

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 18 September 1990

## ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

**Chairman:**

Mr M.J. Evans

**Members:**

Dr M.H. Armitage  
 Mr M.R. De Laine  
 The Hon. B.C. Eastick  
 Mr P. Holloway  
 Mr W.A. Matthew  
 Mr C.D.T. McKee

*The Committee met at 11 a.m.*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Members will have the opportunity of asking three questions each, but brief supplementary questions will be allowed to complete a line of questioning. Any member who is not a member of the Committee will be permitted to ask a question at any time during the day, and this will be facilitated at the appropriate point.

Standing Orders provide for the Estimates of Receipts to be examined as well as the Estimates of Payments. I ask members to refer to the appropriate document and the particular program, line or page number when they ask their questions. If the Minister wishes to submit written supplementary material in response to a question, that should be provided to the Committee by 5 October so that it may be incorporated in *Hansard*.

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Arts, \$39 467 000

**Witness:**

The Hon. Anne Levy, Minister for the Arts.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr L. Amadio, Chief Executive Officer.  
 Mr P. Bailey, Manager Resources.  
 Mr K. Lloyd, Acting Director, Arts Programs.  
 Mr S. Saffell, Senior Finance Officer.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to pages 159 to 161 of the Estimates of Payments, page 49 of the Estimates of Receipts and pages 462 to 474 of the Program Estimates. Although not strictly in order, it has been the practice for members to refer to the capital works line when asking questions in order to facilitate business. That line will be open for examination separately, but the Chair will not police that division too strictly. Does the Minister wish to make a brief opening statement?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I welcome the opportunity to give a brief overview of the arts budget for the coming financial year. Certainly throughout the term of the Bannon Government there has been a strong commitment to the arts in South Australia. Over the period from 1982-83 onwards, total recurrent payments to the arts portfolio have increased by 23 per cent in real terms. This is clear evidence of the importance that the Government places on the maintenance of an energetic and vibrant arts industry in South Australia.

In this current financial year, we have allocated a total of \$39.46 million to the arts portfolio for recurrent purposes. That represents an increase of 6.25 per cent over last year's allocation for the arts. A further \$4.77 million has been allocated to the arts portfolio for capital purposes. I imagine that the difference in the figure quoted by the honourable member is because some of it comes through the Sacon line.

The first major initiatives included in the budget proposals is the Living Arts Centre. Over the next two years the Government will spend a total of \$7.882 million on the construction of the Living Arts Centre. That major arts facility will house the Jam Factory, the Experimental Art Foundation, the Media Resource Centre, the Multicultural Art Workers Committee and Doppio de Teatro. Construction is due to start later this year and it will be completed by December 1991 in time for the 1992 Adelaide Festival. That has already been approved by the Public Works Standing Committee. Also of interest is the Art Gallery extensions and, as part of this year's budget, the Government has allocated \$500 000 for the development of detailed plans for a major extension to the Art Gallery's exhibition space. It is anticipated that construction will start in the following financial year so that it will be finished in time for the 1994 Adelaide Festival.

Another major initiative is an allocation for theatre maintenance because we are committed to the proper maintenance of existing State-owned arts venues. As part of this budget there is an allocation of \$300 000 for a long-term maintenance program for all the major State-owned arts venues. We have three major policy themes in the arts. First, we believe in access and participation. We are certainly striving to ensure that there are no social, economic, geographical, gender, physical or information barriers to the participation in the arts by all sections of the community. In accord with that policy, we are pleased to support programs such as Arts in Action, to assist disabled people with access to the arts, and also the regional touring programs. We are very pleased that, as part of the current budget, \$60 000 has been made available for a feasibility study into the South Australian rock industry. This study will enable the Government to consider funding programs for talented individuals and for developing people within the rock industry.

This financial year, the Government will also take over funding from the Commonwealth Government of the Aboriginal Family History Project at the South Australian Museum. The Government is striving to provide opportunities for artists to work in South Australia and gain recognition for their work. We are proud of our commitment in that area and, over the period from 1986-87 to the current financial year, project grants for individual artists and small organisations have increased by 41 per cent in real terms. This year the Government will allocate \$470 000 for that purpose.

The third major plank is promotion of the arts, because the Government is well aware of the contribution that the arts make to the South Australian economy. The economic impact study, which was undertaken as part of the 1990 Adelaide Festival, clearly demonstrates the economic and tourism benefits of major events in South Australia. Studies of this type, combined with the data collected by the department on the subsidised arts industry, will provide quantitative information to demonstrate the arts contribution to the South Australia economy.

South Australia has an enviable reputation as a leader in the arts. The initiatives detailed here will ensure that the Government maintains this position. But we must also

ensure that the arts are properly managed and that, where risks are required to be taken, the organisation concerned takes the appropriate measures to protect its interests. As I outlined to Parliament on 2 August, the South Australian Film Corporation is now in a difficult financial position because of a significant overrun with the production of the *Ultraman* series. While the Government is strongly committed to the Film Corporation, as one of Australia's leading filmmakers, this financial situation could not be permitted to continue. Accordingly, a consultant has been engaged to undertake a fundamental review of the corporation's operations with a view to reducing the overhead costs and streamlining the corporation's production and management arrangements. The consultant's report will be available at the end of October, and I hope that a series of recommendations can be implemented which will not only overcome the corporation's financial difficulties but will place it in a strong position from which to undertake future project developments.

I welcome questions from members of the Committee on these and any other matters that they may care to raise.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I do not wish to make a formal opening statement. However, I would seek some clarification. We have a number of questions which we have asked of all Ministers. I wonder whether the Minister would be happy to take them on notice, as other Ministers have. The questions deal with departmental committees, consultancies, productivity savings, public sector enterprises and Government cars.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The normal procedure is to read them out briefly and the Minister can indicate her intentions.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** There are a number of other issues on which we want to ask questions.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Having previously heard the questions myself, I am sure that the Minister will want to take them on notice, but, in terms of putting them on the record, the honourable member might briefly refer to the questions: otherwise there is no documentation to support them.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I have a number of general questions, which we have asked of all Ministers. First, what is the number and title of each departmental committee; the function of the committee; the names of the members; the date on which it was formed; the amount of membership fees and where they are paid; the budgeted cost of serving the committee; and how often the committee meets?

What is the name of each consultant hired last financial year; the cost of the consultancy; the purpose and terms of reference; and the plan for release of any reports? Also, what work is proposed to be given to consultants this financial year and at what cost?

What productivity savings have been achieved in each of the past three financial years, and can these savings, if any, be identified by program and amounts in each instance; and what productivity savings are budgeted for this financial year? What public sector enterprises have been established in respect of areas under the Minister's control—for example, Scenic Constructions Pty Limited, a subsidiary of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust, and SAFC Productions Limited, a subsidiary of South Australian Film Corporation—and, if so, does the enterprise have a corporate business plan with suitable performance targets; assets valued at written down historical cost or at a cost which indicates their value to the corporation, termed 'real current cost accounting'; any Government capital or equity and, if so, what is the total and how is that capital being utilised; and what is its real and nominal rate of return?

Finally, how many Government cars are operated by the department and statutory authorities in the arts; and how

many are for the exclusive use of executive officers and other offices?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Obviously I do not have all that information. I am happy to take it on notice. I have information on Government vehicles regarding the Arts Department, which I am happy to provide. The Arts Department operates 10 sedans or station sedans, all of which are hired from Statefleet. Three of them are provided as part of employment contracts but all are available for general use. The department also owns and operates four four-wheel drive vehicles, four trucks, one van and one utility. The vehicles are located as follows: nine for the South Australia Museum, four for the Art Gallery of South Australia, three for Carrick Hill, two for the State Conservation Centre and two for the Central Directorate, giving a total of 20 vehicles (10 hired and 10 owned by the department). The 10 vehicles that we own are special purpose vehicles. The Museum and the Art Gallery have particular requirements for their vehicles and such vehicles are not available through Statefleet, so the vehicles are specially purchased and fitted out for the particular purpose for which they are required.

As far as the statutory bodies are concerned, under the Department for the Arts there are 25 sedans or station sedans. All are available for general use. Those bodies own seven utilities, four vans, one truck, one panel van and one tray-top. Again, there would be special requirements and, therefore, vehicles would not be available on a leasing basis. The location of these vehicles is as follows: six for the Adelaide Festival Centre, six for the Eyre Peninsula Cultural Trust, seven for the History Trust of South Australia, four for the Northern Cultural Trust, four for the Riverland Cultural Trust, four for the South Australian Film Corporation (which includes the South Australian Film and Video Centre), six for the South-East Cultural Trust and two for the State Theatre Company.

I will certainly take on notice the other questions. The question on consultancies has been asked previously as a question on notice. The data has been provided, but it may not yet have been incorporated in *Hansard* as Parliament has not met for some time. It will certainly be incorporated in the proceedings of the Legislative Council in the near future, if it has not already been incorporated.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to page 468 of the Program Estimates. Can the Minister provide details of the building timetable for the Living Arts Centre development?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I mentioned, the cost of the Living Arts Centre will be \$7.882 million, that is, at May 1990 prices. It will be constructed in two parts. Tenders for the construction of new premises for the Jam Factory are currently being considered and it is expected that building work will commence in November this year and be completed by December next year. The total cost of that building will be \$4.7 million.

The second area of construction relates to the visual and performing arts buildings, the inhabitants of which I mentioned a minute ago. As with the Jam Factory, construction is expected to be completed by December of next year. The total cost of that component will be \$3.182 million. We have allocated \$3.4 million this current financial year to meet the design costs and to enable construction to commence. The remainder of the cost will form part of next year's budget. The time frame for construction is fairly tight because it is essential that the reconstruction be completed and the buildings occupied before the 1992 Festival of Arts, as the Fringe to the Adelaide Festival always has its headquarters in the Living Arts Centre, and we certainly do not want to disturb that arrangement for the next Festival of Arts.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to page 474 of the Program Estimates. What is the situation in regard to the inquiry into performing arts training?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The performing arts training inquiry was set up jointly by the Minister of Employment and Further Education and the Minister for the Arts. It is looking into the requirements of training for the performing arts in South Australia. Its final report is not expected until later this year. Its Chair is Ms Mary Beasley, and there are six other members whose names I will be happy to provide to the honourable member if he so desires. That inquiry gave a statement of intent indicating the lines along which it was currently thinking, without having given any rationale or reasoning for that tentative conclusion, so that the various people involved could react to it. However, there is no suggestion that that is the final answer and, in the light of further consultation, it may well change its final recommendation.

It is a very exciting inquiry and its ramifications for future training for the performing arts are very important for South Australia as a whole. In other States there have been such inquiries and the establishment of performing arts centres or performing arts academies—bodies that combine training for all facets of the performing arts—and the inquiry's statement of intent certainly suggested that it was thinking along those lines for South Australia. This has obvious advantages in that, if different sections of the performing arts were put together, the sum of the whole is often greater than the sum of the parts in terms of the training experience that is provided for the students. I stress that any implementation of the result of the inquiry will not be my responsibility as Minister for the Arts but the responsibility of the Minister of Employment and Further Education. My interest in the matter is that the arts industry depends on the products of the training in the State, but the responsibility for ensuring that the training occurs is the responsibility of the Minister of Employment and Further Education.

**Mr De LAINE:** In relation to page 467 of the Program Estimates, how much has the department allocated for arts project grants this coming financial year?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It has allocated \$470 000 this year. Despite the fact that these are very tough economic times—as I am sure all members are aware—we have been mindful of the fact that project grants are extremely important to arts activity throughout the State, and we have determined that no reduction in funding will occur with these project grants, which have been maintained in real terms. Of course, this does not mean that every organisation which applied for a grant last year will necessarily get one this year. However, the overall total remains the same in real terms. They are allowed as a result of submissions by individuals and art organisations, and all applications go through a system of peer review.

We have a number of advisory committees in the different art forms (for example, literature, visual arts, performing arts, and so on) which make recommendations as to which individuals or organisations should receive project grant money. The strength of the system is peer group assessment. There can be no suggestion of any political interference or interference on the part of people who do not really know the art form being considered. The peer group assessment ensures that the highest standards of excellence will be maintained and further encouraged in South Australia.

The sum applied for is always far greater than the amount available. Analysis of the applications of previous years suggests that there is about between a one in four and a one in three success rate for applications. Obviously, there is a great deal of arts activity in South Australia, and if we

had more resources available we could fund even more than we do at the moment. One point of interest this year is that for the first time there will be a specific Aboriginal arts allocation with an Aboriginal arts advisory committee to make recommendations on funding for project grants in that area. Of course, this does not mean that no money has been allocated for Aboriginal arts in the past, but they have tended to be included in other areas. However, we felt that to get the best peer group assessment it would be desirable to have an Aboriginal arts advisory committee. This has been newly established, and we will advise on project grants within that area.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** In relation to the Program Estimates (page 472), the Maritime Museum is reported to be in serious financial trouble, experiencing a shortfall last year of about \$40 000 due to a drop of about 10 000 anticipated visitors. This problem has been exacerbated by the fact that, due to the lack of operating funds, the museum is now closed on Thursdays and Fridays. However, the museum's problems do not end there, as the artefacts in the collection are at risk of decay because of poor storage conditions.

Meanwhile, the museum has been told to find new storage facilities following advice from the Port Adelaide Centre Project that it must vacate the building known as the Koch store. What action is being taken to address all these serious problems, including the issue of opening hours, so that the museum can fulfil its proper function as a custodian of our maritime heritage, and so that it can operate in a manner befitting the recognition it gained in 1988 when winning both the National Museum of the Year award and a national tourism award?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Maritime Museum has never opened more than five days a week, so it has not reduced its opening hours. It has only ever opened on five days a week except in holiday periods, when it opens seven days a week; it is doing that now, as it has in the past. I certainly support the museum being open for as long as possible, and I understand that the museum management is currently looking at ways in which it may be possible to extend the opening hours to perhaps six days a week. Of course, staff is a problem, and the fact that the History Trust museums at Port Adelaide are scattered over a number of venues increases the cost of opening because of the staff requirements of running a number of venues. I understand that the management is considering moving the bookshop from across the road into the main building of the Maritime Museum to enable staff savings which could then be put into extending the opening hours to six days a week. I certainly would welcome such a proposal, and I know that it is being looked at at the moment.

I understand that storage space is of considerable historic value and will be developed as part of the whole Port Adelaide development. I am sure that the honourable member would agree that storage facilities do not need to be in historic buildings; provided that the atmosphere is suitable, the quality of the building is fairly irrelevant. So, it does not seem unnecessarily harsh to suggest that other storage facilities should be found, and I hope that they will be located in the near future.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I refer to page 159 of the Estimates of Payments. Last year, Tandanya received a special injection of \$139 000 on top of the budgeted \$540 000 when revenue projections were lower than anticipated because of visitor numbers of 15 000 over an eight-month period compared to an estimated total of 70 000 visitors per annum. How much did Tandanya earn from visitor admission charges last year; what are the projected visitor numbers for this year; and what sum does Tandanya aim to generate from

admission charges for this year? Also, does the anticipated increase in earnings from admission charges account for the \$100 000 reduction from \$679 000 to \$580 000 in the allocation to Tandanya this year, or does the reduction in State funds indicate that Tandanya will cut its opening hours, services, exhibition program and/or training initiatives this year? Finally, will the Minister confirm that the balance of the \$54 000 costs associated with travel by representatives of Tandanya to the Edinburgh Festival last month was met by commissions from the sale of art works or is there a shortfall; and, if so, how will this be met?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I have not received a financial report on the visit overseas of the exhibition from Tandanya to the Edinburgh Festival, as I understand that the Director returned for Edinburgh only yesterday. Certainly, sales did occur, but at this stage I do not know the extent of them.

There is no suggestion at all that the cost of the visit to Edinburgh will receive any extra funding. It was made quite clear to the board of Tandanya that its allocation of funds for this financial year was to cover all its activities; it is, of course, a matter for the board to determine how those funds are allocated and to decide what proportion will be used for exhibitions and various other activities. I certainly hope that the visit overseas was a financial success; I have been told that it was a great success artistically but, if the finances did not quite match up, this will be a matter for the Tandanya board to determine within its total budget allocation.

Regarding attendance figures, as the honourable member mentioned, only about 14 000 attended last year. We must realise, of course, that Tandanya was not open for a full 12 months: it opened three months into the financial year and had to be closed at various times for further capital works, such as the installation of the lift, to be carried out. So, attendances were down on what might be expected for a full year. I understand that a visitor level of about 20 000 is expected for the current financial year, and that will gross about \$50 000 in receipts.

As the honourable member mentioned, an exceptional grant was allocated last year. It was agreed that this was a guesstimate only for Tandanya in its initial year and that the allocation would be looked at again towards the end of the financial year and adjustments made accordingly; this has certainly occurred. As I said, there were difficulties with works going on for part of the nine months that Tandanya was open. Also, one-off grants were included in the total. I understand that there was a one-off grant of about \$70 000 for necessary equipment of various types, but that this will not be repeated.

This year, Tandanya will be open for a full 12 months, and it is expected to have normal operations throughout that time; certainly, no hiccups are expected. As far as I know, there were no plans to alter the opening hours or to cut down on the exhibitions or planned cultural activities; I am not aware of any such plans on the part of the board.

As originally determined when Tandanya was set up, it was planned to review Tandanya's operations after 12 months. Tandanya has not been open for quite 12 months, but we are planning to start this review in the very near future. This is in no way a criticism of Tandanya; it was planned right from the word 'go' that after 12 months there would be a review because it is a new venture with no precedent in Australia from which to draw experience. This review is designed to assist Tandanya to improve its efficiency, and, now that the Director has returned to Adelaide, the review will get under way in the very near future.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I agree with the Minister that it is an exciting project. In fact, I can tell members who cannot see this that I am wearing socks which I bought at Tandanya,

which is in my electorate. How much did Tandanya earn from visitor admission charges last year?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** About \$35 000.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** My final question is related to page 159 of the Estimates of Payments. Does the South Australian Film Corporation remain committed to the strategic production plan 1989-92 released by the Premier in October 1989 or has the plan been discarded? In relation to the production of *Ultraman*, why did the contract include no provision for a completion guarantor insurance fund which SAFIAC has been traditionally prepared to provide for commercial film productions? Finally, will the Minister confirm that, at the time of the resignation of the Managing Director on 25 May, production overruns amounted to \$400 000 due to changed arrangements for filming stunt work and that the additional budget overrun amounting to \$890 000 was experienced since oversight of production was entrusted to a group of three, including members of the current board?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The corporate plan for the Film Corporation is something which the consultants will be examining with the board of the Film Corporation. They will certainly consider whether it is relevant or whether changes should be made to it. That would be part of the consultants' brief. With regard to the cost overruns on *Ultraman*, at the time the Managing Director resigned from the Film Corporation there were serious overruns, as has been mentioned, resulting from the changed production techniques—what is commonly called the 'men in suits' production techniques. That not only resulted in extra production costs, but it put the whole production schedule behind. That in itself caused further 'overages'. Because the whole process had been delayed due to the 'men in suits' sequences, the post-production work had to be speeded up and carried out around the clock using more than one laboratory. That considerably added to the overrun. While that expenditure may have taken place in June and July of this year, it followed as a consequence of the 'men in suits' production techniques. It flowed automatically from the previous excess expenditure.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I also asked whether the Minister would confirm that, at the time of the Managing Director's resignation, production overruns amounted to \$400 000. If not, what was the overrun at the time of the Managing Director's resignation?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It was much more in the region of \$900 000 at that stage, part of the payment of which was being negotiated, or had been negotiated, with Tsuburaya. The total overrun at that stage was close to \$900 000. As I have mentioned, the subsequent overruns were a consequence of the earlier one.

**Mr McKEE:** With reference to page 467 of the Program Estimates, and having had some background in the entertainment industry unions in this State, I note that as part of the 1990-91 recurrent budget an allocation of \$60 000 has been set aside for a rock industry consultancy. Can the Minister advise me as to how those funds are to be expended?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The main expenditure is for the employment of a consultant. A rock industry consultant, Mr Richard Ortner, who is a widely experienced operator in the field of artist and band management, has been appointed. He began work a fortnight ago and is reporting to a small management committee chaired by a member of the Department for the Arts. Mr Ortner's main function will be to collect hard data on the nature and extent of the industry in South Australia with the aim of preparing a detailed report on its economic and cultural value and to make recommendations for the future of the South Australian rock industry.

Another important role will be to provide advice to the interim industry committee as it prepares to become a formally constituted body. The rock industry in South Australia has set up its own interim industry committee combining all elements of the rock industry. We believe that that is a very positive step forward because until now the different elements of the rock industry have not necessarily got together to work for the good of the industry as a whole. That has now occurred and Mr Ortner will certainly be providing advice to that committee in terms of its final establishment, structure and activities.

I am sure that he will also look at becoming involved in appropriate promotional activities on behalf of the industry committee. He is expected to provide an interim report by the end of next January with a final report to be presented by the end of June next year. I understand that his appointment has been received very enthusiastically in many sections of the rock industry in South Australia. I have every confidence in his energy, enthusiasm and ability and I very much look forward to receiving his reports as a result of his nine months work.

**Mr McKEE:** My second question relates to page 468. Having lived some of my life in the country, I ask how is the Government working to provide regional South Australians with access to high quality visual arts exhibitions.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Government is doing a great deal in that regard. Nearly four years ago we established the South Australian Touring Exhibition Program—or SATEP, as it is commonly known. It provides high quality visual arts exhibitions to tour around South Australia, and it has done that very successfully with the cooperation and support of the Australia Council.

In its first three years SATEP toured 25 exhibitions to 150 South Australian regional centres. It works on a calendar rather than a financial year basis. For the calendar year 1990, SATEP is touring up to 15 different exhibitions to 200 different venues. It has been estimated that they will reach an audience of about 30 000 people. The exhibitions are very warmly welcomed and widely appreciated throughout the regional areas of South Australia. The exhibitions are certainly very popular. As soon as SATEP announces that it is putting on a particular exhibition, it is flooded with requests for it to come to many different centres and the exhibitions are fully booked long before they start. This year SATEP will receive a total of \$97 000 for its operations. Of that, \$75 000 will come from the South Australian Government and \$22 000 through the Australia Council's Visual Arts and Crafts Board.

Apart from SATEP, there are other matters which the Government undertakes for regional art. We are currently undertaking a survey of possible regional gallery venues. This survey is being undertaken in conjunction with an officer from Sacon with the idea of drawing up a list of suitable gallery venues throughout South Australia. Despite the fact that SATEP goes to 200 different places, there are still places to which SATEP exhibitions cannot go and other exhibition venues which are not of sufficient quality to take some of the exhibitions which SATEP provides, particularly where works of art are fragile or require highly controlled atmosphere environments. The idea of undertaking this survey, as resources permit, is to improve facilities for regional art displays over a period and to upgrade venues, where necessary.

Some years ago we provided the resources to redevelop the Riddoch Art Gallery in Mount Gambier, which is the only class A gallery in South Australia outside the metropolitan area. It is a very fine venue. We would certainly hope eventually to provide galleries of that calibre elsewhere

in South Australia. The Riverland is an obvious candidate for a high quality gallery, and the Riverland Cultural Trust is considering various options for developing a suitable art gallery site in the Riverland.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Overall, the Government has been propounding the view that the user pays ethic should pervade Government activity. Towards that end it is obvious that the department was asked to respond because, in a minute to the Under Treasurer on 13 March, the Director of the department highlighted that a number of strategies had been proposed by the department to help major arts institutions to cope with the 12.5 per cent cut in real terms in arts funding over the past four years, including the proposal which noted that the Government had rejected a proposal 'specifically to charge admission fees at all North Terrace cultural institutions'. How much does the department believe each cultural institution could gain each year from adopting a practice of charging admission fees and, in the process, fulfil the Government's objective that they become less reliant on Government funding?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There is no proposal whatsoever to charge admission fees along North Terrace. That has not been and as a matter of policy is not being considered by the Government.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** As a supplementary question, it was recommended to the Government that that be an option, as the minute shows.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I beg to differ. It was not recommended; it was put forward as one of a series of possible options. The Government does not propose to introduce charges for normal visitation anywhere along North Terrace. I would point out that there are exceptions when special exhibitions are held at the Art Gallery or the Museum, particularly the travelling blockbusters which come from elsewhere, as at festival and other times. Charges are made for entrance to those particular exhibitions. However, there never have been and it is not Government policy to introduce charges for ordinary visitation to the South Australian Art Gallery or the South Australian Museum.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** The Government is not averse to charging fees at Carrick Hill and at the Constitutional Museum. What does the Government believe is the difference regarding these other facilities which are a benefit to the community at large and which are institutions which rate a fee wherever one travels in the world or interstate?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I disagree. It is not true that all around the world one pays to go into art galleries. It is part of the British system that one does not pay to go into art galleries. If the honourable member has visited the Tate Gallery or the National Gallery in London, he will know that no entrance fee is charged; nor is an entrance fee charged to most of the major art galleries in the United States. It is not accepted that there should be entrance fees, other than for special occasions, as I mentioned. I know that there are examples of charges being made in Australia, but the Government has no intention of breaking the long and proud tradition of not charging fees for the Museum and the Art Gallery.

The honourable member drew a comparison with Carrick Hill. That comes into a different category. It is not part of the North Terrace cultural boulevard. The emphasis is on the free availability to all citizens of South Australia of what is their property along the North Terrace boulevard.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** As a supplementary question, whilst it is not in the Minister's area of responsibility, if the public is charged to enter national parks recreation areas, why not the North Terrace boulevard?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As the honourable member mentioned, I am not responsible for national parks.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** But the Government is.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Government is. I suggest that that question be asked of the responsible Minister. Certainly, we have no intention of deviating from the long held tradition that art galleries and museums in the English-speaking world do not charge entrance fees. The contents of the art galleries and museums in South Australia are the property of all South Australians, and the people should have ready and easy access to what is their property.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** When Mr Daniel Thomas retired as the Director of the Art Gallery he expressed the hope that a new Director would be appointed within a short time and not after a gap of one year, as occurred before he was nominated to that position. Now, 2½ months later, what precisely is the position relative to a replacement for Mr Thomas?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The position has been advertised on two occasions, including internationally. One obviously wants the very best possible applicant for a position such as this, and we do not want to limit ourselves necessarily to Australia, so we have advertised internationally. Of course, this slows down the selection procedure both in terms of receiving applications and interviewing people from overseas, if appropriate. Arrangements must be made and that all takes time. I certainly hope that there will not be a 12-month wait, and I also understand that, following the last round of advertising, the selection panel will meet in about six weeks. I certainly hope that interviews can take place fairly soon after that.

Of course, after we have found the best possible person it may be several months before he or she can take up the position, depending on that person's current position—what notice they have to give, where they are currently employed and what length of time it may take to make arrangements for them to come to Adelaide, if they are not already in Adelaide. It is a bit hard to predict when someone will actually take up the position, but we do not expect that it will be too long before the successful applicant will become known.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** I refer to the Program Estimates at page 469. I understand that the department undertakes an Art for Public Places program. Will the Minister provide details of the operation and scope of this program and, in particular, its current activities?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Art for Public Places program is one of the programs of which this Government feels proud indeed. It is unique in Australia, and we understand that many other States look to this activity with envy and plan to copy it; some have already started to copy it and, of course, imitation is the most sincere form of flattery. The program has encouraged the provision of high quality works of art in any place of public access and importance within the State. The committee provides a comprehensive advisory service in all aspects of public art commissions and, in some cases, provides financial support as well, although in other cases it provides an advisory service only.

The committee has worked with a wide range of clients such as numerous local councils, particularly in country areas, various public institutions, community groups, Government departments and, I am very pleased to say, to an increasing extent private corporations and developers. It has been responsible for commissioning more than 50 projects of artistic merit and community relevance and has provided work opportunities for more than 70 South Australian artists. While there is financial support for the programs, it is estimated that for every dollar the committee

spends more than \$2 is provided from other sources. Thus, it is responsible for generating considerable expenditure on public art throughout South Australia.

In the financial year just completed the committee was involved with projects at Mount Gambier, Port Pirie and Peace Park. There were two commissions for the Adelaide Festival Centre and four commissions for the ASER precinct. The committee was involved with stage 1 of major projects at Tandanya and also Bordertown. Projects are currently under way at the Birdwood Mill; a sculptured Holden car will be displayed outside the Mill.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** Is it an FJ Holden?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I think it is an FJ Holden—or it is recognisable as an FJ. Projects are also under way at Berri, Coonawarra, Norwood and Noarlunga, and a couple of projects have been commenced at Penola. Stage 2 of the Tandanya project, that is, the rainbow serpent depicted in the footpath at the entrance to Tandanya, is proceeding and there is also a project associated with the northern Adelaide gateway, a community development project that involves the Art in Public Places Committee. There will also be the second round of the ASER commissions and further stages of the Bordertown project, which incorporates an ornamental lake and associated artistic park. There will be commissions for the Royal Adelaide Hospital, the Hindmarsh Development Committee, the City of Adelaide and the Kapunda District Council, and there will be a project with the Housing Trust of South Australia. A great deal of activity is occurring in relation to the Art for Public Places Committee.

The committee is also planning to promote its activities to a greater extent than in the past. Numerous organisations and local government bodies throughout the State are unaware of the existence of the committee. It would obviously be desirable for the benefits it would bring to spread further through the community. We particularly welcome a growing awareness in the corporate sector when architectural or large developments are proposed that they consider art works being a part of that development, and that they trust the Art for Public Places Committee and will consult with them to obtain the very best value for money and a significant work of art of great acceptability but, nevertheless, of very high quality to be part of different commercial developments. It is a very welcome initiative, indeed, to get the corporate sector involved in providing works of art where they are available and accessible to all members of the community.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** I note on page 468 of the Program Estimates under the program titled 'Assistance for Establishment and Operation of Arts Venues' the following statement:

The increase in recurrent expenditure . . . mainly reflects new initiative for theatre maintenance.

Can the Minister provide some details of this?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Certainly, I am very happy to. It is a new initiative in terms of being part of our recurrent budget. In past years there has been an allocation under capital made to the Festival Centre Trust for upgrading the Festival Centre, and over a four-year period they have had over \$2 million to expend in this way. There has been a realisation that this is not really capital but should more accurately be described as maintenance, hence it has been deleted from the capital lines and put into the recurrent line.

This year it is proposed to use that money to undertake some urgently required work both at the Festival Centre and at some of the regional cultural centres. I understand that there is a problem with the boiler at the Northern



Cultural Centre and some other leaking problem at the Middleback Theatre in the Eyre Peninsula Cultural Trust. This money will obviously be used for some of that urgent maintenance work. However, in addition to this we want to develop a complete maintenance program for all the major theatres owned by the Government and get an idea of future maintenance requirements and when they will be required to get a properly integrated program drawn up. I think that this study has already commenced with the help of Sacon so that for the next financial year we will have completely integrated and ongoing maintenance requirements for the major venues.

I should state that there are, of course, a number of these. Whereas we tend to think in Adelaide of the Festival Centre, which, of course, is our major venue for the State, there are four regional cultural trusts, namely, in Renmark, Mount Gambier, Port Pirie and Whyalla (in Adelaide there are also Her Majesty's and the Lion Theatre), all of which are owned by the Government and which must be maintained to provide the major arts venues that they obviously are.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** I refer to page 467 of the Program Estimates. I understand that an economic impact study has been made of the 1990 Adelaide festival. Can the Minister say what impact the festival had on the economy of this State?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Certainly. This economic impact study, or EIS, as we have been calling it, was a major undertaking and was carried out at the last Adelaide festival in joint collaboration with the festival itself, the Department for the Arts and Tourism SA because of its obvious importance to tourism. It was a very thorough study which confirmed what everyone had, I suppose, subconsciously known all along: that the festival is not only a great cultural event, but extremely important from an economic point of view to the economy of South Australia.

Some of the conclusions from the study were that the total value added economic impact generated by the festival was over \$10 million; that the festival, in fact, generated around \$12 million in expenditure in Adelaide and the rest of the State; that it attracted nearly 10 500 visitors to South Australia of whom 16 per cent were from overseas and the rest from interstate, with the largest proportion coming from Victoria; that this very large number of visitors spent a total of \$5.2 million in Adelaide including \$1.5 million on accommodation alone, bringing the highest monthly level of room nights ever recorded in the Adelaide accommodation sector; and that in terms of visitor days the festival had a greater impact than the Grand Prix because, although the number of visitors may have been less than for the Grand Prix, they stayed much longer coming for the festival than coming for the Grand Prix.

The study also showed that because of the festival a large number of South Australians did not leave South Australia to take holidays elsewhere as they otherwise would have done, and it was estimated that this retained within South Australia \$4.1 million which otherwise would have been spent elsewhere. Almost 6 per cent of the entire adult population of Adelaide paid to attend at least one festival or fringe event and, if you take in the exhibitions, Artists' Week, Writers' Week and free events such as Tosca in the Park, it means that at least 12 per cent of the South Australian population attended something at the festival—that is, one person in eight, which is a really remarkable participation rate for an event of this kind.

In total, the festival recorded, I think, close to 600 000 attendances, and the fringe nearly 300 000 attendances. Many, of course, would be the same person going more than once, but those are remarkable figures, and the study

certainly indicates the great importance of the festival both in participation by South Australians and visitors that it brings to South Australia, and in the very large economic contribution that it makes to the State.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I understand that in 1988 State Opera agreed to disband its past practice of employing orchestral players on a casual basis in favour of the current arrangement whereby the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra (ASO) plays for all State Opera productions. Further, I understand that the players accepted this arrangement because, while they were losing part-time work opportunities, the ASO agreed to increase the number of full-time positions by 10.

Bearing that in mind, is the Minister aware that since 1988 State Government funds to the ASO have never been allocated by its management for the purposes originally negotiated, that being the employment of a further 10 full-time players? Will the Minister ascertain for what purpose the ASO management has used these State funds, which amount to \$240 000 per annum, in order to determine that those funds have not simply ended up in ABC general revenue?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I understand it, the South Australian Government's contribution to the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra goes to the general maintenance of the orchestra, and how it is spent is really a matter for the management. I also understand that there is no way that these funds can be diverted from orchestral purposes; that we can be quite confident that these funds are not going to any other ABC purposes and that they are expended strictly for the orchestra. It is at the discretion of the management of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra as to how it manages the orchestra.

**Mr MATTHEW:** As a supplementary question, as these funds have not gone to the purpose for which they were originally negotiated, that is, for the employment of those further 10 full-time players, is the Minister prepared to investigate where that money has gone?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I understand that there have been discussions with the General Manager of the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra in terms of obtaining an undertaking and a time frame for implementation of improvements to the orchestra. There have been meetings between the department and the senior ABC music staff, and more meetings are expected on this topic.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Will there only be many meetings—this matter dates back to 1988—or will those negotiated full-time positions actually become available?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I certainly hope that they will, but that is a matter of negotiation with the management of the orchestra, and that is certainly being undertaken. We are trying to work towards that as a goal, the honourable member may rest assured of that.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Is there a final date by which the Minister expects that goal to be achieved, as this matter has gone on now for two years?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Certainly, one of the aspects being discussed is the time frame for implementation of this matter.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Is the Minister aware that lighting and sound systems at the Festival Theatre are now 17 years old and that, at best (I am advised), one in two stage lights works effectively; and also that, if a commitment is not made urgently to upgrade the systems, there are fears among centre staff (I am advised) that in three to four years time performances may not be able to be accepted because the Festival Theatre will not be able to supply the goods? Bearing that in mind, what practical action rather than plans on paper is the Government developing to address the major

lighting and sound problems being experienced at the Festival Theatre?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I mentioned earlier, over the past four years the Festival Centre has received over \$2 million of Government funds towards any capital or maintenance requirements that it may have had. I understand that this has largely covered equipment in the sound, lighting and technical areas. Of course, it also covers the new carpet in the entrance foyer to prevent it looking too scruffy. The expenditure of that money has been entirely at the discretion of the Festival Centre Trust and, if it has not put any of that money into the lighting system, that would reflect its priorities in terms of what it feels is required.

As I also mentioned earlier, this year we provided \$300 000 for general maintenance of all our theatres, and doubtless some of that money will be used by the Festival Centre Trust for such maintenance or upgrading that it feels is necessary. However, the priorities are determined by the trust, not by the Government; it is the trust's responsibility to manage that centre and to draw up its forward maintenance plan. This, I think, illustrates perhaps one of the reasons why we want to develop a forward maintenance plan, so that we do have an indication of what needs maintaining, what needs upgrading and when those things will be required. But, any upgrading at the Festival Centre and the priority that it is given is a matter for the Festival Centre Trust. It determines those priorities.

**Mr MATTHEW:** On a point of clarification, do I take it that the Minister has no forward maintenance plan, no idea what works need to be done at the centre and how much they will cost?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Festival Centre Trust has, for a number of years, provided a list of what it thinks needs to be done at the centre. As far as I know it has never prioritised that list. As I mentioned earlier in response to, I think, the member for Gilles, we are this year undertaking a full study not only of the Festival Centre but of all Government owned theatres around the State so that we can have a forward maintenance plan with priorities allocated, not only for one centre but right through all seven venues around the State.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I am pleased to hear that the Minister is doing that, and I am absolutely staggered that those things do not already exist. I would have thought that it made sound business sense.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I would agree with you. As I say, to date the Festival Centre Trust, while it has provided a list, has never prioritised items on that list although, presumably, in expending the money that was made available to it it must have applied some priorities. Of course, as time goes on new needs will arise which will have to be slotted into any priority list.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Is the Minister aware that in the past year, due to the absence of air-conditioning at the museum, let alone any atmospheric controls, the museum has had to refuse offers for the display of a number of international exhibitions including, as I understand it, Kanaks, Pharaohs' Gold and Chinese Embroidery? Is the department proposing this year to begin working on the case for the commencement of stage 2 of the museum redevelopment program, an initiative which, the Minister may remember, the Government in 1983 deferred for 10 years? Further, when, if ever, does the Government propose providing the museum with an acquisition fund?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I understand it, the non-arrival of the Pharaohs' Gold exhibition in Adelaide had nothing to do with air-conditioning; it was not financially viable for the exhibition to come here. I am afraid neither my advisers

nor I have heard about the Chinese Embroidery exhibition, so perhaps we can make further inquiries in that regard.

Certainly, in 1983 the museum redevelopment was put off for 10 years, and we have not yet reached 1993, so there is nothing planned in this financial year in terms of museum redevelopment. The question of air-conditioning is something of which we are obviously well aware, and some studies have been conducted in that regard. Of course, the problem is that it will be extremely expensive and difficult to install appropriate air-conditioning, because the museum is a heritage building. It is much easier to install air-conditioning in modern buildings; heritage buildings were not designed originally for air-conditioning, and the structure does not readily adapt to it. Great care must be taken of the fabric and character of a heritage building, so there are many problems associated with the installation of air-conditioning in such a heritage building. We hope it will be done at some time.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Does the Government propose to provide the museum with an acquisition fund?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It has not had one in the past, and there is no provision for it in this year's budget.

**Mr De LAINE:** On page 468 of the Program Estimates under '1989-90 Specific Targets/Objectives' reference is made to the Jam Factory being rehoused in the new Living Arts Centre. What is the intended future use for the Jam Factory building?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The building in which the Jam Factory is housed belongs to the Commonwealth Government. We have been leasing it ever since the Jam Factory was first established. Once the Jam Factory moves out of the building, its fate will be a matter for the Commonwealth Government; it will determine what happens to the site. The building is not in the best of condition, and it may well be that demolition and redevelopment of the site will be proposed, but it is not really a matter for us, as the Commonwealth Government owns the building. The decision will be made in accordance with planning restrictions, of course.

**Mr De LAINE:** On page 472 of the Program Estimates reference is made to more than 250 community-based museums and historical museums that have been and are still being developed throughout the State. Does that figure of 250 include private museums, and is there a register of all public and private museums in South Australia?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The figure I quoted would certainly include private museums. The History Trust undertakes a program with museums right around South Australia, particularly with museums run by the National Trust, which, of course, is a private organisation. It provides support and advice to a large number of museums around South Australia. There has been an incredible growth in the number of museums in recent years, partly I think because of increasing interest in our history and heritage and partly, I am sure, because of the existence of the History Trust and the encouragement, support and advice it gives to people who are interested in establishing a museum.

The History Trust runs a museum accreditation program and there is certainly a list of the provisionally accredited museums around the State. I am not sure of the actual number of provisionally accredited museums, but it is a very large number. I will certainly get that information for the honourable member. There are only two fully accredited regional museums in South Australia, one in Naracoorte and one in Millicent. They achieved their full accreditation status about 12 months ago. There was appropriate ceremony and a great deal of celebration upon their achieving this status. However, there are many provisionally accredited



museums, a list of which is available through the museum's officer of the History Trust. I can advise the actual number and provide a copy of this list if the honourable member is interested.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to the successful tour of the United States of America of the Museum's Dreamings exhibition. How successful was that exhibition in the United States in international terms? Did it make a profit or loss? Has any overseas country requested that the exhibition be shown there?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Dreamings exhibition was extremely important, particularly in cultural terms, being highly successful in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles and arousing an enormous amount of interest in Aboriginal art. It was also shown in Melbourne and Adelaide, and was a major Festival attraction at the Museum earlier this year. I am sure that anyone who saw it would heartily endorse its significance and importance and say what a wonderful exhibition it was. I do not have visitation figures for the five locations, but I can certainly obtain them. In financial terms, it was a sponsored exhibition. A large number of people, including American sponsors, put up the money to enable the exhibition to be put together—to provide the curatorial services and to transport the exhibition to its many different venues. So, a financial balance sheet is not relevant in this way; it was a sponsored exhibition for promotion of Aboriginal art and was extremely successful.

It has certainly put Australian Aboriginal art on the world map, has been of enormous significance around the world, particularly in the United States, and has very much affected the development of Aboriginal art in this country. Whilst the Dreamings exhibition comprised traditional Aboriginal art, the interest that it has stimulated overseas has led to visitors to this country wanting to sample more Aboriginal art, both traditional and more contemporary in style, and this is contributing to the explosion of Aboriginal art that is occurring not just in South Australia but all around Australia. And it has world-wide significance, something that is delightful to see.

The catalogue for the Dreamings exhibition is a superb work of art in itself with a great deal of exposition and explanation, and serves as a wonderful introduction to Aboriginal art for people who have not encountered it previously. It is a worthwhile book in its own right.

**Mr De LAINE:** Have there been any request by other overseas countries to host this exhibition?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Not that I am aware of at the moment.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I refer to the questions asked about the North Terrace boulevard. The National Gallery in Canberra, the Victorian Art Gallery and the Power House Museum in New South Wales are but three organisations which charge for entry. The Minister would be aware that the Commonwealth Government not infrequently requires that each State undertake charging similar to that which occurs in other States or forgo loans and grants. Has the Government considered the vulnerability of its claims for Commonwealth funding because it has not followed suit?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As far as I am aware, that question has never been raised. Whilst it is true that the Australian National Gallery and the Victorian Art Gallery charge for admission, the Victorian Museum, the New South Wales Art Gallery and the Australian Museum in Sydney do not charge for admission, nor do art galleries or museums in Queensland, Western Australia and Tasmania. So, we are in very good company and I have never heard any suggestion that we would be penalised in any way for maintaining our policy of free access.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** On page 33 of his report under the heading 'Asset Registers and Stocktaking of Collections', the Auditor-General comments that, while the department's policy of secure care is an important management element of the custody of collections, it is not a substitute for periodical verification of valuable items. What action is the Government taking to ensure the security of the collections held by the Art Gallery and the South Australian Museum, which are valued conservatively at \$400 million, and what liability would the Government have in the event of a major theft?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** We have always recognised the importance of maintaining up-to-date registers and confirming the existence of items in the collections in our major cultural institutions but, due to the size of these collections and the resource implications, it has not been possible for these controls to be as stringent as might be preferred.

A computer register is being established at the Art Gallery in this financial year. Whilst it will take a number of years for everything to be put on the register, it will certainly enable stocktaking to be carried out much more simply. It seems obvious that computerisation is the most efficient way of proceeding with this and, as I have said, the first step of obtaining a computer and starting the considerable job of compiling an adequate register of Art Gallery items on computer will be taken this year.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** Given the well documented activities of the Australian cultural terrorists a few years ago in Victoria in relation to Picasso's 'Weeping Woman', what would be the liability of the Government in the event of a major theft?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** For our major cultural institutions, the Government undertakes self-insurance so that no outside insurance companies would be called on in the event of a major theft, and it would be a matter for the police to recover any stolen items. To some extent, it is a protection for the gallery that it has such major and well-known collections. There is excellent security at the gallery and I do not think anyone has ever suggested that it needs improving. It is very comprehensive, detailed and thorough so the chance of anyone absconding with an item is very low indeed. If it should happen—and I most sincerely hope it never does—any items would be so well known that it would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, for a thief to dispose of them and, because of this, we hope that they would be recovered rapidly.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I dare say that those sentiments would have been reflected in the comments of Mr McCaughey prior to the theft of 'Weeping Woman', and that is an anxiety provoking feature.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** They got it back.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** Eventually.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Even the 'Mona Lisa' vanished from the Louvre on one occasion.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I refer to page 159 of the Estimates of Payments, 'Development of the Arts'. Recognising the multiple economic benefits for this State generated by the Adelaide Festival, and in view of the economic review mentioned earlier, what steps does the Minister believe the Government can and will take to ensure that anxieties, expressed in the past few months by former directors of the festival (Anthony Steel and Clifford Hocking) about inadequate levels of Government funding, do not lead, as predicted, to an undermining of the quality of future Festivals or to the Festival succumbing to a major push from other States, in particular Victoria, to take over our long standing status for staging the premier Australian arts festival?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The level of funding for the Adelaide Festival has been maintained in real terms over many different Festivals. Given the general stringency and the cuts which have been occurring in many different areas, the fact that funding for the Adelaide Festival has been maintained in real terms is an indication of just how important the Government regards the Festival. While all sorts of cuts are being made, no cuts have been made to Festival funding. Due recognition should be given to that fact and its importance in maintaining the Festival's standard.

That does not mean to say that there are no problems with the level of Festival funding. Fluctuations in the Australian dollar have made life a bit difficult for some Festival organisers. It seems that what helps a Festival organiser does not necessarily help a farmer, and *vice versa*, in terms of the rate of the Australian dollar. Ups and downs there have certainly affected some past Festival directors and, undoubtedly, the fees of some overseas Festival attractions have been rising faster than the rate of inflation. I recognise that that also provides problems for Festival directors.

However, we are having discussions with the Festival people, including the Festival fundraising committee, about the level of Government contribution for the next Festival. Those discussions have not yet concluded. Of course, the Festival receives its allocation this financial year but, as this is a non-Festival year, that is really just a holding grant. The Festival is concerned about its allocation in next year's budget. While Governments do not usually make commitments into next year's budget, we appreciate that the Festival needs to know, probably by the end of this year, the forward commitment for next year's budget. It needs to know the sum for its planning, even though it does not actually need the money at this stage. It needs to know what it will get. We have started discussions already and we will be having further discussions with the Festival people on that matter.

**Dr ARMITAGE:** I heard the Minister refer to 'by the end of this year'. Will she be finalising those discussions for the prospective budget for next year by the end of this year?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** We hope so. I do not want to give a cast-iron guarantee, but we would certainly hope to do so.

**Mr McKEE:** I would imagine that the producers of the Adelaide Festival who have used the Festival Theatre or the producers of forthcoming programs such as *Les Misérables* would not use the Festival Theatre if they thought that the sound and lighting were not of a sufficient standard to support those programs. In relation to page 469 and the Art Gallery, what progress has been made in formulating plans to extend the Art Gallery of South Australia and what is the likely timetable for that?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** We have allocated \$500 000 this year for the further development of plans and feasibility studies and we are getting on with some of the detailed work. We would not expect to actually turn a sod until next financial year. It is not easy to carry out the detailed feasibility studies and detailed plans. We announced only last October the plans to provide the major extensions to the Art Gallery. In January this year Mr Andrew Andersons, of Peddle Thorpe architects in Sydney, was engaged to submit a conceptual proposal which would be both feasible in the short term and also provide for further expansion if and when additional funds might become available, be that in 10 or 20 years.

Those proposals were received back from Peddle Thorpe in May this year and we now move to the stage of detailed design and documentation which will continue for the rest of this financial year. We hope that the actual work will

start on site in the next financial year and that it will be completed in time for the 1994 Adelaide Festival. That will of course mean that the Art Gallery will be a much less useful venue for the 1992 Adelaide Festival, and that will be a great shame. However, the work is such that it could not be expected to be carried out between two Festivals. There will have to be one Festival when the Art Gallery is somewhat restricted in its use for the Festival. However, we want it to be completed in time for the 1994 Festival so that the Art Gallery will then be able to benefit from the extra space and be a real ornament for that particular Festival.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** There is no reference to Carclew's operations over the past year or to its future plans. Can the Minister tell us what is envisaged for Carclew?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There was a review of the Carclew Youth Performing Arts Centre in the past financial year. As a result of that review, we set up the South Australian Youth Arts Board based at Carclew which had a much broader mandate in that it was to cover the performing arts and all art forms. At the moment, the South Australian Youth Arts Board is concerned with performing arts, literature, visual arts, craft and a wide range of activities across all art forms. It also has a much greater commitment to outreach activities to provide cultural activities for young people in parts of the State and in art forms where there are currently gaps in availability. There should be more outreach to young people to provide a rich cultural experience for all young people across all art forms. There has been a change of emphasis.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Will the Minister make available to the Committee the amount expended on Carclew last year and a breakdown of the individual programs within that?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I will be happy to take that on notice.

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

Works and Services—Department for the Arts, \$250 000—  
Examination declared complete.

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

State Services, \$5 385 000

**Chairman:**

Mr M.J. Evans

**Members:**

Mr M.R. De Laine  
The Hon. B.C. Eastick  
Mr V.S. Heron  
Mr I.P. Lewis  
Mr W.A. Matthew  
Mr C.D.T. McKee

**Witness:**

The Hon. Anne Levy, Minister of State Services.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr Ray Dundon, Chief Executive Officer, State Services Department.

Dr W. Tilstone, Director, State Forensic Science.

Mr A. Caudell, Director, State Print.

Mr P. Bridge, Director, State Supply.

Mr D. Patriarca, Director, State Computing.  
 Mr P. Grenville, Director, State Fleet.  
 Mr M. Jones, Director, Corporate Services.  
 Mr E. Durand, General Manager, State Link.  
 Mr D. Suter, General Manager, State Clothing.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination and invite the Minister to make an opening statement.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I would like to provide the Committee with some information that would be of assistance in reviewing the estimates for State Services. The department provides a range of services primarily to South Australian Government agencies. However, it also sells its services to Commonwealth and local government bodies, statutory authorities and some segments of the general public. These services include supply, computing, printing, forensic science, transport, information, clothing manufacture and communications. State Services sees its role as using its undoubted expertise and substantial infrastructure to help Government agencies to add value to the South Australian community.

In order to achieve this role successfully, it has placed priority on four key factors.

1. It must build successful partnerships with its customers;
2. Likewise it must build successful partnerships with other parties, for example, with industry, with other Governments and with professional associations;
3. It must operate in a commercially viable way; and
4. These cannot be successfully achieved unless it builds successful partnerships with its people.

State Services is leading the way among Government agencies in South Australia in changing the culture of its people towards providing superior service to customers. All business units have made substantial improvements in service delivery over the past 12 months. So much so that, in an environment where its customers are no longer required to go to State Services for their needs, more and more are coming to the department because they want to, not because they have to. State Services is also developing strong partnerships with industry, suppliers and professional bodies to ensure that they support each other for the overall benefit of South Australia.

State Services operates with a financial structure which is unique among Government departments in Australia. It is required to recover all of its cost of operations from fees charged for the services rendered, except in those limited cases where services are provided in the interests of Government or the community. Examples of these Government or community services, which are not self-sufficient, are the State Information Service, the State Supply Board Secretariat, and the VIP chauffeured fleet. In terms of the budget, members of the Committee should be aware that more than 95 per cent of the department trades on a fully commercial basis. The department operates from a single deposit account and has commercial performance targets set by comparison with alternative suppliers in the private sector. It is required to pay a dividend of 50 per cent of its surplus on commercial operations to consolidated account. The department also repays interest to Treasury for capital borrowings on all assets, and recognises long service leave liabilities for staff.

Nearly all the services which the department provides may be compared directly with alternative suppliers, either 'in-house' within Government agencies or in the private sector. Regular comparisons of price and quality of service are undertaken by the department to evaluate the perform-

ance of its services against the alternative suppliers. Because the department has been able to expand its activities in many areas of its operation, its service in terms of price and quality compares more than favourably with alternative suppliers.

I point out that 1989-90 was the second year of the department's more commercial financial charter. The department achieved its set targets in its first year, 1988-89. I am pleased to say that, for 1989-90, the financial performance was significantly better than the targets set. A surplus on commercial operations of \$2.682 million was achieved and a dividend of \$1.341 million declared. This surplus represents a 5.7 per cent rate of return on commercial assets, which is much greater than the 4 per cent target set. The target rate of return on commercial capital funds was 10.6 per cent compared to the actual of 20 per cent. This compares more than favourably with alternative private sector operations. For 1990-91 a dividend of at least \$1.3 million is anticipated, which represents a 5 per cent targeted return on assets.

The financial performance of State Print in 1989-90 is particularly pleasing. State Print developed a turn-around strategy to reverse the disappointing trading result in 1988-89 which was a deficit of \$1.77 million prior to asset sales. This strategy produced excellent results, returning a surplus of \$44 000, which represents a turn-around of \$1.8 million. The main thrusts of the strategy were a strong focus on improved customer service, rationalisation of product mix, improved cost control and management reporting, and the development of a competitive edge through a more professional approach to its overall business.

During 1989-90 there have been other significant achievements. State Print won a gold medal at the 1990 National Print Awards in the limited editions/art reproductions category. This unit also won three of the 25 categories in the 1989 Printing Industry Craftsmanship Awards (PICA). State Computing was successful in winning, against strong commercial competition, a substantial facilities management contract for WorkCover computer processing. The first phase of the country telephone network was substantially completed by State Link. The development and maintenance of a three-day delivery cycle was achieved at the Seaton warehouse. A pilot supervisory staff training program was commenced in conjunction with the office of the Government Management Board. State Forensic Science achieved quality accreditation from the American Society of Crime Laboratory Directors, the only organisation outside of North America to do so. State Fleet was successful in issuing competitive contracts to provide fleet leasing and management services to WorkCover and a number of statutory authorities and local councils. The most important change for the department in 1990-91 is the addition of the State Clothing Corporation within State Services.

Under the financial structure, the estimated recurrent expenditure for the department for 1990-91 is \$100.3 million, of which only \$5.4 million will be funded directly from Consolidated Account. The balance will be funded from the sale of services on a fully commercial basis. The estimated capital expenditure will be \$24.7 million, of which only \$9.8 million will be funded from Consolidated Account. The balance will be funded from internally generated sources.

**Mr LEWIS:** I wish to make a brief opening statement to indicate the Opposition's concern at the way in which the department makes its apparent profit, in that there is no evidence in the budget documents of where the competitive edge would appear with enterprises providing a similar service in the private sector. Because of our anxiety about that, we will be seeking information of a more explicit

nature than is currently provided in the conventional form in those papers, so that in due course it will be possible to make comparisons between the services provided by the State Services Department and similar commercial operations in the private sector than has been possible in the past. The Opposition places on record at this point its congratulations to the Government Printer on having won the gold medal.

In the first instance, we note that under the programs and subprograms referred to in the Financial Paper No. 1 a number of items are used of a capital nature which include motor vehicles (we know that the department has motor vehicles), although they are not specified. How many motor vehicles are used in connection with those programs and each of the subprograms, and what is the total? Does this total represent an increase over the past year? How many of them are for the exclusive use of any one executive officer or, for that matter, any other officer of the department? What are the various categories of vehicles that the department owns in terms of small sedans, larger sedans and any heavier vehicles such as four-wheel drives and trucks? Are any of those vehicles run on LPG or gas, in keeping with the Government's stated policy elsewhere of using more atmospheric carbon emission sensitive fuel sources for vehicles generally in the community? Is the department keeping abreast of its own statements, within its own agencies, to the public? If there is no program for conversion of the larger capacity vehicle motors to gas, will the Minister explain why?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I would obviously have to take a number of those questions on notice and provide the information. State Services, through State Fleet, operates a total of 1 514 vehicles which is for the whole of Government, of course. I am certainly not aware of any vehicles allocated exclusively to any executive officer or any other officer. While some executive officers may have privately plated vehicles, they are not exclusively for their use, and can be and are available for general use whenever required. I will have to take on notice the further finer details which the honourable member requested.

**Mr LEWIS:** We note in the budget paper entitled 'The Budget and Its Impact on Women' a number of committees identified within the State Services Department (in fact, six). Is that the actual number of committees that exist within the department? What are the names of those committees? What are they each established to do? When was each of them formed? Upon which of them are members who are not departmental employees? Upon which of them are members who are paid any sitting fee, other allowance or emolument of any kind for their services on the committee? Upon which of the committees are members who are not permanent public servants, and what are their names and their professional qualifications making them eligible to be included on the committees? Which members of the committees are not permanent employees of a Government department, another Government agency, quango or other statutory authority of some kind, and on which committees do they serve completely outside Government salaried officers and salaried officers of Government agencies? We do not need names, but just qualifications. I suggest that perhaps this information could be provided in a table setting it out. Given that there are already six committees identified in the budget document, I presume that it would not be difficult to obtain that information.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Again, I will take that on notice and provide full information. There certainly are committees such as the State Supply Board, which have membership from outside the Public Service. The State Supply

Board has a representative both from the United Trades and Labor Council and from industry. The Forensic Science Advisory Committee has a representative from the legal profession from outside Government and also an eminent scientist from outside Government. I will be happy to take on notice the exact details and supply that information at a later time.

**Mr LEWIS:** I seek from the Minister information about consultancy services that have reported and concluded during the past 12 months and those that are still in progress and likely to report during this coming 12 months. If any consultancies are ongoing, what are the names of the consultants and the fees they have been paid, and have any reports been brought down on the subjects for which they were hired as consultants?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Again, I would like to take that question on notice. A large part of that question has already been asked as a Question on Notice in the Legislative Council, and information has been supplied in response to that question. But, as Parliament is not presently sitting I do not think the reply has formally been given or has yet appeared in *Hansard* of the Legislative Council, as it no doubt will as soon as Parliament reconvenes. However, I will be happy to provide the information requested to the Committee before 5 October.

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** I would like to ask the Minister a question in relation to the provision of transport services, which is an ongoing issue in the community. Whether or not the problem is real or perceived, the public believes there is a great deal of improper use of Government vehicles, and it is quite proper that they should have some concern about whether or not their tax money is being put to proper use. However, it is very easy for people to jump to incorrect conclusions based purely on a Government number plate being on a vehicle that is in a particular place at a particular time.

I will mention an incident that happened at the Ascot Park Primary School polling booth during one election where I had to deal with a member of another political Party who was handing out 'how to vote' cards and, in contrast to most members of his Party, this particular chap was rather stupid and offensive. He was making derogatory remarks about the number of cars with Government number plates that were in the parking lot at the school; he was drawing inferences that this had something to do with favouritism towards Public Service employees getting jobs as clerks with the Electoral Commission. I was able to point out to him that the parking lot was full of Government cars because that school served as a depot on weekends for Government cars of the southern region of the Education Department.

That example makes obvious how easy it is for people to jump to incorrect conclusions, simply by seeing blue and white Government number plates on cars. A lot of these cars can be in what seem to be inappropriate locations for what members of the public might assume to be improper reasons, even though they may be enforcing aspects of particular Government acts. The fact that there is a car with a Government number plate outside a racecourse or a hotel might relate to inspections in connection with, say, liquor licensing or places of public entertainment legislation, matters of occupational health and safety, fire safety, other Department of Labour inquiries, weights and measures inquiries in relation to hotels, aspects in relation to the Department of Tourism, and so on.

Members of the public may see children being driven around in Government cars on weekends, but this could be welfare officers transporting families in crisis; Government cars parked at a supermarket could simply mean that offi-

cers are shopping for what, in olden days, were called 'orphanages'; or Government cars may simply be taking indigent children on an outing. Even if a large proportion of cars come from a common pool or are leased cars, surely there must be some way in which those cars which are not from that common pool can be identified in terms of the department to which they are allocated by a marking on the door or some form of window sticker. I am not trying to deter members of the public from making inquiries about what they believe to be the improper use of Government cars; rather I am trying to minimise the amount of time that is spent on wild goose chases when the use of the car has been completely legitimate and the member of the public has jumped to an unwarranted conclusion.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I appreciate the point that the honourable member has raised. A number of complaints are received each year where members of the public have seen a Government vehicle and have felt that it had no business being there at the time. Only about 50 per cent of Government cars are run by State Fleet, which has 1 500-odd vehicles that are leased by other agencies. However, some Government vehicles are still owned by agencies. Of the 50 per cent or so Government vehicles that come from State Fleet, about 20 complaints a year come in about Government vehicles being improperly used. Those complaints are always very thoroughly investigated, and one complaint, or perhaps two at the outside, per year is found to be legitimate. For the other 19 complaints, the car had every reason for being where it was at the time it was noted as being there.

With regard to the marking of the cars, while this may be an option in some cases, I think one must be careful about it. Obviously, cars which are marked as being from, say, the Rape Crisis Centre or DCW could considerably reduce the usefulness of the vehicle in that privacy is wanted by the clients who are being visited or transported in the vehicle, and it may make people less likely to make use of the services of, say, the Rape Crisis Centre if a vehicle with those words written all over it was to pull up outside their house.

So, I think on the grounds of privacy any specific marking would have to be very carefully looked at. Also, one would want to be able to remove any marking because if that were not possible it would affect the resale value of the car. The high efficiency of State Fleet comes not only from the excellent contracts that it makes in terms of purchasing vehicles but also from the care of the vehicles and high prices that are obtained on selling the vehicles. So, one would not want any markings that would in any way interfere with a vehicle's resale value.

Those two provisions aside, it might certainly be worth looking at some identification. I am sure that members would understand that we would not want any identification that could not be removed when the car was sold, and we certainly would not want identification which would interfere with a client's privacy and so inhibit the proper use of the vehicle.

**Mr De LAINE:** This question and the next relate to page 487 of the Program Estimates and the Seaton warehouse. Will the Minister advise the Committee of the delivery time of the Seaton warehouse?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Traditionally supply functions were slow, and I can certainly recall the old days when schools complained that, if they ordered something from the Government, it would take days, weeks or months to arrive. This was a constant source of complaint. State Supply has completely revolutionised that aspect of its supply functions and, as a result, is now the envy of its counterparts in all

other States. I am proud to tell everyone that the delivery cycle now is three days for any general item and one day for hospital supplies. This is an enormous achievement, due to a great deal of hard work, reorganisation and an emphasis on the 'customer first' philosophy.

By comparison, for instance, in New South Wales the supply delivery cycle for general stock is seven weeks compared with our three days, and even for hospitals in New South Wales the delivery cycle is 10 days compared with our one day. Of course, this makes an enormous difference, particularly to the hospitals or bodies obtaining supplies from the Seaton warehouse; it means that they do not have to carry a great amount of stock, so they save on space and availability and in not having to hold stock because it takes so long to get stock from the warehouse.

I understand that, in the old days, when we had a delivery time equivalent to that which applies at present in New South Wales, the Queen Elizabeth Hospital had to allocate about \$90 000 to be held as inventory in its own stock. Now that the hospital is guaranteed supplies from the Seaton warehouse within one day it no longer has to carry that stock and, so, makes a saving of \$90 000. There would be similar savings for many agencies right around the State. It really is something that State Supply can be very proud of indeed.

**Mr De LAINE:** What distribution control arrangements have been established to facilitate operations at the Seaton store?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Of course, State Supply has its warehouse at Seaton, and this serves as a central supply point for Government agencies. However, also because of its great efficiency and quick delivery time, State Supply is now being awarded distributorships by interstate firms. It has become one of the official South Australian distributors for some interstate firms: for example, the 3M distributorship for the little yellow stickers which everyone uses and which everyone wonders how they did without before they were invented. State Supply will offer warehouse and distribution services to any vendor if that is the preferred logistical option for commercial reasons. As I say, 3M is using the Seaton warehouse. Another example is Torumo, which makes syringes used in hospitals. The Seaton warehouse is now the South Australian distribution point for Torumo syringes. Of course, State Supply is very glad to achieve these distributorships, and it is a compliment to its efficiency that it has managed to gain such agencies and distributorships.

**Mr LEWIS:** I must say that I am amazed at the answer the Minister has just given. I am not sure what it implies about State Supply. Does it imply that these distributorships are purely for Government agencies, or does it, in fact, imply that it is to supply a wider market for that product, regardless of whether the product is used by Government agencies, semi-government agencies or, more importantly, the private sector—people everywhere?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** They are distributorships for public-funded agencies—Government agencies, semi-government agencies and local government agencies—not for the private sector.

**Mr LEWIS:** Did the Minister say local government agencies as well as State Government agencies?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Local government authorities can certainly use State Supply services, and they do so willingly. Obviously, there is no obligation, but many local government bodies wish to do so because of the efficiency and good deals that are obtained.

**Mr LEWIS:** Can the Minister provide information about defeasance arrangements or other sell-off lease back arrange-

ments which the department may have on any of its capital assets, such as buildings at Seaton, in the same way as, for instance, the Woods and Forests Department is involved with defeasance arrangements on its assets in the South-East? Further, ETSA has sold off several of its capital assets under a defeasance arrangement in each case, where an annual payment is made and, at the end of the term, a balloon payment secures the repossession of the ownership by the agency. If there are any defeasance arrangements for any of the capital assets owned by the department, will the Minister provide the Committee with a list of the assets, the terms of the arrangements and the annual defeasance costs involved? The Minister can take this question on notice if she wishes.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I do not think there are any such arrangements, but perhaps Mr Dundon could elaborate on this.

**Mr Dundon:** We do not have any arrangements of the type referred to. However, we do lease computing equipment on a more or less commercial lease arrangement, and we are now investigating the feasibility of leasing a small portion of our motor vehicle fleet to see whether it is economically feasible and viable. I am happy to provide information on our lease arrangements for any of our assets, if that is the wish of the Committee, but none of the sale and lease back arrangements, which were specifically referred to, apply in this organisation.

**Mr LEWIS:** Can the Minister provide any information at all about what is being done to overcome the problems in the State Computing Centre which were identified on pages 199 and 200 of the Auditor-General's Report? A number of problems are involved and I wonder whether any attempt has been made to address them.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Auditor-General's Report mentions three areas which were discussed in last year's report. Computer facilities and control and the central/common system security were discussed in last year's Auditor-General's Report and those issues were resolved satisfactorily in the last financial year. The one remaining question relates to 'Project Management, Reporting and Control'. In his report, the Auditor-General says that State Computing recognises the need to further strengthen its project management expertise, and that the ongoing monitoring of projects has been targeted for action in this current year. I will ask Mr Patriarca from State Computing to give more detail on this matter.

**Mr Patriarca:** As the Minister outlined, the Auditor-General raised three areas of concern in relation to project control and the central/common system security. We have taken considerable remedial action to ensure that those problems are remedied, and this was identified by the Auditor-General in his report.

With regard to project management and costing, the principal concern was in terms of standards, procedures and documentation to ensure that adequate records were kept and that there was a sound relationship between the budgeted and actual costs of a project. We have spent some time tightening those procedures to ensure uniformity in documentation for the project management and control process. Once again, that action received favourable comment in the Auditor-General's Report; it was acknowledged that our project management and costing has been fine tuned and tightened. During the next 12 months, we will endeavour to strengthen training in terms of project management methodologies for all our staff to ensure that they are adequately skilled to maintain ongoing projects.

**Mr LEWIS:** I am reassured to hear that, but I am not certain of the specifics. The last paragraph under 'Project

Management, Reporting and Control' on page 199 of the Auditor-General's Report states:

Notwithstanding, audit again identified instances of unfavourable variations between estimated, actual and invoiced amounts associated with the development and operation of some specific client systems and common systems, emphasising the importance of quick implementation of the documented approach and management review of the unit's projects.

Can the Minister give us the instances in which the task force has addressed the problems referred to in that paragraph? In which instances have problems arisen and in what way have they been addressed to prevent a recurrence?

Under the heading 'Central/Common System Security' we see that yet another weakness has been identified. It is stated that the review of security and access controls over other central and common systems within the Public Service overall 'revealed similar weaknesses regarding the level of control over access granted to certain State Computing staff to production procedures, programs and master files within a number of the systems'. Which systems are referred to and how have the problems been resolved?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I point out that underneath the section quoted by the honourable member from the Auditor-General's Report it is stated that 'matters of a specific control nature arising from the review were reported to the unit and subsequent satisfactory remedial action was instituted'. I will ask Mr Patriarca to give more detail on this matter.

**Mr Patriarca:** In relation to security access, a number of steps have been taken. Computer systems have in-built security procedures and, in the past, those integrity controls were located at State Computing. To ensure a further level of security, what we know technically as RACF administration or security administration was placed with the sponsors of the common system. For instance, in relation to the Treasury accounting system and the general ledgers, we negotiated with Treasury to establish RACF administration, and it was Treasury's responsibility to provide training. That segregated control and made sure that the security aspects in terms of the applications programs and systems software programs were quite divorced.

We have established also a security branch. The manager of DP security and four people deal with problems such as change control and security access control. We have run seminars in organisations to brief them on security requirements, for instance, not leaving passwords on computer terminals. We have run a number of seminars on the work sites where people have terminals available to access our facility. These are the sorts of things we have been doing to strengthen security and access control. We have also circulated user IDs that have expired to ensure that they are not left on the system by the clients. We have adopted a number of strategies, the principal one being the separation of security or RACF administration from the centre to the core agencies.

**Mr LEWIS:** I take it that the officers involved have the capacity to generate their own password unknown to anyone else and indeed officers who may get access to any part of the network to which they are entitled to have access are known only to that department. I also take it that the fact that they are entitled to have access is established and that the passwords they use are known only to them so that the system is now hacker-proof. It would be terrible if we found that someone was taking advantage of State Supply and its claims department's purchasing power and credit raisings as well as those of other Government agencies by hacking their way into the computer system, which hitherto has been possible.



The Opposition is pursuing this matter to ensure that the State is serviced by computers that are hacker-proof and unlikely to cost us financially and in the interests of the Government's not becoming involved in terms of political embarrassment. From what the Minister and her officers are telling us, I take it that we are safe and we can count on that.

**Mr Patriarca:** That is correct. State Computing conducts a considerable number of security reviews for other facilities. For example, in the past 12 months we have conducted security reviews for ETSA, the JIS, the Department of Mines and Energy and the Police Department. So, in terms of security we believe we have a considerable reputation in the maintenance of a very secure environment.

No doubt the honourable member is aware of the PC viruses which are plaguing computer installations these days. We also do a considerable amount of work in terms of advising people on how to deal with viruses and the procedures to be put in place to ensure that systems are not contaminated. We also provide advice and consoling services to help people clean up systems which have been corrupted by viruses. Recognition of those activities suggests that our facility is secure and is recognised as such.

**Mr LEWIS:** I will leave other more detailed questions about that subject to my colleague the member for Bright, who is well versed in those matters. My third question is about State Link. Will the Minister give the Committee information to enable us to more clearly understand the productivity benefits which will arise from the significant increase in spending that we notice under program 8 on page 166 of the Estimates of Payments? The Opposition notes the significant increase in spending there. How is that justified on the basis of increased marginal benefits for the dollars so invested?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I hope that I have understood the honourable member's question correctly. If we consider the figures for program 8, part of the increase is an increase in salaries from last year's actual to this year's proposed because a full complement of staff will be going for this financial year. The establishment of the data task force will also increase the number of staff. I should point out that State Link is in the process of changing from cash accounting to accrual accounting. Consequently, the figure proposed for this current year is on an accrual accounting basis. Therefore it includes depreciation and other matters which were not included in the 1989-90 figures where the accounting was on a cash basis. The change in the method of accounting makes comparisons between the two years difficult.

**Mr LEWIS:** We can understand that and it might be helpful in future to include an explanatory note to that effect. However, we would be pleased to learn what the additional staff will be doing to enhance the productivity of the overall Public Service through the increase in expenditure on staff salaries in State Link. What is happening with that?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Very likely that is because of the expansion of the country service which started with Berri, Mount Gambier and Port Lincoln in the past financial year. Many other country centres are due to come on this financial year. That will enable much better and easier communication between regional Government offices and offices in the CBD. That will result in a much better service to the community and much more efficient government in terms of those services. That will be achieved by expanding the State Link network. State Link is a fairly new business unit within State Services. It has not been going for very long and is still building up to its optimum size.

**Mr LEWIS:** We do not know what that plan is and I am pleased that the Minister has revealed that such a plan exists. What is the so-called optimum size? Where are we heading? How many branch offices will there be in the electronic supermarket organisation?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** In 1989-90, 24 full-time equivalents were employed in State Link. In this current financial year that figure is expected to rise to 40. However, in subsequent years it is expected to reduce to about 36 or 37. The difference is due to the data task force which will be in operation this year performing a complete planning exercise. Once that has been achieved, the data task force will no longer exist.

**Mr LEWIS:** Are they on contract with a specific limited tenure for the establishment phase of the program?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** They are on secondment from other Government areas.

**Mr LEWIS:** Does it state in the other budget papers the various Government agencies which they have come from?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I do not know, although I presume so. It might be down one here and down one there. It may not be specifically noted as such.

**Mr McKEE:** My question concerns a lot of recent publicity given to the environment and it refers directly to the State Supply Board. Is the State Supply Board encouraging the use of unbleached and recycled paper?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There has certainly been growing public awareness of the need to protect the environment and to encourage the use of such materials as recycled paper. State Supply has stocks of both 100 per cent and 80 per cent recycled paper. It is a matter for each Government agency to determine what type of paper it orders from State Supply, but all types are available. The Department of Environment and Planning is looking at developing a policy for the whole of Government on recycled paper. There is encouragement for the use of either unbleached or recycled paper, which is available at State Supply.

There are some problems in that many photocopiers do not happily accept recycled paper. The use of recycled paper can lead to problems with the photocopiers. There was even a fear that it might lead to the warranty on a photocopier not being operable if people used the wrong sort of paper. I understand that that is not of such concern as warranties for most brands of photocopiers will still apply, but, as current types of recycled paper are not really desirable with many photocopiers, it can lead to greater maintenance bills and difficulties in that regard. I understand that a number of photocopiers, while not liking 100 per cent recycled paper, are happy with 80 per cent recycled paper, and I know of many Government offices which are ordering 80 per cent recycled paper for that reason. Developments in this area are occurring rapidly and it may be that before too long there will be 100 per cent recycled paper of a quality which can be used in photocopiers, and that will make it more acceptable throughout Government.

**Mr McKEE:** What benefits will schools receive for making large purchases from the State Supply warehouses?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It is not obligatory for schools to use State Supply warehouses, but most, if not all, do. As an encouragement, State Supply brought in a scheme whereby any high school which ordered more than \$50 000 worth of material from State Supply in any one year received a rebate of \$1 000. For any sizeable high school, it is not difficult to achieve \$50 000 in orders when one thinks of all the books, pens and everything else that schools require. They receive \$1 000 back when they pass the \$50 000 mark. That encourages them to think in a macro perspective and think of their entire supply needs rather than their paper or clean-

ing needs. It encourages them to separate it out into different boxes in their heads. The big advantage for schools in going to State Supply is that it is a one-stop shop. They can get everything there. They do not have to go to different suppliers for different items, be they books, sporting goods, cleaning materials or stationery. The rebate of \$1 000 is given in the form of a cheque, and that can be put to whatever use the school community wishes. Quite a number of schools have taken advantage of this and have been very pleased to do so.

**Mr McKEE:** I have one more question on page 485 of the Program Estimates relating to the forensic area. I recall that a couple of years ago a major international forensic science meeting was coming to Adelaide. What is the present position?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The honourable member is referring to the 12th triennial meeting of the International Association of Forensic Sciences, which is to be held at the Adelaide Convention Centre at the end of next month, so it is soon to be upon us. The organising committee for this major conference is made up of officers from State Forensic Sciences. They worked hard last year setting up the framework for the meeting and they have been working very hard this year to make this major international conference a success. It is the first time that this conference will have met outside Europe and North America. For it to meet in Adelaide is a compliment both to our State Forensic Sciences and to the energy and dedication of Dr Tilstone, who is responsible for getting it here.

There are signs already that this will be a very successful conference. We are told that more than 100 delegates from Japan will attend, whereas at the last conference in Vancouver only 26 delegates from Japan attended. There has been very good trade support for the conference, such that the commercial display is pretty well sold out already. There will be more than 1 000 delegates from interstate and overseas. We are sure that, given the good facilities of the Convention Centre, the advantages of Adelaide and the very hard and dedicated work which has been put into preparing for this conference, it will be a memorable meeting and something which those in the forensic science area will remember for a long time. It will help to put Adelaide on the map in more ways than one.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** The Estimates of Receipts indicates a 125 per cent increase in the amount of recurrent recoveries for 1990-91. Is the Minister able to give full details to the Committee of how that massive increase has come about? If the information is not available at present, will she take the question on notice?

**Mr Dundon:** As we said before, the department operates on a commercial basis and is required to pay 50 per cent of its surpluses by way of dividends to its principal shareholder, Treasury. We do that on a six-monthly basis so we pay half the expected dividend halfway through the year, and the other half at the end of the year. The \$600 000 paid into consolidated account last year represented the advance payment of the dividend at the six-month mark (1989-90), and the final dividend payment will be paid in this current financial year (1990-91), which is roughly \$700 000.

We made a profit of \$2.6 million, of which \$1.3 million has to be paid by way of dividends. We paid \$600 000 last year, and a further \$700 000 will be paid this year relating to last year's operations. We are also planning to make a \$2.6 million profit again this coming year, of which half will be paid in dividends, so that one-half of the dividend will be paid, once again, at the six-monthly period (\$600 000), plus \$700 000 (or thereabouts) which gives \$1.3 million for this current year. This is a one-off instance. In future there

will not be the wider variation because this was the first year that we paid that sort of dividend as a result of our financial charter.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Does this in any way relate to a document that was circulated by State Supply Board on or about 20 July 1990 addressed to the Manager (whatever the business might be)? It states:

State Supply now operates on a commercial basis. As part of this approach, State Supply will now recover the costs associated with the administration of the Government supplies contracts, by the collection of a commission from contractors of contract item sales. Currently, costs associated with providing and administering common use contracts are recovered from Government agencies by the allocation of an annual levy, based on an estimate of individual agency usage of the contracts.

The letter further indicates that the items listed will incur a commission of 1 per cent of the total of all amounts paid by purchasers as from 1 September 1990. Is this a new entrepreneurial role, is it a taxing measure, or does it reflect in the recoveries that we are dealing with at present?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** No, it is merely a change in where the commission is being paid and in the time of collection. Until the change was made, all users of State Supply were charged a fixed sum as being their commission for using State Supply contracts, and they were billed six-monthly and charged a fee for their use of State Supply contracts. This was inequitable in that they were not necessarily paying in proportion to the number of contracts they were using. It was a guesstimate only of what proportion of which contracts these particular agencies were using. So it was decided as an equitable measure to charge the commission. The supplier collects it from the agency and then, once a quarter, sends on to State Supply the commission collected, along with the payment—they just add it to their payment—for the goods ordered as part of a State Supply contract.

It is revenue neutral as far as State Supply is concerned, and it is a system that Tasmania and the Commonwealth Supply Departments are now using and which all Supply Departments in Australia are moving towards using. It is more equitable in that it means that the agencies, in effect, will be paying this fee according to the degree to which they use a State Supply contract.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Just so that there may be no misunderstanding on this, is the 1 per cent paid by the client Government department or the private sector supplier of the goods?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It is paid by the Government department when it pays its bill to the supplier, and the supplier then, once a quarter, sends on to State Supply that commission collected from the Government agency. There are some occasions when the supplier has decided not to add that commission to the Government agency, but to absorb that cost himself. However, whether or not he does that is, of course, entirely up to him. There is certainly no obligation to do that. I can assure members that, as far as the Government is concerned, it is revenue neutral. It just means that Government agencies are paying for their use of State Supply contracts in proportion to the use that they can make of them, and consequently it is more equitable.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I refer to page 200 of the Auditor-General's Report, where a number of statements are made about the Distribution Control System (DCS). In particular, the Auditor-General states:

The preliminary review identified problems with respect to the integrity of information produced by the DCS . . . The follow-up review identified effort applied but little achievement made in the resolution of many of the matters identified in the preliminary review . . . Notwithstanding the action taken, Audit is of the opinion that many of the problems experienced in the operation of DCS may have been avoided had the implementation of the system been managed by personnel with technical computing

expertise and experience in systems implementation . . . Furthermore, audit review revealed an absence of formalised systems documentation necessary to aid system implementation and user staff in the efficient day-to-day operation, maintenance and control of the system. The audit review also disclosed significantly high processing costs . . . \$500 000 in 1989-90 . . . If processing costs continue at such a high level, the justification for the system would need to be evaluated.

Bearing in mind all the statements made by the Auditor-General, what steps have actually been taken to rectify the problems experienced to date, and what progress has been achieved since the Auditor-General's Report was prepared?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** State Supply had continual access to and assistance from State Computing, from the computer systems officers, who had extensive experience in DCS, and also from a State Supply Board project officer with experience in the implementation and operation of DCS at five other Government agencies. The Manager, Computing Services, was a member of the DCS implementation group at State Supply. State Supply employed at the Seaton office a special project officer with computer systems experience to assist with the implementation and the first six months of operations of DCS.

I think we need to remember that the DCS system at State Supply is probably the largest application of DCS anywhere in Australia, and the use of the warehouse management module at State Supply was the first time this module was ever used in Australia. The on-line features of DCS have certainly contributed a great deal to State Supply's very high level of service to customers.

As I mentioned earlier, DCS has been most instrumental in achieving the three-day general delivery time and the one-day delivery time to hospitals. State Supply has carried out an interim review of DCS, and a DCS status report was prepared at the request of the Director of the Department of State Supply. The recommendations of that report are now being put into effect. A post-implementation review of DCS was scheduled for May of this year, which was 12 months after the last DCS module was installed, so that 12 months experience could be evaluated.

With regard to the system documentation, I can assure the honourable member that DCS is supported by vendor-supplied documentation which is both detailed and comprehensive and includes flow charts and procedure manuals. This documentation is held by State Computing (which, of course, is also part of the Department of State Services) and State Supply has been given approval by the suppliers of DCS to photocopy any documentation as it requires it. Certainly, State Supply accepts that there is a need to prepare customised flow charts for use at operator level.

With regard to the honourable member's comment about computer processing costs at State Computing, those high computer processing costs are mainly due to the on-line nature of DCS which assists State Supply to provide the high level of customer service that I have mentioned. The high computing costs have been paid to State Computing at the appropriate rate so that they do not represent a net outflow to the whole Department of State Services. Certainly, there is an acknowledgement that the high level of DCS computing costs needs to be reduced, and State Supply is working with State Computing and Arthur Andersen, the vendors of DCS, to improve this aspect. State Supply will also be reviewing the strategy for information technology used in warehousing as a result of the approval to implement DCS. This review will be available by July of next year.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I have heard a defence against the statements made in the Auditor-General's Report, and the Minister, by her comments, has given me considerable cause for additional concern. She mentioned a customised flow

chart, and that suggests to me that some tailoring of the off-the-shelf package has occurred. I suggest to the Minister, from my experience in the computer industry, that any customisation of a flow chart would indicate a need for greater user documentation, as in fact the Auditor-General has experienced. So, I repeat: what actual work has been done to remedy the documentation problems that have been identified by the Auditor-General? Further, the Minister mentioned that a project officer or a number of project officers were involved at various times in the design and implementation of this particular system. What people with actual computing experience who were not on the committee in an advisory capacity had actual hands-on experience in the implementation of this system?

**Mr Bridge:** The approach that we have taken consistently is to avoid making changes to the software because we, like you, have had experience with changes that have caused more problems than they have cured. So, we have been quite firm about that and have made changes only where it has been absolutely necessary. In terms of the people who have been involved in the process, as the Minister mentioned, we had one person working on it from the State Supply Board who had been involved in the five previous implementations of the same system in the State Government, excluding the warehouse management package which was new to Government and to State Supply. We also had working full time at Seaton a person who was specifically recruited from the then Highways Department (now the Department of Road Transport) to help in the implementation process, and that person was there throughout the whole process.

The documentation problem is a moot point. I am aware of the Auditor-General's comments and I would have to say that there are others who feel the same way. On the other hand, the amount of work that was going on at the time this all went in meant that it was often difficult for staff to contemplate looking at the documentation; they were so busy dealing with our customers that we feel they often did not have sufficient time, despite the training, to refresh themselves as to the documentation.

The question of whether we actually need to do flow charting needs to be looked at more closely so that we identify the problem and do not head off in the direction of a perceived problem. I have asked the Manager of the warehouse, who chairs the implementation committee, to endeavour to get to the root of the problem. I assure you, Mr Chairman and members, that the system is working very effectively now and has a lot of user acceptance both at our main warehouse at Seaton and at our regional stores. We have now reached the stage where we need to be working hard to make sure that the operating costs are appropriate for an on-line system, which we have not had before—the previous system was a batch system—and to make sure also that the now relatively minor problems and bugs are ironed out of the system.

**Mr MATTHEW:** My question concerns the Auditor-General's Report and, in particular, the table that appears at page 414. I note that in March 1990 Cabinet actually approved the State Clothing Corporation's going over to the Department of State Services and that a number of changes are still required before that process is completed. I note, further, that in 1989-90 the State Clothing Corporation made yet another loss of \$252 000, and that that can be added to losses of \$118 000 in 1985-86, \$68 000 in 1986-87, \$496 000 in 1987-88, and \$591 000 in 1988-89.

In view of the fact that State Services has just taken this corporation on board, will the Minister be assessing the possibility of disposing of it, bearing in mind that it com-

petes with very efficient and effective private companies which operate at a profit, or will the Government continue putting up with the losses that this corporation continues to make despite years of Government revenue input into what is amounting to a disastrous operation?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I would certainly point out that the loss last year was considerably reduced.

**Mr MATTHEW:** It was a loss nonetheless.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I certainly do not resile from the fact that it was a loss, but a considerable improvement occurred in the last 12 months when the State Clothing Corporation was not associated with State Services, except for the last couple of months. Now that the State Clothing Corporation has been integrated into State Services we expect further savings through streamlining of overheads and administrative costs. The State Clothing Corporation is certainly not planning to expand its activities, but neither is the Government proposing to close it down. We hope to run it efficiently, and I point out that use of the State Clothing Corporation is not obligatory for Government agencies. It is competing against the firms which the honourable member describes as being efficient.

The State Clothing Corporation has now been commissioned by the Police Department to run its clothing store. This operation has been set up and is working extremely satisfactorily. It did not run at a profit this year because there were setting up costs involved, but it is expected to produce a profit next year. This will all contribute to the overall result of the State Clothing Corporation.

**Mr MATTHEW:** If, indeed, the State Clothing Corporation is winning contracts, but if effectively those contracts are being won because they are undercutting competition and doing so by running at a loss, perhaps those prices should go up to a point where the corporation breaks even and makes a profit, to truly test its worth in the market place.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I understand it, any quotes supplied by the State Clothing Corporation have to be competitive in the market place. Last year's results were affected by the fact that a contract which the State Clothing Corporation held from interstate was terminated unexpectedly in December last year. This was not because of the quality of the product but because the interstate firm had decided that it did not wish to have to transport goods; it wished to source them closer to home. This obviously had an effect on the overall operation of the State Clothing Corporation.

**Mr HERON:** The Minister, in her opening remarks, touched on some achievements of State Print, explaining that State Print had achieved international recognition, which was commendable. What are the other publishing activities of State Print?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** State Print has an excellent record of which we can all feel very proud indeed. In recent years, State Print has entered into the area of facsimile limited editions and other commercially viable books. The facsimile limited editions included: *Terra Australis*, which covers the circumnavigation of Australia by Matthew Flinders and the S.A. White collection of illustrated bird books. The first publication of the S.A. White collection, *The Birds of Australia* by John Gould, won a gold medal at the 1990 national print awards, and *Terra Australis* was awarded a silver medal at the same awards. *The Birds of Australia*, by John Gould, was subsequently entered in the 1990 printing industries of America national print awards and was awarded a certificate of merit. I stress that it was in a world competition that that book received this certificate of merit.

Apart from these award-winning programs, there is a long-standing tradition that State Print will publish scientific and

educational material which is authorised by a long-standing so-called handbooks committee. The committee is comprised of a number of professional and academic people who act on a voluntary basis and who have provided the material for printing such publications as Black's *Flora of South Australia* and other scientific handbooks, which are well recognised indeed and which are much appreciated in scientific and other communities not only for their availability but also for the high quality of production. They are certainly much appreciated, and State Print is to be congratulated.

**Mr HERON:** The Minister referred to a rather drastic turnaround in the profit margin of State Print, which is now showing a profit of some \$44 000 compared with a \$1.7 million deficit. What are the reasons for that turnaround?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I think it is certainly a wonderful turnaround, for which State Print should be congratulated. There were obvious areas that had to be worked on. It was believed that management reporting was poor due to implementation problems associated with the new job costing system. The first management report was produced in November 1988, and the system collapsed in March and April. So, State Print had operated for a significant part of the previous year without adequate management reporting at all. This, plus a number of other factors, contributed to the deficit last year. The turnaround to a small surplus was due to all these critical factors being addressed through a full management executive. Proper reporting systems were introduced and a rationalisation program was introduced in November 1989 to address restructuring and staff reductions through attrition. There was a freeze on capital equipment purchases and State Print managed to achieve an upturn in business activity. All these things together resulted in a turnaround from a loss to a profit.

**Mr HERON:** How is the Government investment in State Link providing benefits to the consumers of Government services?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The investment in State Link is saving money for Government agencies. It is anticipated that in excess of \$20 million will be saved over the five-year period from now until the 1994-95 financial year. Communications within and between Government agencies are being greatly improved and this will facilitate improved delivery of Government services to the people of South Australia.

The sorts of things that are occurring are in the improved voice and data services between Government offices in the country and their headquarters in Adelaide. This means that Government information and expertise located in Adelaide will be more readily available to people in the country. New developments still occurring in data communications will improve public access to Government information, as all Government data bases will be linked over a common standardised network throughout all Government agencies in the State.

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

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Minister of State Services, Miscellaneous, \$1 449 000—  
Examination declared completed.

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Works and Services—State Services Department,  
\$9 800 000—Examination declared completed.

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Local Government, \$91 743 000

**Chairman:**

Mr M.J. Evans

**Members:**

Mr M.R. De Laine  
The Hon. B.C. Eastick  
Mr V.S. Heron  
Mr W. Matthew  
Mr C.D.T. McKee  
Mr E.J. Meier

**Witness:**

The Hon. Anne Levy, Minister of Local Government.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr S. Tully, Deputy State Librarian, Department of Local Government.  
Mr R. Shattock, General Manager, West Beach Trust.  
Mr K. Crowden, General Manager, Enfield Cemetery.

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

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** By agreement, we will spend a short period of time on the statutory authorities which come under local government. Mr Crowden is from the Enfield General Cemetery Trust and Mr Shattock from the West Beach Trust. Neither of these bodies receives any money from nor contributes any money to Consolidated Revenue. As a result, in the past, questions on their activities have not been asked in the Estimates Committees. By agreement, such questions may be asked this year. I am happy to admit right from the outset that, whilst I receive the minutes, budgets and accounts of these trusts, I do not in any way interfere with their operations. However, I assure the Committee that the two executive officers are very happy to answer any questions which members of the Committee may put to them.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** In fairly recent times, Parliament extended the activities of the Enfield Trust to include the Cheltenham cemetery. It was suggested that there may even be further extensions at a later stage, although that matter has not come before the Parliament.

A couple of matters that I would like to raise relate to the policy of the Enfield Trust, which has had some public airing on the placement of flowers and other articles on grave sites. A great deal of public interest has been generated by people who have lost children and who requested action by the former Minister. I am led to believe that the trust indicated clearly that it was drawn to the attention of all who wished to use the facilities of the Enfield Trust that the placement of flowers or other articles for an extended period of time was taboo, although there was some question as to whether that fact was sufficiently pointed out to the persons who had taken out the lease, having regard to their distressed state. How has this matter been addressed by the trust?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The trust has regularised its policy in regard to this matter. In the lawn part of the cemetery flowers and other materials left on graves are cleared once a week on a stated day. The rest of the cemetery is cleared once a month so that any items left there can remain for as long as 29 days.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Has the documentation relative to this issue been prepared in a different fashion from that which applied previously, so that persons who take out a lease are under no misapprehension?

**Mr Crowden:** Each licence holder has always been advised. The problem arose when other members of the family who were not in direct contact with the cemetery were reacting to the situation. As we have no direct contact with them, they were not aware of the trust's policy. However, the licensees hold the licence to each of the burial and memorial sites and they have always been advised of that fact.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** With regard to the rationalisation between Enfield and Cheltenham, earth has been removed from one cemetery to the other and there was some public disquiet about fragments of bone being displayed on earth which was being placed in the other cemetery. Has that matter been resolved or is a course of action in train to ensure that that difficulty does not, except on very rare occasions, occur in future?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The General Manager has suggested that there might be some confusion about this. Soil has never been moved from Cheltenham to Enfield. The honourable member's question might refer to the movement of soil in Payneham cemetery which has a quite different controlling authority and is not answerable to Parliament in this way. There has been some soil movement within Cheltenham cemetery and there may have been some questions initially about that movement, but those questions have been addressed and there are no problems in that regard at the moment.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** With regard to a current debate (and I am not referring to people going overseas) about providing additional facilities at cemeteries in South Australia and providing mausoleums or above-ground vaults, has the Enfield Trust laid down a policy about that and, if so, what is it?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I understand it, the Enfield Cemetery Trust has considered mausoleums in relation to its future plans. At the moment, the trust has decided not to proceed with any plans for mausoleums. It does not believe that there is any evidence of demand for such a facility at Enfield. Obviously if there was evidence of demand, the trust would consider the matter.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** In relation to the cost structure associated with cremations at Enfield, has any consideration been given to the cremation of a body as distinct from a cremation following the use of the facilities at that cemetery? I am led to believe that, if a funeral director from outside the area, perhaps from the country, was to deliver a body for cremation, it would cost him the same to use the facilities in the chapel as if the cremation had been undertaken after a chapel service at the cemetery.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The General Manager has informed me that Enfield cemetery charges one fee which covers the use of the chapel, the lounge and the crematorium. It is obviously up to individuals whether they make use of more than one of those facilities, and that would apply not just to people from the country, but to city people who wanted a cremation without any ceremony. They would be charged the same fee as someone who had the ceremony on site.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I appreciate that it is universal, but I understand that it is more frequently likely to have been the consequence of a country service terminating in a cremation in Adelaide.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I do not have any information about frequency. I certainly know of city cremations where there has been no service.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Can the Minister or the General Manager tell us to what degree the reorganisation and integration of the Enfield and Cheltenham cemeteries has occurred and whether any extension is contemplated of the somewhat desirable conjunction of services by an organi-

sation which, through the years, has shown a capacity to perform?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Perhaps I can ask Mr Crowden to respond to that matter involving the trust's policy.

**Mr Crowden:** It is now 3½ years since Enfield cemetery took over the Cheltenham cemetery. There was clear evidence that the Cheltenham cemetery was financially unviable in the way in which it was being run. I am pleased to report that in the past 3½ years, because of management expertise and the ability for the cemetery to be serviced from the one location, there has been a significant turnaround in the viability of the Cheltenham cemetery. It is certainly paying for itself as an operation. It has been self-funding in its own right from the very beginning.

In response to the second part of the honourable member's question, while the Enfield Cemetery Trust believes that it has a responsibility to help people and organisations which are not operating cemeteries successfully, and while we are prepared to assist them in whatever way we can, we have no intention of seeking takeovers. However, we will provide assistance when that is requested.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I should like to make a statement for the benefit of other members of the Committee. By agreement—and I hope it is bipartisan—there will be no specific questions relating to dolphins or whatever with regard to Marineland. We are more interested in the general aspects of the West Beach Trust and its activities and not matters which are currently being canvassed before a select committee. If we understand that now, we will not stray one way or the other.

The West Beach Recreation Reserve Act was repealed in 1987 and a new Act was put into place. In the second reading speech directly associated with the repeal Act, introduced into the House of Assembly by the Hon. G.F. Kennelly, at page 1242 of *Hansard* on 15 October, it was stated:

There has been increasing pressure for more diversified development on the reserve in recent years. The trust has recognised the need to move away from purely recreational activity and a significant tourism accommodation and entertainment complex has been established to cater for the ever-increasing demand from interstate and local tourists . . . The Bill also establishes the aims of the trust in the development of the reserve as a resort and recreation complex for the use and enjoyment of the public and defines its functions and powers.

May we have an update of the present management policy directly associated with the West Beach Trust, having regard to the promotion at the time that the Bill was rewritten to provide greater opportunity than was entailed in the original Bill?

**Mr Shattock:** The policies of the trust are to develop the reserve for sporting, recreation and tourism facilities. Since 1987 there has been an upgrading of the existing facilities and the culmination of a desire to provide a further level of accommodation for tourists. That was the Zhen Yun proposal, which is now before the court and will obviously not proceed. There are no immediate plans for any other forms of development on the reserve, other than to continue to upgrade our own operational facilities of the Marineland village, the caravan park and the golf course.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** In regard to the relocated villas and the development of the new golf course, can we have an expansion of the information as to how they are proceeding, whether or when they will be operational and whether the trust is suffering any deficit of income as a result of non-satisfactory location or of delays in the completion of the golf course, if that is a fact?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I understand that all the villas, relocated and non-relocated, are fully operational, as is the expansion of the northern golf course. That is fully completed and operational and is bringing in the expected amount

of revenue. In terms of the overall finances, the only hiccup was the six weeks or so when certain villas were being relocated and, hence, were not available for hire.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Has the trust considered the likely effect of any extension of the runway at the airport? The trust has a short or extended term lease of land from the airport authority. How is this being integrated into the overall policy plan relative to the area?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The area, if there were an extension of the runway, has been redeveloped as the northern golf course. The lease is not due to expire until the year 2010. So it is a fair way down the track—at least another 20 years—before that lease will expire. I understand that the airport master plan has been completed and that that land, which is currently the northern golf course, is not expected to be needed by the airport for 20 to 30 years, so there does not need to be any forward planning at the moment on the part of the trust.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** By what means are golf course and other facilities in the area watered? Is it by mains water or is it by making full use of an entitlement from the Glenelg sewage treatment works?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Perhaps I could pass such a detailed question to the General Manager.

**Mr Shattock:** By far the larger areas of the reserve are watered by reclaimed water from the Glenelg treatment works. A very small grassed area outside each accommodation unit is watered by mains water—probably within the vicinity of 10ft from the unit.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** The balance is from recycled water?

**Mr Shattock:** Yes.

**Mr MEIER:** Why has the practice green of the Patawalonga golf course not been established, and what is to happen to the brick building which previously contained the pro shop and toilet block?

**Mr Shattock:** The former pro shop, as it is termed, the brick building which includes the toilets, has been considered for upgrading and re-establishment as the main pro shop with a new entranceway included to serve both courses, and in that plan a practice putting green and a practice fairway will be reinstated on the course.

**Mr MEIER:** What is the time schedule for the establishment of the new pro shop and putting green?

**Mr Shattock:** We believe that that would be complete within six months. We are talking with builders now on the necessary work to reinstate the pro shop.

**Mr MEIER:** What improvements have been planned or made to West Beach Trust caravan park to cater for campers, bearing in mind the continuing increase in the price of petrol which will have an impact on people wishing to travel?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Currently at Marineland Village there are 10 cabins with internal en suites. In the caravan park there are seven cabins, an establishment of 15 en suite sites using en suite units transferred from the village. Upgrading is occurring to the park's original toilet block. The upgrading of power supply to sites and undergrounding of the main power supply as well as the further provision of playground equipment is also occurring. I do not know whether the honourable member wants further information on that, but these are all designed to make it a very attractive holiday location and, as far as I know, there has been no diminution of patronage. It has always been a very well patronised site and recognised as such throughout the length and breadth of Australia as a wonderful place to bring one's caravan or to take a villa for a holiday.



**Mr MEIER:** Has a specific sum been earmarked for the developments that the Minister has just identified? Thinking back to the last petrol crisis, when Australia virtually went with world parity pricing at that stage and there was a lot of talk that caravanning was a thing of the past, can the Minister say what effect that had on the caravan park then? Is that matter being considered at present, when we do not really know what ceiling will eventuate for the price of petrol in the next few months?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I will ask Mr Shattock to answer that.

**Mr Shattock:** It has been very pleasing to see the number of—as we term them—towed vans increasing over the past two to three years. It is very unfortunate, again, that we are anticipating a drop-off in number of those towed vans. The caravan manufacturing industry is suffering because of a decreased number of units being purchased, but the number of units using our park seems to be on the increase. We have an aggressive marketing campaign that continues each year, and we will be out there very strongly making sure that people across Australia are aware of our park in an effort to keep the occupancy rate up to its current level.

We have transferred some on-site accommodation units from the village to the park and we have, in this year's budget, a further eight cabins to be put into the park because the previous trend, when the number of towed vans reduced, was that on-site accommodation increased. People are prepared to drive their car rather than take their own caravan but still want to stay in a caravan park because they like the environment and they choose to stay in on-site accommodation.

**Mr MEIER:** Restating my earlier supplementary question, do we have a monetary figure on the cost of the improvement, that is, the upgrading that the Minister has just identified?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I understand that they have budgeted for \$120 000 for the 10 on-site cabins and \$120 000 for a bunkhouse, whatever that is.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Following on from my colleague's question on the further development of the caravan park, is the trust at all concerned, particularly with summer approaching, that derelict buildings in the vicinity may create a problem, with vagrants and others whose presence may interfere with the pleasure of people using the area? If so, what action is to be taken to get rid of those derelict buildings?

**Mr Shattock:** The only derelict buildings I can recall would be those at Marineland. In answer to the first part of the question, I do not see it as a problem in the coming summer season. It has not been a problem until now. A decision for the demolition of the buildings has not yet been taken by the board of the trust.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I am thinking more of people sleeping out, which is more appropriate in summer than in winter, although the buildings would provide protection for anyone who wanted to make use of them. Certainly the use of the caravan park and the whole site will be maximised come summer compared with the recent months.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I am assured that the entire reserve is policed on a regular basis, so that any tendency for misuse would be detected pretty quickly and stopped.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** The Auditor-General, at page 456, draws attention to a large sum of outstanding funds due to the West Beach Trust (and I appreciate that some of those funds are from Marineland, which we are not directly debating): have any of those moneys been recovered or are there other outstanding funds which are of concern to the trust?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I understand it, all those outstanding debts—the cost of shifting the villas and rent—are connected with the Zhen Yun proposal, and these sums are presently the subject of court proceedings and may not be finalised for quite some time. Luckily the trust had sufficient reserves for this disputed debt not to send it into overdraft or make running impossible while waiting for the debts to be paid.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Has the lease been returned or is that still part of the dispute?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The lease has been terminated.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I said 'returned', which as I understand it was a problem: while the lease had been terminated the original documents were still not returned to the trust.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I do not think they have to be returned. There were problems with the previous Tribond lease and its termination, but that was settled many months ago. The Zhen Yun lease has now been terminated, but there is no legal problem in that regard; the legal argument involves payment, or non-payment, of the debt.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Has the trust made any representation to the Minister, or the powers that be, to have contained in one council area all the trust's property? I believe that at present it is divided between two councils and abuts another council.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** No official approaches have been made to me in this regard. The trust includes representatives of the three councils: two members from one council and one member from each of the other councils. They make up the majority of the membership of the trust. Certainly, no approaches have been made to me, and the General Manager assures me that this matter has not been raised at any trust meeting.

Before we continue, do any members of the Committee have any questions about The Parks Community Centre?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Mr De Laine has.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Would it be convenient to deal with that now so that we can finish with all statutory authorities?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Yes.

#### Additional Departmental Adviser:

Mr J. Mitchell, General Manager, The Parks Community Centre.

**Mr De LAINE:** I am very lucky to have The Parks Community Centre in my electorate and, of late, I have noticed a tremendous amount of activity at the centre, both day and night, evidenced by the number of cars in the car park and the number of people around the centre. Is there any specific reason for this or is it a general trend of increasing use?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I am told that it is a measure of the success of The Parks; so much activity is being generated that a very large number of people come to the centre, hence the large number of cars in the car park. So great is this success that it is almost causing problems in terms of sufficient areas for meetings and various activities. The Parks is having to set some priorities in terms of bookings for its facilities, and it does this by giving preference to nearby residents and only accepting bookings from individuals or groups which come from further afield as a second priority. I am sure that all members of the Committee realise that the facilities at The Parks are so excellent that there is a demand for them throughout the metropolitan area. However, priority is given to local groups. At present

the facilities are being very well used, and this is certainly a measure of the success of The Parks.

**Mr De LAINE:** I think that the increased use of the facilities at The Parks is a direct result of the excellent job the current General Manager is doing in initiating many different programs; it is because of his input, in particular, that The Parks is thriving. Are any records kept or is there any way of ascertaining how many people who currently use The Parks come from The Parks catchment area as opposed to those who come from outside the catchment area?

**Mr MITCHELL:** The collection of statistics is very difficult because, as well as directly running a number of services, we are also the landlord for a whole range of services. So, at the moment we do not have a central register of exactly how many people use The Parks. We are trying to redress that, but we have a little way to go in terms of doing it.

The proportion of local people who use the services varies from section to section; for example, regarding the public library about 65 per cent of all the borrowers are local; in terms of the community development programs, the proportion is about 95 per cent; but in the sports area the proportion gets down to about 30 per cent, depending upon the activities. So, the proportion does vary. In the youth area, the proportion is practically 100 per cent.

**Mr HERON:** The Minister of Education and the Director-General of Education have just announced existing changes to The Parks High School, and that is, I know, an education matter. As the Minister would know, The Parks High School is situated within The Parks Community Centre. The changes will reflect an increased emphasis on the already excellent re-entry program that is being conducted at The Parks High School and, in particular, on the exciting new and innovative idea of an after-hours resource centre for public school students within the catchment area through which they will have access to assistance and extra tuition between the hours of 4 p.m. and 9 p.m. during the week. Are any beneficial or adverse effects expected from this change in emphasis?

**Mr Mitchell:** We, at The Parks, are very appreciative of the Minister of Education's initiative in this area. It really brings to fruition some of the dreams and plans that were held right at the beginning of the 1970s for The Parks, when it was seen as an education centre for the whole community rather than just a high school. We can actually see that happening in the 1990s. So, in an educational sense, The Parks will be open from about 8.30 a.m. until 9 p.m. every night of the week, and on Sundays as well.

In an area where education does not have a strong tradition and where the skill level—according to all the research and statistics—is very low, we shall be working hard to provide re-entry programs and opportunities for unemployed people and, also, to encourage those at work to come back and further their skills. This is a joint program with the Woodville High School, the Croydon Park High School and The Parks High School, all focused at The Parks Community Centre.

Those four groups, including me, are now meeting to ensure that the planning serves the whole community rather than just the local Parks High School. However, in 1991 we expect to have open an extraordinary facility that will focus on secondary schooling for people currently enrolled as students, the re-entry program, a more homework-type, after-hours service, literacy programs, counselling and a whole range of other things. This coincides with Commonwealth Skillshare programs, which can now be open until 9 p.m. The Parks also recently established a new employment and

training function which focuses the services of The Parks towards local employment. These matters are all coming together at the moment.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Would the Minister say, with the benefit of hindsight, that anything ought to have been done or should be done now with respect to The Parks, and would that be supported by The Parks authority in another establishment of a similar type that might be set up elsewhere?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Twenty-twenty vision is always possible with hindsight. It has been suggested that The Parks is looking at perhaps amending the Act to broaden the range of expertise available on the board of The Parks. There is a feeling that it could benefit from this. Certainly, no proposals have come to me yet, so I presume that board members are still thinking about this. In addition, of course, with the multifunction polis about to eventuate not very far away from The Parks site, there is certainly a desire on the part of The Parks to be part of the consultation and to play its role in relation to the development of the MFP. Of course, this is further down the track, and something which, it is hoped, will evolve.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** As a former member of the Public Works Standing Committee, I was involved with the examination of the proposal for the theatre complex, which is a vital part of The Parks. How has it fitted into the program of The Parks? There was a question at the time as to whether, with normal development of the area, it would be large enough for the community that it was to serve. It is certainly large enough for a school-type or a teaching-type profile. I would be pleased to have any information that is available relative to the complex as a centrepiece of the whole operation.

**Mr Mitchell:** There is a concern that the theatres are too small to be commercially viable, and particularly over the past few years, as other theatres have been established, we have found it increasingly difficult to attract the sort of commercial audience required. We do attract people to some extent, but not a large number. That has encouraged us to re-focus the activities towards more intimate-type theatre—towards high schools, community groups, and so on, rather than the commercial operation. However, that does have an effect on the viability of the centre.

#### Additional Departmental Advisers:

Ms A. Dunn, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Local Government

Mr C. Rogowski, Manager, Resources.

Mr U. Peisach, Manager, Finance.

Ms V. Siebert, Manager, Public Record Office.

Mr E. Miller, State Librarian.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Will the Minister say how many motor vehicles are operated by the Department of Local Government and how many of those vehicles are for the exclusive use of the executives and other officers? What are the names of the four committees under the department? What is their membership and function, when were they formed, what are the membership fees (that is, the payments for sittings), what are the budgeted costs of servicing the committees, and how often do the committees meet? Further, what are the names of any consultants who were hired by the department in the review period or who will be hired in the current year, and are any of the reports prepared by the consultants available for general use?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I do not have all of that information, but I am happy to take these questions on notice. A question has already been put on notice in the Legislative Council regarding consultancies and that information should

be provided shortly in *Hansard*. There are not many committees, and, while I have some information, it is not the full detail requested. That information will be supplied later.

The department owns 10 vehicles and leases a further seven on long-term hire from State Fleet, all of which, including those for executive use, are for general departmental use. With the exception of one six-cylinder sedan, the remainder are four-cylinder light vehicles. The department has no four-wheel drive or heavy vehicles. All vehicles are petrol fuelled and in the main use unleaded petrol.

Of these vehicles, four are used by the State Library Services, five by the Public Libraries Branch, two by the Public Records Office, four by the Local Government Division, and two by Support Services. In addition, The Parks Community Centre owns three vehicles: one utility, one passenger van and one station wagon. These are four-cylinder light vehicles for general use.

The Outback Areas Development Trust has one four-wheel drive four-cylinder light vehicle fuelled by petrol which is funded through the Grants Commission. The Enfield Cemetery Trust has seven vehicles which are not funded through Government sources. It has one six-cylinder sedan for executive use; two utilities, which are four-cylinder light vehicles for general use; two vans, which are three-cylinder light vehicles for general use; one two tonne Toyota truck; and one three tonne heavy Ford truck. All these vehicles are registered to the Enfield Cemetery Trust and funded by its own funds.

The West Beach Trust has 14 vehicles and six motorcycles, all of which are for general use. It has one four-wheel drive four-cylinder light utility and one five tonne truck. The cars are all four cylinder except for two which have six cylinders. All of these vehicles are funded by and registered with the West Beach Trust.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Recently, there have been frequent comments that there is an inadequacy of funding in relation to library services in the community in general and that local government is being required to find more and more of the funds. As a consequence, a number of the services provided are being wound back rather than continued at their current delivery rate. The Estimates of Payments would have one believe that there has been an increase; however, there is still this public perception which is being promoted in electorates across the State and not just in one area. I would welcome an overview of the relative value of moneys currently being made available for community library services and a comment on the perceived view by local government that it is being called upon to meet a greater part of the total cost than was previously the case. I do not want to enter into questioning on local government *per se*, but library services form an integral part of local government activity.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** If there is such a perception throughout the local government community, it is an erroneous one and I hope that it can be laid to rest. The Government made a commitment that the subsidies for public libraries would be maintained in real terms throughout the period of this Government. That promise has been met: the subsidies for libraries are being increased in accordance with inflation figures and have maintained their real value. Any suggestion that we are cutting back in the area of public libraries is erroneous. The cost of running the Public Libraries Branch headquarters at Hindmarsh is borne entirely by the Government.

There is no local government subsidy or contribution to the running of the headquarters at Hindmarsh and, because of the efficiency of the service provided from Hindmarsh, our public library system is able to function as efficiently

and effectively as it does. The increase in the budget, as seen in program 2, reflects not just the maintenance in real terms of the public library subsidies, but the inclusion therein of the community information services budget which, in past years, was accounted for separately.

The community information services budget likewise has not been cut. They are being put together for the very good reason that more and more community information services are being run through our public library system. At this time last year, there were 19 community information services while there are now more than 30 and the number is growing rapidly. However, they are all located and serviced through the public library system, thus emphasising that libraries are about a lot more than just books. Because of this increasing interrelationship between public libraries and community information, the subsidy to local government for both those matters is now placed in the same line. However, there has been no decrease and I would be grateful if all Committee members would help spread that information, of which I believe all the public libraries in South Australia are aware. The funding for public libraries is being maintained in real terms. There is no suggestion of its being cut.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** The most recent case that I have seen publicised is in the City of Munno Para, where there is an argument about the closure of several of the sub-library services because of costs. With regard to the Minister's statement about the increase of the information services along with libraries, has anyone undertaken a review of the additional cost being placed on local government to integrate a double service where previously there was only the one perceived service, namely, a library service?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** They get extra money if there is an information service as well as a library service.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** There is still an additional commitment on them.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It is an additional commitment on them if they wish it. It is not compulsory for them to provide a community information service. The fact that it is growing so rapidly throughout the State is an indication that councils and the public welcome it. Councils are looking to provide that service for their communities particularly knowing that they can get a Government subsidy if they do so. However, they obviously do not have to take it up. I am not aware of the suggestions that the honourable member made about Munno Para. However, perhaps Munno Para does not wish to put in its matching contribution for the public library system. The Government's subsidy is a matching system and councils have to provide equal resources to attract the subsidy from the Government.

The Munno Para council probably has the highest debt servicing ratio in the State. With current interest rates, perhaps it wants to cut back on its spending from council funds. It has been pointed out to me that Munno Para's operating subsidy has been increased this year from \$4.25 per capita to \$4.68 if it wishes to match that itself. It is available from the Government if it is prepared to match it. Perhaps the council is finding the matching difficult. It is certainly not a cut in Government money. On the contrary, there is an increase.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to program 2 on page 458 of the Program Estimates. Will the Minister tell us how the implementation of the Public Libraries Automated Information Network (PLAIN) is proceeding?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The PLAIN system which is being introduced is one of the most exciting things to happen in public libraries for a long time. It will result in computer links between all public libraries in the State so that a

borrower in one library can have access to the complete catalogue of every other library in the State. If the book a borrower wants is not available in that library, it can be obtained from whatever library it happens to be in with only a few days delay. Every borrower in the State will have access to more than two million items in the catalogue.

The first stage of installing PLAIN has been implemented. The Adelaide based company DISC was selected as a supplier and the contract was signed in April this year. The hardware has been installed at the public libraries branch and the ABN database was put on the computer in June. Various test sites around the State were connected in August and it is expected that all public libraries will be connected by December of this year. The users in the libraries will then have to be trained and that will also occur at the end of this year.

The inquiry module and the bibliographical maintenance modules are expected to be mounted in January of next year and the stock movement modules are to be mounted next April. The document delivery service will be upgraded as from this October, and that will enable requested books to move between libraries very rapidly. The target is for a minimum of two days and a maximum of six days for any book from one place to another in the State. We certainly hope to achieve that target.

**Mr De LAINE:** Does that connection of information in relation to what items are where include our Parliamentary Library?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** No, the Parliamentary Library is not part of the State library or public library system. It is a completely separate library, as are the libraries at the tertiary institutions.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to page 457 of the Program Estimates relating to the Mortlock Library. What action has been taken on the proposal to provide computerised access to the pictorial collection of the Mortlock Library?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Computerisation of the Mortlock Library is one of the exciting projects within the State Library this year. The tender processes, through the Department of State Supply, led to the identification and detailed evaluation of two potential suppliers of the video disk and computerised database systems which will be necessary for this development. A contract has been finalised with Aussie Vision, a South Australian-based company, and the conversion has commenced. This contract is to convert 54 000 photographs and to supply the computer equipment and appropriate software solution for this process. That was let in June and the conversion has commenced.

When implemented, this system will allow more efficient public access to photographs and the associated information that goes with them. It will also support the preservation of the original material and do a great deal for the occupational health and safety of the workers in the Mortlock Library by reducing the onerous physical tasks of retrieving these photographs when they are required by clients. By having it computerised in this way, their job will be made much easier. The system is expected to be operative, from the point of view of the staff, during this financial year, but it probably will not be until next financial year that there will be public access to the system. It will take that long before it is ready.

**Mr De LAINE:** On page 458 of the Program Estimates reference is made to the community information services. I believe these are funded on a shared basis by both State and local government. Is State Government funding calculated on the number of people living in the catchment area of a particular community information service or on the number of clients or contacts who use the resource?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The community information service is funded in a way analogous to the Grants Commission funding to local councils. Some 50 per cent of the money is allocated per capita; in other words, the number of people within the area being served. However, the other 50 per cent is allocated on a needs basis and takes into account the information needs of the people in the area. A disability factor similar to the Grants Commission disability factor is evaluated for each area, using many of the indices which are used for the Grants Commission—socioeconomic factors, such as the number of people on benefits and pensions, the proportion of the population which is Aboriginal and how many people have a non-English speaking background. These are all factors which are used in the Grants Commission's calculations. For community information we do not use some of the factors which are used for the Grants Commission, such as soil types. That does not seem relevant for community information, though it is relevant for grants for councils as it affects the cost of roadmaking in an area. The Grants Commission factors are relevant for information needs in an area. The disability factor constitutes half the funding for community information services.

**Mr De LAINE:** As a supplementary question, is the number of people making contact in the previous 12 months taken into account?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** No, no notice is taken of that. In terms of numbers, it is purely on a per capita basis—the number of people in the catchment area. The same applies to libraries. The funding for a library does not depend on whether the community never uses it or whether there are queues down the street every day of the week.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I note that on page 286 of the Auditor-General's Report a brief mention is made of the Public Libraries Automated Information Network (PLAIN). We are told that the total cost of the project to 30 June 1993 is expected to be \$5 million, with \$992 000 having been expended last year. How much has the project cost to date; how does that cost measure back against the original projected cost when the feasibility study was carried out; how many staff were believed to be required when the project was first planned; how many are employed now; and how much funding has been allocated for 1990-91 for this project?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** PLAIN is coming in on budget very nicely. It was originally thought that there might be a need for a total of around 16 staff, but that has not been found to be necessary. Presently nine are employed for PLAIN, and that number is not expected to change. It is coming in on budget very nicely. I should stress that it is jointly funded by State and local government, so there are watchdogs at both ends to make sure that it does not exceed expected expenditure.

**Mr MATTHEW:** As a supplementary question, you say that it was originally envisaged there would be 16 staff. Was that as the result of a consultant's report or an internal feasibility study?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Initially, there was a feasibility study by Touche Ross which suggested that a total of around 16 staff might be necessary. Following that there was detailed implementation work by a project manager, and his rigorous work showed that it was feasible to implement PLAIN within the financial parameters which had been set and that only nine people would be required.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Were those financial parameters actually set as recommendations by Touche Ross in that report?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The original consultant's report suggested a higher figure. It was as a result of the work in the department and with the project manager that the costs

were reduced and then agreed between the State Government and the local government and a formal document was signed by Mr Germein, as President of the Local Government Association and me, as Minister, formalising the arrangement. I am told that it is a memorandum of understanding—that is the legal jargon—which sets out the agreement in terms of costs.

**Mr MATTHEW:** My original question was: how much has been expended to date and how much has been allocated for the next financial year?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The agreement is for 12.57 per cent of the book levy being contributed towards PLAIN and the agreement is based on that proportion continuing until PLAIN is fully implemented but, in terms of actual dollars, we would be happy to take that matter on notice and ascertain the actual amount spent so far and the projections.

**Mr MATTHEW:** On page 155 of the Estimates of Payments, under program 2, I note against the Community Information Service item that the amount appears to have gone from some \$8.7 million last financial year to \$10.2 million this financial year. By my calculations, that is some 17 per cent. What has actually brought about that increase?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I mentioned earlier to the member for Light, this is an amalgamation of the subsidy for public libraries and the subsidies for community information services. In the past they have been quite separate because many community information services were provided from outside public libraries—there were not very many of them, anyway. Now, increasingly, community information services are being provided through public libraries so that the two amounts have been put together. It looks like 17 per cent but, in fact, it is maintaining in real terms the subsidy to public libraries and rolling in with it the community information services.

I should also point out that that figure is increased by \$800 000, which has been provided as a one-off payment to the Libraries Board so that it can complete stage 1 of the development of library systems around the State. The master plan for development of public libraries was drawn up in 1978, and was to be a 10-year plan. It is not quite finished yet; there are still five libraries to go before we have a complete library network around the State.

The fact that these five libraries have not come on yet is due not to tardiness on the part of the Government, but to the fact that the councils concerned either were not ready to put forward their contribution or they had other things that they had to do first, including other developments, and the library had to be established sequentially. The five libraries still to come are at Yankalilla, Tea Tree Gully, Barossa, Glenelg and Magill. It is expected that Yankalilla, Tea Tree Gully and perhaps Glenelg will be achieved this financial year. Whether or not Glenelg will be finished depends on other developments happening first, so it may not be completed this financial year; it may be tipped over to the following financial year.

However, this \$800 000 has been allocated to the Libraries Board for it to manage and use for the development of these five major projects. It also wants to use those funds and the income they generate to provide library services for four small district councils that are going to act in association with a larger nearby centre that does not have a library of its own. Although those councils are very small, they will contribute towards joining a larger library service. An example is Mount Gambier District Council, which will obviously join with the town of Mount Gambier; and, likewise, the District Council of Peterborough will join with the town of Peterborough. So, that \$800 000 is a one-off grant to enable

the Libraries Board to manage this last stage of the development of the public libraries system.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Page 458 of the Program Estimates refers to 'approved social justice strategies implemented', and page 459, refers to a new social justice project—'Guide to records relating to people of non-English speaking background'—being undertaken. Specifically, what social justice strategies have been implemented to date?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There is a large number, actually. In public libraries last year the need of public libraries to support adult literacy programs was evaluated, and \$53 300 was spent on special literacy materials for public libraries. The materials for visually impaired were purchased for the Greenacres branch of Enfield library. A special collection for intellectually disabled adult learners was established. Planning was completed to create a Greek language collection at Goodwood library. Material on hearing impairment were provided to West Torrens library, where it is very well received. This year we hope to establish a library service for the visually impaired at Enfield, to establish an ethnic language collection at Goodwood library and a further ethnic collection at another public library, as yet not selected.

We wish to devise guidelines for appropriate materials for Aboriginal users of libraries to encourage them to use libraries more. We want to purchase more cassette book materials and acquire more material on the needs of women. Last year in the Mortlock Library a comprehensive database of published holdings from 1951 to 1980 was prepared in relation to Aboriginal material, and photographs obtained through the museum and Mortlock Library project were fully accessed. The completed database on Aboriginal material was launched a few days ago in the public library as part of NAIDOC week, and present were a large audience of Aborigines who were obviously delighted that this project had been completed.

Through the Mortlock Library there is also the Aboriginal liaison project, which is intended to supply relevant information about its services to Aborigines; also coordination with the Aboriginal Outreach Network, which is centred at the Public Libraries Branch; and an oral history consultancy relating to disadvantaged groups, with support being provided to community oral history projects focusing on disadvantaged groups to ensure that they would be represented in any oral history collection. The groups worked with included the Italian Federation of Migrant Workers and their families, the Salisbury Public Library industrial history project, the United Trades and Labor Council mature age unemployment project, the Aberfoyle Park migrant women project and the Italian women in nursing homes project. All of these projects are ongoing and will provide a lot of evidence relating to non-English speaking background communities.

A social justice strategy was approved for the current financial year, with two Aboriginal trainees being recruited to the preservation services section of the State Library to continue training in the conservation of rare paper materials, a skill which is of relevance to them and to the material of Aboriginal provenance with which they wished to work. There have also been social justice projects. User guides to records about women and about Aborigines have been very widely distributed both locally and nationally, and work is continuing on further volumes relating to this.

A new social justice project being prepared will be a guide to records relating to people of non-English speaking backgrounds. These user guides are of obvious relevance to the communities themselves, and people wishing to conduct research in these areas will be able to readily access the material.

**Mr MATTHEW:** You mentioned services for the visually impaired being provided at Enfield. Has consideration been given to providing services of that nature in the Brighton or near Brighton area, bearing in mind that in that area we have Townsend House (which is a school for the visually and hearing impaired), Seaview High School (which provides education at a secondary level for the visually impaired) and Paringa High School (which provides some education for the visually impaired)? Is a service in the area likely to be introduced for those people? Why was Enfield chosen as the site?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The service was provided at Enfield because the Royal Society for the Blind is located nearby. However, all libraries in the State have material for the visually impaired, and if there is a demand those libraries can readily obtain more. In fact, I am told that last year there were 60 000 loans throughout the State of material for the visually impaired, and I am sure that the people in the part of the metropolitan area mentioned by the honourable member have ready access to that material and that if something they require is not there they need only ask and it will be very quickly obtained.

#### Membership:

Mr Holloway substituted for Mr Heron.

**Mr McKEE:** I refer to page 457 of the Program Estimates under '1990-91 Specific Targets/Objectives': what progress has been made on the proposal to automate the Bray Reference and Mortlock Libraries?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The automation of the Bray Reference and Mortlock Libraries is one of the major improvements planned for the State Library this current financial year. Approval was given for a total allocation of \$1.27 million this current financial. In terms of capital costs, in the current financial year \$550 000 will be allocated; in the next financial year, around \$170 000; and in the following financial year, around \$300 000. The project has commenced. A registration of interest was advertised late last year inviting potential suppliers to offer a total solution, including both the hardware and software. The responses from suppliers were evaluated against an extensive list of what the library wanted from a functional point of view. Benchmark testing of the preferred systems is currently being conducted. It is hoped that this testing phase will be completed very soon and that a contract for the entire system will be let by the end of this year so that it can be installed early next calendar year.

**Mr McKEE:** I refer to page 457 of the Program Estimates; can the Minister advise on the success of the business information service offered by the Bray reference library?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Again, this is a potential success story. This service was established by the reference library in October of last year, although it was not officially opened until earlier this year when publicity began. It is a joint project involving the State Library, the South Australian Institute of Technology and the South Australian College of Advanced Education. It provides a specialised information service for business users. There certainly has been a positive response to the program by users. The number of people who have used it has not been great, but the repeat usage is encouraging.

People who have used it once are coming back a second time, and that is obvious evidence that they were satisfied with the service they received. I am told that at least one user of the service has won a significant Government contract based on the information that user obtained through the service, and he is no doubt very pleased by that. Usage

is certainly growing, and the service is being given greater publicity at the moment. There is a charge for this service, and the fees are expected to completely support the service by the end of the second year of operation, so that it will be completely self-sufficient.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I note from the Estimates of Payments (page 201) that there has been a massive increase in the allocation for purchase of equipment; does that relate to the library area or to local government? Last year, \$34 141 was expended and \$1.58 million is proposed this year.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It relates to the library area, in particular to automation in the Mortlock Library, to which I referred a minute ago. Funding was approved in 1989-90, but only \$34 000 was spent in that year on consultancies in relation to the project, so a lot of the cost has been held over to this financial year. A large equipment update, at a cost of \$313 000, makes up part of that sum. This is for new equipment for the preservation service section of the State Library, where wonderful preservation work is done on old books and scruffy bits of paper are turned into readable material.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Is the \$660 000 component which was allocated in 1989-90 but which was not spent now dearer as a portion of the \$1.58 million or is it a straight deferred payment? What has been the cost blow-out, if any at all?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The project was reassessed. Last year \$660 000 was allocated, but only \$34 000 was spent in the consultancies. As a result of the rigorous reassessment, we took into account the automation experiences of other libraries. There are advantages in not being first cab off the rank, because coming later it is possible to learn from other people's efforts and, also, of course, technology is improving all the time. The original cost was put down as \$1.467 million in total over five years, not as one lump sum. The revised cost, again over five years, is around \$2.8 million. It is an increased cost. There is no blow-out because the project has been delayed; we have been learning from other people's experience and it was decided that what had originally been contemplated would not be adequate for the job that was required.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I note from page 458 of the Program Estimates that one of the 1990-91 specific targets/objectives is that the subsidies formula for operating costs be further improved to provide equity. This is in relation to sport and recreation, culture and libraries and associated services. What are the features of that change? Have they yet been formulated, or are they still in contemplation? If they have been formulated, what are they?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Historically, there was an imbalance in the per capita library subsidy which has now been equalised across the State. The new per capita standard for school community libraries and depots will be implemented in the current year, and we will pursue equal allocation of subsidies across all libraries in the system. As I mentioned earlier, the base subsidy was increased last year from \$4 to \$4.25 per capita and this year will increase from \$4.25 to \$4.68 per capita.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I am aware that the Crawford report was the starting point for a completely new approach to library funding. There have been subsequent reports; there was a further report after 10 years. We are now advised that in December 1990 there is to be a review of the funding arrangements associated with libraries, and I link this with other statements that have been made in the past few days about local government being held responsible for a greater proportion of its costs. Should there be any fear that local government will be left to provide funds in greater amounts



for a philosophy that was previously sold as a near equal partnership between the Government and local government?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The review which is forecast for December of this year has been anticipated for a long time and has nothing whatsoever to do with any reviews that are occurring at the moment. At the last election, the Government made a commitment that library subsidies would be maintained in real terms over the term of this Government. I see no reason to suggest that that promise will not be maintained; it has been maintained so far, and I expect that to continue.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Is it likely that costs foisted upon local government will seriously affect its ability to match grants directly associated with libraries? For example, under the budget the Premier announced that local government would no longer enjoy a reduced registration fee for its vehicles. It is recognised that the removal of this benefit will cost local government \$2 million per annum to start with, so that local government will be further behind. It is therefore conceivable that more and more local governing bodies will have less opportunity to meet matching grants for libraries. This could be so for other programs as well, but we are looking specifically at a program that has been sold to the community over an extended period of time as having great importance to local government and the community, and it might be *de facto* reduced in value by a change in circumstances.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I know that car registration has nothing to do with libraries, but as the honourable member raised the matter I should respond at this stage.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I raised this matter in the context of funds available.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There is still the same concession for registration of any vehicle associated with road building. That is what the concession was designed for and that is what it still is; it ensures that councils are not claiming as vehicles required for road building vehicles that are not so required. It removes a loophole, if you like.

Finance is becoming tight at all levels of government. This certainly applies at State and Federal Government levels and local government level: all levels of government are having to be more efficient. The State Government, right across all its functions, is looking at becoming a more efficient deliverer of services to the community of South Australia. I suspect that local government will have to undertake the same reappraisal and become more efficient. If we can do it, they can do it too. I am talking generally, and it is a bit hard to do other than that when we are talking of a hypothetical situation that may or may not eventuate. To what degree it may eventuate is hard to judge, but in general all levels of government have to become more efficient.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** However, it would not be wrong to postulate that the library and information services to the community will suffer.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I would not like to make that hypothesis and I sincerely hope it does not happen. The resources which councils allocate to libraries are a matter for councils themselves. Most communities throughout the State give a very high priority to their local library and I imagine that council priorities will reflect the priorities of their communities and that they will do their utmost to maintain the excellent public library system that we have throughout South Australia.

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

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** In 1988 the Local Government

Act was changed in quite material directions relative to financial aspects of local government. In particular, provision was made for entrepreneurial activities of councils. It has caused some concern in a number of areas, not the least being directly associated with Port Adelaide. Is the Minister able to indicate how many requests she has had for the acceptance of various entrepreneurial activities, and is she able to say whether she, as Minister of Local Government, or her department are at all concerned about the manner in which some councils may be exercising their rights, so to speak, in respect of entrepreneurial activity?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** In this regard, since I became Minister there have been no such requests at all from any local government body. A request for approval was sought for the Port Adelaide flower farm, and that was given by the previous Minister. The Local Government Act, of course, requires ministerial approval only for a major entrepreneurial undertaking. It is my understanding that a number of councils have more minor entrepreneurial activities, but I would have no record of them because they need seek approval only when it is a major undertaking which affects or potentially could affect a large proportion of the rates.

No application has been made to me. I am aware that Tea Tree Gully is preparing a scheme. There have been discussions with me regarding the scheme, but it has not yet reached the stage—and I do not know whether it ever will—where formal application for my approval is required. The procedure would obviously be to do a detailed financial analysis and evaluate this against the risks involved to see whether or not it was a relatively safe undertaking for the council.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Is the Minister able to indicate whether any discussions which have been held by her or within her department suggest that sales tax and other forms of taxation may become a vital part of entrepreneurial activity in the hands of local government?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I understand it, there have been no discussions at all. Sales tax, of course, is a Federal matter, not a State matter.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I appreciate that, but it would impact upon entrepreneurial activities of local government and may be a feature of all future activities that need consideration as to their feasibility and possible benefit.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It would obviously be relevant if sales tax was applicable, but that is a matter for the Federal Government, not for the State Government.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** By way of a supplementary question, fringe benefits tax and other similar type taxes which apply to private enterprise may well be construed as applicable to what is private enterprise in the hands of another tier of government.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Fringe benefits tax applies now to State Government activities and local government activities. I would hope that all local government areas were aware of their responsibilities under the Federal legislation. There is no fringe benefits tax exemption for State Government or local government.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Quite recently the Minister stated in the press that she would look at the proposed visit overseas of the Chief Executive Officer and the Mayor of Port Adelaide. This came at a time very close to that when the same statement was made by the Minister in relation to the movements overseas of members of the Centennial Park Trust, who were local government members from the City of Unley and the City of Mitcham. Was that followed through?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I am not aware that I made any statement whatsoever regarding the proposed visit overseas

by people from Port Adelaide. I asked for a report but I never said that I would take any action regarding that visit. The situation regarding the visit overseas by members of the Centennial Park Trust was different in that both Unley and Mitcham councils asked me to set up a task force to look at the Centennial Park Trust. At their request an investigation and report was prepared in respect of the Centennial Park Trust. It was at the request of the councils that I became involved in the Centennial Park Trust. That is a very different situation from that in respect of Port Adelaide.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** By way of a supplementary question, are we able to determine what the Minister's final decision was in relation to the activities of the Centennial Park Trust personnel going overseas?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Mitcham council passed a motion requesting its members who were part of the Centennial Park Trust not to go overseas, and subsequently they both cancelled their trip. I met with people from Unley council and discussed with them the cost benefit of such a trip. I indicated quite clearly that it seemed to me that they were perhaps undertaking unnecessary expenditure, particularly given the current legal situation regarding mausoleums. However, despite my meeting with them, they made the decision to undertake the trip and did so. There was no decision for me to take. It was merely a question of meeting with them and indicating my view on the matter, which they listened to, but obviously they decided to follow a different course of action.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** How much money has been expended by the trust over the past five or six years in relation to the consideration of a mausoleum?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I do not have that information with me. However, I would be happy to ask the constituent councils whether they can supply me with the information to pass on to the Committee.

**Mr De LAINE:** Some councils claim that it is the Government's fault that rates in some areas are being demanded earlier this year, and in some cases as early as the beginning of September, as in the case of Unley council.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Since the amendments to the Local Government Act, councils can now set their budgets as early as the beginning of June for the following financial year. That has made it possible for councils, which might otherwise have collected their rates in October or November, to have rates payable as early as 1 September. That is the earliest possible date under the Act. However, it should be perfectly clear that the date on which the rate is declared and the date by which the rates must be paid are entirely a council's decision. That is not something which the Government controls in any way. That is a decision of individual councils, providing that it is within the Act.

I should point out that there are advantages to councils in having an early collection date. Many councils have high debt ratios and early payments may mean that they can save quite a lot of interest on their debts and, even if they are not servicing debts, early payments can avoid cash flow problems which councils might be experiencing and so prevent them having to take out temporary loans until the rates come in, which, of course, would incur further costs. The early payment of rates can be to the ratepayers' advantage in that the council's debt bill can be reduced and the rates might be lower than they might be otherwise. However, that is a decision for a council to take.

**Mr De LAINE:** Some councils claim that changes to the Local Government Act have forced them to reduce the incidence of minimum rating and therefore have forced a

general increase in rates. What is your reaction to such claims?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The amendments to the Act, which came into effect last year, have placed clear limits on the number of assessments in each council which can be subject to minimum rating. There is a three-year phasing-in period such that the proportion of assessments on minimum rates does not have to decrease to the 35 per cent limit until 1992. Some councils had allowed the minimum rate provision to virtually override the property value basis of rates in that an inordinately high proportion of assessments were on minimum rates. In fact, I believe that in some cases it was as high as 80 or 85 per cent. That makes a mockery of the principle of rates being based on property values.

Parliament decided that no more than 35 per cent of properties can be subject to minimum rates. The three-year period allows councils to phase in a reduction in their dependence on minimum rates. Some councils have not taken advantage of that phasing-in period and have reduced the incidence of minimum rates to the 35 per cent figure in one fell swoop. That may have caused some concern in the council areas concerned. However, to do it in one fell swoop is entirely a council decision. It is not required by legislation.

**Mr De LAINE:** My next question relates to the payment of council rates by instalments. There is no question that that provision has been of tremendous benefit to many low income ratepayers throughout South Australia. Are the present provisions under the Local Government Act adequate to give councils enough flexibility in arranging for the payment of rates by instalments?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There is quite definitely a great deal of flexibility in the Act. The Act virtually provides no limits to the arrangements that councils can make for instalment payments. The Act sets out some requirements which councils must follow if they decide to have quarterly or half-yearly payments. These requirements relate to the billing arrangements, such as prior notice to ratepayers as to when the quarterly or half-yearly payment is due. Those requirements apply where a council decides that in general rates will be paid by instalments. There is certainly no limit to the flexibility in respect of councils reaching agreement with individual ratepayers on instalment arrangements.

That is not necessarily as cumbersome as it might sound because a council can choose, as indeed many do, to offer special payment arrangements on the rate notice which is sent out with the assessment. That offer can then be accepted by the ratepayer simply by tearing off a perforated strip which accompanies the rate notice and returning it with the first instalment. The Government has certainly been very conscious of the need to have a flexible payment system which can respond to the differing financial circumstances of ratepayers. The system certainly exists, and it is up to councils to decide whether to use it.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Can the Minister or one of her advisers tell the Committee what are the precise information requirements to be laid before a council in relation to the passage of a motion to acquire a loan in the name of the council?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There is no specific provision in the Act—I did not think there was and my advisers assure me there is not—that a council can decide to take out a loan or to undertake any obligation by a majority vote of council.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Would the Minister expect that the purpose for which the money was to be expended would be explained in full to the councillors before they made their decision, or would there be an expectation that

the request be made from staff to move for perhaps \$3 million without any explanation being given of what it was to be used for?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I think it depends on the context in which a loan is being sought. If there is an allocation in the budget that there will be a loan program of a certain sum which will be used to undertake certain works, be it roads or some other development, I suppose it would be possible for the motion to approve the taking out of the loan, which had previously been examined in the preparation of the budget, but not to specify in detail what it was to be for because it could be covered by the general purpose provisions which had already been agreed to in the budget. There is no statutory requirement that a motion should be in a particular form when a loan is being sought.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** If the council were required to place the raising of such a sum before the Minister because it was going outside its borrowing limits or the amount on request was greater than 20 per cent of rate revenue, what sort of information would the Minister want directed to her attention to justify ministerial approval of that sum?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I would want information on a wide range of matters: was it affordable for the council; what was it for; what were the social purposes; what effect would it have on the council's budget; what effect might it have on the community; what would be the environmental effects of the proposal; what were the employment effects? I would want a general social impact evaluation of what the loan was for.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Supplementary to that, is it likely that in future the Minister would require a statement that the councillors were fully appreciative of what it was they had voted the money for?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I doubt it. It seems to me that that is the council's business. If I receive a request which has been correctly passed by the council, I need to satisfy myself on certain information, but how well informed individual councillors are seems to me to be a matter for the council, not the Minister.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** So it could be 'Open Sesame' for staff?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Surely that is up to the council and the councillors. It is their responsibility to ensure that they know what they are doing. They have the power to control their staff and they should do so.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Can the Minister indicate—if not now, in the supplementary journal which will be circulated—the present loan/rate balance for all councils in South Australia? Earlier today, when talking about libraries, the Minister, adverting to a particular council on the northern side of Adelaide, suggested that it had the worst loan/rate balance of all councils in the State. Therefore, I presume—perhaps wrongly—that the Minister has that information in respect of all councils.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Yes, we have that information, but I do not have it with me. This is a question of the debt servicing ratio—what proportion of rates is required for debt servicing?

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** That is correct.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I should be happy to make that information available. It varies widely. The State average is about 22 per cent; the metropolitan average is 23 per cent. Despite those two figures being very close, there are wide variations between councils. One or two councils have debt servicing ratios above 40 per cent and others are down around 5 or 6 per cent, or even lower, and there is every-

thing in between. I should be happy to make that information available.

**Mr McKEE:** I think that everyone is aware of the tragedy of small children drowning in swimming pools. I refer to page 460, under 'Specific Targets/Objectives'. What is being done to reduce the risk of small children drowning in private swimming pools and spas?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The tragic drownings of small children in backyard swimming pools is a matter of great concern to me and to a very large number of people as being deaths which should be avoidable. The legal situation is that under the Swimming Pools (Safety) Act all properties with swimming pools are required to have perimeter fencing—that is, a fence which goes all round the edge of the property—which will prevent children wandering in from the street and accidentally falling into a pool and suffering the consequences thereof.

This legislation, laudable though it is, is not having the desired effect, for a variety of reasons. While it successfully prevents children trespassing onto a property, the children who are likely to wander the streets and perhaps enter a property tend to be aged about eight or nine, at which age most of them can swim, anyway. The tragic deaths which occur are mainly among toddlers—the under fives. In a five-year period in Australia, 530 toddlers drowned in private swimming pools. That is a shocking number. It is second only to road deaths as the cause of death of children in this age group. It is a really serious problem.

Furthermore, the analysis of these deaths showed that, in the vast majority of cases, these children were not trespassing; they had every right to be on the property. They were either children of the household or children of visitors to the household: they were not trespassers. They had every right to be there, so that perimeter fencing was no protection to them whatsoever. This has been considered nationally at the appropriate Ministers' conferences, and the new Building Code of Australia which comes into operation within a few months has a new section which will apply right throughout Australia and it will say that for any new pool that is put in after 1 January 1992 there will have to be isolation fencing around that pool. By isolation fencing we mean a fence that goes around the pool and isolates it from the house so that a toddler cannot then wander out the back door and fall into the pool, because there will be a fence preventing access to the pool from the house.

The new Building Code of Australia specifies that this fence must be a minimum of 1.2 metres high; it must be constructed without any crossbars so that there is no way of climbing it; gates must be self-closing and self-latching, so that they cannot be accidentally left open. As from 1 January 1992, all new pools will have to have this isolation fencing. This is not just in South Australia: as I say, it will occur Australia-wide. I am informed that this has been approved for inclusion in the Building Code of Australia. It will not be published in the code this year, but will appear in the first annual revision of the code next year. When it actually appears in the code is not really of great importance because it will apply from 1 January 1992.

The question then remains as to what should be done about all existing pools and this, of course, is up to each State to determine. In South Australia there are about 100 000 swimming pools both above and below ground. In discussions with other Ministers it is quite obvious that different procedures will be followed in the different States. I put out a green paper on this matter a few months ago inviting public comment, and a large volume of comment was received which is being analysed at the moment. The suggestion made in the green paper relating to existing pools

was to consider different possible alternatives. One alternative is to say that existing pools should have isolation fencing put around them by the same date, 1 January 1992. Another option is that they be given a little longer, say, 1 January 1993, before the isolation fencing has to be installed.

Another alternative which can be considered is that, while every effort will be made to persuade people to put isolation fences around their existing pools, it would not be mandatory until the property was sold or until it changed hands, and that at that time, if isolation fencing had not been installed beforehand, it would then have to be installed. The Government has not yet taken a position on this, but I can assure everyone that I regard this as a very serious problem and something that we have a responsibility to do something about.

I personally tend to favour the idea of only making it mandatory when a property changes hands, while encouraging people to install isolation fencing before then. I know that there might be comment about the cost of this, but it is a very small cost compared with the cost of a swimming pool. Furthermore, how can one put a cost on the life of a child? Without isolation fencing there is always the danger that a small child might fall in and drown. It can happen so very quickly, and no parent can possibly keep their eyes on every toddler for every minute of every day. I am sure that any parent would realise that with small children it is an impossibility and protective measures are necessary.

Of course, other than children drowning, children are sometimes fished out of swimming pools; they live but the effect of the oxygen deprivation leaves them permanently brain damaged. Some people might regard that as even worse than a child drowning. With regard to these existing pools and how to achieve isolation fencing for them, the Committee might be interested to know that the New South Wales Government has already passed legislation which will make it mandatory for all existing pools to be fenced by 1 August 1992, that is, just six months later than the date from which existing pools would have to be fenced. They have not taken the approach of waiting until a property is sold.

I am not sure at this stage what other States will be doing. The Queensland Government was certainly talking about setting a date by which isolation fencing must be supplied, but to my knowledge it has not yet introduced the legislation. I certainly hope that before too long we may be able to bring in legislation ourselves. I feel that it is a responsibility that we must accept for the large number of small children.

**Mr McKEE:** I certainly agree. As a supplementary question I refer to another mechanism that swimming pools have which is called a skimmer box. Is it still a risk that children can be injured due to swimming pool skimmer boxes?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There certainly was a risk of children being injured by the skimmer boxes and some absolutely shocking accidents occurred when small children sat on a skimmer box. We passed legislation five years ago covering the safety aspects of skimmer boxes. A skimmer box has to be constructed in a manner which prevents its use as a seat and there also has to be a second suction point no less than 80 centimetres away which is not capable of being blocked off. There have been occasions since the legislation was passed of at least two companies in South Australia which continued to install the unsafe skimmer box.

Combined action was taken by the Department of Local Government and the Department of Public and Consumer Affairs which resulted in these companies having their prod-

uct banned and being forced to install safety bars on the skimmer boxes they had installed to prevent their being dangerous. This does not seem to be a problem any more, given the legislation and good follow-up to ensure that the provisions of the legislation were being met.

**Mr McKEE:** As property values increase in some parts of Adelaide, such as in the inner city areas or beachfront areas, is it increasingly the case that people who are asset rich but income poor are finding it difficult to meet the payments, and what can councils do about it?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** This is not a new situation, as property values have always tended to change, not necessarily uniformly but relative to one another. However, I think it has been adequately catered for in amendments to the Local Government Act which were passed a few years ago and which related to rating and financing. It has always been the case that rates based on the value of land are considered the desirable basis for councils to raise their revenue; it is a secure progressive rate base for them. Of course, the services that councils provide enhance property values, so it is legitimate that owners of properties should pay on a basis that is proportional to the benefits they receive.

To some extent local government rates tax the unearned increment in yearly property values. But, given that that is the philosophical basis for the rating system, it is certainly true that some property owners, particularly people who have retired, may be asset rich but income poor, though it is not necessarily the case that all retired people are in this situation. One should also remember that people owning land in these strategic locations will receive significant capital gains when the property is sold, though that is not of much assistance to someone who has no intention of selling their property for a number of years.

Councils have total flexibility to respond sensitively to the needs of people in these categories. Indeed, the amendments to the Act which were passed by Parliament were intended to provide flexibility for councils to be able to cater for this sort of situation. For instance, the Act provides that a council can remit or postpone the payment of rates, and that section also allows a council, if it feels that payment of rates in full would cause hardship, to remit the rates, write off the amount in full or in part, or to postpone payment for any period it thinks fit.

I think it would be most unlikely that councils would write off rates, even though they have the power to do so. It could be regarded as not being equitable to other ratepayers if the rates were completely written off, but councils certainly can consider a deferment of payment on any conditions which can be agreed between the council and the owner of the property concerned. Indeed, some councils are doing this particularly for pensioners; they are prepared to remit a large part, if not all, of the rates to be a charge on the property so that, when the pensioner dies and the house is sold, the deferred rates can be paid.

Of course, it is up to councils whether or not they offer such assistance to their ratepayers; equally, it is up to individual ratepayers whether or not they take advantage of it. I know that some councils offer deferment of rates to be a charge on the estate, and they tell me that a limited but reasonable number of pensioners take advantage of this system.

**Mr McKEE:** As a supplementary question, do some councils allow people to pay their rates off quarterly or on an instalment basis?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Certainly. Councils can decide to charge all ratepayers either quarterly or half yearly; that is a decision for councils to make. Alternatively, councils can

reach agreement with individual ratepayers; they may send a rate notice requiring payment in a lump sum but any individual for whom this causes hardship can enter into an arrangement with the council to pay so much a month, or every three months or every six months. Certainly, councils have the flexibility to make that arrangement if they wish, but councils cannot be forced to do. In my experience most councils are fairly sympathetic to people who are experiencing financial problems and are willing to discuss with them arrangements that will make the payment of rates easier.

**Mr MEIER:** I refer to page 201 of the Estimates of Payments. I note that the grants to local government for effluent drainage projects have increased from \$2.3 million to \$3.1 million, or 32 per cent, and that is pleasing. How many high priority common effluent drainage projects are on the list for this financial year and beyond? Why was the Maslins project approved before others on the list? Will the Aldinga project receive similar priority? How advanced is the Yorketown project?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I am slightly confused in that the honourable member referred to Maslins. I have not seen another reference to Maslins; Maslins does not appear on our list as a council that has put forward an application for an effluent drainage scheme. Maybe one is in the post, but we certainly have not received such an application.

**Mr MEIER:** I will check my information on that and ask a supplementary question later.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It may be on the way. I, too, am delighted that there is an increase in funds this year for the effluent drainage schemes, but it certainly will not enable us to catch up the backlog. Applications have been made in relation to a number of schemes which have been waiting for many years and which are deemed to be a very high priority due to the health risks that result because there is no effluent drainage scheme.

In the current financial year, there will be further payments for an effluent drainage scheme for Robe which commenced previously and which has run into difficulties because of latent soil conditions. This has resulted in the project running considerably over budget. There will be a final payment for the Tumby Bay scheme which was commenced last financial year and which will end up costing a good deal more than was originally expected. Apart from that, the effluent drainage scheme for Laura will be completed. New schemes will be undertaken in Macclesfield and Waterport and a scheme for Streaky Bay will be commenced. However, we imagine that that will use up the entire allocation for this financial year.

Of course, many other places have requested schemes, and next year we hope—if the provision of funding is of the same order—to complete the scheme at Macclesfield, to continue the scheme at Streaky Bay, to undertake new programs at Wallaroo, Kersbrook and Wolseley (which is in the District Council of Tatiara), and to begin a scheme at Milang (in the District Council of Strathalbyn). These are all reckoned to be schemes of high priority that have been waiting for a long time.

**Mr MEIER:** I also mentioned Aldinga and Yorketown.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Yorketown is on our current program for beyond 1991. As I understand it, too, the scheme for Yorketown lacks a majority of community support. Certainly, the District Council of Yorketown has decided to proceed with final design plans and documentation, and is working towards substantiating the need for a scheme. However, there are obvious problems if the community does not support such a scheme, particularly when there is a large number of applications from towns where there is

unanimous support for a scheme being undertaken. In fact, there is a list of 62 applications, and that will take many years to work through. We have recently decided to review all the existing applications to see whether the priorities have been changing because, when councils apply for an effluent drainage scheme, their priority is assessed and funds are allocated not only on length of waiting time but mainly on health needs.

It can happen that, because a township has been waiting for some time, the health situation has changed and become considerably worse. So a review of all 62 applications is currently being undertaken to see whether the priority list should be changed on health criteria. This should be completed within a few months.

**Mr MEIER:** In view of the freeze on building commencement in the Hills—not on common effluent systems, as announced by Minister Lenehan last week—will a special allocation for common effluent drainage schemes in the Hills area be made supplementary to this year's budget so that orderly development in the Hills area is not penalised? Can the Minister indicate whether such a special allocation would be considered for 1991-92 and beyond?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Primarily, the main criterion for an effluent drainage scheme is health. Of course, this can include the effects of an area not having a scheme in a water catchment area, so that there can be a health related impact not only for that community but for the whole of Adelaide. The town of Macclesfield will receive an effluent drainage scheme this year, and Kersbrook is expected to receive one next year. I am told that currently in the Mount Lofty Ranges watershed area eight major townships are already serviced by effluent disposal schemes; in 13 townships a full sewerage system is already installed; and two townships, that is, Macclesfield and Kersbrook, have developed proposals for effluent drainage and are on the list for installations.

Another three towns have made application for assistance for an effluent drainage scheme, and they are part of the 60 that are being reassessed in terms of health priority listing. Seven townships in the Mount Lofty Ranges area have made no application for assistance at all. So, they are not included in the review and will not be allocated a relative priority. These towns are Houghton, Inglewood, Lower Hermitage, Uraidla, Summertown, Verdun and Mylor. However, I feel that, in terms of the effluent drainage scheme, we must continue to allocate priorities on a basis of need, that need being determined on health criteria. That must be our top priority.

**Mr MEIER:** Do I take it, therefore, that the review could well see some of the Hills towns receiving a higher priority because of the health aspect in relation to water supply or because people will not be allowed to build in certain areas because of the health risk?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** They will certainly be reassessed, along with others that are part of the list of 60. Health criteria and the possible effect on the water supplies of Adelaide will determine the priority for available funds. I stress that the health criterion must be the main one; it is the only equitable system that we can use in allocating priorities. It must take precedence over matters such as the ability to subdivide, which may have financial implications but not health implications.

**Mr MEIER:** What is the estimated cost to the Stirling council of the development freeze in the Hills, and did the Minister know about the possibility of a freeze in the Stirling council area when considering the financial ability of the council to repay the \$4 million bushfire loan signed by the administrator?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The consideration of the financial capability of Stirling council was done on the basis that it need not sell any assets at all. The report of the officers which determined that Stirling council had the financial capacity to service a debt of \$7 million was likewise based on an assumption that no asset sales would occur. Certainly, all the calculations which were done, indicating how Stirling could comfortably afford to repay or service a debt of \$4 million, made no assumptions about asset sales at all. The administrator did pinpoint a number of parcels of land which he felt could be sold and, if they were sold and the proceeds put towards the debt, it would mean that debt repayments would fall because more of the principal would have been paid off. He did not include any asset sales in drawing up his budget, where the loan of \$4 million can comfortably be serviced with the rate increase of 8.5 per cent. Asset sales are certainly not required to enable Stirling to meet that debt and meet it comfortably. In addition, Stirling has full sewerage so, if the council did decide to dispose of some small blocks of land to reduce the principal which it owes, it would be able to do so as the freeze does not apply where there is sewerage.

**Mr MEIER:** By way of supplementary question, I take it that people can continue to buy land in Stirling and can continue to have their houses erected?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** If there is land which is sewered, that certainly applies, providing of course that it comes within Stirling council's planning provisions. There are, of course, areas which are not zoned for residential development and, whether or not they are sewered, I presume that planning applications would not succeed in those areas.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** On page 460 of the Program Estimates the specific targets/objectives for the current financial year include the introduction of new legislation on parking for the disabled. What are the proposed legislative changes expected to achieve?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Parking for the disabled falls into two categories: street parking and parking in private parking lots, which basically means shopping centres, though not exclusively. There has been agreement amongst Ministers all around Australia that parking provisions for the disabled will be implemented in all States and that parking permits issued in one State will be recognised in other States. While this has been agreed, it has not yet been fully achieved. It is slightly complicated by the fact that parking regulations in some States come under Local Government Ministers and in other States they come under Transport Ministers. Therefore, one ministerial council cannot solve this problem.

As far as parking for the disabled in South Australia is concerned, street parking for the disabled is governed by local government parking regulations. Most local government bodies have regulations which recognise the disabled parking permit and make appropriate provisions for it. So a car bearing a sticker can park for a longer time if it is a timed zone, and so on. The problems experienced arise in respect of off-street parking, which is covered by the Private Parking Areas Act. The current legislation has not been very effective in that owners of private parking lots—and, as I said, they are usually shopping centres—are not required to set aside parking areas for the disabled, though many do. Often owners do not erect the prescribed notices or signs to indicate that these areas are reserved for the disabled.

Then comes the question of enforcement. If people who are not disabled use these parking areas, it means they are not available when a disabled person arrives. What remedy is available? What needs to happen is for the owners of these parking areas to enter into an agreement with their

local council whereby the local council will then police, with their own parking inspectors, the private parking lots or shopping centre car parks. Of course they would be required to police only the small number of parking places which are set aside for the disabled.

We have had a consultant do a study of off-street parking for the disabled to see how best these provisions can be enforced. It has been suggested that there should be mandatory enforcement of parking areas for the disabled in shopping centres and other private parking areas and that by legislation it could be made a council responsibility. At the moment, it seems that either the shopping centre owner does not want to enter into an agreement with the council or, when the owner is in agreement, the council is not. So one gets somewhat of a stand-off situation. We hope to produce guidelines that will cover all aspects of disabled parking, and these will be distributed to councils.

The first agreement for enforcement between a council and a shopping centre was made last year by the North Adelaide shopping centre, which entered into an agreement with the Adelaide City Council for its parking inspectors to police the disabled parking spaces in the shopping centre. A few weeks ago a big breakthrough was achieved when the Westfield Shopping Centre Management Company agreed to negotiate enforcement agreements for disabled parking with all councils in which its shopping centres are situated. This will apply to the Westfield shopping centres at Arndale, Tea Tree Plaza and Marion. They will enter into an agreement with their councils so that council parking inspectors will police the disabled parking spaces in all Westfield shopping centre parking lots. This seems to me to be an admirable step by Westfield and I hope that other shopping centres follow suit in the near future.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** Another specific target referred to on page 460 of the Program Estimates is to sponsor and organise a State conference on local government and the environment. Will the Minister provide more details on this conference and the issues that it is hoped will be addressed?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** This conference is being organised by the Department of Local Government in cooperation with the Local Government Association. It will be held at the Convention Centre on 25 October and will be co-hosted by me and the LGA with involvement by Government and non-government agencies. The conference will be held the day before the annual general meeting of the Local Government Association. A large number of interested people from the local government sector is likely to be in Adelaide at that time and we hope that they will attend this seminar. We are counting on about 200 people attending.

The themes to be covered at the seminar will have a practical rather than theoretical emphasis and will include topics such as community consultation from a planning approach; environmental sustainability at a local level; and recycling initiatives and land care activities by councils. The keynote speaker at the conference will be Professor Peter Newman, who is Associate Professor of Environmental Studies at Murdoch University in Western Australia. His speciality is known as traffic calming, but he will address a broad range of environmental issues of particular relevance to local government from economic, management and planning points of view. A number of other specialists will be involved in the sessions, workshops and panel discussions that will form part of what we hope will be a very worthwhile conference.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** Does the department monitor any of the recycling initiatives of councils?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Waste Management Commission is under the jurisdiction of the Minister for Environ-



ment and Planning, and the Department of Environment and Planning looks after such matters and consults with councils where necessary.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** One of the issues listed on page 460 of the Program Estimates is:

The standard of financial reporting by local government needs to be brought into line with general accounting standards.

Is the Government aware of any initiatives being taken by local government in this area?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** This is being undertaken at a national level. The Local Government Ministers conference has allocated funds to prepare draft standards on local government financial reporting. For some reason, it rejoices in the title of ED50. These standards have been prepared by the Australian Accounting Research Foundation, and the principles within ED50 are being discussed with the local government finance managers group to determine the differences that exist between the standard and current practices. Seminars have been run for country council administrators to explain the principles of ED50.

At a national level, it is hoped soon to have a report on what will happen in each State and Territory as a result of the promulgation of the ED50 standard, and we will need to tie this in with the use made of local government statistics because many of the statistics used by a wide variety of agencies—that is, statistics from local government—come from financial documents. So, a consistent means of accounting will, amongst other things, result in consistent figures being collected all around the country so that valid comparisons can be made.

The ED50 standard will improve the standard of accounting in local government areas and probably develop a framework for financial reporting in local government which has not existed until now and may well reveal a number of deficiencies that are not being noticed because of current accounting practices in local government. I refer, for example, to the capitalisation of infrastructure which is incorporated in the ED50 accounting procedures but is rarely touched on in local government accounting at present. If this is brought to account, it will bring home to many local government bodies the requirements of their infrastructure which, unfortunately, have tended sometimes to be neglected.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I refer to a letter which I understand was circularised to all or most local councils on or about 18 May after the Minister returned to Adelaide from the annual Local Government Ministers conference. I refer in particular to the paragraph where the Minister states:

The Ministers considered a report which detailed rate rebates for pensioners in the Australian States and Territories. It was interesting to note that South Australia and Western Australia are the only States where councils themselves do not assist in funding remission payments.

Has the Minister or her department any intention of either withdrawing in full or in part pensioner rebates on council rates or is it expected that local government should meet all or part of that which it does not currently meet?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** This is rather a question of 'Have you stopped beating your wife? Answer yes or no.' As all members know, a review is occurring at the moment of all Government departments and inter-governmental financial relations.

**The Hon. B.C. Eastick:** The 'razor gang'.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Some people have chosen to give it that name. However, the examination of financial relationships between levels of government is not just a question which involves the State Government and local government in this State: it occurs right across Australia and involves all three levels of government. As I am sure members know, in about six weeks time a major conference

to be held in Brisbane will examine the interrelationships between all three levels of government.

Obviously, rate remissions will be considered in that review. That topic is part of the financial interrelationship between two levels of government so it will obviously be considered. However, I do not want there to be any suggestion that the Government was not sympathetic to the plight of pensioners or was undertaking such a review with the deliberate aim of eliminating it. That would be the wrong conclusion to draw. Such a remission scheme will be reviewed because all financial relations between all levels of government are being reviewed, and that matter must be part of the review. However, I see no reason for concern on the part of councils or pensioners as a result of that.

**Mr MATTHEW:** As part of that review, certainly in the initial stages, there was no identification of a particular department which may or may not be targeted. However, I find it quite alarming that of late there has been considerable newspaper speculation concentrated in particular on the Local Government Department. Only recently it alluded to two options in a report, which I understand is soon to be presented to the Premier. I believe that that report is being prepared by the Minister's Chief Executive Officer, Ms Dunn. From what I understand, that report detailed two options, and the department's favoured option is to completely replace the Department of Local Government by a commission funded at least in part by councils. I understand that councils will fund that by contributing directly to the commission's cost, through a levy or the LGA. As I understand it, the second option is to transfer the department's responsibilities to another department such as Premier and Cabinet or the Treasury.

Has that 'razor gang' to which an Opposition member alluded earlier, actually started to concentrate on the Local Government Department or have negotiations been under way for quite some time? If they have, has the Local Government Association been involved in those negotiations?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I stated before, all Government departments are going to be reviewed without exception. Marine and Harbors, Housing and Construction and the Department of Local Government are the three departments which are further advanced than the other departments. The honourable member referred to a report. No report has been prepared. A report is being prepared by my CEO, Ms Dunn, but it has not been completed. Therefore there is no report at this stage and there will not be one for several weeks yet. In the course of preparing that report, Ms Dunn is having discussions with a wide range of people and groups. She is discussing various options with them. Of course the Local Government Association is included among those groups. It is not the only group, but she has certainly had discussions with it and she will be having discussions with many other different groups and individuals as she prepares her report.

I have formally advised the Local Government Association that Ms Dunn will be having discussions with it, and she has already commenced them. The terms of reference of the review of State local government relations are public and they have been sent to the Local Government Association. They obviously form the basis of any discussions which are taking place. However, I stress that at this stage no paper or report has been prepared. Certainly no decisions have been taken. It is a matter of looking at options, and when the Government receives the report it will obviously consider it and decide what course, if any, it should follow.

**Mr MATTHEW:** Can the Minister confirm or deny that a favoured option is to replace the department with a local government commission funded by local councils?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** 'Have you stopped beating your wife yet? Answer yes or no!' We do not have a report with options to consider at this stage. A report is being prepared, but the Government has no options before it at this time. Therefore, I cannot say whether we favour one option or another, because I have none before me. We are waiting to receive the report, which we expect to receive in a few weeks time.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I want now to follow up on questions which were raised earlier by the member for Gilles and the member for Price. At the time legislation went through this Parliament to provide for the new minimum rating provisions, the former member for Bright, in response to written concerns from constituents about the matter, sent out a somewhat standard letter in which he said that he had no difficulty with the concept of council rates being used as a wealth tax. Were those words the Minister's policy or that of her department? If not, what does she regard council rates as—a charge for a service or something else?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Council rates are traditionally levied as a property rate. They are a progressive rate in that the sum paid is proportionate in some fashion to the value of the property. It is a property tax and it has traditionally been so through the centuries. Traditionally local government has raised its revenue by a tax on property, as I have said. The Federal Government raises its money by a tax on income. There is obviously a relationship between property and income, and I am quite happy to agree that the correlation is not one.

The basis of council rates is the value of property. On occasions there have been suggestions of using other bases for council rates, but on examination the conclusion has always been that rates based on property values, while not the perfect system, are the best possible system. Any other system of a council raising income would be more inequitable than a progressive tax on property values.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I ask a further supplementary question to my second question relating to property tax rates. The Minister said that she felt it was a workable and good system, or something to that effect. I should like to put an analogy to the Minister to obtain a response in that light. Within my electorate are two groups who, as a direct result of the change to minimum rate legislation, now face drastic council rate rises. Those two groups—one in the area of Seaview Downs and Seaclyff Park and the other in Marino—because they were so penalised have seen fit to get together petitions which they have presented to the Local Government Advisory Commission to secede from the City of Marion to the City of Brighton. The Minister will be aware that there have been a number of public meetings on that issue. I suggest that the increases to which they have been subjected through the removal of the minimum rate have demonstrated that that is not a good system. Prior to that, 87 per cent were paying the minimum rate. Those people were happy with the way in which their properties were rated, but, because of the disparity which has been introduced, they are now seeking a way out.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The Parliament decided that to have such a high proportion of people on a minimum rate was not equitable. Where virtually everyone is on a minimum rate, there is no progressive tax. When everyone is paying the same rate, it becomes a flat rather than a progressive rate based on property values. For that reason, the Parliament decided that no more than 35 per cent of assessments could have a minimum rate. The Parliament also set up an alternative system for rating, whereby a council could abolish minimum rates altogether and levy a flat charge on all property owners which would be based on the actual

costs of administration in the council area divided by the number of rateable properties and, above that charge, a rate which was based solely on property values.

A number of councils in the State have decided to use that system rather than have the minimum rate. The problem with the minimum rate is that, when there are a very large number of properties on the minimum rate, they are all paying exactly the same amount regardless of their property value, so that people with low property values are, in fact, subsidising people with high property values because all properties gain from the services that a council provides and those that are worth more gain more as a result of the services that the council is providing.

In the same way that everyone does not pay a flat income tax, the amount of income tax people pay is related to the amount of income they receive and that is regarded as progressive; to have a flat tax is regressive in that those with the lowest valued properties are then subsidising those with the highest valued properties. An alternative, of course, is a poll tax, as has been introduced in the United Kingdom, but we feel that that is even more regressive than a minimum rate and is not a tax that we would ever contemplate at all. It is grossly inequitable and certainly puts a far greater relative burden on people with low incomes and low means compared with those with high incomes and high means.

Some form of progressive taxation is generally regarded as the most equitable system whereby those who have more, pay more. That is the whole system on which all forms of taxation are based.

**Mr MATTHEW:** I put to you, Minister, that, regardless of the value of property, the occupants of that property use exactly the same roads, have exactly the same amount of garbage pick up by exactly the same garbage trucks, walk on the same footpaths, use the same reserves and use the same council library—in fact, they use the same services provided by that council. The value of people's property is absolutely irrelevant to the provision of that service and people see council rates as, in fact, a charge for a service, not as a tax, and the property value is no indication of their ability to pay. They may be asset rich and income poor.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** As I have already indicated in response to several other questions, councils have the flexibility to make arrangements for people who are asset rich and income poor. Councils can certainly make arrangements which take account of people who are in that situation. But most people are not in that situation; most people who are asset rich are also income rich and can afford to pay more, and people who are asset poor tend to be income poor. As I indicated before, the correlation between assets and income does not have a value of one, but equally the correlation is not zero. It is a positive correlation between asset and income, and for the exceptions where people are asset rich but income poor, councils do have the flexibility to make arrangements. There are numerous arrangements which they can and do make with ratepayers for whom hardship would be caused as a result of a progressive property tax.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to page 460 of the Program Estimates and the report on voter turnout at local government elections in metropolitan Adelaide. Will the Minister outline the findings of that report? Does it contain any recommendations?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** An analysis of voter turnout for the past four local government elections has been completed. This report is available and has been supplied by the Local Government Association with computer assistance from Data General. I would be happy to provide a copy of it to the honourable member if he is interested. A number of points which I think are noteworthy arise from

this report. Both the number and the percentage of positions where elections actually occurred have increased markedly over the four elections that were analysed. In 1983 only 20 per cent of vacant positions were contested, but in 1989 the number of vacant positions contested had risen to 48 per cent. So, far more activity is occurring and the number of unopposed candidates is decreasing. I hope to see the number of contested vacant positions rise further. To me it seems healthy that there are elections in every ward at local government elections.

Also, the percentage of eligible voters who actually voted increased over those four elections, but there is still a great deal of room for improvement. In 1983 only 14.8 per cent of eligible voters actually voted, and by 1989 that number had risen to 20.1 per cent. I admit that the proportion of voters who vote is higher in country areas than in metropolitan areas, with more than 36 per cent of eligible country voters voting at the last election. In the metropolitan area the percentage varies considerably from one council area to another and tends to be lower in some of the very large council areas and we want to work with those councils to have them undertake activities that will increase voter turnout at local government elections.

As I say, the low turnout is particularly evident in some of the large metropolitan council areas, and that drags down the State average. Previously we have had campaigns, such as the 'Have a say' campaign, to try to persuade people to vote. For the 1991 election it is planned to concentrate efforts to increase voter turnout in the Marion, Enfield, Noarlunga and Tea Tree Gully council areas. Those councils will be targeted as being areas where considerable improvement can be made with some sort of effort being undertaken.

I should add that another emphasis which the department wishes to undertake is to increase the participation of Aboriginal people, both as candidates and as voters, in local government elections. Many Aboriginal communities seem to feel alienated from the local government process. It is felt that, with particular emphasis, their participation could be increased considerably. With the cooperation of local councils, we will run pilot projects both in Port Adelaide and Port Augusta to try to increase the involvement of Aboriginal people in local government at the next elections.

**Mr De LAINE:** Do councils have the power or flexibility to adjust the amount of rates payable by a ratepayer during a financial year? To quote an example, if a ratepayer is employed at the beginning of the rate year and is assessed accordingly but then retires soon afterwards, can his rates be adjusted pro rata so that he receives an appropriate refund?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Certainly councils have the power to remit rates or make other arrangements for rates. Many councils will be sympathetic if they are approached by an individual ratepayer. There is no obligation on councils to take into account such circumstances, but they certainly have the power to do so if they wish.

**Mr De LAINE:** Following on from questions by the member for Gilles in relation to pool safety and the proposed legislation on swimming pool safety—and I know this overlaps into the area of the Minister of Mines and Energy—is there any possibility of including in that legislation provision for ELCBs (earth leakage circuit breakers) to be added to the electric pump and pool filter to give added protection against any sort of shorting out and fatal electric shocks?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It has not been considered at this stage, but I understand the honourable member's concern in this area. There is electrical danger which can be asso-

ciated with swimming pools if there is shorting and the pool becomes electrified. I am not aware of data relating to the chance of this happening or whether any fatalities have been caused as a result of the lack of such a circuit breaker. This is certainly something that could be looked into. It seems to me that the first thing would be to collect data on the incidence of this occurring to evaluate whether the risk is such that Government action should be taken. It is perhaps something which we could refer to our building control branch for investigation and to report back as to whether it feels that action is necessary.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** In relation to the question from the member for Price, surely the answer is that, if a council finds that there is a lesser valuation, it will charge more by rates than is applicable to the corrected valuation. It may either repay during that council year or, alternatively, hold the money and pay a set interest rate on it as a credit towards the next year. Is that not the case?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I think the honourable member is talking about a different matter. As I understood it, the member for Price was talking about a change in the financial circumstances of a ratepayer and not a change in the valuation of the property. I think the honourable member is referring to a change in the valuation of a property. Rates are struck on a particular date using the valuations of the properties throughout the area as at that date, or the most up-to-date valuations which the council has received from the Valuer-General or from a private valuation source. In those cases the rates do not change because they are determined by the value of the property on a particular date.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** I misunderstood the honourable member's question. At the commencement of the local government lines this afternoon, when we were dealing with libraries, questions were asked of the Minister in relation to motor vehicles, etc. Has the Minister accepted that as a blanket request for information on the whole of the local government lines?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** Yes. The information I gave was in relation to the whole department, including all its divisions. I will check *Hansard*, and if any details that were requested have not been provided I will make them available.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Now that the affairs of the Stirling council are back in the hands of the elected body, how does the Minister view any attempt by that elected council to overturn correctly taken decisions by Mr Ross when he administered the council's affairs?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I am not aware that the Stirling council has given any suggestion of behaving in any way other than completely responsibly. The council has legal obligations which do not alter according to who happens to be a member of the council at a particular time. Councils like Governments are bodies with perpetual succession and the decisions of a council, as of a Government, hold regardless of who constitutes that council or Government. I am not aware that Stirling council in any way proposes to behave other than completely responsibly; I would not expect it to adopt any other course of behaviour and I hope it will not do so.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** In the Minister's opinion does the stated view that the council will seek a moratorium in respect of any repayment pending the outcome of an exercise in another House constitute a failure to perform in accordance with the decisions of the previous administrator?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** It is certainly within their power to seek a moratorium. To unilaterally impose a moratorium

would obviously be going against their legal obligations. I did receive a letter from the Stirling council asking if I would use my good offices to try to obtain a moratorium for it, but I replied to the council, indicating that its legal obligation is the debenture document which it had signed with the Local Government Finance Authority. That authority is not a body to which I can give any directions at all and, if the council wishes to make any arrangements or seek agreement, it is with that body that it should do so. It is not in my power to influence, in any way, what the Local Government Finance Authority may decide.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** If it fails to meet the deadline of the repayments to that organisation without that organisation's approval, where then would the Minister find herself?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I most sincerely hope that that situation will not arise. I am sure that the members of Stirling council are aware of their legal obligations, and I expect them—as I expect of every other member of the local government community—to live up to their legal obligations. I would expect them to do so, and I would hope that they would do so.

**Mr McKEE:** I want to record my appreciation to the Minister and her staff of their conduct today, and of the frank and comprehensive way in which they have answered all their questions.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** In relation to the Estimates of Receipts (page 49) I note that book sales, fines, fees, etc., for the Department of Local Government are estimated to be \$9 000 for this current financial year; last year the actual amount was \$190 750. What is the reason for the large change in estimated receipts?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** This arises from a changed accounting procedure. In the past the libraries received a certain base funding, and then any income from sale of surplus books or fines for late returns, and so on, was returned to Treasury. The arrangement has now been made that the funding provided by Treasury to the department is reduced by the amount which can reasonably be expected to be raised. The income received from the sale of surplus books, fines and charges such as those will then be retained by the department. So, in effect, it is an accounting variation; it does not mean that we suddenly expect all books to be returned on time.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** Earlier this evening the member for Light referred to the Centennial Park Cemetery Trust. I am aware that a report on the accountability of the trust was handed to the Mitcham and Unley councils some time ago. Is the Minister aware of any response to that report from either of these councils?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I have not received any indication from the councils at this stage. The report was provided to the two councils. It suggested a change to the rules under which the Centennial Park Trust operates, but the rules have to be adopted by the two councils or amended by them following discussions between them. When they have agreed on a new set of rules, they send them to me for my endorsement. However, I have not yet heard from the two councils. I do not know whether they have considered them yet, but they may be having discussions between themselves prior to formally passing motions at separate meetings of the two councils.

**Mr HOLLOWAY:** My next question relates to rating and the Minister may wish to take it on notice. In the Local Government Association magazine *Council and the Community* in August/September of this year, I noticed references to a series of rating seminars held with councils, and a number of issues were mentioned for which it was sug-

gested that legislative changes might be necessary. Those included the definition of the word 'contiguous' the rateability of churches, the loss of rates when large tracts of land become subject to heritage agreements and so on. Will those issues be addressed in the Local Government Act revision referred to in the Program Estimates?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The seminars to which the honourable member refers were conducted by the LGA for its own members. I know that a number of matters were raised at those seminars, but I presume that they are still being considered by the LGA. They have not put any submissions to me on those matters. Obviously, when they do we will consider them carefully. I would not expect that any changes could be achieved in time to be included in the amendments to the Local Government Act which I hope to introduce in the near future. However, after due consideration corrective changes could be made in legislation next year.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** Is the Minister at all concerned that the Port Adelaide council has been accruing a debt on interest in excess of \$7 000 a day for holding land associated with the quayside development? More particularly, is she concerned that the organisation which had a share in the responsibility for that development has, in the past 48 hours, disappeared from the financial pages of the newspapers as a quote for shares? I am referring to Pennant Holdings Limited.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The harborside quay land to which the honourable member refers was acquired by the council several years ago for development purposes. I admit that progress has been very disappointing in that regard. I understand that discussions about that are taking place involving the Under Treasurer and the special projects unit from the Premier's office, but I am not aware of any outcome. I certainly have not had any formal involvement in it. It has not been suggested by anyone that any procedures under the Local Government Act have been necessary.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** As a supplementary, the involvement of the special project unit of the Premier's Department suggests that there was a possible joint operation as between Government and local government or that the special projects unit acted as a facilitator to try to find a further operator to develop that area.

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I am not aware of the basis of the discussions which have been taking place, but the origins of the special project unit were the redevelopment of Port Adelaide. It has been involved from the outset in the Port Adelaide redevelopment scheme, which has made such a transformation to that part of the metropolitan area. I presume that its involvement in any further discussions would likewise be related to its overall involvement in the redevelopment of Port Adelaide.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** As a further supplementary, will the Minister undertake to provide the Committee with such information as may be available by making overtures to the Premier's special projects unit?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I do not wish to be unhelpful, but I am not in a position to get information from the special projects unit, nor from the Under Treasurer. I suggest that the honourable member should put a question on notice to the Premier on this matter as he has responsibility for this unit and will obviously have ready access to the information requested.

**Mr MATTHEW:** On page 14 of the budget speech, the Premier said:

There will be no change to motor registration fees, including concessions provided to pensioners. However, some other concessions particularly applying to primary producers and local government will no longer apply.

I take it that the Premier was effectively saying that local government would no longer enjoy a reduced registration fee for its vehicles. If so, I understand that local government collectively would have to find a further \$2 million. What justification has there been to increase these charges on local government? Is it just another part of pushing more on to local government than it is already able to afford?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** There are two points that I would make on this matter. Motor registration does not come under my portfolio; it is more properly a question to be directed to the Minister of Transport who is responsible for motor registration. However, I understand that the change is not an abolition of concessions to local government; it is to ensure that the concessions in motor registration which were given to local government for the vehicles used in road building and road making apply only to vehicles which are in fact used for those purposes. There is a suggestion that councils have been using the concession for the registration of vehicles—such as ordinary sedans or station wagons—which are not really needed for road making or road maintenance. In that sense, it is not the removal of a concession; it is preventing the abuse of a concession and ensuring that the concessional vehicle registration is given only for vehicles which are actually used in road maintenance and road making. I suggest that the question could more properly be answered by the Minister of Transport who has responsibility for vehicle registration in his portfolio.

**Mr MATTHEW:** With respect, the Premier said:

However, some other concessions particularly applying to primary producers and local government will no longer apply.

In other words, concessions that applied previously do now not apply, so local government is removing a concession that was previously granted, is it not?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I suggest that that question should be directed to the Minister of Transport. It is not part of my portfolio.

**Mr MATTHEW:** When will the draft legislation for the third stage of the review of the Local Government Act be ready for consultation? When will it be introduced?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** The third stage of the review deals with streets, roads, squares, parklands, reserves, parking and foreshores, that is, with all the provisions of the Act that relate to the management of land which is dedicated for public use. Initially it was thought that this stage of review would be largely a technical exercise and consequently would not take very long but, as consultations have been proceeding, it is evident that there are a number of policy issues

involved which need very careful consideration. Examples of the sort of policy issues that are involved include the extent of council's liability for negligence in relation to land that has been dedicated to public use, the extent to which councils should be able to alienate public land, the implications for general public access if there is alienation of public land and the appropriate way to recover road and footpath construction costs.

These are all matters of policy rather than just technicalities. As it became obvious that these important policy decisions had to be made, it was decided that we should aim to issue a discussion paper, and we hope to do that by the end of this year. That will enable these policy matters to be discussed widely in an attempt to achieve some sort of consensus as to the best policy. Perhaps we could have moved faster in this regard, but the Local Government Association gave the impression that it was still becoming accustomed to the changes resulting from the second stage of the review and was not pressing that the third stage should receive a very high priority. We have certainly not forgotten it and we wish to proceed with it. However, where the LGA and the Government feel there are matters of higher priority, they will be dealt with first and the review of the Act will be taken in a less hurried fashion.

**The Hon. B.C. EASTICK:** As a supplementary question, I take it that stages 4 and 5 are into eternity?

**The Hon. Anne Levy:** I would not say 'into eternity', but I do not think that any time frame has been placed on them at this stage. Stage 3 will be the next stage.

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

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Works and Services—Department of Local Government,  
\$4 630 000—Examination declared completed.

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**The CHAIRMAN:** I thank the Minister and the officers for their attendance and cooperation.

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#### ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 19 September at 11 a.m.