I cannot make an informed judgment on the correctness of the claim of \$4 223 for 'Routine vandalism and break-down maintenance for 1988-89', but I believe this should be correct. However, on the 'Minor works' sheet Mount Gambier East Junior Primary School has the items 'Upgrading new quad \$15 000' and 'Upgrade southern quad/shed \$49 400' written against our school.

And obviously that was a different school. Further:

The second item of \$49 400 should have been debited against Mount Gambier East Primary School, not my school. I rang Facilities (Eastern Area) . . . On the same list a claim for \$7 500 for 'Replacing fuse boards' was made but this work has not been done. I was informed at the beginning of this term that this work could not be done at present but would be attended to as soon as funds allow.

We are assuming that the notification received was an indication of funds expended. Another letter which I received stated:

\$45 000 for replacement of new cooler still to be undertaken.

The Minister will understand these are all May 1988 letters. Another letter stated:

. . . we were not in a position to determine whether the money had actually been spent as we did not know the value of the building work completed . . . in one instance an amount of \$7 500 is listed for replacing fuse boards at the Mount Gambier East Junior Primary School. To date this has not been installed.

That confirmed previous correspondence. Another stated that two schools on my list, Tarlee and Red Hill, are obviously not in my electorate: I knew that, but I thought Tarlee might have been Tarpeena and Red Hill might have been another school. They both denied that and said that they had their own allocations. Yet another, the one that I referred to as having an itemised list, listed about 130 itemised repairs—a comprehensive list—but provided no costing.

On a separate single sheet there is a breakdown of \$34 552. The principal of that school stated:

We certainly find the . . . figure for routine vandalism, break-down—maintenance for grant for the period 1988-89 surprisingly high. I have included a printout of our asset screen from Sacon. It is difficult for us to account for the total figure because the printout does not contain individual costings.

He stated that in any case the tractor shed had not been painted. This is correspondence from a small section of schools in a corner of the State. The schools are interested enough to keep close tabs on what has been done. Most seem to be surprised at the high cost of repairs and maintenance, however reassuring the Minister might have been about the efficiency of Sacon and the quality of its work. I suggest that it may be that the schools themselves could be ministerial watchdogs.

There are two alternatives: the school council could be given a financial allocation and responsibility for repairs and maintenance so that at its discretion it could utilise Sacon or private enterprise; alternatively, schools could be given a costed invoice instead of a lump sum figure. They could be the Minister's best friend and tell him when the other department is short-changing him. There does not seem to be a general air of satisfaction.

I have three or four letters which stated that the information was correct. Obviously, those schools had not bothered to check. Most are sufficiently keen to want to do the work and to get back with the information. I suggest that they will do the same for the Minister.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for raising this issue. The exercise he has been through is very worthwhile indeed. It is a weakness that the schools often do not have that information or are not invited to play a more active role in the development of those programs. Each year schools list the priority for work and have discussions with Sacon and area officers of the Education Department to seek assistance for the routine breakdown of plant and the like. The information to which the honourable member refers is available within the Education Department, and has been made available to the honourable member. It is also in the green booklet, which contains a statistical summary.

When I first became Minister of Education I asked that a computer printout be forwarded each year to each school, with the annual report, giving information about expenditure directly related to each school. Even the cost of salaries is fundamental information that a school, particularly the school council, should have. There should be some understanding within the community of the extent of expenditure and, where appropriate, we should encourage schools to accept greater involvement in decisions relating to that expenditure. We have had positive feedback about the receipt of that information.

It is interesting that I received correspondence from a member recently indicating that the principal of a school had said that the recurrent salaries were not in any way related to the school. He stated that the expenditure was someone else's responsibility, yet that is the source of funding and payment that is directly related to the programs that that school can provide. Where there is, within the leadership of at least one school, the concept that it is really someone else's responsibility and that indeed it happens outside the context of the school, that indicates we still have quite a distance to travel in terms of the realistic accounting that is required in our education system. I will take up the suggestions of the honourable member.

It is appropriate that schools receive advice on expenditures and, where appropriate, they are the obvious choice to see that work is done properly and that there is an appreciation of the expenditure involved in those works. Whilst the cleaning out of a drain may seem to be a relatively swift exercise to some, it can be an expensive and complicated exercise which must be undertaken by specialist plumbers. All of that helps to develop an understanding of the costs of running our schools. I appreciate the comments of the honourable member.

Mr HAMILTON: Last week the member for Goyder cast doubt upon the validity of the \$10 million back-to-school program. Are the honourable member's comments valid?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I am disappointed that the member for Goyder, who has an interest in education (and I visited schools in his electorate with him), has chosen to take this line with respect to the \$10 million provided by the Government for school improvements. The funds were raised by the sale of surplus school properties and the department has permission to return those resources to education. Previously, as with other Government agencies, it has been returned to consolidated revenue. It is interesting to note that the Leader of the Opposition in his budget speech last week indicated that, if he were to achieve government, most certainly those funds would be used to pay off the State debt.

The provision of additional resources to our schools for further maintenance is money well spent and very much appreciated by school communities across the State. That work would not otherwise have been undertaken, but we are now able to do it. In some cases it would not have been done for many years.

I was surprised to hear that the honourable member believed that the books had been fiddled and that there was not \$10 million there or, if there was, it was for the works program and that somehow money would drop off elsewhere. Neither situation is true. Perusal of the budget documents will show that this is a genuine program and a substantial and real commitment, greater than any Government has made in this State in an out of budget context to improve the physical resources in our schools.

In the District of Goyder the \$10 million program provided the following projects for small redevelopments in schools and upgrading: Moonta Area School, upgrading of junior primary school classrooms, \$30 000; Ardrossan Area School, upgrading timber classrooms, \$30 000; Price Primary School, upgrading timber classrooms, \$30 000; Wallaroo Primary School, upgrading timber classrooms, \$30 000; and Balaklava Primary School, repair and paint, \$12 000. For heating and cooling plant replacement, the Yorketown Area School replaced the evaporative cooling and a rusted roof at a cost of \$165 000. For internal painting, up to \$15 000 per school was allowed for both Ardrossan and Maitland Area Schools.

One of the comments made by the honourable member was that one lot of toilet blocks had apparently been completed 18 months earlier and that this was supposedly a new grant. The projects approved under the \$10 million back-to-school program for the District of Goyder were as I have read out. None included a toilet block. I am not sure who gave the honourable member information about the back-to-school program.

However, we know that over the past three years, we have spent \$101 590 at the Ardrossan Area School, some work having been done on upgrading toilets. I am disappointed that the honourable member has chosen to make those comments, because he has obviously received quite erroneous information. That information could have been corrected had he simply contacted the Education Department. The honourable member's electorate has done very well out of the \$10 million, and the sacrifices that a number of school communities have made in reconfiguring their schools, and school closures and allowing for the disposal of that property has brought considerable benefits for students, particularly in rural areas around this State, where some one-third of that \$10 million has been spent.

Mr HAMILTON: I must have a word with the member for Goyder; it seems that, if he criticises the Minister or the Government, he gets a lot of work done in his electorate. I am almost tempted to be very critical of the Minister and the Government. Perhaps a message is inherent in what the honourable member is doing; he may be smarter than the rest of us. It seems very ungracious to me. However, I am not here to cast aspersions on members opposite. Reference has been made in the Program Estimates to a schools in houses planning concept. Will the Minister provide further details of this concept?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I thank the honourable member for raising this issue. It is a quite innovative approach on the part of the Education Department in recent years. Currently, three South Australian Government schools occupy, as general teaching areas, buildings that are planned for ultimate use as residential accommodation. One such school is the Aberfoyle Park High School, which has duplex units that, I understand, can be used for aged persons' housing at a later stage when the number of students in that school declines.

There are two primary schools involved in the program: the Pines and the Settlers Farm Primary Schools. It is the opinion of personnel who teach in these buildings that the teaching environment is generally favourable, and they are very supportive of any proposal that would extend the application of this concept. Approval has been given in the past few weeks for the construction of two new primary schools—Wynnvale West, which is at Golden Grove, and Salisbury Downs West. Those buildings will be available for occupation in the 1990 school year. Part of both those schools will be provided as three separate houses, each offering accommodation for two classes.

It is now proposed to further develop the housing concept by designing a complete new primary school using house units for administration, library and service areas, as well as for general classrooms. Sacon has begun the preliminary design for this school, which may be constructed in the southern area during 1990, depending on the demand for new places generated by housing development. However, this concept, which gives the department much more flexibility in the future use of its resources in times of fluctuating demographic trends, has proved to be a very wise initiative. It is also considered that the concept of a house within the context of a school is very supportive, particu-

larly for younger children, and that style of school has received positive support from those school communities.

Mr HAMILTON: Can the Minister obtain information about the proposed expenditure for 1989-90 on schools in the Albert Park area?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will be pleased to obtain what information I can for the member for Albert Park about the capital works program and the minor works program in his electorate.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: One of the problems associated with the designation of Murray Bridge as a regional centre for such divergent regions as Clare, the Lower South-East and the Riverland is illustrated by the fact that recently we have received complaints from Clare, where the Government's decision to close down the Clare Resource Centre seems to have aroused the ire of teachers who are now expected to travel to Murray Bridge for resources. Can the Minister explain the reasons for the closure of the Clare Resource Centre and give some indication whether that decision may be reviewed?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Although for most people who drive around the community, Murray Bridge may not seem to be a central location, it is proving to be a very effective base for a number of Government agencies to administer and deliver services in the eastern areas of the State. Indeed, Murray Bridge is also a rapidly growing community centre.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Clare is more directly down the road to Adelaide. It is one of those anomalies where one crosses the range and moves into a country area, instead of coming down to Adelaide, just as people in the South-East find it is easier to come to Adelaide because there is no airport in Murray Bridge.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The ability to provide a non-metropolitan base for the department is an issue that has occupied a great deal of time of the Department of Education—as it occupied the time of officers of the Department for Community Welfare when I was Minister. However, the issue of the resource centre—which perhaps is not directly related to where we should locate our regional officers—has been brought to the attention of the Director-General, and I will ask him to comment.

Dr Boston: To date, four resource centres have been established in the eastern area. One is serving the Clare district; one is serving the Riverland; one is serving Murray Bridge; and the other is serving the South-East. These centres basically perform two functions: the professional development of teachers and the distribution of resources and curriculum materials, which are shared, to schools. It has been discovered that those two functions in the eastern area are incompatible at that particular level of scale. The resources need to be much closer to the schools, because they are used frequently. Also, the professional development needs to be offered at a higher level and at a higher quality and needs to cover the area as a whole.

The Area Director, after consultation with schools and the clientele, has come to the decision that it would be far better to decentralise the resource component out to clusters of schools to bring it much closer to individual schools and groups of schools and be managed in small clusters. The professional development function would be delivered in a more highly centralised mode where a better quality could be obtained. He is proposing, as a consequence, to place the resources within school clusters and establish professional development centres or teacher centres, which will work on professional development with teachers at Mount Gambier and Murray Bridge. There has been a good deal of discussion about that within the area and I have asked for a report on it so that I can look more closely at the

detail behind the decision. That should be done within the next few days. That is the current state of play.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: I note that the department 'gained formal commitment from an Anangu Pitjantjatjara to take up educational policy making role for schools in Pitjantjatjara Lands', (Program Estimates, page 196). What specifically does that mean, and what is the role the Director-General and the Education Department? Will the Minister indicate the major elements of the Aboriginal policy statement and release a copy to the Committee?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Discussions have been going on for some time between the Education Department, the Anangu Pitjantjatjara and its education committee, and there is now a strong desire on the part of the Pitjantjatjara communities to accept a much greater responsibility in running the schools on those lands. Quite a strong debate has been going on, for example, about the teaching of English and the teaching of the Pitjantjatjara language in those communities. The Education Department has traditionally trained teachers who have served in those communities in the Pitjantjatjara language and who have trained at the South Australia college of Advanced Education in a very fine faculty there.

However, the communities are concerned that education provided within the traditional settings is not tampered with in any way and that the predominant role of European educators in those communities is to teach the English language and proficiency, and a basic proficiency in literacy and numeracy for young students. There is now a much stronger desire to see secondary programs and, indeed, technical and further education programs on the lands. Funds have been set aside to develop secondary programs on the Pitjantjatjara lands.

Arising out of this, a study has been undertaken within the Education Department involving the Aboriginal Education Unit. I do not know the status of that report and whether it is current or has been concluded. However, it is grappling with this complex and delicate issue of policy development for those school communities, and is developing new management structures for them and a policy which is sympathetic to the communities that they serve. So, that is the issue that is referred to here in the budget documents. I know that much work has been done in the department to try to resolve this issue to the greatest possible extent. I know that the Director-General has been travelling through those lands and talking to communities about this in recent months.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: As to the reason I asked whether we could have a look at the policy, I was reading back some 10 years ago, after I opened a convention in Adelaide, when I launched the book on the Narrinyeri people at the Murray Mouth, that Mr Rankin, who was a lay preacher, an Aboriginal and one of the Narrinyeri tribe was asking at that time that the Education Department provide the Aboriginal people—who, of course, had their own Parliament of tribes on the Murray long before we arrived here—for assistance. He said, 'Look, we have been studying our own language for centuries before you came here. You teach us English. You teach us mathematics. You teach us the intricacies of business and administration and we will be happy.'

When I went to the Pitjantjatjara lands in the early 1980s when we handed over the Pitjantjatjara lands, one of the comments made to me by Donald Fraser, who was manager and administrator of one of the largest cattle stations there, was, 'Look, Minister, you teach us English, you teach us mathematics, business and administration.' I thought, 'I have read this before; it is 100 years old.' So, I am wondering, another decade down the track, whether paternalism

has gone by the wayside and whether we are addressing the problems that have needed to be addressed. The Aborigines recognised that as long ago as 110 years ago. What sort of progress are we making? So, I was really looking for some insight into that, whether we are changing from that paternalistic attitude and moving into the twenty-first century for the Aboriginal people too.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I think the honourable member's comments are very pertinent comments indeed, and I wish I could tell the Committee that we have made real progress in this area, but I do not think that we have made great progress. I think we have made some progress, and I think I can indicate that by saying that the person to whom the honourable member refers, in fact, Donald Fraser, said those same words to me many times. But it is Donald Fraser who is now the Chairperson of the Anangu Pitjantjatjaraku Education Committee and works full time in developing new approaches to education on those lands.

In fact, in Donald Fraser's home community, it is interesting to see that the responsibility for the teaching of the traditional language is left to the community and, indeed, on one day a week, all of the children in that school go with either the men, who are elders, or women or with the whole family groups out into the bush and are taught an appreciation of their culture—whether it is in collecting food or hunting, or in understanding many of the varied aspects of the traditional Aboriginal life in those communities.

It is the drive, enthusiasm and, indeed, the incredible talent of people like Donald Fraser that will bring about the changes that those people desire. It will not be so much the Ministers or administrators in the city wanting to see that happen, but it relates to the will of those people themselves and having a system that is sensitive enough, understanding and appreciative enough of the Aboriginal culture to allow that to occur in those communities. It is in that sense that I am optimistic and hopeful that a new era can dawn on education in those remote communities, and that we can well and truly put behind us the period of paternalism of those lands when they were administered by the missionaries or by welfare authorities or by paternal administrations. Hopefully, that era is rapidly passing.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: With regard to the education of gifted children, and related to page 184 of the Program Estimates, what facilities are there in schools generally in South Australia for the identification and special education of gifted children? I suppose I ask this question with a little more feeling than would normally be the case, because one of our pioneers in gifted education in primary school particularly, Miraca Gross, has now moved on into tertiary education. I wonder if her place has been filled. She certainly was a very dedicated person. She pushed gifted education along the track for some 10 or 15 years before she left the department.

I would like to link this with earlier comments which the Minister made regarding his reluctance or that of Australian Ministers of Education generally to implement nation-wide tests, if not simply State-wide general tests, very much as we used to do with what we used to call the SS (standard score) test. One thing which the Minister said triggered this off. The Minister inferred that standard score tests and their like had been given for the wrong reasons. If that is correct, it is not to say that you reject the test: the obvious thing is to give the test, but for the right reasons. I used to attach considerable importance to them, simply because I found them an ideal tool for the identification of reading and numerical problems, and also to identify the bright and the gifted.

If the youngsters were retarded in any way, the test was used to pinpoint their weaknesses and bring them up. If they were gifted children, then it was used to isolate them and, if necessary, to set them tasks aside from the teacher and advance them from the rest of the class. So we have dealt with two ends of the spectrum and, largely, in the book which we have before us, the Program Estimates, the emphasis generally in the expenditure of money, in the allocation of resources, is towards equalisation from the lower end of the spectrum, that is the disadvantaged, but there is, I fear, a strong possibility that, if you place all of the emphasis on that end of the spectrum, needy as it is, then you may in fact be levelling off at, but levelling off about knee height—which is not of course the Education Department's role.

I suggest that we are looking towards standards of excellence which the Education Department has always emphasised. So these standards of excellence, of course, are to be found in the gifted children, and I wonder if the Minister could make a general comment. Perhaps he could also relate it to yet another area, and that is that, if we can pin down some means of assisting the gifted children, then that, too, may be a means of arresting the movement from the Education Department into the non-government sector. It is a very wide-ranging issue, I know, and the Minister probably will not be able to answer it all in the few minutes that I have left him.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The honourable member raises some quite fundamental questions about the role of schools, particularly of State schools, because the State schools are asked to provide education programs for the widest cross-section of students who attend those schools. In reality, it is not an either/or response that schools give: either to give to the gifted and talented or to give to the disadvantaged. No, we have to allocate our resources in the best way we can—and they are finite resources—to all students, and we must provide an accommodation for those of special abilities and those who have special difficulties as well and it continually pleases me to see so many schools that are providing those programs. I was at Magill Primary School the other day, talking to a group of parents and teachers there about their gifted and talented program within the school, and in so many schools there are those additional resources that come from the staff, from the parent body and from amongst the student body to provide those additional programs.

Excellence is important to our schools. It has always been the hallmark of education in this State and it will continue to be so. That is why we have decided to establish a national baccalaureate program at Glenunga High School from next year. That will provide another dimension to the opportunities that exist for another group of students in our schools.

We have established the gymnastic focus school at Ascot Park Primary School to cater for a group of particularly talented and committed young people in gymnastics. Already assessments of that program in that school have shown that the whole tenor and ethos of the school have been changed. A group of disinclined students has shown a renewed interest in educational opportunities and in assisting those talented students in other ways so that they can express their talents in organising activities at weekends and the like at the local gymnasium. Similarly with the ethos surrounding our specialist music schools, and so on, including language programs.

There are many and varied opportunities for the expression and development of those special abilities that so many young people express. With respect to that and, indeed, the issue of standardised testing, I have stated and will continue

to state publicly my abhorrence of it as a technique to determine outcomes and standards in schools. I find abhorrent the way in which that is being used as a technique to bring about a restructuring of the educational system. I will ask Mr Boomer to comment on the approach that has been taken in South Australia.

Mr Boomer: First, the Education Department recognises in its three-year plan the need to cater for gifted and talented students, but its policy does not confine gifts and talents to academic excellence. It looks at a broad notion of ascertaining gifts and talents and places a good deal of emphasis not on nationwide tests, but on diagnostic tests and commonsense observation. The approach, particularly in primary schools, is towards a sophisticated tracking of the progress of students and profiling of their capacities. If we look closely at our children, we do not need too many tests to find out whether they have gifts and talents. The diagnostic tests which are available—and there are many through ACER and other places—are used by teachers, but the control is with the teachers with an eye on individual progression.

We now have two superintendents looking at the whole business of gifted and talented students: Joan Tennant in the primary area and Paul Kilvert in the secondary area. They have the job of implementing our policies on gifted and talented students. The emphasis on excellence is apparent throughout the charter 'Educating for the 21st Century'. This department is not resiling from the questions of excellence and high achievement in a very wide range of areas.

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

Works and Services—Department of Education,
\$14 790 000—Examination declared completed.

Children's Services Office, \$45 420 000

Chairman:

The Hon. G.F. Keneally

Members:

The Hon. H. Allison
Mr M.R. De Laine
Mr S.G. Evans
Mr T.R. Groom
Mr K.C. Hamilton
The Hon. D.C. Wotton

Witness:

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

Departmental Advisers:

Mr B. Wright, Director of Children's Services.
Mr G. Lewkowicz, Director, Resources.
Ms P. Archer, Acting Director, Policy, Planning and Programs.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to pages 90 and 91 in the Estimates of Payments and pages 211 and 220 in the Program Estimates.

Mr HAMILTON: One of the issues relating to child-care services is the continuing demand for out of school hours care. What action is being taken to ensure that there is greater access to suitable before and after school care services for South Australian families?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is an emerging area of importance in our community not only as the nature of families changes and as the nature of our community itself changes but also in terms of participation, particularly of women, in the work force; the need for both before and after school hours care has emerged as a very important service. The Commonwealth has recognised this and the most recent agreement between this State and the Commonwealth on children's services has provided a substantial fillup in out of hours school care places in this State. The triannual program for 1989 to 1993 provides for the expansion of outside school hours care by a further 1 700 places. I am very pleased that we have been able to negotiate with the Commonwealth so that in South Australia the implementation of all the new programs will be achieved in this the first of the triannual programs.

As a consequence of the rapid establishment of the new programs 405 additional places will be available in 15 programs which receive Government funding from the start of term three of this year, a further 270 places will be provided in 10 new programs to start from term four of this year and a remaining 1 025 places will become operational in terms one and two of 1990. The establishment of the new programs is being coordinated and supported by the Children's Services Office, the Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health, and Network South Australia.

I am pleased that the Children's Services Office has produced a comprehensive handbook to be used by staff and management for the development and the delivery of high quality outside school hours care services in South Australia. That kit will assist new and established services to achieve those standards that are required of them in delivering the service and it covers such things as how to start a program, responsibilities of management committees, staffing, administration, operational guidelines and budgeting. In addition, the handbook incorporates a new section on programing and ideas for activities that children will enjoy. Extensive resources available at the CSO resource centre and elsewhere provide, a wealth of stimulating ideas for program development. This is a substantially new area of activity. The resource materials are much needed and appreciated in the development of these new programs.

Mr HAMILTON: What is happening in terms of out of school hours care, particularly in the Semaphore Park area? The Minister may want to take that question on notice. Another issue identified in the child-care program is the demand for occasional care. This is significant because, as members will be aware, there is a growing demand by women not in the paid work force to have access to a child-care service from time to time. Is this need being addressed in the planning for children's services?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Initial Commonwealth programs have not provided substantial resources for occasional child-care services. There has been a concentration on long day care programs and on family day care programs. There has been seen a need for the provision of occasional child-care services, and the initial entry of the Commonwealth into those programs was very much restricted by the funding guidelines. Whilst that support was welcomed, it was believed that in South Australia there was a network of neighbourhood houses that could be more appropriately used than some of the venues recommended by the Commonwealth guidelines. As a result of representations made by South Australia at appropriate forums, the Commonwealth set up a working party, and South Australia was well represented on it by the Director of the Children's Services Office. We

were able to bring about some change in attitudes on the part of the Commonwealth.

The latest agreement has provided a substantial expansion of the occasional child-care services in South Australia, and this financial year 37 new locally based occasional care programs will become operational, and a further 19 services will be established in the next two financial years. An important element to the program is the initiatives contained in the budget documents under the social justice strategy. For this financial year State funding has been provided for occasional care services in 30 locations to be established early next year.

Whilst the totality of both the Commonwealth-State and solely State programs will provide a greater increase in long day-care services, the availability of short-term and occasional care services has remained in an area of acute need in our community. Women not in the work force but with young children need short-term child-care from time to time for a variety of reasons. The expansion of access to occasional care is seen as a priority by both the State and Commonwealth Governments, and in the provision of new services the major objective will be to meet the needs of disadvantaged families. Criteria has been established to provide for the establishment of this very substantial program.

Mr HAMILTON: The specific objective for 1989-90 is the implementation of the CSO social justice strategy. How has the Children's Services Office contributed to the implementation of the Government's social justice policy, and what are the achievements of the office to date?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Since its inception the Children's Services Office has accepted responsibility for an equitable distribution of its services. When one looks at the achievements of the Children's Services Office one can see not only an expansion of children's services programs in areas of high need, in remote areas of the State, in Aboriginal communities often for the first time and in areas where there previously was a low participation rate in children's services programs, but also a redistribution of resources within the system. I hold the CSO up as an example of a Government agency that has accepted wholeheartedly social justice principles.

Indeed, the Director of the Social Justice Unit of the Premier's Department remarked earlier this year that the social justice submission presented by the CSO was the most outstanding he had seen from all Government agencies that had prepared such submissions. For that reason, for the reason of the clarity of the submission made and for its compelling nature, the Government chose to provide substantial additional financial support for the social justice initiatives being sought by the CSO. I referred to the occasional care program in high-need areas, but will ask the Director of the Children's Services Office to provide further details of the CSO's social justice strategy.

Mr Wright: The strategy of the office is carefully targeted and aimed to provide increased support for those groups in the community who are disadvantaged. In particular, the strategy this financial year will provide increased support for women and children in poverty; increased support for Aboriginal children; enhanced quality of family life through additional services directed to disadvantaged families; improved child protection services; better access to the range of children's services through provision of more relevant information and access to services which are affordable to all. Additional funds allocated to the office for 1989-90 for specific social justice initiatives amount to \$687 000.

These funds cover the following initiatives: first, the occasional child care services for disadvantaged families, which the Minister has already outlined and requires no further

detail; a specific program to provide information services for the disadvantaged groups; and that will be based upon development of an information service plan, based on social justice principles; the development and implementation of strategies and projects targeted to the most disadvantaged groups; staff development and professional development programs in all regions, which promote the notion of the provision of service to disadvantaged groups; and the development of resources and materials aimed at increasing the awareness and availability of children's services throughout the State.

Another major initiative is directed towards Aboriginal families and Aboriginal children. We will employ three Aboriginal development workers during the year, whose job it will be to assist Aboriginal groups to encourage families to use children's services. We believe that working with children at the pre-school stage of their life is critically important in providing them with a good start to their education career. A major objective has been to ensure the maximum possible participation on the part of Aboriginal children in children's services. These workers will work with families and with existing staff, teachers in kindergartens and child care workers in child care centres to encourage that participation. Specific provision has also been made for a child protection strategy in social justice funding.

This funding will enable us to research and develop child protection programs, specifically targeted at pre-school aged children. It will develop the means of providing programs which are appropriate and relevant to children from different communities and it will enable us to implement and evaluate staff development programs on child protection for children's services staff in all sectors. In addition to those major initiatives, there will also be initiatives aimed at increasing our efforts in the bilingual assistance program (which has been a very successful program over the past three or four years); an integration program for children with disabilities; and the provision of Aboriginal staff in pre-school services.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: On page 218 of the Program Estimates, there are several statements in rapid succession under the heading '1988-89 Specific Targets/Objectives', one of which states: 'Review of licensing process completed.' Can the Minister provide information on that review?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: A great deal of work has been done in the field of licensing, which is a function that was transferred to the Children's Services Office from the Department of Community Welfare when the CSO was established. In 1988 a working party was established to review the current licensing process. That group examined central and regional office functions and responsibilities and the further development of support and advice to centres on quality of care, licensee responsibilities and roles, and penalties for non-compliance with child care centre regulations.

The review was completed a short time ago and those recommendations are under consideration. Those which can be implemented administratively are being put in place. The Director of the Children's Services Office will give a status report of where the review is currently at.

Mr Wright: The review is not yet at the implementation stage. As the Minister has said, the recommendations are under consideration but, in principle, the outcome of the review is to recommend practices which continue to place the onus of meeting the conditions of licences on the licensees of centres. We believe that most, if not all, child-care licensees are committed to the provision of high quality care and, therefore, we take the view that they should be made as responsible as possible for self-regulation and for

policing, at least initially, their own standards of care. Of course, that is not to suggest in any way that the office will not maintain as close a watch on standards in child-care as it has maintained in the past, but there is a desire to increase the participation of licensees in the licensing process itself.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Also at page 218 of the Program Estimates, under '1988-89 specific targets/objectives', it is stated:

Pilot program undertaken to investigate models for provision of occasional care through pre-school centres.

I was under the impression that this had been going on for several years, although it is still under the heading of 'pilot program'. Can the Minister clarify what is happening there?

Mr Wright: The honourable member is quite correct, of course. Occasional care on an informal basis has been provided by kindergartens for many years; parents have been able to request that their child perhaps stay on for a little longer—perhaps over lunchtime—if that would assist the family to meet some out of the ordinary commitment. This has been a regular feature of kindergartens for a long time. However, the pilot program referred to in the documents related to formal programs where occasional care was offered as a regular part of the pre-school program, where staff were specifically set aside to provide care, where fee structures were put in place and where parents could make a regular booking for occasional care outside the normal kindergarten time.

Those pilot programs were the basis of what we were discussing a few moments ago—the new occasional care services mentioned by the Minister both in the joint Commonwealth-State program and in the State-funded social justice program. Those pilot programs were able to demonstrate to us the ways in which occasional care could be provided on a formal basis in kindergartens and in other community settings, and they have given us some options for the design of those occasional care services in those settings.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Also in the paragraph that I referred to there is the statement 'Negotiations completed for new State-Commonwealth development program 1989-93...' Can the Minister outline the major principles of agreement?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: As I said earlier in response to the specific question from the member for Albert Park, the South Australian Government has entered into a further three years program jointly funded by the State and Commonwealth Governments, and there is, very clearly, an unmet need in our community for the provision of children's services, and now there is a broader range of services available for South Australian families as a result of this most recent agreement. It builds on two very successful previous programs and, as I have said in the House on a number of occasions, the commitment of the Hawke Government to the provision of child-care has been really quite incredible and has turned around one of the great problems in our community to now providing a very robust sector of human services delivery agencies.

Over the next three years outside school hours care places will be effectively doubled, providing an extra 1 700 places for children needing care and quality activities after or before school. Five new long day care centres will be built and extensions will be made to 11 other centres, providing a total of 247 new places. That is in addition to the 42 centres that we have established under the previous two Commonwealth-State programs. Parents seeking short term breaks from their children will gain greater access to occasional care with 160 new places being provided. This program will specifically help parents not in the work force

and will target existing community facilities to ensure that families have access to child care in their local neighbourhood.

Family day care places will be boosted by 330 places. The new package will involve a total capital works expenditure of more than \$5 million and operational contributions for both Governments totalling \$5 million over the next three years. Implementation of the new outside school hours care services has already begun. The first 15 programs will receive subsidy funding from the beginning of term 3 this year, providing 405 subsidised places; another 10 new programs are expected to begin operation in term 4 of this year; and the remainder of the 50 new programs will commence early in 1990.

Mr De LAINE: I refer to page 212 of the Program Estimates, 'Services for Aboriginal children'. Will the Minister outline the initiatives taken by the Children's Services Office to address the needs of Aboriginal children?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: This is an area where very considerable progress has been made in this State in meeting what has been a great tragedy, namely, that there has been a dearth of programs for very young Aboriginal children in urban areas and in the remote areas of this State. For the very first time now we have been able to provide a range of programs for children of Aboriginal families. As the Director has told the Committee, it is a major component of the office's social justice strategy and it is giving particular priority to the development of appropriate services for Aboriginal children and their families. Clearly, by all approaches that are taken to ascertain need in our community, Aboriginal families are the most disadvantaged group in Australian society, and South Australia is no exception to that assessed criteria.

The CSO has been working towards achieving an increased participation rate of Aboriginal children in its services through the creation of appropriate integrated Aboriginal services, the employment of Aboriginal staff in mainstream services and close liaison and consultation with Aboriginal communities and parents. The CSO has developed a policy on services to Aboriginal children and their families as the basis for planning, resource allocation and service delivery. I officially launched that policy when I attended the opening of the Kurna Plains early childhood centre at Elizabeth earlier this year. The policy was developed through an extensive consultative process in which Aboriginal communities, the CSO Aboriginal Consultative Committee and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff all played a major part.

In line with this policy and to ensure ongoing consultation with Aboriginal communities, the CSO is currently broadening the membership of its Early Childhood Aboriginal Consultative Committee to include representation of metropolitan, country and remote Aboriginal communities. The committee is now also directly linked with the South Australian Aboriginal Education Consultative Committee which advises the Minister of Employment and Further Education and me on the whole gambit of educational needs and programs for the Aboriginal community in this State.

In relation to specific programs a significant increase has been achieved in the number of Aboriginal children attending early childhood services over the past four years. Since 1985, the participation rate in pre-school and child-care services has increased by 76 per cent—from 589 children in pre-school child-care centres and family day care centres in 1986 to 1 038 in 1989. Significant achievements in terms of the employment of Aboriginal people in children's services have included the completion by the CSO of the first 12 month's exemption from sections 52 and 103 of the Equal Opportunity Act allowing advertising and recruitment

specifically for Aboriginal staff. The number of Aboriginal staff in the CSO is now 37, or 3 per cent of the CSO work force: this compares with 20 Aboriginal staff in 1985.

Development and implementation of the joint State-Commonwealth study release program provides paid leave for Aboriginal employees to complete post-secondary child-care and development studies. The scheme also provides for the employment of Aboriginal people as relief staff while employees are completing the training program. Seven Aboriginal staff employed by the CSO are currently completing the child-care certificate or equivalent courses.

Mr De LAINE: I refer the Minister to page 212 of the Program Estimates 'Multicultural Services for Children'. In order to respond to the multicultural nature of the South Australian community, what service developments has the Children's Service Office undertaken?

Mr Wright: The office takes with great seriousness its responsibility to ensure that its services reflect the multicultural and multilingual nature of the community. That requirement is reflected in its charter under the Act, so, it has paid particular attention to it. The office attempts to ensure that multicultural issues are an integral part of all planning, staff development and service delivery operations in the CSO. In particular, the office recognises that program must be sensitive to the different needs of disparate ethnic groups according to stages in their settlement in this country and in accordance with differing family lifestyles, English language confidence and economic circumstances. Under that broad statement of belief, the CSO has developed a bilingual program, which involves the employment in CSO pre-schools of bilingual assistants who are employed in accordance with the groupings of ethnic groups in particular areas. The program targets the needs of newly arrived families in particular.

The aims of the bilingual assistance program are: to establish positive links and effective communication with families from different cultural backgrounds as quickly as possible; to assist pre-school staff—teachers and pre-school assistants—in the initiation and development of culturally appropriate programs; to meet the needs of children from different cultural backgrounds; and to promote pre-school services generally amongst families from different cultural backgrounds.

In 1989, the overall resource levels for the program increased to 5.6 full-time equivalent staff positions, an increase from 3.6 in 1988. In the 1989-90 budget, additional resources have been allocated as part of the social justice initiatives package. There are 23 staff covering 11 languages, in contrast to the situation three years ago when only three languages were covered. In 1989, bilingual assistants were employed for the first time in country areas—in the Riverland and in Whyalla. In services where those bilingual assistants are employed there has been growth of up to 30 per cent in the participation of children from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Mr De LAINE: On page 212 of the Program Estimates under 'Services for Children with Special Needs', what is the record of the CSO in providing services for children with special needs and are these services being expanded in the next 12 months?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: Clearly the Children's Services Office plays a very important role in programs for children with special needs. This is quite a vital time in the life of those children and also it is an important time in identifying the nature and extent of the disability that those children are experiencing. So the integration of programs that assist children with special needs is given a very high priority within the Children's Services Office. The office is com-

mitted to equitable access and participation for children with special needs to that full range of early childhood services in order to promote their optimum development and functioning. The number of children with special needs participating in the range of children's services has risen over the past four years, as evidenced in the following table:

	CSO Pre-schools	Subsidised Child-care Centres	Family Day Care	Total
1986	1 724	144	128	1 966
1987	1 798	178	92	2 068
1988	2 004	378	260	2 642
1989	2 222	539	274	3 035

I will ask the Director to comment on the details of special services staffing and the integration of the program that has been developed in the CSO.

Mr Wright: In each of the six regions the CSO employs specialist personnel including psychologists, speech pathologists, social workers and special education teachers. These staff provide consultancy assessment and direct services to children with special needs across all early childhood sectors. There has been an increase in the level of these specialist staff from 22.5 full-time equivalent staff in 1985 to 24.5 in 1988-89, and once again the social justice budget provided for an increase of 2.5 additional positions in the current financial year bringing the level up to 27.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: In view of the relatively short time left I would like to place three question on notice:

1. Will the Minister provide statistical information on the number of South Australian metropolitan family day care providers and the number of family day care providers in country districts?

2. Will the Minister provide detailed information on all Government subsidised child-care centres, especially the capacity of the centres and the established demand for each service?

3. Is it possible for the Minister to provide the Committee with the number of people receiving fee relief for care in Government subsidised child-care centres and the total amount of money spent in fee relief along with the number of people receiving maximum fee relief.

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I will certainly take those matters on notice. Some of the information the honourable member seeks is actually in the Commonwealth Government's province. The substantial responsibility for the provision of child-care remains with the Commonwealth and some of that information may be accessed only through the Department for Social Security, which provides fee relief for those users of child-care programs who are subsidised by way of fee relief. I will make inquiries to seek the extent of information that may be available to the department.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: The South Australian Council of Social Services reported recently that a number of low income parents are dropping out of formal care. Does the CSO have any evidence to support such a claim?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: The Federal Government in its most recent budget provided additional relief for users of child-care programs in recognition of the difficulties some low income families have in accessing these programs. The extent of the commitment the Federal Government has made in the whole range of children's services programs is an indication of its desire to provide access to the services by the disadvantaged in our community. One cannot conclude the questions about access without looking at the totality of the redirection of social security resources in this country in recent years. The recommendations of the work of Bettina Cass and subsequent decisions taken in recent times by the Federal Government have most certainly

directed resources, particularly cash payments, to families with young children, so that they can improve their access to children's services, particularly through such programs as the family assistance scheme. I will ask Mr Wright whether he has additional information.

Mr Wright: We have only anecdotal reports at this stage of some difficulties in some areas with low income families in accessing child-care services. It is worth noting that the fee relief strategy seems to have a major impact in the child-care area because the majority of users of subsidising child-care centres qualify for some fee relief. Low income users are able to access child-care services both in the long day care centres and in family day care.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Will the Minister advise whether the new child-care centre regulations being drafted have been completed and, if so, when it is anticipated that they will be tabled and promulgated?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: No, they have not been completed and we are engaged in discussions with the Commonwealth on those regulations.

The Hon. H. ALLISON: Of the 160 new occasional care places being funded this year, how many have been allocated to community groups as recommended by SACOSS?

The Hon. G.J. Crafter: I have had discussions with SACOSS and more recently with the community neighbourhood house committee about these places.

Mr Wright: No firm decisions have been made at this stage on the matter raised by the honourable member.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed and thank the Minister and his officers for their contribution to the Committee.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Friday 15 September at 9.30 a.m.