

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 25 June 1997

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A**Chairman:**
Mr R.P. Bass**Members:**
The Hon. Frank Blevins
Mr S. Condous
Mrs J. Hall
Ms A.K. Hurley
Mr S.R. Leggett
Mr J.A. Quirke*The Committee met at 11 a.m.*

Office of Local Government, \$610 000
Minister for Local Government—Other payments,
\$52 311 000

Witness:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden, Minister for Tourism, Minister for Local Government and Minister for Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:Mr I. Dixon, Chief Executive Officer, Office of Local Government.
Ms C. Procter, Director.
Mr J. Wright, Client Manager.
Mr A. Beasley, Project officer.

The CHAIRMAN: As all members would be aware, the Committee hearings are relatively informal and there is no need for members to rise when they ask or answer questions. The Committee will determine the approximate time for consideration of proposed payments, to facilitate the change-over of departmental advisers. Changes to the composition of the Committee will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure that they have provided the Chair with a completed request to be discharged form. If the Minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be in a form suitable for insertion in *Hansard* and two copies submitted no later than Friday 4 July to the Clerk of the House of Assembly.

I propose to allow the Minister and the lead speaker for the Opposition time to make opening statements, if desired, of about 10 minutes but no longer than 15 minutes. There will be a flexible approach in relation to giving the call for the asking of questions, based on three questions per member, alternating sides. Members will also be allowed to ask a brief supplementary question to conclude a line of questioning, but I stress that supplementary questions will be the exception rather than the rule; indeed, if the Minister answers the question fully there should be no need for a supplementary question.

Subject to the convenience of the Committee, members outside the Committee who desire to ask questions on a line of questioning currently being undertaken by the Committee will be permitted to do so once the line of questioning on an

item has been exhausted by other members of the Committee. An indication to the Chair in advance from the member outside the Committee wishing to ask a question is necessary.

Questions must be based on lines of expenditure as revealed in the Estimates of Receipts and Payments, Printed Paper No. 2. Reference may also be made to other budget documentation, including Program Estimates and Information, Capital Works Program, and Financial Statement. Members must identify the page number of the financial paper to which their question relates. Questions not asked at the end of the day may be placed on the next sitting day's House of Assembly Notice Paper.

I remind the Minister that there is no formal facility for the tabling of documents before the Committee. However, documents can be supplied to the Chair for distribution to the Committee. The incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the House of Assembly; that is, that it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length. All questions are to be directed to the Minister through the Chair, not to the Minister's advisers. The Minister may refer questions to his advisers for a response if he so desires. I also advise that for the purposes of the Committee some freedom will be allowed for television coverage by allowing a short period of filming from the northern gallery of this Chamber. I declare the proposed payments open for examination. Does the Minister wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Yes, Mr Chairman. The Office of Local Government was established on 19 December 1996 as an administrative unit under the Public Sector Management Act 1995. When ministerial portfolios were revised last year in a way which separated responsibility for local government and housing and urban development, it was no longer effective to retain officers engaged in the local government program within the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Employees of the State Local Government Relations Unit and the Structure Reform Unit of the Department of Housing and Urban Development were therefore transferred to the new office. Legislation committed to me includes the South Australian Local Government Grants Commission Act 1992 and the Outback Areas Community Development Trust Act 1978, and it is proposed that officers of these bodies will be transferred to the Office of Local Government.

The creation of the Office of Local Government provides the impetus for evaluating the way in which the State's responsibilities for and relationship with local government are administered. A three to five year strategic plan being developed for the office will ensure that it continues to provide services which will effectively achieve the Government's objectives and contribute to the development of the local government sector in the critical years ahead. There have been a number of notable outcomes this year with structural reform being the success story of 1996-97. Following the passage of the Local Government Boundary Reform Amendment Act in December 1995, the local government boundary reform board was established to assist councils with the development of voluntary structural reform proposals, to consider these proposals in line with the legislative requirements and to recommend the formation of new amalgamated councils.

This process has reduced the total number of councils in South Australia from 118 to 69, creating potential savings of at least \$20 million. The efforts of the board and its staff during 1996-97 have been outstanding, and I commend them

and particularly the Chairman, Mrs Annette Eiffe, and those councils which have participated so diligently in ensuring the success of the amalgamation program.

The structural reform process has seen some significant changes. South Australia now has one council in the southern metropolitan area with a population of 150 000, through the amalgamation of the Cities of Happy Valley and Noarlunga and the District Council of Willunga. In the Adelaide Hills, there is now one council where previously there were four, a situation that will be beneficial from an environmental and economic development perspective, as well as providing benefits to the residents and ratepayers of the area.

Many amalgamations have occurred in rural areas of the State, including the creation of a single council on Kangaroo Island at long last after 110 years. In several cases, corporations and the surrounding district councils have come together, for example, in Naracoorte, Peterborough and Port Pirie. There have been two instances where councils have actively participated in more than one amalgamation, for example, Port Pirie City and Districts being formed and then merging with Crystal Brook-Redhill, and the Barossa Council commencing on 1 July 1996 and then merging with the District Council of Mount Pleasant.

Some new councils have identified savings through rationalisation of staff and physical assets, which will be passed onto their ratepayers by way of lower rates or improved services, or both. In other cases, the participating councils have taken the decision in line with their community view to retain employment at each centre, even though efficiencies may not be maximised. The new Clare and Gilbert Valley Council is an example of this philosophy.

The structural reform program has also resulted in other innovations in service provision by local government. For example, two newly amalgamated councils in the Far North are progressing well in developing an administrative federation to consolidate all administrative services into one organisation which will service both the Peterborough District Council and the District Council of Orroroo-Carrieton. On Eyre Peninsula, the District Councils of Cleve, Kimba and Franklin Harbor are exploring the cooperative formation of a joint works authority to rationalise services and to facilitate their ability to tender for additional work on a competitive basis.

Other key achievements in 1996-97 include, first, the introduction of postal voting as an option for all councils. Many councils took advantage of this option for the first time at the May 1997 elections, resulting in an increase in the State average voter turnout from 18.78 per cent in 1995 to 33.84 per cent in 1997. The second achievement was the production on schedule of the necessary working documents to support the review of the Local Government Act which is presently under way. Thus 1997-98 will be a year in which the gains made in local government structural reform will be consolidated and the work done in planning and developing legislative and management reform proposals and projects will produce results.

The Governance Review Advisory Group set up to review the future governance of the City of Adelaide and funded jointly by the Office of Local Government and the Adelaide City Council will report by 31 December 1997. As a result of the progress which has been made, the additional allocation which is provided for the local government reform program over and behalf above the normal appropriation for the office will reduce to just over \$1 million compared with the 1996-97 revised estimate of just under \$3.7 million.

The Outback Areas Community Development Trust has been allocated \$111 000 as in 1996-97 to provide for one-off project grants for assistance to outback communities for a range of community services, services which are very much needed in these communities. It is to the credit of the trust that the residents in the remote areas of South Australia are so supportive of it, particularly as the trust was originally regarded with considerable suspicion. Local government has much to contribute to our society and I will be ensuring that it is well placed to do so.

Ms HURLEY: I refer to the Program Estimates (page 406). The Governance Review Advisory Group was established in March 1997 to take public submissions and advise the Government on issues relating to the governance of the City of Adelaide. This group was set up because of opposition and community objections to the proposed sacking of the Adelaide City Council in an arbitrary way by the State Government. There were vigorous calls for the Government to consult with the community and to work with the existing city council. At the time, it was widely assumed that the Government would release its report for review by the public and the groups and individuals who will make submissions, and that further feedback would be available to the Government before a decision was reached and legislation introduced. I now understand that the Government may not allow the public to see the summary of its views and the options arising from them. Will the Minister undertake to release the report of the Governance Review Advisory Group for the public?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I want to make sure that the information I provide to the Committee is accurate: my senior officers have confirmed my understanding, that is, that no commitment was ever given that all the information that will be made available to the group will be released. It is important that I go over the details of the group and exactly what the requirements are. It was established in March this year—as the honourable member knows—to examine issues related to the governance of the Adelaide City Council. The purpose of the review is to identify desirable governance arrangements, which will ensure the proper management of the city for its electors and enable the council to provide leadership as the capital city council of South Australia. I can assure the honourable member that an extensive consultation process is under way, and it includes ongoing consultation and communication with elected members and staff of the council itself, including meetings with council and individual interviews with elected members and officers, and with the Local Government Association.

It also includes public calls for written submissions, which are due by Monday of next week, and I understand that a large number of submissions have been forwarded to the group. It includes a letter to all electors in the Adelaide City Council, enclosing a call for submissions brief, and to all State Government Ministers, members of Parliament and chief executive officers, explaining the process. It includes consultation with representative and community groups, and public meetings and hearings scheduled later this year. Submissions to the review can be made by anyone who has an interest in the governance, and the group will report to me by 31 December this year. At that time, obviously, I will have the opportunity to consider all the information the group forwards to me, and I will subsequently make available a statement to the Parliament and to the public.

Ms HURLEY: Was the answer, 'No, the report will not be made public'?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The answer was not 'No.' I said that I will make a decision once I have had an opportunity to review the report.

Ms HURLEY: So, if you like the report it will be public; if you do not, it will not?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The honourable member can put onto that whatever connotation she likes.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The question was asked and a supplementary followed. I want an answer and not debate.

Ms HURLEY: I again refer to the Program Estimates (page 406) and to the completion of exposure drafts of Bills for a new Local Government Act, a consultation paper on associated repeals and amendments, and a community consultation guide. I am aware that drafts of the Local Government Bill have been available for some months but have not been made available to councils or the community. I also understand that some drafts have been made available to at least some Liberal members of Parliament. Many people closely involved in local government have expressed much frustration to me about the delay in the process of consultation. When will the Minister proceed with community consultation on the review of the Local Government Act, and why has this been delayed?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The honourable member makes a number of assumptions in her question. I will go over exactly what the process is. Yes, we are in the process of rewriting the Local Government Act, but before I introduce the Bill into this Parliament I am determined to do one thing.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Despite the interjection of the honourable member on my right, I very much look forward to being here to do that, and it will be great to be able to do that without his inane interjections. However, let us come back to the issue at hand.

The CHAIRMAN: I would ask the member for Giles not to interject and the Minister not to react to interjections; that is my job.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We have to acknowledge that as they get a bit older they get a bit grumpier.

The CHAIRMAN: Will the Minister please answer the question.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: A process is under way and extensive consultation is presently going on involving my officers, the President and officers of the Local Government Association and myself. We are striving to achieve something which I guess the Opposition finds difficult to understand: we are trying to reach a point where we have substantial agreement on the amendments that I will make to the Local Government Act. When we have that substantial agreement, the draft Bill will be released for public consultation. I assure the honourable member, all members of the South Australian public and all those interested in local government that an extensive consultation period will be provided once the association and the Government have reached substantial agreement on the draft Bill. When that occurs, the documents will go out for months. Councils and individuals will then have the opportunity to put submissions to the Government based on the draft Bill as it has been released.

That draft Bill will then come back and we will consider all the comments that have been made. We will again work closely with the Local Government Association to prepare a second draft on which we will again invite comment before we prepare the final Bill, which will be presented to this Parliament. So, extensive consultation with the Local Government Association is being undertaken at the moment,

there will be extensive consultation with councils and individuals on the Bill, and all this will be undertaken prior to the introduction of the Bill.

The honourable member also raises the fact that some members of Parliament have a copy of the preliminary draft Bill. I do not know how her Party works, but the Liberal Party is a Party of consultation. Therefore, I have also been seeking from my own colleagues input and comment on how they feel about the preliminary draft Bill and what direction I as Minister should be taking on their behalf. So, yes, of course members of my Party have been provided with a copy of the Bill, because I regard them as a very important resource and I want to ensure that when the Bill is introduced it reflects their wishes.

With respect to the honourable member's comment that the draft Bill's not being released for consultation is causing concern in local government circles, again, this has been whipped up, probably mainly by the Opposition. Certainly, two or three people have written to me and, when I have explained to them the process I am adopting, immediately they indicate that they are very happy indeed with the process. The association has seen a copy of the preliminary draft and is working on that. We are working towards achieving and have already achieved a number of agreements in relation to the draft, and we still have more to go. I can assure the honourable member that, once substantial agreement on the Bill has been reached and it is in a form where it is ready for public consultation, it will be released.

Ms HURLEY: The program description at page 406 of the Program Estimates under '1997-98 Specific Targets/Objectives' states:

To review the methodology for the distribution of Commonwealth Financial Assistance Grants through the South Australian Local Government Grants Commission.

What are the deficiencies with the present system of allocation of grants which the review is intended to address, what are the terms of reference for the review and can a copy of these be supplied?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The principles of horizontal fiscal equalisation—that fancy term we tend to use—determine how the funding will be allocated by the Grants Commission. Those principles are contained within the Commonwealth Local Government Financial Assistance Act. The South Australian Grants Commission has continually endeavoured to meet the intention of these principles and was instrumental in the commissioning of a report completed in 1996 on the measurement of the revenue raising capacities of councils. The commission has reviewed the findings of this report, together with other literature on Grants Commission methodology, and commenced a review of its methodology in October 1996.

This involves investigation of alternative indicators of the revenue raising capacity of councils and a review of expenditure functions and cost drivers for expenditure. The commission will be consulting with councils and the Local Government Association and anticipates completion of the review in time for incorporation of any changes to the methodology for the 1998-99 grant calculations. The honourable member asked about the terms of reference. The commission has not yet framed its terms of reference: we are aware only of their general direction in terms of the information it is seeking. As the terms of reference have not yet been framed, I am not in a position to release them.

I am concerned about the present method of distribution of funding for local government. I believe that South

Australia is disadvantaged because of the present method by which the funding is calculated. I also believe that it is not necessarily fair to councils. As the honourable member would know, the formula is extremely complicated. The way in which the amounts are determined seems to me to be too complicated and makes the process very difficult for anyone to follow, particularly the councils. It is certainly hoped that the formula will be changed; and I would also hope that the method of allocation of funding to the States is reviewed.

South Australia has a small population in terms of the total population of Australia but has a very large land area and, because of the way in which the present funding is allocated, that is one area in which we are seriously disadvantaged.

Mr CONDOUS: What have councils identified as the major benefits of amalgamating?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: As far as the amalgamation process is concerned, councils have reaped a number of benefits, predominantly in the areas of increased efficiencies, which in turn have led either to the councils being in a position to reduce the rates payable to those councils or to providing additional funding for works to be undertaken. In fact, I spoke to the member for Hart prior to entering the Chamber, and he said that it is great that his rates are down \$100, because he lives in the City of Port Adelaide Enfield. I can assure the member for Hart and others that, particularly in relation to the City of Port Adelaide Enfield, I have received a lot of feedback in terms of how happy the ratepayers of that new city are. They have had a substantial reduction in their rates and yet at the same time the council is undertaking record public works.

I can provide the member for Colton with some examples in relation to specific savings: the City of Port Adelaide Enfield, \$2.3 million per annum; the City of Playford, \$1 million per annum; and the City of Happy Valley, Noarlunga and Willunga (or City South), \$3.5 million per annum, which will be achieved over three years. Other councils have identified similar types of savings and that they will be applied in rate reductions and/or improved services to the community. I can also provide some examples of rural councils and the efficiencies and savings that they have been able to achieve: the District Council of the Copper Coast, \$400 000 per annum; the District Council of Naracoorte, \$260 000 per annum; and, the Wattle Range Council, \$700 000 per annum.

I also point out that a number of councils which have amalgamated once have amalgamated a second time. The feedback I am receiving is that a number of other councils which have undertaken one amalgamation are considering undertaking subsequent amalgamations. Obviously, economic viability is one major factor and, of course, amalgamations make it so much easier for those in large councils to be more effective in their environmental controls and, certainly, more effective in the way they allocate funds to important areas such as tourism. A number of the new councils have indicated to me how much better it is to have large councils controlling a large area in terms of what they can do to attract tourists to their area. There are a number of ways in which the amalgamation process has assisted councils.

Mr CONDOUS: The Minister would be aware that section 69B of the Local Government Act which established the Local Government Equal Opportunity Advisory Committee expires on 30 June this year. What arrangements will replace the current advisory committee to ensure that there still is a focus on EEO in local government?

The CHAIRMAN: When asking a question I request that members refer to the page number in the budget papers?

Mr CONDOUS: It is page 406.

The CHAIRMAN: If members provide that detail, it does make it easier; and the Standing Orders require it.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Let me assure the honourable member that not only is my department strongly supportive of the equal employment opportunities in local government but so am I as Minister. There is no doubt that we have a huge untapped resource as far as the appointment of females is concerned. In fact, in my department I have a very senior female officer with tremendous experience in local government who is assisting me here today. All but one of my ministerial staff are female, and I have just appointed a female Chief Executive Officer to the South Australian Tourism Commission. I have not made such appointments in terms of equality but purely and simply because I believe that there are some tremendous abilities within that large untapped resource. My department and I will treat all applications and all aspects of employment in a manner in which the best person will always be appointed.

The provisions which establish the Local Government Equal Employment Opportunity Advisory Committee require annual reports relating to the councils' EEO programs to be submitted to the committee, and these will expire on 30 June this year. Under section 69D, which does not expire, the chief executive officer of each council remains responsible to that council for developing and implementing an equal employment opportunity program relating to employment with the council, and for developing and implementing other initiatives to ensure that staff of the council have equal opportunities in relation to their employment. In addition, it is common practice for council enterprise bargaining agreements to deal with these matters. The advisory committee, chaired by the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity and consisting of representatives of the Local Government Association, the Australian Services Union and the Australian Workers Union, has provided very important services to the local government sector, including recognition of best practice in equal employment opportunity, provision of advice, assistance and guidelines, and analysis and publication of data.

This monitoring and assistance will not come to an abrupt halt. The aim will be for the local government sector to assume more direct responsibility for the promoting and monitoring of EEO policies and practices within local government. The final report of the advisory committee, which I expect to receive very soon, will assess the achievements that have been made by the councils and will make recommendations about an ongoing relationship between the parties represented on the advisory committee, to ensure that the gains that have been made in the local government sector are maintained and extended in day-to-day behaviour and practice.

Mr CONDOUS: Has the Minister received any complaints in relation to the operation of the confidentiality provisions of the Local Government Act amended in December last year (Program Estimates, page 406)?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Initially, a number of concerns were raised with me about the provisions, both before I introduced the amendment to this Parliament and immediately afterwards. However, the proof of the pudding is always in the eating and, as I said to those who expressed their concern to me at that time, I did not see that they should have any concerns at all because, if the council is acting properly, the changes that I made would have no impact whatsoever.

That has proven to be the case. Now that that amendment has been in place for some time, I can assure the honourable member that we are receiving no complaints whatsoever. However, I am still receiving comments of a positive nature, both from within and outside local government, about the positive benefits of the changes that I introduced.

I know that the honourable member has extensive experience in local government, and I am sure that he is as aware as I am of the way in which the old wording could be abused—and I use that word quite deliberately. What we have done now is ensure that the spirit of the Act as it was intended is now written in such a way that it must be complied with. We are finding that councils themselves are very comfortable with the amendment now in place, and certainly the ratepayers and citizens of South Australia have indicated to me in various ways that they feel much more comfortable with the fact that they are able to determine exactly what their councils and councillors are doing, the decisions they are making and the reasons for those decisions. We have not received any complaints since the very early days, and I expect that to continue.

Ms HURLEY: I refer to page 404 of the Program Estimates, 'Structural reform'. The Minister in answer to a previous question gave some examples of the benefits from the amalgamation of councils, in individual council terms. What is the State Government's estimate of the expected total of recurrent capital and employee savings as a result of the amalgamation process?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: As I noted in my introductory remarks, the recurrent savings are presently of the order of \$20 million. They are the savings that have been indicated to the Local Government Boundary Reform Board by the councils themselves as the savings they anticipate making. It is expected that, as the years go by, those savings will not only continue but will increase. For example, in three or four years it is expected that a number of officers who have been retained under an agreement between the council and the union may move on to other positions, so savings will come as those officers leave the council and are not replaced.

Also, of course, we have the situation in a number of cases of officers having chosen to take a package and leave. That obviously impacts on the short-term costs of the councils. As I said, the savings at the moment as put forward by the councils themselves are \$20 million recurrent, and we are expecting that to increase as the years go by.

Ms HURLEY: As a supplementary question, the Minister answered on the recurrent savings: I also asked about capital and employee savings.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I am advised that the board does not separate the savings in terms of the staff and capital works, so I cannot give the honourable member the exact numbers of staff savings or the capital, except to give her examples of what occurs. Normally, with two or more councils combining, where we previously had two chief executive officers the number will be reduced to one; where we had two finance directors, the number will be reduced to one; and where we had two works directors, it will be reduced to one. It is fair to say that, particularly at the most expensive end of the operations of the council, the management end, there will be quite substantial savings and reductions in relation to employment.

I can cite another example. There is a rural council where there has been an amalgamation of three councils, which council areas have a large number of unsealed roads. Previously, each council had a grader, and those graders were

all under-utilised because there was not enough work for each grader to be used all the time. That council will reduce the number of graders owned from three to one. I understand that a grader costs at least \$250 000 to purchase, so you immediately have \$500 000 in the value of the capital equipment of those councils. Those graders are being sold and they will not need to be replaced. That is just one example of the sorts of savings that can occur.

The operational costs of buildings have been reduced, because where you have two or more councils coming together usually only one of the offices is retained as the main office, although it is usual for the other office to be retained as a branch of that council. On that point, the feedback we were getting initially showed concern that, with the reduction in the number of councils, there would be a reduction in the availability and ease of services. That is proving not to be the case. Again, I come back to Port Adelaide Enfield. That council has now more offices throughout its city for residents to call into than it had prior to amalgamation.

Ms HURLEY: As a point of clarification, I understood that the Local Government Reform Board had reports done on each of the council amalgamations.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member asked a question and has asked a supplementary question. She now needs to ask another question.

Ms HURLEY: I do not believe the Minister answered the question that I asked.

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot control how the Minister answers questions. He hears the questions, and he answers them as he sees fit. If the honourable member does not believe that he has done so, she may ask a supplementary question to clarify an answer, which she has done. She now needs to ask another question.

Ms HURLEY: The local government reform board, in spite of having reports done on each of the council amalgamations—in which I presume councils estimated employee reductions—is not able to provide the Minister with the total employee reductions?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The proposals submitted by the councils vary tremendously, and that is fair enough because each council, or the amalgamated council, has its own approach. Consequently, there is no set format and therefore the information provided to the board by the councils is set out in a range of ways. The point is that the honourable member is able to get the information she wants. All the honourable member has to do is obtain the reports that have been prepared for the board by the councils—and they are available—and she will be able to compile all the information she is seeking.

Ms HURLEY: Give me the answer then.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I have told the honourable member that, if she wants the answer, those reports are available and she would be able to get the information she is seeking.

Ms HURLEY: I now refer to the Program Estimates and Information, page 406, which states that an objective of the Office of Local Government is to support management and organisational reform in local government, particularly in the areas of competitive arrangements and performance assessment. To what extent will competitive arrangements be made mandatory and will councils be required to consider in-house bids to undertake work which has been contracted out on an equal basis?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: This matter is still under review. Certainly, I do not resile from the position that as

Minister I will be looking for councils to provide the best services at the lowest possible price to the ratepayers of their areas. Let me make that quite clear. I can see very real benefits where councils are required to be competitive in terms of the letting of any contract. However, at the same time, I am also the first to acknowledge that the direction which Victoria has taken has turned out to be—we can only use these words—a disaster. I assure the honourable member that certainly we will not be following the Victorian model. We are reviewing it and, as I said, we will be looking to ensure that local government is required to provide competitive services to its ratepayers.

As the honourable member would be aware, clause 7 of the inter-governmental competition principles agreement makes the State responsible for applying agreed competition principles to local government, but we have to do that in consultation with local government. The Department of the Premier and Cabinet has the carriage of coordinating the State's compliance with the competition principles agreement. A joint State-local government working group assisted with the development of the clause 7 statement, that is, the statement on the application of competition principles to local government under the competition principles inter-governmental agreement which were published last year. The most significant areas for most local government bodies will be the application of the competitive neutrality policy and principles to their service operations and the review and reform of laws, including by-laws, which may restrict competition.

The statement expects that most decisions on the implementation of competitive neutrality policy and principles as set out in the competition principles agreement are to be undertaken by individual local government authorities. Some guidance is provided on appropriate approaches based on the size of the business activity concerned. The Local Government Association has prepared additional guidelines to help councils discharge their obligations in these areas, and that has been undertaken in consultation with the Office of Local Government and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The adoption of annual reports and the complaints mechanism covering competitive neutrality will ensure accountability. The statement contains a timetable with dates at which implementation activities are to be completed successively.

In recognition of the remarkable success of the Government's local government structural reform program and the work that that involves for newly amalgamated councils, the date for completion of local government's first tasks on competition policy has been extended from 1 June and 30 June to 30 September this year. That was done at the request of local government because it said, 'We have just got so much going on at the moment with amalgamations and so on that, if we are to do the job properly, we need more time in which to prepare the information being sought.' It is still under review; it is still under way.

As far as competition principles and compulsory competitive tendering are concerned, the national competition policy obligations do not extend to requiring councils to use competitive tendering for any proportion of their expenditure. Competition policy links with policy affecting compulsory competitive tendering by councils only at the point that in-house business units or other local government owned bodies tender for the same work as private firms. In these circumstances, the competition principles agreement may require in-house groups to be subject to taxation equivalent regimes and

any regulatory regimes such as industrial safety standards and so on applying to private tenderers.

The extent to which councils are required to use competitive tendering as part of the current structural reform of local government in South Australia will be dealt with under the local government structural and legislative reforms together with other aspects of the local government management practices on which consultations have recently been undertaken. Let me assure the honourable member that I am well aware of the importance and the content of her question. It is a significant area and one on which I will be working closely with local government and the association.

Ms HURLEY: Supplementary to that, the Minister dealt with the competitive arrangement part of my question but did not tease out the performance assessment part. What will be the basis for the performance assessment of local government and, in particular, will it have any bearing on the Local Government Grants Commission allocation?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I will answer the first part of the question first. In relation to performance assessment, measures requiring councils to prepare corporate plans linked to annual operational plans in budgets can be expected in the Bill I am presently preparing to bring before Parliament. Councils will need to specify targets in these plans as well as measures by which their performance can be measured against the targets they have set. The State's priority in this area will be to provide a balance of initiative and support for the implementation of performance measurement systems at the individual council level and for efforts to address comparability, specification of outputs and outcomes, data definition and other sector wide issues. At present, careful attention is being given to planning the detailed role of the new Office of Local Government in conjunction with local government in support of these initiatives. The objectives of efficiency and effectiveness will be at the forefront of these decisions for the office just as they will for the framework within which local government will have to operate.

In relation to the second part of the honourable member's question, there is no intention to include performance criteria in grants allocation by the Local Government Grants Commission. That is the most recent advice we have received from it and I pass that onto the honourable member.

Mrs HALL: I refer to the Program Estimates, page 406. Under '1997-98 Specific Targets/Objectives' it states:

- To evaluate the use of postal voting in the 1997 local government elections.

Does the Minister consider that postal voting was a success for those councils that used the system in the May 1997 elections?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I am delighted to respond by indicating that the use of postal voting was an absolutely unqualified success, and perhaps the honourable member to my right might regret her comment—which, I grant, she made before the elections—that it would be an absolute disaster. The point is that both the Local Government Association and local government and I are in total agreement with the fact that it was an unqualified success. It was a real pleasure to find the Local Government Association for once coming out and supporting very strongly the initiative which I introduced in terms of providing the opportunity for postal voting.

The honourable member may be interested to know that, of the present 69 councils in South Australia, 43 conducted postal voting and the average elector turnout for those

councils was 39 per cent. Eleven councils had voting at polling places—in other words, they used the old system—and their average turnout was 15 per cent. Eleven councils had their elections deferred by Governor's proclamation due to amalgamations. Three councils did not need to conduct elections because the number of nominations matched exactly the number of vacant positions and one council, Roxby Downs, is yet to have elected members.

I highlight the fact that the statewide voter participation rate of 39 per cent for elections conducted exclusively by postal voting is significantly greater than the 15 per cent achieved in the same elections but conducted at polling places. In addition, the average voter turnout across South Australia this year was 33.8 per cent, which was very much in excess of previous years. Since 1983, comparable figures at periodical council elections have ranged from a low of 14.8 per cent in 1983 to a high of 20.14 per cent in 1989.

One of the most significant results was the very high elector turnout in the City of Tea Tree Gully, which used postal voting, compared with the neighbouring City of Salisbury, where one ward had a voter turnout of less than 3 per cent. We would all agree that that is not democracy at work. Postal voting was an outstanding success.

Having said that, let me also indicate to the honourable member that there were some teething problems. In some situations the rolls created a problem, because people who thought they were on the roll were not. I also understand that there might have been some misdirection of mail. The Local Government Association and my officers are doing a thorough review of what happened in the last election and we are confident that, when the next round of elections occurs, those few problems will be removed. Even taking that into account, it was an outstanding success.

Mrs HALL: I will pursue the issue of the postal voting analysis. Following press reports that some councils and members of the community experienced difficulties with the system, what type of problems—I acknowledge that the Minister has just referred to a couple—were brought to the Minister's attention and what action, if any, was taken in relation to any formal complaints that were made to him?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Some concern was generated and, although I do not want to be seen to be media bashing because I am not doing that, I must point out that much of the concern was generated by media reports just prior to the elections, particularly reports in relation to non-delivery of ballot papers and allegations that persons were illegally removing ballot papers from letterboxes. It is not possible for me to entirely rule out the possibility that some postal voting packs were interfered with or to say that there is no evidence that such a claim could emerge.

However, I can say that no formal allegations have been made to me at any time either before or subsequent to the elections in relation to that type of complaint. I repeat: not one formal complaint has been lodged. No concrete evidence has emerged to confirm the allegations that were made, particularly on talkback radio by a number of callers that this was a problem.

One reported allegation along these lines related to a council area in which over 70 000 packs were sent out; yet of those 70 000 electors, fewer than 40 asked for a replacement of the ballot papers. Of those 40 electors, some had spoiled the ballot papers or had misplaced the ballot papers. From those figures it can be said that, if there was a problem, it was a small one indeed.

The firm which conducted the telephone help line for voters made the interesting observation that, after the claims of electoral fraud appeared in the press, many of the people who called regarding non-receipt of papers were convinced their ballot papers had been stolen, but a common reason that they did not receive their ballot papers was that they had changed their address and had failed to notify the Australian Electoral Commission. If their name and address was not on the roll, it was impossible for the council to post out those forms. Under the old system, if their name had not been on the roll and they had turned up to vote at a booth, they might not have been able to vote.

Comments were made that electors were confused by the postal voting procedures, but I doubt that there was as much confusion as some suggested. The instructions sent out with every postal ballot pack were devised by a working party of experienced people and step-by-step instructions were very simple to follow. Metropolitan and country telephone help line numbers were included with the instructions, and the help line, which was jointly funded by the State and local government, was available to provide assistance as required. In fact, over 4 000 calls were answered and help provided.

When it is considered that over 500 000 postal voting packs were sent out and only 4 000 voters sought help, that again proves that not too many people were confused. When the help line was being planned, the estimate of the number of calls expected was 60 000, so some of the criticisms of the postal voting system are misplaced and it was generally well accepted by voters.

In previous elections in rural areas where there has been postal voting, a number of complaints were made that electoral officials could fairly easily ascertain how a person voted as the elector's name appeared on the back of the declaration envelope. That is why, under my amendment, we introduced the requirement that an elector's personal details should appear on a tear-off flap which had to be removed before the envelope was opened. We also required that, before they were opened, the envelopes had to be shuffled. Because of my amendment, one of the previous concerns was removed.

Only one complaint of illegal practice specifically related to postal voting has been made to me. In that case, a candidate for election to one office witnessed the ballot paper envelope of a candidate for election to a different office, and that is contrary to section 132 of the Local Government Act. This complaint was investigated by the returning officer for the council, who decided to take no further action on the basis that it was not a deliberate act. In that case, the harm that the section was designed to prevent, that is, a candidate improperly influencing or interfering with the vote of an elector, had not occurred.

Based on the information that has come in following the last elections, the honourable member would agree that there were very few problems. One thing we did learn was that we inadvertently did not provide enough help for non-English speaking people. However, we immediately corrected that when it was drawn to our attention that some people were seeking advice in their native tongue. In future, we will ensure the availability of instructions in languages other than English.

Mrs HALL: I refer to the specific targets and objectives for 1997-98 and the conduct or facilitation of projects which provide models for more effective coordination of State and local government roles and responsibilities. It has been reported that, under section 174A of the Local Government

Act, limitations on rates will disadvantage councils where their areas are developing and their costs are increasing. What does the Government intend to do to assist these councils? Does it mean that developers will have to pay council rates for which they would not otherwise have been liable?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The honourable member's question has hit on the nub of a problem that arose because of the Government's introduction of rate capping. I make quite clear that the Government introduced rate capping purely and simply to ensure that all ratepayers in South Australia benefited from the local government reform program which this Government introduced. To do that, we required that councils had a maximum rate which they could treat as income over the next couple of years. By applying that cap, we have ensured that all ratepayers will benefit. It is interesting to note that some councils have come in with rates at levels below the cap, which is very pleasing.

However, it became obvious that there was one unintentional impact of rate capping—the definition of 'same land'. For example, particularly in a developing area such as the northern or southern areas where land might be broad acre, it was never intended that that land would be subdivided and developed as a housing development. Obviously, it is the same land, but its use is substantially different. Under the original wording of the Act, councils would not have been able to charge a rate on that developed land greater than they could have charged while that land was undeveloped. Of course, this would have put an unfair burden on councils where development is occurring. That is why I introduced an amendment in the last session of Parliament that made quite clear that councils can ignore such areas with respect to their rate calculations and the rate capping provisions. However, let me make quite clear that rate capping will still be of benefit to persons who are buying homes in those newly developed areas. Regarding the rate that can be charged on that newly developed residential land, there will be a benefit from the rate the council will strike, because the balance of the rate on the residential land will be capped.

The benefits we intended will still flow on to the ratepayers, but at the same time we have removed the serious disadvantage that developing councils would have experienced in getting a true rate income from land the use of which had changed. Incidentally, it was confined not only to metropolitan areas but to a number of rural councils that were concerned at the original rate capping provisions; for example, a council might have had land which was used for grazing now being used for vineyards. The councils felt that it was unfair that they were not able to strike a rate based on the new use and not the old use of the land. The Government responded to the concerns of local government and made those changes to ensure that the ratepayers would benefit from the rate capping provisions but that councils would not be disadvantaged because of development.

Ms HURLEY: I refer to the Program Estimates (page 406) in relation to the conducting of council elections under the postal ballot system. Postal voting is not an absolute disaster; I was a strong supporter of postal voting at the time the legislation went through, in order to try to increase the number of people voting on local government—and postal voting certainly had that effect. I might have said that the publicity and education process surrounding it was a disaster. What was the cost per council of local government elections conducted under the new arrangement, and how does that compare with the cost of council elections under the previous system?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I cannot give the honourable member the specific dollar costs, because they vary from council to council. Of course, each council would be able to provide the honourable member with the costs. The advice we have received back from councils that changed to a postal voting system is that the cost increased. However, to my knowledge, every one of those councils also indicated that the cost per vote was reduced. In other words, although they paid out more money because more people voted than had previously voted, the cost per vote was lower. The cost per vote cast should also obviously be considered, as well as the total cost. My information indicates that postal voting achieved a voter turnout of 39 per cent—and I have already given that figure—in contrast to 15 per cent that occurred previously. The cost was higher as a total figure, but the cost per vote was lower using postal voting than it was under the previous system, because the cost was spread over the many more voters who responded.

Ms HURLEY: What proportion of ballots were informal because the declaration on the ballot-paper envelope was not correctly filled out and witnessed?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: My officers advise that we do not have that information. We expect to be able to provide it down the track when we do the full comprehensive review of the system. I assure the honourable member that, when that work is done, we will forward a copy of those figures to her. The only way she could get the information now is to approach each of the 69 councils individually.

Ms HURLEY: You seem to be much in favour of my doing that for everything else rather than your giving the information.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I just said to the honourable member that we will prepare a report that will contain the information she is seeking. I assure the honourable member that I will provide that information when it becomes available.

The CHAIRMAN: I accept that you will make that available to the member for Napier. It cannot be taken on notice, because you may not be able to comply with the time frame for providing written answers to questions as you will be waiting on information.

Ms HURLEY: I again refer to the Program Estimates (page 406). The program description indicates that the significant level of financial assistance provided to councils to encourage and implement voluntary structural reform will not recur in 1997-98. What was the level of financial assistance for this in 1996-97?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: My officers have been able to give me a preliminary estimate that approximately 5.5 per cent of postal votes were invalid. I stress to the honourable member that that is a preliminary estimate; as soon as we have the full estimate, we will make that information available to her. If the figure I provide to the honourable member is not what she is seeking, I am happy to obtain the appropriate information. I understand that the honourable member wants information regarding financial assistance or incentive payments. The cost of the interest-free loans to councils was \$150 000, and we provided \$900 000 in grants to those amalgamated councils, making a total of \$1.05 million.

Ms HURLEY: According to the program description, this was financial assistance provided to councils to encourage and implement structural reform. Are they the grants to which the Minister was referring?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: They were the grants that were provided once the proposals were completed. That is the incentive provided to encourage councils to amalgamate.

Mr LEGGETT: I also refer to the Program Estimates (page 406). How many councils have applied for exemptions from the rate capping provisions of the Local Government Act, and what has been the outcome of those applications?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I will give a little preliminary background so that we can understand where the Government is coming from. Under section 174A of the Local Government Act, the Governor may grant an exemption by proclamation from the rate capping provisions under 'extenuating circumstances'. It was clearly Parliament's intention that these exemptions should be used sparingly. Any submission for exemption by reason of extenuating circumstances is treated on its merits. To date, 11 councils have applied for exemptions from the rate capping provisions. Of these, six have already been advised that I do not consider that a recommendation for exemption on the ground of extenuating circumstances can be justified. These councils are the Town of Gawler and the Cities of Tea Tree Gully, Salisbury, Prospect, Burnside and Marion.

The application from one council—the District Council of Tatiara—based on development growth has effectively been addressed by the changes I have made—and I referred to this matter in an earlier answer, where we are excluding development growth from the rate capping provisions. In one case—the Flinders Ranges council—a recommendation was put to me, and I made a recommendation to Cabinet that the council should be exempted from the rate cap. This was endorsed, and the Governor subsequently issued a proclamation on 29 May granting an exemption for that council under section 174A.

The reason is that, in its first full year of operation since the amalgamation of the Hawker and Kenyaka-Quorn councils, the new council was faced with a significant loss of revenue arising from the transfer of responsibility, from the Hawker council to ETSA, for operating the electricity supply in the Hawker area. Given the small operational size and limited financial flexibility of the council, the increased revenue is the most feasible means it has to meet the revenue shortfall. I make quite clear that the agreement I reached with the council was that it would not increase its rates by any more than the savings that the residents were able to achieve because power was being supplied by ETSA and not the council. In other words, the residents of the area will pay no more than they would have paid, had the rate capping provision applied. Instead of paying it through the electricity bill they will pay a higher rate, but what they pay in higher rates they will recoup in lower electricity costs.

Three further submissions from the District Council of Cleve and the Cities of Mitcham and Unley are still under consideration. I should advise the Committee that, if a council does not believe that my decision is right or fair, the Act provides it with the opportunity to undertake a ratepayer poll. If the majority of ratepayers in that poll vote for the capping provision not to apply, it will not apply. Six councils conducted polls at the same time as the May local government elections, and the City of Salisbury, the District Councils of Ceduna and Tumby Bay, the City of Port Lincoln and the District Council of Lower Eyre Peninsula all voted to allow the rate cap to be exceeded. Obviously, the honourable member on my right did a very good job with his ratepayers, because the City of Whyalla's ratepayer poll rejected the council's request to increase its rates. Obviously,

the honourable member has done a very good job up there in pointing out to his constituents the value of the rate capping provisions.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 406 of the Estimates of Payments and Receipts. Why are further local government elections being held during June 1997?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: A number of council amalgamations have occurred at a time when it would not have been convenient for the ratepayers or councils to hold elections when the rest of the local government elections were being conducted. Six elections are being held in June and all of them have chosen to use postal voting exclusively. The close of voting will be 6 p.m. on Friday of this week. These elections are all for newly amalgamated councils, and the reason is that it was not possible for the elections to be held any earlier. The councils having June elections are the Adelaide Hills council, the Barossa council (which includes part of Mount Pleasant), City South council (including Happy Valley, Noarlunga and part of Willunga), Naracoorte (comprising the district and town councils), Wakefield regional council and the Mid Murray council, which comprises the old councils of Mannum, Morgan and Ridley-Truro.

Mr LEGGETT: Again I refer to page 406. What progress has been made with the comprehensive review of the Local Government Act?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I do not want to hold up the hearings of the Committee unduly. I cannot add to the answer I have already given to the member for Napier. As I said, it is proceeding well. Very in-depth consultation is being undertaken involving my officers and officers of the LGA, the President of the LGA and myself. We are moving, albeit slowly. I will not initiate public consultation until we have reached substantial agreement. It may be that substantial agreement will not be achieved. If that happens and it appears that further discussions will be pointless, obviously that would be the time when the Government or I as Minister would make the decision that it was time to involve the public to get a feeling about any areas of disagreement between the LGA and me. However, it is proceeding well. We are hoping to reach the stage where we can out put the draft Bill for public consultation, and we will then move through the normal parliamentary processes.

Ms HURLEY: Page 4.7 of the Financial Statement lists the reforms to be pursued by the Department of Premier and Cabinet. One is a project to systematise business access to local government regulations. What complaints have been received from business about local government regulations, and why is this project being undertaken by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet rather than the Department of Local Government Relations?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The reason the Premier and Cabinet is doing it is that it is doing it for all agencies. The whole idea of what the Premier is (rightly) trying to achieve is to come up with a system of licences and so on that will be user friendly. The term 'one stop shop' has been used frequently. If we want to make regulations easier to understand and more accessible to business, the one way to achieve that is to have one body organising the review. That is why it is being done by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. I assure the honourable member that my agency, like every agency, is working very closely with the Department of Premier and Cabinet in the work that is being undertaken.

Ms HURLEY: Is the Minister aware of any complaints from business specifically about access to local government regulations?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Not of a specific nature. There is a general feeling in small business and others that it is hard to find your way around the regulations that control local government. So, that is the best way I can answer the question. There have been no specific complaints but (and I am sure the honourable member would get the same feedback), whenever we talk with small business, we hear that they are over-regulated and do not know where to go. So, the review is needed and will be of benefit to small business.

Ms HURLEY: Page 406 of the Program Estimates states that probity in local government office was maintained by two successful prosecutions for breaches of the conflict of interest provisions, and that significant problems in seven councils were monitored and resolved before formal investigation was required. Which councils were prosecuted and which were investigated, and for what sort of breaches of probity?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: In answer to the first part of the honourable member's question concerning conflict of interest, there were two prosecutions. One was against councillor Stan Evans of the Stirling council. The complaint was upheld and the council was fined \$200. The second was against Avon Hudson of the District Council of Wakefield Plains. Again, the complaint was upheld and that council was fined \$150 plus expenses of \$250. I do not have the information sought in the second part of the honourable member's question, but we will make it available to her. I should advise the honourable member that there were no formal investigations under section 30 but that there have been some preliminary investigations, and we will get those details.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Minister's advisers for their contribution to the Estimates Committee. I understand that the member for Napier will not be with us after the break, so I thank her also. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the votes completed.

[Sitting suspended from 12.26 to 2 p.m.]

South Australian Tourism Commission, \$27 948 000

Departmental Advisers:

Mr W. Spurr, Acting Chief Executive and General Manager, Australian Major Events.

Ms S. Saville, General Manager, Domestic Marketing, South Australian Tourism Commission.

Ms E. Warhurst, Group Manager, Corporate Services, South Australian Tourism Commission.

Mr W. Kelly, Acting Finance Manager, South Australian Tourism Commission.

Mr J. Harris, Manager, Corporate Communications, South Australian Tourism Commission.

Mr R. Wills, Manager, Executive Services, South Australian Tourism Commission.

Membership:

Ms White substituted for Ms Hurley.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination. I refer members to pages 69 and 227 to 229 of the Estimates of Receipts, and pages 379 to 389 of the Program Estimates and Information. Does the Minister wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Yes, Mr Chairman. I want to make some key points in relation to tourism because it is a key ingredient in the economic revitalisation of South

Australia. When considering tourism it should be remembered that, over the past 10 years, it contributed 10 per cent of the growth in the gross State product; it created 7 400 additional jobs over the past 10 years; it contributed \$1.89 billion to South Australia in the year 1994-95; it delivered around 400 million new dollars to South Australia in 1996; and it can create 13 500 additional jobs over the next 10 years. That is an indication of the significance of tourism to South Australia.

A consortium, led by the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies, was commissioned by the South Australian Tourism Commission, the Department for Treasury and Finance and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to undertake a tourism forecasting and economic impact study. The study is designed to assess the strategic role that tourism can play in the revitalisation of the State's economy, and it clearly demonstrates that tourism can help achieve the Government's economic development objectives.

Tourism is a growth industry and, in global terms, the World Travel and Tourism Council predicts that, by the year 2005, travel and tourism's absolute contribution to the world economy will have more than doubled, adding more than 144 million jobs to a total 348 million employees already engaged. It is also pleasing to note that Australia is one of the fastest growing tourist destinations in the world. Tourism is, of course, also export orientated, and the Bureau of Tourism Research data shows that tourism is Australia's largest export industry with \$14 billion being earned in the 1995-96 financial year. The Australian Tourism Commission is targeting 6.82 million visitors to Australia by the year 2000.

Tourism is a generator of jobs and, as I have already indicated, we have generated an additional 7 500 jobs in South Australia since 1984-85. The South Australian Government unashamedly has a tourism strategy that is very much designed to create new jobs in this State, as well as attracting additional dollars to our economy from overseas and interstate. Tourism is also very much orientated to the small business area. In fact, small business is truly the backbone of tourism. The whole area of tourism, including accommodation, restaurants and tourist operators—all small businesses—plays a key role in the economy and employment markets in South Australia.

Tourism also has the advantage of being a decentralised activity and therefore provides excellent development opportunities for many of the regional areas of this State. I am sure that all of us would be well aware of the Government's expenditure in areas such as the Flinders Ranges and Kangaroo Island to ensure that we maximise the tourism benefits in the regional areas of South Australia. Tourism is also very much linked with other activities. In fact, the South Australian tourism plan contains directions for partnerships with 22 different sectors of the State economy. Tourism is very much a sustainable activity and, if managed well, has minimal impact on the environment.

I think that it would be agreed that the Government has undertaken a number of key developments in very sensitive environmental areas—for example, the development of the new boardwalk at Seal Bay on Kangaroo Island and the way in which the development has proceeded at the head of the Gulf St Vincent to accommodate whale watching. We are well aware of the importance of ecotourism and that we must protect the environment that proves so attractive to our tourists. I am pleased to say that the Tourism Commission has a very clear vision and sense of direction for its tourism plan

for the years 1996-2001, and the Government also has a very clear vision.

The emphasis in our plan is on marketing competitiveness, responding to emerging trends, getting the strategic and marketing process right, forging partnerships with other sectors of the economy, regional development and new thinking and critical interventions in a number of areas. The objectives and several key strategies of the plan are to establish a strong marketing position and brand, to strengthen the State's destination appeal, to make the tourism industry stronger, to identify initiatives that achieve simultaneous economic community benefits, to forge partnerships between stakeholders and to ensure that tourism growth and activity is sustainable.

The budget supports a State strategic tourism plan and the key economic revitalisation initiatives of this Government. The State tourism goal is to increase the value of tourism to \$2.6 billion by the year 2005-6 and to generate an additional 13 500 jobs in that time. Realistic and achievable growth targets of 7.5 per cent, 1 per cent and .8 per cent have been set for the international, interstate and intrastate markets respectively. Achieving these targets, which I am sure we would all agree are modest and achievable, will generate \$700 million in additional income and 13 500 additional jobs in the tourism sector over the next 10 years.

These targets have been used as the basis for the State's overall tourism goal of increasing annual tourism income, as I said, to \$2.6 billion in real terms by the year 2005-6. It is within this context that the specific goals I just mentioned become relevant, that is, 7.5 per cent average annual growth in nights in the international market to be achieved through market development activities, 1 per cent average annual growth in nights in the interstate market to be achieved through increasing market share, and .8 per cent average annual growth in nights in the local market to be achieved through a market defence strategy to encourage South Australians to holiday more in South Australia.

Tourism has performed well despite some constraints, and the commission has worked to a clear strategy that is achieving results. The strategy has been to develop the product and South Australia as a competitive region that is significantly different from alternative regions. We have emphasised key niche areas, and when I use the word 'niche' I do not mean small. It means that we have targeted specific areas on which we will concentrate and, of course, wine/tourism would be a perfect example of what I regard as a niche area. We are also concentrating on festivals and special events and our wildlife and unspoilt natural environment.

As members of this Committee would be well aware, Kangaroo Island is recognised as the top ecotourism spot in the world, and we will certainly be doing all we can to develop that. I mention also conventions and incentives; and, following the dinner adjournment, I will be talking about the way in which we have been so successful with respect to the convention market. An example of the new products undertaken by the Government include the National Wine Centre and the Tasting Australia Food and Wine Event. When I attended the Australian Tourism Exchange in Melbourne last week, I was amazed at the knowledge of all persons present about our Tasting Australia Food and Wine Event. They are all looking forward to that week in October.

The revitalisation of the Wirrina and Wilpena Pound accommodation, the Mount Lofty summit redevelopment, the McLaren Vale tourism centre, the Barossa convention centre,

the Granite Island redevelopment, Seal Bay and so on are examples of where we have ensured that we position ourselves to cater for the tourism market. We are looking to position and brand our product, and 'Come to your senses' is a perfect example of that. Through the wholesale area we are packaging and distributing our product and have focused our effort on raising the travel trade's awareness of South Australia as a destination option. Again, with respect to the Australian Tourism Exchange, it was very pleasing to get feedback from inbound tourist operators, our tourist operators and those from interstate in respect of the success we have had there. We want to establish representation in retail outlets and have done so in London, Munich, Singapore, Tokyo, Los Angeles, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth and Adelaide. Of course, we are providing extensive information about our tourism product.

The State's past declining share of these markets has been arrested only since the establishment of the South Australian Tourism Commission. For example, the international market share has steadied after a period of significant decline, whilst the most recent interstate data shows a strong increase in market share. We have conclusive proof that the direction we are taking is very successful. Now that we have a firm foundation in place we will obviously build on such events as the Sydney 2000 Olympics. Despite promising signs, South Australia does suffer some significant constraints and competitive disadvantages, and these must be addressed if we are to realise our tourism potential and its associated economic benefits.

What are some of these disadvantages? We have a low industry critical marketing mass, and that is why we must concentrate on niche markets; we have relatively low levels of investment; we have low levels of State-based inbound wholesalers (again, another matter we are looking to address); and we have low levels of international flight arrivals, which makes it more difficult for us to compete with markets such as Sydney and Melbourne where there are so many inbound flights. However, today I was delighted to be advised that a twice weekly new series of flights could be very close to fruition. Again, if that is the case it will be fantastic.

The next three years present an opportunity for this State to build on the work that has already been done. The amalgamation of Australian Major Events and tourism and other changes that we have made have all been received well, and we already can see the effects in terms of increased efficiencies and even better results as far as our programs are concerned. The structural changes we have undertaken will result in a number of benefits. As I said, increased efficiency, improved marketing of events, reduced costs and improved access to services are just some of those advantages.

Although Australian Major Events is part of the South Australian Tourism Commission, it will continue to provide a number of new events as well as continuing many that have already been established. Hotel and motel occupancy figures are increasing. Events such as the Adelaide Festival, the Fringe Festival, the Ford Open Golf, the International Rugby Sevens and World Bowls are just some examples of the work that AME has done so successfully for our State.

In conclusion, I reiterate that tourism is a major sector of the economy and that it will be used as a key platform for the economic revitalisation of the State. Tourism and hospitality have contributed one-third of the growth to gross State product over the past 10 years. Tourism delivers tangible outcomes in terms of jobs and export income.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member for Taylor wish to make an opening statement?

Ms WHITE: Yes, Mr Chairman. On behalf of the Opposition I signal our support of efforts that have the effect of increasing tourism numbers and outcomes in this State. We support tourism development generally in this State. As far as the Government's performance is concerned, we applaud those ventures that have had the net effect of a positive impact on this State. We will bring to the Government's attention those measures that we do not think are moving in the right direction and attempt to refocus its direction in those areas. We acknowledge the importance of Australian tourism, in particular South Australian tourism, to the self image and culture of South Australians and, most importantly, to the economic development of our State.

The Tourism Commission was set up by the previous Labor Government. It plays a vital role not only in developing tourism marketing and strategies but in fostering big tourism developments and in helping develop the health of the industry in terms of individual operators. Over the past year we have seen one change to the department's structure and one near change. In September 1996, under the previous Minister, the Deputy Premier, the Government introduced legislation to amalgamate the Tourism Commission, Major Events, the Office of Recreation and Sport and the convention and entertainment centres into one super commission. While the Opposition had doubts at the time about the wisdom and appropriateness of such a move and asked the responsible Minister a large number of questions when the Bill was debated in the House of Assembly, nevertheless we took the view that governments have the right to restructure their departments and that, provided they can guarantee benefit in outcome from such restructuring, we will not hinder such a process.

The Labor Opposition supported the Bill, and it was passed by the House of Assembly. Something quite extraordinary then occurred. The Deputy Premier stated to the House that he had been instructed by the Premier to withdraw the Bill from Parliament, a Bill which had already passed through the Lower House, which had passed through Cabinet with Cabinet support and which it had been argued by the Government was essential to the future best operation of the Minister's portfolios. The then Minister's whole justification for the necessity of that legislation was that the Minister did not have the power to accomplish an amalgamation of his portfolio areas without such enabling legislation. Here we are in the same financial year as that Bill, but this time with a different Minister and, guess what, the tourism commission and Major Events offices have been administratively amalgamated by this Minister without any legislation being passed. Life does seem stranger than fiction sometimes.

I should point out at this point that the Opposition fully supports the amalgamation of the tourism and major events functions. It makes much more sense than the proposed amalgamation with the Department of Recreation and Sport and, indeed, it is exactly what the Opposition suggested to the Government as a preferable restructuring arrangement. The Opposition is pleased to have been of such assistance to the Government in this matter. However, the former Minister's handling of that piece of legislation and his lack of consultation with the industry and key stakeholders affected by it has led, along with the disruption and ill feeling generated through the sacking of the respected and popular former CEO Mr Michael Gleeson, to an undeniable disquiet and discontent within South Australia's tourism industry.

When I sought consultation with regional tourism boards, industry associations and private operators on the Government's legislation of September last year, which would affect them and which had at that stage already been introduced into Parliament, I was told in every single case that my contact was the first that they had heard about the Bill. The then Minister had not bothered to contact them. That is hardly a healthy industry-Government relationship. The relationship between the tourism industry and Government was further soured in this financial year by the sacking of the Tourism Commission Chief Executive. It was the manner in which this event unfolded and the very public and, some would say, unfair way in which the then Minister sought to humiliate the senior public servant that I believe most horrified his department and, indeed, the industry.

Under parliamentary privilege, the Minister alleged incompetence of a public servant whose only crime, it seems, was that he stood up to the Minister and refused to do the Minister's bidding of sacking another public servant who had simply been carrying out his duties. The Minister made his allegations in coward's castle—Parliament. His Chief Executive made his without any privilege in the public domain. This, too, has been noted by his public servants and the industry. In essence, morale within the commission has been low for most of the past 12 months, and the tourism industry has not been well served by this Government in that respect. It has taken more than seven months for a new Chief Executive to be announced, in which time, despite the very commendable job done by the Acting Chief Executive, Mr Bill Spurr, an atmosphere of uncertainty has pervaded, which has had a languishing effect on the tourism industry.

The culture of an organisation is very much shaped by the person driving it—in this case, the Minister. There can be no doubt that the destructive influence of the last Minister has left a scar on the Tourism Commission, and I look forward to working with the current Minister toward our mutual goal of improving South Australia's share of the benefits nationally of growth in the tourism industry. Perhaps the most significant thing that can be gleaned from the budget papers is the significant decrease in spending on marketing in this budget. Under domestic marketing, there is a decrease in nominal terms from \$15.4 million to \$14 million. Under the international marketing line, it is a decrease from \$8.2 million in 1996-97 to \$7.5 million in 1997-98. I would like to address questions on this issue to the Minister at a later stage. However, as a first question to the Minister—

The CHAIRMAN: As I said this morning, will the honourable member refer her question to a budget page and line, please?

Ms WHITE: As it is a general question, I refer to the Program Estimates, page 381, and the general total budget expenditure. Given that there has been a restructuring and amalgamation of the former Tourism Commission and major events functions, on top of which there has been a number of staff and at least one function of the Tourism Commission taken out of the commission in the form of the tourism development function, will the Minister outline the new role of the Tourism Commission, what it is responsible for and what it is now not responsible for? In doing that, will the Minister specifically indicate the movement of funds that have accompanied that change, as well as the movement of staff?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: That question will require quite a detailed response. I will go through that and if, at the end, I have not addressed any issue that the honourable

member would like me to address, I will provide additional information. I need to go through the changes that we have made so that they are clearly on the record, because there were three key organisational changes that I made within the South Australian Tourism Commission and the Australian Major Events structure. They are interrelated, but I would like to talk about each of the three individually.

First there was the tourism development transfer to the MFPDC. Until January 1997 the SATC incorporated a tourism development group to manage all aspects of infrastructure development for tourism projects in South Australia. This unit comprised approximately six staff plus a tourism research and planning function that comprised four staff. In January this year, the Government merged the development functions of several agencies, including tourism, the Urban Planning Authority and the MFP under a new corporation reporting to the Premier, to be known as the Multifunction Polis Development Corporation (MFPDC). The tourism development function of the commission relocated to the MFPDC in February. The SATC continues to be responsible for sector development, tourism research and planning, and grants schemes, particularly tourist road and signpost grants. These functions are being undertaken by the Domestic Marketing Group of the SATC but, basically, any other tourism development is now the responsibility of the MFPDC.

The second change I made was to merge the AME and the SATC. Although the proposed Bill to merge recreation and sport, tourism, the AME, the Adelaide Entertainment Centre and the Adelaide Convention Centre was withdrawn, as the honourable member noted, the proposal identified close synergies between the functions of the SATC and the AME. It was because of that that I put a proposal to Cabinet, which acknowledged the close relationship between these two Government agencies and approved the merger and the collocation of the AME into the offices vacated by the Tourism Development Unit. This transfer was completed in March and the two agencies are now completely integrated.

The final step will be to combine the two boards. That will occur, I think, on 27 July, which is the last meeting of the SATC board, so the new SATC board will be in place on 28 July. At that time the AME board will cease to exist and there will be just the one board, the SATC board. However, I will be setting up an advisory group with a chairman. This will not be a board: it will be an advisory group on major events. I would anticipate that the chairman of that group would be a member of the new Tourism Commission board, but that decision has not yet been made. Certainly, there will be one board, so we will have a unified approach to the total area.

Thirdly, we created the Domestic Marketing Group. In January the board agreed to amalgamate the former State and national groups of the SATC into one group, which we have called the Domestic Marketing Group. This grouping is in line with the tourism commissions of other States and enables a much more efficient use of resources. It is fair to say that the whole idea of what I was doing in the restructuring was exactly that: to make sure that we were using as efficiently as possible the resources available to me.

In conclusion, the three structural changes will result in a number of benefits for tourism. There will be increased efficiencies in the use of financial and human resources. There will be improved marketing of major events, leading to greater visitor numbers. There will be reduced costs of office accommodation and board fees, and there will be

improved access to services by small business tourism operators.

In her question the honourable member also addressed the fact that she felt there was a substantial reduction in marketing funds. That is not correct: the figures reflect changes that Treasury has made in the allocation of funds. For example, tourism development has been transferred to the MFPDC, so obviously all funds associated with that have gone across to that corporation. The merger of the Tourism Commission and Major Events has resulted in further figures being changed in the budget papers and, with corporate services, marketing, communications, and marketing and research being treated as overheads and spread over the three main programs of domestic marketing, international marketing and AME, it has again resulted in an apparent reduction in marketing funds.

Treasury also required that all agencies must accommodate increased costs due to inflation within their present budget as well as taking out an efficiency dividend, and this has been factored into the budget. I assure the honourable member that, as far as marketing funds are concerned, we have not had a reduction in the funds available for utilisation in the marketing areas. If I have missed any area that the honourable member wanted covered, I am happy to take further advice from her.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member wish to ask a supplementary question to clarify anything?

Ms WHITE: Yes.

The CHAIRMAN: A supplementary?

Ms WHITE: Perhaps it is a new question. With regard to the amalgamation of the Tourism Commission and the Major Events function, in September last year when the amalgamation Bill was being debated in Parliament, the then Minister claimed that that amalgamation would save \$900 000. I refer to *Hansard* and what the former Minister claimed regarding the savings to be made between Major Events and the Tourism Commission. The Hon. Graham Ingerson said:

In terms of costs savings, it is estimated about half that figure—he is referring to \$900 000—

that is, about \$500 000, will be saved by bringing together Major Events and the Tourism Commission, in that there is a lot of duplication in terms of administration, office space and numbers. Just bringing those two together will result in a saving of about \$500 000.

At that time I asked:

Are you including the CEO's salary?

The Hon. Mr Ingerson said:

Yes, that is a net figure.

Has the Minister achieved that \$500 000 saving identified by the former Minister and, if so, where has that money gone?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We will achieve the \$500 000 saving to which the honourable member referred in a full year. Those savings will come from rent, corporate services, reception services, tour packaging and public relations, as well as the fact that there will be the one chief executive and so on. Those savings will be achieved in a full 12 month period.

Ms WHITE: My question was not where it came from but where the savings will go?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The main area in which it will be utilised is the Major Events area, namely, using additional funds to attract events to South Australia and also in relation to marketing.

Ms WHITE: The former Minister when debating the amalgamation Bill and referring to savings to be made through this amalgamation stated that country regions as well

as metropolitan areas would get the same share from any savings created. Is that your intention?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Yes, I assure the honourable member that we have spread the funds in both the metropolitan and the regional areas. We do have regional events. I am sure the honourable member is aware of some of the regional events, for example, the Barossa Music Festival and so on. We have increased funding across the board in both regional areas and metropolitan Adelaide. As I said, the regional areas have benefited on a pro rata basis just as much as metropolitan Adelaide and, in fact, the regional areas attract greater financial assistance than the metropolitan area.

Mr CONDOUS: My question concerns the appointment of the new Chief Executive (Program Estimates, page 381). We have recently read in the media of the appointment of a new Chief Executive Officer for the Tourism Commission. Will the Minister explain the process adopted to appoint the new Chief Executive and for what reasons he selected the successful applicant?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: This also picks up a point which the member for Taylor addressed. Perhaps it is my private enterprise background and the old human resources director in me that came out in the process I adopted. One thing that I did do was to look at the talent, skills and abilities that were already available to me in the commission. The new Deputy Chief Executive and General Manager of Major Events has some tremendous skills and aptitudes that I intend to utilise as Minister, and I am delighted that Mr Spurr has accepted that position because we as a State could not afford to lose his skills, expertise and contacts. I make that point first and foremost: I was very aware of the skills that Mr Spurr had to offer the commission.

However, I also said, 'What are the total skills for which I am looking in terms of the top level of management within my function?' There were some skill areas that I regarded as absolutely essential in the person whom I was to appoint as the Chief Executive. Possibly even in order of importance I would have said marketing skills; in other words, I was looking for a person who had very strong marketing skills and a proven background of success in the marketing area. I was looking for a person who had a very strong business management record behind him or her; in other words, someone who had demonstrated that they were skilled in management. I regarded this skill as absolutely key. Then it was important that the person whom I appointed had extensive experience in the tourism industry.

I appreciate the point made by the member for Taylor that the time it took before an appointment was made caused concern in the tourism industry in South Australia. However, the feedback I am getting now that I have announced the Chief Executive is that they recognise the appointment as an extremely good one and that they understand the reasons, although they did find them difficult at the time, why it took so long. I cannot reiterate the point enough: we had a large number of very highly skilled applicants who applied for the position. I have already explained the key role that Mr Spurr was to play in my plans all the way through and I was looking for a person who would complement Mr Spurr's skills and bring in areas additional to those which Mr Spurr so obviously has. Frankly, in the first round of—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: So do I; unhesitatingly I would say that Mr Spurr is absolutely first class and, as I said, the skills that he has are those—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: If the honourable member had been listening to what I have been saying instead of speaking to his colleague, he would have understood the skills I was seeking to bring into the commission to complement those of Mr Spurr. If the honourable member is indicating that the person I have appointed is not an adequate Chief Executive, I would be happy to debate that point with him, but I will continue with the points that I was making.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Giles is out of order.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I make the point that I was determined that, before—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Let me assure the honourable member that I am not embarrassed, but he should be embarrassed by the way he is performing. If I hear him correctly, the honourable member is saying that he believes that the appointment that I have made is not a good one. I make the point to the honourable member that the skills that this person will bring to this position most closely match the skills that I was looking for in the Chief Executive, and the skills that this person will bring to that position will complement those of Mr Spurr, who will continue to provide service to us.

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I challenge the honourable member who is interjecting so often to stand up and say that the appointment that I have made is unsuitable; that this person should not have been appointed; and that this person will not have the ability to undertake the role to which I have appointed her, because I would be the first to go out on the hustings to proclaim why she has been appointed. I would have no hesitation in letting the tourism industry know that one of the key members of the Opposition is strongly opposed to the appointment I have made. If that is the way he wants to go, that is fine, but I note that the member for Taylor is not entering into this debate, and for that I give her full marks, because I imagine that she is very embarrassed by the interjections her colleague is making. I come back to the point that she is unhesitatingly—

The Hon. Frank Blevins interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Giles is out of order. I ask him not to interject and I also ask the Minister to ignore the interjections and to continue with his answer to the member for Colton's question.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Thank you, Sir, but I am afraid that the honourable member's comments were just so out of court that they needed a response. I come back to why we looked at people throughout Australia to see whether we could find that mix for which I was looking. It is something that the honourable member would not understand, but whenever one looks for a key executive, one sets down very carefully exactly the attributes one is looking for in that person. Until one finds those attributes, one does not make an appointment.

I am delighted that the appointment I have made meets the attributes that I have mentioned: very strong marketing skills; very strong management skills; and a very strong tourism background. I am delighted that Ms Carole Hancock has accepted the appointment and will join us in the middle of July. Ms Hancock has a wealth of public and private sector experience specialising in marketing. She has held senior positions in the Australian Tourist Commission both in the United States and in Sydney, and among other things will provide a positive linkage between the two organisations,

thereby ensuring that South Australia will be prominently featured in international marketing.

What I noticed at last week's Australian Tourism Exchange was that both my Deputy Chief Executive Officer (Mr Bill Spurr) and my new Chief Executive Officer (Ms Carole Hancock) received tremendous recognition. They are both well known and widely respected, and the feedback I got from people at the exchange was that South Australia will undoubtedly have the leading team in tourism in Australia. Mr Spurr and Ms Hancock deserve every compliment that they were given in the time that I spent at the exchange.

That was the selection process that I adopted. I understand why the tourism industry was becoming concerned at the long delay, but I was determined that no appointment would be made until I had the person who fitted the very tight criteria that I have established for myself and, once that person became available and accepted the position, the announcement was made. I repeat: although there was some concern, I assure the honourable member that that concern is now well and truly dissipated and the tourism industry is looking forward to working with Ms Hancock when she arrives in just a few weeks.

Mr CONDOUS: I refer to page 382. Does South Australia have a tourism plan and what are the key directions of that plan?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I assure the honourable member that we do have a tourism plan and I am happy to outline the key directions of that plan. The South Australian Tourism Plan has been developed jointly by the tourism industry—and that is important—and the Government. It was initiated in 1981 and has been developed and periodically reviewed through an extensive consultation process. The 1996-2001 plan was released in 1996 and demonstrates the Government's commitment to invigorating South Australia's tourism industry to revitalise the economy.

The South Australian Tourism Plan 1996-2001 provides the tourism industry and Government with a clear vision and detailed directions which emphasise market competitiveness, responding to emerging trends, getting the strategic and marketing process right, forging partnerships with other sectors of the economy, regional development, and new thinking and critical interventions. The objectives of the plan are to establish a strong market position and brand, to strengthen the State's destination appeal, to make the tourism industry stronger, to identify initiatives that achieve economic and community benefits, to forge partnerships between stakeholders and to ensure that tourism growth and activity is sustainable.

As a result of the implementation of the South Australian Tourism Plan, some of the tourism initiatives currently under way or recently completed include: South Australia's positioning and branding strategy, which has been tested and refined; the Wine Tourism Council has been established to forge closer links between the wine industry and the tourism industry; funds have been committed and work is under way on the establishment of the National Wine Centre; planning is well under way for a major international food and wine festival, Tasting Australia, which will be held in October; the Government has significantly increased infrastructure funding for strategic development projects to \$14 million in the 1996-97 financial year; work has commenced on the development of the Wilpena resort in the Flinders Ranges (and although it is not in my budget line I can assure members that I had a lot to do with the fact that we will be putting in a

sealed airstrip at Hawker because of the value that will have in providing additional tourism opportunities for the Flinders Ranges); and a pioneering tourism monitoring and management model is being developed for Kangaroo Island.

As the honourable member would note, not only do we have a plan and strategy but it is well placed and formulated and we are using it to increase tourism opportunities in this State.

Mr CONDOUS: On page 386, I notice that 115 000 copies of the *SA Shorts* booklet and 186 000 copies of the *SA Getaways* booklet were distributed. I was delighted that the *Getaways* booklet was launched at the West Beach Surf Lifesaving Club in the electorate of Colton. The sales of *Shorts* holidays increased to \$2.2 million. That is a very significant amount, and the great beneficiary of that has been the small, cottage-style accommodation industry spread across the State. Can the Minister for Tourism say what has been the significance of the *Shorts* holidays to the industry? How does he intend to generate further growth in the *Shorts* program? What programs are locked in? This program makes a fairly significant contribution to the tourism industry.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: There is no doubt whatsoever that what the honourable member has stated is absolutely correct, because this program has been successful. The industry itself is absolutely enraptured over this program. As I visited each of the regions, the one thing that has been said to me is, 'For goodness sake, whatever you do, don't you dare change anything about *South Australian Shorts*, because it's been worth so much to the operators throughout South Australia.' The important benefit of these programs to the tourism industry is that they enable the small operators, who comprise the largest proportion of the tourism industry, to promote their product in full colour brochures that reach thousands of people each year. In addition, the flexibility of booking arrangements, which can be made either directly with the operator himself or herself through the South Australian Travel Centre or a travel agent, enables exposure of that small business to a far wider audience than any of those small businesses could individually afford to undertake on their own.

With the re-branding of the book for the national market as *South Australian Shortbreaks*, there is the added exposure to the national tourist market through the Harvey World Travel chain, where it carries preferred product status. All Harvey World Travel bookings are channelled through the SATC in Sydney. SATC is supportive of *South Australian Shorts*, as are the operators themselves, and *South Australian Getaways*. This is demonstrated by the increasing demand each year to participate in the programs. On average, operators receive four out of 10 bookings directly for *South Australian Shorts* and two out of three for *Getaways* bookings. Again, for the small operators that is a tremendous advantage, because they get the full benefit of the booking and no commission is deducted from the payment that comes to them.

The *South Australian Shorts* and *Getaways* campaigns are cooperative ventures with tourist operators in the production and marketing of the programs. The production and printing costs for the printing of 100 000 intrastate books was \$180 000, and the cost of the interstate production was \$35 000. It is estimated that the total cost spent on this program in 1997-98 will be about \$450 000, and this includes direct mail costs, print and radio advertising, and a new television commercial. Revenue raised by the SATC from operators' participation in advertising in the current programs

was \$169 700. Sales of *South Australian Shorts* packages through the SATC totalled some \$700 000, while total sales—and this is incredible—amounted to \$3.5 million to those small operators.

In addition, the South Australian Travel Centre offices in Adelaide and Sydney receive the standard industry rate of commission on all sales made through those offices. The total commission received on the sale of *South Australian Shorts* packages in 1996-97 was approximately \$140 000, and for *South Australian Getaways* through the South Australian Travel Centre in Adelaide, the commission earned \$19 000 for the same period. As the Premier has so often said, we can see that we have a win-win situation in that the operators themselves are being provided with an opportunity and income that they would not be able to afford individually and, at the same time, the commission, which is providing support and input to those programs, is also receiving benefits.

Ms WHITE: The Minister, in answer to his first Dorothy Dixier from members opposite, spent 10 minutes talking about the reasons why he has appointed his new Chief Executive. It always amazes me how I can be sitting here doing and saying nothing but be brought into the debate and told that I, or the Opposition represented by me, have certain opinions on various matters. We are yet to see the new Chief Executive, and we will judge her performance when she arrives. In my second reading speech, I mentioned the commendable job the Acting Chief Executive had done. Since the Minister raised this matter—and it was an extraordinary matter to raise in this forum—I might just add that, during the seven months or so that the Acting Chief Executive has been in the job, there has been quite some procrastination, with two rounds of interviews, for which he was an applicant. That is quite extraordinary, and the Minister should be appreciative of the fact that the Acting Chief Executive is still there. The former Minister spent at least \$160 000 of Tourism Commission money commissioning a report on the amalgamation of certain functions into a new Tourism Commission. A portion of that report has been implemented. I am interested in seeing whether other sections of that report would be worth implementing. Will the Minister table that report in Parliament?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: At this stage, I have no intention of tabling that report.

Ms WHITE: Why not? Public money has been spent on that report.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I would prefer that we look to the future rather than the past. Certainly, some information contained in that report has been useful. Perhaps the new broom sweeps clean and, as I am looking to the future and not to the past, I intend to make every post a winner with the changes I have already implemented.

Ms WHITE: Perhaps I will take up my colleague's suggestion and FOI the Government on a public report into amalgamations implemented with taxpayers' money. On 6 November 1996 the former Minister said that the cost of the payout to the former Chief Executive of the Tourism Commission is not included in the future budget. He said it was an 'extra cost'. Has that cost been included in this budget and, if so, where does it appear?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I have confirmed with my Deputy Chief Executive that the payout was at a cost of the commission. However, it has not resulted in an additional cost, in the sense that the savings that have been made from the amalgamation of the commission and the AME exceed that payout quite considerably. Therefore, we have been able

to make the payout and still have funds left over to put in the areas I have already outlined to the honourable member.

Ms WHITE: The Minister indicated earlier that that saving of \$500 000, which does not include the payout to the former Chief Executive, had been or would be made. What is the net saving in that case, taking into consideration the payout to the former Chief Executive Officer?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: On the figures that have been provided to me, when we look at savings from the amalgamation and the cost of the payout to the previous Chief Executive, we see that over a full 12-month period probably in excess of \$400 000 will be positive out of the savings, less what was paid to the Chief Executive.

Ms WHITE: How much was paid to the Chief Executive?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The figure I have is \$115 479.90.

Ms WHITE: I refer to the use of consultants within the Tourism Commission. The former Minister, when questioned over that \$160 000 consultancy, said that the process he had employed to appoint the consultant was just to telephone him. Is this the process that the current Minister uses in appointing consultants? If not, what process does he use? Are all consultancies put out to tender?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I would adopt exactly the same process in appointing a consultant as I do in appointing a chief executive. I would determine exactly what I was looking for in that consultant. There may be a number of consultants who could provide that advice, and in those circumstances it would go to tender. On the other hand, I may be aware of a consultant with outstanding ability in that area and in my opinion it would not matter whether we went to tender: we would not find anybody better. I may then negotiate directly.

Mrs HALL: I refer to tourism development on page 386 of the Program Estimates. Under the heading 'Broad objectives and goals' mention is made of the need to work with the tourism marketing boards to achieve stronger, more independent and highly professional regional capabilities. It then talks about the trends in South Australian tourism. A lot has been said about tourism and its employment opportunities as the major growth area in South Australia. What is being done to create jobs within the industry and for the State of South Australia?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I see two aspects to this question, namely, how the industry is performing and where the growth will come. The growth in visitor nights is probably the best measure of our performance. The percentage figures for visitor nights in the year September 1995 to 1996, which are the latest available, show that international visitor nights are up 11 per cent in Australia and 27 per cent in South Australia; interstate visitor nights are up 4 per cent in Australia and 13 per cent in South Australia; and intrastate nights are up 3 per cent in Australia and 5 per cent in South Australia. So, we are well in excess of the Australian average, and this shows quite clearly that South Australia has performed better than the national average in attracting international, interstate and intrastate visitors. This creates employment opportunities and demonstrates the economic significance of tourism in South Australia, because tourism can help to achieve the Government's economic development. It is a growth industry, it is export oriented, it generates jobs, it is sustainable and it is a decentralised activity with a small business focus.

In conjunction with the Department of Treasury and Finance and the Department of Treasurer and Cabinet, the

South Australian Tourism Commission commissioned a study by the South Australian Centre for Economic Studies, and that has been very useful to us in forecasting future growth. That study was designed to assess the strategic role that tourism would play in the revitalisation of the State's economy and clearly demonstrates that tourism can help achieve the Government's economic development objectives. The results indicate that tourism generates about \$2 billion of expenditure annually and supports about 41 000 jobs in all. It is very significant in the creation of jobs. Tourism is a significant export earner. It is a growth industry and provides not only additional income to the State's economy but also additional jobs. In comparison with the more traditional export industries of agriculture, manufacture and mining, tourism growth was equivalent to three quarters of the income growth in these three sectors combined over the past 10 years. So, from that we can see clearly that tourism generates significant economic benefits for South Australia and also creates jobs.

Mrs HALL: My next question specifically relates to what are called these days 'clearly defined business plans'. What is the Tourism Commission doing in terms of operating to a clearly defined business plan?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: It is a fact that any major organisation worth its salt these days will operate under a formal business plan to guide its operations during the year. If you do not know where you are going, how do you know when you have arrived? Business planning within the commission has been an organisational initiative since the commission was first established in 1993. Preparation of the 1996-97 business plan was outsourced to a consultant, and the resulting plan proved to lack staff ownership and did not satisfactorily contain detailed strategies and objectives to address the issues. As a result, an in-house corporate planner has recently been appointed, and the business planning process for the 1997-98 year is well under way.

The SATC is aiming to publish the corporate and business plans early in the new financial year. Staff in each group have identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats and are in the process of establishing strategies, objectives and costed activity schedules for the next 12 months. Group managers in the commission have emphasised that the business plan should evolve from the strategic direction of the corporate plan (in other words, the two should go hand in hand), highlight the need for the SATC to work collaboratively across groups and contain measurable performance indicators.

The 1997-98 business plan is expected to focus on target markets, will address ways in which the SATC staff can work smarter and less, and will contain a greater emphasis on the evaluation of performance. Performance evaluation of previous business plans has occurred within tight budget constraints and has included an ongoing evaluation of broad market performances—for example, visitor nights and hotel and motel demand—and specific evaluations of activities undertaken, such as tracking methods (for example, the Roy Morgan holiday tracking survey); the Shorts program, which includes sales figures; and the romantic holidays campaign and others. We are basing the measurement on criteria that can be measured.

Recent evaluation of operations as part of the business planning process has determined that as a matter of policy a proportion of any campaign expenditure will be dedicated to pre-campaign research and post-campaign evaluation, and that is exactly what is occurring. I can assure the honourable

member that there is a business plan; it is tied in very closely with a total corporate plan; and it has involved staff very closely in setting strategic goals. They will be advised of, and very much involved in, the analysis of the results of their performance against those plans.

Mrs HALL: In all the program policy areas listed in the Program Estimates, the direction of the performance indicators look pretty good to me. What assurances can the Minister give the Committee on how wisely the Tourism Commission is spending its money and what evaluation is being undertaken to determine how well its programs are performing?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The commission takes very seriously its responsibility to be cost effective and to achieve economic benefits for the State by being customer and commercially oriented, particularly given the current pressure on the limited State resources. It aims to improve its capacity to ensure that the marketing dollar is cost effectively employed to maximum effect. The commission has in place several specific strategies to evaluate and monitor its performance. The conclusion of the Forecasts for Tourism in South Australia report, the associated economic impacts that I referred to in the previous question and recent tourism indicators demonstrate that South Australia is performing well against our better resourced competitors, which is an overall indication of cost effectiveness. As an example, it is interesting to note that, at the Australian Tourism Exchange last year or the year before, South Australia set up its area like cottages. The display looked like rows of cottages and was very effective.

It is interesting to note that, this year at the Australian Tourism Exchange, the Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales are setting up their areas almost identical to last year's South Australian display. I use that to support the fact that, although we are nowhere near as well resourced as our interstate competitors, we certainly show the way with our initiatives and tend to be copied by our bigger interstate competitors. The latest performance indicators show that international visitor nights are up 27 per cent compared with the national increase of 11 per cent.

The most recent figures available indicate that domestic visitor nights are up 8 per cent compared to a national increase of 4 per cent, and that hotel and motel demand for the State as a whole is up 3.9 per cent compared with the national average of 2.5 per cent. In other words, each indicator shows clearly that South Australia is ahead of the national averages. We also use tracking methods. For example, the Roy Morgan Holiday Tracking Survey gives a month-by-month measure of consumer awareness, preferences, intentions and behaviour State by State. In fact, when South Australia was advertised as a holiday destination on television in 1994-95, there was a very strong correlation between increased destination awareness and South Australia's appearing on television.

This became even stronger when the television campaign was supported by a press campaign. We also evaluated our programs and, when the commission received an increase in its national marketing budget in 1994-95, its priority was to establish a stronger brand awareness through television advertising. To evaluate the effectiveness of this initiative, an independent three-way tracking study was commissioned over the period of the campaign and post campaign. As a result of this tracking, it was decided that, on a cost-effective basis, that television advertising would not be continued. This decision was taken not because the television campaign missed the mark—it was assessed as a good campaign in

terms of consumer appeal—but it suffered from insufficient media buy and exposure.

In addition to tracking this campaign, the commission has undertaken evaluations of other initiatives, including the 'Shorts' program, which includes sales figures; the community tourism awareness program; and the 'Romantic Holidays' campaign. Other indicators we use in our evaluation include the fact that in 1995-96 \$634 500 was expended on media and trade familiarisations, and that generated the equivalent of \$39.7 million of editorial value. As of March 1996-97, this activity has generated \$67.6 million in editorial value. With static staffing levels the Adelaide Travel Centre is handling 25 per cent more calls, mail-outs and inquiries, and the commission grants to tourism marketing boards, which amounted to \$2 million in 1996-97, have become more effective through closer collaboration with the commission, particularly in the development of business plans, market segmentation research and more rigorous performance indicators. The honourable member would agree that the way in which we measure our market is certainly very sophisticated and provides us with very accurate figures and details in relation to how we are performing.

Ms WHITE: I refer to page 382 of the Program Estimates and Information, Financial Paper 1. I understand that last year South Australia did no interstate television marketing. Is that correct?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: When the honourable member says 'last year', does she mean the 1996-97 financial year?

Ms WHITE: I meant the calendar.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The year 1996?

Ms WHITE: Yes.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: In that year, no, we did not spend any funds on interstate television advertising.

Ms WHITE: In response to a question from the member for Coles, the Minister alluded to the direct correlation between visitor numbers and television marketing campaigns, and that was also said by the previous Minister. Why did we not do any television marketing interstate? Members would be very aware of Victoria's success story through its 'a piece of Victoria', and 'every little piece' jigsaw campaign. That has been enormously successful, and most people in the industry say that it was directly responsible for Victoria's good showing in increased tourism numbers. Why did South Australia do no interstate television marketing?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: In relation to the 'jigsaw' campaign to which the honourable member referred, that was not only a television advertising program but was also backed up by other marketing strategies. Television just happened to be a part of Victoria's total campaign.

Ms WHITE: Would you say that it was effective?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Yes. As I said, South Australia ran an effective campaign but, when we sat down and analysed it, we determined that, although the campaign was effective, there were more effective ways in which we could utilise our limited funds. The commission believes that advertising funds are better spent on carefully selected print advertising and direct marketing activities. In other words, television is fine but, as Minister, I must ensure that the available funds are utilised in the best way. The commission is unhesitating in its advice to me that it believes the funds available can be better used in selected print advertising and direct marketing.

Australia has one of the highest numbers of magazine titles *per capita* in the world, and that enables us to target accurately the niche markets, which I mentioned earlier—for

instance, food and wine through *Gourmet Traveller*, eco-tourism and soft adventure through *Geo Australia* and *Australian Geographic*, and so on. I am not denying that television is an effective form of media, but advice from the commission's officers—and I accept their advice—quite clearly shows that our funds can be better utilised in other ways. Television advertising is not cheap and we must look at the best ways of utilising our funds, and that is a decision we have taken quite deliberately.

Ms WHITE: Does that mean, first, that we will not do any further interstate television marketing and, secondly, when precisely did we stop our interstate television marketing campaign? The Minister mentioned that we did no television marketing in the calendar year 1996, but I think he mentioned that we did some in 1994-96. When did we stop, and is it the intention that we not do any more?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I will answer the last part of the honourable member's question to give my officers an opportunity to find out when we stopped advertising on television. What I have said does not mean that we will not use television advertising in the future. We must look at the most effective use for the available money at a given time. The commission's advertising plan for the next financial year is still being considered, and one reason for that is that I believe it is imperative that we have the new Chief Executive Officer on board before such a major decision is taken. Taking into account her experience in the marketing area, I am sure she will make a very valuable input into marketing strategies that we will be adopting in the coming 12 months.

As I said, it does not mean that we will not use television advertising in the future. I cannot say whether or not we will use it this year because, as I have said, we are still considering our marketing plans for the coming year. That will be one of the first tasks I will ask the new Chief Executive to address. The Chief Executive and I, and certainly the Deputy Chief Executive, will then weigh up what we see as the best way to utilise the funds available. It could be that we will decide to go back into television. Bearing in mind that the officers are using their collective memories, their advice is that they believe the last interstate television advertising campaign was probably in October-November 1995.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 388 of the Program Estimates. I applaud the Government on the amount of work being done in bringing major events to South Australia. The Government has secured a number of these major international events by the bidding process. What is the Government's strategy to fund bids?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The Government does have a strategy to secure major international events for South Australia and, in many cases, the only way we can secure these events is to enter into a bidding process which is usually prescribed by the international sporting federations or by the event owners themselves; we have no choice. These organisations and federations are quite up-front. They will often say to us, 'We want to come to Australia to conduct an event.' They then set out some parameters and ask, 'What will you offer?' When we analyse many of these events, we say, 'We are not interested' or 'We believe that other events would be of more significance.' So, we tend to look at these events and ask, 'What will be good for the State in terms of economic benefit as far as exposure of the State overseas is concerned?' We weigh up these factors, ask, 'What is it worth to us to attract that event?' and we then make our bid.

Some of the events that we have attracted include one which I recently attended in Vancouver, the Golden Oldies

Rugby Festival. I note that one Victorian newspaper writer has had what he thinks to be a little bit of fun at South Australia's expense. The point is that Melbourne bided very aggressively to obtain the Golden Oldies Rugby Festival. We beat Melbourne—again. When one considers that cities such as Paris, Atlanta and others all were in the bidding stakes for the Golden Oldies Rugby Festival, one has to ask why. The answer is that when we spoke with the organisers in Christchurch, the city that conducted this event two years ago, we were told that \$25 million was generated in the economy over the two week period that the Golden Oldies Rugby people were there.

Mr Leggett interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I wish I could have stayed in Vancouver for more than two nights and one day, because I did not exactly feel the best when I returned. The point is that after the rugby events finished there was a week of tourism activity all within British Columbia. When I spoke to the organisers of that festival, they indicated that it is not at all unrealistic to expect that each attendee will spend about \$5 000 during the two week festival. With the prospect of \$25 million being generated in the South Australian economy, we felt that the Golden Oldies Rugby Festival was well worth chasing. We chased it and we got it. I refer to the World Masters Rowing Regatta, the Champions Trophy in hockey, the Australian Performing Arts Market, Golden Oldies Netball (which we won just prior to winning the Golden Oldies Rugby Festival), the Holden Australian Open (something which immediately after my appointment as Minister we went after and which we were absolutely delighted to bring to South Australia) and the Seventh Australian Masters Games.

In many cases bid documents have been prepared by AME in-house, although much of the preparatory work can often be outsourced to the private sector. I assure the honourable member that the bidding process is very competitive and that at times it is quite expensive to establish a competitive edge to ensure that we are successful. The Government recognises that bidding for major international events is costly, and before AME enters the market place in terms of formal bidding it is required to evaluate the economic and tourist benefits to the State. The estimated economic impact to the South Australian economy of the events that I have listed from outside this State is about \$40 million. Again, I pay full credit to the General Manager of Australian Major Events and the previous Chief Executive of Australian Major Events, Mr Spurr, on the excellent work that he and his group undertook during the period in which they were a separate entity. There is no doubt that many of the successes were achieved because of the work that Mr Spurr, his staff and the board put into attracting these events.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer the Minister to pages 382 and 386 of the Program Estimates. Tourism signposting is an important part of South Australia's tourism infrastructure. The South Australian Tourism Commission has announced that it will undertake a statewide program to upgrade tourism signposting. What progress has been made with this program?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I thank the honourable member for the question, because this is one of the most important questions that we can address as far as tourism is concerned. I have been fortunate to travel fairly widely in Australia and overseas over many years. When you travel as a tourist the one thing that you notice is how easy or difficult it is to find your way around a city, country or whatever the case may be. There is no doubt that the tourism signposting that existed in

South Australia was just inadequate. That is reflected by the fact that letters to the editor and other criticisms have been made by visitors to South Australia which indicate how difficult it has been to find one's way around certain areas of the State. Obviously, we must make sure that visitors to South Australia are given every assistance to find the way to their destinations.

A revised policy for tourism signposting on South Australian roads was recently published. This was prepared in association with the Department of Transport to ensure that uniform guidelines and criteria for tourism signs would exist throughout all South Australia. The policy also sets out the responsibilities of the parties concerned in having signage evaluated, approved and erected. Funding for tourism signposting has been allocated over a three year program. This commenced in the current 1996-97 financial year and will cover nine designated tourism regions of the State. This will result in three of the tourism regions having tourism signposting upgraded each year over the next three years. Aggregate funding is in the order of \$200 000. That has been committed for each financial year of the three year program.

In this first year of the program, Adelaide, the Barossa and the big river regions have been targeted; Kangaroo Island, the Adelaide Hills, Fleurieu Peninsula and the South-East have been targeted for next year; and the Flinders outback, classic country and Eyre Peninsula have been targeted for the third year. The tourism signposting audit of these regions will be evaluated by the commission, working with the Department of Transport, local government organisations, regional tourism marketing boards and regional development boards, resulting in a significant upgrading of tourism signs in each region. We will allocate funds to this program on a dollar for dollar basis with local government. The aim of the three year program is to provide improved tourism signage infrastructure which, as I said, is desperately needed. I am confident that, as far as tourism signs are concerns, in three years we will have facilities that are second to none in Australia.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 388 of the Program Estimates. What is Tasting Australia, why is the South Australian Government supporting this event and what is the economic benefit of this event to the State?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: It is another good news, big win story for South Australia. Again, this was brought home to me last week when I visited the Australian Tourism Exchange in Melbourne. The number of comments made to me about this South Australian initiative, as well as the interest being shown in the program, were extraordinary. I understand that already some of the dinners are completely booked out. The point is that, in the true sense of the word, we have not even started marketing. The knowledge that we are conducting this program in Adelaide is throughout Australia and, in fact, even some of the overseas operators to whom I spoke while in Melbourne indicated that they were well aware of this week that we are having in Adelaide and that a number of international visitors will visit Adelaide purely and simply for the Tasting Australia event. It is a high profile international food and wine event for South Australia.

It is intended that it will be staged biennially, with the first event being held between 5 and 12 October this year. Tasting Australia is the flagship event and a banner under which associated events will operate. Tasting Australia will provide an excellent profile for Adelaide and South Australia through the world's food and wine industry media, the latter comprising a captive audience during the event. Again, while I was in Melbourne, I was told that many producers of top televi-

sion programs, writers in key overseas journals and so on related to food and wine, will be coming to Adelaide for that week. Not only will it create an economic impact through the visitors who come here but at the same time it will provide a tremendous marketing of South Australia overseas.

Tasting Australia will host up to 100 international media representing approximately 20 television networks, with the potential for promoting South Australia—and its gastronomic delights—throughout the world as the premier State for food and wine. It is expected that the economic benefit to the State from Tasting Australia will be \$7 million.

Ms WHITE: I want to continue questioning with regard to 'Domestic marketing' (page 382, Program Estimates) and to refer to two lines in particular, that is, interstate information and sales and interstate consumer marketing, which show nominal decreases in spending from 1996-97 to this budget. Information and sales has gone from a total of \$2.18 million in 1996-97 to \$1.977 million in this budget; and consumer marketing has gone from \$2.506 million down to \$2.273 million in this budget. The Minister said earlier that this decrease shown in the budget papers, in terms of domestic marketing as a whole, was not actually a decrease. The decrease I am referring to is the decrease on page 382 from a total program of \$15.393 million in 1996-97 down to \$13.999 million in 1997-98. Particularly referring to those interstate spending lines, will the Minister explain this to the Committee?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I can understand why the honourable member asked that question, but there is a very simple explanation. Between 1995-96 and 1996-97 there were what we call carryovers, money carried over from one year to the next, which increased the revised figure for recurrent expenditure for the past year. We are anticipating that there will also be some carry-overs from the past financial year into the new financial year. When the revised budget comes out we would expect that an increased amount will be available for spending in those areas.

Ms WHITE: Is the Minister saying that there has been an increase in domestic marketing in this budget?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Certainly at least lineball, but, no, I would not say that there was an increase.

Ms WHITE: Is the Minister talking about lineball in real terms?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: That is what I am anticipating, yes.

Ms WHITE: I refer to the sub-program lines dealing with international marketing (page 382). Regarding the priorities—and perhaps there is a similar story to be told here—the total program for international marketing shows a decrease from \$8.198 million in 1996-97 to \$7.462 million in 1997-98. Will the Minister address that matter and indicate where changes may have occurred in priority involving expenditure in each of the regions listed—Europe, Asia, North America, Japan and New Zealand? I refer the Minister particularly to a press release put out by the Premier in May this year headed 'South Australia: A Major Tourism Drive in Japan'. Obviously the ATC (Australian Tourism Council) has also pointed to the strong growth in the Japanese market nationally and its importance to our tourism industry and, further, pointed to the need for individual States to address a slowing down in that Japanese market.

The Premier has indicated a major tourism drive in the Japanese market. The international marketing line, referring to Japan, shows a decrease in expenditure from \$925 000 to \$873 000, and there is a similar decrease in figures for the

other regions. Will the Minister address that decrease in his reply?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I assure the honourable member that the answer in relation to international marketing is exactly the same as the answer I gave for domestic marketing; in other words, we are anticipating that carry-overs will increase the funding that will be available to us this year. Specifically in relation to Japan, there is an additional benefit as well as a carry-over. As the honourable member would be aware, the tourism office which we have established is a shared office with the EDA, and therefore the costs associated with the operation of that office will be less than that for a stand-alone office. Obviously the savings that will be made will also now be able to be directed to marketing. Let me assure the honourable member that we are well aware of the significance of the Japanese market, and South Australia has seen quite spectacular growth from the Japanese market in the past year.

The international visitors survey statistics revealed a 250 per cent increase in Japanese visitors to South Australia in the year ended June 1996 compared with the same period the previous year. So 27 500 Japanese visitors came to South Australia in 1995-96 compared with 7 900 in 1994-95, a very substantial increase. These increases coincided with our establishment of cooperative marketing programs with JTB, the world's largest travel company, Kintetsu, the second largest, and MTA, including for the first time ever dedicated South Australian consumer brochures, and the enthusiastic support of those companies for South Australian consumer marketing programs.

Again, I refer to an incident that occurred when I was at the ATE last week. A person from one of the Japanese inbound tourist companies, when he realised I was the Minister for Tourism for South Australia, gave me a copy of a brochure that he uses in Japan. Although I do not have it with me, it was a magnificent brochure, written entirely in Japanese. We are obviously having an impact as far as extending our market into Japan is concerned. I reassure the honourable member that, although it appears that there is a reduction in the figures, we expect that there will be carry-overs that will increase the amount of funding available and, with the sharing of facilities, we will have additional funds that can be put into marketing rather than into the cost of having an office and officers in Japan.

Ms WHITE: Is the Minister saying that in real terms he is expecting the expenditure on international marketing to be maintained in 1997-98?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I expect it to be maintained, or very close to it.

Ms WHITE: I refer to the financial summary of the Tourism Commission on page 227. There is a change in the balance in the deposit account. Are there projects for which this amount of money is held in the deposit account? There is an amount of \$4.596 million under the change in balance in the deposit accounts. Are there some projects against which this money is being held? What is that money?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The explanation is quite simple but I will get the officer to provide that answer.

Mr Kelly: The change in balance in the deposit account reflects the cash brought forward from the previous year. If you take that figure less the amount that has been paid out, \$3 720 000 for contributions and transfers to Consolidated Account, which you will see under 'Application of funds' and which was paid to the MFP, and if you add the \$134 000 change in balance in the deposit account to the capital source

of funds, which is on the same page, that gives you roughly \$1 million, which is the net cash which has been brought forward from the previous year and which has been reflected as increased expenditure for the year. If we take the figures which I have mentioned, which comes roughly to a net \$1 million, that is the \$1 million to which the Minister referred as being carried over from the previous year. That \$1 million has been available for expenditure on domestic and international marketing.

Mr CONDOUS: It was announced today on radio that new contracts have been signed for the supply of South Australian premium red wine to Europe, sending the figures to a new level in terms of record sales in the European market. In light of the Government's announcement to establish a wine museum in South Australia, and the continual criticism of Victoria at our having lost the Formula 1 Grand Prix, can the Minister say what sort of effect the wine museum will have on the South Australian tourism market?

Today this country was described as being on a par with two of the greatest wine making countries in the world, namely, Germany and France, so the wine museum may be as big as if not bigger than the Formula 1 Grand Prix, given that it will operate 52 weeks of the year instead of just one week.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The premise under which the honourable member is working is probably correct. The Grand Prix tended to attract tremendous attention and certainly brought a lot of money to the State but, as I said earlier, the golden oldies rugby festival will bring more money to the State than any Grand Prix did. Similarly, other initiatives that the Government is undertaking will be of greater financial benefit to South Australia than was the Grand Prix.

There is no doubt that the wine centre and wine tourism is a vital part of South Australia's tourism industry. It is one of the niche areas to which I have referred a couple of times today. It is an area in which South Australia has not only national but international recognition, and we would be foolish not to build on that recognition. The National Wine Centre will operate 12 months of the year, it will attract tourists all the time and it will undoubtedly generate considerable income for the State.

Mr CONDOUS: Have there been any forward calculations as to how many people the wine museum will attract? A figure was mentioned in the press. In the initial year or two, what sort of turnover of tourists or visitors, including local visitors, is expected at the centre?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The wine centre is still under the care and control of the MFP and we do not have the detail of the specific questions that the honourable member has asked, but we can provide it. Projections have been done but it is still one of the MFP's developments. Once the development is under way, it will revert to my agency. We will get those figures for the honourable member.

Mr CONDOUS: Regional tourism marketing boards in South Australia undertake a number of marketing initiatives throughout the year as part of the planned marketing program for their respective regions. The collective effort of these activities must have significant impact on the overall marketing of South Australia's tourism product. What support does the South Australian Tourism Commission provide to these boards to assist them with their programs?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We provide significant funds to these boards to assist them with what we regard as a vital task. However, it is the close working partnership that has

been developed between the commission and the boards that is increasing the impact of the marketing efforts being undertaken. Commission staff work closely with the boards in developing their individual annual marketing plans. This provides the opportunity to link many of the activities of the boards with those of the commission, thus providing increased impact in the marketplace; for example, a trade and consumer show is held throughout Australia. The commission and the boards work closely together to present the State's tourism product in the most professional manner. This is also enhanced by support from tourism marketing board members who also participate in these activities by presenting their individual products such as tours, transport, accommodation and attractions at these events.

There are a number of examples where the tourism marketing boards and the commission are combining in media advertising activities, and that is enabling the State to obtain extensive coverage, thus extending the reach of our marketing dollars. Recent examples of this cooperation are features that are being run in the current Qantas inflight magazine the *Australian Way* and the June edition of the *Overlander* four-wheel drive magazine. The commission and the boards also work closely together on the visiting trade and media familiarisation programs which result in millions of dollars worth of coverage for the State each year, and this occurs with a minimum of outlay. This partnership has been growing steadily and will continue to improve in the year ahead. I can assure the honourable member that we provide not only significant funds to the boards but a lot of in-kind support, because there is no doubt at all that they really maximise our dollars and result in additional tourism to those regions.

Mr CONDOUS: I refer to page 386 of the Program Estimates and the reviewed funding structure for regional tourism marketing boards under '1996-97 Specific Targets/Objectives'. The largest proportion of our South Australian tourism industry is regionally based outside metropolitan Adelaide. What is the South Australian Tourism Commission doing to assist in business planning for regional tourism?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The South Australian tourism plan for 1996 to 2001, to which I referred earlier this afternoon, set as a strategy the preparation of regional profiles to assist in local business planning and investment advice. The regional tourism profiles which consolidate and interpret regional tourism data were released in August 1996 for six regions of the State. They were the Adelaide Hills, the Flinders Outback, classic country, Kangaroo Island, Adelaide and Eyre Peninsula. The profiles have met an important need for a single document for each region which serves the needs of a variety of users including tourism marketing boards, regional operators, developers, other Government agencies, the commission, and so on.

The profiles consolidate and summarise statistics and information from a range of sources and provide value added analysis and interpretation of tourism data and the nature of tourism in the region. Areas covered include a general overview of the region; a summary of tourism visitation; an analysis of visitor and visit characteristics for both international and domestic visitation; an assessment of tourism accommodation supply and demand; a description of the particular strengths of tourism in the region; and an interpretation of the implications and opportunities which the changing marketplace presents.

Currently, the commission is working with the regions to maximise the use of the market segmentation data used by the commission, the Roy Morgan holiday travel survey. New profiles are being prepared for the regions which will provide detailed regional marketing information for the tourism marketing boards, industry operators and industry partners. The South Australian Tourism Commission is the first in Australia to have commissioned this regional marketing information. The commission has also been working with the tourism marketing boards (TMBs) over the past two years to improve business planning. There has been a pleasing improvement in this regard which will be further helped with the use of the Roy Morgan market segmentation data. Again, we are providing considerable key support to the regions in that area.

Ms WHITE: Do we have records of where interstate visitors come from?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Yes.

Ms WHITE: How many come from Victoria, Queensland, and so on?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Yes.

Ms WHITE: What is the net tourism spending and net outcome in terms of visitor nights between the number of interstate and international visitors coming to South Australia and spending within this State and those South Australians who take their tourism dollars and spend them interstate? Will the Minister provide net figures in terms of dollars and in terms of visitor nights?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We cannot provide that information.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I presume that the honourable member is referring to page 387, performance indicators, in the program papers.

Ms WHITE: Indeed I am, Sir.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We cannot provide those figures, but we will make them available to the honourable member.

Ms WHITE: I refer to major events at page 388 of the Program Estimates. There is a statement in the commentary on major resource variations between this and last year's budget which indicates that there is a net decrease in funding of approximately \$1 million in 1997-98, due mainly to additional funding of \$750 000 in the previous year for two events. This does not seem to gel with the budget figures under that line on page 382. Will the Minister explain that?

Mr Spurr: In response to page 382, the figure the honourable member is looking at is probably \$4.759 million to \$6.113 million. Much of that is with respect to programmed planned commercial sponsorship that we anticipate receiving over the coming year through the major events of the World Solar Challenge, Tasting Australia and the Christmas pageant. For those three events in particular, it is planned to raise additional sponsorship from the commercial sector, and that is reflected in those figures.

Ms WHITE: Page 388 indicates that there is a net decrease of \$1 million in Government spending; is that what that is saying?

Mr Spurr: There is a decrease in Government spending but an increase in planned commercial spending over those three events, which are really managed and owned by Australian Major Events in the South Australian Tourism Commission.

Ms WHITE: I refer to page 388 of the Program Estimates. Under the major event line, there is mention of generated economic activity, and various figures are given.

There is \$36.7 million for the 49 events staged during 1996-97 and \$62.75 million for upcoming events. In various public information there is an estimate of \$10 million economic activity to be generated by the Masters' Games in 1999; \$8 million for the golf; \$14 million for Wagner's Ring Cycle Opera; \$2 million for the world cycle challenge; \$1.2 billion worth of tourism business generated by the Australian Tourism Exchange; and \$7 million from the Masters' Racing Regatta. Where do these figures come from? How do you arrive at these estimates of economic activity?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The figures are always prepared for me and are based on very carefully determined criteria. I will ask the Deputy Chief Executive to give the specifics. I am very confident that the figures provided to me are accurate, and I am sure the Deputy Chief Executive will be able to reassure the honourable member of that.

Mr Spurr: We estimate economic impact in a number of ways. In the case of Wagner's Ring Cycle, the Centre for Economic Studies undertook a program to estimate the economic impact of that event in 1998. The economic impact comes through expenditure on the event and national and international visitors bringing new dollars into the State. That is one instance. In other instances, particularly where the event has been held previously in another country, we always try to extract the economic impact studies that would have been undertaken by those cities or countries. That has been undertaken with respect to Golden Oldies. In the late 1980s Perth undertook an economic impact assessment of Golden Oldies, as did Christchurch. We also conduct visitor surveys of events ourselves, and we have done that for events such as the Barossa Music Festival, Oakbank, the Festival of Arts and the Festival Fringe in recording visitors who come from interstate and overseas, using an economic analysis to measure economic impact. We use a standard formula based on surveys and past experience of other people doing economic impact studies.

Mrs HALL: I refer to page 386 of the Program Estimates. Under the program title 'Domestic marketing' the 1997-98 specific targets and objectives are to broaden the exposure of South Australian product through cooperative marketing ventures with industry partners. It must be accepted that South Australia is still developing in terms of creating a strong and recognisable brand and image interstate. In this context, the importance of consistent imagery and promotion becomes a vital component. Given that each of the regions produces its own brochures in addition to the range of publications already produced by the commission, what consideration is given to creating a cooperative and consistent image across all promotions of the State?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The value that can be gained by consistent imagery and promotion is critical to South Australia's success in the national and international market-places. Considerable research has been undertaken to establish a brand and position that would set South Australia apart from other parts of Australia and appeal to our key markets. This positioning and branding centres around the senses; for example, the capacity to access a wide variety of experiences that are not available elsewhere. That is obviously what we will sell. In cooperation with the Adelaide Convention and Tourism Authority (ACTA) and each of the regions around the State, this branding has formed an umbrella for these organisations and their marketing activities. The Senses campaign has been developed as a Sensational Adelaide tag line for both Major Events and ACTA. Each of the regions has taken on this theme with the commission

and developed similar calls to action. In other words, we are all working closely together.

In addition, the commission has developed a border theme to each of its publications, highlighting particular flora and produce of the State. These border themes have created considerable interest at the trade and consumer shows here and internationally. Borders are being developed by the commission for each of the regional areas and, as they reach the end of existing stocks, the new brochures with the chosen border are being produced. South Australia is renowned for the quality of its tourism productions, and during the course of this year every region will have publications which match the stable produced by the commission, providing a consistent, professional and appealing image for the State.

Mrs HALL: Again I refer to page 386 of the Program Estimates. A dot point under the 1997-98 specific targets/objectives for the program entitled 'Domestic marketing' refers to the need to participate in all major domestic consumer and trade shows. Some recent publicity has concerned a tourism exchange in Melbourne, to which the Tourism Commission provided significant sponsorship. What was this event all about, and can the Minister assure us that it represented a worthwhile use of South Australian Tourism Commission funds?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The answer to the last part of the question is: 'Absolutely'. The Australian Tourism Exchange (ATE) is the largest tourism trade show conducted in Australia. It provides opportunities for participants to sell their tourism product to international travel wholesalers. The object is to encourage the wholesalers to include their product in packages sold to consumers through the international travel agent network. More than 600 international wholesalers attended the ATE last week. Although the ATE was held in Melbourne, it was jointly hosted by South Australia, Victoria and Tasmania and highlighted more than 350 Australian tourism products. Some 38 South Australian tourism operators joined the SATC at the South Australian stand. I seek to have that list inserted in *Hansard*; it is purely statistical.

Invitations to South Australian Operators
Attending ATE Briefing on 4/6/97

Helen Finlayson	A Little Shopping and Touring
Leanne Richards	ACTA
Catherine Leonard	ACTA
Michael Delittoso	Adelaide Meridien
Craig Wickham	Adventure Charters of KI
Amelia St Vincent	Adventure Charters of KI
Nigel Robertson	Air & Adventure Tours Pty Ltd
Michael Kohn	Air South Air Tours
Godfrey Gardiner	Airtours South Australia
Julie Finch	Arkaroola Wilderness Sanctuary
Brian Storey	Barossa Events
Barry Salter	Barossa Wine and Tourism
Bill Magoulianos	Bensons Limousines
Suzanne Caudell	Caudell's Explorer Self Drive
Yvonne Barnes	Caudell's Explorer Self Drive
Robert Thumm	Chateau Yaldara
Colin Spehr	Chateau Yaldara
Rosmarie Esposito	Coachlines of Aust/Adelaide
	Sightseeing
Helena Granic	Coachlines of Aust/Adelaide
	Sightseeing
Robert Coro	Desert Cave Underground Hotel
Andrew Dwyer	Diamantia Touring Co.
Astrid Birkensteigh	Emu Airways
Donna Cattanach	Fleurieu Unique Accommodation
	Flinders Ranges & Outback
Jacquie Roberts	Hotel Adelaide International
Anna Howard	Kangaroo Island Odysseys
Rick Smith	Kangaroo Island Sealink

Michael Robinson	Kangaroo Island Sealink
Philip Cox	Kangaroo Island Wilderness Tours
John Simos	Kendell Airlines
Adam Ruggero	Kendell Airlines
Chris Carpenter	Mirror Image
Richard McLeod	Nomads Backpackers International
	North Adelaide Heritage Apartments
Edward Borg-Barthet	Paradise Wirrina Cove Resort
Mark Wakefield	Paradise Wirrina Cove Resort
Elizabeth Laurie	Portee Station
Ian Clark	Portee Station
Jenni Nelson	Proud Australia Holidays
Bob Foord	Proud Australia Holidays
Fraser Vickery	Rainbow Walkabouts of KI
Paul Widmer	Skylink Australia
Chris Burchett	South Australia's Fleurieu Peninsula
Kenneth Lehmann	Thorngrove Manor
Marc Warren	Tourism Kangaroo Island
Tom Bettess	Tourism Kangaroo Island
Kirsty Quinlan-Watson	Wayward Bus Touring Co.
Ralph Jackson	Wayward Bus Touring Co.
Tracey Bassingthwaighte	Wilpena Pound
Lynette Rasheed	Wilpena Pound

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The South Australian stand featured a heritage streetscape with street pavers, cottages and vine leaves, as well as a two-storey cafe representing the lifestyle and culture that are so well known in our State. It has been estimated that approximately \$1.2 billion of tourism business was generated during the week long tourism exchange. The exchange is one of the most important events for the tourism industry, because it allows tourism operators, wholesalers and the media from around the world to meet and talk about Australia as a tourism destination. I indicate that 37 people, representing various media organisations throughout Australia and overseas, were present at South Australia's press conference. As part of the exchange, commission executive staff and I addressed a press conference. This was extremely well received and will result in quite positive media exposure for South Australia. I base that assessment on the fact that after the formal press conference was conducted a number of the media people came up to the new Chief Executive, the Deputy Chief Executive and me to gain additional information, such as their interest.

In addition, a special South Australian dinner was held where the SATC hosted international buyers and showcased SA's many tourism attractions, gourmet food, fine wines and entertainment. The SATC hosted a record 64 agents and travel writers on familiarisation tours throughout South Australia on pre and post ATE familiarisation tours. In other words, it was not only an exchange but a before-and-after exercise. So, there is no doubt that it was extremely worthwhile.

I spoke with each of our operators who travelled to Melbourne and I can say without fear of contradiction that every one of them indicated two things. The first was that their appointment book was virtually full. I think the appointments were over 4½ days, and the appointments changed every half hour, so a very sophisticated appointment system was set up. Each of our operators indicated that for the 4½ days they virtually did not have an unfilled time slot. The second point the operators made to me was that each and every one of them has made substantial sales to overseas inbound operators and were absolutely delighted with the response that their investment in the exchange had gained for them. I will be urging all South Australian operators to attend next year's ATE because, as I said, every operator who attended was absolutely singing the praises of the exchange in terms of business generated.

Mrs HALL: I refer to page 387 of the Program Estimates under the title 'International marketing' which states that South Australia will increase trade awareness with strategic Asian markets by familiarisation and direct business development workshop programs, and it mentions the South Australian Travel Exchange (SATEX). I understand that South Australia recently hosted about 60 members of the Asian travel industry. Will the Minister explain to the Committee the purpose of this visit and how South Australia will capitalise on this and future similar tourism trade activities?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The South Australian Travel Exchange was an initiative of the South Australian Tourism Commission to encourage targeted decision making travel trade from key regions of Asia to experience South Australian tourism first hand. I worked for one organisation prior to my returning to Parliament and I know how important it is for those selling a tourism product to experience it first hand. We found that the 60 visitors enthused about what South Australia has to offer which means that, as a consequence, when they return to their home countries and people say, 'We want to go to Australia', they will be naturally enthusiastic and point their customers in the direction of South Australia.

Rewards from this program are already occurring, combined with a strategic marketing direction towards the education of key agents and wholesalers of the Asian travel industry in our total tourism product. As with all marketing programs, it is essential that we maximise our return on the funds invested. Currently, the business activity associated with the South Australian Travel Exchange initiative is extremely pleasing, and current trends indicate that such an event will become an annual event on South Australia's trade calendar. Again, I was fortunate to attend that exchange for a short period and I experienced first hand the absolute enthusiasm of our international visitors for our product.

Sixty travel agents from Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Hong Kong, Korea, Thailand, Taiwan and Indonesia experienced brief familiarisation tours to Kangaroo Island, Wirrina, Spear Creek, the Clare Valley, the Adelaide Hills and the Barossa. Each travel agent met with 60 South Australian tourism operators for two days of rotating 10 minute business briefings to gain a better understanding of what our industry has to offer. Several tourism operators attending SATEX have advised of recent inclusion in Asian wholesale packages for the first time. They had not been previously listed and are already receiving bookings from those travel agents who participated from the various Asian regions. Again, it was an excellent initiative of the commission, which is resulting in increased tourism for South Australia.

Ms WHITE: I refer to page 383 of the Program Estimates. The corporate support sub-program indicates that, in nominal terms, no change has occurred which means that, in real terms, there has been a reduction in 1997-98 from 1996-97 for the Adelaide Convention and Tourism Authority and wine tourism. We all know the importance of conventions and conferences in generating tourist dollars in this State and the importance of the wine tourism industry. Certainly, there is no increase in funding but, in real terms, there appears to be a cut in funding in those areas.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: If the honourable member looks at another line she will find that we have allocated \$750 000 towards Tasting Australia, which I am sure she would agree ties in very closely with ACTA and wine tourism. In all, there has been quite a substantial increase in funding for those areas. I am able to go into more detail if the honourable member wishes, but I think that answers the nub

of the question. Although those lines have remained the same, one cannot remove Tasting Australia from the money we are spending with respect to ACTA or wine tourism. Adding that on, we are well in front.

Ms WHITE: I note that Government sponsorship of the sailing ship *One and All* in 1996-97 amounted to \$100 000 and there was a revised figure of \$125 000. This budget allocates a further \$100 000. It is indicated (page 389) that the Tourism Commission receives sponsorship exposure from that vessel. What is the level of corporate sponsorship attracted by the vessel?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Although the line relating to sponsorship of the *One and All* for 1996-97 indicates a revised figure of \$125 000, \$25 000 of that amount was a loan. The sponsorship is still the same at \$100 000. I do not have the specific detail regarding corporate sponsorship but I will provide the honourable member with the relevant details.

Ms WHITE: What proportion of time does the *One and All* spend inside the State as opposed to outside the State?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We will obtain that information and provide it to the honourable member.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 382 of the Program Estimates and the line 'Marketing Support'. It has been argued that Kangaroo Island requires a regional development strategy. What has been done to address this problem and to ensure that Kangaroo Island, as a resource, is appropriately managed?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I can certainly provide considerable detail, and I am sure that the honourable member would be aware of the Premier's initiative in forming an implementation group specifically to ensure that the strategy we utilise on Kangaroo Island will provide the maximum benefit possible. In October 1995, the Department of the Premier and Cabinet published the Kangaroo Island Sustainable Development Strategy. It prioritised development for the island, which is based on improving the value of the local tourism industry, marketing the island as a tourism destination, maintaining biodiversity and expanding community services and infrastructure. This strategy built on an earlier Kangaroo Island tourism policy which was prepared in 1991 and which was updated in 1994, as well as the work that was being undertaken at the time on the Kangaroo Island section of the South Australian Tourism Plan.

In addition, the Tourism Optimisation Management Model was developed to provide an innovative mechanism to help monitor and manage tourism growth on the island. This is a collaborative initiative involving the commission, DENR, Tourism Kangaroo Island, the Kangaroo Island council and the Kangaroo Island economic development board. In addition to these initiatives, a tourist accommodation market survey was completed in February this year to assist the commission in developing the final stage of Kangaroo Island's development strategy investment. This study recommended that we do need—and I could not agree more—a four-star nature lodge facility and clustered eco-friendly self-catering chalet style accommodation. They are two areas which, undoubtedly, we do need in terms of significant development.

As the honourable member may be aware, Kangaroo Island does attract a large number of international tourists, but many of them are looking for four-star accommodation as a minimum. The fact that we cannot yet provide that means that many of them visit Kangaroo Island only as a day trip, because they are then able to remain in their four or five-star

accommodation in Adelaide. We all would agree that that situation is not best for tourism in South Australia and does not optimise the opportunity that Kangaroo Island offers.

The MFP development group, in association with the commission, is seeking private sector investment interested in creating a sustainable future for Kangaroo Island. In all these studies there has been extensive consultation with the Kangaroo Island stakeholders and the community. We need not more planning but rather implementation of a strategy, and this is being achieved through the Premier's initiative, which we announced recently.

The honourable member can see from that that the commission, the Government and I, as Minister, are only too well aware of the tremendous opportunity that we have on Kangaroo Island and that we do need to provide additional infrastructure to ensure that we can maximise the benefits of the island. However, I emphasise that after years of neglect it is this Government which is starting to pour money into Kangaroo Island. On a recent visit to Kangaroo Island I was very pleased to note, for example, that the South Coast Road has been sealed to Vivonne Bay. Work will continue until the road extends to the national park at the western end of the island. We are putting money into infrastructure; we will continue to put money into infrastructure; and as Minister I am pursuing very actively the two accommodation needs that require addressing.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 382 of the Program Estimates in relation to marketing support and the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. With the lead-up to the Sydney 2000 Olympics I believe there will be a tremendous opportunity for South Australia to capitalise on the visiting media. In what way has the South Australian Tourism Commission planned to integrate the 2000 Olympics media visitation into its public relations activities?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: There is no doubt whatsoever that the 2000 Olympics will provide a tremendous chance for South Australia to gain additional tourism opportunities. However, those opportunities have to be seized now and in the lead-up to the Olympics, because once the visitors are in Australia it will be too late. The vast majority of tourists who travel overseas have an itinerary which is carefully planned for the entire time they are away. In other words, it will be absolutely useless targeting the visitors once they arrive in Sydney, because they will not have the flexibility to change their program and visit South Australia. The main area of integration for the commission's public relations unit to make maximum benefit out of the Olympics is to work with participating media. This will be covered with initiatives such as the SATC national media office that has been positioned within the South Australian Olympics office in Sydney. A comprehensive media kit has been introduced and will be made available to the media.

The targeting and hosting of relevant national and international media is being undertaken. The issuing of media releases, transparencies and broadcast vision is already under way. We will provide the South Australian travel centre in Sydney with information on South Australian packages so that it gets through to the inbound tourism operators. Also, assistance is provided with the South Australian segment of the torch relay around Australia, and we will use that as an opportunity to market our State and to attract visitors to South Australia during their visit to the 2000 Olympics in Sydney.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to pages 382 and 386 of the Program Estimates in relation to domestic marketing. Backpackers have sometimes been referred to as two-bob

tourists, implying that they are not noted for being significant in commercial terms to the tourism industry. However, the backpacker market has gained increased significance nationally, with a national backpacker strategy that was developed by the Commonwealth Department of Tourism now in place. How important is the backpacker segment to the State's tourism industry, and what part is the South Australian Tourism Commission playing in the development of that market segment?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: As I said in a previous question, I can use one word to summarise how important it is: 'Vital'. Backpacking is grossly underestimated by many; certainly it is not underestimated by me, because I am well aware of the number of backpackers who visit South Australia and the money that that group contributes to the economy. It is a very significant area of tourism in South Australia. Backpacker expenditure in Australia is estimated to amount to about \$844 million. I quote from *A Mid Summer Snapshot of the Backpacker Market in SA, 1995*, as follows:

Backpackers are increasingly being recognised for their importance in opening up new destinations for mainstream travellers. South Australia, Western Australia and the Northern Territory are strategically positioned to take advantage of a growing trend away from the Eastern States.

Research in the backpacker market indicates that backpackers account for about 27 per cent of all international visitors to South Australia and 22 per cent of all visitor nights. Of all backpacker trips undertaken in Australia, 33 per cent involve a visit to South Australia. That is very much in excess of the population pro rata basis: of course, we have about 8 per cent of the national population. In 1995-96, 75 800 backpackers visited South Australia, an increase of 1 per cent over the previous year, and this is despite zero growth in this market at a national level. Once again, South Australia is leading the way. This segment generated about \$44 million for the State in that year.

So, what are we doing to create initiatives to ensure that we get maximum benefit from this? In July 1995 the commission secured a grant of \$30 000 from the Federal Department of Tourism to develop the backpacker market in South Australia. The South Australian Tourism Commission and the South Australian Backpacker Industry Association matched the Federal grant by undertaking a program of development and promotional activities. Achievements to date include the holding of two backpacker industry seminars and the undertaking of surveys into the motivation and influences on backpackers visiting South Australia.

Two Aussie Host customer training sessions for backpacker operators have been provided. Attendance at the Backpacker Expo in Sydney in 1995-96 was undertaken by the commission, and it will do it again this year. Advertising in guide books, both domestically and in the UK, has been undertaken to raise the awareness of South Australia as a backpacker destination. There will be continual liaison with the Backpackers Association and assistance to it to develop an ongoing business plan. It is a very significant segment of the tourism market and one which we are actively pursuing.

Ms WHITE: I am glad that in his first question of that set the member for Hanson raised the issue of Kangaroo Island and asked about plans by the Government for development of Kangaroo Island, because that is an issue that I want to pursue with the Minister. It is true that the natural assets of flora and fauna, the seal colonies and the natural attractions of Kangaroo Island are worth a big marketing push by the State, and are some of our best assets. But it is also true that

the tourist experience with infrastructure and facilities is not what it could be. On the several occasions on which I have been to Kangaroo Island I have noted that one of the major problems you have at times, depending on where you are on the island, is getting food, particularly along the south coast. In fact, I have had the experience of turning up to places to eat and being told that if you had not booked and were on a bus tour then you could not be accommodated. This issue was raised a few weeks back by the *Advertiser*, which did a big article on the tourist experience of Kangaroo Island, suggesting that we needed to lift our game there.

One of the big issues associated with the experience on Kangaroo Island and the tourism benefits from visitors is the capacity of people to get there in the first place. Our ferry service has become very important. With Kangaroo Island Fast Ferries going belly up and ceasing to operate, and given that we are spending \$7 million at Glenelg to build a safe harbor—which was an initiative by the Government in supporting Kangaroo Island Fast Ferries—how much money has the Government put into Kangaroo Island Fast Ferries? Now that it has ceased to operate, what does this mean for taxpayers, given that a levy of \$2.50 on every passenger travelling on Kangaroo Island Fast Ferries which was to go towards payment of that ferry terminal at Glenelg has now been taken out of the system?

What is the implication for taxpayers having to pick up that bill, and what does the Minister see as the future arrangement for transport between the mainland and Kangaroo Island in terms of physically getting tourists to the island?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: To answer the second part of the honourable member's question first, the details that she is seeking are not under my agency's control. Those questions would need to be directed to the Premier as the Minister in charge of the MFP Development Corporation. Those figures would be available through that corporation: we do not have them. In relation to the first part of the honourable member's question, I am a little surprised that she is raising the infrastructure problems on Kangaroo Island because, although she was not a member of the then Government, the previous Government virtually ignored Kangaroo Island. This Government is trying to make up for the years of neglect that Kangaroo Island suffered.

One example we can give immediately is that of the sealing of the south coast road, right through to Vivonne Bay and continuing. I agree with the honourable member: the infrastructure on Kangaroo Island is not yet adequate, but it is certainly a darn sight more adequate than it was when we came to office. I can assure the honourable member that we will continue to invest in the tourism infrastructure of Kangaroo Island, because she knows that since I have been Minister I have indicated that I see Kangaroo Island as one of the jewels in the crown of South Australia.

That and the Flinders Ranges in the outback are the areas to which I as Minister am giving extremely close attention, and I will be doing everything within my power to ensure that we are able to cater for the tourists who want to visit the island. Some of the infrastructure we need to change is both at the top end and at the bottom end of the accommodation scale. We definitely need four star accommodation and also need ecotourism-type accommodation. I do not think that I am breaking any confidences when I indicate that the discussions I am holding with potential operators in both of those areas are at the moment very encouraging.

I can assure the honourable member that I will continue to do all that I can to get the accommodation infrastructure increased and improved and, at the same time, in conjunction with my colleague the Minister for Transport, am working on overcoming what is quite a serious problem on the island, that is, the roads, which must be sealed because of the inherently dangerous nature of the natural surface of Kangaroo Island.

Ms WHITE: In a preliminary discussion about this Committee it was pointed out that under the line relating to the Glenelg ferry development and other tourism developments, the MFP line, the Premier would take half an hour of questioning on the whole MFP line, which deals with every tourism development, every urban development plus all the other MFP staff. The Minister indicated that he would attempt to answer questions on those tourism developments and that if the Minister could not answer them here because he did not have the appropriate advisers he would take them on notice and obtain answers for me.

Is the Minister indicating that he will take those questions on notice and bring back the information I sought, involving the shortfall in the passenger levy that would have arisen from ticket sales for Kangaroo Island Fast Ferries; how much the Government has subsidised Kangaroo Island Fast Ferries, and also the amount of subsidy towards Sealink?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I give an assurance to the honourable member that I will have my officers ask the officers of the MFP Development Corporation to provide those figures to us so that we in turn can provide them to the Committee.

Ms WHITE: My second question relates to the Wirrina development and the tourism outcomes from it. The Minister will be aware that the taxpayer is putting of the order of \$20 million towards that development, which is a private development. Most of those funds that have been expended to date have come from Tourism Commission budget lines. What has been the tourism outcome from that development to date in terms of international and interstate visitors coming to the resort, and what is the break-up for South Australian occupancy at the resort?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: In relation to the last part of the question, we will attempt to obtain those figures, but I am sure that the honourable member would appreciate that the only group we could get those from are the operators themselves, and they may regard the information the honourable member is seeking as commercially sensitive. I assure the honourable member that we will seek to get those figures for her and, if we are able to get them, then we will provide them to the Committee.

In relation to the earlier part of the honourable member's question, as she is aware the responsibility for tourism development, including the former staff and budget, was transferred from the commission to the MFP Development Corporation to centralise all State development functions under the Premier's portfolio. In relation to the specific questions the honourable member asked, I can only give my recollection; therefore, I stress that the figures I will give the honourable member are based on recollection because bear in mind that it has not come under my portfolio for some five months. My recollection is that the Government is contributing about \$15 million towards the cost of providing infrastructure to the project. This includes a construction of the marina, road access and provision of water and effluent treatment services. In contrast—again I am going on memory—the developer, MBfl, is spending about \$60 million on major refurbishment of the existing resort, development of

111 allotments in medium density development and 80 condominium units, upgrading the golf course and construction of the marina berths.

A new SA Water reticulated water supply from the Myponga reservoir has been required because the existing water supply was not adequate to guarantee sufficient volume or quality of water for the project once it is completed. In addition, a local on-site sewerage scheme has been required to meet the needs of the development. The scale of this overall project has been determined following extensive market analysis which revealed considerable market demand for a project from local and national markets and very much from the international tourism market. I believe that such developments are absolutely crucial for South Australia and, if we are to move forward with tourism in this State and maximise our share of growth in international visitor numbers to Australia, we have to work in partnership with the private development sector by ensuring that adequate infrastructure support is provided to enable these developments to go ahead.

Ms WHITE: I hope that the Minister is able to provide that information in terms of the tourism outcomes because, for a couple of years at least, the majority of capital funds from the tourism budget have been spent on Wirrina and taxpayers would expect reasonable value for that money, in terms of tourism dollars brought to the State. My next question deals with the Mount Lofty summit development. I have visited the summit a couple of times recently, and on those occasions it has been well utilised and quite packed. It seems that the capacity of the existing building may not be adequate to serve the needs of the number of tourists visiting the summit. I understand that some suggestion has been made that the building might need to be extended. Certainly the number of people trying to get snack foods as opposed to the number of diners is presenting somewhat of a logistical problem with people moving around the centre.

I understand that there is a suggestion that the centre may be extended. I have been told that in order to extend the tourist facility the design of the current roof structure is such that the whole roof would need to be replaced at some expense. Will the Minister confirm whether or not this is true? Will he comment on the capacity of the building and say whether consideration is being given to extending it?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I need to make a number of points in response to that question. The first is that the development undertaken by this Government at Mount Lofty, to put it mildly, has been extremely successful. The response has been far beyond our expectations when we went ahead with the building. Again, it shows that this Government could see the opportunity for a magnificent development which would be very valuable to tourism in this State, and we went ahead and built it. Its success is there for everyone to see. However, as the honourable member has pointed out, because it has proven to be even more successful than we had hoped for in our wildest dreams, problems have been created in that, at times, the building is not large enough to cater for the number of visitors. Certainly, at times the catering facilities are stretched beyond their limits.

Yes, concerns have been expressed to us by some visitors about the problems that have been encountered. The last thing we want is to have such a magnificent tourism development being one which perhaps people could be going away from with negative impressions rather than positive. I am having discussions with the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources, who is also very well aware of the fact that the present facilities are being stretched beyond their

capability. My officers are meeting with officers of DENR and we are looking at what we can do to increase the size of the facility and therefore increase the potential for that facility to cater for the needs of tourists visiting that site.

In relation to the roof, I have to say that that is the first I have heard of that concern. Certainly in the discussions I have been holding it has been along the lines of, if we are to build an extension, how easy it will be to duplicate the existing roof line to make any addition appear as if it was not an addition. I had not heard of that concern, but now that the honourable member has drawn it to my attention I will certainly ascertain whether or not that information is correct. None of my officers has heard of it either. I can only tell the honourable member that, in discussions I have had with people, including the architect and Minister Wotton, it has been indicated that any addition would be relatively simple to undertake and would fit in with the existing structure.

Mr CONDOUS: My question is on the 2000 Olympics provision in the tourism budget. With the focus on Australia with the 2000 Olympics, what initiatives has South Australia been developing to capitalise on the increasing awareness of Australia; and will there be consideration of specific funding allocation towards these activities?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I touched earlier on what we perceive as a very real potential value to South Australia—provided we grasp it—regarding the Sydney 2000 Olympics. The Sydney Olympics will provide exciting business opportunities for Australia and South Australia. In all, 30 000 visitors, 15 000 athletes and officials and 15 000 media employees will visit Australia during the games. Although those numbers do not sound great, I assure the honourable member that the biggest opportunities as far as South Australia is concerned lie with the media attention that Australia will have in the lead-up to the Olympics. The South Australian Tourism Commission is aware of that and has already relocated its Sydney-based national media coordinator to the South Australian Government's Olympics business office to give it a more integrated operational focus.

We are increasing our familiarisation unit to be able to cope with the increased number of journalists who will visit South Australia between now and the Olympics. The number of journalists expected to visit Australia will double every year between now and the Olympics. By 1998 a minimum of 3 000 journalists and film crews will seek sponsorship and planning assistance. We have also put in place public relations managers in North America, France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Singapore, who will be able to target key journalists and convert the interest in Australia to interest in South Australia.

We are working with the Australian Tourist Commission and other State and Territory bodies in the worldwide promotion of the games and Australia's attractions. We will work with the Olympic partners who paid \$US40 million in cash or services for the rights to use the Olympic rings in conjunction with their own brands. We are working with the broadcast-rights holders on gaining some promotion for South Australia.

We have identified the Olympic-nominated tour wholesalers who are appointed by the national Olympic committee in each country to handle the Olympic packages which include accommodation, transfers and tickets, and we are currently working with them on providing packages for pre-Olympic and post-Olympic tours in and of South Australia. They in turn work with inbound tour operators based in Australia, and we are working very closely with them.

Funding for initiatives targeting Olympic spin-off activity will be reviewed on an annual basis within the commission's budget allocation in the years preceding the event. It is anticipated that the opportunity of linking with the Australian Tourist Commission's promotional campaigns through the Partnership Australia program will also bring in additional resources to a number of promotional campaigns. As the honourable member can see, we are leaving no stone unturned to maximise the visitor opportunities to South Australia during the 2000 Olympics.

Mr CONDOUS: In light of a recent decision by the New South Wales State Labor Government and a tendency for other Governments to follow stupid fundraising schemes, does the State Government propose to introduce a bed tax on tourist accommodation?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I give the honourable member a categorical assurance, as I have done on previous occasions to the media, that this Government will not introduce a bed tax in South Australia. Why on earth would we be so foolish? I shake my head every time I see the New South Wales Premier defending what I regard as the absolutely indefensible. In fact, we are not the only ones who are shaking their heads. All the hotel and motel operators within the area considered appropriate for a bed tax by the New South Wales Government are putting tremendous pressure on the New South Wales Premier to change his mind, but he seems to be absolutely determined to do everything he can to destroy the tourism market in Sydney.

Frankly, I am delighted with what he has done because we are already getting feedback that visitors coming to Australia are increasingly recognising South Australia, they appreciate that we have magnificent tourism opportunities and, even before the bed tax is in place, they know that we can offer accommodation far cheaper than can be obtained in the Sydney CBD. The Premier of New South Wales has drawn the attention of international tourists to the cost of hotel accommodation in Sydney, and inbound operators and wholesalers are indicating that they are experiencing considerable resistance from potential visitors to Sydney.

We will be able to pick up the tourists that Sydney loses, so I thank the New South Wales Premier from the bottom of my heart for what he has done, because he has provided us with an opportunity that we have already seized and will continue to work on. When you have something which generates so much income and so many jobs for the State, why on earth would you tax it in the way that he has done? There is no way in the world that we will do it, and we intend to do everything we can to benefit from the stupid mistake that has been made by the Premier of New South Wales.

Mr CONDOUS: I have a supplementary question. I understand from the member for Giles that the Northern Territory has had a bed tax for a number of years.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: That is correct and, having stayed in the Northern Territory, I know how much I resented having to pay that tax. When people check out of their hotel, go down the bill and get to the tax, they make plenty of comments because many of them do not realise that such a tax is applied. The publicity that the New South Wales bed tax has received has been fantastic, so people who go to Sydney know that they will cop a tax. I assure the honourable member that the bed tax that is imposed in the Northern Territory creates considerable angst amongst visitors. If visitors get stung once, when next they come to Australia they will not go to the Northern Territory. We will make sure that they come to South Australia.

Mr CONDOUS: Although the SA Travel Centre occupies a very prominent site on the corner of North Terrace and King William Street, Adelaide, how effective is the centre in meeting the needs of visitors to this State? What is the future of the old SA Travel Centre building? It seems an enormous waste of money to leave empty a building in such a prominent location, and it is far larger than the present location. Why cannot money be allocated to the refurbishment of that building so that it can be used again for the Travel Centre?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The advice that I have been given and my own observation is that the site that we have now is much more prominent than was the old site. It is on the corner of two of the key streets in Adelaide, King William Street and North Terrace, and the success of the centre since it has been relocated speaks for itself. The Travel Centre is open 364 days a year, and that is a tremendous boon to the many visitors to this State. Over the weekend when the centre closes, a booth in Rundle Mall handles inquiries.

In addition to meeting the needs of South Australian residents who make inquiries and bookings through the Travel Centre, some 200 000 visitors call into the centre each year. The Travel Centre is the single most important point of public contact with the State's tourism industry. It provides an exceptional level of service to the visitor, with an extensive range of brochures as well as a complex computer database on tourist attractions, destinations and activities for visitors to South Australia. Several staff who have foreign language skills are available, and they are frequently called upon to assist international tourists.

The centre works with the tourist industry in a number of ways, including coordinating product seminars for operators to brief consultants on their product on a weekly basis. These are held every Tuesday morning. Travel consultants visit the TMB regions on a yearly basis, and this is done in the form of staff familiarisation exercises. The centre is a distribution point for over 4 000 tourist operators regarding accommodation, attractions, tours, transport, and so on. The Travel Centre hosts special promotions during off peak times of the year to increase bookings, and these promotions include the popular St Valentine's Day romance month promotion in February, a winter sale between July and August and a possible summer sale to increase bookings for the northern regions of the State.

The centre also fulfils an important information and State promotion role which must not be overlooked. Staff at the Travel Centre have extensive knowledge of South Australia which is freely available to the public. Having visited the Travel Centre, I can see that the additional space that it has and the way in which it has been able to set up its operations is beneficial to the State. The ground floor area is used to service visitors, and on the upper floors the telephone operators have very pleasant conditions in which to work. The move has benefited tourists in South Australia and South Australians who visit the centre to make bookings, and it is more user friendly for employees and staff.

Ms WHITE: In last year's budget \$300 000 was allocated to the Hog Bay Inn. What are we doing for the Hog Bay Inn?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: It was in our line, but that line has been transferred to the MFP Development Corporation budget line. It is still sitting there so that it will be available—and I use the term advisedly—when the development proceeds.

Ms WHITE: What is the money for?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I have held discussions with potential builders and operators of such a hotel, and I am

aware that the funds are there to provide infrastructure. The honourable member said that she has been to Kangaroo Island. If she visited Hog Bay, she would be well aware that the roads, sewerage and water services are just not adequate for such a development. We are looking to provide essential infrastructure to enable a hotel of, say, a 4 or 4½ star standard to be built, with approximately 50 to 60 rooms. However, the funds are to provide the method by which to get there and the essential services such as water, sewerage, and so on.

Ms WHITE: For a while now, there have been all sorts of suggestions for the Old Treasury building, for example, that a boutique hotel be established there. What has happened to all that?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Once again, the honourable member would need to address her question to the MFP Development Corporation, because it is handling those potential developments. The honourable member would need to ask the Premier, who is Minister in charge of that area.

Ms WHITE: In June 1996, during last year's budget Estimates, the then Minister said:

In the past 12 to 18 months there has been \$110 million worth of overseas investment in tourism product in South Australia. It is expected that a similar amount will be injected into the local economy in the coming year for new and ongoing projects such as the Old Treasury boutique hotel. . .

How much overseas investment has been injected into tourism product in South Australia in the past year?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Once again, that area comes under the control of the MFP Development Corporation. However, on the honourable member's behalf, I will undertake to have my officers ask the MFP Development Corporation for that information so that we can provide it to the Committee.

Mrs HALL: I refer to page 383 of the Program Estimates. As the Minister is well aware, South Australia is recognised as Australia's pre-eminent wine State. Will the Minister outline to the Committee how South Australia intends to capitalise on the tourist opportunities presented to South Australia by our wonderful, world-class wine industry?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I could not agree more with the honourable member: South Australia is absolutely the wine State. Regardless of how we look at it—production levels, the areas or whatever—we come out in front of any other State. South Australia produces 43 per cent of the nation's grape output. What is most important, particularly with our overseas opportunities, is that South Australia produces 60 per cent of Australia's premium wine grapes. I am sure that I do not have to point out to the honourable member how delightful are the shirazes that come from the Barossa Valley and the cabernet sauvignons that come from the Coonawarra, and I could go on.

As I said, South Australia has 60 per cent of Australia's premium wine grape production. South Australia produces about 60 per cent of the total wine production and over 70 per cent of Australia's wine exports. In other words, we are virtually twice as big a producer as all the other States put together. The wine industry employs 2.6 per cent of the State's manufacturing work force in addition to having strong linkages back into the agricultural sector.

The South Australian Tourism Commission has already instigated several initiatives to ensure that this State maintains its rightful place as the leading wine tourism destination in the country. These initiatives include the formation of the South Australian Wine Tourism Council; the adoption of the grape logo as the SATC corporate identity (which I also use

on letterhead in my own correspondence); publication of the South Australian Wine Touring Guide; the South Australian wine and food calendar of events; increasing the focus of wine in Tourism Commission mainstream marketing, Tasting Australia; and the National Wine Centre.

I want to emphasise to members that, despite Victoria's best endeavours to try to take away from us that title, the Australian Tourism Council is using the term 'Wine State' only in relation to South Australia. It is recognised nationally that South Australia is the wine State. Of course, we will continue to market South Australia in that area. I mentioned earlier that we are concentrating on our niche markets, and wine tourism is very much one of those niche markets.

Mrs HALL: What specific initiatives does the Minister intend to implement in the coming year specifically focused on promoting South Australia's wine industry as a tourism product? I want the Minister to bear in mind that Magill Estate is in my electorate, so I take personal interest in that. What emphasis, if any, is the commission putting on the general regions of wine tourism, other than the Magill Estate?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: In addition to the initiatives that the South Australian Wine and Tourism Council and the South Australian Tourism Commission already have in place, we will focus our attention on a number of specific initiatives. The first is one to which I have already referred—Tasting Australia, which is an event that will promote the enormous diversity and quality of Australia's food and wine to the international media and give South Australia a tremendous opportunity to showcase our wine tourism product while those international visitors, particularly from the media, are here.

A second initiative is Wine Australia, Australia's new and highly successful wine promotion event which will be held in Melbourne but which will give South Australia a tremendous platform on which we will promote our wine tourism product to our largest single tourism market, that is, Victoria. Thirdly, we have the National Wine Centre, which will be an interpretive, educative and entertaining centre and which will promote and entrench Australian wine within the national culture. It will be a world class facility which will promote the international status of Australian wine and which will become the central headquarters for the Australian national wine industry. The National Wine Centre will provide a dynamic showcase for the excellence and diversity of Australian wines, wine makers and wine regions. It really will become the epicentre for Australian wine tourism. Make no mistake: when people come to Adelaide to experience the National Wine Centre, we do not need to be Philadelphia lawyers to work out how easy it will be to get those visitors to visit our premium wine centres such as the Barossa Valley, the Clare Valley, the Southern Vales, the South-East and so on.

Mrs HALL: I refer to marketing support (page 382), moving from the joys of wine tourism to the joys of plain visiting South Australia. We know that everyone shows good sense visiting us here, whether they be Victorian or international visitors. For some time the national advertising campaign for the Tourism Commission has focused on the 'Senses' theme. Does the Tourism Commission intend to persist with the 'Come to your senses' theme? If so, why?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: This theme has its basis in over 10 years of consumer marketing research. Working with the South Australian Tourism Commission, our advertising agency developed and refined the 'Come to your senses' campaign with which we are now so familiar. Testing and

ongoing tracking has validated the use of the theme, with positive attitude changes toward South Australia as a holiday tourist destination, as shown in accurate records. Increased levels of intention to holiday in South Australia are being expressed because of that theme, which we have introduced so successfully.

Why has the 'Senses' campaign worked so well? Apart from wine and grapes, which are visual images, South Australia also has something which we may regard as intangible but which is tremendously important to all of us who live here, namely, our lifestyle. Key lifestyle attributes have been emotionalised through the use of the human senses in the current branding, 'Come to your senses; come to South Australia.' In other words, we are working on what is a recognised plus as far as South Australia is concerned. Whenever I go interstate, people living in Sydney, Melbourne and elsewhere always refer to Adelaide's lifestyle.

This tag is under review, but the use of the 'Senses' concept will continue, because the branding strategy is based on over 10 years of consistent consumer research findings which show that it has a very positive impact. Pre-testing and evaluation also show its positive market acceptance. Separate analysis by the Australian Tourist Commission supports the 'Senses' strategy. Recent growth in visitation to South Australia is strong. The South Australian Tourism Commission has made a substantial investment in this positioning and branding, so to get the benefit of it we must continue with it. The most crucial strategic imperative for the commission is to achieve consistency in the marketplace. Focus will now be on further testing and refinement for target markets. So, the program has been successful and will be continuing.

Ms WHITE: My question concerns ecotourism. Under last year's budget the sole officer who had been working on ecotourism was absorbed into the international marketing division and there was a budget change showing that, which was a halving of that line in last year's budget. No individual line is devoted to ecotourism in this year's budget, and I assume that that function is performed in international marketing; the Minister may correct me if that is not the case. How much of the budget is devoted to the development of ecotourist product in this State?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: First, ecotourism is now part of the new product development unit in domestic marketing, so that is where—

Ms White interjecting:

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Yes.

Ms WHITE: Was it in international marketing?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: It works across the commission, but it is in domestic marketing. I have been advised that \$20 000 has been allocated for new product development in that area, but we have made substantial investment in ecotourism in the past, with brochures such as 'South Australia Naturally'; I am sure the honourable member is familiar with the quality of that brochure. Those brochures and other advertising support exist. So, as the honourable member would be well aware from comments I have made in this House on other occasions, I can assure her that I am well aware of the significance of ecotourism to South Australia. I can assure her that the commission is just as well aware of that and that we are actively pursuing that segment of the market.

Ms WHITE: I realise that the Casino does not come under the Minister's portfolio, but obviously it generates tourist income to the State, so there is certainly a link with this portfolio. The State Government pressured the Casino to

abandon its Players program, which involved signed deals with operators to bring groups of gamblers with tens of millions of dollars of front money from overseas to visit South Australia and the Adelaide Casino. Last year we saw the high rollers area in the Casino close. Is the commission rethinking that issue, or does it have any involvement in negotiations with the Casino regarding the future of high roller programs? Does the Minister have any plans to reintroduce or encourage any such programs in the Casino?

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member ought to relate her question to a line in the budget, but I can understand that the Casino is involved with tourism. If the Minister wishes to answer I will give him that prerogative, but it is not the Minister's responsibility. If the Minister does not think he can assist, we should move on.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I am happy to give an answer to part of the question. The detail as to what the Casino will do is totally out of my purview and I will not even attempt to answer that part of the question. However, the honourable member linked that to the importance or otherwise of the Casino to tourism in South Australia. I indicated earlier that the one thing that we are concentrating on within the commission is our niche market. It is fair to say that we do not see the Casino as a niche market; therefore, we will be concentrating on what we can do best and avenues through which we will be able to attract interstate and international tourists to South Australia. I think that is probably the best way I can answer that question. Despite the changes that have occurred within the Casino, our tourism figures in all segments are up, so obviously we are doing something right.

Ms WHITE: In recent weeks I have received a number of telephone calls from staff within the Tourism Commission who tell me that recently a substantial amount of money was spent on stationery depicting the former Minister's and Premier's details and picture. Is that true and, if so, what expenditure is involved?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: My advisers confirm what was certainly my very distinct impression: we are still using the old stock of brochures and will continue to use them until they are gone.

Ms WHITE: Was any new material printed depicting the former Minister's picture—

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I have been assured by my officers that that is not the case.

The CHAIRMAN: Because of time constraints, the member for Taylor might like to read into *Hansard* questions on notice relating to the Tourism Commission.

Ms WHITE: I have received a letter from a person in South Australia who expresses concern about the Riesling Trail and, given the importance of the trail to tourism in this State, I will read two short paragraphs for your response on notice. The letter states:

The Riesling Trail appears to be little used and choked with weeds. It was opened amid great fanfare by David Wotton two or three years ago. It follows the route of the old Clare railway line and was intended as a trail for walkers and riders. I believe that some bridges had to be restored at great cost after the railway line was demolished. I'm not sure if all the necessary bridges are in place even now. Anyway, it might be worth having a look at.

This letter covers two issues and the second paragraph states:

I'm told that interstate visitors asked the Hyatt Hotel for tourism brochures on Adelaide Cup day. The hotel didn't have any and advised the visitors to try the tourist bureau. The bureau was shut. Same old story.

I await the Minister's response to that letter. Minister, you mentioned earlier that part of the restructure of your department would be a new board. I am not sure whether you meant replacement of current members on a board or the amalgamation of the two current boards into one. If you were talking about an amalgamation of the two existing boards into one new board, could you outline the differences in terms of numbers of members on this new board, their remuneration and, in broad terms, the areas the members will represent? Finally, will the Minister detail changes in employment in the tourism sector, particularly with respect to numbers of people employed since the 1993-94 year to the current year?

The CHAIRMAN: I accept that those questions are on notice and the Minister will respond within the guidelines.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 388 of the Program Estimates in relation to the 1998 Australian Open Golf Championship. The Premier announced that the Government has secured the Australian Open as a major event for South Australia, and that is tremendous. What is the financial commitment to this event and what benefits will be delivered to the State in staging the event in Adelaide?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I will answer the second part of the honourable member's question first, because it is important to lay on the table the tremendous benefits that will flow to South Australia by our winning the Holden Australian Open. Let me assure members that securing that event was no easy task. Despite what the Premier of Victoria said, Victoria fought tooth and nail to keep the event in that State. I am very proud of this State's securing the event and the role I was able to play in that effort.

The Open is the single most prestigious tournament in the Australasian PGA (Professional Golfers Association) calendar. Greg Norman is a certainty to play. It is highly likely that Tiger Woods will also be in Adelaide to contest the championship. A couple of years ago we saw the impact that Greg Norman had, even though it was a South Australian Open and not an Australian Open. Greater crowds attended that South Australian Open than any other golf tournament has been able to attract. The event will attract substantial national and international media attention and will be telecast live nationally and internationally, particularly to our key tourism markets of South-East Asia, the United States, Europe and Japan. The television viewing audience is expected to be approximately 600 million people.

In terms of visitors, the championship is expected to attract more than 75 000 people, and the estimated economic benefit to the South Australian economy will be between \$7.5 million and \$8 million. The South Australian Government will be sponsoring the tournament for a maximum amount of \$1 million, but we are very confident that we will be able to obtain corporate sponsorship that will lead to a reduction in the level of Government contribution. However, if we do end up contributing the full \$1 million, I point out that, by multiplying that amount by eight, one can determine the economic benefit to South Australia.

The competition for premium international sporting events is fierce, and there can be no doubt that the opportunity to capitalise on this event for South Australia in both economic terms and ongoing marketing potential will realise significant returns on the sponsorship investment we have made. I am confident that we will run it so well that we will position ourselves as very strong bidders for future Australian Golf Opens.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 388 of the Program Estimates in relation to the Australian Masters Games. What

progress has been made in relation to the Australian Masters Games since the Premier's announcement about this event? When will the event be held, and what level of economic benefit will South Australia gain from hosting this event?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Since the Premier's announcement on 23 April that Adelaide had been selected by the Confederation of Australian Sport as the host city for the 1999 Australian Masters Games, several initial tasks have been addressed by Australian Major Events. Priority has been given to the promotion of the event during the forthcoming 1997 Australian Masters Games to be held in Canberra during October. To this end, a design for a games logo has been commissioned. It is expected that the Government will announce the chairperson of the games organising committee by September and the balance of the committee very shortly thereafter.

In late July Australian Major Events and Sport SA (the Confederation of Australian Sports affiliate in South Australia) will conduct a symposium with State sporting associations to establish basic principles for the inclusion of sports on the 1999 Australian Masters Games program. Considerable early interest has already been shown by many State sporting associations, and their involvement in the successful planning of the games is essential. No date has been set for the 1999 Australian Masters Games, but it is expected that, subject to the approval of the Confederation of Australian Sport, Adelaide will host the games towards the end of October that year. The economic benefit expected from the hosting of the 1999 Australian Masters Games will exceed \$12 million. Again, I indicate that we are considering the same sort of figure that we gained from the Grand Prix.

The organising committee of the 1997 Australian Masters Games in Canberra recently commissioned an economic impact study for its event. This study suggests that the economic impact of the 1997 games may be as high as \$15 million, and reports of the 1995 Australian Masters Games held in Melbourne show that from its staging of the games that city received an economic benefit of \$11.5 million. As the number of participants grows with each games, Adelaide should easily achieve \$12 million in economic benefit from the 1999 Australian Masters. Finally, it is worth noting that Adelaide has the distinction of being the first city to be awarded the Australian Masters Games for a second time. Adelaide previously hosted the games in 1989, and the organisers of the games made it very clear that it was the very successful and professional manner in which those games were conducted that played a major part in Adelaide being the first city ever to host two of these games.

Ms WHITE: Will the Minister provide a list of sponsorship amounts for major events?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I will take that question on notice.

Ms WHITE: Are there any financial implications in this budget that relate to the winding-up of the Grand Prix board?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Again, we will take that question on notice and provide the honourable member with an answer.

Ms WHITE: In that question I also refer to salary arrangements for Grand Prix board members.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I understand.

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

Minister for Tourism—Other payments, \$3 215 000

Departmental Advisers:

Mr P.A. Van der Hoeven, General Manager, Adelaide Convention Centre.

Mr G.L. Ashman, Deputy General Manager.

Mr I.H. Fraser, General Manager, Adelaide Entertainment Centre.

Mr R.M. Kerslake, Deputy General Manager.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payments open for examination. Does the Minister wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I will make a very brief opening statement. The Adelaide Convention Centre is maintaining its reputation as the quiet achiever. Since opening, it has generated in excess of \$250 million, which far outweighs the Government's investment or debt servicing during the same period by a ratio of nearly three to one. In addition to the economic benefits generated by the local business economy in accommodation, retail shopping, restaurants, entertainment, transport and touring, a resultant number of jobs are created throughout these tourist and business related enterprises.

As well as the economic benefits that have been generated, the Convention Centre has produced an operating profit each year since opening, with the last six years of profits exceeding \$1 million each year. We are all well aware of the excellent reputation the centre has, the fact that it is a very popular centre and that we are attracting more business to that centre than are Brisbane, the Gold Coast, Auckland and Bali. As I said, the results speak for themselves.

The Entertainment Centre is similarly a very good news story. I am pleased to be able to report that the Adelaide Entertainment Centre is predicting a record profit of \$2 million for the 1996-97 financial year, which will result in a return directly to the Government of \$800 000. The rapid expansion of the centre's catering and functions businesses has contributed significantly to this record result. As a result of these initiatives, the centre succeeded in 1996-97 in doubling its net income from catering operations for the second consecutive year. The centre has also hosted many spectacular public events during the year, including *The Music of Andrew Lloyd Webber*, *Lord of the Dance* and *Riverdance*. The centre is holding very strong forward bookings for the coming year, including the two Disney ice shows, the Royal Lippizaner stallions and the return of *Riverdance*.

The bookings held for the main arena are at a record level, 30 per cent up on last year. The centre is also currently completing construction of its major function centre and multimedia precinct known as Rubicon. This new venue will incorporate innovative decor and architecture, flexible hiring configurations and the latest in audiovisual technology. Over 25 per cent of the cost of Rubicon has been funded by the centre's commercial sponsors. I am very much looking forward to the official launch of that facility. I am very proud to have the privilege of being associated with these two centres, and believe that the success of each centre is in no small measure due to the gentlemen I have sitting on each side of me right now.

Ms WHITE: The Minister referred to the good reputation and quality of the facilities of the Convention Centre. I was present when the Minister made a speech recently commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Convention Centre, and he

seemed to be indicating that the extensions to the centre would go ahead. Is that the case and, if so, what will be the extent of those extensions? Will it be the full exhibition space as proposed by the Convention Centre people?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I am very positive about the proposed extensions, because as Minister I see them as absolutely essential if we are to retain the centre as a pre-eminent convention centre in the Asia Pacific region. However, having said that, the final decision as to whether the extensions will proceed will be a matter for Cabinet and the Government to decide. At the moment a feasibility study is being undertaken as to whether an extension should occur; if so, how big that extension should be; and exactly what that extension should contain. I did speak very positively at that function about the future of the Convention Centre but, as I said, what will occur, when it will occur and how it will occur are matters completely in the hands of the Government. I as Minister am looking forward to receiving the report on the feasibility study presently being undertaken, in order that I can go back to Cabinet with very firm recommendations.

Ms WHITE: So, this has not been to Cabinet as yet?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The matter has been before Cabinet and Cabinet has agreed that the feasibility study should proceed. That is the first step when we are looking at what could be an investment of \$50 million or \$60 million. As I said, the form that extension will take, if it proceeds, will be a matter for Cabinet to determine once the feasibility study has been completed.

Ms WHITE: I refer the Minister to the Estimates of Receipts and Payments, page 16. Under 'Other non-commercial sector agencies and funds', it lists the figures for the Adelaide Convention Centre. In the 1996-97 budget an estimated \$663 000 was allocated, which was revised to a figure of \$1.276 million, and the estimate for 1997-98 comes in at \$653 000. There is a difference between the budget estimate for last year and the revised budget figure; a doubling of that figure. Will the Minister explain what that represents?

Mr Ashman: The amount to which the honourable member is referring is actually a deposit working account. It is like our bank account that we operate from year to year. It reflects the balance that we are holding in that account. It is purely working funds, moneys that are deposited there, deposits from conventions coming up, etc. It is just our working account balance.

Ms WHITE: I turn to the Entertainment Centre. At the time of budget Estimates last year there was much speculation about the sale of the Adelaide Entertainment Centre. At page 196 of *Hansard* (26 June 1996, Estimates Committee A) the Minister said:

The Government is not selling any land on the Adelaide Entertainment Centre site but is looking at the reorganisation and further development of that site, particularly the main area fronting Port Road.

He referred to it as a proposal. Will the Minister expand on whether there is any proposal for further development on that portion of the Adelaide Festival Centre land?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Obviously that land is very valuable and we certainly see the opportunity for development to occur on that land which would be in conjunction with the Entertainment Centre. I am presently reviewing possible uses to which that land could be put; uses which, I assure the honourable member, if we do proceed, will only add to the existing facilities at the centre.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 235 of the Estimates of Receipts and Payments. Will the Minister advise what economic benefits the Adelaide Convention Centre has generated to the State's economy since it opened, and how do those benefits translate into jobs?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: As I said, the Adelaide Convention Centre and the Entertainment Centre are both totally good news stories, and I am delighted to provide the information that the honourable member seeks. The economic benefits estimated are generated by convention delegates who come into Adelaide only from overseas and interstate and are calculated on the basis of room nights booked by the delegates. A formula has been developed by the Bureau of Industry Economics which takes account of average spending by a delegate based on surveys conducted and a multiplier effect, which is a measure of the spin-off to those industries benefiting from servicing tourists. This includes food and beverage, hotel services such as linen, laundry and so on, and transport, just to mention a few. The economic benefits to the State are based on purely interstate and international visitors, and I stress that—it does not include any local functions or delegates. We are talking about only those who come from other States or from overseas.

The room nights which have been booked at hotels by delegates attending the Convention Centre since its opening total 334 270. Hotel accommodation at an average—and I think this is an under estimate rather than an over estimate—of \$155 per night results in revenue of \$51.81 million. Delegate spending, based on a formula advised by the Bureau of Industry Economics, averages \$140 a day, totalling \$46.69 million. The multiplier effect, again based on a formula advised by the Bureau of Industry Economics, of 1.6 by \$98.6 million totals \$156.76 million. The total revenue to the State—and this excludes the multiplier effect from local functions and only takes account of functions booked involving delegate accommodation—is \$256.36 million, which we would all agree is an absolutely fantastic contribution to South Australia's economy.

Mr CONDOUS: Going on from the Minister's previous statement regarding the extension to the Adelaide Convention Centre and realising that the extension of such a centre creates an enormous number of jobs in the hospitality industry, especially for young people in our community, will the Minister advise the basis for increasing the size of the Convention Centre and also advise what the additional economic benefits will provide?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The Adelaide Convention Centre has raised with me the issue of the lack of available space for the trend in increasing sizes of conventions with an exhibition component and, when looking beyond the year 2000, the prospect of not being able to accommodate as many of the larger conventions as it would like. Already over 70 events have been turned away due to lack of available space, which, if not corrected, will cause a loss of market share to our interstate competitors. I know from the general manager that we have at least one function for which we have accepted a booking which will require us to put temporary accommodation on top of the Plaza car park to enable us to cater for that convention.

As a result of these concerns, I approved the commissioning of a feasibility study, which was conducted by Coopers & Lybrand. This study has identified that there is a need for additional space, and it makes recommendations about the size of that increase and where it should occur. This is a matter which will be considered. Cabinet has approved the

establishment of an agency working party, and that working party comprises members of the Adelaide Convention Centre, TransAdelaide, Treasury and Finance, the MFP Development Corporation, Services SA in building management, the Economic Development Authority and the North Terrace study group. That working party has been charged with the task of examining the development feasibility study and reporting back to Cabinet on what it sees as the optimum size of the development, the economic benefits associated with it, what would be the most appropriate site, the cost and funding of construction, and associated hotel accommodation that would be required. The working party is required to report to Cabinet on its findings in the near future.

In relation to the economic benefits in respect of the extension of the Convention Centre—and referring again to the feasibility study to which I previously referred—it is anticipated by the consultants that it will provide the following additional economic benefits: by the year 2000, about \$5.5 million value added, and 110 additional full-time equivalents in direct employment; by the year 2005-6, \$24 million value added, and the employment of 490; and, by the year 2010-11, \$42.9 million value added, and 890 full-time equivalents. If we look at the total impact in terms of those figures, by the year 2010-11 the total impact of the value added would be \$101.9 million and additional employment of 1 730. We would all agree that obviously there are very strong arguments for the extension of the Convention Centre.

Mrs HALL: I refer to Estimates of Receipts and Payments, page 235. Will the Minister advise the Committee what Adelaide's share of the national convention market is, and will he also—and, if he does not have the information available, he could take the question on notice—advise on the number of bookings that have been made with the Convention Centre since it opened 10 years ago and perhaps provide some indication to the Committee of how existing bookings are holding up?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The Adelaide Convention Centre achieves 17 per cent of the national market. When one considers that South Australia has 8 per cent of the nation's population, that is double the rate that one would reasonably expect this State to be able to obtain in the wider tourism market. When we look at our share of the tourism market, which is about 6 per cent, we are about three times up on that.

This success is due to the high quality convention facility, the relative ease of travel within Adelaide and the cost-competitive hotel accommodation. I also advise that the Asia region, which includes Australia, is the fastest growing convention region in the world and accounts for 16.5 per cent of the world market share of conventions. Australia is currently ranked fourth in the world behind the US, the United Kingdom and Japan. When one sees how successful we are in Adelaide, it brings home just what a great asset that centre is to South Australia. In relation to the bookings, I have a table which is purely statistical. It is less than one page in length, and I insert it in *Hansard* without reading it.

	Actual	Forecast	Actual Days Booked
Convention Centre			
1995-96	571	460	314
1996-97	572	465	317
1997-98	127	465	217
Exhibition Hall			
1995-96	45	38	201
1996-97	43	40	123
1997-98	28	40	143

	Analysis of Actual Bookings		1997-98
	1995-96	1996-97	
Number of bookings			
up to 500	470	477	72
500-999	56	65	36
Over 1 000	45	30	19
Total	571	572	127

Ms WHITE: I have another question on the Entertainment Centre. I understand that there has been some suggestion that the State Theatre Company workshops will be taken over by the Festival Centre Trust. Will that happen?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The General Manager advises me that there is absolutely no thought of that occurring.

Ms WHITE: In the budget papers and explanations to the budget papers there is no mention of any ministerial directions within the tourism portfolio for the last financial year. Can the Minister guarantee that there have been no ministerial directions, given by either himself or the previous Minister?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: My officers say 'No'. It certainly has not happened since I have been Minister, and they advise me that it did not occur prior to my being appointed Minister.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 235 of the Estimates of Receipts and Payments. How does the Adelaide Entertainment Centre compare with other entertainment centres interstate, and what is the trend in public attendance at the centre?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The centre compares very well with similar venues interstate. It regularly manages to attract small events which have played in venues other than entertainment centres when touring interstate. When compared with other centres, the Adelaide Entertainment Centre is also unique in the success and rapid expansion of its functions and banqueting business. Many promoters have compared the centre favourably to other entertainment centres in terms of its costs, customer service and backstage catering.

In relation to the trend in attendance, attendances for 1996-97 are projected at 345 000, which is the highest level since the centre's opening year. Attendances are expected to be 15 per cent higher again in the next financial year, which will take it up to about 400 000 patrons. The centre is expecting to reward its two millionth patron some time towards the end of this year. That enviable record speaks for itself.

Mr CONDOUS: In light of the fact that there has been a drop in the number of people visiting the city in recent times and the problem encountered in retailing in the city by the Adelaide City Council, can the Minister advise what is the financial position of the car park run by the Adelaide Convention Centre? Has there been an increase or decrease in recent years? If there has been a decrease, can we look forward to promotion of that car park so that it runs to its maximum capacity?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The income which has been derived from the car parks has been declining since August 1994, and this relates to the introduction of poker machines to hotels and clubs and the subsequent decline of patrons to the Adelaide Casino. Despite the decline in income from \$3.6 million in 1993-94 to an estimated \$2.8 million in 1996-97, the car parks are still providing a very attractive operating surplus for the Convention Centre of the order of about \$2 million a year.

It is anticipated that, with the new Hotel Playford and the EDS building, along with the revitalisation that the

Government is determined to introduce along North Terrace, we expect the income to the car parks to pick up and to revert to the strong income that they have enjoyed. There has been a decline in income, but I assure the honourable member that the profitability is still of real value to the total operations of the centre.

Mrs HALL: Given the Minister's response to an earlier question that the Adelaide Convention Centre has 17 per cent of the national market, can he advise how a convention delegate's spending is broken down into the various categories which form part of the estimated economic benefits generated into the local economy?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The various studies that have been completed for the Australian Convention and Visitor Bureau provide a very good guide as to how the average delegate dollar is spent. Two pieces of information are relevant. First, for every dollar spent by a convention delegate, 10 per cent is spent within the convention venue, but 90 per cent is spent outside. Secondly, the convention delegate spends approximately five times that which the average tourist spends during their stay, due to payment of the major part of their expenses by their employer, which leaves them with more expendable dollars for personal use, or because of tax concessions to a private business allowing for more expendable personal dollars.

The breakdown of how a delegate spends into categories is as follows: entertainment, around 10 per cent; restaurants, 16.5 per cent; shopping, around 20 per cent; accommodation, approximately 40 per cent; touring and other areas, about 15 per cent. That gives an indication of the way in which the average delegate to a convention spends his or her money.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the votes completed. I thank the Minister's advisers for their contribution and congratulate them on the magnificent job that they do at the Adelaide Convention Centre and the Adelaide Entertainment Centre.

Department of Recreation and Sport, \$22 041 000

Departmental Advisers:

Mr M. Scott, Chief Executive.
 Mr S. Forrest, Director, South Australian Sports Institute.
 Mr R. Fletcher, Director, Corporate Services.
 Ms L. Parnell, Director, Recreation and Sport Development.
 Mr V. Bollen, Manager, Capital Works.
 Mr D. Pullino, Manager, Financial Services.
 Ms D. Michalk, Senior Policy and Project Officer.
 Mr P. Schwarz, Manager, Grants.

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

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I would like to make a statement, because obviously recreation and sport plays a significant role in the life of many South Australians. It not only is a healthy and active way to spend leisure time but also has a positive impact on the State's economy. For example, in 1994-95, the economic significance of South Australian sport can be summarised as the total estimated expenditure on sport and recreation, some \$650 million, which is equivalent to 2.2 per cent of South Australia's gross State

product and is slightly higher in size than the gross product of the State's mining industry. Business in the sport and recreation industry directly employed 5 625 people in 1994-95. This represents 12.6 per cent of people employed nationally within the industry, which is 50 per cent above the *per capita* national average. Again, I make the point that in every area I have spoken of today we are ahead of our population and the national average, which speaks volumes for the way in which this State is moving.

The most recent figures available to us indicate that 29 per cent of the South Australian population aged 15 years and over played sport in the 12 months to March 1993; 49 per cent of the South Australian population aged 15 years and over were spectators at one or more sporting events; and 8.2 per cent of the Australian population lives in South Australia. Given that sport and recreation is known to decline with age and that South Australia has a higher than average proportion of aged people within its population, that just emphasises how successful we have been in this State in relation to the services we provide to recreation and sport. These figures—which incidentally come from a completely independent publication—indicate that the business of sport and recreation is not just a game but is significant. Many other positive social outcomes flow from a healthy and active lifestyle, and sport and recreation is a major contributor in fostering healthy life-styles.

Sport and recreation also enhances our economy by providing new opportunities for the export market, and I can assure members that this area is being actively pursued by my department in association with the industry. Sport Export Adelaide will continue to identify and facilitate the development of both outbound and inbound recreation and sport products for the international market. Sport Export Adelaide provides an opportunity to showcase the advantage of sport through the development of business opportunities. It has produced a directory to highlight the export capabilities of companies and key organisations that are presently regarded as leaders in the sport and recreation industry in South Australia. This directory is now being reprinted and will be available by about September 1997.

The department has been included in a number of trade missions to Asia to identify and facilitate the development of products for the international market. From a recent trade mission to Malaysia, there has been a request from the Sabah provincial Government to submit a proposal for an active Sabah program which is a physical activity in sports program for all. In addition, Playsafe Australia, which is a South Australian company, is the front runner for a contract to construct a personal walking trail of 3 000 metres worth \$200 000 for the Sultan of Brunei's brother. Also, two Brunei athletes will probably train in South Australia in the lead-up to the Asian games.

The department is examining the feasibility of establishing a South Australian College of Sports Education, as well as opportunities in tourism through special sports packages which are linked to a number of sports. The department has recently been involved in twinning proposals between various Australian States and South African provinces. This proposal arose from an agreement between the Governments of South Africa and Australia in the field of sport and recreation. The South African Government has treated the twinning process as a critical step in the development of South African sporting structures and administration at both the national and provincial levels. The department has participated as part of an important delegation to South Africa which will enable the

utilisation of the department's Prepared to Win and Sport Export products as vehicles for establishing networks and economic opportunities for South Australia. South Australia has been twinned with four provinces in South Africa, and we are expecting considerable benefits from that twinning.

The policy and social development unit of the department will continue to promote access and equity for identified groups with social needs. These groups include women and girls, the ageing, Aboriginal people, the disabled and South Australians from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The unit has expertise in the area of policy and projects and networks with a wide range of State and Federal Government and non-government agencies that are involved in this field.

The department's role in recreation and sport is varied; for example, it includes the management of 3 000 kilometres of walking, cycling and horse riding trails, which are a real asset to the State. As part of the International Sports Gateway project, the Government is working on the continuation and finalisation of three major capital projects: the athletics facility at Mile End; the new netball stadium, also at Mile End; and stage 1 of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium. The Government has committed \$7.7 million during 1997-98 for stage 2 of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium project out of a total of \$16.2 million which will be spent over three financial years. The Government has also committed \$3 million for an electronic scoreboard at Football Park, which will be a very valuable addition to that facility.

The department will continue to assist with the development of regional facilities, through the continuation of the regional recreation and sport facilities grants scheme during the coming year; an amount of \$900 000 has been budgeted for this valuable scheme in the coming year. The department will continue to administer funds of \$2.5 million allocated under the Gaming Machines (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 1996 through the sport and recreation fund. This will provide financial assistance for sporting and recreational organisations. The agency is taking a leadership and coordination role for South Australia's efforts to host a preliminary round of the 2000 Olympic soccer tournament. This activity will build momentum, commencing this financial year and culminating in September 2000.

The Prepared to Win project will continue to pursue the business of attracting international sporting teams and athletes to this State for training and acclimatisation in the lead-up to the Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games. One of the aims of the project is to attract teams now, with return visits occurring up to the year 2000. In recent months a number of teams have visited Adelaide for training camps and/or competition. These include the Latvian basketball team, two Indonesian volleyball teams and the Russian pole vaulters. Each of the teams has returned to its country with positive comments about its visit to South Australia, and this must assist in the promotion of our State as an ideal venue for pre-games training and acclimatisation. In addition, three delegates from the United States Olympic Committee visited Adelaide for a site inspection, and I have received information which indicates that that visit will result in a number of teams coming to South Australia.

The 1996-97 year was extremely successful for South Australian sport, given the success of South Australians at the Atlantic Olympic and Paralympic Games. Of the nine Olympic gold medals won by Australia, South Australians featured in five. Additionally, another 13 current or former South Australian Sports Institute scholarship holders won medals at the Atlanta Olympic Games, and nine Paralympians

picked up gold, silver or bronze medals at the Paralympic Games. This is an outstanding performance by South Australians. The task now is to prepare our athletes to compete successfully in the Sydney Games in the year 2000. This task has been undertaken by the South Australian Sports Institute through its Olympic athlete program, which is a national program delivered at the State level, designed to assist Australia's athletes to be successful at the coming Olympics.

Unfortunately, drugs in sport is an issue that demands an increasing amount of attention. In conjunction with the Australian Sports Drug Agency, the department is working vigorously to ensure that South Australian athletes are aware of their responsibilities in relation to drugs in sport, and we are committed to reducing—in fact, removing completely—this type of behaviour and activity. The South Australian Government will soon release a policy on drugs in sport and in the spring session of this Parliament will introduce drugs in sport legislation. The Department of Recreation and Sport will ensure that all athletes are provided with an education program in relation to the dangers of using drugs in sport. Policy, education and legislation all form part of a framework which is designed to ensure that our athletes will compete fairly and without damage to their bodies at the highest levels of performance in the world.

Finally, I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Chief Executive of the department, Mr Michael Scott. Michael has accepted a position in New South Wales where he will be undertaking work with peak athletes. Ever since I have known him Michael has indicated to me that that is the area in which he wishes to work. It is an area that appeals to him greatly, and I have no doubt at all that the job satisfaction that Michael will gain from the appointment that he has accepted in New South Wales will make the move—unfortunately for South Australia but fortunately for Michael and very fortunately for New South Wales—an excellent opportunity for Michael to fulfil what has been a lifetime ambition, and that is to work with the very best athletes that we have in our nation. Michael goes with my best wishes. I did not want to lose him and it is a mark of the man that, although I made him an offer better than the Sydney offer, he said 'No'; it is an area in which he wants to be involved. In spite of the enjoyment he has derived from his time in South Australia, he has decided that that is the path he wishes to follow.

Michael has been instrumental in some major projects in South Australia; we have only to look at the athletics, netball and soccer stadiums. We will have a lot to remember Michael by in South Australia. Every time he comes back to South Australia by air and drives over the Hilton Bridges he will be able to look with very real and justified pride when he sees the marks he has left here in South Australia. As I have said to him on so many occasions, I thank him for what he has done for South Australia and I wish him every success in New South Wales—except when it comes to winning something from South Australia. Again, I extend my very best wishes to him and Gwynneth, and I know he will enjoy working in the area he has chosen.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member for Taylor wish to make an opening statement?

Ms WHITE: I will make a short comment, given the time constraints. On behalf of the Opposition I too pay tribute to the current Chief Executive of the department, Mr Michael Scott. I have had this shadow portfolio for only a few months and have not had a long association with Mr Scott but, certainly, as I have spoken with very many people involved

in sports and sporting associations, I have found that he is generally very well regarded. In fact, one of the comments about Mr Scott's time in the job has been that he has got things done, smoothed over many former problems and generally done a good job. I pay tribute to the current Chief Executive Officer.

That brings me to my first question, which is about the new Chief Executive Officer. We have just concluded a budget line in tourism, and we noted that the commission ran for six months before a Chief Executive Officer was appointed, and that has only just occurred. That uncertainty over an extended length of time led to quite a disadvantage to the industry, with several rounds of interviews, expectations rising and falling, and people feeling they could not get on with the job. When will the new Chief Executive be on deck? If it takes as long to appoint this Chief Executive as the Minister took to appoint one in another part of his portfolio, that will put the sports and recreation industries in this State at a bit of a disadvantage, particularly given that in the sports arena we are looking towards the Olympic Games in the year 2000. Will the Minister give an indication of when the new chief executive will be up and running within the department?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I assure the honourable member that I have been just as thorough in setting the standards I am looking for in the person I would be happy to appoint as my Chief Executive in the sport and recreation agency. Having said that, I am hopeful that I will be in a position to make an announcement, certainly by the middle of July. But I remind the honourable member that I will not make such an announcement or such an appointment until I am absolutely convinced that the person I consider for that appointment meets all the criteria I have set.

Ms WHITE: Is the successful candidate likely to be one of the persons who has just been interviewed, or is a further round of interviews likely? I note that several rounds of interviews occurred prior to the appointment of the tourism CEO?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: It may well be that, as a result of the first round of interviews, a person will meet all the criteria I have set.

Ms WHITE: Late last year—and we talked earlier in the tourism portfolio about this—a Bill was introduced in Parliament to amalgamate the Tourism Commission and the Department of Recreation and Sport, among other things, into a super commission. The Bill was passed in the Lower House but was withdrawn by the Government before it reached the Upper House. However, at that time a report was commissioned which recommended that amalgamation and, as we discussed earlier, \$160 000 of Tourism Commission funds was used to produce that report. I asked the Minister earlier whether he would table that report and he denied my request.

Has the Minister reconsidered my request in the interim and, if not, will he give me an indication whether he intends to implement some aspects of that report? Does the Minister intend now to perform such an amalgamation, having implemented part of that report which recommended the amalgamation of the Tourism Commission and Major Events? I ask this question because since 1987 the sport and recreation industries have seen five Ministers and 11 CEOs come and go, which is quite a number of chief executives. Obviously, each new chief executive would necessarily impact on the planning and policy development within the industry.

In the past 12 months three Ministers have handled this portfolio. A lot of change has occurred within the

Government and the industry and, in asking this question, I am looking for an indication from the Minister about any future plans for the industry. Will the Minister address the issue of what aspects of the \$160 000 report into the amalgamation of the Department of Recreation and Sport and the Tourism Commission might still be implemented? I commented at the time the Bill was discussed late last year that perhaps there were some positive aspects, particularly with respect to coaching in elite sports. Could the Minister address which aspects of that report he might implement?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The honourable member has asked a series of questions, but I can only repeat the answer I gave this morning: at this stage, it is not my intention to table the report. In relation to any future plans I might or might not have for the department, obviously I will continually look at ways to improve what is already an absolutely first-class department and agency. As good as the agency is, I have no doubt that we can still make improvements.

When the new chief executive is appointed, I look forward very much to discussing some of his or her ideas and, together, I would expect to consider a range of possible changes to the agency. To say whether or not I intend to implement any of the recommendations in the report is quite irrelevant. However, I indicate that I will look always to ensure that my agency continues to be at the forefront of sport and recreation agencies not only in Australia but also in worldwide comparisons.

Ms WHITE: I do not see this as irrelevant at all. That report cost taxpayers \$160 000. The previous Minister said that the report was extensive and involved a thorough investigation necessitating, so he said, the Bill that was introduced in Parliament. The Minister seemed to indicate earlier that changes would be made to the department. Many clubs and associations will say that successful programs run by the Government in this industry rely on individual staff members within the department and the relationships built up between staff members and clubs and organisers of sport.

The industry would say that excessive changes of staffing—and there have been quite a few—are not a positive for them. The Minister indicated there would be changes: can he expand on that? Is he signalling some sort of restructure, and what impact would that have on changes to staff who presently carry out particular functions within the bureaucracy?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I assure the honourable member that I did not intend my answer in any way to indicate that I am looking to undertake a major restructuring within the department. If anything I said led the honourable member to that sort of belief then I put that to rest immediately: that was not my intention. When I talked of change, I was talking about ensuring that we make changes in the way in which operations are conducted. That could relate to the programs we offer or the way in which we offer programs: that was the sort of aspect to which I referred. I will ensure that we maintain our leadership role in sport and recreation in Australia.

The figures I gave in my introductory remarks show just how successful the agency has been. However, if we sat back and conducted our business for the next 10 years in the way in which we conducted it over the past 12 months then, very rapidly, we will fall behind the other States, because they have learnt from South Australia. Other States are implementing the sorts of programs we have initiated in South Australia. We must ensure that we continue to provide programs and set

up processes that will maintain South Australia in the No. 1 position. I want to assure the honourable member of that.

My staff are all absolutely first class. I have been fortunate on a number of occasions to visit the institute and the premises in which the agency is located. I have met all the staff. I have also had the opportunity to work with many of those staff in various ways. All I can say is that the professionalism of that group of people is second to none, and I can reassure them that the service they have provided is very much recognised by me. I will be looking in the future for them to continue their contribution, but I will also be looking for them to be innovative and to develop new ideas and suggestions just as they have done in the past.

I assure the honourable member that I am not looking to make major structural changes and I am not looking to make major changes in the organisation: I am looking forward to working with the staff I am already fortunate to have in my agency, and I am also looking to ensure that, with the incoming chief executive and his or her staff, we continue to develop innovations that will keep South Australia at the forefront of sport and recreation in Australia.

Ms WHITE: I commented earlier that some aspects of the report—and I mentioned elite sports and funding for coaching, etc.—might well be a good thing. For the record, I make it clear that the Opposition did not support the amalgamation of the South Australian Tourism Commission and the Department of Recreation and Sport into one commission.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 397 of the Program Estimates. What has the Government done to ensure that employment opportunities are available within the sport industry, and what steps have been taken to ensure that staff are appropriately trained to assist the State to realise the growth potential and commercial opportunities likely to arise in the lead up to the Olympic Games in the year 2000?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The Liberal Government has recognised that the sports industry is a vital and rapidly growing sector of the State's economy. I have already provided figures which show that only too clearly. As a result, it has taken a number of steps in order to provide the industry with expertly recruited and trained staff to maximise the growth potential which is now occurring. Since coming to office the Government has offered employment opportunities to 85 trainees under the sport and recreation traineeship program. During the same period, the Government has employed another 36 sport and recreation trainees on behalf of two major sporting organisations, the Adelaide Rams and the South Australian National Football League, as well as smaller sports groups including Hockey SA, the Basketball Association, Life—Be In It and Athletics SA.

Until the end of April 1997, this State has employed 350 trainees in sports, sport administration and sports training, which represents 17.5 per cent of the total number employed throughout Australia. From this State's perspective, this represents twice our per capita figure. Of the 350 trainees employed throughout the State, 124 have been employed in sport and recreation administration, 94 in grounds maintenance, 103 in the horse racing industry, 15 in athlete education programs, 12 in marketing and 10 in fitness instruction. These career opportunities have not only benefited the young people involved but have provided significant value to the sports themselves. I am confident that this new pool of skilled young people will ensure the demands that will come about as a result of the State's initiatives to woo and to win business in the lead up to the Olympic Games will be very well catered for indeed.

Mr LEGGETT: Again, I refer the Minister to page 397 of the Program Estimates. I applaud the Government for what is taking place with the Mile End development. What will be the benefits for the sports of athletics and netball as a result of the construction of the new stadium complex at Mile End?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I think there might be just a little bit of interest from the honourable member's question in terms of the fact that these facilities are within his electorate. I know that he has been very closely watching the growth of the two facilities. The athletics stadium is due for completion in October this year and will finally provide the sport of athletics with an international-standard facility. Once again, when this Government came to office it saw only too clearly that what this State had been left with in terms of athletics facilities was absolutely abysmal. The Government immediately set about correcting that situation. The total budget for this facility when it is completed will be \$8.4 million, and it will provide the headquarters for Athletics SA, the peak athletics organisation for promoting the sport of athletics within schools and the community generally. In addition, the facility will serve as the headquarters for veterans, disabled and professional athletes. This facility will provide the State with the opportunity to attract a wide range of international athletes and events to the state-of-the-art venue for our burgeoning community interest in the sport of athletics. It will be a focal point for major athletic sporting events.

The indoor netball stadium will comprise four courts with sprung timber floors, a seating capacity of 3 000 on fixed and retractable seating, player and spectator amenities, drug testing, corporate boxes, offices for administration and the media, seminar rooms and creche, cafeteria and merchandising. The development of the netball complex at Mile End South will assist in the overall car parking requirements for both the netball and athletics facilities. Services SA has been engaged to provide project management and risk management services for the development, and Greenway International has been engaged as a primary consultant. In August last year Cabinet approved that the project proceed at an estimated cost of \$9.9 million. This consists of \$7 million for the indoor stadium and four outdoor courts and \$2.9 million for site development. The latter will be funded from the sale of assets and other sources by the Department of Recreation and Sport.

In August 1996 the project went before the Public Works Committee for assessment, and the report by the committee was tabled in Parliament on 2 October 1996 with a recommendation that the project proceed. Since that time we have undergone registration of interest and tenders, and we almost have in place a facility which will be available in September-October this year. The latest revised program suggests that construction, which commenced late in December last year, will be completed in early October by the latest. The fact that that was done in less than 10 months speaks volumes for the project managers, the builders and all those associated with the project. I very much look forward, as I am sure the local member does, to those two facilities being opened and therefore available for the sports of athletics and netball in South Australia.

Mr LEGGETT: Again, I refer the Minister to page 397 of the Program Estimates with respect to benefits from the Olympics. The Sydney 2000 Olympics will have a major impact on the Australian economy. What is this Government doing to ensure that this State benefits from the 2000 Olympic Games?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Let me assure the honourable member that we are doing a lot. The Sydney 2000 Olympic

Games will obviously have a major impact on the Australian economy. It has been estimated that the net impact on the gross domestic product for the period 1991-2004 will be in the region of \$7.336 billion for Australia. The bulk of this will be concentrated in the period 1998 to 2000. One-third of the benefit, or \$2.8 billion, will be outside New South Wales; in other words, we can look forward to about \$2.8 billion being spent outside New South Wales. Austrade and the Australian Sports Commission have estimated that the economic impact of pre-games training and acclimatisation will be up to \$200 million. The Department of Recreation and Sport has set a target of between 8 and 12 per cent of this figure, which will bring the State up to \$20 million in economic benefits.

The aim of our 'Prepared to Win' strategy is to attract Olympic and Paralympic teams and athletes to South Australia now for training and acclimatisation. In terms of return visits, we will target 70 per cent of those who use South Australia for training and acclimatisation to come back for further training up to the year 2000. A list of target sports and countries has been developed to maximise our opportunities for success in attracting teams. Teams will be coming to Australia for the Sydney 2000 Games, and the decision on where they train needs to be influenced. We want to ensure that they choose Adelaide in preference to other sites. Therefore, the 'Prepared to Win' prospectus promotes South Australia as a venue for training and acclimatisation. It is a major communication tool and identifies the advantages of visiting South Australia. It provides information on items such as sporting facilities, expertise (for example, our sports science), climate, transportation, accommodation, cost of living, travel, leisure, tourism and business opportunities.

Other associated promotional material includes a folder of A4 capacity which presents a package of information. There are fact sheets which identify target sports and other technical benefits. There is a brochure which is designed to fit into a pocket of the prospectus and a 2½ minute video that gives a broad visual representation of the material contained within the prospectus.

There is also a multimedia presentation system produced as a CD-ROM, which builds on that material. Members would agree that a very professional approach has been adopted. The core 'Prepared to win' material has been placed on the Internet, and the Australian Sports Commission has already created a link from its site to ours, and links with other relevant Internet sites are being considered. The prospectus and associated material is being targeted at national Olympic committees and sporting federations with international affiliations. The next phase of the project is the implementation of the recently prepared international marketing plan. The activity associated with this project will clearly intensify now that the international focus is on Australia for the 2000 Games.

In line with the requirement to maximise economic development, the project will operate on a commercial or user-pays principle. Teams and athletes will be encouraged to choose South Australia as their training destination. Also, we have a key strategy of promoting South Australia through the use of personal contacts, and we have appointed ambassadors who, we are confident, will be able to network and bring additional teams to South Australia. Key individuals have been provided with the information and appropriate skills to promote South Australia when they travel overseas or when they meet with overseas competitors who visit our State. These key individuals range from Australian athletes, sports

coaches and officials, trade delegations, Ministers, chief executive officers, through to community leaders, educators and media figures. In other words, we are leaving no stone unturned.

Appropriate people are identified and briefed to deliver a prospectus personally and give a presentation to selected target decision makers. The ambassadors report back to the 'Prepared to win' program and provide a follow-up service continually to the group they have targeted. Back-up support is being provided by the 'Prepared to win' team. On 8 April this year a three person delegation from the United States Olympic Committee visited Adelaide for a facility site inspection. They visited key sporting venues and viewed several accommodation options during their one day visit. We are confident that that will bring a number of teams to South Australia. It can be clearly seen that we are adopting a number of strategies to ensure that we maximise the opportunities available to us, based on the Olympics and Paralympics that will be held in Sydney in the year 2000.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind the member for Taylor to refer to a budget line.

Ms WHITE: I refer to the sub-program line for the South Australian Sports Institute (page 394, Program Estimates). I understand that there are to be some changes in the sports funded through SASI and that that funding will be based on their performance in competition at various levels. I understand that the Minister might need to take part of this question on notice, but will he provide to the Committee a list of the sports that are currently funded, a list of those sports that are to be funded and those that will cease to be funded? Also, will the Minister address the issue of the impact that this change in funding arrangements will have on those sports that are no longer to be funded?

The Olympic Games are a few years away now and, as we know, the larger portion of the sporting industry is in non-elite sport. What analysis has the Minister undertaken on the impact of the funding decision change that he has made or is to make on the whole industry, looking further than the year 2000 Olympics?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: As the honourable member would be aware, in late 1996 the Australian Institute of Sport conducted a review of the funding of all Olympic sports in Australia and, as a result, the board of the Australian Sports Commission has reconfigured the funding. This reconfiguration will affect some of the funding received by the South Australian Sports Institute and all other State-based institutes, not just that of South Australia. In the context of the Olympic athlete program review conducted by the AIS, I believe that the redirection of funds is appropriate. SASI has conducted a review of its sports programs to ensure that it manages the funding cuts in a strategic manner. The review has been conducted by Wally Foreman, Director of the Western Australian Institute of Sport, and it involved SASI coaches and the presidents of the State sporting organisations. So, there has certainly been consultation.

Mr Foreman reported on his findings to Mr Simon Forrest, Director of SASI, and provided the final report on 20 May this year. The charter of the South Australian Sports Institute is to assist South Australian athletes to be competitive at international level. The terms of reference of the review are, first, to examine the previous performance and the potential performance of each sport within SASI and, secondly, to provide information as to the likelihood of athletes in each sport becoming successful at international level. The process for the review was quite detailed.

A questionnaire was completed by State sporting associations and the SASI coach, and data was collated from the questionnaire. Discussions were held between the reviewer and the relevant State sporting associations, and there was identification of gaps in the information provided. Additional data was therefore gathered and a draft report circulated to each State sporting association. Discussions were held with relevant State sporting associations and, finally, the report was prepared and forwarded. The review has reported that SASI should no longer fund a program in the sports of weightlifting, badminton or gymnastics. Discussions are currently being held with the principals of the State sporting associations involved in those three sports.

The decision to discontinue funding is based on the fact that Australia as a nation is not performing well in these sports at international level. Consequently, there is little point in South Australia's funding those programs when we will not receive any financial support from the Federal Government. Whilst the programs will be discontinued, the best athletes in each sport will continue to be funded via SASI individual scholarships. I have already written to a number of those athletes, advising them of their success in that area. These scholarships will provide both cash and SASI services to those athletes. Savings made by discontinuing the programs will be used to increase the individual scholarship budget and to provide additional funds to programs that are under-funded from the Federal arena. If the honourable member requires additional information, I will take that as a question on notice and the information will be made available.

Ms WHITE: I understand that the Minister will now provide a list of those sports, and the funding levels and the rationale for each one. The Minister talked about performance at international level. The impact of funding decisions is also felt by the sports industry generally at the non-elite level. I did address part of my question to the impact that those decisions would have on those sports generally in South Australia.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I accept the point that the honourable member is making. I know that the Director of SASI has held discussions with the sports that have been advised that funding will be discontinued or reduced. At the same time, I know that agreements have been reached and, although understandably the sports that are no longer to be funded to that peak level are disappointed, I understand that the discussions that have been held with them have been positive and that those associations are happy to work with SASI in the way in which assistance will be provided down the track.

In relation to non-peak athlete funding in the various sports, the final determination in relation to the allocation of funds has yet to be decided but, as the honourable member would be aware, we will have a nice little nest egg to distribute to those sports in that non-peak area from the funding that we are gaining from the poker machine legislation. I assure the honourable member that we are aware of the impact that these changes will have, and we are working very closely with the various sports to ensure that we do everything we can to provide the assistance they need at that non-peak level.

Ms WHITE: The Minister mentioned active club grants and sports funding through the income generated from poker machines in South Australia. Has the Minister done some analysis of the distribution of that money to individual sports? Will the Minister provide information concerning how that

funding is distributed between sports, between geographical regions and the correlation it has to need within individual sports and individual clubs?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: In her question the honourable member initially referred to associations, but she then mentioned clubs. It is clubs that are funded through the active club grants. Under the Gaming Machines Amendment Act 1996, a fund has been established, from which \$2.5 million per year has been distributed. We have put \$949 500 into the active club grants. At the same time we have put \$860 000 into the Statewide Development Scheme, \$100 000 into the SASI talent scholarship, and \$500 000 into the State Sports Facility Fund. In addition to that, administration expenses have been deducted and so on.

The honourable member asked for a breakdown of the figures. As they cover four A4 pages, it would take too long for me to read them out now, and I cannot ask for them to be inserted in *Hansard*. However, I am happy to make the figures available to the honourable member directly so that she can see how the funding has been allocated. As the honourable member would be aware, as far as the active club program is concerned, round 1 has been completed for some time, and we expect to be in a position to advise successful clubs in relation to round 2 within the next week.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Minister wishes to supply that documentation, I can have it copied and distributed to Committee members.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We can certainly do that. Incidentally, that report has been tabled with the Economic and Finance Committee, too. I am happy to provide the information for distribution to the Committee.

Ms WHITE: Since we cannot go through the information at this point, will the Minister make some general comment about the question I asked in terms of the distribution of that funding between sports. I refer to the total gaming machine revenue, which is the active club program plus the association's money and so on.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Once again I can provide the broad parameters and, if the honourable member wants the detail, I will have to take it as a question on notice. A total of 240 organisations have been successful in obtaining an active club grant. These organisations are spread over all the electorates and represent over 46 different sport and recreation activities. The groups are very diverse, for example, archery, disabled groups, kindergyms, tennis, soccer and rugby. Virtually any sport that is conducted has received a grant. As I said, if the honourable member wants the breakdown specifically in respect of the sports, I will take the question on notice and provide the information to the honourable member. One figure I can provide is that 70 per cent of the funding went to sport and 30 per cent to recreation. As I said, we will take the question on notice and provide that detail.

Ms WHITE: Another member of the Committee raised the issue of the Mile End Netball Stadium. I would like to pursue that issue with a question. As the Minister pointed out, the Public Works Committee of this Parliament looked at the proposal in 1996, and at the time a number of concerns were raised in terms of the viability of the project. The concern—and it was an ongoing concern—was that the South Australian Netball Association would not be able to meet the commitment of that proposal in terms of the amount of funds that it would be asked to pay back. For the benefit of the Committee, I refer to a couple of statements by the Public Works Committee. On page 14 of its report, the committee

states:

However, it is noted amongst committee members that, if the income streams assumed in the financial analysis prove to be incorrect, there is a possibility that the South Australian Netball Association may have difficulty meeting its long-term debt obligations.

On page 12 of the report mention is made of the memorandum of understanding established between the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing and SANA. The report states:

... that SANA will contribute 50 per cent of the debt servicing of the loan over the 20 year period.

Also on page 12 it states:

The committee has noted the recommendation from Ernst and Young—

who did the report into the project—

with the following disclaimer appearing in their financial analysis:

'In preparing the incremental revenue and expenditure models for the Mile End construction, Ernst and Young has relied upon information supplied by the management of the South Australian Netball Association and other parties involved in the project.

The information disclosed in this report [financial analysis of the proposed netball stadium] has not been audited by Ernst and Young nor have we carried out any independent inquiries and investigations to assess the reliability, accuracy or completeness of any financial or statistical information provided to us. In these circumstances, neither Ernst and Young nor any member or employee of this firm accepts responsibility... for errors or omissions however caused.

The financial and statistical forecasts are based on many assumptions and are also subject to significant uncertainties and contingencies. Ernst and Young expressly disclaim... all liability for representations expressed or implied in this document or any other written or oral communications.'

Given that a somewhat disappointing crowd is being attracted to the national league netball matches and the spectator capacity of the stadium has been reduced to 2 000, have the assumptions made in the Ernst and Young study—namely, that 3 000 people a week will attend matches at the Mile End stadium—been modified and, if so, what effect has that had on the ability of SANA to service its debt?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: In relation to the long extract the honourable member read about the consultant, there is no need to worry about that because that is a standard consultant's disclaimer. Any consultant will always include that disclaimer as part of the report that they prepare. It does not matter how solid the proposal being considered is: the consultant will always include that disclaimer to protect himself or herself against any future claims in respect of any recommendation they may make. I assure the honourable member that that is nothing more than a standard consultant's disclaimer and should be treated accordingly.

In relation to the figures to which the honourable member referred regarding the elite level of netball, the honourable member should remember that this facility is not just for the use of the elite level of netball: it is there as a mass participation facility.

Mr CONDOUS: They have been waiting 20 years for this.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: That is right. The attendance at the peak level does not need to be the cause of any concern. I also assure the honourable member that we have seen the business plan which has been prepared by the association, and my officers and I are very confident that the association will be able to meet the commitments it has entered into. However, there is the ultimate fall back. If by any chance the association is not able to meet its commitments, the Government has guaranteed the loan. The facility could not be safer.

I also point out to the honourable member that the funding deeds in relation to this centre provide for very stringent reporting and other accountability requirements to be met by the sporting organisations that are parties to them. In response to comments from the Auditor-General last year, we have established a register of contracts and we are going through a very formal process to ensure that the commitments that have been given will be met. I cannot reassure the honourable member enough that, on the advice that I have been given by my officers, from the figures that I have seen in the business plan, and from every other indication, we are very confident that this facility will meet the projections that have been made for it.

Mr CONDOUS: Earlier this year we read in the *Advertiser* of a visit to South Australia by representatives of the US Olympic committee in order to inspect Adelaide's sporting facilities. Has the Minister received any feedback from the committee following its visit? I am especially interested in the upgrade of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, because only yesterday a young champion from the electorate of Colton, Kosta Salapasis, was successful in kicking four goals.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I am absolutely delighted with the response that we have had from the US Olympic committee. As I told Parliament after I met with the committee members while they were here, they indicated to me that they were tremendously impressed with what they saw. Even though our athletics stadium was nowhere near finished, they saw where it is going and what has been done. When they viewed the plans and the layout, they indicated that they know of no facility anywhere in the world that will provide the safe and excellent training opportunities of that facility.

Since their return to the US, the Olympic committee has completed a comprehensive report on its tour of sporting facilities in Australia and it has forwarded a copy of that report to my department and its Prepared to Win team. I will indicate some of the highlights from that report. The committee stated that in its opinion the new Mile End athletics and netball facilities and the multipurpose uses that are available here are of very real benefit. The committee members stated that they regard our velodrome as 'world class' where 'the seating is excellent and climate is controlled'. They then referred to the 'excellent' hockey stadium with 'state of the art' dugout facilities and lighting.

In relation to the Adelaide Aquatic Centre they referred to it as 'an excellent dry land facility' and diving well which can be used for synchronised swimming and water polo. They referred to the 'immaculate field' of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium and to the facilities being upgraded. They referred to the Fort Largs Police Training Academy's ability to house up to 150 athletes at any one time with the necessary training facilities and an 'excellent 2 000 metre rowing course just 10 minutes away.'

Those extracts from the committee's report indicate that those people were most impressed with a range of facilities that are available in South Australia. We expect that Adelaide will be provided with the opportunity to host up to six sporting teams from the United States prior to the Games. We understand that the US men's soccer team is one of the most likely teams to come to Adelaide for training. That committee did not intend to make a visit to South Australia but, because of the initiative of the Chief Executive, it came to South Australia and it looks as though we will have spin-off benefits of tremendous value to the State as a result.

Mr CONDOUS: I refer to page 397 of the Program Estimates. Before I ask my question, I want to relate a role that I played in recreation and sport in the last month. The West Adelaide Soccer Club decided to move to Thebarton Oval and wanted to relinquish its two pitches in the extension of what is now Pulteney Street opposite the Green Dragon Hotel. There was conflict about the site because two major organisations wanted those pitches: one was the young ladies of St Aloysius College in Wakefield Street; and the other was Adelaide City Soccer Club, which wanted to gain an additional two pitches for the sole purpose of creating eight women's soccer teams.

I got both bodies together and negotiated a deal with the Adelaide City Council whereby Adelaide City bought the rights to those two pitches to use for women's soccer training five nights a week after 5 p.m. and their use for competitive women's soccer on Saturday and Sunday. Agreement was reached because Adelaide City was kind enough to donate the use of the grounds to St Aloysius College from Monday to Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Adelaide City representatives told me at that meeting with St Aloysius College that they believe that, within 10 years, women's soccer will become a professional sport. What strategies are in place to ensure that girls and women participate in sport and recreation?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Before answering the question, I commend the honourable member for the work he did to bring those two organisations together and to achieve such a remarkable result. It is an example of what can be done when organisations work together.

As to the strategies that are in place to ensure that girls and women participate in sport and recreation, I point out that it is interesting to note that five South Australians won gold medals at the Atlanta Games: Judith Haslam, Gillian Rolton, Wendy Schaefer, Kate Slatter and Mark Woodforde. I am sure that all honourable members can count and work out how many are female. More interesting is that 80 per cent of the gold medallists at those Games were female. The most outstanding State-based team in a national competition is Adelaide Quit Lightning. Currently they are triple consecutive national champions in the Women's Basketball League, so clearly females in South Australian sport are competing extremely successfully.

SASI provides scholarships to athletes on the basis of performance without reference to gender. The most recent analysis of the male:female ratio of scholarship holders shows the ratio to be about 50:50, which is what one would expect. However, SASI is aware of the need to provide services to female athletes, and the coach education program for the current year listed courses such as female athletes: physiological factors affecting performance. The institute was the location for the launch of the book *Hormones and Females' Athletic Performances*, written by well known South Australian female athletes Judy Daly and the late Wendy Ey. In 1997-98, the South Australian Sports Institute will introduce a new topic in the coach education program, male coaches coaching female athletes. The record we have in South Australia for the encouragement and support we provide for girls and women to participate in sport and recreation speaks for itself, and the programs we have in place are a perfect example of why we in South Australia have been so successful.

Mr CONDOUS: I have participated in and been a great spectator of sport all my life. In theory, if we were able to involve every young person in a sport, be it individual or

team, there would be many savings in policing and the building of institutions at a time when drug use is so high. As a Government, it is important for us to encourage as many people as possible to play sport. Has the State Government or the Department of Recreation and Sport put in place strategies to increase the opportunity for teenage girls to gain leadership and fellowship qualities through active recreation and sport but, further, what are we doing about promoting it to parents in an endeavour to overcome some of our social problems? I can see nothing better than sport for disciplining young people.

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We have set up a campaign known as the Active Girls Campaign. This is a promotional campaign of the Australian Sports Commission, and it targets teenage girls and recommends strategies to increase their participation in all aspects of sport for the very reasons the honourable member has just outlined. Our Department of Recreation and Sport is responsible for ensuring that appropriate strategies are in place to provide sporting and recreational opportunities for teenage girls under that program. The Active Girls Aboriginal Sports Camp provides sporting, recreational and personal development opportunities for teenage Aboriginal girls. Through this, the aim is to encourage long-term participation in physical activity and develop role models for other Aboriginal teenage girls. I am sure we would all agree that establishing such role models will play a tremendous part in providing a leadership model for young Aboriginal women to follow so that they again take up the recreation and sport activities to provide the healthy support, discipline, and so on associated with it.

As well, a database of South Australian sportswomen will be developed as a resource for schools, service groups, corporate organisations and other interested groups in South Australia. This register will assist schools and clubs by providing a list of women athletes whom they could invite as guest speakers. Its aim again is to present positive role models to aspiring female athletes and to others who may otherwise drop out of their activity at an early age. This register forms part of the web site for the Department of Recreation and Sport. We are putting in place a number of programs and supportive facilities to ensure that the maximum opportunity is provided to girls at an age when it would be expected that the greatest influence would be provided. Out of the Active Girls Campaign, the Aboriginal sports camp, the database, and so on, we are looking to ensure that we provide every opportunity we can to girls and young women to participate in sport and recreation.

Ms WHITE: I refer to pages 394 and 397, development of recreation and sport. Who will be managing the stadium? I understood that the peak body Athletics SA had a memorandum of understanding with the Government to pay back moneys on a *per annum* basis in order to be awarded the management of that venue. However, I understand that it has now been put out for tender. Who will manage the stadium? If it is not Athletics SA, where does that leave the project if the volunteers of that organisation are no longer involved in functions of the stadium?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: We will consider your last point when we are assessing the matter. I will go back over the history of the matter. A memorandum of understanding was drafted. I emphasise that explicitly it did not create a legally binding contract between the Government and Athletics SA. It is important to understand that. The MOU also envisaged that either or both the Government and Athletics SA would undertake further reviews into the

management and financial operations of the stadium. The decision to alter the management arrangements was taken in the light of a management study by KPMG Management Consulting. This report recommended the separation of the management of the stadium from the management of the sport. Athletics SA and Little Athletics were consulted in the brief for and final selection of the consultant. At this stage, an interim board of management has been established for the stadium. It will be the precursor of a corporate entity which will have responsibility for the long-term future of the facility.

A major task of the interim board will be to select a manager of the facility. This will be a competitive process, and registrations of interest closed on 10 June 1997. In other words, we said, 'If you're interested in managing this facility, put in an expression of interest.' Those registrations of interest are under consideration by the interim board, which will seek more detailed bids from a selected short list. The intent is to select a facility manager by the end of July so that that new manager will have time to undertake preparation for the commissioning of the stadium, which will occur in October or November this year. In the longer term, we will establish a separate forum within which all major user groups will be able to have input into the management of the stadium.

With regard to the structure and the membership of the interim board, there is an independent chair (Mr Leon Holmes) and two persons from a panel nominated by Athletics SA (Mr David Prince and Ms Maxine Goulding) and two persons selected from nominations made by other users groups (Mr Dieter Beisiegel and Mr John Crouch). We are waiting advice from the Crown Solicitor on the appropriate form for the board in the long term. When that is to hand, we will reconsider the structure of the board. However, I anticipate it will be similar to the above.

With these arrangements, we are moving towards providing for transparency, and that is what I wanted to emphasise to the honourable member. The reason I supported the decision of my immediate predecessor is that I was determined that the process to be adopted in the selection of the manager of the facility would be completely open and could not be subject to any accusation that favouritism was being shown to any one individual or organisation.

By going out and seeking expressions of interest, by going through a public process in the determination of who the manager will be, nobody will be able to say that any aspect could have involved favouritism, or whatever word one wants to use. That is the reason behind my decision to support, endorse and go along with the decision that had been made by my immediate predecessor. I certainly will not resile from that position because, when we are looking at something as important as the management of that stadium, the process by which the manager is selected has to be absolutely above reproach.

Ms WHITE: The Minister mentioned an interim board. Is a representative from Athletics SA on that board? If not, why is it not appropriate to have a representative of this sport on the board? He also said that the memorandum of understanding with Athletics SA was not a legally binding document, so with what regard does the Government hold that memorandum of understanding? Also, has the full financial information for the stadium been made available to prospective tenderers for the management of the stadium?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Athletics SA was asked to nominate two members of the interim board. I made the

appointments recommended to me by Athletics SA. The other two members were appointed from other user groups that we anticipate would be at the stadium. Half the number of members of that board were nominated by Athletics SA. I emphasise that the MOU envisages that the Government and/or Athletics SA would undertake further reviews into the management and financial operations of the stadium. That is exactly the process which my predecessor and I have adopted, and I believe it is the correct one.

Ms WHITE: My next question concerns physical and sport education in schools. A Federal Government Senate inquiry has looked into this, and numerous subcommittees have made recommendations that physical and sport education be part of every school's educational program, but this is not occurring. Many sporting organisations—the SANFL and others—are employing development officers to conduct clinics and sporting activities in schools. Without that involvement of the sporting organisations, those students would not have access to those sports and activities in the schools. What plans does the Government have to increase the further development of sports in schools?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Through its Recreation and Sport Development Division, the Department of Recreation and Sport aims to increase the status, profile and quality of junior sport in schools and the community. So, I assure the honourable member that one of our goals is to ensure that we provide every opportunity for junior sport in schools. In fact, this is goal four in the department's strategic plan, so that is how important we regard it. It is part of our strategic plan. The department has a funding agreement with DECS to promote, develop and facilitate the delivery of junior sport programs, services and resources in conjunction with State sporting associations and the Australian Sports Commission. This includes facilitating the professional development of early childhood care givers, primary and secondary teachers and tertiary students in teaching sports skill acquisition.

It includes facilitating the delivery of coaching and teaching sports skills and courses for coaches from State sporting associations who work with children in schools. It includes developing a 'train the trainer' approach to teacher professional training and development programs. It includes membership of a consortium successful in tendering for the DECS professional development program for primary school teachers in physical education and sports skills. The department's role in the consortium includes course writing, development and presentation. I assure the honourable member that we are well aware of the importance and significance of providing support at that level, and it is one of our major strategic goals.

Ms WHITE: Concern has been expressed about the future of the Heysen Trail over the last 18 months. Concerns have included the lack of maintenance, the threat posed by outsourcing and even the threat of closure due to its deteriorating condition. The Heysen Trail has become something of an icon for anyone who enjoys walking. They vary from those who enjoy family day walks to those intrepid souls who undertake the whole 1 000 or more kilometres of the trail. The Heysen Trail's fame has spread overseas, and many overseas visitors walk sections of the trail, so it is an important part of our regional tourism offerings.

The trail comes within about 10 kilometres of the city of Adelaide, making those sections of the trail an easy afternoon outing for families. It encompasses some of the best scenery South Australia has to offer, ranging from the rugged coast within the Deep Creek Conservation Park to the incomparable

Wilpena Pound in the Flinders Ranges. I believe that the whole State owes a major debt to Terry Lavender, who managed the trail's unit for many years and who really was the architect and driving force behind the trail. His Order of Australia award was small testimony to those efforts. I heard last year that Mr Lavender was redeployed and precluded from contributing to the trail's policy and direction discussions.

I note that this year, unlike last year, the Program Estimates make no mention of the need to forge new partnerships with tourism and local government sectors to ensure that the benefits of the trail to the State are maximised. In fact, I could not see any mention at all of our internationally renowned network of trails. The major concern expressed to the Opposition about the future of the trail is that the outsourcing of the trail's maintenance, rather than being managed centrally and in-house, will make it very difficult to attract volunteers, without whom the trail would fall into rack and ruin.

Volunteers often have notions of public service when they undertake unpaid work and so, not surprisingly, many do not feel the same way if the work they are being asked to perform is on behalf of a contractor. Will the Minister advise the Committee what the future holds for the Heysen Trail, and what funding will be applied to its maintenance in this coming financial year?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I am happy to do that but, before I do, I need to correct a point made by the honourable member in relation to Terry Lavender. In fact, Mr Lavender wrote to the chief executive seeking a package as he wanted to pursue other interests. His leaving the department was very much on his initiative. The integrity of the Heysen Trail is a priority for the Department of Recreation and Sport. I can assure the honourable member that no section of the trail has been closed, although some route alterations have occurred due to privacy risk management and security concerns by the landowners.

I assure the honourable member that there is no intention to close any section of the Heysen Trail. The Department of Recreation and Sport has a long-term commitment to the management and control of the trail, and recognises it as important to both tourism and economic development. As the honourable member would be aware, the Heysen Trail has been established in many places through the goodwill of landowners, and the department is working assiduously to ensure that those relationships are maintained. It is also important to indicate that the Friends of the Heysen Trail are currently maintaining several sections of the trail as part of an interim maintenance plan, which includes the Cape Jervis to Kapunda, Logan's Gap to Spalding and Wilpena to Parachilna sections.

The Department of Recreation and Sport is supplying materials and paying out-of-pocket expenses to volunteers undertaking maintenance work along the trail. The department is also sending representatives to the trail section leader meetings to ascertain all important issues that are related to the maintenance of that trail. The department has met with the President of the Friends of the Trail to discuss issues relating to it. The department is currently developing an asset register to determine the infrastructure in place along the trail network under its control.

The department will be undertaking a risk management audit of the trail network in 1997 and the Friends of the Heysen Trail will have the opportunity to be involved in this process. In future, all capital works and general maintenance

along the recreation trail network will be contracted out, and the Friends of the Heysen Trail will have the opportunity to tender for these contracts. In the interim, the Friends of the Trail will continue to have a role in the maintenance of the trail. The department facilitated the establishment of the Friends of the Trail in 1988 to assist with the development of the Heysen and Mount Lofty walking trails.

The department has provided substantial funding to the Friends of the Trail since its inception for the development and maintenance of the trail. In 1995 the department reviewed the structure and function of the outdoor recreation unit and recommended that maintenance of the recreation trail network should be contracted out. The Friends of the Trail have been advised of these new arrangements, and the department has implemented the changes whilst addressing the needs of the volunteers. Finally, I point out to the honourable member that \$100 000 for trail maintenance will continue through minor works programs.

Mrs HALL: I refer to page 397 of the Program Estimates. The 1997-98 specific targets and objectives state:

Promote policy for mature-age, Aborigines, disabled persons, women and girls, culturally and linguistically diverse people in collaboration with other agencies and peak bodies.

What is the Government specifically doing to address the recreational needs of women from non-English speaking backgrounds?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The Premier has announced that South Australia will have a declaration of principles for a culturally and linguistically diverse community. In this context, we need a policy to encourage the inclusion of non-English speaking women in mainstream sport and community recreation. Essentially, current programs do not satisfy this community recreation need. With the release of the document 'We wish to be included'—(Non-English Speaking Background Women and Participation in South Australia)—the sporting and recreational needs of ethnic women were not addressed. A needs analysis, therefore, of the recreational requirements of non-English speaking women has been conducted in association with the Office for Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs and Womensport and Recreation SA Incorporated. A completion of the analysis has led to the adaptation of current programs and the contracting out of these programs to community organisations, local government and the Department for Education and Children's Services. Since March 1996, eight pilot programs have been or are being conducted. A strategy will be developed to consider the continuance of these programs with particular relevance to each of the ethnic groups taking part.

A forum will be conducted in June 1997 by the Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, when the results of the pilot programs will be made public. This forum will be hosted by the Department for Recreation and Sport, which will be continuing to provide all the facilitation it can to meet the recreation needs of women from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Mrs HALL: I refer to page 398 of the Program Estimates. The 1997-98 specific targets and objectives outline some of the specifics as they relate to SASI, including the Olympic Athlete program, the Talent Scholarship program, and the Athlete Ambassadors program. Will the Minister outline to the Committee what support, if any, is available from SASI to athletes with a disability?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: Again, the South Australian Sports Institute (SASI) aims to assist South Australian athletes to compete successfully in the international arena. To

do this, SASI cooperates with State sporting associations and other peak bodies to develop criteria by which athletes become eligible for support through both the SASI sports program and the South Australian Sports Institute individual scholarship program. These athletes must meet selection standards as well as comply with the training and competition commitments established by the coach of any particular squad. While there is no SASI squad for athletes with a disability, individual scholarships are available to athletes who are nominated by appropriate representative sporting organisations. Individual scholarships are particularly applicable to athletes with a disability. Where it can be established that there is a recognised world championship for an athlete with a particular disability, SASI will consider awarding a scholarship to that athlete on the endorsement of the appropriate sporting organisation.

An example of this type of situation is where wheelchair athletes are endorsed by the Wheelchair Sports Association of South Australia and are awarded individual scholarships. Similarly, athletes with a physical disability, for example amputees, are also awarded individual scholarships upon the endorsement of the appropriate sporting association on the proviso that there is a recognised world championship in which they can compete. SASI currently spends about one-third of its budget allocated to individual scholarships on athletes with a disability. The institute is currently negotiating with the Australian Paralympic Federation in relation to the provision of a coaching coordinator for athletes with a disability. Once again, it is another area in which the agency is showing leadership in the support that it is providing to this very important group of athletes within our community.

Mrs HALL: I refer to page 397 of the Program Estimates. We all know that without the many volunteers that give so freely of their services in South Australia the enjoyment and competition of sport could never happen. All members of the Committee would hate to put a dollar value on the worth of volunteers to our magnificent recreation and sport organisations. How is the Government supporting and recognising the efforts of volunteers in recreation and sport organisations throughout South Australia?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: I can assure the honourable member that this Government recognises only too well the tremendous support provided to sport and recreation by volunteers. Without those volunteers it would be impossible for the programs that are in place to be conducted. We do provide training opportunities to volunteers who administer recreation and sporting organisations, and this is done through the Volunteer Involvement Program (VIP). VIP has developed six non-accredited introductory sport administration modules that can be completed as individual components. There is no obligation to complete all the modules. The Australian Sports Commission will provide participants with module notes at no cost. The department coordinates delivery of the training, and the only cost to organisations is that of the presenter—so long as they can supply a venue such as a club room at no cost.

The department also provides support to recreation and sport organisations in strategic planning. A guide, *Club Planning, an Easy Guide for Sport and Recreation Clubs*, is for sale at a cost of only \$5. The VIP coordinator can also provide advice to organisations about the planning process and its benefits. Recognition opportunities are in place to recognise the valuable contribution of volunteers to the operation of sport and recreation in South Australia. The department recognises annually the Volunteer of the Year

category in its State awards. The VIP State recognition scheme was launched in May 1994 to recognise good volunteer management practice at both club and State association levels. The State award winners are announced each year in November, and the national winners are announced in December.

Initiatives in the areas of training, recognition and volunteer management planning are considered. The Australian Sports Commission has provided the department with funding to cover the salary of the State VIP Coordinator and some project costs, and funding for this program has been allocated until the year 2000. The Liberal Party policy on volunteering, released in September 1993, complements the aims and objectives of the volunteer development program. Local government agencies have been very supportive of the VIP program by encouraging local club administrators to attend training seminar opportunities which have been provided by individual councils. Undoubtedly, volunteers are essential. Of course, volunteers without training can perhaps cause more problems than no volunteers at all. We are ensuring that those volunteers whose heart is in the right place are given the training which will ensure that the support they provide is of value to the organisation that they work with.

Ms WHITE: I would like the opportunity to read questions into *Hansard* so that the Minister can take them on notice. First, with regard to the sport in schools issue, how much money will the Minister's department devote to enhancing sport in schools in this budget? With respect to the athletics stadium, has full financial information regarding the stadium been made available to prospective tenderers? What allowance for depreciation and ongoing maintenance has been made for the athletics stadium, what are the revenue predictions and on what assumptions are those predictions based? Who will make up any shortfall in the recurrent costs associated with the athletics stadium? What is the car parking capacity and what provisions have been made for overflow parking at the time of major events at the athletics stadium and the netball stadium? I believe that the Ernst & Young study in relation to the netball stadium assumes capacity of 700. With regard to the netball stadium, what is the most recent estimate of the total cost?

Will the South Australian Netball Association take up the suggestion of Ernst & Young that a stadium management organisation be contracted to operate the Mile End stadium? How many corporate boxes will the stadium contain, and how many of these have now been filled, given that Ernst & Young assumes that the number of corporate boxes has been reduced from 14 to seven but that corporate revenue will still make up 12 per cent of the total revenue?

With respect to the Vacswim program, what effect has the outsourcing of the school holiday learn to swim program had in terms of the numbers of children participating and the costs paid by parents for each child? In answering that, the Minister might supply a comparison between, say, the 1992-93 Christmas holidays and these past Christmas holidays in 1996-97. With respect to the Heysen Trail, does the Minister intend that no further road reserves that are used by walkers and others for recreational pursuits be sold to landowners?

I refer now to some correspondence, of which I have received a copy, between the Minister and the Squash Racquets Association of South Australia. The Minister wrote to that organisation on 7 March concerning its letter to him of November 1996 asking for support for the building of a squash facility of international standard, which would feature

double courts under an all glass court. In that letter the Minister says that Squash South Australia's project does not meet the criteria for funding assistance under the regional recreation and sport facilities grants scheme administered by his department.

The association wrote to the Minister again on 14 March saying that its sport was in desperate need of an international standard court, and I have a copy of the letter of 11 June which reads:

We are very disappointed that you appear to completely misunderstand our application for Government assistance. We are not a club but the Squash Racquets Association of South Australia, and we run the game of squash in South Australia.

Will the Minister give an update on whether he intends to give any Government assistance to that project aim? With reference to poker machine revenue money, have there been delays in clubs receiving payments once their allocation has been communicated and, if so, what has been the reason for those? Are any payments being made in instalments? I have been told that the possibility of payment by instalments has been mooted with at least one or more clubs.

How well have the grants to date corresponded with needs in regions? On page 399 of the Program Estimates under 'Recreation Support Services' there is the comment that effective systems for managing ongoing relationships relevant to major sport facility developments would be introduced. Will the Minister expand on what has prompted that comment? Is this in reference to the management of the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium and, if that is the case, what procedures has the Minister now put in place? If it is in relation to something else, will the Minister explain that?

I have received a letter from Sports SA with regard to the request of user groups at the Adelaide Aquatic Centre for funding to upgrade the centre. The letter states in part that, whilst other States have upgraded their facilities, there has been minimal upgrading conducted at the Adelaide Aquatic Centre. When the centre was endorsed in 1985 it was one of the best centres in Australia, but it is now in need of drastic overhaul. This has been—

The CHAIRMAN: If the honourable member wishes to read a letter into the record, I suggest she do it via the Notice Paper of the House of Assembly.

Ms WHITE: Does the Minister intend to support the upgrading of that centre as requested of him in correspondence?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I think the member for Taylor has asked something like 16 questions on notice and she has had a fair go. If there are other questions at this late stage I ask that the honourable member put them on the Notice Paper of the House of Assembly.

Ms WHITE: I had one question remaining.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member has had a good 16, so I am afraid that is her quota.

Mr LEGGETT: I refer to page 397 of the Program Estimates. Will the Minister explain the proposed development of the Riesling Trail and its advantages to South Australia?

The Hon. E.S. Ashenden: The Riesling Trail is a walking and cycling trail using the bed of the disused railway line between Riverton and Rhynie in the Mid North of South Australia. It is designed as a recreational and tourism facility linking regional centres such as Clare and Auburn with local wineries as well as providing access to other trails which are administered by my department. Negotiations for the acquisition and development of the trail by the department

were completed in August 1993. There was upgrading of the rail corridor as the trail commenced in 1995 with the resurfacing of two sections of the trail: the 6 kilometres between Riverton and Rhynie, and the 4 kilometres between Watervale and Penwortham.

The trail was reassessed in February 1997 and the commitment has been made to develop the section between Auburn and Clare, a distance of approximately 26 kilometres. This section traverses the length of the Clare Valley wine growing district and has been assessed as the most appropriate to upgrade for recreational and tourism purposes. A 15 metre bridge spanning Quarry Road on the southern outskirts of Clare was constructed and installed by a local engineering firm on 12 May 1997. A continuous link now exists between Auburn and Clare. A community consultative forum was conducted in Clare by the department on the evening of 28 May of this year. The meeting established a cooperative approach to trail development by involving the local community from the outset and fostered a sense of community ownership in the project. Tenders are currently being sought for the upgrade and resurfacing of the trail between Watervale and Clare, a distance of approximately 15 kilometres. Financial support for the Riesling Trail has been received from BHP and the Clare Valley Wine Growers Association. The South Australian Wine Tourism Council, BikeSouth and the Saddleworth-Auburn council have also registered a commitment to supporting the project.

It is anticipated that the Clare to Watervale section will be completed by the end of the 1996-97 financial year and the remainder of the trail from Watervale to Auburn by September of this year. This will enable user groups to access the trail at the peak of the tourism season. The Riesling Trail will provide a recreational asset to a broad cross-section of the community. Placing the trail on a disused rail reserve with gentle gradients makes it a safe and accessible facility for walkers, cyclists and disabled groups of all ages. The trail has

the potential to add to the level of tourism attracted to the region by creating a recreational link to the towns and wineries situated throughout the Clare Valley. Development of the Riesling Trail also contains a regional economic development focus by seeking to attract visitors from metropolitan, interstate and overseas locations. The trail will also become a useful facility for residents of the Clare Valley by providing them with a recreational asset that can be used to improve their own levels of health and fitness. This in turn may have a positive impact on the health care costs for this population as it ages.

Completion of the trail between Auburn and Clare will be followed by a survey of user group numbers to establish the viability of extending the trail even further and linking it to Riverton at some stage in the future. The department is keen to offset maintenance costs on the trail by establishing cooperative ventures between the community, wine growers, local councils and user groups, such as cycling and walking clubs, to assist with the upkeep of the trail. That very quick outline of what we are doing on the Riesling Trail would tend to allay some of the negative criticisms or concerns that were expressed by the member for Taylor earlier. As Minister I am delighted with the support that my department is providing in relation to the Riesling Trail and I know that it will be an asset and a facility that will be very widely used and will become a quite a major asset to healthy lifestyles and to tourism in that very important area of South Australia.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further time for questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed. I thank the Minister and his advisers for their contribution to the Committee. I thank the Committee members for their cooperation with me as Chairman.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.2 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Thursday 26 June at 11 a.m.