

## HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 19 September 1991

## ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

**Chairman:**

Mr M.J. Evans

**Members:**

Mr M.K. Brindal  
 Hon. Jennifer Cashmore  
 Mr M.R. De Laine  
 Mr T.R. Groom  
 Mr R.B. Such  
 Hon. J.P. Trainer

*The Committee met at 11 a.m.*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Has the Minister a suggested program as to the estimates to be considered today?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Broadly, I suggest that matters relating to the miscellaneous lines be dealt with this afternoon when the appropriate officers will be in attendance, and that we deal with the Children's Services Office after the dinner adjournment, as this will allow time to advise officers when they are required.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I accept that.

Education, \$919 308 000

**Witness:**

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

**Departmental Advisers:**

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

**The CHAIRMAN:** I declare this line open. As there are no opening statements, we will go straight to questions.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer the Minister to page 158 of the Program Estimates under the heading 'Personnel'. I have before me a circular to schools dated 18 September 1991 from the Director-General in which he indicates that there have been 262 applications for retraining grants under the Changing Directions scheme, which is intended to assist under-performing teachers out of schools. The Director-General also indicates that many of these teachers are deemed to be ineligible for the 184 retraining grants available and that further applications will have to be called. Does the Minister agree with the Director-General when, on page 2 of the circular, he states that there were apparently significant numbers of under-performing teachers who did not apply for the Changing Directions schemes, or does the Minister maintain his often stated view that there is only a small minority of under-performing teachers?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It is a matter of definition as to what those terms mean. The reality is that we do not have in place, nor does any other education system, a mechanism which says that a certain teacher is under performing to a

particular level. That is what we are trying to establish in this State. Indeed, there is a lot of interest from other jurisdictions in respect of how we are going about this very complex and difficult area of administration in education and the performance of teachers. This has always been a difficulty with which the education system has had to grapple. It is not always a matter of a teacher's performance slowly declining (although that may occur in some cases): but sometimes it can occur quickly as a result of circumstances within a school or external to a school. For example, a teacher's performance can be substantially impaired as a result of family circumstances.

It may be that a teacher has some form of disability, a health factor, that can cause diminished performance; and there can be many other reasons. It is a matter of trying to grapple with all these problems in a comprehensive way. The two programs announced by the Government earlier this year are the first to be put into place by any education system. They deal with two groups of people, although I guess that the lines between the two are somewhat grey. The honourable member referred to the first of those programs, the details of which are being developed.

The honourable member also referred to some of the details surrounding the very first stage of implementation of one of those programs—the Changing Directions scheme. It is designed for teachers who have opted to change their career path. The aim is to provide for a dignified, appropriate and assisted exit from the teaching service into another career path. The department did not have a set number of people that it thought might apply for the scheme, so it was pleasing that such a large number of applicants in the first round of this exercise applied for those opportunities. As was to be expected, not all were appropriate for this scheme. We sought the advice and assistance of external consultants in this matter. It is our view that they have done an excellent job in assessing the applications that have so far been received and are advising the department on how we should further develop this program.

It is envisaged that, whilst the first round of offers have been released this week to those selected teachers (involving some 50 teachers), we will progressively make further offers and call for further applications. This has been done very carefully by the consultants and, now, in conjunction with senior management of the Education Department. It has also included senior officers of the Education Department speaking on a confidential basis to the principals of schools in which these teachers are currently teaching. As a result of that process we may wish to extend the call for expressions of interest in the Changing Directions scheme. The principals and other senior officers such as district superintendents may become involved in the process to assist in providing this information to those teachers who may wish to avail themselves of this scheme.

Some teachers will fall into the other scheme, the Managing Poor Performance scheme designed for teachers who have been identified as not reaching the required standards of teaching in a school community. They will be given the necessary assistance, advice and counselling with respect to their performance, which will be monitored carefully over a period of time. If that performance is enhanced and they meet the satisfactory standards, they will continue in the teaching service and have that career path ahead of them.

If they fail to achieve, one of the options available to them, as has been stated by the Director-General, is dismissal under the provisions of the Education Act. That is the other end of the spectrum. As with all other education systems, we have difficulties in this area. We do not know the exact nature and extent of the problem, and I assume

that no other education system does either, but in South Australia we are doing something about it.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I wish to ask a supplementary question: will the Minister indicate how many of the 262 applications were found by Ernst and Young, the consultants, to meet the criteria for the scheme, and how many of those have been deemed to be suitable by the Director-General? From the Minister's reply it seems that that answer may not yet be available.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will obtain more precise information for the honourable member. A judgment has to be made. It is not simply a percentage analysis in meeting a criterion; a whole range of criteria must be taken into account. I will take that question on notice and provide some sort of a general figure for the honourable member.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** The Liberal Party has been provided with a draft copy of the detail of the Managing Poor Performance scheme, on page 4 of which it is stated:

Failure to establish a supervision program when necessary will be regarded as a breach of duty for which the principal will be accountable.

Who will decide whether a principal has failed to establish a supervision program for an under-performing teacher, and how will an Education Department officer outside a school be in a position to judge the performance of a teacher and whether a principal has failed to be accountable?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will ask the Director-General to comment on the actual status of that document to which the honourable member refers, because I think that is relevant to the conclusions that the honourable member may be drawing. We are breaking new ground in this area in terms of management of our staff. We have a very large teaching staff in this State of 14 000 teachers. It is the view of the teachers' union, many school communities and certainly parent organisations that represent the broader school communities to Government that there is a great deal of support for the schemes on which we have embarked. I do not think anyone sees them as being easy to administer.

The roles that respective managers, school principals, district superintendents, senior managers of the Education Department and other personnel will play are evolving as these schemes develop. So, they are not set in concrete. The work that has been done in recent weeks by senior officers of the Education Department in personally speaking to many principals of schools throughout South Australia about these schemes and the way in which they might be administered has been a very valuable exercise also. Therefore, in a sense, our approach to this is evolving and, as a department, we want to be as sensitive as we can to the needs and rights of our teachers, but we also have a very great obligation to provide adequate standards of tuition to the community. It is also a matter of our fulfilling that obligation. I ask the Director-General to comment on the specific document to which the honourable member refers.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Can the Director-General indicate to the Committee what penalties there are for a breach of duty by a principal in respect of this responsibility and whether the draft document has the support of the Institute of Teachers?

**Dr Boston:** The Managing Poor Performance guidelines and the procedures to deal with the scheme are currently in draft form and are being developed in consultation with relevant agencies, senior department officers, the union, teachers, and the State In-service Education Advisory Committee. There is very broad consultation, and that is working towards defining professional competency standards for teachers, related criteria and indicators.

There has been and there will be further consultation with the primary and secondary boards of education and with parent organisations, so the material is widely distributed. At the moment, none of it has any status; in fact, none of it has come to me for recommendation to the Minister, so there is absolutely nothing that is final. I do not have with me a copy of the material to which the honourable member refers.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Would you like to see a copy of it?

**Dr Boston:** I would like to see a copy of the document, and I may be able to offer some comments on it.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Here is a copy.

**The CHAIRMAN:** If documents are to be exchanged, it may be possible for them to be circulated to the whole Committee, at least if the document is of a size that would make that practical. The Chair has some concern about documents being shared between only one member and the Minister.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I apologise. I am very happy—and I am sure that the Minister would be happy too—for the relevant page of that document to be circulated. It may be a bit bulky.

**The CHAIRMAN:** If reference is to be made to a particular page, we could have that page circulated.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Yes.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I hope that members understand that I want to make sure that there is an equal basis.

**Dr Boston:** The document states that failure to establish an agreement will be regarded as a breach of duty. That is simply a proposal that has not landed even on my desk, let alone on the Minister's desk. I assume that what is proposed are penalties under the disciplinary provisions of the Education Act. I have not considered in any way the pros and cons of that proposal, because I have not formally received the paper or advice on it. I really do not think that I can comment on it much further at this stage except to say that I expect that, at some time in the future after it has been further refined by the consultation process, it will be brought to me.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer to page 172 of the Program Estimates and teacher appraisal. Some four years ago the Yerbury report in South Australia recommended the introduction of a teacher appraisal program. Four years later we have still not seen a policy relating to that recommendation. In last year's Program Estimates the department listed, as an achievement for 1989-90, 'Staff appraisal framework developed'. An objective in 1991 is the implementation of the staff appraisal policy. Under 'Achievements', this year's Program Estimates (page 172) refers to the staff appraisal policy being re-evaluated—presumably without having been implemented. Under 'Objectives' for the current year there is no mention of the staff appraisal policy. Will the Minister provide a copy of that staff appraisal policy and indicate the current state of its implementation? Will he also indicate whether a draft document entitled 'Teacher performance: dimensions, performance standards, criteria and indicators' is part of this policy? I have a copy of that document. When will the appraisal policy be fully implemented?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** First, it is not true that nothing has been done in this area, because a good deal of work has been going on in the development of that strategy. It is not simply a matter of developing a policy and releasing it; it is a matter of a process that needs to occur as well. However, it should also be put in the context of the establishment of the Education Review Unit in the department and the changing roles that principals and district superin-

tendents play in the department in terms of management of our teaching staff.

Indeed, the two previous questions from the honourable member have related to part of the ongoing work that the department has been undertaking. Certainly, as I said, the work of the department is far ahead of that being undertaken in any other part of Australia in terms of some practical programs on the ground to assist under-achieving teachers. The development, for example, of the very extensive professional training program for our school principals, which has been undertaken for the past several years, has also been part of the development of the strategy. Mr Wauchope, who is the Director of Personnel of the Education Department, can perhaps give more specific detail on this matter.

**Mr Wauchope:** The selection task force of the department has been working for quite some time on the appraisal issue. The task force includes union representation and the current union representative is Clare McCarty. The task force itself relied on several other projects to feed it information. One such project was conducted last year with a group of superintendents who worked up a model that has been spread throughout the school system, to some degree, and is being trialled in schools. The results of that have been fed to the selection task force, which is possibly only two or three meetings away from recommending a policy on appraisal to the Director-General.

Further, it has been looking at performance plans for schools that would include an almost catalytic approach, I suppose we could call it, from the performance management plan agreed to by the principals and the area directors. It would then go down through the staff, so that the principal would have a full set of performance plans that he or she would expect from members of staff. So, that will flow from the policy coming from the selection task force.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** It seems to me that a very large number of departmental officers have been involved over a period of years in the development of something that has not yet come to fruition. Will the Minister provide the Committee, through *Hansard*, with the cost of developing the staff appraisal program? Two years work without a program yet capable of being implemented seems an unduly long period and, equally, a costly project.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member has misunderstood the answer that I gave previously. There are many elements to the question of staff appraisal. It is not simply clicking one's fingers and having a staff appraisal policy that obtains the results that the community would demand of us if we were to have the perfect teaching service. It is a matter of developing a series of strategies, some of which have already been put into place, embarking on the necessary professional development and training programs, particularly with respect to principals and district superintendents as Mr Wauchope has outlined to the Committee, and feeding those strategies into the development of an overall and comprehensive policy in this area. I will attempt to get an overall picture that can be put into the record for the benefit of the Committee.

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** The program description for primary education makes a couple of references to focus schools; for example, literacy in low socio-economic areas and, separately, mathematics and science and technology focus schools, and recently the Minister announced the establishment of engineering focus schools. Apart from the superb focus school for gymnastics in my electorate, located at the Ascot Park Primary School, using facilities at the nearby headquarters of the Gymnastic Association of South Australia in the Marion Recreation Centre, will the Minister

explain what other types of focus schools are in existence and will he explain the focus school concept, informing us how many there are and what resources the Government provides to support the program?

I put on the record my great pride that Ascot Park Primary School was chosen as the first focus school in South Australia of any type, and I am delighted that it has been an outstanding success. Budding gymnasts from all over South Australia have been transferred by their parents to the Ascot Park Primary School where they can receive the specialised intensive training that they require which, fortunately, is implemented there without the social and educational disadvantages that would be the consequence of a more spartan East German style of gymnastics education with elite students kept separate from others in their age group. Instead, at Ascot Park their excellence is fostered in an educational environment where training procedures are integrated with normal school life as part of the school as a whole. Indeed, other students look on the elite not as a race apart but as school members in whose performance they take great pride. I confidently predict (and I am sure that all South Australians will rejoice in this when it happens) that many of the young students at the Ascot Park focus school for gymnastics will be pursuing medals for Australia in future Olympic Games in the not too distant future.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The focus school program has been highly successful. Once again, South Australia has taken a novel approach to the provision of specialist opportunities for staff and for students in our schools. The gymnastics focus school is an interesting example. I understand that the effect has been not only to develop a series of gymnasts in this State who are obviously going to perform at the Olympic Games in future, but to lift the whole ethos of the school. There were some difficulties in the management of student behaviour and there were some disinclined learners in the school. However, I understand that the whole performance of that school has risen as a result of the focus program, and that is well worth close study.

The other feature of that is the relationship that has developed between the Gymnastics Association, which financially contributes to the employment of specialist staff in that school, and indeed the Education Department. That is a very interesting model for further developments in this area. The difficult choice that young people have to make is whether they are going to sacrifice their educational opportunities or their sporting capacities in order to proceed down one or other of the career paths. This opportunity gives them a chance to proceed down both paths at the same time. That philosophy of having a focus, a special capacity within schools, has been extended into areas of literacy, of primary mathematics, primary science and technology, junior secondary mathematics, senior school physics, land care and environmental education and in engineering studies, and next year into a series of schools for gifted and talented students.

Members of the Committee might be interested in the details of the numbers of schools in each category for the current year: literacy, 25; primary school maths, 30; primary science and technology, 24; junior secondary maths, 7; senior school physics, 3; land care and environmental education, 26; and engineering studies, 9. So there is obviously a very comprehensive network of focus schools now right across South Australia. With respect to the funding, that has been allocated to those schools and their operation, I shall ask Mr Boomer to briefly comment.

**Mr Boomer:** The focus school movement began in 1987-88, and the total allocation at that time was \$447 000. This

progressed to an allocation of \$1.535 million in 1988-89 and to \$2.3 million in 1989-90. The total since 1987-88 comes to \$4.312 million. The significance of the focus school movement—and South Australia leads the nation in this area—is that it is, in effect, a major teacher training and development program, which is working on the principle that teachers learn best on the job and from each other by having access to the best of practice and seeing it working in context. So the focus schools are, in effect, a lighthouse where, through working with the higher education sector, we train people, for example, in literacy teaching. They then apply that in the schools and then, having got up a successful program, we document that to provide materials for other teachers. But further, we invite other teachers in to see that work in progress, and we also send teachers out.

With the number of schools that we now have we are getting quite intense coverage across the State in the training and development program. When one looks at those resource figures, one can see that we are getting a huge payoff in terms of the multiplier effect. By taking some schools, showing the work in operation in an excellent way and then spreading it, we are progressively introducing large numbers of teachers to areas of literacy, primary school maths, science and technology, physics, environmental education and engineering studies, and next year, as the Minister has said, it will extend to the area of children with high intellectual potential.

These schools will be quite a new feature on the Australian scene where, in conjunction with the higher education sector, we will train people in the very complex business of identifying children who have high intellectual potential and then mounting programs for them, which will include some acceleration to higher classes or even exchange work in nearby secondary schools and mentor programs, using people in the community to come in and assist. Progressively, through the work in those focus schools, we are developing teacher training and development programs that will help us in a quite substantial way to increase the capacity and repertoire of teachers in providing programs that will stretch children with high intellectual potential. If we stand back and look at the effect nationally, it is clear now that other States of Australia are looking at this scheme and, in many of the projects of national significance that are now being funded from the Commonwealth, the focus school model is being taken up as a general model for teacher training and development.

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** Will the Minister indicate how many students are involved in the school card scheme? Does the scheme cover both Government and non-government sectors? What is the total cost and what benefits does it provide for eligible students?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The school card scheme has increased in value and importance as a financial support to a large number of students and their families in our schools, and it is designed to be non-discriminatory. That was a substantial weakness in what was known as the Government-assisted students scheme (GAS) and prior to that the free book students scheme. The value of that allowance was held down in the early part of the 1980s, and we as a Government have increased that progressively over the years. There was a disparity between the amount that Government and non-government school students received, even though they met the same eligibility criteria. That was rectified in the creation of the school card.

For the 1992 school year the budget provides for eligible primary students to receive a payment of \$110 and secondary school students \$165. That is in excess of the school fee requirement and allows for those students to expend

their surplus funds, for example, on the payment of school excursions or other costs associated with normal educational opportunities. In 1991, 66 000 students received the school card, but next year we expect that the number will increase to about 75 500 students, given the increase in enrolments that we anticipate next year. This is getting close to 30 per cent of our student population in Government and non-government schools.

Interestingly, the socio-economic analysis that can be made by comparison between Government and non-government sectors shows that this year 30 per cent of Government students will receive the school card and about 17 per cent of non-government school students will receive it. We anticipate that there will be a slight increase in non-government recipients of the card next year—about 500 additional students—whereas in Government schools we expect the increase to be almost 10 000 students. Some conclusions can be drawn about the impact of the recession and other factors that relate to disposable family income and the impact on the State school sector. It is a valuable card that is appreciated by families. Its administration within the school community has been successful, although we review it each year to ensure that it operates smoothly. I believe that it provides an important fillip for students to stay on at school and feel comfortable about their participation in the education process whereas, in the past, it was financial factors that discomfited children and their families and, for some older students, discouraged them from continuing in formal education.

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** I refer to page 133 of the Auditor-General's Report relating to the Department of Labour and the reference to workers compensation payments. The Education Department has the highest payout of the departments listed. Will the Minister explain how the department's performance compares with the performance of other departments listed in the Auditor-General's table? In 1988 the department's payments were \$9.134 million out of a total of \$32.527 million in payments by all departments; in 1989 it was \$8.965 million out of a total of \$32.335 million; in 1990 it was \$10.355 million from a total of \$36.486 million; and for 1991 payments by the Education Department amounted to \$12.227 million from a total claims payment by the other listed departments of \$41.140 million. It seems that the Education Department accounts for 25 to 30 per cent of workers compensation payments in each of those years.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It is important to put the record straight or into some context at least with respect to the statements that have been made about the extent of workers compensation claims in the Education Department. The work the department has done in recent years has led us to put ourselves in a position to manage the difficulties we face as a large employer with complex working situations. In today's money terms the workers compensation bill five or six years ago was far in excess of what it is today. With the introduction of the new workers compensation scheme, costs to the department increased, and the nature and incidence of claims changed.

When one considers the claims on and the payments by the department, which is the primary concern of the Committee—that is the cost of administering the scheme in the context of our overall salaries budget and staff numbers—and when one compares that with the costs of other departments, one can draw more appropriate conclusions as a percentage of the salaries that are paid out in workers compensation claims. In the Education Department it is 1.58 per cent compared with 11.93 per cent for the Correctional Services Department; 5.12 per cent for E&WS; and

4.3 per cent for the Road Transport Department and so on. Perhaps a comparable figure is the Employment and Technical and Further Education Department, where the figure is 1.6 per cent, as opposed to the Education Department's 1.58 per cent. That comparison provides a more appropriate context, rather than simply using the money figures. It is interesting to note that the total number of claims made by Education Department employees is reducing and not increasing, although the value of the claims is increasing. That accounts for some of the department's increases in total payments. I will ask Ms Kolbe to comment on this matter.

**Ms Kolbe:** In addition to what the Minister has just outlined, the important matter that should be recognised is that, whilst there appears to be a slight increase in the number of claims between 1989 and 1990 to 1991, the total number of claims has been reduced. The reflection of the work that has been done within the department is the individual value of the claims now going through the system. I have a few finalised figures: for example, in 1987-88 the average cost per claim was \$3 189, whereas in 1991 it is only \$631. The financial parameters need to be brought together. Also, we have a different legislative framework under which we are operating whereby people receiving workers compensation payments stay in the system longer, and that puts a floor under the amount with which we are dealing. In terms of the work undertaken by the department, the figures analysed and read out by the Minister recognise the success of that work.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I refer to pages 156 to 160 of the Program Estimates. On 27 August 1991 the Minister announced that for 1992 the total number of staff employed outside schools would be reduced from 1 200 to 900. Will the Minister provide a detailed breakdown by way of job description and classification of which 300 positions will be abolished, and will the total number of staff to be employed in the six new teacher and student support centres referred to as TASS in the GARG report be included as part of the 1992 figure of 900 staff employed outside schools for the sake of this calculation?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Government Agencies Review Group report to which the honourable member refers provides those details, and I will obtain more specific information for the honourable member as to the classifications proposed in the reduction. I will ask the Director-General to comment on the second matter.

**Dr Boston:** The 900 positions does include people in the teacher and student support centre.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Is it correct that the staffing level of the Materials Development Unit is 37.7? That is the figure that appears in the GARG report. How many Special Education Unit staff will be employed in the six TASS centres?

**Dr Boston:** The figure given for the Materials Development Unit is correct. Negotiations continue in respect of that figure because it is to be a stand-alone business unit. The number of special education staff in the teacher and student support centres I can calculate by going back to the document. We will take the question on notice.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I refer to page 158 of the Program Estimates relating to educational facilities with regard to the closure of western suburbs schools. In recent months I have attended a number of meetings of schools protesting at the various recommendations of the Western Suburbs Primary Schools Review. As a result of those meetings the department received 42 submissions on the proposals for change. As recently as 20 August Mr Kevin Doolette, on behalf of the department, sent a bulletin to all schools saying that these submissions would be considered and that in the next

two to three weeks further meetings would be held with the chairperson of each cluster group. He also promised further discussion with principals, other Government departments and local councils and said the Minister would release the recommendations before the end of the year.

However, at about the same time the Liberal Party began to hear disturbing stories that certain political deals had been done by the Premier and that the whole process would be affected in relation to the schools, particularly those on the LeFevre Peninsula. Three weeks ago senior sources in the Education Department privately confirmed that the Premier had done a deal with the independent member for Semaphore to ensure his support in the critical no-confidence motion moved against the Government. Last Saturday the department's area education director confirmed that the review process would be shortened by about two months and that 'no schools on the LeFevre Peninsula would be restructured until the long-term opportunities for education by the MFP and other developments in the area were clearer'.

I am sure that this decision will please those schools, in particular the Ethelton Primary School, which had a strong case against closure. However, obviously the deal has infuriated many other schools that will face closure as a result of the deal. As the MFP is in the electorate of Price, and the northern parts of the electorates of Albert Park and Spence are as close to Gillman as are the northern parts of Semaphore, does the Minister intend to be consistent by extending the moratorium on school closures to the electorate of Price and the northern parts of the electorates of Spence and Albert Park?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member obviously takes a cynical view of the world and of this process. He does a great disservice to officers in the Education Department by implicating them as he has in this way. An enormous amount of work has been done in looking at where our schools should be heading, not in the short term but over the next 10 or 20 years. There has been criticism of educational outcomes in the western suburbs, particularly in respect of the retention rates, which are lower than those in other parts of metropolitan Adelaide. A review of secondary schools conducted throughout the western suburbs of Adelaide met with heated debate, discussion and meetings.

However, the department worked its way through that process and is still so doing, as is occurring with the primary school sector. On the one hand, some school communities have come forward and said, 'The debate that is occurring is not in the best interests of the school and, where there is likely to be no change in the situation, the debate should be curtailed so that we can get on with the job.' That is common sense. On the other hand, some communities have said, 'Our facilities should be altered or closed, and we would like that decision to be taken so that the school does not go through some debilitating period whilst a *fait accompli* decision is taken.' So, it was decided that, where decisions could be made, they should be made and the information conveyed to the school communities. In several of those cluster areas that has been possible.

Some schools on the LeFevre Peninsula, such as Ethelton primary, are going through some important changes as to their nature and numbers. The proposal in respect of Taperoo Primary School was quite novel. Following discussions it became clear that neither the high school nor the primary school wanted to participate in that more novel approach. Where there is strong opposition in a community a proposal is not taken any further because it would not succeed and therefore would not be in the interests of the educational opportunities of those young people. It is an area in which

we need to think carefully about the most effective way of providing educational opportunities for the residents of each community.

With respect to the upgrading of facilities, those school communities which knew that, as a result of the sale of land, for example, funds could be returned to upgrade facilities wanted to get on with that. They did not want to wait until some time later in the year for that to be approved, because they wanted to get on with works programs that could bring about more immediate improvements in educational opportunities and the working environment of teachers and students.

With respect to the closure of Seaton North Primary School, the relationship with Seaton High School, the upgrading of Hendon Primary School, and the provision of pedestrian lights at West Lakes Boulevard, people wanted to get on with those things; they wanted some finality and decisions taken. That has occurred and has been well received by those respective school clusters.

As the honourable member has said, we are still going through consultative processes with respect to other situations. The process that will be followed in the western suburbs will be that, once those clusters have resolved the general direction in which they should go in consultation with officers of the Education Department, that information should be released so that the matter can be put to rest and people can get on with their job knowing the configuration of schools for an extended period of time.

With respect to the Le Fevre Peninsula, very strong representations came out of the consultation process about the enormous developments taking place in that area, not only with respect to the MFP project but the ongoing development of the Submarine Corporation and associated industries and the tourism infrastructure around Port Adelaide. I think all people would see the enormous potential that that has. Before decisions should be taken about reconfiguration of schools, the articulation of primary and secondary schools in that area and, indeed, the articulation of secondary schools with TAFE—a new TAFE college is being built in Port Adelaide, and there will be a new focus for TAFE in that area—it was felt that we should bring together not only education providers but employers and those planning the MFP to develop a different approach to the provision of education and a strategy for it over the next 10 to 20 years.

I think that is very wise advice indeed. I know that the cynics will read into it, as the honourable member has, other motives, but representations came from a wide cross-section of the community, certainly from the union involved, to the effect that we should progress down that path. That advice has been accepted: a structure will be established so that there can be a fully integrated consultation process to enable the development of long-term policies that will provide the education opportunities that we want for young people, and articulate them with career paths and jobs that will be available in that area. Indeed, our education system will be able to play its part in the development of those key industries for the future wealth of this State.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Supplementary to that, I meant no disrespect or slight to the Minister's departmental officers, and I am somewhat confused by his answer in which, in my opinion, he seems to have slighted them himself. I assumed—and the Minister may call me cynical—that a political deal was done because I know that the competence of his departmental officers is such that they would have carefully analysed the demographics and such things as the Submarine Corporation and the MFP quite carefully before putting forward the proposal for the Le Fevre Peninsula.

I can only take it from the Minister's answer that he is saying that they failed to do that and have subsequently mollified and negated a whole series of community discussions and decisions that were taken in light of knowledge they could and should have had before they undertook the discussion process. I would like the Minister to answer that and, in view of his previous answer, will he outline the decisions that have been taken for the other 46 schools involved in this review?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The reality is that the consultative process established did not include the key industry sectors to which I referred. In the recommendations that came forward it was asked whether we could develop a broader consultative and planning structure that formally included those sectors of the local community, for example, the tourism industry in Port Adelaide, the MFP, the Submarine Corporation and so on. That is the line that is now being taken, and I think it is a wise course of action, one which speaks for itself. So, I do not read into that process the response that the honourable member gives to it.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I refer to page 156 of the Program Estimate. The GARG submission states that six teacher and student support centres are to be established. It states also that schools can purchase services from these centres for a fee. Will schools now have to pay for services provided by speech pathologists, guidance officers, equal opportunity advisers, social workers and health and safety officers, as these services are clearly placed under the auspices of these new centres? If so, where will the schools obtain the money to do this?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** There is some confusion with this section of the Government Agencies Review Group submission. The nature of what is being proposed is still the subject of discussion with all interest groups about how we may progress down this path. It is clearly designed to create a more appropriately targeted access to support services for our schools, a more efficient use of our resources and a more equitable access to those resources in our system. The nature and extent of those resources is very substantial indeed. I will ask the Director General to state briefly how the scheme may work.

**Dr Boston:** The matter raised by the honourable member is a broad issue that will be negotiated in terms of the one line budget over the next four years and will be implemented incrementally. The basic proposition is that certain services which teacher and student support centres will provide will need to stand the constant test of relevance. In other words, are these services really what the schools want or would they prefer something else? Do they really want to buy these services from the Education Department or would they prefer to go elsewhere for them, for example, to tertiary education, to another school or to a private consultant? Are these services relevant? Are they of a high enough quality for the schools? Are the people who are supplying and providing the services the most appropriate people to do so?

The basic proposition is to put the school at the centre of the Education Department and have the people in the school making judgments about whether the quality of the service being provided is the one it really wants. Precisely which functions that will encompass need to be negotiated and tested with the schools. One function that we believe it must encompass, or for which there will be strong support, is training and development. We believe that schools should have the option to take training and development services not simply from a limited number of people appointed for a certain term to deliver these services but that they should have the capacity in the long term to make judgments about

the sort of training and development they want and where they will obtain it.

The fee for service is fundamentally something that allows the school the capacity to go outside the department and it also faces the provider through the teacher and student support centre with the constant test of relevance. Are schools prepared to pay for this service with their own resources or would they prefer to use those resources for something else? If they do, that tells us something pretty quickly about the service being provided by these support centres.

I do not see guidance officers, equal opportunity advisers and others mentioned by the honourable member being introduced on a fee for service basis, certainly not in the short to medium term and perhaps never. There is a core of services that the system will need to provide and will need to support schools with. There will be a certain core of such services that are quite outside the user pays principle. Equal opportunity advisers are a clear example. The State school system has a clear equal opportunity imperative. That service will be provided. In fact, schools will not have the capacity to ignore equal opportunity provisions. On the other hand, schools will have a great capacity to determine the sort of training and development they require and the source from which they want it delivered.

**Mr BRINDAL:** As a supplementary question, will the centres have subject advisers, that is an adviser in mathematics and so on? If not, who will take on that responsibility?

**Dr Boston:** The teacher and student support centres will have what we are calling 'key directions advisers'. They will be consultants in key areas of change and development which accord with the departmental plan built up by the schools from time to time. The decisions about the areas within which those key directions consultants will be appointed are, of course, yet to be made through consultation within the system. Of course, we must bear in mind that the introduction of teacher and student support centres is occurring at the same time as the introduction into schools of advanced skills teachers. They have a very important role in curriculum and subject area leadership within the school. We also have the focus schools, which provide a very important training and development component, as was described previously, in mathematics, literacy and so on and, to a very large extent, are performing the role of subjects advisers.

Of course, cluster agreements will also be very important in determining the extent to which subject specialist advice is provided from outside the school. Schools will work together in clusters and may pool back into their group some salaries or proportions of salaries which they would then devote to specialist curriculum advice and support.

**Mr GROOM:** Before I ask a question, I would like to congratulate the Minister for the way in which he handles his portfolio, particularly for his sensitivity to educational issues and his ongoing commitment to improving our educational system and service. Having heard those questions, I shudder to think what the Opposition would do to this portfolio if it ever got the chance.

*Mr BRINDAL interjecting:*

**Mr GROOM:** Well, I don't think that we will. Don't count your chickens—you have counted them before and missed out. The Minister knows that I am very much interested in the gemellaggio between Campagna and South Australia because of the significant number of people of Italian background—some 30 per cent—in my electorate. As the Minister knows, last year the Premier signed the gemellaggio documents with the President of the Campagna region. Has the Minister given any thought or consideration

to facilitating the process with regard to student educational exchanges between the two regions and, if not, could that be a matter of consideration by the department?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I thank the honourable member for his complimentary remarks. I enjoy being the Minister of Education. It is not an easy area, but it is an area of fundamental importance to government in this State, and I appreciate the opportunity that has been given to me.

I think that the gemellaggio agreement provides the basis whereby student and teacher exchange programs can be developed. Some informal discussions have been going on between the groups that have already participated in exchange programs. In fact, a music teacher visited a number of schools here and met with teachers earlier this year. So, in an informal way, that relationship is growing. There have been some discussions within the Education Department about how we might formalise this agreement and any future exchange programs involving the Premier, the Minister of Ethnic Affairs or me. When the opportunity arises, we may be able to more formally embrace this matter. However, the current project between the South Australian and Italian Governments involves formal arrangements surrounding the appointment of an education adviser—a specialist teacher and a teacher educator who can develop professional programs, in particular, and develop teaching of the Italian language in our schools. That appointment has recently been made and I am visiting the Italian Ambassador in a few weeks to further discuss these relationships between the South Australian Education Department and the Italian Government.

We have teacher exchange programs and teachers have just left for their period of service in Italian schools. The agreements developed over a period of years have proved to be very valuable. We have had traditional agreements with both the Italian and the French Governments and, more recently, with the Spanish Government and, of course, with the Greek Government. There may well now be opportunities for similar agreements with other countries, all of which very much enhances the language policy that we have in South Australia and, in particular, our commitment to the establishment of a primary school language program for the year 1995. That policy aims to have each of our primary school students having access to a second language by that year, and we are well on the way to meeting that target.

**Mr GROOM:** I note that, under 'Issues/Trends' relating to the provision of primary education, mention is made of improving existing links, information flow and understanding between various groups. No specific reference is made to parents, whose involvement is extremely important in schools. What is the department doing to encourage parental involvement and participation in schools?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** In the first year I was Minister—which was known as the Year of Parents and Students in our schools—we conducted quite extensive development programs. We had a major phone-in and began the process of developing a comprehensive policy for parent and student participation in the life of our school communities. That has now been embodied in a firmer policy, and amendments have been made to the Education Act regulations. I think we are well served in this State with respect to parent participation. Grants are provided for programs throughout the State to increase the participation of parents where we know that there is diminished participation. That may be because of ethnicity, language difficulties, aboriginality, geographic isolation, and so on. We must always be vigilant to ensure that parents who would like to participate in our schools are given that opportunity. It is a similar situation with student participation; it is a feature of our schools,

and particularly of our secondary schools, that students are accepting responsibility for various elements of the life of their school community. It is often remarked upon by people who visit schools, attended assemblies and participated in projects that reach out into the community. That is an important element of our education process and, again, provision is made in the budget for grants to parents and students.

There is support for other programs, for example, the Learning Assistance Program, which has been very successful, involving parents in the actual delivery of that special element of literacy programs in our schools, with learning development of students. There is parental involvement in so many elements of the life of the department and within the training and development focus. They are also involved in policy formulation at all levels of the South Australian Education Department. So, there is very comprehensive involvement and it is very effective. We are well served by the several parent organisations that represent parents formally.

**Mr De LAINE:** I certainly endorse the comments made by my colleague the member for Hartley with respect to the commitment and dedication shown by the South Australian Minister of Education. I refer to page 162 of the Program Estimates and to the teaching of languages other than English. What opportunities exist for primary school students to learn another language and what resources have been provided to give many primary school students access to that learning?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** In response to the member for Hartley, I referred to the commitment that the Government has made. In fact, we are the only State in this country to make that commitment. As I said, we are well on the way to achieving it. However, there has also been quite a dramatic growth in the number of students in our schools who are accessing language education. In fact, the movement of students between primary schools has often been directly related to those students and their family wanting to access particular subjects. There has been a particular interest in the study of a number of Asian languages in our schools. The study of Mandarin, for example, is quite extensive in South Australia. I am not sure of the current statistics, but I know that last year there were more students numerically, not per capita, studying Mandarin in South Australian schools than in any other State. Mr Boomer may be able to provide more specific detail.

**Mr Boomer:** Progress towards the 1995 goal is on target. As an indication of the number of primary school students involved in the program in 1990, 3 789 primary students were studying 17 different languages; 21 244 secondary students were studying 16 different languages. In 1991, 241 junior primary and primary schools are teaching 17 different languages; and 52 secondary schools, 31 area schools and five rural schools teach 13 different languages at the secondary level. Of course, we also have the South Australian School of Languages, which offers the opportunity for those who are studying languages that are not so prevalent in the community to do so. We have 692 students at that school studying 12 different languages. So, overall, we are getting a large coverage across our junior, primary and secondary schools and at the South Australian School of Languages. In addition, through the policies for ethnic schools, which sees the ethnic school language offering as part of the comprehensive Government policy in the ethnic school system and which is a very valuable part of the overall policy, we have 7 000 students studying 35 different languages. So, when we look at all of those things together, we are making a substantial movement towards the goals.

Clearly there is a national challenge in the teaching of languages other than English. As a nation, we have tended to ignore the importance of learning a second language. All systems in Australia are now gearing up to meet the challenges. South Australia is the only State going for the fundamental policy of providing languages at the primary level. Other States are moving in at the secondary level. However, the belief is that languages are best approached at the junior primary/primary level and that will form a firm base on which we can move to expand the teaching of languages at the secondary level. The question of teacher supply will remain with us in areas such as Japanese. We are having to be creative in providing the resources we need. We have some very interesting relationships now with the Japanese Government in terms of teacher exchange, and, of course, we are gearing up our teacher training within the higher education sector. The formation of the Centre for Languages, Teaching and Research has meant that the three universities have now combined with the Education Department to look at teacher supply in this area.

**Mr SUCH:** My question relates to a recent prominent case involving out-of-school hours behaviour by a school principal. What are the department's guidelines relating to out-of-school hours behaviour by principals; do the guidelines, if any, apply to class teachers and ancillary staff as well as administrators; and what disciplinary measures are available to the Minister or the Director-General?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The required standards of behaviour are well established by the cases that have been considered over the years and are well known in the community. The most recent case in the judgment of the tribunal further clarified that and found that the behaviour of the principal involved met the criteria of the Education Department and was in fact disgraceful conduct. The dispute arose about the nature of the penalty that should be imposed. The tribunal altered the decision that had been taken by the Director-General with respect to the appropriate penalty in those circumstances and obviously took into account the circumstances surrounding the public controversy on that matter.

We should look carefully at the facts in a situation of this kind. It involved a child who was severely assaulted and who sustained substantial head injuries and it was in the company of students of that school, students with whom that principal had a fiduciary relationship, a relationship that is well established at law. The nature of that community meant that charges were not brought by the parents or by the children to the police, but the intervention of the Education Department was sought with the lodging of formal complaints. Then a protracted investigation took place very much between the legal advisers of the principal and officers of the Crown Law Department and the Education Department. That culminated in advice being received by the department as to the appropriate action to be taken. The action taken was challenged by the principal and it resulted in the judgment that has been brought down by the tribunal.

**Mr SUCH:** Are those guidelines in published form and do they extend beyond acts involving violence?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The matter is not a subject for drawing up guidelines which would apply to every conceivable case. They are a matter of application of the law as has been determined over the years, not only in South Australia but in other places as well. It is not a matter of having guidelines that can determine whether behaviour within a school community, within the physical bounds of a school or within the broader community, is acceptable. These matters often relate not only to acts of violence, as was the case here, although aggravated by inebriation, but to child sexual abuse and to other matters which are very

difficult to prove. Often they are also outside the physical bounds of a school. They clearly come within the confines of the disciplinary procedures provided for in the Education Act. It is not possible to say that this set of circumstances and act fall within the guidelines. It must be judged on the circumstances of each case.

**Mr SUCH:** Will the Minister explain whether these rules and disciplinary measures would apply equally to class teachers, administrators and ancillary staff and would they include, for example, romantic liaisons involving staff members? How would teachers know what is appropriate or inappropriate out-of-school hours behaviour?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** In the same way as medical practitioners, lawyers, the clergy and members of Parliament exercise their behaviour as persons of standing in the community who accept a higher standard of public responsibility than others perhaps, but particularly where there is a relationship with those for whom they accept a special duty of care and with whom they form a special relationship. The teacher/student relationship is a particular one, as is the standing of the principal in our community.

In the same way, a doctor accepts certain standards of care in a community. In fact, policemen are often paraded in the press, particularly in recent times, for accepting certain standards of care. I am often surprised at the rigour with which the Police Department exercises its disciplinary powers over officers who are engaged in what perhaps the community would regard as more minor matters—matters of personal morality and the like—but which are subject to internal disciplinary proceedings within the Police Department. Many police officers complain about the rigour with which they are investigated internally because of their behaviour or allegations about their behaviour.

**Mr SUCH:** In Financial Information Paper No. 5, 'The Budget and its Impact on Women', there is a project called the secondary school sexuality education program. It indicates that the aim is to develop and document state of the art sexuality education. What does that entail and which schools will be involved, as it is suggested here that five schools have nominated to be part of that program?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** A decade ago only three out of 10 students stayed on in schools until year 12, whereas now we have 75 per cent of students staying on until year 12. That means that we have a different age profile in our secondary schools and, therefore, the needs of those students manifest themselves in different ways. It is very much in line with requests that have been made by the general community, students, parents and teachers that that element of our curriculum, particularly dealing with human relationships and matters of that type, should be put into an appropriate teaching context. In the past they have either not been put into the curriculum or they have been treated in a more peripheral way. What has occurred in our schools, in cooperation with health workers and other specialists, has been very beneficial to students. We have moved through a period where matters relating to human sexuality were not talked about in our schools. It is now done in terms of the curriculum in an appropriate way; it is put into a proper context. Of course, there are opportunities for families to have their students excluded from those classes if that is their desire, although that rarely occurs. I will invite Mr Boomer to expand on that briefly.

**Mr Boomer:** The programs that are alluded to here will occur within the established health education curriculum of the Education Department, and they relate particularly to AIDS education. As would be appreciated, there are aspects of AIDS education that are best treated on an agenda specific basis. Because of the delicate nature of some of the

information that needs to be discussed, the aim in these pilot schools is to train specifically a number of teachers, six or seven teachers from each school, so that the handling of these highly sensitive matters will be done in the most professional way.

**Mr SUCH:** I refer to page 160 of the Program Estimates and to the line dealing with executive, professional staff, etc. Will the Minister explain the reason for the increase in full-time equivalents from 444.2 as proposed for 1990-91 to an actual 499.3 in 1990-91? Can he explain how 55 extra staff were employed and yet recurrent expenditure for that line dropped from \$38 million to \$37 million?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** There is an explanation of why that change is being presented in that way. At this stage, rather than speaking in generalities, I will provide the honourable member with the precise details later.

**The CHAIRMAN:** It is possible for the Minister to bring in information for the Committee at any time during the course of today's proceedings.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** There was another matter raised earlier and I will get that information as well for the honourable member.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to page 162 of the Program Estimates and, in particular, to the commentary on major resource variations. It refers to increases in enrolments in primary schools and I notice that there is no similar reference to secondary schools. I am aware that over the past few years there has been a steady decline in enrolments, due to demographic changes. What is the current situation in primary and secondary schools with regard to enrolments and what is the general trend?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Normally for the Estimates Committees I have prepared a statistical summary of information. I now have the document for this year and I shall have that distributed to members of the Committee. It refers to enrolments and also to the distribution of those enrolments between the various schools in our system. It also provides details on the number of teachers and on salaries, wages and amounts expended on goods, services and maintenance in each of the schools.

In respect of primary and secondary enrolments, I can say that there has been a continued growth in primary enrolments and it is estimated that next year that will continue. February enrolments for this year were 115 000 and estimated enrolments for next year are 118 100. However, secondary enrolments will continue to decline. That declining number has been arrested to some extent by the re-entry programs that have proved to be very successful and indeed by the transfer of students undertaking secondary courses in TAFE colleges to the responsibility of the Education Department. Next year it is anticipated that year 8 to 12 enrolments will reduce from 69 331 to 68 450. That will give an overall increase in enrolments of almost 2 000 students, from this calendar year to February enrolments next calendar year.

**Mr De LAINE:** Have any predictions been made for enrolment patterns over, say, the next decade?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Yes, I think we can make some projections about enrolment patterns into the future. We anticipate that there will be continued growth in our schools until the middle of the 1990s. That will in fact plateau perhaps into the early part of the next century. So, we are not going to return to the high numbers of students in schools that we had back in the 1960s and 1970s. It is interesting to note that we have about the same number of students in our schools now as we had in the early 1960s. Interestingly, in the early 1960s we had virtually no ancillary staff in our schools and we now have almost 3 000 ancillary

staff in our schools. In the early 1960s we had some 6 900 teachers in our schools while we now have almost 14 000; so there has been an enormous growth in the resourcing of our schools. Whilst we have gone through a period of high enrolment, it has now declined and that pattern is not going to change substantially.

**Mr De LAINE:** Again referring to page 162 of the Program Estimates and to the major resource variations, and I also refer to the Minister's budget information brochure. In relation to teacher salaries, I note that the Minister has stated on a number of occasions that South Australia's teachers are the highest paid in the nation. What are the South Australian rates of pay for teachers and how do they compare with other States?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** In recent years the Ministers of Education formed a committee, which meets as a public sector employers forum, and we have established a national benchmark for teacher salaries in this country. It was a matter that came out of discussions with the Australian Teachers Union and the Australian Council of Trade Unions, and it was seen in everyone's interest that we establish some benchmark in this area. There has been a very undesirable leapfrogging by the States in relation to teacher salaries for many years and that has been harmful to the recruitment of teachers and in relation to disparities that have grown up between the State systems, which need not have occurred. Also, that impacts, of course, on non-government school salaries as well.

The national benchmark figure was ignored by the Industrial Tribunal, which is responsible for teacher salaries in South Australia; not only did it ignore the national benchmark presentation but it also chose not to accede to the submissions by the Government, supported by the Australian Teachers Union, that those salary increases be phased in. So, South Australia was alone amongst all the States, despite the agreements that we had negotiated with the peak teacher unions in this country, when the teacher salaries increase was in fact brought down retrospectively, and, by contrast, non-government schools in this State were provided with a phase-in period, and also with those teachers in the Children's Services Office jurisdiction.

The decision in South Australia was particularly difficult to manage and it brought about the consequences that were announced late last year, as members would be aware. Nevertheless, South Australian teachers remain the highest paid in the country. Their salary is above the national benchmark, and there is also a situation where our principals, who have recently had their salaries increased, remain the highest paid in Australia also.

For a State the size of South Australia, with its traditional positioning in the middle ground of salaries and with our advantage of lower living costs in this State, it is an anomaly that is not desirable and obviously, with the continued cooperation between peak employer and employee representatives, the movement in Australia towards the national benchmark will continue over the next few years. The benchmark figure for South Australian teacher salaries is taken at a point which is the maximum salary paid to a non-promoted teacher, the classroom teacher, at the top of the automatic salary range which, in South Australia, is \$38 200. By comparison, a teacher in Tasmania earns \$34 095, which is at the other end of the spectrum. In respect of the other States, a teacher in Victoria received \$36 937; in the ACT it was \$36 744; New South Wales, \$36 613, Western Australia, \$36 500 and the Northern Territory, \$35 210. The other States have now moved from these positions to the national benchmark figure of \$38 000, except for Tasmania which remains at \$34 095. So, it can

be seen that South Australia is leading the nation in terms of its rewards to teachers and is paying salaries beyond the national benchmark figure that all other States are either paying or are moving towards over time.

**Mr De LAINE:** Page 55 of the Auditor-General's Report refers to average salary overpayments per fortnight having increased substantially for the third year in a row. Why do overpayments occur and why has the fortnightly amount increased?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** There is a misconstruing of the facts in this case in the public statements made. When one takes the nature and the extent of the payroll in the Education Department and the actual moneys not recovered at the end of the financial year, one can get a better view of the reality of the picture. Write-offs over the past few years have been reducing. In 1989-90 the write-off amounted to \$20 579 as the result of overpayments that we were unable to recover for one reason or another, but usually where persons leave the State. For the last financial year on which the Auditor-General reported that has been reduced to \$11 397. Out of a payroll approaching \$800 million, the net loss to the State and by comparison with other payrolls is such that the problem is minimal in terms of money lost. However, there is still a concern and the department is vigilant in the way in which we receive information about employment, particularly those people employed on a part-time casual basis and how we calculate their pay, because there is enormous pressure on the department to pay those people as quickly as we can. That information is often transmitted to the pay authority in a less than satisfactory way, but the computerisation that is going on within the department is minimising the possibility of misinformation being acted on in these circumstances. I will ask Ms Kolbe to comment.

**Ms Kolbe:** I would like to add that the reason why overpayments occur are twofold. First, advice may arrive after the payroll has closed. However, the way our system works, it will then show up as an overpayment by the time the pay is made, and that is a management strategy we have built into the system. However, it does throw up some of the payments that otherwise would not be shown as overpayments as such. Those overpayments are recovered immediately in the following pay, so there is no loss to funding at all. If someone takes a day's unpaid leave and the system is not advised in time, because we have quite a widely distributed system of locations, the system may not have been advised, whereas that day may relate to the pay period that has been closed off and has gone by. It will then show up as an overpayment.

The Auditor-General said that the outstanding balance at the end of the year has been reduced from last year's \$313 000 to \$264 000. Most of those funds are recovered in following pays. As to the Minister's comment about the size of the payroll, we process each fortnight a payroll worth about \$23 million. Of the \$50 000 mentioned as overpayments, most of it is recovered, except for the \$11 000 written off at the end of the year. That is not a large amount when one considers what I mentioned earlier, that the overpayments show up in the system.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I notice from examining the program descriptions of the various programs for the Education Department that there does not seem to be any performance criteria, targets or performance output measures, which many other departments sought to include in their material. There has been reference and discussion in the Estimates Committees over many years of assessments and attainment levels and the like. I notice that these are still listed as targets and objectives for implementation, although I am

aware that some trialling has been going on. When does the Minister expect that he might include in the budget material actual output measures of the department's activities for what is a substantial amount of money, what progress has been made in implementing those attainment level tests and what degree of finality has been achieved?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am pleased to be able to report that a substantial amount of work has been done in the education system with respect to performance monitoring. We referred earlier to the work of the Education Review Unit, for example, in the assessment of the performance of our schools and the reporting of that. It is a unique system in Australia based on Her Majesty's Inspectorate system founded in England.

That has proved to be very successful where each school has a development plan and is externally assessed as to its performance based on the plan. Each sector of the Education Department is subject to similar review, and certain elements or parts of the life of the education community in South Australia are also subject to that external review process. From time to time occasional reports come up from the Education Review Unit about aspects of the education system in South Australia. I will ask the Director-General to comment on the details of this matter and we would be pleased to include them in some way in these documents in future. Discussions could be held in respect of further involvement in this process.

**Dr Boston:** The performance monitoring and accountability function of the department has been developed very strongly over the past three years. Performance can be measured only if we have very clear goals and objectives and we know what we want to achieve as a system. We are doing that through the development of the planning process for the department, which is guided by our charter 'Educating for the Twenty-first Century'. The planning structure is implemented through a framework consisting of the three year plan, which has a rolling 12 month horizon; individual directorate plans, which have clear outcome statements as well as strategies; and for each strategy outcome statement specified. All schools now have a school development plan which outlines specifically what the school will achieve, its key goals, key strategies and desired outcomes in terms of reflecting local needs and aspirations within the overall system objectives.

We have also made quite extraordinary progress in the development of performance planning for principals. All our principals are moving on to performance management plans. We are quite ahead of the rest of the country in this area. Those plans in due course will become the basis for teacher appraisal that we talked about earlier. We also have the Education Review Unit monitoring the achievement of plans and the achievement of individual schools. We provide on that basis public reports on school performance, and over 150 of our schools have now been the subject of publicly available reports on school performance.

We are providing a five-year review program to the office of the Government Management Board. We are also discharging at the national level our accountability through the annual national report on schooling. If all that is not enough, the GARG proposal itself is strongly built around improving performance at all levels of the organisation. It is a document which moves from highly centralised top-down bureaucratic management to management by delegation and accountability for results. Clearly it will be our objective, consistent with achieving such, to move more than we have towards the inclusion of clear outcome statements on each of these programs.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I refer to the legislative change required for the implementation of effective clustering of schools and, in particular, the situation in respect of Inbarendi College, which is in my area. Various legislative proposals for putting it on a sound footing have been around for many years, in fact for 12 months before the college was established. The intimation is that legislation will not be forthcoming for a further extended period. Why is it taking so long to develop an effective legislative response to the clustering of schools which is now established on a very inadequate legislative base?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Unfortunately the legislative arrangements seen as desirable in order to provide for a new form of governance of the configuration of schools in the Elizabeth area has been delayed because of personnel factors in the appointment and detailing of the management structure that would complement the governance of the schools in that area. It is also complicated by the further review that has been announced. Discussions are going on at the moment within the department on whether the issue of governance can be separated from those personnel issues and can be clarified and proceeded with.

Underneath that umbrella, management decisions can then be taken on the specific structuring of those schools. In that way it can be flexible enough to cope with changes rather than be fixed in concrete and have to be changed again at some later stage. If that can proceed, it may allay the concerns expressed by the honourable member over time about the need to make entirely clear the authority of the governance of schools where it simply is not one school council being referred to but rather a group of schools subject to the governance of the one school council.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer to page 155 of the Program Estimates and ask that, for each of the average full-time equivalent figures for 1991 (proposed), 1991 (actual) and 1991-92 (proposed), the Minister provide a breakdown of staff as indicated on page 151 of the Financial Statement in respect of the Government Management and Employment Act and other major Acts. I expect that this question will be taken on notice.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will take the question on notice.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer to page 157 of the Program Estimates. Will the Minister confirm that there are currently 11 000 students on the special education database, and how will they all be assisted when guidance officer numbers are cut from about 60 to 40 and speech pathologists are three fewer than for last year?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is a debate that occurs around the definition of the needs of those students and the role that those specialist service providers play within our system and those involved in the assessment and referral process and those who attend to problems and the way in which we deploy our staff, particularly the ancillary and other support staff in our schools. One should not ignore this, as do those who advocate a continuation of what has occurred in the past rather than embracing new approaches to ways in which we support the group of students in our schools who have vastly differing needs and degrees of disability. We need to look at the more than \$4 million that has been expended in recent years in our methodology, services and multi-disciplinary approach for dealing with students with severe behavioural disorders.

Further, we have provided some 70 councillors in our primary schools where hitherto none existed and none exist elsewhere in Australia as I understand it. They provide services to over 100 primary schools so that the functions that have traditionally been provided have been diffused and we now have a much more comprehensive and effective

way of calling in other human service providers, whether in the Health Commission, the Mental Health Services, CAFHS, FACS and so on. I would ask Mr Boomer to comment on this matter. However, to correct one point made by the honourable member, she referred to a cut in speech pathologist numbers. I know of no such cut proposed by the Education Department. We have a difficulty finding people to take on some of the positions as there is a demand for them, particularly in respect of our requirement that some of our staff serve in rural locations. However, there is certainly no diminution of numbers in our head count.

**Mr Boomer:** The calculation of guidance officer salaries for 1992 proposed in the GARG submission is based on an analysis of the number of students who will need specific consultation. That figure has been placed in context with the whole range of people we are now providing within schools and across schools to handle students with learning difficulties and behavioural and management problems. In the context of the guidance officers proposed, we need to take into account the fact that we now have 200 senior school counsellors, 70 primary school counsellors, 30 project team members, 3.5 inter-agency referral managers and a number of cluster-based salaries in student behaviour management. We have a comprehensive array of support to supplement the work of guidance officers.

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

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I wish to ask a supplementary question in respect of special education students which the Minister may wish to take on notice. What is the waiting list and the waiting time for speech pathology services in each of the five areas?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I indicated just before lunch that there was no diminution of effort in the area of speech pathology. In fact, I have since ascertained that there has been a slight increase in resources in the budget for that area, but I will be pleased to obtain that information for the honourable member.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** On page 157 of the Program Estimates we see that the Government will spend \$59.5 million on children who are disadvantaged in a socio-economic sense. Of that amount, \$1.2 million will be spent on curriculum development and advisory services. I refer to a recent Education Department publication entitled 'Social Justice and Poverty—A Training and Development Package for CPC to Year 7 Schools' produced by the Curriculum Directorate in June 1990. The introduction to this document makes clear that all staff in schools need to be exposed to the package through a workshop program. It outlines the State Government's general social justice strategy and indicates that staff are 'obliged to implement the Government's social justice strategy'. The document then states:

It is the responsibility of schools to ensure that all students achieve equality of outcomes.

I refer to page 5 of a supporting article by Basil Moore (1987). It is important to have this on the record so that the Parliament knows how this amount of \$1.2 million is being spent on curriculum development. The article, which is a critique of capitalism, states:

The first is that they [the winners] interpret 'equality' to mean not equality of outcomes but equality of opportunity, that is, people are not equal at the end of the race but at the beginning. And they employ the tortuous logic that because one can all can, that is, because I made it, all can make it. The truth in any competition, like a race, is that it is not possible for all the competitors to win. Because one wins the others cannot. They must lose.

So equality, interpreted as equality of opportunity, leads to the inevitable and perfectly logical conclusion that only the best can

win. The losers lose because they are inadequate—they have inherent weaknesses. That is, the 'fault' that produces 'losers' does not lie in the nature of competition but in the personal qualities of the 'losers' themselves who are not up to the rigours and demands of competition. Losers are seen, in contrast to winners, as inherently inadequate. Thus the winners distance themselves from the losers and thus also distance the culture of affluence from the culture of poverty.

Given the social and political dominance of the winners, it is inevitable that their ideas too will have social dominance. That is, it is inevitable that within the culture of poverty itself the 'losers' will also come to see themselves as inherently inadequate.

That is a quote from a quite substantial article entitled 'The Culture of Poverty' by Basil Moore (1987). Given the actions of the Minister and his department in this area of curriculum development for the socio-economically disadvantaged, does he accept that, if a new Government with a different outlook and policy from that espoused in this package were elected in South Australia, it would be entitled to ensure that all teachers were trained and developed in accordance with this goal in line with that new Government's policy and philosophy? Further, does the department have any record of the number of teachers who have already been exposed to this training package and of the number of children who have received the 'benefit' of it, and what has been the response of teachers to the package?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think the honourable member has just sealed up the rest of the afternoon in terms of philosophical debate on where our schools are heading and, indeed, on the relationship between the school, the family and the broader community. I suggest that the honourable member and her Party are seeking to ascertain some ideological ground that has so far eluded policy development amongst conservative Parties in dealing in the past with disadvantaged groups in our education system. It somewhat disappoints me that conservative forces are so ready to denigrate social justice strategies that are being attempted by various Governments at both State and Commonwealth level in this country.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I just asked a question.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member quoted from a text and asked me to comment on it. Obviously, that is why she quoted it. I am trying to give a response.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The Minister will direct his remarks through the Chair and the member for Coles will cease interjecting.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I have never seen this text, so I do not know the full context in which it is being quoted. Nevertheless, I think it should be said that the role that the school plays is only one factor in the growth and development of life opportunities of children. The first and fundamental role is played by the family itself, and the influences of the family are obviously substantial.

The question is: what additional value can be given to life opportunities by the education process and by additional programs within schools? I think that is the crux of the programs which we have developed in our school system and which have been developed in many other school systems of this type. I will ask Mr Boomer to comment in a little more detail about the specific nature of these programs in the context in which the question has been asked.

**Mr Boomer:** The article that has been quoted in this document is by Basil Moore, who is not a member of the Education Department of South Australia, so his views cannot be taken as being the policy of the Education Department of South Australia. Whilst that article is of interest, I am sure that many of us would want to do a critique of it. I could see areas where I would take argument, so it certainly does not represent the views of the Education Department of South Australia.

The important part of the social justice strategy that has overtaken the particular document that has been quoted is the social justice strategy for the Education Department of South Australia which could not be seen to be ideological in nature. One would hope that on a bipartisan approach to it all citizens would agree with the three planks of that social justice strategy, which are simply that over the next five years we will pursue three particular goals with regard to all children: first, to increase the attendance of children in schools. Clearly, if children do not attend school it is very hard for them to achieve outcomes of any kind, let alone equal outcomes, so we will target that area. In relation to participation, having got children to attend school, it is clear that we must keep them there through to year 12, and the statistics clearly show that those who leave school before year 12 are finding it more difficult to enter worthwhile occupations.

Thirdly, we will be targeting attainment. It is not assumed that every child will achieve equal outcomes. The achievement we are looking for is to have a more equitable distribution across groups of students. If for example, it could be shown that the schoolcard children in South Australia are somewhat behind the normal in regard to attainments, one would think it would be an admirable target to bring those children up to the level of attainment as a grouping compared with the norm in South Australia. Therefore, in those three areas of attainment, participation and attendance, the social justice strategy is being put forward.

I believe that 'equal outcomes' is a misleading term, because it suggests rather glibly that all children will achieve the same kind of educational attainment. Nevertheless, the South Australian Education Department should be and is aiming to stretch each child to the utmost capacity and, where there are clear systemic differences in the group outcomes of students, we would want to look at the reasons for that and redress the inequities.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I am not sure that the Minister or his officers heard my questions. I asked: does the department have any record of how many teachers have already been exposed to this training package, and what is the response of teachers to the package? Can the Minister or his officers address those two questions?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** We will have to check on the extent of the training programs to which the honourable member refers, and what the response has been to them. As Mr Boomer said, in effect, that document is now somewhat dated by more recent documentation.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** What were the vacancy rental costs for the Education Department in 1990-91? How much of those costs relate to employee housing, and how much to vacant office accommodation?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is a perennial question which relates in some way to the policies of the Government Employee Housing Authority. It is also a requirement of the Education Department that we hold properties for teachers through that authority during the Christmas vacation period so that housing is available when it is vacated at the end of one school year and tenanted at the beginning of the next school year.

Therefore, I think that the figures we are quoting should be put into that context. It is not simply a matter of some inefficiency in the system, if that is the inference that the honourable member is making in relation to this: it is a matter of prudent management of the resources and provision of accommodation for our employees who serve in the non-metropolitan areas of the State. I ask Ms Kolbe to provide the precise figures.

**Ms Kolbe:** As the Minister mentioned, we need to hold houses for teachers, particularly in some country areas. However, the length of time that houses are vacant is minimised, and that is a function of good management. We have done an analysis from 1979-80 to the current year and, whilst there was an increase from \$179 112 to \$407 000, if we convert that into constant dollars, which I think is an appropriate way of dealing with this matter, we find that in 1979-80 the value of those dollars expressed would be \$527 000 whereas, at the moment, the amount set aside is \$407 000.

As I mentioned earlier, we are keeping the minimum rental that must be carried within each budget year, and very great scrutiny is made of all the houses that are available. If they are no longer required, they are disposed of, and one must consider that in some country areas, whilst normally one would consider that hotels or motels would be alternatives, they would be very costly. Also, in some areas where we have houses, hotels and motels simply do not exist. Therefore, there is little alternative other than to keep these houses and, of course, during certain times of the year the houses would be vacant.

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** The Program Estimates (page 163) refers to establishing new forms of secondary schooling to cater for the full range of students, including adults. How does the Education Department cater for adults who wish to return to studies? How many adults are involved, and what links does the Education Department have with other providers that may overlap in this area, such as technical and further education?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is a most important development in education in South Australia. We live in a community in which the majority of people have not been able to complete a full secondary education, as we see that being available today. Ten years ago three out of 10 South Australians proceeded to year 12, which I think we would now see as a basic formal education in our community. At present some 75 per cent of students proceed to year 12. Therefore, there are now many people in the community who want to return to formal educational opportunities, to use it as a stepping stone to new career paths, and to enter tertiary education and further training opportunities. Therefore, the Education Department and the Department of Technical and Further Education have agreed that the provider in this area should be the Education Department, and a series of schools have now been established to provide the appropriate ethos and resources so that we can develop these new opportunities for mature age students.

It is interesting to see the great success of that group of students and, indeed, the impact that it can have on communities. For example, the school at Elizabeth West had an intake of fewer than 30 students into year 8 some six years ago, and this year it has an enrolment of some 800 students. The academic achievements of those students have been quite outstanding. It has required the provision of additional facilities at that school; for example, a child care centre has been established on the school campus and has proved to be a very important asset. It has allowed many women caring for very young children to pursue studies that would not otherwise be available to them. The senior colleges that have been established are Edward John Eyre in Whyalla, Elizabeth West, as I mentioned, Thebarton, Marden, Hamilton College, at Christies Beach and LeFevre, and at Thorndon High School.

A network of these schools has been established to provide for mature age re-entry programs. Approximately 4 000 students are currently enrolled in those programs and, as I say, that has meant that, overall, whilst there is still a decline

in the number of secondary enrolments in our education system, there is a growth factor, which I think has been an important element in that area of education. It is interesting that, of the 4 000 enrolments, an analysis conducted in May this year showed that 1 700 are full-time students and 2 600 are female students; 15 per cent are aged between 15 and 17 years (having broken their schooling for one reason or another and then returned to it); 25 per cent are aged between 18 and 21 years; 26 per cent are aged between 22 and 30 years; 34 per cent are aged between 31 and 55 years; and 88 per cent of high schools and 80 per cent of area schools had one or more adult enrolments.

So, there is also a phenomenon that has spread among other schools throughout the State. In fact, 3 000 mature age students—the equivalent of 2 000 full-time students—are enrolled at senior colleges and campuses in that network of schools specifically catering for that group of students. Approximately 500 full-time equivalent students are enrolled with the Department of Technical and Further Education during 1991. It is anticipated that next year that group of students, or the equivalent number, will transfer into Education Department programs.

**Mr GROOM:** How does school restructuring work? How many schools have been closed in the past five years, and how many new schools have been built in that time?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is an important aspect of the life of the Education Department at present. We have gone through a very substantial enrolment decline. There has been a decline of some 53 000 students in our schools in the past 15 years and yet we are required to build a substantial number of new schools each year. There is a limit to how far one can stretch the resources within any total bundle of resources. In addition, we have to look at the quality of educational offerings in those schools with very diminished resources. So, the school communities themselves are asking for these reviews, because they can see that by entering into reconfigurations of schools—whether that involves a closure, amalgamation or sale of parts of the property, thus liberating resources to carry out rebuilding programs—we can provide much better educational opportunities for students in those localities.

Right across South Australia there is a spirit abroad involving this rethinking of how we provide for students. No longer are people prepared simply to continue on as they always have with a traditional school and allow its numbers just to decline and then see important resources being lost to the school. Indeed, to have primary school class numbers in the metropolitan area of six and seven means that they cannot form sporting teams or participate in extra curricular activities and so on.

So, at the present time, many schools are involved and the number depends on the interests of the local school community. This is not a phenomenon of the 1990s or the late 1980s. In 1934 there were 1 035 schools in South Australia. At the present time there are just over 700 schools in South Australia. So, almost half the number of schools now exist compared with 1934 and I hazard a guess that the population was then probably half, or less, than it is today. The number of schools closed and opened since 1986 may be of interest to the Committee. In 1986 we closed four schools and opened six; in 1987 we closed six schools and opened seven; in 1988 we closed eight schools and opened five; in 1989 we closed seven schools and opened four; and in 1990 we closed 13 schools and opened six. So, one can see that, whilst we have closed a very small number of schools in that five year period, we have also opened a very large number as well. As I said, that is in a period of very substantial enrolment decline.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to page 37 of the Estimates of Receipts and to the item relating to fees. How many overseas fee paying students are there in the Government education system and what fees are involved?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Education Department in South Australia was given Government approval several years ago to embark upon a program in four secondary schools providing for full fee paying overseas students in year 12. That program has proven to be quite successful. Indeed, quotas were set on the number of students that would be allowed to attend the four schools and those quotas have been achieved. In fact, approval has now been given to establish new quotas and also to include year 11 students in the program. There has been a substantial drive to market educational services, particularly in South-East Asian countries. In the past five or six years, South Australia has participated in that marketing exercise.

The primary responsibility for this program falls within the ministerial responsibility of my colleague the Minister of Employment and Further Education. However, the Education Department has a niche market in this area and intends to pursue it, because not only are we providing for full fee paying students coming to South Australia but we are also providing examination systems through the Senior Secondary Assessment Board to a number of schools in Malaysia. So, I think we have an ideal climate in which to establish our *bone fides* and to market our programs and link them with the programs that are being provided, particularly in Malaysia but, potentially, in other countries. These students come primarily from Hong Kong and Malaysia, but also from the Solomon Islands, Kenya, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Sweden, Indonesia, Germany and China.

The four schools involved in the scheme are Marion, Glenunga, Campbelltown and Morialta High Schools. Glenunga High School is also providing the International Baccalaureate program. The anticipated surplus from the program at the end of the 1991 calendar year will be about \$142 000. The program is very much in its infancy. It has commenced in a very satisfactory way and it shows great potential. Apart from the educational opportunities it provides, it is, of course, important for relations between Australia and those countries to which I have referred.

**Mr SUCH:** In today's *News*, on page 11, a report emanating from Brisbane states:

Teachers can be sued for defamation over comments on report cards and school records a leading educator has warned. Lecturer in Education at Queensland University of Technology, Mr Doug Stewart, told teachers to be sensitive to the new possibilities of defamation. Mr Stewart said an international treaty, recently signed and ratified by the Federal Government, paved the way for students to sue teachers for comments on report cards. The treaty, from a UN convention on the rights of the child, says children have the right to legal protection against unlawful attacks on honour or reputation. Teachers said they should be able to give an honest appraisal without threat of legal action.

In the light of that report are any fears held by the department that legal action may be taken in respect of report cards?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I have never had it put to me before that there was a problem in this area and I have seen plenty of frank comments in report cards. That is what parents and students expect of teachers. The only people who are immune from prosecution for defamation in the workplace are politicians. Everyone else is subject to the defamation law for what they say in the workplace. If people go beyond the bounds, they are subject to those sanctions that will follow.

There is a well established process in our schools for reporting to parents on the performance of students, and that has been in place for many years. It has never been

raised with me as a problem and I have never heard of a case where a teacher has been sued in that context. This is probably speculation. If it were a problem, we would consider it. I do not know whether the Director-General or Mr Boomer might comment on this as they have more practical experience. I have not had the opportunity to read the *News* yet, but I will in due course.

**Mr SUCH:** I have had the opportunity to look at that paper. My second question also relates to a report in that paper which has emanated from Sydney. It states:

A phone-in by more than 1 000 New South Wales parents has shown families with children in public schools want the State education system to go back to the educational basics. The survey, conducted by the School Education Ministry, represented the first stage of a national campaign known as the effective schools project. The project, launched by the Federal Government in July, aims to provide States and Territories with the most comprehensive study on community requirements and attitudes towards schooling.

Many Government school parents believed discipline and basics such as mathematics, spelling and reading were important. More than half who phoned in ranked a strong, enthusiastic principal as the primary factor determining a school's effectiveness. About 65 per cent said they believed good schools were those which concentrated on basic literacy and numeracy skills coupled with discipline and stringent school rules.

Is the Minister surprised by the results of that survey, does he agree with the sentiments of the parents, will he indicate whether a similar survey has been or is planned to be conducted in South Australia and, if there has been a survey, what were the results?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think that every survey I have seen of this type taken over the past 10 years has concluded that people want to see strong leadership and effective discipline in schools. They also want to see an emphasis on the fundamentals as they perceive them in our education system and curriculum offering. What surveys do not tell us is the more in-depth analysis of what it means. We now have an opportunity to go a step beyond the simple survey, important as that is as a tool for gauging public perceptions of our schools and education systems generally.

The project was launched not by the Federal Government but by all Governments in Australia, both Federal and State. The effective schools project is an interesting and important opportunity to gauge a deeper public perception of what makes an effective school, what things they value in our school system and how we can achieve that more uniformly across all our schools in varying circumstances.

The Federal Government, in the May statement, provided \$10 million over the next three years for the effective schools project, the first stage of which we are embarking on now. That involves the distribution of this booklet and videos which will engage a broad cross-section of our community in a discussion and then an analysis of what they perceive makes an effective school.

It is pleasing to hear people talk about the importance and role of leadership in our schools, the role of the principal in particular, and the criteria they would attach to that role and so on. We in South Australia are embarking on a substantial program to get the views of a broad cross-section of our community. We certainly value the views of those directly involved in the education service and those directly connected with schools, but we would be doing the community a disservice if we did not involve the broader community in this discussion and debate, so we intend to do that.

This is not a Government exercise in this context; it is the Government asking an independent body, the Australian Council for Educational Research, chaired by Professor Karmel, which has a very high reputation for educational research in this country, to conduct this study and make

recommendations to all Governments for the continuation of this program over the three years and to work out ways in which the available funding can be expended to establish good practice and models so that we can all share that information in improving the quality of education.

**Mr SUCH:** As a supplementary question (I readily accept that there is more to education than so-called basics), can the Minister guarantee that our schools are dealing adequately with those basic curriculum areas?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Yes, I can. Unfortunately, a simplistic view taken by people—often people who do not have a direct connection with schools—is that a good dose of what is called a return to basics will fix up all the problems in our community. Never before have young people leaving our schools been more literate and numerate. Employers and responsible leaders in industry will tell anyone that. There are young people who do not have the attributes and skills that we would desire, but that is a very small number, and often there are reasons why that has occurred. In the main, each year our standard of education has been enhanced and more and more young people are participating for a greater length of time in formal education.

The rhetoric about a return to the basics is simply not factually based. However, we should not lose sight of the fundamental values in our education system and we should ensure that they are embraced in every school. That is what this State has done through its curriculum guarantee. It is a guarantee of students' rights to access certain fundamental and basic components that we consider important for education in modern Australia. That is embraced not only in that statement, but in 'Educating for the 21st century' and other prime documents which formulate the policy of education in South Australia. This is a very important point and I will ask the Director-General to comment briefly upon it.

**Dr Boston:** The point that I would make is that we not only assert this, but we have set up a process for measuring it through levels of attainment which will establish what a child should know and be able to do and understand in each of the key areas of learning, including the so-called basics. We will be able to aggregate that information and report it on a State basis, and will be able to report to parents on learning outcomes specifically. We are ahead of the rest of the nation in that way, and we believe that this will clearly confirm that the basics are being dealt with here better than ever before.

**Mr SUCH:** A number of teachers have expressed concern to me about some aspects of the operation of the Education Review Unit and, in particular, I am told that some reviews of schools in country areas are costing taxpayers up to \$10 000 each. I am told that up to seven people spend up to a week reviewing one school. When one considers the salary, accommodation and travel expenses of seven people, it is possible that the cost is getting close to the figure that I mentioned. In fact, I was told that for one recent visit to a West Coast school five officers turned up in five separate cars. I have also been told of an example where, after a busy day's reviewing of a Mid North school, about seven reviewers decided that the local food was not up to standard and hopped into two Government cars and drove 50 kilometres south to a more up-market restaurant. My question to the Minister is: what guidelines exist, if any, regarding the use of Government cars during ERU visits and was this example within those guidelines?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The importance of the Education Review Unit should not be denigrated in that way, by allegations of that type. If it costs \$10 000 to review a school thoroughly, then I would say that that is \$10 000 very well

spent indeed. I think that is what the taxpayers of this State would expect of us as a department, and the outcomes of that are worth many more times that amount, given that it costs \$4 853 per student to provide for their education in this State, in the budget that we are considering in this Estimates Committee.

If that attack on the Education Review Unit has been advanced by a teacher, then the honourable member ought to ask the teacher what it is that he or she fears by the activities of the Education Review Unit and what his or her real concerns are, rather than trying to find some way to attack that unit and its staff. I guess this has been a hazard for school inspectors over the years and other people who have responsibilities to ensure that the policies and standards that are set for education in our schools are in fact achieved.

I will find out what the guidelines are for the use of Government vehicles. I think they are probably well known in this place. If officers want to go somewhere else to have their dinner, and it might be appropriate that they do so, if they are in a rural community, then presumably they do so at the level of recompense that is provided for officers when they are on duty in non-metropolitan locations. Obviously, the Education Review Unit is constantly travelling and so those rules would be well established.

*Mr BRINDAL interjecting:*

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! The member for Hayward is not yet on the question list. The Chair would like to direct a question to the Minister in relation to social justice matters. In looking at the document 'Statistical Summary' which the Minister provided this morning (and if I have missed anything in this it is possibly due to the fact that I have only had it for a couple of hours, and if there is some nuance that I have not appreciated I am sure that the Minister will acquaint me with it), I have had time to take out a couple of examples, and in looking at Craigmere High School, for example (and I do not single it out for any reason other than it is a typical school in the district), it has an average number of students per teacher of 14.5 and a recurrent expenditure per student of \$3 751, and if one picks another school, at random, like Marryatville, one discovers that it has 14.1 students per teacher and \$4 368 of annual recurrent expenditure. In social justice terms there does seem to be some *prima facie* difficulty with that.

If one looks at the capital works program, one notes that for amalgamation of Hamilton secondary school, which involves the consolidation of Glengowrie and Mitchell Park High Schools, some \$3.4 million is scheduled for that project. The Windsor Gardens High School project, which involves the amalgamation of Strathmont and Gilles Plains High Schools, amounts to \$3.075 million, but if one looks at the Inbarendi College, which involves the closure of one whole school and the refurbishment of several other schools, \$1.85 million is allocated for that. In strict social justice criteria, would the Minister like to comment on those relevant recurrent and capital expenditure items that I have drawn at random from the budget?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I draw the honourable member's attention to page 8 of this statistical information booklet. I think these are the same comments that appeared previously, with the same cautions about trying to draw the comparisons that the honourable member has drawn. For example, I think the honourable member referred to phase 1 of the capital works program for Inbarendi College and phase 2 is being provided at the present time, and so on. So, it depends in a way on how these works are staged and some of the histories of particular schools. For example, Marryatville High School is a special school which takes

students on a State-wide basis who are assessed through long established criteria, and so on. So, there are reasons why there are discrepancies between schools. Some of the small country schools, for example, have recurrent costs per student of \$6 000 and \$8 000—and up to \$16 000, and that is because of special circumstances.

These figures are meant as a guide. I think it is appropriate that that information is made available, but we need to be careful how we draw these comparisons. If the honourable member wants to pursue that, I think we need to look at it case by case and then go through a proper analysis, for the appropriate conclusions to be drawn. Historically, we have schools that have been built at different times. They have been built to serve different needs and those needs may have changed. We are refurbishing as a result of amalgamations and school closures and this is coming at different stages in budget cycles, and so on. This is all done within the context of social justice programs, and all this has to be put together before one can draw any conclusions that the honourable member may have in the back of his mind.

**The CHAIRMAN:** So, the Minister is indicating that, for example, with the amalgamation question, phase 2 will bring that college that I referred to up to a level consistent with the funds available to other amalgamations in this State.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** That is how we see it, Mr Chairman.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to pages 162 and 163 of the Program Estimates and to the general provision of primary and secondary education. What forms of national collaboration is South Australia involved in and how will they benefit South Australian students?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I can say that there is now a very substantial degree of cooperation between the States and the Commonwealth, since the Commonwealth divested itself in its role in relation to curriculum, for example, and provided for those resources to be transferred to a structure known as the curriculum corporation, of which the States and the Commonwealth are the proprietors and on which management body representatives of the education community in this country are involved, both Government and non-government providers as well as parents and union representatives. That is a very important and quite exciting development in the provision of curriculum support for schools across the nation.

For far too long our education systems have been separated and going their own way. Now, there is a national dimension to many aspects of education. Some degree of cooperation has been valuable in the past but it has certainly not been at the level that we now have. It crosses the political boundaries and it is something that will bring great benefit to us. As I said earlier, it gives a national dimension to other elements of education, particularly in industrial relations and in relationships with employer groups in this country, business and industry leaders, and so on. I invite Mr Boomer to briefly comment on the developments in this field of national collaboration.

**Mr Boomer:** The national collaboration in curriculum has moved rapidly over the past two years since the so-called Hobart declaration of Ministers of Education in 1989 which agreed to a set of national goals. We are now moving to establish national subject statements and profiles on an agreed basis across all systems for eight areas of curriculum which happen to coincide with the areas of curriculum as set out in our charter.

South Australia is taking the lead in national curriculum development, in developing national statements in English

and health, and contributing to national statements on society and environment. We are also collaborating with other States in other subject statements. The national collaborative exercise allows us to get economies of scale and also to share the best quality curriculum materials across Australia. South Australia has contributed to that exercise by developing the national Australian language levels materials, which are now adopted across all States.

We have developed ESL materials which have now been agreed for national publication by the curriculum corporation. We have coordinated a national program on distance education in languages. We have taken a lead in a number of gender equity programs for the education of girls, and we are taking the lead also in a careers education working party. All these are examples of the kind of collaboration which is going on and which allows us to effect economies while not diminishing and in fact increasing the quality of the materials by sharing the best in Australia. For example, because we believe there is no need for us to reinvent the wheel and, given that its content is excellent, we recently took a document on information skills from New South Wales. That is an example of the kind of economies that we are effecting.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to the proposed closure of the Seaton North Primary School. A letter written by the Chairperson of the Seaton High School Council to my colleague the member for Albert Park states:

We note with interest the 'Progress Report on the Review of Primary Schools in the Western Suburbs' by Mr John Cusack, Director of Adelaide Area, dated 11 September 1991. While it is sad to see the closure of Seaton North Primary School, we understand the need for rationalisation of schools in this area. We are particularly heartened by the statement that 'proceeds of the sale of West Lakes High School be used in part to assist in the upgrading of Seaton High School facilities'. We see this as the opportunity to bring our facilities up to standard for the next generation or two. Indeed, we not only expect that very significant upgrading will occur, as has already happened in a number of other schools, but we also strongly believe it is our right.

If and when Seaton North Primary School is sold, what benefits will accrue to other schools in the western suburbs, and what schools in particular will benefit?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Coming out of this exercise that was referred to this morning are a number of benefits for that community. Seaton North Primary School had reached a stage where obviously the local school community believed that it should not continue to exist and, in fact, it could be renewed as a school building if it formed part of the facilities available at Seaton High School. It is interesting to note the spin-off effects of a decision of that type and how we can regenerate our resources to provide for new and emerging needs in our schools.

As a result of the clustering arrangements and the decisions that have just been announced, along with those in the LeFevre Peninsula area just recently, we have the collocation and subsequent amalgamation of the Seaton Park primary and junior primary schools with upgraded facilities in the form of a resource centre, activity hall and administration areas; and upgrading of the facilities at Findon Primary School, providing better recreational facilities, an activity hall and resource centre, more general learning areas and an upgraded administration section.

The closure of the Seaton North Primary School, to which the honourable member referred, accompanies an upgrading of Hendon Primary School and the provision of pedestrian lights on West Lakes Boulevard, as students are required to cross that road. Hendon Primary School will receive improved general learning facilities, an activity hall and ground landscaping. Seaton High School, to which the honourable member also referred, serving the same community,

would benefit from this proposal since it could expand into the current Seaton North Primary School site. Upgrading of the Seaton High School would also be partly funded by the sale of the West Lakes High School site, which was a decision taken some time ago. So, the generation of funds by the rejuvenation of our schools in that area and the resources that have been freed up by doing so will allow us to carry out a number of important programs in the schools to which the honourable member refers.

**Mr BRINDAL:** My question is prompted by your first question, Mr Chairman, and is related to social justice. I refer to page 157 of the Program Estimates under 'Socio-economic Disadvantaged'. The Minister knows that I have long had an interest in this area. I was dismayed when I heard that a Jenny Coates, a social justice coordinator at Mansfield Park Primary School, had addressed a conference of teachers who were returning after extended leave. She said that she had been appointed as social justice coordinator at that school because the considerable sum of money that had been poured into priority projects—and I remind the Minister that Mansfield Park Primary School and Mansfield Park Junior Primary School have been priority project schools since the inception of the program by the Whitlam Government in the early 1970s—had been wasted, hence her appointment.

Last year I asked the Minister a series of questions about the better application of priority project funds to schools. I was dismayed and disheartened to hear Ms Coates' comments and I ask the Minister, in terms of the budget estimates, to comment on the officer's comments, to say whether he believes they are true, and to tell Parliament whether he has come up with any better way of applying perfectly good money to schools when officers of his department claim that about 20 years of money—the application of good Commonwealth money—has been wasted.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am certainly not going to comment on hearsay by the honourable member: it is probably taken out of context, anyway. I would have thought that money expended under that program has been relatively well targeted and has not been wasted. There are substantial needs in that community. They have perhaps changed in nature somewhat over the decades since the establishment of that program under the Whitlam Government. In fact, the ability of that school to adapt to the very substantial pressures that are placed on it have perhaps been evidence to the contrary. Certainly, my visits to that region have indicated some very careful targeting of programs and valuable outcomes in support for both teachers and students.

More importantly as well is the ability of the school to relate to the broader community, because the school and teachers alone cannot solve the inequities and the great difficulties faced by families and children living in that locality or in a number of metropolitan Adelaide localities. One cannot come out with a glib statement and draw the sorts of conclusions that the honourable member has about these programs. Indeed, over the years I have fought to ensure that we retain that Commonwealth funding.

All of that would go if there was a change of Federal Government, and we would see the implementation of the stated policy in respect of the provision of vouchers for education and the Commonwealth would quickly move away from the specific targeting of education programs. There would be a walking away from the social justice policies that we have established to a system of people accessing education in a totally different way—a way that has introduced class orientation to education in the United Kingdom and a State system that is simply a provider of residual education. There could be no greater attack on the

educational opportunities of the poor than a continuation of that system in this country.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I do not question the Minister's philanthropic commitment in respect of the socio-economic disadvantaged and social justice. I have consistently in this place questioned the administration of the program, and it was that to which I directed my question. Similarly, I do not expect the Minister to rely on my second-hand information, but 50 people were present at that conference, as was the officer of the department in question. I therefore ask the Minister whether he will seek to confirm—and he can do so by conferring with the 50 people in attendance—whether such a statement was made and, if indeed it was, will he answer my question?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will make appropriate inquiries.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I refer to 'Special Education' and students with learning difficulties on page 157 of the Program Estimates. Liberal members have received many letters recently from schools and from parents experiencing concern over a lack of support available for students with learning difficulties. I will quote from one letter signed by the principal of a primary school. I will not mention his name because of the fear of leaving him vulnerable to one of the visits alluded to in the press. The letter, addressed to his local member, states:

The council of the [school] wishes to add its collective voice to the growing number of parents and school communities concerned by the New Education Department policy 'Students with Disabilities'.

We would like you to consider the following points and either raise the matter in Parliament or support the cause when it is raised. While the policy is aimed at offering support to some 4 per cent of the school population, who are recognised as disabled, our concern is with the forgotten children, those who have some form of learning difficulty. This figure is widely accepted to be at least 12 per cent. These learning difficulties may include named problems such as dyslexia, or a range of symptoms such as short-term memory problems, visual perception difficulties, etc. These children often develop behavioural problems and/or lag more and more behind their peers.

With the advent of this new policy, guidance officers will be decreased in number and restricted to working only with those with recognised disabilities. It should also be noted that the 4 per cent disabled are not being adequately catered for in terms of individual assistance and support in resources in 'normal schools'. This does not include learning difficulties. Where does the line between disabilities and learning difficulties fall? It is not good enough to 'in-service' some teachers regarding this problem. In these days of increasingly overcrowded classrooms one cannot realistically expect a classroom teacher to effectively cope with the range of learning needs she/he will be faced with and cater to the needs of the individual without further assistance.

It is these children, who are otherwise normal, healthy children, who leave school early, often becoming street kids or a member of the growing group of bored, unemployable youth who turn to vandalism or petty crime. Surely these are the very children, those 'at risk', of whom Greg Crafter spoke when he assured us 'at risk children' would be targeted for support.

He quotes the Minister's comments in the *School Post* of February/March 1990. The letter continues:

While no one would claim that the severely or multiple disabled child is over catered for, it is of great concern, and surely a question of social justice, that so many children with learning difficulties are not offered some assistance. Who is to diagnose the child with a learning difficulty? Seeking a private diagnosis and assistance is very costly and beyond the reach of most. A Government diagnosis is available from CAFHS, Flinders Medical and the Children's Hospital but what happens next? The Education Department's policy is not to offer any extra help to these children. It is ironic, and of concern, that this Education Department would then be in breach of the Government's own social justice policy by refusing assistance to these disadvantaged children—the very children who would have been diagnosed as needing assistance by that same Government's Health Commission.

Let us strive for that illusive 'clever country' by offering learning, emotional and social support to these children who are not intellectually or physically disabled but are only experiencing

some learning difficulty. We thank you for your anticipated support in this matter.

Will the Minister provide an answer to that cry for help which is representative of so many other letters we have received? Will the Minister provide a table showing the total number of children classified in the special education categories 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in our schools for each of the five areas of the Education Department?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member should reflect on the situation in which he finds himself when he is being asked to run errands for people in the department who are seeking to aggregate resources to their programs or to their view of the world. The reasons why someone should want to write a letter like that to a member and ask them to raise it bears reflection. The honourable member is offensive to officers of the Education Department when he makes the allegations about maintaining anonymity of the author of that correspondence, because people who use devices such as compliant members of the Parliament to not vet that information, seek out the facts and then try to respond to that information in an appropriate and factual way do a disservice to the profession of teaching, to the quality of leadership in our schools and particularly to that vulnerable and clearly disadvantaged group in our schools.

The reality is that some people do not want to accept the facts and are shying away from the programs that are being established and the resources that are being provided to cater for the needs of those students. They would like us to establish some criteria and categorisation, however that can be done (and I do not think that it can), into various groups with a money figure alongside it. They would have control over categorisation of those students and aggregate resources so that there would be greater resource allocation, as though that were the answer to every need of that group of students in our schools.

To simply heap resource upon resource in order to provide higher quality education is a fallacious argument, which is what the honourable member is clearly advancing on behalf of the person who wrote to him. It ignores the provision of 70 new positions of counsellors in primary schools (and I presume that it was a primary school to which the honourable member was referring). The whole implementation of the Stratman report dealing with severely behaviourally disturbed children and the enormous price tag that has been provided to implement that report, the inter-agency structures that have been established, the withdrawal structures, programs and so on: all indicate a very substantial increase in the effort and resources but, most importantly, in developing programs which are more appropriate and effective in dealing with this group of young people not only at school but in the preschool area also—an area which, prior to this Government coming to office, was very neglected indeed. In fact, those young people were alienated in the main from preschool programs, but that is no longer the case. That can substantially enhance their capacity to participate fully in primary and now in secondary school programs in this State, but I think that this matter should be put on the record, so I will ask Mr Boomer to comment as well.

**Mr Boomer:** Under some criteria we could categorise up to 25 per cent of the student population as having some form of learning disability. The question arises: what is the role of the mainstream classroom teacher? If we continue to hive off at one end those people with high intellectual ability and at the other end those categorised as having some kind of learning problem our teachers would be teaching perhaps only 50 per cent of the children. Clearly, this is an untenable situation, so the Education Department is

faced with determining the normal requirement for a mainstream teacher.

Over the years we have seen many examples of very capable teachers who can teach the full spectrum of students. This requires the capacity to group students, to give individual attention and to team with other teachers in various ways. The Education Department ruled that, by and large, the mainstream teacher should be able to cope with most of the learning aspirations and capacities in a classroom from the very bright to those who are struggling a little. We have to draw a line at an appropriate place and then provide the resources.

Clearly, we can demarcate those who are severely and multiply disabled, but there is a grey area at the lower end and the problem is where to draw the line. I suspect that some of the people who are seeking further assistance for children with learning difficulties would want to stretch that category to 25 per cent. That calls into question the capacity of teachers generally to take the full spectrum of students before them. Clearly, regarding learning difficulties or problems of a more severe nature guidance officers are called in, and schools, within the resources provided to them under the curriculum guarantee, are able to deploy teachers to give extra support where necessary. However, as the Minister has implied, there is not a bottomless bucket of resources, and one needs to be very careful in making definitions.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** In terms of resource implications in our system there are 732 special education teachers and 163 school assistants who support students with disabilities, and this budget provides for an additional 29 full-time equivalent salaries.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I take no objection to the Minister's accusing me of acting at the behest of the employees of the Education Department. I willingly acknowledge that I will act at the behest of anyone who is an elector in this State and who has the right to seek this Parliament's forum and the best actions of the Government of the day. I make no apology for that, and I never will.

However, I believe that the Minister does those people a disservice because I quoted but one letter. Based on fact, I can tell the Minister that every school in my electorate believes that children, who are differently abled, by a commendable process of mainstreaming embarked on by this Government, are in fact being sold short in the resourcing department. That is not happening at only one school in my electorate but at every school. I feel sure, Mr Chairman, that if the Minister were to ask you or any other member in this place about the opinion of schools in their area of the service that children who are differently abled and with special needs are getting, he would receive the same answer.

I acknowledge what the Associate Director-General said when he stated that it is a normal requirement of a mainstream teacher. It is a fact that until recently it was not a normal requirement for mainstream teachers to take differently abled children. A whole series of schools and institutions exist to assist the differently abled. I repeat, every school will say that, when children who are differently abled and who have received specialist support in the past have been placed back into the mainstream teaching service, the provision of service for those children has not been adequate, and children are being sold down the tubes as a consequence. That was the purport of my question to the Minister, so I ask him to consider again his answer.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am not denying the honourable member's right to raise issues: I am saying that he should look also at the factual situation and make those representations within the context which I believe they deserve if we are to have a responsible debate on these issues rather

than simply to convey what I believe is one view of a situation and which is not correct in its total context.

I have just indicated the additional expenditure provided under this budget. We still have all our special schools and, in addition, we have a structure which has evolved and which calls in other agencies to support our schools and teachers. I think that is a very valuable and important development in this area, one that, obviously, will grow in the years ahead. One simply cannot deny the additional resources that have been put into this area and, of course, in the context indicated by Mr Boomer with respect to the mainstream provision that we have now and have always had in our schools to deal with students with some form of disability.

In a political context, we have achieved this priority for this group of students despite strongly competing priorities for resources. When one considers the statement by the Opposition that it would reduce the public sector by 9 000 positions and the impact that that would have on education—and one cannot see how education could be absolved from that proposal—one sees that there must be an impact on our ability to provide for these specialist areas and sensitive programs.

I believe that the Education Department and our schools do an outstanding job using the resources available to them to provide for the needs of this group of students. I am constantly amazed at the way in which ancillary staff can be used in conjunction with teaching resources and other specialist facilities to support children with disabilities in our schools, often in remote localities of the State, so that children can stay with their families rather than being separated. There must be nothing more traumatic for families than to be separated from disabled children so that they can access educational opportunities.

So, I put on record my appreciation of the work done by our schools and teachers in this area. It never has been, and never will be, easy, and it will always be a great challenge for our teachers.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Section 7(1)(d) of the Education Act provides that the Minister:

Shall have the powers, authorities, duties and obligations prescribed by or under this Act.

Section 49 provides:

The appeal board shall exercise such jurisdiction as is conferred on the board under this Act or any other Act.

In that context, I direct a question to the Minister. Last week the Teachers Appeal Board handed down a decision in the case of the demotion by the Director-General of the principal of the Parndana Area School. An article in Saturday's *Advertiser*, referring to comments of the Director-General of Education, Dr Ken Boston, stated:

The Director-General of Education, Dr Ken Boston, has attacked a decision by the Teachers Appeal Board to revoke the demotion of a Kangaroo Island principal. Dr Boston said the ruling reinstating Mr Max Smith as principal of Parndana Area School with only a reprimand was 'far too light' a penalty. . . . Dr Boston said reprimanding Mr Smith threatened to damage the 'standing and reputation of the State school system'. He could not understand how the board could treat 'so lightly' behaviour in the State school system which would 'outrage' the community if it occurred in an independent school. 'It is my profound belief that the same high standards must apply to the State school system,' he said. When asked if he would apologise to Mr Smith, who had faced being forced off the island, Dr Boston said 'absolutely not'.

Does the Minister agree with the publicly-stated views of his Director-General?

**Mr De LAINE:** Mr Chairman, I ask for your ruling about what this has to do with the budget's line and the Estimates Committee?

**The CHAIRMAN:** The honourable member is entitled to ask questions that relate to matters of policy as well as

to matters of dollars and, as far as I can see, this is a matter of policy within the department, which is within the Minister's competence to answer, if he wishes.

**Mr BRINDAL:** In particular, does the Minister believe that the reprimand was too light a penalty, as was outlined by Dr Boston? Will he comment on the part of the Act to which I alluded, that is, his responsibilities for the Act, the Director-General's responsibilities under the Act, and whether, in fact, the Director-General has exceeded his responsibilities under the Act in public statements he has made in the press?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** No, I do not believe that the Director-General has exceeded his powers. In fact, he has been carrying out the obligations required of him under the Education Act. It is neither the duty nor the function of the Director-General to apologise to someone who, it has been decided by an appropriate judicial tribunal, has behaved in a manner contrary to the provisions of the Education Act.

In fact, the duties of the Director-General are to comply with the requirements vested in him under that Act, and he has done so. The fact is that the tribunal has replaced his level of punishment with another level of punishment, and it is appropriate that the Director-General may like to comment from time to time on those decisions. He is vested with a very grave responsibility to maintain the highest standards of behaviour in the teaching service. The community expects nothing less than that of the education system and, if that is challenged—and I think it would be unusual if it was not challenged from time to time—and the court determines otherwise, it is appropriate that some comment be made.

But I think the important issue is that the Education Department, through the Director-General, has accepted the decision of the tribunal. I concur in that, and the principal will be punished in the way recommended by the tribunal. Obviously, that will occur. As I said earlier, I think that the statements made in the judgment and in the evidence before this Committee help to clarify the standards of behaviour required of, in this case, our school principals. In certain circumstances it adds to the general knowledge and body of law in this area, which is of guidance to all our employees in conducting themselves in the community. Therefore, I do not see this issue in any other context than that.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to the description of secondary education on page 163 of the white book and the review of education for the very important area of 11 to 15-year-old students. What form is this review taking, and what stage has it reached?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The review of junior secondary education has commenced and, obviously, will take some time to complete. It is being conducted under the leadership of Dr Vivian Evers, who is the former Director of the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia and a highly regarded educator in this State. I think it complements the inquiries into the other elements of our school system that were conducted in the 1980s in South Australia, that is, the primary review. That was a far-reaching review which reported in the late 1980s and which was conducted under the Chair of Marilyn Gilbertson and the President of the Primary Principals Association in this State. I think that that has given a very fine focus to primary education in South Australia. We have the finest primary schools in this nation, and I believe there is a higher degree of satisfaction with the outcomes of that review and the programs of our primary schools.

The work of the inquiry into post-compulsory education and tertiary entrance requirements under the Chair of Mr Kevin Gilding has given us a new emphasis in the area of

senior secondary education in our schools, so it was appropriate that we then looked carefully at those intervening years. That is now taking place. There is some concern in the community now that the new South Australian Certificate of Education is being established—that its impact will flow into those junior secondary years and that we need to prepare ourselves in order to better accommodate what we want to achieve in those senior secondary years, and to provide those opportunities so that the pathways which are articulated—for example in the Finn report—and which can lead to further training, tertiary education and employment are also better provided for in those junior secondary years. I ask Dr Boston or Mr Boomer if they would like to add a comment, as this is quite an important area.

**Dr Boston:** We see this as a very important initiative, one which is proceeding on target. A general reference group has been formed to provide advice and comment for the reviewer, and it consists of parents, business, unions, health and welfare sectors—which interrelate with education—and, of course, representatives from schools. At present an extensive consultation process is taking place with schools, identifying exemplary practice. Importantly, students' viewpoints are being sought as well as the viewpoints of other members of the community. There is an extensive review of the literature and research statistics, and there is consultation, with national and international expert groups.

I believe that we are the first of the States to review education in those critical middle years between the primary and upper secondary areas. As the Minister said, both of those areas have been reviewed in this State, and we believe that the review will lead to far-reaching recommendations which will be of great benefit in improving educational outcomes of 11 to 15-year-old students.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Changes that have now been introduced or contemplated by the Government place great weight on the administrative computing capacity of most schools. As the Minister would know, schools have had computing hardware for some time, but are still awaiting software for administrative changes. I understand that the department needs at least \$2 million so that it can go to tender to purchase the software for the schools administration computing package. I also understand that at a very recent departmental meeting great doubt was cast over the possibility of the department's finding the \$2 million required. Concern has also been expressed in schools that without this software it will be further delayed until next year. Does the Minister agree that this software package is needed by schools? Can the Minister indicate whether the \$2 million is available for the software—or an amount in that region? Can he also indicate when the software package will be provided to schools?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** A great deal of work is being done in the department on the computerisation of our administration. With such a diverse organisation, that is quite a complex issue. However, that work is well under way and, as the honourable member has said, provision has been made in recent budgets for the development of both hardware and software packages. A number of facets are associated with this, certainly for administrative purposes but also linking in with the development of the new South Australian Certificate of Education packages, for example, dealing with career paths as well, which is also well advanced. That work is being done by SSABSA as well. So, there is a number of facets to the development of these programs. Of course, a number of non-government school providers will also want to access the software because of the interrelated structures that we have in South Australia between the

Government and non-government sectors. Ms Kolbe can perhaps provide more detail with respect to these matters.

**Ms Kolbe:** Indeed, we have done quite a lot of preparatory work and the hardware component of the whole project has been out in the schools for some time. The school achievement record has been processed on those systems. The software, which is the subject of the question, can be purchased in various ways. The specifications have been completed, as has the feasibility study, and we are moving to the final stages for approval of the system as a whole. However, depending on the phasing in of various components it is a heavily modularised system, because we are talking about a range of modules to cater for all needs at the school level. We are looking at prioritising these modules. In that sense, one could talk about expenditure from anywhere near \$300 000, but I think \$2 million is rather high. For the acquisition of the software, we would talk about an upper limit of \$1 million, if we were to purchase the whole system. However, that would not be possible, because it would not be possible to implement the whole system in one financial year. So, we are looking at a staged implementation, which has, indeed, always been the plan, and until we have been out to tender the actual cost of that component is very difficult to assess. Once we have been out to tender, we will know the actual cost of the software.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** In the light of the information about the modular structure of the system, can the Minister tell the Committee whether any schools have already been allocated funds for the purchase of software? If so, how much has been allocated for this purpose and how long have the schools held those funds?

**Ms Kolbe:** No school has been allocated any amount for software. The schools have had the money for hardware and some of that has been purchased to undertake some of the work that has been undertaken in the schools. The software is intended to be purchased centrally by the department and it will then be provided to the schools.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Members of the Opposition were given a briefing earlier this week by the head of the Premier's Department about the proposed information utility and the productivity gains that would result from a substantial system to serve all of the Government sector. Can the Minister tell the Committee what is the relationship between the expenditure now being proposed by the department for the software packages and the prospect of a largely new system, which would render such hardware and software out of date in a very short time—or one assumes that that would be the case as a result of what the Opposition was told?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think that is a very important development that is in its embryo stage at present, as has been explained to the Opposition. Certainly a good deal of work has been done by officers in the Education Department on the development of that new strategy and our relationship with it. Ms Kolbe will briefly detail that for the benefit of the Committee.

**Ms Kolbe:** We are in constant contact with the developments of the information utility and another system which is the subject of development, the human resource management system, into which the school administrative system will interlink. That is likely to be taken up by the information utility and made available to all of Government. The school administrative computing system is unique to schools. At this time the utility has not expressed any interest. However, should that be the case, through the contacts that we have that will emerge and it will come under the umbrella. Because of its uniqueness at this point no benefit is seen by bringing it under that umbrella.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer the Minister to the Program Estimates, page 156 to 160, and the Auditor-General's Report, page 55. Will the Minister give the names of the 27 committees which have been abolished in the past year and say which further 107 departmental committees are to be abolished as part of the Government Agency Review Group's proposals?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I shall have to take that on notice. The changes which are occurring in the management structure of the department are moving away from the committee model that has perhaps overly dominated the development of policy and various related units and levels within the department. One feature of the new proposed management structure is a much flatter management model which will not require these elaborate structures to communicate between tiers of administration within the department. With more modern communication technologies, that flow of information and sharing of comment can occur in different forms. I shall be pleased to obtain what information is available on that matter for the honourable member.

**Mr De LAINE:** My question refers to social justice as it relates to the socio-economic disadvantaged program on page 169 of the Program Estimates. What social justice initiatives has the department implemented and what others are planned for the coming year?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Education Department has participated very largely in the development of the social justice policies of the Government which are articulated in the social justice budget documents each year. The department has been developing within its own structure a social justice policy and also a reallocation of priorities and flexibility to achieve that within our own resources and individual schools.

The social justice budget provides for these programs which have a full year effect of \$10.094 million. They include the appointment of extra attendance officers dealing with school attendance and other behavioural problems associated with school attendance; the extra 29 special education teaching staff to which I referred earlier; and the development of the northern area multiple disabled unit, to which I referred earlier in a general way in answer to the member for Hayward about programs for disabled students in our schools. We have also targeted programs in our new schools redevelopment and upgrades in disadvantaged areas which amount to \$7.4 million. They should not be read out of context with the ongoing programs which we have developed under previous social justice strategies and the commitment we have within our own organisation for social justice priorities within the staffing formula provided to schools by way of second tier staffing and our school card program, transport concessions and so on. All have a social justice component attached to them.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to Aboriginal education, being an area dear to my heart with the type of electorate that I have: referring to page 156 of the Program Estimates, will the Minister advise the Committee about some of the resources that are being provided to improve the educational opportunities of Aboriginal students?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is a very important area of education, because we know that Aboriginal students do not participate in our education system to the same extent as other students. Their attendance rate is much lower and much of the educational opportunity that Aboriginal students are accessing appears to be inappropriate. That may account for a high level of truancy and lack of interest in the programs that have been provided. We also need to take account of the mobility of many Aboriginal students who have come from rural communities into urban situa-

tions and instability and other difficulties within the family life of young Aboriginal people in our community. The department has a multifaceted approach to this. It must also provide education programs in remote areas for those living on traditional lands. All of this comes under the Aboriginal Education Unit, under the direction of Mr Paul Hughes, who is regarded as one of the leading Australian educators in this area.

Some of the programs and additional resources which are provided for Aboriginal students in this State are the result of Commonwealth Government programs that come through the Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education. The sum of \$3.6 million is provided for Aboriginal education programs which involve the employment of Aboriginal education workers, curriculum development, training and development costs for teachers, assisting community initiatives and support costs for Aboriginal and Anangu schools—the traditional school program.

Provision is made in our State budget for 50 Aboriginal education resource teachers to implement Aboriginal education programs in mainstream schools. There is \$350 000 for the shortfall in Aboriginal education worker salary costs—the additional salaries that the State picks up. The Commonwealth capped some of those components of the salaries hitherto wholly paid by the Commonwealth Government. There is also provision for the salaries of five Aboriginal youth strategy workers as part of the social justice strategy, and there are costs associated with staffing, curriculum, capital costs and support staff for Aboriginal and Anangu schools programs. That is a brief summary of some of the additional resources provided in programs specifically targeted at Aboriginal students.

**Mr De LAINE:** There is another area of particular interest to me because of the background of my electorate and the high proportion of people, particularly students, from non-English speaking backgrounds. I refer to the lines relating to migrant education and multicultural education at page 156 of the Program Estimates. How does the Education Department support improved learning opportunities for students from this migrant background?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member will be aware that in his electorate, for example, at The Parks High School, there are quite extensive programs for Indo-Chinese students; and the development of an after school hours program to provide an alternative and additional mode of tuition for students has been very successful in that district. Perhaps we could look at other schools where we may successfully introduce programs after traditional school hours time.

The problems associated with making sure that there are enhanced learning opportunities for students from non-English speaking backgrounds are ever changing, as well as being dependent upon migration programs and waves of migration programs as well. So it is often quite difficult to predict the numbers of students, from where they will come and what their specific needs will be. It does require a good deal of flexibility in planning and also in targeting some of the Commonwealth resources that are provided in this area as well. South Australia also receives a very large proportion of young people coming in as unattached and attached minors under the refugee program, and quite a disproportionate number compared with Western Australia or Queensland for example, and they have certain needs of their own. I invite Mr Boomer to comment briefly on the nature of the provision in this area.

**Mr Boomer:** In relation to the range of programs in the area of support for students of non-English speaking backgrounds, the frontline of that support is six secondary lan-

guage centres and six primary language units for new arrival students. It is very important that we provide for those people who are arriving and allow them some initiation into the language. We currently cater for 394 secondary students and 361 primary students. We have also developed a program that is creating great interest nationally. It will be produced by the curriculum corporation. It is a program to assess student needs in the area of English as a second language. That assessment program will be implemented in 1992. The ESL and mainstream teacher development course is a course that aims to assist mainstream teachers in the teaching of English as a second language. To date we have inducted 1 500 primary and secondary teachers into that course.

The new South Australian Certificate of Education will have a course in English as a second language for stages one and two, and this is a very important part of ensuring that those who come to the country, perhaps in their secondary education stage, will be able to go through and complete a satisfactory certificate. In addition to this, a good deal of research is going on into what we are calling supporting school environments. That is helping teachers to develop good practice in supporting children for whom English is not their first language. The new arrival students are now part of our social justice strategy and planning, and we are continuing to supply support for multicultural education and ESL. That will now be through the teacher and support centres. That work will continue next year.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I would like to ask a question about the attainment level testing. The Minister has referred a number of times during the day to the standards of our primary and secondary school students and to the fact that the basic skills have improved in recent years and also that our students have amongst the best levels in Australia. I assume, then, that significant amounts of data must be available from the attainment testing levels program. Can the Minister give us a timetable for the full implementation? How long is it expected to take to achieve and can he indicate what data is available now from the attainment testing program?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is obviously an area where a great deal of activity is under way. We have been doing this for a number of years. In fact, it is interesting that the reading and writing assessment project in South Australia has been picked up by a number of other jurisdictions as an ideal model to be used. This is perhaps in contrast to the standardised testing approach which seemed attractive some time ago, to provide for some data in this area, and I might say that the standardised testing approach to student assessment that was in vogue in the United States seems to be losing credibility reasonably rapidly. So, we have opted for a more qualitative approach here and, of course, we want to link into what is happening at a national level as well, because that will provide very substantial benefit in the flow of information, for the benefit of students right across this country. I ask Mr Boomer to briefly outline what is happening in this area and to perhaps provide some time lines.

**Mr Boomer:** The attainment levels have not been implemented into our schools as yet. They will be in all primary schools as from the beginning of 1992. As the Minister has pointed out, over the past three years we have had an intensive survey of writing and reading, and the public reporting of data on that work will occur at the end of this year. We have had some interim reports, and I think in this place last year I was able to report that from surveys we had found that children were doing very well indeed on the conventional uses of language but that we needed to look

to improve the quality of the assignments that we were setting students. The data from that survey will be available to us, for use in schools and for public analysis towards the end of this year.

The attainment levels project—which I might say has now been taken up as the national model—is a project whereby for the eight areas of the curriculum, as set out in 'Educating for the Twenty-first Century', we are specifying six levels of attainment from year 1 to year 10. Having specified those levels of attainment and giving examples of the standards that we are looking for at each level, we will put that into the schools as from the beginning of next year, and in 1992 we will be completing a first run survey of literacy, English and mathematics, and then in a period between 1992 and 1995 we will progressively bring on line surveys of the other areas of the curriculum. So, in brief, the time line is: 1992, implementation into primary schools and, 1993, implementation into secondary schools. We have held back implementation in secondary schools because of the preoccupation at the moment with the South Australian Certificate of Education. So, by 1993 the attainment levels will be in all schools and the system will then progressively gather data, and I should imagine that in our reports of this kind every year that data will be available, comparative data of statistics.

The attainment levels will allow us to look at the overall pattern of performance and we will also be able to extract from that the comparative performance of students on school cards and the comparative performance of Aboriginal students and students of non-English speaking background. So, rather than perhaps relying on social justice rhetoric and attainment, we will be able to set ourselves quite distinct targets for improvement. I think this will do a lot to increase teacher reflex in art and science teaching and the showing and sharing of work to get more and more students up to the mark.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Mr Chairman, I want to ask a question about your question. In the response I heard no mention of the Education Review Unit. Does the ERU do any reviews of students' curriculum, performance or attainment in schools? If not, what does it do, what is its function?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will ask Dr Cuttance to comment, as he is the Director of the Education Review Unit. As to the progress this new unit in our education system, 127 schools were reviewed in 1990 and a further 104 schools were reviewed in the first two terms of this year. Public reports of between 25 and 45 pages in length have been prepared for all schools reviewed. I am not sure whether the honourable member has read any of those reports, but they do indicate some of the areas in which the unit is concentrating its activities.

The honourable member may be interested to know that the reports for the 127 schools reviewed in 1990 contained 1 283 recommendations for schools to implement. The bulk of these recommendations to schools dealt with issues such as school development planning, including curriculum, decision-making, school organisations and regulations and requirements. The impact of the 1990 reviews on school development is also now being evaluated so that there is a follow-up procedure to see that those recommendations are attended to as well. I ask Dr Cuttance to refer to the more specific detail sought.

**Additional Departmental Adviser:**  
Dr P. Cuttance.

**Dr Cuttance:** Briefly, the Education Review Unit is taking an approach to the evaluation of the performance of schools that has not really been undertaken anywhere else previ-

ously. It builds on what has been undertaken in the United Kingdom for some time through Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI), but has gone a considerable distance beyond that. In fact, HMI is coming here early next year to look at the possibility of transplanting the system that we have developed to the British system.

We are looking at it as very much orientated towards a quality assurance system for schools so that our task is not so much the old inspectorial task of looking at the performance of individuals in schools—whether they be teachers or students—but considering whether or not the schools as organisations have appropriate structures and processes for themselves to ensure that students and staff are performing well.

Our focus is on management, on the development of the school, on the outcomes for students from the development process, on the curriculum provision and review in schools and, finally, finish on the quality of student work. However, our primary task is not, as I said earlier, to look at the performance of individual students; it is to look at the performance of students as a group, so to speak—to look at the quality of student work overall. That is one of the differences between what we are doing and what the Student Attainment Levels Program will do. That program will look at individual students and then perhaps provide other information for groups of students. Our program focuses on the development of the school and on the performance of the school in terms of what that does for student outcomes.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I refer to the Capital Works Program 1991-92, page 24 and subsequent pages. It should relate to Capital Receipts on page 20, but I can find no line there, which is the basis of my question. I wish to quote from yesterday's Estimates Committee B examination of the Minister of Lands, when Mr Peter Lewis, MP, stated:

I wish to draw attention to off budget paper activities of the Government. This question relates to the Urban Projects Trust . . . He went on to talk about something said earlier that morning. It related particularly to the sale of land opposite the Henley Beach High School and, in answering a question in relation to that land, Ms Stimson, presumably of the Lands Department, said:

From our assessment we believe that by undertaking a joint venture and subsequently selling developed allotments rather than making a broad acre sale of undeveloped allotments we are able to gain a better financial return for the Government, particularly the Education Department, which is the major beneficiary from the sales of these allotments.

The member for Henley Beach (Mr Ferguson) then went on to question the Minister about lands that he believed will be surplus to requirements at the back of Findon High School and asked whether the same joint venture arrangement could apply. In view of that I was interested to follow it through but could find nowhere in the budget where moneys such as that from the sale of land and buildings actually appear. Where does it appear and, if it does not appear, why not?

In respect of the Oaklands Park Primary School site, was such a development of blocks considered as it was R1 residential land? Why was that site sold as a broad acre allotment, apparently to the detriment of the department's financial best interests if the statements of the Minister of Lands in Committee B yesterday were correct?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member misunderstands the process that occurs within my portfolio area. When a property becomes surplus to our requirements, it is declared surplus and offered in accordance with the schedule, first, to other Government agencies and instrumentalities and, if none of them wants to purchase the property, the Lands Department disposes of it. The Education Department is not a developer and does not engage in some sort

of value adding process. My recollection of the sale of that land adjacent to Henley Beach High School is that the Henley Beach council bought it and carried out some sort of land swap.

The Education Department received the proceeds from that sale. The council was a priority purchaser under the guidelines for the disposal of Government property to Government instrumentalities. In other words, local government has the ability as a classified applicant to purchase before property is offered on the public market. In that case the council became the developer. I think the land was rezoned or was already zoned in that way, and the council subdivided the land itself and built the houses itself.

It is important that the process be understood. When it was decided to close the Oaklands Park Primary School, from memory, the land was declared surplus and offered to agencies and instrumentalities, one of which purchased it. However, in that case the land was rezoned, which increased its value, but I do not have the specific details. The Education Department does not intend to be a developer of its properties. If such work is to be done by the Government, it would be done by the Lands Department, or the property is sold by that department to those who may want to make subsequent changes to its existing use.

**Mr BRINDAL:** As a point of clarification, I understand the process. I am trying to ascertain where the moneys received from the sale of such property appears in the budget papers or statements. If the Lands Department is selling it on behalf of the Education Department, obviously the Minister wishes to maximise those profits. However, there does not appear to be a mechanism for the Minister to ensure that the Department of Lands obtains the best possible deal as to the return from sales.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Under the system developed we simply transfer the surplus land on, and the role that we would play in acting as a developer or the like is not open to us in that situation. If that work is to be done, the Lands Department may well call in consultants or other Government agencies, for example, the Special Projects Unit of the Premier's Department. That is not a role that we would seek to play. If the honourable member believes that we can make some quick money on being a developer, I point out that it is a risky exercise for Government agencies such as the Education Department. We are providers of education services and not developers. We gain by disposing of properties as soon as they are declared surplus to our requirements and by receiving payment for them. Under Government policy that money is reallocated to educational programs and our objective is to have them removed from our books as quickly as we can and obtain payment, the proceeds of the sale, as it is in our interests rather than waiting for a development process to occur which could take some years and thus halve our capacity to upgrade facilities and develop programs.

In the Estimates of Receipts, to which the honourable member refers, the figures asked on page 43 for the sale of land and buildings in respect of primary and secondary education, indicate that the actual amount last year was less than we estimated, and the estimate for this year includes the carry-over from last year. Because of the depressed property markets and delays in being able to declare property surplus, there is a carry-over to the full year effect for this year.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I refer to 'Curriculum Services' on page 157 of the Program Estimates. The *Australian* of 13 May this year ran an article by that learned educator and commentator on educational matters Dame Leonie Kramer. Under the heading 'Launching National Curriculum by

Stealth', Dame Leonie discussed the national curriculum and a new ABC television series entitled *Lift Off*. The article states:

The most telling comments on *Lift Off* have, however, been made by Garth Boomer. Associate Director-General of Education (Curriculum) in South Australia, Chairman of the Directors of Curriculum, former Chairman of the Schools Commission, and once an ardent proponent of 'progressive' education whose philosophies, I believe, caused most of the problems we are now trying to solve.

Mr Boomer's enthusiasm is, as usual, unbounded. He supports and extends Janet Holmes a Court's announcement that the *Lift Off* series will be 'part of the primary and preschool curriculum in every State and Territory next year'. He thinks that 'the tradition of having separate State curriculums is reminiscent of the railway gauge problem', a statement which, apart from its inherent absurdity, is surprising coming from someone who was once a strong advocate of school-based curriculum.

He also says this is the first time 'that education systems will work hand in hand with a television series as part of the national curriculum' and that it has come at the right time since it will 'give impetus to the push for a nationally cohesive curriculum'.

Does the Minister now accept that the policy of Mr Boomer and other educationalists of the 1970s and 1980s, supported by Labor Governments for most of that time in supporting school-based curriculum, was a mistake which has lowered the quality of education for our students?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am not sure who writes the honourable member's questions, but they are becoming more and more abstruse as the afternoon goes on. It is very hard to follow the logic of Dame Leonie Kramer, and I read the article a number of times. Does she support the national collaboration that is occurring in this country with respect to the provision of curriculum? I would have thought that her political ideology embraced that concept. I believe she illustrates some confusion in her thought processes on the issue. She seems to be scratching around for some arguments to make her article controversial, which is the problem that columnists have in order to retain readership rather than trying to apply academic rigour and consistency in the line of argument that comes through the articles of the columnists that I enjoy reading. Dame Leonie Kramer provides an interesting comment on what is happening in education, normally in the tertiary sector. However, I welcome her interest in the schools area, also.

I think there is a change in prevailing attitudes with respect to curriculum development in this country, but I do not think that it is along political lines at all. The decisions that have been taken by the Australian Education Council illustrate that very clearly. It is about how we can develop an education system more appropriate to the needs of this nation as we move into the next century and how we can most efficiently use the resources we have for the benefit of each other rather than treating education in a colonial mode as we have in the past and seeing it provided solely within State boundaries with the occasional foray into some cooperation between several or more of the States and to have the Commonwealth playing an external role and imposing its views upon the States' education systems by means of financial carrots and developing structures that work in a form of collaboration with the States but are certainly very much Commonwealth owned and build up, rightly or wrongly, divisions between the Commonwealth and the States.

We have seen changes in the development of national collaboration in the curriculum and assessment models and in the establishment of the Curriculum Corporation based on the goals the Ministers established at that historic meeting in Tasmania. We have seen developments that have occurred on the industrial front with respect to the establishment of wage structures that reach across this nation, the national project and quality of teaching and learning in

Australia with structures between employers and employees, which I think will have a profound effect on the nature of teaching in this country in the years ahead. Of course, the Effective Schools Project which has resulted from this whole consultative and collaborative process has also been very valuable.

It is disappointing that Dame Leonie should try to marginalise the process that has been occurring. She has a national vision of education in this country, and perhaps she ought to apply herself to some of the challenges that we all face, coming from a State viewpoint, and the traditions that we have and with how we can create a truly national dimension to education. We are a small nation of 17 million people. It is likely that the European Community's education system will be more unified than ours, yet it should be much simpler for us to achieve that over the next five or 10 years.

There is a tremendous will, as I understand it, in the European Community nations to bring about collaboration and cooperation in some fundamental areas of education. The EC can see very clearly the benefits that it will give to the career opportunities of not only young people and the most efficient use of the talents available to them in those nations but also their collective wealth and capacity to develop their own economy. We cannot ignore that in this country. The longer the States remain divided in the field of education, the longer it will harm our national objectives and provide a weakening effect on our capacity to develop our national assets, intellectual assets and strength as a trading nation.

**Mr BRINDAL:** In asking a supplementary question, I assure the Minister that I learned in his schools and that I am capable of writing my own questions. Lest the Minister's answer be construed as obtuse, I seek further clarification. The Minister would be well aware that South Australia is the only State in which the Director-General is responsible for curriculum, yet the Australian Council of Education, to which the Minister himself alluded, is formulating national curriculum guidelines. My understanding is that the Minister is a member of the Australian Council of Education and that the Director-General is not. This strikes me as being a rather fascinating conundrum: does the Director-General give the Minister his riding orders when he attends meetings of the Australian Council of Education in matters with respect to curriculum? That is what made me look at the situation in terms of amendments to the Education Act. I think the Minister has explained something of his vision of a national curriculum. Would he like to add to that, and does he believe that the national mapping exercise will be implemented substantially or wholly in South Australian schools?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** A lot of what is occurring at the national level is based on experiences in South Australia and a number of other States. South Australia has traditionally been a leader in the development of curriculum materials and in relation to assessment questions about which we were talking earlier. So, we enter into these negotiations from a position of strength. Indeed, I hope that we could benefit intellectually and financially from our participation in these national moves, because I think we have a product and a capacity to further develop and market products in South Australia and to provide assistance to, for example, the Curriculum Corporation, as an agency that contracts with the States to develop those materials.

With respect to the mapping exercises, we are proceeding reasonably rapidly down that line. There are very extensive consultative processes engaged in that exercise but, in essence, they are building on the existing programs in the States. So,

the question is not whether we change what is occurring in the States, or in a State such as South Australia, but whether we add something to it. That issue needs to be addressed within the development of a curriculum as the results of those mapping exercises come to hand.

So, I do not see any of the dilemmas to which the honourable member alludes, certainly not with respect to the respective roles of the Minister and the Director-General under the Education Act. I think that is a very appropriate structure in a responsible education system so that it is devoid of political interference. Indeed, the structure that is evolving at a national level is also devoid of that Party-political type influence that can completely disrupt the status and the effectiveness of a curriculum in a particular jurisdiction across this country. Unfortunately, that has been all too frequent in the past. We have managed to avoid all that in this State by the wisdom of our legislation. I will ask the Director-General and Mr Boomer whether they would like to comment briefly on some of the more detailed issues in this area.

**Dr Boston:** It is very important to understand that the national curriculum development that is occurring is national and not Commonwealth. It is arrived at by national collaboration between the various parties to the Australian Education Council, that is, all the States and Territories plus the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is only one member and has only one vote. We are not seeing a Commonwealth agenda being asserted and imposed: we are seeing national collaboration.

As the Minister said, South Australia is taking a substantial lead at the moment. This year, the Minister is Chairman of the Australian Education Council; I am Chairman of the Curriculum Corporation of Australia, which is the board of management responsible for bringing together the collaborative curriculum development; and Garth Boomer is Chairman of the Curriculum Assessment Committee established at the last AEC meeting to do the detailed work and manage the detailed process of national curriculum development. Our view is that if we can buy, say, the curriculum programs and materials for mathematics in New South Wales and science in Queensland, influence their development, and have a quality control presence right from the start as they are developed, buying a quality product that is as applicable to South Australia as to anywhere else in the nation, this will be to our very great benefit.

As I think Mr Boomer said, reciprocally we are taking national leadership in literacy, health and Aboriginal education. It is a very exciting time for national development. There has been no inhibition at all of the vigour and strength of our own curriculum focus, because we are willing and open partners in the process rather than being dragooned into a centrally imposed agenda.

**Mr De LAINE:** How many teachers and ancillary staff are employed in Government schools; what is the present teacher to student ratio and the ratio of ancillary staff, and how do these ratios compare with those of other States?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is probably the most difficult area of education statistics in which to ascertain the factual basis, particularly in recent years when trying to collect data from amongst the States. We probably still do not have accurate information, because education departments across the country are constantly changing the resource level provided to schools as a result of various decisions taken. There have been very dramatic changes to staffing provisions and general resourcing of schools. For example, in Victoria under the recent budget \$86 million was taken out of the provision for schools in that State, and in Tasmania there were very dramatic changes to resourcing levels. Those two States,

together with South Australia, previously had the highest resourcing levels in this country. I think it is now emerging that South Australia has probably the best resourced education system in this country.

A recent statement on radio by Mr Tonkin, the President of the South Australian Institute of Teachers, indicated that he regarded South Australia and Victoria as having the best resourced education systems in the country. That statement was made prior to the recent Victorian budget, which, as I said, saw a very substantial reduction of teaching, administrative and other positions. There is no statistical information to show that, at this stage, class sizes can be compared accurately, but it is my guess that South Australia has the most favourable class sizes in this country.

It is interesting that, in its first two budgets, the Queensland Labor Government brought education resourcing in that State up to the level of the national average. I would guess that it would take the Queensland Government another decade of Labor Government to bring it up to the standard of the South Australian education system. That is the extent to which the South Australian education system is resourced above the national average. If South Australia were to return to the national average with respect to staffing, we would reduce our teaching service by some 1 450 teachers. We would still be at the national average for staffing in schools in this country, and certainly well above the average of the non-government school sector in this State and nationally.

Therefore, I think that the staffing and resourcing of our schools, together with the fact that we pay the highest teacher and principal salaries in this country, indicates the level of resourcing that has been provided in this State by Labor Administrations over a long period of time, and it is able to service very well. Of course, in this budget we have been able to withstand any reductions and, in fact, provide increases in our school resourcing in this State, so it is indeed a very favourable budget for our schools. Certainly, when comparisons are made with other States, we can see how incredibly favourably our schools are resourced, given the current economic trend and climate.

One could also look at other areas. Certainly, it is regarded that ancillary staffing levels in this State are more generous than in other States, and the role that our ancillary staff play is an enhanced one. I point that out as one area, but there are a number of other areas, such as curriculum where, traditionally, we have been resourced well above the national average.

**Mr De LAINE:** Will the Minister explain the significance of the report on young people's participation in post-compulsory education and training, commonly referred to as the Finn report? What part will South Australia play in responding to this report?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** One of the most important reports to be brought down for a long time is the Finn report. I believe that it will have a very profound impact on not only schools but TAFE, our tertiary institutions, and the relationships between those sectors of education and training and employers in this country. It is a very interesting report, and provides the framework for the abolition of youth unemployment in this country and for a place in either education, training or employment for every young person in this country until the age of 22. It has a strategy to see that achieved by the year 2001.

I think that, for a long time, people in this country have been saying that it is wrong that a sector of this population—predominantly teenagers—cannot participate in formal education, training or employment opportunities. In this country we have 450 000 young people between the ages of 15 and 19 who are regarded as unemployed, and

some of whom now receive no social security support, or limited support. I believe that those young people are alienated from the mainstream of Australian society, I think that is a tragedy for us as a nation, and it is a great waste of talent and human resources in this country. It is a great dispiriting factor in the lives of those young people as individuals.

This report can reverse that situation. Within the timetable, of course, a great deal of work is to be done in exploring the implications and methods by which we could see the achievement of those goals that have now been so clearly set out for us. At its last meeting, the Australian Education Council agreed in principle that the report was moving in the right direction. There is some unfinished work in the report, which links to the comments just made by Dr Boston and Mr Boomer about attainment levels. It provides for six areas of key competencies that the report recommends each young person attain as a result of their participation in education and training.

We need to explore those and link them in with the other criteria we have established in our individual school systems as the fundamental basis of the outcomes that we desire for students who pass through these education processes. Interestingly, they are very much modelled on the criteria we have established in 'Educating for the Twenty-first Century' and the key competencies that we want to see young people leaving our schools having achieved.

So, the next Australian Education Council will take this matter a little further. Obviously, it has implications much broader than my Ministry. At a State level, I am involved in discussions with my colleague the Minister of Employment and Further Education, and we intend to place submissions before State Cabinet as to how we might proceed, as a State, with respect to the outcomes of this report. It is giving this area a national vision and, for the first time, it is linking the portfolio of education with the portfolio of social security. It is also linking much more carefully the implications of our social security policies and, particularly, support and encouragement for young people to participate in constructive activity, in education and training in particular, rather than providing financial support for that group of young people simply to stay at home or outside of what I would call the mainstream activities in Australian society. It is well worth every member paying some attention to this report and I think it will be essential to Government activity, both at a Federal and State level for many years to come.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to the extremely successful re-entry program that has been conducted at The Parks High School which, of course, is in my electorate. Will the Minister comment on the Statewide success of this very exciting and valuable program?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am pleased to comment on the re-entry program, which was mentioned earlier, and the after traditional school hours program being conducted at The Parks. That program particularly meets the needs of that student community which finds it difficult to attend school during school hours and which wants to access educational activities in the early evening. As we know, many of those students have had their study opportunities broken—whether it be as a result of migration, involvement in refugee programs, or for one reason or another having to leave school prematurely. That is an indication of how our schools can and need to be adaptable to the needs of the community. It takes the cooperation and leadership of that school to achieve that. It has an excellent principal, who has encouraged this very much and, of course, it has a staff that is flexible in its attitude to the way in which

the working day evolves. There is a lot we can learn from schools, for example, in Singapore, which provide a number of sessions per day and provide supports for students to study in their own home or within their community structures. The Parks, of course, has an excellent library system in which students can also study and gain resource materials.

However, as I told the Estimates Committee earlier, this is being mirrored in a number of other metropolitan schools and in country areas of the State. Every one of those schools has indicated a good deal of success and certainly encouragement to proceed to develop these programs. We live in a community that has not been able, in the main, to access adequate minimal education opportunities and now we want to provide them. As was the case in response to the last question, we want to provide that opportunity for young people in our community, but we also have an obligation to provide access to educational opportunities for mature age students. We do not simply want to steer them into a purely academic stream that would see them all going to tertiary education institutions. This is also for those who simply want to develop their own talents and interests. There are many people who have retired and who want to do some form of study and we need to be able to provide that for them. As TAFE becomes more specialised and moves into a greater emphasis on training, I think we might see more recreational subjects revolving around our school communities.

There are many examples of parents who are studying particular subjects of interest with their sons and daughters in schools. In fact, I met a woman who had studied Italian with her daughter. I met her at the merit ceremony at Government House this year. She had obtained a merit certificate, which members will know is awarded to those students in the State who have achieved 20 out of 20 for a subject. This woman commenced studying with her daughter at home, helping her. The daughter said to her, 'Why not come to school?' She attended school, formally sat the examination and achieved a very high result. That is an indication of the dormant talents there are, and I think we need to provide an opportunity for them to be developed and expressed. The mature age re-entry program does that. It is being provided in that ethos specifically in eight schools in Adelaide and in the country. However, almost 80 per cent of secondary schools in this State—be they high schools or area schools—have some mature age students. So, it is a very broadly spread phenomenon in our community and, of course, we welcome it.

**Mr SUCH:** Given the low cut-off scores for many students entering tertiary institutions to undertake teacher training and the obvious attraction of disciplines such as law, medicine, and so on, has any consideration been given by the department to offering scholarships or other financial incentives to attract high calibre students into the teaching profession in any format?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think few people would want to go back to the bonding arrangements. I am not sure whether the honourable member is one of those people who was involved in those arrangements, but I can certainly recall Alby Jones and Colin Thiele coming to Gawler High School to recruit teachers and speaking to us about the great attractions of a career in teaching. Certainly, many people in the community would never have been able to access tertiary education opportunities if it had not been for the financial support provided through the scholarship and bonding process. We live in a totally different environment today, where there is a surplus of teachers available to us. It is very much

a buyer's market and we have other support structure—in particular, Austudy—for students to enter tertiary studies.

It is a matter of great concern to our country that so many of our most talented students want to embark on some of the more narrow areas of professional life and do not see some of the other professions as attractive. Fortunately, some do and I think our recruitment officers in the Education Department would testify to the very high calibre of many of the staff we are recruiting who are recent graduates. That certainly is explained to me in great detail by the deputations approaching me wanting to see the continuation of employment of contract teachers in our schools. Often they are those who have recently left the tertiary sector and their talents obviously are wanted by those individual school communities but, because of declining enrolments, it has been difficult to keep them in permanent employment.

You have touched on a matter of concern to us, and we have considered a number of ways in which we might address this problem. It is very hard for people in the education system, as the purchasers of the products that come from another sector of education, to influence that process to any great extent. There are four reports or reviews on teacher education in this country. It is very much in the melting pot and it needs to be addressed by this nation. Whilst we have a surplus of teachers at the moment, we may have a shortage at the end of this decade. The average age of teachers in our school system is 45, and a large number of people will be approaching retirement age in the next decade. If current trends continue, we will have difficulties not only in recruiting teachers but in recruiting the teachers we want for our schools. The issues are pertinent and I will ask the Director-General to comment further.

**Dr Boston:** I have little to add except to confirm that it is a major problem which will perhaps loom in the future rather than at the moment because we are not recruiting so many. Our prime objective is to assist the work force to improve. Consequently, training and development with existing staff are a major priority. Like others, I went into teaching at a time when there was a bond. There was the guarantee of a job and it was highly attractive. Teaching as a profession might well have been more attractive then than it is at the moment for a number of reasons. I hope that award restructuring in the education profession will lead to a greater attractiveness of teaching as an activity and that, as our demand for teachers increases, the attractiveness of the position can be turned around. There are no instant solutions. It will be a long, hard battle to achieve real change.

**Mr SUCH:** Two issues frequently arise on school councils. One is the collecting of outstanding debts from parents who presumably are able to pay for books and so on but who choose not to do so; and the other is the perennial issue of the compulsory wearing of school uniforms. As Minister, are you sympathetic to changing the rules or regulations regarding these matters and the operating procedures? There seems to be continuing frustration in school communities on these two issues. When the collection of debts is pursued vigorously, the department seems to counsel against it. The compulsory wearing of school uniforms issue also seems to waste a lot of school councils' time.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I do not think that a change in the law is the way to achieve the end result. With respect to the non-payment of fees, those who cannot afford to pay are covered by the school card, and that is certainly in excess of the school fees. As I said earlier, 30 per cent of students are receiving the school card. It is obviously not a matter that is related to socio-economic difficulties; it is a

matter of people who, for one reason or another—albeit very few, I understand—refuse to pay. That problem needs to be worked through within school communities and explained to those people who simply refuse to pay what other parents or the Government on behalf of a group of parents pay for the basic necessities which traditionally have been the responsibility of parents. There has been a lot of counselling and advice available to school communities experiencing difficulty with that problem. The parent organisations have been quite active in this area. They have certainly been engaged in discussions with me and with officers of the department about policy in that area. As I said, I am not sure that a change in the law is the way to achieve compliance by that small number of people who, for one reason or another, refuse to pay that amount of money.

The issue of school uniforms is a little more complex. Once again, it is a small number of students, often with the support of their parents, who object to wearing school uniform. There is a resurgence of interest in our schools to provide for a school uniform policy and its application. It seems that, where an ethos is established within a school for the wearing of a school uniform, that is quite successful. But, again, the annoyance arises when there is an objector to that. Schools then, of course, develop their own sanctions, and the application of those sanctions often raises some controversy within the school community which is referred back to the school council. It is realised that it is more economical for students to wear school uniform than not to wear school uniform, and that is one of the attractions of it. Another is the image that it creates of a school and the students in that school. That image is important to many parents. I do not think that a change in policy in this area will achieve the desired results.

In Victoria, where there has been an attempt to change policy in this area, there is still the provision, and obviously there would be a requirement for what I term the conscientious objectors. That situation must be dealt with somehow or other. I think the school communities are best placed to work their way through that and to decide how to respond to that very small group of students who refuse to comply with the dictates established within a school with respect to the wearing of the school uniform.

**Mr SUCH:** I take it that the Minister is not supportive of anything that would allow school councils to enforce these policies by way of regulation or operating procedures of the department?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think that school councils do that now. The problem arises when a small number of people object. They have a right to attend the school, so there is a practical dilemma of how to deal with them. I do not believe that expulsion is an option that the public sector can provide. The private school sector can do that. It can say to a student, 'Go elsewhere if you are not going to do this.' We are not in a position to do that. By law, we have an obligation to provide education for students who come to us. It is their right. This problem has to be worked out in the context of each situation. My experience is that probably 99.99 per cent of problems can be resolved at the school council level.

**Mr SUCH:** In relation to the statistical summary made available to us today, I was wondering whether the Minister or his staff would comment on the figures. For example, on pages 24 to 26 there are current dollar costs per student. It would seem fairly obvious that the larger the school the more cost effective it is, although I appreciate that there are educational factors other than costs to be considered. Would the Minister comment on the fact that, for example,

Port Adelaide Girls High School has a cost per student of nearly \$8 000, which is more than double the figure for the very large high schools that I have in my electorate? Does the department have a long-term policy to phase out a school like the Port Adelaide Girls High School, which has an enrolment below 200, and is that in keeping with the department's attitude towards, for example, Goodwood High School, which also has a very small enrolment?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Once again, as I said to the Chairman earlier, I would caution against direct comparisons, and there are some cautionary notes here in the booklet about making direct comparisons. It is interesting that Port Adelaide Girls High School, I think the smallest of the metropolitan secondary schools, has been the subject of a quite extensive review of secondary education in that area of Adelaide, and plans are under way to link and cluster that school with other secondary schools in the area. It was decided that there should be a specialist facility of that type in that area.

It is of concern that there is a very low retention rate of girls in secondary education in the Port Adelaide district. The department believes that that specialist facility is one way of developing programs, although we most certainly want to see many more students access that facility. The comparisons that the honourable member makes, for example, with Goodwood, are not easy to make, because Goodwood in fact was providing a different educational opportunity for a different strata of students. The decision taken to recreate a Goodwood-type program at a number of locations in the metropolitan and country areas of the State, to have an engineering focus for those schools, I think arises out of the experience of the effectiveness of the Goodwood-type program.

The dispute about Goodwood has been about the physical building and whether it would stay there, and not so much about the program. There has never been any doubt that the program is a valuable one, and we are now transposing that program to a number of other locations, as I said. It is interesting that Goodwood has also been targeted by a number of students each year from the private school sector, from schools that cannot provide that specialist program for their students. So, each of these schools that have a high price tag have a particular focus and each is in some state of transition and is being managed in that way.

**Mr SUCH:** I ask a supplementary question while I am on these exciting tables. On page 30 we are told that the Kenmore Park Aboriginal School has an enrolment of 13 and teaching staff of two, and the cost per student works out at some \$13 000 per head. The salaries component is \$144 773. Presumably there are school assistants or some other component. Will the Minister comment on that cost, which seems very high. I appreciate that it is in one of the remoter areas. Also, referring to the Cowandilla Language Centre, that has a cost per student of nearly \$8 000. Can those lines be clarified?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Once again, there are reasons behind all of these, which need to be examined before one can draw conclusions about the appropriateness of the expenditure that has been provided. Kenmore Park is in fact a station property and the school is associated with the Aboriginal and European communities that live there and manage that property. It is a very interesting school. If the honourable member ever has the opportunity to visit those lands he would find it interesting. The driving force behind the school has been a man called Donald Fraser, who is currently the chairperson of the education authority that is involved with the provision of education across the Pitjantjatjara lands.

That school is managing to bridge the difficulties between a traditional education for those young Aboriginal children and a European-style education. There is a clear delineation in that community between the rights and responsibilities of parents and elders in that community and the role of the teachers there. I think that was blurred perhaps under our previous policies. So, it is a very interesting school. For example, one day of the week the children go with the parents and elders into the bush and engage in a traditional form of education, and yet the Aboriginal elders and parents reinforce very much the role that the European teachers have in teaching traditional literacy and numeracy programs, and so on.

It has been proved to be a very successful model in that area. As to the additional expenditure, I am unsure at the moment, but I suggest, as the honourable member mentioned, that it is probably related to the payment of the Aboriginal education workers who play a very important role in the education process. It is a new school that has been built there in recent years. The Cowandilla Language Centre was referred to earlier in a question from the member for Price, about our programs for students who have recently arrived and who have English as a second language. That accounts for the additional funding that is provided in that language centre. If the honourable member requires any further information about specific staffing in those schools, I will be pleased to obtain it.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to page 163 of the Program Estimates and to the establishment of new forms of secondary schooling. Will the Minister give the Committee some information about the Technology School of the Future and the Investigator Science and Technology Centre and about the involvement that the Education Department has with those projects and the number of students and schools that make use of them?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Technology School of the Future has been a very successful initiative of the State Government and it has in its initial stages been used more by teachers than by students, because teachers were very keen to access the facilities there for their own professional development. Since that first wave of teacher involvement, there is now a very constant use by students and teachers. Recently, the Government was able to inject a further \$200 000 into the equipment needs of that school in order to cope with the large volume of students and teachers who were going through the school.

In 1990, 2 000 students attended the Technology School of the Future and 2 200 teachers attended. By August 1991, 4 497 students and 7 212 teachers had participated in programs. Participants have come from over 63 schools in the State. That school has given new insight into the use of new technologies in schools and in our education system generally. That will be supplemented by the Science School of the Future, which is currently being established at Science Park, Bedford Park, which will work in conjunction with the institutions that are being established there and, of course, with Flinders University and Flinders Medical Centre.

That is very much linked with the Investigator Science and Technology Centre, which is to be opened very soon in the Expo Building at the Wayville Showgrounds. That is a quite magnificent achievement by a committee chaired by Mrs Barbara Hardy. It has secured very substantial private sector funding, to see that centre established. It has also received almost \$1 million in State Government support and ongoing support from the Education Department. It brings the CSIRO centre, which was accessed by many schools, into that same location and it will provide over

100 exhibits for students, particularly, to access. Most of them are hands-on exhibits. There are also lecture rooms and other education resources provided there, in addition to the CSIRO centre at the showgrounds.

So, that will become a focal point for tens of thousands of students throughout the year to access science education opportunities in an exciting and innovative way. Together, these three programs, which are in various stages of development, form a unique opportunity for stimulation of the teaching of science and mathematics in our schools. We know that far too many students still perceive both science and mathematics as not important or as unattainable for them, particularly for a large number of girls who do not participate in senior secondary years in the study of science and mathematics. We want to address that situation. We believe that these specialist focus facilities will assist in that area and help to change prevailing community attitudes, particularly on the part of parents and some teachers who have cast students into these destructive and negative role models. I will ask Mr Boomer to comment on these initiatives from an education point of view.

**Mr Boomer:** The significance of these three ventures is that they represent areas which relate in a way to the earlier question about basics. The Finn review, which has just come down, nominates six competencies, including what I think is a new set of basics for Australian education. Language, communication and mathematics are there as they always will be, but we find scientific and technological understanding added to those competencies. Our document 'Education for the twenty-first century' makes it clear that, if Australia is to emerge productively into the twenty-first century, it will be through the exercise of increased higher order thinking and problem-solving skills and application of knowledge.

The Science School of the Future, the Technology School of the Future and the Investigator are all hands-on places where the emphasis will be not just on science as an inert body of knowledge but on science in application. That relates to the wider economic goals of the State in terms of its economic base, which will rely very much on the kind of work that will go on in connection with the multi function polis and the general movement to make South Australia a technological leader in this country.

These are lighthouse places where teachers and students can have access to the best of materials and have visions of the kinds of things that will be technologically available more widely later on. The target for the School of the Future in 1990 was 2 000 students and 2 200 teachers. As the Minister said, that target has been far exceeded. It is a success story of enormous proportions, and we have more than doubled those target figures in 1991. In fact, we now have a queueing system. The work will be a continuing resource for the training and development of our teachers and the inspiration of our children.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to page 168 under 'Isolated Education' and refer to the department's open access education strategic plan. Can the Minister outline details of the plan?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It is a little similar to the situation Mr Boomer just related in that it is exceeding our expectations of use. Certainly, the Open Access College that has now been established as part of the Marden Complex of Education Services has far exceeded our expectations for student numbers. The Open Access College combines the previous Correspondence School with the School of the Air, which is still located at Port Augusta. Not only does it serve students in remote areas of the State, as was previously its predominant nature, but it now plays an integral part in providing educational opportunities for students throughout

the metropolitan area—so much so that the majority of students enrolled at the Open Access College live in metropolitan Adelaide.

It is now the largest school in South Australia. This year enrolments are expected to reach 1 055 full-time equivalent students, which is an increase of 180 students over last year. We expect that more than 1 300 full-time equivalent students will enrol in the college in 1992, which will be a 23 per cent increase over this year. The major increase is in the year 12 enrolments. That means that many more students who are staying on at school to complete their 12th year or to participate in a year 13 program want access to subjects that are not available at their school. There are other students in the community who are not attending a school but who still want to do some study, and the college provides for those students.

It is clear that the standard of tuition provided is of a high quality, and the success of students attending the college is testimony to that. A couple of years ago the South Australian Rhodes scholar was a former Open Access College student. The college has a new organisation structure that is more appropriate for the services it provides, and I will refer to that briefly. It has a School of Distance Education covering reception to year 10 and a School of Distance Education for senior secondary years. Both of those schools previously comprised the South Australian Correspondence School. The School of Distance Education covering reception to year 7 will go up to year 10 next year, and in 1993 it will go up to year 12, and it will be delivered from Port Augusta. (previously the Port Augusta School of the Air). It has an Anangu Aboriginal Schools Unit, and it has an Open Access Materials Unit which was previously within the umbrella of the Correspondence School. It also has responsibility for Outreach Education Services, including the education services provided at a range of public institutions, for example at the South Australian Museum, the Art Gallery, the St Kilda boardwalk, the CSIRO, the centre I referred to just a moment ago that is transferred to the Wayville Showgrounds, the Zoological Gardens, Parliament House, the courts and so on. The estimated recurrent expenditure for the 1992 school year is \$12.68 million.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to 'Isolated Education' on page 168. Is there any intention by the department to use DETAFE's recently developed video conferencing system to broaden curriculum choice for isolated students?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The Education Department is working in cooperation with the Department of TAFE to develop new technologies for teaching purposes. The Education Department has used a range of technologies, including the DUCT system. That telephone teaching system, which has been used traditionally, has proved to be successful. We also extensively use faxes in conjunction with the DUCT system. We are developing, and have successfully used in a number of locations, our own microwave system for beaming images between schools. We have interactive white boards whereby there can be an exchange of written information visually between two locations. In addition to the technologies that TAFE is developing, we have a range of new technologies available to us but, where appropriate, we wish to access those technologies and share them wherever possible.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I refer to 'Aboriginal Education' on page 166 of the Program Estimates. Two of the specific targets/objectives for 1991-92 are:

Complete R-3 Aboriginal culture and the language framework using Ngarrindjeri as a model.

Completing the R7-LOTE Pitjantjatjara framework.

The last time I was in the north-west tribal lands, several members of the Aboriginal communities were not con-

vinced of the advisability of teaching segments of the curriculum in Pitjantjatjara. Has that problem been resolved? Will the Minister explain to the Committee how he is assisting to preserve and develop an Aboriginal culture when that culture was clearly oral in tradition? In fact, our schools system has transposed what was an oral culture into a written language which never existed, thereby artificially creating a written language that they now call Pitjantjatjara and Ngarrindjeri? Does this not in itself interfere with and transmute the culture? I seek the Minister's guidance and his current thinking on whether it is in all ways desirable.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The honourable member's question simply cannot be answered, but it nevertheless interests me greatly, as I know it does many members of this Parliament, particularly those involved over a long period in Parliamentary committees that visited the lands to look at these issues in some depth. The bilingual program that we have traditionally provided in our schools is now somewhat dated, and its ineffectiveness is being seen more clearly than it has been in the past. Whilst it is still important for our teachers to have a capacity to communicate in the traditional language, in our State in the Pitjantjatjara language, the application of that language and the teaching of it has caused conflict.

As I said in answer to a previous question from the honourable member's colleague, the communities themselves assume a much greater responsibility for language teaching because they do not dissociate the language from the culture as perhaps we do and believe that the development of an understanding of the culture is fundamental to their responsibility in bringing up their children and in passing down the rites and laws that they believe is their fundamental responsibility. To the extent that the teaching methods and practices that have been established in those schools have been in conflict with that, we need to remove that conflict. Kenmore Park, to which I referred, is an interesting example of an alternative of using the traditional communities as educators and in being able to complement such with the traditional western education that we provide, and most certainly with which parents in those communities want to access. They want their children to progress through a European style education system, to be literate and numerate and to be nurses and teachers in those communities. We need to make that adjustment.

It is proceeding along those lines in the department at present and impacts upon teacher education. The programs of development of Aboriginal education workers and their training is also involved. Substantial changes need to occur. With respect to the ideology of a Western education being in conflict with the best interests of those traditional communities, we should provide the supports for the continuation of those communities and their lifestyles in the way in which they perceive them rather than the way in which we perceive them progressing over the next few decades. That is evidenced by the way in which we have provided traditional services to the community at Oak Valley.

At Oak Valley people had left the Western-type enclave at Yalata and were taken from the Pitjantjatjara lands in trucks and buses so that the atomic bomb test program could continue. When land rights were granted to those people, they moved back to those lands. They were essentially nomadic and said that they did not want to live in a community dictated to them in respect of where teachers, health workers or police wanted to live. We were able to develop a model of support that was able to follow the more nomadic or transient community. It has caused management difficulties, but what we have seen has been a very real strengthening of that community and the great strength-

ening of the language capacity of the children as well as a healthier and happier community that has managed to overcome the traditional European influences of alcoholism, petrol sniffing, anti-social behaviour and the like, which is clearly evidenced in the community at Oak Valley.

In our policies we need to develop a greater sensitivity to the needs and lifestyles of those communities and provide the supports which they believe they need and are entitled to. That means changes in thinking on the part of the education and health systems, but clearly, in my view, that is the way that we should go during this period, and that is the recommendation coming to us from the appropriate parliamentary committees.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I refer to the 'Socio-economic disadvantaged' program on page 169 of the Program Estimates. I refer the Minister to answers he gave me last year and also to the GARG report. The Minister's reply to question 416 from me last year states:

The relocation of the field officer from Port Lincoln to Whyalla was negotiated between the western area director and the coordinators of both the country areas program and priority-projects. The relocation was done in order to reduce travel costs and ensure a sensible allocation of schools to field officers across the western area. In 1991, it is anticipated that additional schools in lower Eyre Peninsula will be included on the declared list of priority project schools.

In answer to question No. 419 of the same year, the Minister listed the number of people employed at the Priority Education Unit. I assume that the numbers he gave were for those employed at the unit and in areas on behalf of the unit, because he cited the total number of seconded Education Act staff as 16 and administrative and clerical staff as 8.3, which equates with the sum total. The Special Populations Unit in GARG includes priority education, DSP and CAP, and it lists the following positions: two positions of PO program manager and coordinator; three of PO curriculum research; five of PO metropolitan field officer; and a number of clerical positions, totalling 10.5 PO positions and about four administrative support people.

Has there been a reduction in real terms in this area; and is a field officer still employed at Port Lincoln and, if so, why, because I assure the Minister—and he would only need to check this with his departmental officers—that only two new schools have opened at Port Lincoln in 1991. I can assure the Minister that a decision to relocate to Port Lincoln a field officer whose job is in the western area based solely on the addition of two schools is not in the best economic interests of his department, of running vehicles or with respect to teacher time or teacher stress. Is that person still employed at Port Lincoln and are any CAP field officers located in any of those areas because I cannot find any reference to them other than under the heading 'Special Populations'? I believe that would be a very retrograde step because a whole lot of people running the country areas program from an office in Warradale, five of whom are detailed as metropolitan field officers and three as curriculum research officers, would basically disfranchise country people who are in poverty and who are suffering educational disadvantage because of their isolation.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am pleased that the honourable member has not lost his interest in his old job; it is waiting there if he wants to go back to it, because these programs are funded by the Commonwealth and are, therefore, excluded from the GARG exercise. I will endeavour to obtain specific information for the honourable member about the country position and its present status. Mr Boomer might be able to give more precise information about the figures to which the honourable member refers.

**Mr Boomer:** The figures for the Special Populations Unit omit the field officers to which the honourable member

refers. From memory, I think that an additional five field officers would need to be included in that exercise. There is no intention whatsoever to reduce the number of people operating in that area given that it is a Commonwealth program, but the deployment of those people will be a matter for negotiation. I assure the honourable member that the needs of country areas will be met. The department does not intend to centralise those officers into one unit: it will have those people operating where they are needed.

**Mr BRINDAL:** As a supplementary question, I would be grateful for that information, because item 2.4 under the Special Populations Unit lists 14.5 people as being Commonwealth funded, and that is why I asked the question. Is there to be funding for additional people not included in those figures?

**Mr Boomer:** Yes.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Therefore, the Special Populations Unit of the Curriculum Division will be larger than indicated in the GARG report, because it will include people who do not appear in this report.

**Mr Boomer:** Yes. We included in the disadvantaged schools country areas program the more centralised base of officers but did not include outreach officers, which could have been put under either the Schools Division or the Curriculum Division. We need to clarify that in the charts that will come out following negotiations, but the intention is that this unit will be larger than stated or the Schools Division will be adjusted to include those people operating on a regional basis.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Will the department provide clarification with respect to the position at Port Lincoln, also?

**Mr Boomer:** Yes.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Will the Minister confirm that the majority of school requests for guidance officers relate to the learning and behaviour patterns of non-disabled students, and that such officers will now provide assistance to harassed classroom teachers who have students with behaviour problems when they have reached the end of the department's recommended behaviour management strategies?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Clearly, the honourable member did not absorb the specific information that I gave earlier in the proceedings of this Committee, because very substantial additional resources have been put into precisely this area of our schools. Obviously, this area of education has been given the highest priority with 70 new positions for school counsellors who are directly involved in this work spreading across 101 primary schools. Inter-agency networks have been established with more than \$4 million being put into the implementation of strategies arising from the Stratman report, and networks have been established to develop in our schools appropriate programs for this group of students.

As I said earlier, withdrawal and other programs have been established to deal with these students within the context of their own schools, within the context of another school or outside school programs altogether. So, there has been a very substantial fillip to support for people in these situations and certainly to support teachers in the classroom context, but I will ask Mr Boomer to comment further on this work.

**Mr Boomer:** In light of the injection of 200 senior school counsellors, 70 primary school counsellors and 30 project team members into schools, GARG has proposed the redefining of the position of guidance officers. They will concentrate very much on providing special services and reviews of students with severe problems. The behaviour management aspect of the work of guidance officers will become much more centrally the work of counsellors and behaviour

management support structures that we have put into place. Over a period of 10 school years, the GARG proposal, based on a formula of 600 students with disabilities, would require a total of 3 600 reviews by guidance officers. The number of 40 guidance officers has been derived from that formula, but it needs to be stressed that that is in the context of the extensive behaviour support structures that we have put in place in our schools.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I misunderstood the Minister earlier, because I believed that he and Mr Boomer were saying that the student counsellors will have specific, specialist expertise to deal with behaviour management problems in schools.

**Mr Boomer:** Yes.

**Mr BRINDAL:** However, with the series of networks that are being built up, is the Minister aware that the Northern Area Learning Centre, which is meant to assist schools when those procedures fail and something else needs to be done with the students, already has over 200 students on its books, and I believe it can handle only 10 at one time? Therefore, what advice can he offer to those who are endeavouring to cope with the 190 people who are waiting to get into the 10 places at that centre?

**Mr Boomer:** I think that, clearly, it has been habitual over the years for people to refer students to these learning centres. I think that we are moving into a new culture and a new mode of addressing such students, which would mean that a much higher percentage of them would be dealt with at the school site by the school counsellors. That may mean some re-education of people about referral, and it may be that what we have here is a slight inertia, in the sense that it has become habitual for people to be referred, and we must reaffirm a new policy that, by and large, these difficulties will be dealt with at the school site by the student counsellor.

If, over time, we find that there is still a queuing system at our learning support centres, one would need to investigate further, but I believe that, once the system has become established and it becomes more habitual to treat these problems at the school site, we will see a reduction in the number of referrals to the specialist centres.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think I should also add that, under the models that are being established, some of these behavioural problems cannot be resolved in the context of the education community, and I think that, traditionally, that has been the culture to which Mr Boomer referred—that we would refer these children to another section of the Education Department. There were various units within the department. At one stage it had medical practitioners, social workers, guidance officers and speech therapists, so we had a mini health system within the Education Department. We are moving away from that model in order to access the specialist health services, in particular with the mental health services programs or other health services, in the settings in which they are traditionally provided in the community, rather than to specialise totally within the department, as perhaps we did as recently as 10 years or so ago.

That is the feature of this program. I think that the solution to some of the stresses that the honourable member reflects on behalf of teachers in school communities where one student can cause massive disruption to the whole school community often seems unattainable because of the resources that can be accessed within the education community. So we want to reach out and, in an extreme situation, a child may need to be removed from the school community in order that a program can be established to provide some solutions to the difficulties that the child is experiencing, which are often related not solely to the child but also to the child's family. We must also attack some of

the root causes of the problems that are manifesting themselves in the behaviour of the child. As I said earlier, that can involve certainly the Department for Family and Community Services, specialist health areas and other institutional settings that may be appropriate for that particular child for a period of time.

**Mr SUCH:** I believe that the Education Department's submission to GARG contains a lot of worthwhile initiatives, many of which I applaud, because it incorporates some fine intentions. A question arises in respect of its implementation. Can the Minister or the officers outline details in respect of the implementation of the submission to GARG, assuming that it is accepted?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** A structure has been established for all agencies that are going through a review process under GARG, and that involves a structured consultation process. The Education Department is now proceeding through that process of consultation with its own staff and with representatives of those staff through their appropriate unions. Of course, the broader community now has access to that report and is also involved in that consultation process. I think there is already a very clear indication that there is strong support within our schools and the general education community for, as you say, the recommendations of the GARG report, and I believe that steps will be taken quite quickly to see the recentralisation of the personnel and payroll functions in the department. Certainly, the personnel function must be settled quite quickly so that the staffing process can proceed for the next school year. Of course, we must proceed quickly through the consultation processes in relation to those two matters.

The GARG report envisaged that there would be a longer consultation process and a different strategy with respect to issues of, for example, one line budgeting or devolution of responsibilities to schools, and also with respect to accessing the professional services and how payment would be determined for those services which have traditionally been provided centrally to schools. That was referred to in an earlier question. Therefore, it is envisaged that we will be developing more detailed consultative structures to evolve, first, the philosophy surrounding those new initiatives and then to detail how we might establish that philosophy in practice. It is envisaged that we would certainly set up devolution models as early as next year with respect to how some of them may work in practice, but the report itself refers to a four year program for the development of these new policies.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer the Minister to pages 156 to 160 of the Program Estimates regarding the curriculum guarantee; what is the cost of the curriculum guarantee for 1990-91, and what is the estimated cost of the guarantee for 1991-92?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** If I can find those figures for the honourable member during the dinner break, I will provide them for her benefit.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer to page 157 of the Program Estimates and the Croydon Centre for Hearing Impaired Children, which caters for adult re-entry students with disabilities as well as for children. I understand that in May families were advised that, as from 1992, the centre would not be able to offer placements for adults. A number of teachers and families have been lobbying for a re-entry high school which caters for adults with disabilities. Does the Minister believe there is a need for such an option and, if not, where does he believe these adults should go?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Yes, I think that we are now learning much more about the needs of adults in that category, for whom I certainly want to access further educa-

tional opportunities. It is perhaps a group that has fallen outside those adults who have attended our special schools and programs provided in TAFE colleges. A need is emerging for those people's needs to be met. Perhaps the school to which the honourable member refers is not the appropriate setting for that educational opportunity to be provided. Now that we have a network of re-entry schools, it may be possible to develop emphases within at least one or several of those schools which may well be more geographically accessible to those students, who often have access difficulties in going to one central school. I will be pleased to obtain for the honourable member some more information on our proposals to meet the needs of that group of students.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Can I have an undertaking from the Minister that the needs of adult disabled students will be met?

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

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

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer the Minister to page 163 of the Program Estimates, relating to a commentary on major resource variations. I note that the full-year effect of salary and wage increases has been dealt with by a net variation in program expenditure of what amounts to 2.5 per cent. I also note that in the Premier's budget statement the normal provision for round sum allowances has not been made. Acknowledging the fairly substantial increase in salaries last year, does the Minister think that 2.5 per cent will cover this year's salary increases based on the years previous to last year percentage increases?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** As the honourable member is aware, there have been very substantial increases in the education sector—well above the national wage increases applied to other sectors of the work force. I guess one does not know what impact wage increases will have in the current financial year. As the honourable member has said, the 2.5 per cent, which was brought down recently, has been provided for. Given the fact that we already pay salaries much higher than the national benchmark in this area, I do not think it is possible to predict what will happen. I note that the Prime Minister has been saying that by 1 July next year there could be additional salary increases across the sector. So, we have to wait and see what will occur in the wage fixation area during this next period.

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** I refer to the miscellaneous line relating to the Secondary School Assessment Board. Can the Minister advise how many students are involved in the Secondary School Assessment Board related activities and say how this will change with the introduction of the new South Australian Certificate of Education?

**Additional Departmental Adviser:**

Dr G.M. Willmott, Director, Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** As has been indicated a number of times in evidence to this Committee, the number of students now participating in senior secondary education has increased dramatically. Of course, under recent amendments to the SSABSA Act, SSABSA now has an increased responsibility to provide for students in years 11 and 12. In 1991, there are 23 360 students enrolled for year 12 assessment with SSABSA. This includes students in South Australia, the Northern Territory and South-East Asia. Approximately 21 000 are enrolled from within this State.

The total figure for students enrolled in year 12 studies has grown steadily from 12 156 students in 1984 to the present figure. It is interesting to note that in the years 1988, 1989 and 1990 enrolment numbers appeared to plateau at 19 773 in 1988, 19 837 in 1989 and 19 882 in 1990. The sharper increase in 1991 is a significant reflection of the increased number of adult students and re-entry students who have commenced studies towards year 12 this year. That also should be put into the context of the decreasing number of students participating in secondary education overall in this State because of the enrolment decline.

Next year, with the introduction of the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE), SSABSA will be responsible for years 11 and 12 enrolments. Currently it is estimated that the total number of students associated with SSABSA activities will increase from the present figure to approximately 48 500. In other words, the total number will more than double, with approximately an equal number of students enrolled for year 11, or stage 1, of SACE, and year 12. It is interesting to note that the increase in students between 1984 and 1991 is largely a reflection of the increase in the level of retention of year 12 students during the past seven years. With the current retention level in year 12 a little under 75 per cent. South Australia has the highest retention rate of all Australian States and is only topped in retention rates by the Australian Capital Territory where, of course, particular circumstances prevail. By comparison, New South Wales retains 51 per cent of students to completion of year 12. With respect to expenditure for SACE activities provided in the budget, I will ask Dr Willmott to comment on the specific details.

**Dr Willmott:** The total funding for SACE activities in 1991-92 amounts to \$5 359 000. That is constituted by a figure of \$2.028 million, which is a direct grant as part of the SSABSA budget. In addition, some \$3 185 000 is devoted to SACE systems funds for training and development purposes and continuing curriculum development work.

**The Hon. J.P. TRAINER:** I refer again to South Australia's Certificate of Education. Can the Minister give some details about the computer tracking system that has been devised by the Senior Secondary School Assessment Board for student enrolment and record-keeping with SACE?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Yes, I can. This is a particularly interesting development in which SSABSA is involved, and obviously it has widespread implications for our community. I will ask Dr Willmott to outline briefly the dimensions of this program.

**Dr Willmott:** One of the initiatives implemented to facilitate the smooth introduction of SACE is the development of a record-keeping software program for use by schools. The project has been undertaken by SSABSA in conjunction with the school sectors and the training and development program. The original concept for the software was to replace the current paper-based enrolment and reporting procedures used to transfer information between schools and SSABSA with an electronic exchange process. However, it very quickly became apparent that the software could be used to provide a very useful counselling tool for schools to assist in tracking a student's progress through SACE. Incidentally, a proposal is currently before that group to extend that tracking process to higher education entrance as well.

In summary, the system will enable schools to maintain a record of all students engaged in SACE studies, a record of the subject in which the students are enrolled and a record of the subjects in which students propose to enrol. It will also enable the results to be recorded for each of the subjects and school results to be replaced by official SSABSA results as these become available. It will provide a check

that the recorded subject information for a student satisfies the SACE pattern requirements, produce various reports—either to support the counselling process or for teachers to record assessments—and, importantly, facilitate the transfer of data between the school and SSABSA, and vice versa. I should also add that, when students transfer from one school to another, the electronic system will allow a complete data transfer process between schools in South Australia.

**Mr GROOM:** I should like to ask the Minister about ethnic schools. Some \$443 000 has been allocated in the Estimates with regard to grants. How are those grants determined and in what way do they help to support ethnic schools?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The ethnic schools program in South Australia provides a very important component of our overall languages provision policy. South Australia has proved to be a model in this area, more commonly known as a Saturday school program. We are particularly interested in the continuation of the family language of many young people involved in languages which are not provided in the mainstream in our schools. It is in a context where there is parent and broader community participation so that the language can be presented in the context of the overall culture of those communities. As a result of a comprehensive report on the future of our ethnic schools, we have established an Ethnic Schools Board, and that has set about the task of providing increased professional development for teachers in this area and a registration structure for ethnic schools.

It is pleasing to note that the Commonwealth Government has relaxed some of its quite strict policies of recent times with respect to the ethnic schools program and has now entered into negotiations with the States in an attempt to reduce duplication in bureaucracy in this area. I hope that we can negotiate with the Commonwealth for funding to be provided for the States so that there can be one funding source and one bureaucracy to which that program can be accountable. I hope that will be negotiated within the next few months.

There is growth in this area and it is pleasing to see that waves of newly arrived migrants to South Australia are embracing the ethnic schools program and its philosophy wholeheartedly and developing the ethnic schools in their own way. They are providing not only for language teaching but for a range of other elements of the curriculum. Recently I attended a presentation of students of Vietnamese origin. More than 1 000 students attending that function had participated in the ethnic schools program provided within that community. It is a valuable adjunct to our education system and we have very close cooperation with it. It is a well resourced sector providing a high standard of service to the community.

**Mr BRINDAL:** The penetrating and incisive questioning by the member for Walsh has cleared the muddy waters and allowed me to ask a number of questions on SSABSA. I refer to the same budget lines. A number of schools have approached the Liberal Party and expressed concern about the proposed assessment policy of SSABSA for year 11 at stage 1 level subjects in the new SACE. SSABSA has indicated that three levels of achievement will be needed for stage 1. I believe that those levels are 'satisfactory', 'recorded achievement' and 'requirement not met'.

The concern amongst schools is what level of achievement will be deemed satisfactory by SSABSA. Officers of SSABSA have been giving conflicting messages to teachers and schools. Some officers have been saying that a score of 10 out of 20 will generally be accepted as satisfactory, although they refuse to rule out the possibility that it may

be a lower score than that. One officer has explicitly told one school that in some cases scores as low as six out of 20 could be deemed to be satisfactory. Schools are obviously anxious to get a straight answer on this topic.

Most schools will, in effect, not allow a student who has less than 10 out of 20 in year 11 mathematics to sit for year 12 mathematics. If SSABSA were to say that a score of less than 10 was satisfactory, it would place schools in a most difficult position. Whereas SSABSA or SACE would be saying that this score was satisfactory, the school would be saying, 'Yes, but not satisfactory enough to go on' and would refuse to allow students to take year 12 mathematics. Will SSABSA explicitly outline the policy and guarantee that a score of 10 out of 20 will be the minimum level at which satisfactory performance will be deemed to have occurred?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The mentality of some people in their representations amazes me. Our schools are about maintaining and improving the standards they already provide. Some people seem to believe that the intervention of SACE into year 11 wipes aside the ethos and standards which already exist in our schools. That is nonsense. Schools will still have to strive—I suggest strive to an even greater extent—to achieve the standards required for their students not only to pass into the year 12 program but to enter the further education and career paths they want to follow. The debate and the fears being expressed by some people are unfounded, but they will use hearsay and chatter around the place to devise some sort of campaign to fulfil some other fear that they may have about the implementation and role that SSABSA is now providing in year 11. I think that we should be wary of the kind of approach that the honourable member articulates on behalf of the people who have made those representations. I will ask Dr Willmott to comment on this matter and put it into a proper context.

**Dr Willmott:** I can give both a short and a long answer. The short answer is that the SSBSA Board has indicated that at stage 2 a score of 10 out of 20 is the minimum score that will be regarded as satisfying the satisfactory level of achievement for the award of the South Australian Certificate of Education. That has been definitively determined. However, I should like to elaborate on this matter because I think it needs some further explanation.

The board has agreed that two benchmark assessments will appear at stage 1 or year 11 of the SACE. These are 'satisfactory achievement', the highest of the levels of assessment, and, 'recorded achievement'. 'Satisfactory achievement' reflects a substantial level of achievement in the objectives of the subject and entitles the student to count the unit so assessed as one of the 16 which must be successfully completed to receive the SACE. Specific details of the criteria for 'satisfactory achievement' are provided in each of the extended subject framework documents.

On the other hand, 'recorded achievement' requires that students participate in classroom and practical activities and make a serious attempt at each of the assessment tasks associated with the subject studied. This entitles a student to count the unit as one of the 22 required to satisfy the pattern requirements of the certificate.

Students who achieve neither 'satisfactory achievement' nor 'recorded achievement' will have a notation which is referred to as 'requirement not met'. Of course, that carries no credit towards the certificate. These arrangements were arrived at after quite extensive discussion and consultation by Mr Gilding during the earlier phases of the process of inquiry leading up to the South Australian Certificate of Education.

At stage 2 the board will acknowledge several descriptions of achievement on the documentation associated with the certificate. Successful achievement will be recorded as being satisfied by a subject achievement score of 10 or more in the subject. It is important to acknowledge that the board will continue to use the 20-point scale at stage 2 and will report this in the certificate reporting process. It will also continue to acknowledge excellence through awarding of the merit certificate for scores of 20 out of 20. At stage 2, successful achievement that has a subject achievement score of 10 or more entitles the student to count the unit as one of the 16 required for successful completion for the certificate.

At stage 2, 'recorded achievement' will be satisfied if students record an assessment of between one and nine on the 20-point scale. Specific criteria are being established by the board in each extended subject framework which must be met in order for students to meet the minimum requirements of the subject and thus record achievement in it.

Once again, these minimum criteria will reflect a substantial engagement and participation in that subject, a serious attempt at the requirements of the course and the minimum level of achievement in it. Recorded achievement allows the student to count the unit as one of the 22 required for the South Australian Certificate of Education. At stage 2 there will indeed be further designation of assessment beyond the notion of satisfactory achievement and there will be reporting of those assessments.

I should like to add that the continued use of the 20-point scale at year 12 reflects the fact that at year 12 the existing framework of subjects and of assessment reporting arrangements, which have successfully been established by the board in the past several years, together with the present range of public examinations and public assessment activities, will continue to be used and will be integrated with the SACE.

**Mr BRINDAL:** As the Minister knows, the Opposition supports totally the introduction of a system such as SACE if it is done for the betterment of students. So we are all talking about the same thing. I note Dr Willmott's answer was in respect of year 12 specifically, but I want to tease out what constitutes 'satisfactory' at the first stage, and I want to do so in this form. Would it be possible, for instance, for SSABSA to provide a copy of the achievement issues in relation to the year 11 report and, in view of a satisfactory attainment thereof, could SSABSA guarantee that anyone who gets a satisfactory grading at that first stage would be equivalent to anyone at any other school throughout the State who obtains a satisfactory grading at that stage and that that student could go on to year 12? I accept what the Minister has said, and it is quite right, but the fear in the minds of parents, or the fear for the educators, I suppose, more than the parents, is that, having been told that a student is satisfactory at a level, the school would then be left to explain that, while it is satisfactory, it was not satisfactory enough to go on with the year 12 component.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** We must also bear in mind that there is only school-based assessment at the current stage of year 11, this stage 1.

**Mr BRINDAL:** It must be standardised somehow.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** That is right, so any advances in that area must be a considerable improvement, in terms of articulation of years 11 and 12 and involve some degree of moderation in that approach. As I said earlier, the reality is that the schools themselves will still have to carry out their own assessments and provide that information to parents and to students. So, one should not advance an argument that sees that role transferred from the school to

SSABSA. The school itself must still play a very important role in this process at year 11. I ask Dr Willmott to further comment.

**Dr Willmott:** I have two points to add to the Minister's comments. I can confirm that there is a moderation process that has been devised by the board at year 11 to ensure that the standards that are applied in the various schools determine that 'satisfactory' will be consistent, and that is based upon several elements. The first is a clear identification of the criteria for satisfactory achievement, which exists in the syllabus document or framework document at stage 1. In addition to that, each teacher has to submit to SSABSA at the beginning of the year a detailed assessment plan, consistent with the syllabus document, indicating the assessment program. There is then a follow-up process that SSABSA engages in to visit schools and check on those standards and those assessment plans, and there will be a sampling across the whole State of assessment standards, to monitor the assessment process.

So, in a broad sense there is a moderation process that is being applied and the board is confident that there will be consistency of standards at the satisfactory level at stage 1 and also at the recorded achievement level. I should like to make the additional point that the Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia does not determine whether students may or may not proceed from year 11 to year 12. That is a decision which is wholly open to the school, through its own processes of monitoring the capacity of a student to proceed forward. Whether a student has attained satisfactory achievement or not, in that sense it is not necessarily an issue that the board would be monitoring in terms of its enrolment of students at year 12.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Minister, will you table the report 'Assessment issues at year 11'?

**Dr Willmott:** There is a document that the board has approved 'Moderation and Assessment Policy at Year 11' and I would be happy for that to be tabled before the Committee.

**Mr BRINDAL:** My second question is in relation to the same matter. The national Finn report recommends a national assessment of a number of key competencies deemed to be required of school leavers by employers. Some of these key competencies include language and communication, maths, scientific and technological understanding, cultural understanding, problem solving, and personal and interpersonal relations. Does SSABSA support this recommendation of the Finn report and is it technically possible to assess all or some of these key competencies in a verification fashion as part of the assessment?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Yes. This issue of key competencies contained in the Finn report that was talked about earlier this afternoon is, as I explained earlier to the Committee, an area in which additional work needs to be done. At the last Australian Education Council meeting, a further process was established. A committee representative, across the various tiers of education and across the States and the Commonwealth was established, under the chairmanship of a prominent Australian businessman, Mr Mayer. That is proceeding to establish the full meaning of these key areas of competence regarded as essential for all young people engaged in post-compulsory education and training.

It is interesting to note those key competency areas. The first is language and communication and then there is mathematics, scientific and technological understanding, cultural understanding, problem solving, and personal and interpersonal competencies. It is true to say that each of those key competencies is contained in our basic document for the provision of education in this State, 'Educating for the

Twenty-first Century'. So, in a sense, those key competencies are quite appropriate to the philosophy of education that we are formulating in this State.

However, what the true meaning of those are and how they will be assessed obviously has to be determined. This matter was of particular interest to accreditation authorities around Australia, such as SSABSA, and of course there will be an articulation between the national body of accreditation authorities, ACACA, and the outcomes of the Mayer committee's work and, indeed, in the total consideration by us all of the recommendations of the Finn report.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I need to ask a supplementary question, because there is a communication gap. Perhaps I will do it illustratively. Can the Minister confirm that under the SSABSA requirements for the South Australian Certificate of Education, it might well be possible, with the school's consent, for a student to sit for the literacy requirement every month, and do so eight or nine times, before perhaps passing on the tenth attempt? I am not saying that that is necessarily wrong, but would he then say that that is an adequate indication of competency? First, is that possible and, secondly, would that be an adequate and fair description of literacy competency—*vis-a-vis* the requirements of the Finn report?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The short answer is that we have not yet determined what the outcomes of the Finn report will be in this area. I ask Dr Willmott to comment on the first matter.

**Dr Willmott:** It is significant that the kinds of competencies outlined in the Finn report correspond closely with the study requirements for SACE. For example, the first one on the Finn list is language and communications and, as has been indicated, one of the requirements of SACE is a literacy assessment. Similarly, there is an indication of science and technology competencies in Finn, and science and technology studies are compulsory components of SACE. So, in a general sense there is quite a close matching between the structure of SACE and the competency requirements of the Finn report.

The Senior Secondary Assessment Board has not formally voted one way or the other at this stage on whether it does or does not support the Finn competencies. However, in principle, it strongly supports the incorporation of employment related emphases in SACE, and that is exemplified by both the literacy assessment requirement and by the emphases on work related studies.

I would support the Minister in the view that we do not know whether the language and communication competency as defined by Finn (or as yet to be defined by Finn) would match exactly the literacy assessments in SACE. Obviously one of the important kinds of inputs that boards such as SSABSA would wish to have to that process would be to gain some kind of relationship between assessments within State certificates and the kinds of competencies that are being mooted in the Finn report.

**Mr BRINDAL:** SACE is obviously very exciting and represents enormous potential for students at years 11 and 12 in South Australia. The Minister has repeatedly said that in the House and guaranteed that it will be introduced in a fair and equitable way and to the advantage of all educators in South Australia. However, some schools have been concerned not that it is not new or exciting but that, being new and exciting, there are requirements in terms of new equipment and materials as integral parts of some courses. In fact, one school—a large high school—has assessed the possible cost of the introduction of the program to that school at about \$50 000. Therefore, what assistance and structures are being provided by the department to assist

schools in the orderly transition and to ensure that not only do schools get the right curriculum and the right teachers but that they also have the right levels of equipment and assistance in more tangible form so that the thing can get off the ground?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** We have about 93 State high schools and some additional area schools and the non-government sector secondary schools that provide years 11 and 12 programs. So far we have expended more than \$11 million in implementation of SACE for that number of schools, so it is not a matter of skimping on resources in this area. Substantial resources have been expended in this area, not only formally by the Government providing additional resources but by reorienting the resources that already exist within the education system, whether they are professional development moneys, moneys available within individual schools or individual school systems.

The work that SSABSA has done in this area has been outstanding and it has been criticised for having an elaborate structure to bring about the smooth implementation of SACE. It has been a fine example of cooperation between the Government and non-government sectors and, of course, SSABSA has played a crucial role in establishing that cooperation and the most effective targeting of our resources. It is true that some schools are less advanced than others in their implementation of SACE, and some have specific problems associated with its implementation. Of course, we need to be aware of that. Perhaps the work that is currently underway during this term and in the next term will allay many of those fears of schools, particularly as parents and whole of staff situations are clarified and, of course, as more resources flow in.

There is a particularly substantial allocation in this budget, as we articulated to the Committee earlier, and certainly a much greater amount than Mr Gilding recommended in his report. Additional resources have been made available to schools. Schools will always say that there is never enough. One of the good things, as the honourable member mentioned, is that in a sense it is a rejuvenation of years 11 and 12 in our schools, and also it is in essence a professional development program that is bringing about a renewal and a new interest by many teachers in their subject areas and in the way in which they teach the subjects in the schools and the way in which they relate to their particular disciplines. All of that is positive indeed.

**Mr BRINDAL:** For the benefit of the Opposition, and I know the Minister cannot refer to specific schooling, is that a ball park figure? Is that the sort of contribution the Minister expects a school community to make or does he believe that the school has its figures wrong? I accept what the Minister says about the money that the Government has put in but, on top of that, are schools looking for that sort of a contribution from the school community, or does the Minister believe they have their figures wrong?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It varies from school to school, how many students are in the school, the subjects they teach, the complexity of the school and the needs of students and so on. In this year, the 1991 Training and Development Program has received funding of \$2.134 million, which has allowed for the appointment of a class one principal as a SACE training and development manager. We know that his work has been outstanding in this area: he has visited almost every secondary school in the State. The program also funded an across sectors training and development team of 18 senior educators situated at Ellangowan school. They are working across the systems and across the State to conduct in-service activities. A \$2 100 grant has been made to every school—Government and non-govern-

ment—for in-school SACE training and development activities. Also, there has been a grant to 50 schools of the equivalent of a .4 salary to allow sample program development and publication for all schools and to undertake subregional cluster development.

In addition to that there have been centralised conferences for senior managers in schools with funding for travel and accommodation and key conferences in literacy, mathematics, Australian studies, SACE record keeping and counselling. Additional training and development has been conducted through the Education Department's Curriculum Directorate and area SACE implementation officers as well as through individual subject associations. That has been a focus of funding for this year for those associations. When we gather those resources, we see that they are really substantial and, in addition, they are the services provided directly by SSABSA and from within the schools themselves. That just gives a glimpse of the dimensions of the resourcing being provided.

**Mr De LAINE:** Program 13 at page 74 of the Estimates of Payments deals with transport. How many buses does the department operate and what is the total cost and recurrent cost of running school buses for students?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It is too often taken for granted that the network of school buses operated by the department is substantial indeed. I am told that it is not many buses fewer than the total operated by the STA. This area requires careful management because we provide access to education for students in remote areas across the State and, of course, to major education centres. Currently, the department operates 342 buses on a regular route service, and an additional 37 buses are used as spares and allocated to special schools and centres, for which they often require the attachment of special equipment.

In addition, at the end of June 1991, 300 privately owned buses were operating under contract. In essence we own or provide funding for almost 700 buses in this State. I am told that the STA fleet is just slightly larger than that. Total replacement cost of the buses owned by the Education Department is estimated at \$34.8 million and the recurrent costs of running school buses in the past financial year was \$16.8 million. In addition, we estimate that this year transport for students with disabilities will cost \$2.05 million. We have urban subsidies for student travel, and there is the free service for school card holders, the statistics for which I mentioned earlier in the year. An extensive subsidy is associated with transportation of students right across this State, and the extent of that is substantial. The amount of money expended in rural areas of the State is much greater, although there are fewer students than in the metropolitan area.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to truancy, which is a problem in many electorates, and to school attendance figures. What is the Education Department doing about improving student attendance at school?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It is a matter of concern that has always existed in all school systems. We need to constantly attend to this matter and be vigilant about ways that we can achieve maximum school attendance as often non-attendance is a signal of other problems associated with the life of a young person. If we can provide that support and assistance at an earlier stage, that can have a dramatic effect on the quality of life of a young person and perhaps arrest some of the difficulties in his or her life. This budget provides for a substantial fillip to the number of attendance officers that we employ in the department; and the role that they play will be changed. We will participate in, and watch with interest, the outcome of the parliamentary select com-

mittee dealing with the juvenile justice system. It includes a term of reference relating to attendance of students at school. Often it has been perceived that a relationship exists between non-attenders and young people involved in anti-social behaviour or criminal activity in the community.

I recently announced a series of measures undertaken by the Education Department to deal with attendance matters, including new attendance officers, anti-truancy task forces to target designated areas for a short term—something in which the honourable member has shown an interest in his area—and the gathering of school age children during school hours at pinball parlours, shopping malls and the like, which obviously needs to be addressed. We have obligations under the Education Act to ensure that young people attend school, and that needs to be seen to in a more holistic way than has been the case in the past. We need to engage other key agencies in that task force or team approach to identify those young people and seek out the fundamental reasons for their non-participation in the education process.

Members may be interested to know that a substantial amount of work has been done on school attendance records, on marking the roll and on what information is to be included on the rolls as well as how it is processed and used. Much work has gone into that, and there will be a new roll book for 1992. New guidelines for schools that highlight the best practice taking place in many schools to encourage school attendance and provide follow-up support for truants and their families will be issued. Those guidelines are being developed and will be available for the 1992 school year. School principals include the level of student attendance in their performance management plans as part of social justice initiatives within schools.

It is interesting that the Education Review Unit, which monitors school performance in this area, will include the level of student attendance in its review of all State schools. Truancy prevention will be incorporated into a school discipline training and development program for teachers and principals in secondary schools. A package of measures is being put in place with additional resources being provided. For those involved in the juvenile justice system, the deliberations of the select committee will give us further guidance in that area.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to the program description for secondary education on page 163 and the range of initiatives relating to work education. Will the Minister explain some of the initiatives and say what support is provided for them? What other industry links has the Education Department established?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am pleased with the initiatives taken in the Education Department in respect of school and industry links and work education generally as referred to by Dr Willmott a moment ago. The Year of School and Industry was declared in 1989 when it was our aim to bring about a much closer relationship between our schools and the world of work and the inclusion within our curriculum of a component of work-related activity, which was given value. A large number of students each year go out and obtain work experience of one form or another, and we needed to link that carefully with the curriculum and career aspirations of young people rather than have it as a valuable but more haphazard experience in young people's lives. It also provides some feedback, support and involvement by employer and employee representatives.

So, we have a tripartite structure in this State between the unions, employer organisations and the Education Department. A whole series of initiatives have been developed with large numbers of teachers moving into industry for periods to gain experience with strong relationships

between school communities and workplaces, which has proved to be very valuable. Dr Boston chairs the advisory committee in this area, and I will ask him to mention a couple of initiatives which might be of interest to the committee.

**Dr Boston:** We have a School Industry Links Committee and a School Industry Advisory Council, which includes representatives from business and industry, unions, schools and parents—a widely representative group. It has undertaken or sponsored a number of very important programs in order to promote greater links between school and industry and, above all, to underpin the notion that the Education Department's mission is not only to assist in making Australia a culturally rich nation but also to make it an internationally competitive one.

We have sponsored a visits program to industry—an initiative based at the Housing Industry Association involving union, employer and Education Department representatives and leading to coordinated visits between schools and industries. Further, a speakers' register has been developed to complement the visits program; and we encourage the twinning of schools and industries, whereby schools adopt an industry and *vice versa*, and that has been an important initiative.

Another initiative has been coordination with a number of outside activities and initiatives to ensure maximum access for our students—for example, the Skills Expo. A very important initiative has been work education for teachers, which has involved teachers being placed in industry for a period and developing curriculum programs, for example, in mathematics, chemistry or other areas, based on their experience in industry. We have been very much bolstered by the recent industry education forum's publication of its Declaration of National Goals for Education, which I think encapsulates many of the things we are trying to achieve in this area in South Australia and which, as members will be aware, attracted national attention recently.

**Mr SUCH:** Several of my parliamentary colleagues have informed me that they believe reviews that could lead to the possible closure or amalgamation of schools are being conducted in the Adelaide Hills, Riverland and South-East regions. They also note that the department is planning on receiving \$21 million from the sale of schools this year. I realise that this matter was briefly touched on earlier, but will the Minister provide details of the schools that have been reviewed with respect to possible closure or amalgamation as well as those currently being reviewed, and a breakdown of the \$21 million that is planned to be received from the sale of schools? Can he give a guarantee that that money will be returned in total to the education budget?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It is important to state that there is a clear Government policy that moneys freed up by reconfiguration of schools be returned to education. It is an important criterion to allow local school communities to make these decisions in conjunction with the Education Department in the knowledge that there are better ways of providing educational opportunities than are currently being provided, particularly in communities where there are declining enrolments and where the school community is becoming increasingly frustrated because of a school's inability to provide all the education opportunities that it wants for its children. They know that a school closure may mean an enhanced opportunity at a nearby school.

In country areas other matters need to be taken into consideration. It might be inappropriate to have young people travel large distances and there may be other ways of providing the breadth of curriculum required, for example, through distance education methods and so on. So, the

issue of economy should be put into its proper context. In a sense, the savings to be made are not savings in the context that is often touted by opponents of school change whereby someone in the Treasury or somewhere else will soak up these resources and spend them on roads or sewers. In fact, resources are reallocated within the education portfolio. I will be pleased to obtain the breakdown of those figures for the honourable member.

**Mr SUCH:** My next question relates to the 10 year limited placement rule. A letter signed by 20 staff members of the Victor Harbor High School states:

We, the undersigned members of the Victor High School staff, would like to express our dissatisfaction with the way that the '10 year displacement' rule is being applied to some of our colleagues. This rule may be popular with the administration of the Education Department, and teachers in the metropolitan area, because there are lots of schools nearby that a teacher can be moved to, in a permanent position, but in the country this happy situation does not occur. To use our own situation as an example, we will have six staff who will be moved on at the end of this year, in addition to four others (who became PATs at the end of last year, but were finally placed back at this school two weeks into first term) all because of this '10 year' rule. These 10 teachers have been told to expect to become PATs (for probably four years).

If you don't know what this means, it means that they will be driving anywhere up to 90 km every school day next year, going to another school. On the road each day, they will quite probably be passing teachers from these other schools, who have also been forced out.

The letter states further:

... we would like to highlight a situation that occurred recently. A male maths computing teacher at our school had applied for a teacher exchange to the U.K. He applied to the Training and Development Branch, 'International Teaching Exchange', based at the Orphanage. His application was well received, and after careful consideration, he was informed that he was successful, and he was invited in for an interview, to enable him to sign the relevant forms. He was told that he was going to exchange with a female maths/computing teacher from Bristol, England.

You can imagine his excitement at winning this exchange, and then his extreme disappointment, when after inquiring about how the '10 year thing' would affect this woman, he was told that 'they' hadn't read his form properly, and that he could not be considered for an exchange position if he couldn't guarantee a permanent base school for the Bristol teacher. So the end result was no exchange. Simply because he had committed the unforgivable 'crime' of staying in a school for more than 10 years, he was now being penalised.

We believe that the '10 year placement exercise' needs to be modified, quite significantly, to iron out these concerns. If the Education Department values their teaching employees, then this should become a priority of the highest order. The administrators of the department can do much to restore the trust that teachers once had in them, by addressing this matter.

Does the Minister now concede that this policy has significant problems and that in January and February of 1992 we will again have significant problems trying to match appropriate skills with vacancies?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Not at all. I think the policy is a bold initiative and has great merit for improving the career paths of many teachers and also for increasing the quality of teaching in many schools. I think, however, we must be very sensitive to the career paths that our teachers are following. The powers that vest within individual school communities to determine, within the criteria, how many teachers shall be affected by that policy each year need to be handled very carefully. I think there has been some lack of sensitivity in dealing with this matter, this school year being the first year in which that policy was implemented. I am not saying that it is perfect and is set in concrete: I think we must be open-minded and flexible in our monitoring of that program. However, in essence, I think it is fundamentally a very important program for an education department with the age profile that ours has to embrace.

There are particular difficulties within semi-rural communities, such as Victor Harbor, but I should also point out that if we do not have this policy, which underpins the ability of the department to abolish compulsory country service, some 1 300 teachers, including, no doubt, many of those to whom the honourable member refers, would have received letters saying that they were compulsorily required to serve in schools far more remote than Victor Harbor. We have been able to abolish that and to provide career paths in metropolitan and near-metropolitan schools of their choice for those teachers who have served in rural areas. So, there are two sides to that argument.

Whilst the honourable member wants to advance one side of that argument on behalf of those who have written this letter—and they have a right to raise their side of the story—they ought also to contemplate the consequences of the department reverting to the old system and their being faced with the possibility of going to the country. Many of those teachers would be leaving teaching service to stay in the city. Some would be asked to go back to the country for the second time in their careers, once again because of the profile of age of our teaching service and the requirements of country schools. We have eliminated that. It is a delicate balance and an intricate staffing exercise. The department has an open mind. It needs to remain very sensitive with respect to the implementation of that policy. A lot of responsibility is vested, appropriately, within schools, and we need to ensure that that is fully understood by school operatives.

The other issue of concern is that that teacher would have been denied access to that exchange program. Those exchange programs are very important. I fully endorse the opportunities that they provide for our teachers and they are subject often to quite important relationships with other countries. If a permanent teacher applies for an exchange, that is sufficient. It simply cannot be denied on the basis that the teacher has not yet been appointed to another school. If that is the case, I think an error has been made or there has been some misinformation along the path and the wires have crossed somewhere. So, if the honourable member wants to provide us with the information, or wants to ask that person to contact us, we will ensure that the matter is looked at very expeditiously so that that person can embark on the exchange program. Some 80 or 90 teachers each year embark on those programs and they are very much part of the life of our school communities.

**Mr SUCH:** In relation to school security, the Auditor-General's Report (page 55) stated that fire losses paid for the year amounted to \$1.2 million and for the previous year \$2.5 million, and that the estimate of outstanding fire damage claims admitted by the Public Actuary's Office at 30 June was \$8.1 million, with \$3.3 million for the previous year. In view of that very serious situation, will the Minister inform the Committee how many of our schools in the various categories are covered either in part or in whole by an electronic warning system? Furthermore, why has the department not followed the lead of the Victorian department, which has made dramatic reductions in terms of arson and burglary costs from about \$10 million per annum to \$1 million or \$2 million per annum?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Before forming judgments on the effectiveness of one program or another, it should be realised that these attacks on our schools are cyclical in nature. In some years, the figures are very low and one could conclude that programs developed at that time were very effective, or one could conclude that there were simply other factors at play. In another year, the figures could be very

high. There seems to be that pattern, not only in South Australia but in other States.

Nevertheless, we need to be mindful of the effective programs that may be developed in other States. Certainly, there is a lot of sharing of information in this area. Our School Watch Program, for example, is being watched very carefully by a number of other States. Whilst the figures to which the honourable member refers have escalated, the actual incidence of arson has decreased, but arson attacks have caused substantial damage to a number of school properties in this last period under review. It has been a particularly sad period for many of our school communities that have been affected by it. At the Elizabeth High School, the oldest buildings, which were historic and very much relevant to the history and growth of Elizabeth, were totally destroyed by a substantial fire. The replacement value of those buildings alone is in excess of \$2 million. A number of other fires were of similar proportion. It does not take long to see those figures blow out. The statistics need to be put into that proper context. Ms Kolbe will provide the figures.

**Ms Kolbe:** The \$8.1 million outstanding in relation to claims involves claims which have not been cleared from the Public Actuary's books and which go back to 1985-86. These matters are dealt with through SACON and it is our opinion that some of those claims have been cleared but the books have not shown that. I would like to put that aside and in the fairly near future we can report what is actually outstanding.

As the Minister mentioned, there has been an increase this year but, if one looks at it over a period of time, one sees that the incidence of fires has decreased. For instance, in 1987-88 there were 24 fires; in 1988-89, 10; in 1989-90, 18; and this year, 13, but they were rather larger fires.

A security review was undertaken in 1988-89 and we have implemented quite a number of measures, which also related to the discussion about Victoria. Victoria is primarily using its security forces in an alarm and patrol system. That means that the schools have alarms in nearly all rooms and the patrols react to those alarms. We are using that in part, but we have taken a risk-management approach to the security function in our organisation. In addition to having just alarms and the patrols, we have introduced a School Watch Program as the Minister mentioned.

We have also increased our patrols and the number of alarms in schools. We have a training program in the schools, and we are also looking at the high risk areas so that we deploy our resources in the best possible way. At the moment we have installed alarms in almost one-third of our schools but, unlike Victoria, we do not install alarms in all rooms in all schools. We are looking at the highest risk rooms, and they are the ones that are being equipped with sound alarm systems, which are used by Victoria as well.

**Mr BRINDAL:** In regard to an earlier question on special education categories one, two, three, four and five, will the Minister provide a list of the number of students in those categories for all schools in each area? I am not sure of the Minister's answer.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I think I explained earlier to the honourable member when I was explaining my concerns about the reasons why the correspondence had been sent to the honourable member in form that the Education Department does not use those categories. Obviously, some people would like that to occur for the reasons that I gave, but it is not the way the department treats those issues.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Through the Minister, will Dr Willmott confirm that the confidential report of the scaling project steering committee, which was submitted in October 1990

to the Minister of Education, concluded that under the current entry assessment methods for universities, many SACE subjects would have to be discounted by at least four marks, and in some cases by up to six marks, to make them comparable with the current PES subjects? That simply means that a mark of 14 out of 20 for a SACE subject would be discounted to a score of 10 out of 20 for aggregation for the tertiary entrance score. If that is so, what does that say about the relative standards of SACE and PES subjects?

**Dr Willmott:** It is true that the report of the scaling review was received last October. A further advisory group has been established by the Minister to look at the educational implications of implementing the scaling report. That review is currently looking at some of the issues that have been raised in this question. Evidence from the scaling review indicates that, when the new procedure is applied across the SACE subjects, there will be wide variability in the effect on those subjects. In fact, some SACE subjects would be scaled up slightly up under the new model, which presents them in an interesting light against PES subjects. However, there are other subjects that would be scaled down quite significantly—of the order of four, five or six points, as indicated.

However, when we look at a number of the PES subjects, the current model which is being considered would scale down some subjects by that amount as well. The question being considered by the advisory group is the desirability of achieving cross-subject comparability of such wide ranging effects. There is not only a higher education entrance factor to be considered in that process, but a curriculum effect to ensure that the desirable qualities of many of the SACE and PES subjects are not eroded by the kind of effects that a scaling process would have. The matter is still under review.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I understood Dr Willmott to say that the pass mark for SACE at year 12 will be 10. Does that equate directly with the present C grading pass at year 12 and is that C grading pass currently fixed at 11? Is a drop of 5 per cent to be acceptable or not?

**Dr Willmott:** There has never been a definitive mark regarded as a boundary under the zero to 20 point scale. It has had an ABCDE grading. It is true that the C grading is a range of marks from 11 to 14. There was considerable discussion in the Gilding review as to whether to set the satisfactory grade at 11 or 10. In considering the standards applied at the C grade and the top of the D grade, which was 10, it was felt appropriate that 'satisfactory' would best be regarded as a mark of 10.

**Mr BRINDAL:** In asking my final question, I forgot to commend the Minister for saying that he would look at that individual case. I was lucky enough to get one of those scholarships in 1974 and it was one of the best things I ever did. Therefore, I commend the Minister for his answer in that regard. What attitude has SAIT offered officially to the Government's proposals for attainment levels? Does it mean that every teacher every year will have to assess every student as to performance in the range of attainment areas in the eight key levels of learning?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I should have to address that question to SAIT. I can only give an interpretation of SAIT's attitude towards this. I think there probably is not a clearly defined attitude towards this matter. It has a great deal of value in terms of the status of the teaching profession and the job satisfaction of teachers and their relationships with students and parents. There is much positive value in this. I will ask Mr Boomer to comment briefly.

**Mr Boomer:** SAIT initially, because of other industrial action, was in a stand-off position with regard to attainment levels, not necessarily because it was opposed to the notion of attainment levels but because of the perceived effects on teacher loads and so on. Over the past few months there have been discussions. Mr Tonkin and another SAIT member have now joined the Attainment Levels Reference Group. At our next reference group meeting we shall be discussing the rules which will apply to attainment levels. This will need to be negotiated not just with SAIT but with the field. We need to assess an achievable load for teachers in any one year.

There are various permutations that one can adopt with attainment levels. One need not necessarily ask every teacher across all year levels to record an attainment level in, say, mathematics. We could say that we will look at year six and year 10. We could then even go into a 10 per cent sample, because that would still be scientifically valid. It is my view that, when we finally negotiate a program of monitoring attainment levels over a five-year period, it will not require every teacher to report on every child across every subject. That would be an intolerable load. Eventually we will negotiate a scheme which will give the system the broad picture data that it will need without creating undue burdens on teachers.

The attainment level approach will not be highly intensive of teacher labour. In 1992 the attainment levels will be on the table. We will do a first run in mathematics and in literacy in English and from our feedback we will assess teacher load. I believe that we are now in a situation with SAIT where, with some arguing around the edges, we will reach an amicable agreement about the application of attainment levels.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I have some additional information that I can give to the Committee for incorporation in *Hansard*. The cost of the curriculum guarantee was requested earlier. In the year 1990-91 the actual expenditure was \$20.2 million and the estimated expenditure for 1991-92 is estimated to be \$22.1 million. The estimated receipts from sale of education properties which amount to the \$21 million comprise the sale of parcels of land associated with Kidman Park High School, Glengowrie High School, Pooraka, Montague Road property, Hindmarsh Primary School, part of Findon High School, Strathmont High School, West Lakes High School, Southern Vales outreach property, the Pioneer Village, Ingle Farm Central Primary School and another group of smaller properties which amount to \$171 000. That amounts to the \$21 million. Dr Boston has some information on teacher and student support centres.

**Dr Boston:** There was a request for information on the number of special education people and teacher and student support centres. In the Education Act area there are six inter-agency staff and six special education people dealing with children with disabilities. Under the GME Act, there are 40 guidance officers, 25 speech therapy officers, 11 social workers and 10 attendance officers. The total overall in the special education category is 98 people distributed across six teacher and student support centres.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I have a statistical table of average full-time equivalents under the categories of teachers, ancillary staff and GME Act staff proposed for 1990-91, actual in 1990-91 and proposed for 1991-92, which I would like to have inserted in *Hansard*.

Average Full-time Equivalents			
	Proposed 1990-91	Actual 1990-91	Proposed 1991-92
Teachers . . . . .	14 223.8	14 156.1	13 828.6
Ancillary . . . . .	2 723.2	2 776.4	2 732.7
GME Act . . . . .	867.0	857.0	810.2
	17 814.0	17 789.5	17 371.5

**The CHAIRMAN:** There being no further questions, I declare the examination of this line completed. We appreciate the cooperation of the Minister and his officers.

Minister of Education, Miscellaneous, \$75 577 000—  
Examination declared completed.

Works and Services—Education Department,  
\$13 952 000—Examination declared completed.

Children's Services Office, \$65 129 000

**Chairman:**

Mr M.J. Evans

**Members:**

Mr M.K. Brindal  
Hon. Jennifer Cashmore  
Mr M.R. De Laine  
Mr T.R. Groom  
Mr R.B. Such  
Hon. J.P. Trainer

**Witness:**

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

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr B. Wright, Director, Children's Services Office.  
Ms E. Les, Acting Director, Resources.  
Mr G. Zapcev, Manager, Administration and Finance.

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

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer to page 186 of the Program Estimates and to the specific targets/objectives for 1991-92, which include 'Implement outcomes of the special Premiers' Conference review of child-care management'. I note that it involved early childhood education as well as child care, but there is no reference to that in the pre-school education specific targets, objectives and goals. Can the Minister outline to the Committee, in so far as he is able, the outcome of the conference in respect of the recommendations of the report and the program before implementation?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** There are varying views on the report that was presented to the Ministers' conference. I think it has been a very valuable exercise in conducting this functional review, because clearly there is some overlap between the tiers of Government, particularly between the Commonwealth and State Governments in this area of responsibility. The aim of the functional review, and indeed the reason why it was brought into being was as a result of the Premiers' and the Prime Minister's concern to eliminate overlap between services and to simplify some of the funding structures that currently exist, particularly in the human

services areas, where that overlap and the resultant inefficiency may diminish the effectiveness of the services that we are trying to provide, and particularly in high need areas such as children's services, health, welfare and other related programs. So, that meeting of Ministers of Health, of Welfare and of Children's Services addressed a series of issues.

It agreed that the report would be passed on to the Premiers and the Prime Minister for consideration at the forthcoming Premiers' Conference. However, I think the conclusion that could be drawn from it is that there was not an overwhelming desire to change the current arrangements. I think that everyone agrees that there can be some improvements in those arrangements, but I think there is a desire to see a continued Commonwealth commitment in the form that is currently prevailing. I think that is also the wish of the Commonwealth Minister in this area. A number of States want to see some variations on that, and we were certainly able to discuss all of those in a very valuable discussion period, but the resolutions that we could collectively agree on were very much of a general nature. So, the real conclusion was that we left it to bilateral discussions within the States now and then for some synthesis of that at the Premiers' Conference.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Referring again to page 186 of the Program Estimates and to child care services, a system of proper accreditation is proposed to improve the quality of child care, and \$1 million nationally has been provided by the Federal Government to establish such a system within the States. Will the Minister tell the Committee what was South Australia's share of funding under this scheme to improve the quality of child care? Has the State Government set aside any funding of staff within the CSO to liaise with the Federal Government on accreditation of child care centres and, if so, how much has been allocated and how many staff will be employed?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** One of the officers of the Children's Services Office has been a chairperson of the committee working on these uniform regulations, and I think even as recently as two years ago it would not have been regarded as practically possible that we could agree on uniform regulations in an area where service delivery was so diverse as this, where the regulations were so much at variance. I think South Australia has been regarded as having fairly adequate variations in this field for quite some time, whereas a State like Queensland, for example, had basically no regulation, or what regulation it had was not really enforced in any way. Yet, it has been possible I think to substantially move down that path to the position where we are today, where I think we can now achieve a uniform regulation structure.

That has many advantages for us as States, and obviously it is of particular concern to the Commonwealth, which is the major provider of funding in this area and now, of course, with the subsidies being provided to the non-government or non-subsidised child-care sector, this issue of regulations is quite pressing. The matter of funding has not yet been determined. Indeed, the *modus operandi* of the implementation of these proposals has not reached that stage as yet. I ask Mr Wright if he will briefly comment on our position at this time.

**Mr Wright:** The Commonwealth proposal is that the \$1 million be spent by the Commonwealth in one exercise, which is designed to implement its desire for a national accreditation system. There is no proposal that that money be distributed amongst the States at this stage.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** The Minister will have received a letter from the Association of Child Care Centres of South Australia expressing concern, and I quote:

That our valuable trained people are going to have their trained status taken away and made conditional to the upgrading of their qualifications. Many of these people are over 50 years of age and for various reasons do not wish to embark on lengthy and demanding training. Even though many people in the child care field did their formal training years ago, you may—

this is addressed to the Minister—

be unaware that they have been working in a one-to-one situation with recently trained persons during their entire period of service.

The letter goes on to say:

... it would be the worst form of discrimination to cause unnecessary trauma and stress to these wonderful and dedicated people.

My colleagues have been told by some private child care operators that the CSO is making their lives a living hell by using the threat of delicensing to intimidate centres into complying with new guidelines that they believe will inevitably add to the cost of operating centres and will also effectively remove from centres some of these older women who have been looking after children for a long time. Can the Minister give an assurance that he will review the situation and see whether long-serving employees who have demonstrated their commitment and skills over many years can be protected in some way? We are familiar with the term 'grandfather' clause but perhaps a 'grandmother' clause would be more appropriate here and such an assurance would be warmly welcomed.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** If the honourable member provides me with a copy of that letter, it will help us identify it in our office and then we can respond to it. The Director has a discretion with respect to the accreditation of staff and obviously that is exercised on the basis of each situation that comes before him. There have not been problems in the past in this area and the fears expressed by the correspondent on behalf of the association may be ill-founded but, nevertheless, I need to give a considered response to that. We will look at it and give the undertaking the honourable member seeks to have this matter carefully looked at.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** As to child care, page 196 of the Program Estimates, can the Minister provide a copy of the report of the evaluation of the Out of School Hours Care program and a copy of the results of the review of the Family Day Care Program and advise the Committee about what happened to the review of the child care centre licensing regulations that was listed as a target for 1990-91?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will make those available to the honourable member.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to preschool education on page 181 of the Program Estimates. What support is the State Government providing to ensure that high quality preschool education services are available for South Australian children?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** We have a record in this area of outstanding service to the community. The honourable member would know that some years ago the Commonwealth Government withdrew funding for preschool programs in this State and the decision was taken that that shortfall would be made up by the State. We have been able to maintain over a long time a level of resourcing of preschools far in excess of the national average.

The Loan Council figures provided indicate that that percentage above the national average is the highest in this country and certainly a very substantial amount, as I say, over the average of the other States. The preschool programs in this State provide four sessions per week for an estimated 94 per cent of the eligible four-year-olds, and that is an outstanding program in its extent when taking into account those groups of young people who have traditionally not participated in preschool programs in this State.

The social justice programs that have been developed by the CSO to provide these services in remote rural communities, amongst the Aboriginal communities, amongst newly arrived migrant families and so on have also been an outstanding success. I refer to even the flexibility of service provision so that in small rural communities there is still development of a preschool program in some form or another where existing criteria are not met.

The spread of these programs through the CSO is also complemented by the child-parent centres that exist in about 100 schools throughout the State. It is interesting to compare the position with that in Western Australia. The 94 per cent of the four-year-old figure in South Australia compares with less than 20 per cent of four-year-olds in Western Australia who have access to less than four sessions a week.

That is explained in part by the later entry to school of children of that age group in that State, but nevertheless there is the development of the children in that age group who miss out to an extent that South Australian children do not on access to those preschool opportunities. In other States there are substantial charges that bar certain students from participating in preschool education programs that do not exist in this State. I can provide all this in more detail. I will not burden the Committee with it, except to say that we have been in a substantial growth pattern in this area as well and each year we have been providing new preschool facilities in new suburbs and rejuvenation of some centres in older suburbs as well. The rejuvenation of inner-suburban areas is continuing. Many young families with children are moving into areas previously occupied by older people. I place on record the superb range of preschool programs provided in this State.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer to out-of-school hours care and vacation care referred to on page 181 of the Program Estimates. What action is being taken to ensure that the child care needs of working families with school age children are being met?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is an important new development in the provision of care for children and indeed enriching programs for children who otherwise would be at risk or perhaps unsatisfactorily provided for in the hours before and after school. Certainly an occasional care element is contained in these programs. There has been a dramatic increase in the number of new programs developed in or around schools or other appropriate settings in the community. These programs are able to access fee relief, so it makes them more accessible to working parents and provides an additional incentive for people who have been caring for children to re-enter the work force. There are many benefits for individuals, families and the whole community in the extension of this program.

Since July 1989, 52 new services have been established in South Australia, bringing the total to 100 services provided under the out-of-school hours care program. Since October 1990 efforts have been directed to consolidating the rapid expansion in services, and these activities, which mainly have been conducted in conjunction with the Commonwealth Government, have seen some reallocation of places to match funding and make the best use of available resources in this area. We have been able to follow up training for service providers on the fee relief scheme to ensure maximum access to fee relief for all out-of-school hours care clients. Almost 100 per cent take-up of fee relief by those services has occurred.

We have addressed the quality issues of programs in the area, including liaison between the Children's Services Office and the Education Department on school level issues on behalf of the many programs based in our schools. We have

seen the rapid expansion of these programs and in recent months their consolidation and entrenchment, along with quality control issues. With regard to vacation care, during 1990-91 the Children's Services Office successfully completed the transfer of the Education Department vacation recreation program to the management of the Children's Services Office, and this streamlining and rationalisation process has achieved improved outcomes for families by enabling equity in funding and a greater choice of programs for working parents requiring full day care.

A new subsidy structure has been introduced across all programs, taking account of social justice and special needs groups accessing the program. About 13 per cent of the Children's Services Office vacation program budget has been allocated to special needs participants with \$165 000 per annum going to support community-based programs for children with disabilities. In a separate expansion exercise, 14 new vacation programs have been funded by the Children's Services Office during the past financial year at a total cost of \$104 000, plus establishment costs of \$3 500.

These programs are being held at the following primary schools: Salisbury, Parafield Gardens, Tea Tree Gully, Wynn Vale, Surrey Downs, Modbury West, Hendon, Ridley Grove, Darlington, Hallett Cove South, Christies Beach, Murray Bridge, Flaxmill and Hackam South. I will table a list of funded out-of-school hours services by region as of September 1991 and the Children's Services Office vacation care programs as of October 1991.

**Mr De LAINE:** I refer again to page 181 of the Program Estimates and to the item relating to the services for Aboriginal children at a proposed amount of \$576 000. What are some of the initiatives being undertaken by the Children's Services Office to address the needs of Aboriginal children?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Prior to the establishment of the Children's Services Office, children of Aboriginal families were a neglected group with respect to participation in pre-school and other programs. It is not easy to redress that situation in either rural communities or urban situations. Once again, some outstanding work has been done in this area. The honourable member will be aware of the Kalaya children's services program at Alberton, which is to be relocated to the site of the Port Adelaide Girls High School later this year, and the children's services program established in your electorate, Mr Chairman, at Elizabeth as part of the Kurna Plains education establishment adjacent to the Elizabeth High School site in central Elizabeth.

They are two of many programs which have been established and which are aimed at giving a head start to those young people who suffer a series of disabilities with respect to their ability to participate fully in education programs. It is acknowledged that preschool years are vital for those children in particular and indeed for all young people. I will ask the Director of the Children's Services Office to briefly outline to the Committee some of the programs that have been established in this area that are of benefit to members of the Aboriginal community.

**Mr Wright:** Our program for Aboriginal children is multi-pronged and is focused on both young children and their families. A lot of our work has been done in cooperation with the Commonwealth. For example, the Training for Aboriginal Program (TAP) is very important in respect of the development of skills for Aboriginal people. We are now involved with the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training in developing programs in major country areas under this initiative. We are also running toy library programs and training Aboriginal staff to

work in those programs. We are involved in community worker programs in all country regions.

There is increasing emphasis on the participation of Aboriginal parents and communities in the planning and delivery of programs for Aboriginal children. We have a consultative committee for Aboriginal services which includes members of all the Aboriginal communities in this State. That committee provides us with advice as to the way in which we should develop particular programs for Aboriginal children. It has been involved in informing us on a wide variety of services provided for Aboriginal children across the State. We are working with the Commonwealth to develop an Aboriginal educational program for young children, and we have developed a three year program in association with DEET that is specifically designed to meet the needs of young Aboriginal children.

**Mr De LAINE:** Will the new children's centre at Port Adelaide be named Kalaya, the same as the Alberton centre, and when is it due to be opened?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Yes, I understand that it is the wish of the community that it remain known as the Kalaya Children's Centre. It is anticipated that it will be operating before the end of this year, probably in November or December. I do not know when it will be formally opened.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I note on page 181 reference to children with special needs. Under the heading of 'Services for Remote and Isolated Children' no employment averages for full-time equivalents are listed. The Minister would be well aware that the Remote and Isolated Children's Exercise (RICE) program has existed at Port Augusta. It was a very successful, highly innovative and inter-agency approach to early childhood education. It met a very real need for a particularly disadvantaged group, which included not only preschool children growing up on remote and isolated properties who were not the sons or daughters of wealthy station owners but, rather, the children of ancillary workers but also employees of Australian National living in those small line towns. I note that there is an allocation of money and perhaps it goes to RICE as an incorporated body and it does its own employing. Does the program still exist and is it alive and well? If not, why not?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** There is no change to the resourcing of that joint Commonwealth-State program. I cannot recall the history of the funding; it seems to have followed me around a number of ministries over the years. It is a valuable program, and we hope that it can be incorporated in the new complex being established for the School of the Air component of the Open Access College at Port Augusta, where I think it is appropriately placed.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I note that costs for the Out of School Hours Care program are listed but, again, no staffing levels are shown. I know that the major cost would be for staffing. How are these people employed? I thought they would be specifically employed by the Children's Services Office and therefore would be referred to. Obviously, they are not. How are they employed? This is another source of employment for people, and that is obviously a valuable statistic, if nothing else.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** It has been a major job creation area in recent times. I will ask Mr Wright to explain how these staff are employed. They are not employed by the Children's Services Office.

**Mr Wright:** All the staff are employed by the sponsoring committee running the program, so they do not appear as employment statistics in our budget lines. The majority of the sponsoring committees are school councils, thus most of the personnel involved in the Out of School Hours Care program are direct employees of school councils.

**Mr BRINDAL:** How many are there and, as a very parochial member, I ask how the Warradale Primary School's application is going?

**Mr Wright:** I will have to find out for the honourable member.

**Mr BRINDAL:** Do you know the number?

**Mr Wright:** No, I do not. I will check for the honourable member.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** That is the information I tabled a moment ago. We do not have the actual number, but there are several pages of information. I think the honourable member has corresponded with me about the Warradale situation, and I believe that another group of programs is to be approved in the next three year cycle that the Commonwealth has established. Obviously, Warradale will be part of the group to be considered in that next three year cycle. There are 100 services in that program.

**Mr BRINDAL:** I believe that among the most important services provided in the past decade were the toy libraries and the playgroups, because they were a way of encouraging especially socio-economically disadvantaged people into approaches to education and getting children ready for school. I note that the funding of playgroups and toy libraries is set out on page 181A. Do they remain successful, are there likely to be any new initiatives, have they reached saturation point or are they in a holding pattern?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** The toy libraries and playgroups programs are very valuable. Clearly, they are strengthened and more effective because they are community based, organised almost spontaneously, arise out of a range of other activities in the community and are not overly bureaucratic in their approach. The support that playgroups provide for parents is particularly valuable. I have been through that process as a parent. The friendships formed between the children and the parents are very valuable and lasting in my case and in the experience of many others. They are quite difficult years. Playgroups, in an informal but effective way, assist in the parenting process.

The Playgroup Association of South Australia is a vital and active organisation. It links in well with a range of other service providers and agencies, it is a strong adjunct to the Government in a range of key areas and it participates fully in the consultative processes. There are approximately 700 playgroups in South Australia and over 22 000 children participate in playgroups during any year. The playgroups operate in a range of community facilities and private homes. The Children's Services Office kindergartens also make facilities available to parent-run playgroups as part of its services to the community. Indeed, most kindergartens have playgroups associated with them.

The Playgroup Association of South Australia, with which I have been pleased to be associated for a long period as Minister and a member of Parliament, provides a range of coordination, support and advisory services to playgroups. There are 13 part-time staff employed by that association, so it is a substantial organisation. The association receives funding from both State and Federal Governments. State funding to the association for the past financial year was \$77 100 and Commonwealth funding was \$68 000. This year we propose to increase that funding to \$79 030 and Commonwealth funding to the association has been increased to \$71 000.

Similarly, the toy libraries, which have a different function and role, are community based. They receive substantial community support and are often an adjunct to other services, whether Children's Services Office programs or other programs in the community. As the honourable member said, they provide a particularly valuable service to

parents of children with special needs and to other specialist populations in our community who want to access the programs provided in this way. It is interesting that there are funded toy library services right across the State, and a very comprehensive service is provided by the mini mobile toy libraries that we all see travelling around the State.

The State Government provided a recent grant of \$50 000 for the renewal of toy library stocks. I know that that was appreciated by the toy libraries throughout the State. The criteria that was used in the allocation of those resources was considered jointly by the Children's Services Office and the Toy Library Association, and in June all toy libraries offering a service to children in the age group nought to six years were invited to apply for a grant under that allocation. It was agreed that the \$50 000 be divided into two components—\$30 000 for all eligible services to share and \$20 000 to be divided amongst those services meeting priority of access criteria, the groups to which the honourable member referred in his question. Applications were received from 62 services and each of those was given an equal share of the \$30 000 and the other \$20 000 was allocated to 36 services, depending on that specific needs criteria. The allocation for the toy libraries is maintained this year at \$495 000.

**Mr De LAINE:** The Program Estimates at page 181 refer to multicultural services for children. In order to respond to the multicultural nature of the South Australian community, what service developments has the Children's Services Office undertaken in this area?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Once again, I point out that the children of parents of non-English speaking background in particular need to be provided with services in a sensitive way, and this is particularly so for the children of newly-arrived migrants, many of whom of necessity need to enter the work force or enter training programs or language programs of one form or another. So children's services programs are important for that group, at a very sensitive time, for the integration of those children and indeed of their families into the community. They have often experienced trauma in this migration process, particularly so for refugee families, and so the role that the Children's Services Office plays is an important one in this area. I ask Mr Wright briefly to give a rundown of the elements of the programs that we provide in this area.

**Mr Wright:** The major component of our program is the bilingual assistance program. Bilingual assistants are employed by the Children's Services Office to support the participation in preschool services of children from non-English speaking backgrounds and to liaise with their families and their communities. The program focuses on the needs of newly-arrived migrant families and is of particular importance from the point of view of providing a head start for those children in their subsequent attendance in the compulsory school system.

In the bilingual assistance program, we currently employ 34 staff. We have 7.6 full-time equivalents, working in languages, including Vietnamese, Khmer, Mandarin, Cantonese, Spanish and Punjabi. A review of the bilingual assistance program was conducted in 1990, to identify effective resource deployment, with reference to migrant families in particular, and future needs for this type of support in children's services. The outcome of that review has been to ensure a more effective management and deployment of those bilingual assistants and to recognise the individual nature of regional needs. In 1990-91, \$193 000 was expended on the bilingual program, and the allocation for 1991-92 is \$218 000, representing a significant increase in commitment to this area.

Beyond the bilingual assistance program, the Children's Services Office has committed itself to ensuring that curriculum materials are developed appropriate to the needs of children from multicultural backgrounds. We have also committed ourselves to recruiting people from non-English speaking backgrounds as employees of the office, and there have been specific initiatives in some child-care programs, particularly in family day care, to ensure that those services are made attractive to people from non-English speaking backgrounds.

**Mr De LAINE:** Some time ago consideration was given by the Children's Services Office to providing assistance to families with triplets, but what is the current situation?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will ask Mr Wright to explain our response to these difficulties that families rarely encounter.

**Mr Wright:** The CSO does not have a formal program to deal with multiple births but we have adopted the attitude that, where we can, we will help out those families with multiple births. Generally, we provide assistance through the family day care scheme and, in almost all cases in the past few years involving families with significant multiple births, we have provided assistance through family day care.

Generally, it has been in the form of assistance several hours a day at critical periods—what some call the arsenic hours—when the multiple children are required to be bathed, fed and put to sleep for the night. We will continue to provide that assistance.

**The CHAIRMAN:** The Minister will be aware that in recent months a number of child-care centres in disadvantaged areas, and I refer particularly to my own region and areas such as Elizabeth West and Smithfield Plains, where child-care centres have experienced severe financial difficulties and at one point faced imminent closure. Is the Minister able to give some long-term reassurance that centres located in areas where it is particularly difficult to collect fees will be to sustain an important social justice role in providing a long-term service?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** As the honourable member would be aware it is substantially a Commonwealth Government responsibility but, nevertheless, we have a vital interest in ensuring the continuation of all of these programs. In almost all the cases where this financial difficulty has arisen it has been in areas of high need and the CSO has not only been monitoring the situation and advocating those needs to our Commonwealth counterparts but we have also been trying to provide whatever assistance we can within our resources to assist those centres.

I have met with representatives and discussed this matter, and I have made representations myself to the Commonwealth Government about these centres and their specific needs. Beyond that I can add little and I ask Mr Wright to further comment.

**Mr Wright:** We have assisted those centres in some cases with financial help to enable them to meet pressing maintenance and other capital costs, but our major role in this exercise is to impress on the Commonwealth the need to maintain adequate levels of subsidy to allow those centres to function effectively.

**Mr SUCH:** I consider the preschool centres in my electorate to be excellent, not only in respect of staff but from almost every aspect. I do not know whether other members have had my experience but I have been bombarded with letters of concern from parents who are fearful of the consequences of the functional review of preschool and child-care funding, and this was touched on earlier. Can the Minister give an assurance that there will be no compromise in respect of standards and about the concerns that parents

have? There seems to be a rumour going around that somehow these centres are going to be turned into child minding facilities. I do not know the origin of this rumour, but I have received hundreds of representations from parents concerned about the outcome of the review.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I am sure that we have all had similar representations. I thank the honourable member for the supportive comments he made about the work of the Children's Services Office in his district, as was echoed by his colleagues. We are well served by the staff of the Children's Services Office, whether in direct service provision or in support programs for our preschool, child-care and other programs. As I explained to the member for Coles, this matter was not definitively resolved at the Ministers meeting, but the views expressed by the honourable member's constituent and others throughout this nation were mirrored by Ministers at that meeting. It is an important program and meets an area of high need. The program has been successfully established by the Federal Government. It is clear that the Federal Government wants to maintain what kudos it can for its substantial commitment in this area. It is clear that it does not want to see the program handed over to the States.

In the child-care program and a number of other programs the Commonwealth philosophy has been to fund community-based organisations to employ staff and develop these programs and indeed by-pass State bureaucracies. No doubt the Premiers will address the issues and be mindful of the concerns expressed broadly in the community about substantial change in this area, diminution of standards and so on. In this State we are committed to maintaining those standards in the breadth of the programs that we provide and our commitment to maintain that collaboration with not only the Commonwealth Government but also with local government, which has an emerging interest in this area. The Local Government Association of Australia was represented at that Ministers' meeting by Mr Malcolm Germein, a South Australian, who on that occasion was representing local government across the nation. Whilst the matter must still go through further processes, the honourable member can be assured that the concerns of his constituents have been relayed to the highest authorities in this country.

**Mr SUCH:** In my electorate and other rapidly growing suburbs a shortage of child-care places is a problem. It is particularly the result of factors such as 70 to 80 per cent of women being in the paid work force. Is the Minister aware of the unmet demand in the Happy Valley/Aberfoyle Park area and do plans exist to address the issue?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Despite the fact that there has been a huge increase in the number of child-care places across the nation and targeted to high need areas, there remains a great pool of unmet need in the Australian community for long day care in particular. Another round of long day care centres are to be established in this and other States. We anticipate moving into negotiations with the Commonwealth, which is also a three-year cycle, in the near future. Mr Wright may be able to give more detail on the process. Obviously the emerging areas, such as the honourable member's district, would be in a priority category.

**Mr Wright:** We are still in the process of completing the current round of new centres in conjunction with the Commonwealth and the new program to which the Minister referred will commence in 1992 and go through to 1996. We have not begun detailed negotiations with the Commonwealth on that program, but for the whole of Australia it represents an additional 30 000 places. Our share will be considerable. We anticipate that the negotiations for the

new program will be completed by this time next year at the latest.

**Mr SUCH:** My third question relates to funding for preschools run by the Southern Montessori Education Centre. I corresponded recently with the Minister on this issue, and I would like the matter clarified, because I understand that in South Australia there are at least half a dozen privately run preschools that do not receive any direct funding, yet I am told that many preschools organised and run by church groups do receive funding. Will the Minister clarify that point, because this issue has been raised with me by the Southern Montessori Education Centre people who believe that it should be considered. They feel they are being treated differently in comparison with funding given to church run preschools, which they claim has some historical basis.

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** This is true. There was a period during the establishment of the Children's Services Office when funding to any new non-government preschool program of that type was discontinued, with the highest priority being given to Government established programs within the available resources. As I think I explained in correspondence with the honourable member, that situation remains. I think it is well known in the community and amongst providers of that policy, although I guess some will see it as an anomaly that existed in the way in which the situation was dealt with at that time. I was not the Minister at that time, but that has been established and remains the position.

**Mr SUCH:** As a supplementary question, will the possible funding of the Montessori schools be considered within the ambit of that functional review?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** Yes. I think an opportunity exists for that matter to be considered in the other context.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** I refer to page 182 of the Program Estimates, the heading 'Executive, Professional and Technical Staff'. Why did the number of staff employed under this line increase by 20 last year over budget, and what is the reason for the further increase of 14 this year?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I will need to do some further research on this matter for the honourable member, but I

understand that that involves a number of people on workers compensation and an increase in family day care staff. I will try to obtain more specific information, but it comes under workers compensation, staff who are being held for non-program based positions, increases in licensing staff and occasional care staff. All these involve increases that have occurred in programs in recent years, but I will provide details for the honourable member.

**The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE:** Has any progress been made to encourage and support the establishment of work based child-care, which I personally believe will be a most desirable trend and one much sought by parents, particularly single parents, fathers as well as mothers?

**The Hon. G.J. Crafter:** I was going to refer to that in response to the question of the member for Fisher about the number of working women in his electorate who are trying to access long day care. There is huge potential for employer based child-care. We have been unsuccessful in South Australia, other than in a few instances, for example in Gilbert Street where the Public Service Association and the Australian Bank Officers Association have sponsored a child-care centre—and we have had very little support from industry in this area. Child care is provided in TAFE colleges, hospitals and so on but not in the private sector. I can only concur with the honourable member's comments.

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

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Works and Services—Children's Services Office,  
\$818 000—Examination declared completed.

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#### ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Friday 20 September at 9.30 a.m.