

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**Wednesday 21 June 2000****ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A****Acting Chairman:**

The Hon. G.A. Ingerson

Members:

Ms F.E. Bedford
 Mr S.G. Condous
 Mr K. Hanna
 Mr J.D. Hill
 Hon. R.B. Such
 Mr M.R. Williams

The committee met at 11 a.m.

Department for Environment and Heritage,
 \$115 989 000
 Administered Items for Department for Environment
 and Heritage, \$4 796 000

Witness:

The Hon. I.F. Evans, Minister for Environment and
 Heritage, Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr A. Holmes, Acting Chief Executive, Department for
 Environment and Heritage.

Ms A. Harvey, Director, Corporate Strategy and Business
 Services.

Mr R. Thomas, Executive Director, Environment Protec-
 tion Agency.

Mr L. Best, Acting Director, Heritage and Biodiversity.

Ms L. Burch, Acting Director, Environment Policy.

Mr P. Gardner, Director, Resource Information.

Mr R. Janssan, Manager, Corporate Finance.

Mr D. Carman, Principal Consultant, Corporate Planning.

Mr R. Tucker, Manager, Coast and Marine Section,
 Environment Protection Agency.

Mr M. Harvey, Deputy Director, Environment Protection
 Agency.

Mr J. O'Daly, Manager, Business Services, Environment
 Protection Agency.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The estimates committee is a relatively informal procedure and can be kept that way by the members. I remind members that the rules of this House do apply. Yesterday's hearing was nearly a short one. It is entirely in the hands of the members as to whether or not we fully utilise the time available. The committee will determine an approximate time for consideration of the proposed payments to facilitate the changeover of departmental advisers. I will in due course ask the minister and opposition spokesperson whether they have agreed to the timetable.

Changes to the composition of the committee must be notified to the committee as they occur, and 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 must be submitted to the Clerk of the House of Assembly no later than 7 July. I propose to allow the minister and the lead speaker of the opposition to make an opening statement, if desired, of about 10 minutes but no longer than 15 minutes.

There will be a flexible approach to giving the call for asking questions based on approximately three questions per member, alternating each side of the chamber. Members may also be allowed to ask a brief supplementary question to conclude a line of questioning, although any supplementary questions will be the exception rather than the rule, unlike the case yesterday. Subject to the convenience of the committee, a member who is outside of the committee and decides to ask a question will be permitted to do so once the line of questioning on an item has been exhausted by the committee. An indication to the chair in advance from the member outside of the committee wishing to ask a question is necessary.

Questions must be based on lines of expenditure as disclosed in the Estimates Statement. Reference may be made to other documents, including the Portfolio Statements. Members should identify a page number or program in the relevant financial papers from which their question is derived in an effort to assist *Hansard*. Questions not asked at the end of the day can be placed on the next day's House of Assembly *Notice Paper* or asked as a question without notice. 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.

Incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the House, that is, that it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length. All questions are to be directed to the minister, not to the advisers. The minister will be given the opportunity to answer every question as it is asked, including omnibus questions, if the minister so wishes. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. I also advise that, for the purpose of the committee, some freedom will be allowed for television coverage by allowing a short period of filming from the northern gallery.

I remind all members, the minister and observers that all mobile telephones should be turned off while within the chamber. I now invite the minister to detail any agreed program, introduce his advisers and make a brief opening statement if he wishes.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: My understanding of the agreed program is that from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. we will discuss the environment and heritage portfolio. After the lunch break, we will continue to discuss that portfolio until the afternoon tea break, following which we will discuss recreation, sport and racing until 6 p.m. That is my understanding of the agreed time frame.

I want to make a very short opening statement. As the custodian of South Australia's national parks, botanic gardens and coastline, and the monitor of the quality of South Australia's precious water and other natural resources, the Department for Environment and Heritage has a key role in ensuring sustainable development and environmental quality in this state.

The long-term prosperity of South Australia is enhanced by creating the right conditions for natural resources to be used for their best outcome within sustainable limits. The Department for Environment and Heritage also makes a significant contribution to the social and physical wellbeing of the community. The Office for Recreation and Sport seeks

to reduce the social and economic cost of illness through the development of a range of recreation and sport programs designed to raise the level of general fitness and health of the people of South Australia and to foster community development.

The new Department for Environment and Heritage was established on 21 February 2000. The inclusion of the Office of Recreation and Sport within the new department has created an opportunity both to improve service delivery and to reduce costs through exploring synergies between parts of the new organisation. Enhanced service delivery is expected through improved sharing of knowledge and skills in the area of managing trails and grants administration while cost reductions through the optimal use of administrative resources and systems are being investigated. Benefits through structural changes should begin to flow in 2000-01. It is proposed that today's hearing be conducted in two parts: first, questions relating to environment and heritage; and, secondly, questions on the recreation, sport and racing portfolio.

The government of South Australia is seeking to achieve outcomes in seven broad areas: education and lifelong learning; employment and economic development; regional communities; culture, lifestyle and the environment; health and communities; justice and safety; and government reform. Environment and heritage portfolio outcomes primarily then support the government's outcome of culture, lifestyle and the environment. However, the department does make a significant contribution to employment and economic development and regional communities through activities in parks and the development of tourism opportunities. The government's health and communities outcome, of course, is supported by the outcomes of activities of the EPA in relation to the protection of air, land and water. The key priorities for 2000-01 in the portfolio include:

- national parks and ecotourism.
- improved water quality.
- improved environment protection.
- marine conservation and options for coast protection.
- protecting biodiversity and environmental information on-line.

The department has achieved a great deal over the last year, as any cursory glance at the highlights listed in the Portfolio Statements shows. Some of the key achievements for the last year include:

- the continuation of the parks agenda, including habitat restoration programs, endangered species recovery programs and the strategic upgrading of tourism infrastructure in parks.
- major land acquisition under the National Heritage Trust to create a new 120 000 hectare Gawler Ranges National Park on the Eyre Peninsula.
- declaration of Granite Island as a recreational park to improve visitor management and facilities and conservation of resident penguin populations.
- extension of the Flinders Ranges Bounceback Habitat Restoration Program into the Gammons, and launch of the Ark on the Eyre endangered species program on Eyre Peninsula.
- construction of new headquarters and interpretive centre at Innes National Park and opening of new tourism infrastructure in the Mount Lofty Botanic Garden.
- management, together with PIRSA, of some \$25.5 million worth of commonwealth approved projects under the NHT program.

- completion of 350 kilometres of heritage agreement fencing.
- successful transfer of the collection of the State Herbarium to new and expanded facilities at the Plant Biodiversity Centre as part of the botanic wine and roses project.
- the revision of the threatened species schedules under the National Parks and Wildlife Act.
- the conversion of 239 perpetual and 155 shack leases to freehold title and the creation of some 16 800 new Crown records for parcels of Crown and reserved land.
- an improvement generally to the environmental licensing systems.
- the initiation of the Chemcollect program in conjunction with PIRSA for the collection and safe disposal of unwanted agricultural chemicals.
- work towards maintaining air quality by implementing an air 'hot spot' monitoring service and letting a contract for operating the ambient air quality monitoring network.
- launch of a number of internet based information and inquiry services including property assist and place names on-line.
- the release of a series of CD-ROM based products including updated digital aerial photographs and 1:50 000 topographic maps of metropolitan and regional areas of the state.
- release of a book of maps of the Lower South-East to assist in emergency services operations.
- commencement of review and amendment to a number of pieces of legislation, including Environment Protection Act, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and Heritage Act.
- progress on the development of environment protection policies for waste, water quality and noise.
- training of elected members and officers from 13 councils in the local Agenda 21 process.

The environment and heritage portfolio has an exciting and challenging year ahead. The key targets for the next year are detailed in the Portfolio Statements, and I will not go through those; they are adequately explained within the statement.

In summary, the government's commitment to the environment and heritage portfolio, as measured by the appropriation support from the Consolidated Account, remains constant, and I look forward to elaborating in more detail on these issues during the course of the committee hearing.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I refer members to page 47 in the Estimates Statement and volume 2, part 10, of the Portfolio Statements.

Mr HILL: I want to try to establish the argument that the minister has a case to answer in relation to what I believe is a substantial cut in this year's environment and heritage budget. I will just go through the output classes in an attempt to demonstrate that. Eight output classes relate to the environment and heritage budget. Output class 1 deals with crown lands. It is called the administration and stewardship of crown lands. The Portfolio Statements document indicates that, in this the next financial year 2000-01, \$1.8 million is expected to be expended in that area, compared to \$2.624 million last year, or a cut of \$824 000. I note that there is a change in the Land Management Corporation arrangements which may explain part of that cut, so that is an issue for later.

The second class is animal welfare. This budget allocates \$780 000 for animal welfare compared with \$751 000 last year, so it an increase of \$29 000. In the area of biodiversity

conservation, which is output class 3, there is an increase of \$932 000, the budget going from \$12.648 million to \$13.58 million. However, if you look at the breakdown of that under biodiversity conservation services, you see that there is an increase of \$1.711 million, that is, from \$8.899 million to \$10.610 million. Pastoral management services declines by from \$1.905 million last year to \$1.4 million this year, so that is a reduction of \$505 000. Native vegetation management services also declines by \$274 000, that is, from \$1.844 million to \$1.57 million.

Output class 4, which relates to heritage conservation, has a reduction of \$558 000, from \$2.280 million to \$2.838 million. I just say in passing that these are reductions or increases in dollar terms, not in real or inflated terms. Output class 5 deals with national parks and botanic gardens, and the budget indicates that output class 5.1, national parks management services, shows an increase from \$59.101 million to \$62.235 million this year, whereas the Botanic Gardens line shows a decline from \$8.925 million to \$7.8 million. That is a reduction of \$1.125 million, and the overall result in that output class is \$70.035 million from \$68.026 million last year—an increase of just over \$2 million.

Output class 6, which is environment protection, shows the biggest changes, involving the sum of \$6.1 million. 'Environment protection strategies' shows a huge reduction of \$16.844 million, a decline from \$26.644 million last year to \$9.8 million this year. Environment protection compliance services shows a decline of \$4.54 million, involving \$9 million last year to \$4.46 million this year, and 'environment protection and monitoring and evaluation services' shows a cut from \$9.288 million last year to \$6.21 million this year, or a cut of \$3.078 million—altogether \$24.462 million in environment protection in terms of expenditure that is predicted. Some of that expenditure deals with the removal from the environment portfolio to the new water resources portfolio, so no doubt some of that is explained by that transfer. However, it seems to me that more has been cut than can be explained by that.

Output class 7 relates to spatial infrastructure. The development and management section figure of \$7.1 million shows a reduction of \$1.801 million, that is, from \$8.581 million to \$6.78 million, and the products and services part shows a reduction of \$3.453 million, that is, from \$9.761 million to \$6.308 million. That is an overall reduction of \$5.254 million in that spatial information section, from \$18.342 million to \$13.088 million.

The last class, that of policy and advice, covers all portfolio areas, including recreation and sport, and it is bit hard to take that out because of the way in which the documents are put together. Overall, however, that shows a reduction, compared to last year, of \$8.792 million. Last year policy and advice was \$10.521 million. That is net of Aboriginal affairs, which has gone out of the portfolio, compared to \$1.729 million this year. So there is a substantial reduction there. Overall, by my calculations, this year's budget for the environment portfolio shows \$123.762 million, compared with last year's \$160.68 million.

Some of that, I am certain, relates to water resources being put into a separate portfolio but it seems to me, reading through this document, that the cut is greater than can be explained by the establishment of that new portfolio. The water resources portfolio, as members would be aware, consists of about \$45 million or \$46 million dollars. Some 111 staff have been transferred to that portfolio from the Department for the Environment (and I am relying on the

Government Gazette, 28 February, page 1206 for this figure), compared to 79 staff from primary industries. So, 40 per cent of the staff come from primary industries, 60 per cent from environment. One would have thought that a fair allocation of funds would be about 40 per cent from primary industries—say \$15 million to \$20 million—and 60 per cent from environment which would be, say, \$30 million. It would seem to me that there is a greater contribution from the environment portfolio to the water resources portfolio. I think that can be seen in the budget documents for primary industries which show an increase in funding for primary industries, which is no doubt part of the government's packaging to try to reappeal to rural and regional South Australia. It would seem to me that the environment portfolio is bearing the cost of that political activity.

I find it interesting that there is such a large cut in the amount of money that is going to policy and advice. Last year, as I said, it was \$10.5 million, and this year it is \$1.7 million. I suspect that a lot of that activity has been packed into the other budget line. Whereas last year, for example, heritage and biodiversity policy advice had \$400 000 allocated to it that may well be contained within the biodiversity line 3; environmental reporting which had \$248 000 may well be contained in the EPA lines and so on.

It is really a bit difficult to unpack some of this without some answers from the minister. What I am trying to say is that there is a case to answer about reasonably substantial cuts in the environment portfolio. That concludes my opening statement.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I call on the member for Kurna for his first question.

Mr HILL: The first question I have is to do with the cost of separating the new water resources department from the Department for the Environment. I ask the minister what has been the cost to his department of that transfer and from where the money has come to pay for the establishment of the new department?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am not sure whether I have the cost here. I will run you through what information we have but I am happy to get a cost calculated for you. As I mentioned in my opening statement the Department for Environment and Heritage was created on 21 February 2000; a new Department for Water Resources was also created. The new department was created by transferring the water quality functions of the Environment Protection Agency and the Environment Policy Division to the new Department for Water Resources and transferring the Division of State Aboriginal Affairs to the Department of Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts. In total about 113 staff have been transferred from the former Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs to the new Department for Water Resources. Budgetary adjustments negotiated to date include a transfer of about \$34.1 million in operating and \$1.1 million in capital investing from the former portfolio of DEHAA to the Department for Water Resources. I will not mention the Office for Recreation and Sport because the officer is in the Department for Water Resources. I think that is the information there. I do not have a cost here, but I am happy to calculate that for you.

Mr HILL: I would like to turn now to another issue of moment; that is, the GST. The *Advertiser* has published a full page statement about state charges and the GST. Can the minister comment on the effect of the GST on his portfolio in two ways: first, with respect to the administrative costs associated with dealing with the GST; and, secondly, with

respect to the impact that the GST will have on services provided by the minister's department—in particular, in relation to entrance fees to various facilities and the costs of various publications put out by the department?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Is the member referring to general fees?

Mr HILL: I am talking about two things, I suppose. One is the compliance costs to the department—how much does it cost in administrative time to deal with the GST; and, secondly, what impact will the GST have on the charges that the department makes, for example, when people visit parks or facilities operated by the department, or when they buy publications put out by the department?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We have not calculated a figure on what it has cost us in administrative time. We are just taking all that as part of the process of the change that is occurring. The department has advised me that it is well positioned and is on target to have the necessary systems and policy procedures in place and operational by 30 June. One of the issues that it has dealt with—milestones or achievements, if you like—is that entities within the portfolio have all applied for and received Australian business numbers. The department has communicated with all its suppliers to highlight the need for them to register for an ABN and also request information for their GST prices post 1 July 2000.

We have a GST implementation project team consisting of departmental employees and specialist contractors with the necessary skills for the project, and they will ensure that the knowledge is transferred to the staff and is, therefore, maintained within the department when the project is completed. So, given, I suppose, the specialist nature of the work, we have had some contractors in. They will then train the staff and ensure that that skill remains within the public sector.

An additional permanent position also has been created within the portfolio to take the day-to-day operational responsibility for compliance and to provide a help desk facility for the staff. A comprehensive training program also has been developed, which includes the Department of Treasury and Finance sponsoring training sessions and the GST for the various departmental managers. In relation to GST procedures involving grant recipients, there has been hands-on training; there has been systems training; and the tax status of all fees and charges has been assessed and new prices have been established accordingly. A significant effort has gone into the modification of the systems.

The department has about 10 major systems that needed modification in preparation for the GST, many of which were custom designed. The modified system will be phased into production between 19 and 30 June. Work is also under way to assist the impact of the recent commonwealth legislative changes to transitional provisions of the grants; contract review is ongoing. Leases and licences in relation to Crown lands areas have required a considerable effort. As we all know, the legislation is very complex and has required significant communication with both the Crown Solicitor and the tax office. I will not touch on container deposit legislation: the member might want to ask me a separate question about that. No doubt, it is an item of interest.

In relation to fees and charges, as an integral part of the budget process, of course, all regulated and non-regulated fees and charges are subject to annual review and adjustment based on the state government approved escalation factor and then rounded in accordance with the agency's guidelines. An escalation factor of 2.8 per cent has been used in the setting

of fees and charges to take effect from 1 July 2000. The state government has approved the escalation factor: there is a weighted average of recent movements in both the CPI and public sector wages costs in order to maintain the government's real level of income. The determination of fees and charges applicable during 2000-01 also has been influenced by the impact of the GST. In general, all GST exempt portfolio fees and charges have been increased by less than the 2.8 per cent and all portfolio fees which incur the GST have been increased by generally less than 12.8 per cent. There are, however, a small number of exceptions when increases have departed from that factor.

Mr HILL: I have a supplementary question. With respect to the cost of compliance, I know that the minister does not know the exact figure but can he give us a ballpark—is it in the millions, or the hundreds of thousands?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am advised that for 2000-01 the cost was around \$.6 million, and the estimate for the ongoing compliance, involving one full-time equivalent, about \$56 000.

Mr HILL: I would like to turn now to National Heritage Trust grants. Can the minister tell us what percentage of the budget so far (and I understand that there may well be other grants that come down), or how many millions of dollars of this current budget, is grant money from the commonwealth (I suppose it is only from the commonwealth through NHT or through other sources) and what proportion of the budget is put aside for leverage purposes to gain other NHT grants?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will make some general comments, and the acting CEO might also want to make some comments. Does the member want clarification of the level of funding received in 1999-2000, this budgeted year?

Mr HILL: I am happy if the minister gives a comparison with last year.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Regarding the level of funding anticipated for the state in 2000-01, I think it is fair to say up front that the department has deliberately taken a conservative approach with respect to the amount of money that we may receive from the federal government in relation to NHT. So, it would appear to be a lower figure than last year, but that is, I guess, a presentational issue in relation to the budget. You have to make a judgment about whether you put a high figure, but if you under-achieve it you have some figures to answer for, of course. So, we have taken a conservative approach. I am advised that South Australia has received something like 357 project bids for 2000-01 in the one-stop shop process, seeking a touch under \$41 million—about \$40.8 million—from the NHT.

The total value of these bids includes in kind state and community contributions of about \$107 million. These bids have been evaluated by nine regional assessment panels, each assisted by a technical assessment panel. The recommendations of the regional assessment panels, I understand, were considered by the state panel in May. The consolidated bid has now been put together for consideration by the state ministers. The completed bid is then forwarded to the federal government in early July (which is the normal process), following approval by me, the Minister for Primary Industries and the Minister for Water Resources. All the projects from South Australia are assessed on merit and it is an open competition. Even though the amount of federal funding for Landcare projects may appear to be decreasing, it is anticipated that last year's approved funding of about \$25.5 million is expected to be achieved.

The South Australian government has made available \$6.8 million in additional funding for 2000-01 to help attract funding from the trust. The priority areas for action remain centred upon the Murray Valley, the Murray Mallee, the lakes and Murray Mouth, the Upper South-East, Kangaroo Island and Mount Lofty Ranges, and significant investment is sought for the Mid North, Eyre Peninsula and pastoral lands. Funding for coast and clean seas, as I am sure the member will know, is a separate exercise, and that happens later in the year. Additional funding also has been sought to implement the strategy for Aboriginal managed lands in South Australia, which is a major initiative of the landowners and the South Australian and commonwealth governments.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I have had a very longstanding interest in the environment, and at the outset I would like to pay tribute to the staff of the minister's department. It is never easy to be custodians of the environment, and it is not getting any easier. I would like to pay tribute to the work that the staff do, in often very difficult circumstances. My first question relates to World Environment Day, which was celebrated recently. Will the minister provide a brief outline of the success of that day?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We believe that World Environment Day was a very successful event for both South Australia and the city of Adelaide and, indeed, on the global level. From all the feedback we received, South Australia and Australia did the event proud. Not only did the state receive international acclaim for its extensive World Environment Day program and commitment to environmental excellence but also we succeeded in motivating and educating an enormous number of South Australians to get directly involved in a wide range of environmental activities.

We have already received congratulatory feedback from the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the international laureates and national award winners and, indeed, the commonwealth, for the way in which the event was hosted. In particular, the UNEP deputy director stated that the level of community and state-backed activity in Adelaide was unprecedented in World Environment Day's 28 year history, and UNEP drew attention to the fact that the state has surpassed all previous World Environment Day celebrations in terms of the number of events organised on the program, with more than 120 in total compared to the average of 50 or 60 from previous celebrations.

It was estimated that in excess of 20 000 South Australians were directly involved in World Environment Day, the largest of which was the Youth Parade for the Environment, involving some 6 000 students each delivering their own water quality message. The major aims of World Environment Day were to encourage community participation in environmental activities; to provide a platform for those wishing to deliver the environmental message; and to focus the media's attention on environmental issues. The member for Fisher will be interested to know that schools from his local electorate, such as Craighburn, were involved in and enjoyed participating in the march.

World Environment Day provided us with an excellent opportunity to showcase South Australia's clean, green environment directly to the international audience of approximately 40 UNEP officials and award winning laureates and indirectly to a much larger international audience via UNEP's internet site, the significant international media coverage and our sister city programs.

All in all, I want to place on record, on behalf of the committee and the parliament generally, our congratulations

to the officers of the department, to the City of Adelaide and its officers, and to the community in general for the way in which the whole World Environment Day program was run. They did South Australia and the City of Adelaide proud.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: My next question relates to the Friends of Parks groups. I have been delighted to see some of the work that they have carried out locally, in Belair, but will the minister outline some of the ways in which the Friends of the Parks operate and the support that is provided through his department?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: South Australia's Friends of Parks scheme is the country's largest parks voluntary support network, with 5 000 volunteers who serve the park system through 104 park groups. Parks that receive assistance from friends range from the Belair National Park to the vast landscapes of the Simpson Desert Conservation Park. The statistics for 1999 show that these volunteers contributed 48 000 days of work, equivalent to \$6.2 million in value of time, through 723 projects. This is a monumental achievement and one that has significant benefits for our parks.

The Friends, as I am sure the local member knows, undertake a range of activities, including revegetation programs, weed management, walking trails, heritage sites, litter collection, gardening, camp ground hosting, erosion control, foot bridges, signage, history, administrative and clerical work, interpretation, wildlife education and publicity projects. The Friends are supported through the Community Liaison Unit of the National Parks and Wildlife Service and through the various individual park officers under the Parks Agenda program which was launched in June 1997 and which aims to promote increased community involvement in the parks.

Grants made to the Friends of the Parks groups have doubled from \$30 000 to \$60 000 per annum, and are available upon application by the various Friends groups. In order to educate volunteer participation in the management of things such as our native flora, the Parks Agenda also makes available funding of \$50 000 per annum for a three-year period to provide botanical expertise to the Friends of the Parks groups. About another 2 000 volunteers contribute through the National Parks and Wildlife consultative committees, including camp ground hosts, overseas students and volunteers with biological surveys and other programs.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: My next question relates to the Naracoorte Caves Conservation Park, and I am mindful that I have the local member next to me, so I have to be careful what I say. Will the minister provide an update of the management of that very important conservation park?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As the honourable member would be aware, we have put before the parliament a motion that will be dealt with in the next session, not this, because of the requirement of the number of days for which the motion needs to sit on the agenda. We thought that we would make public our aims in relation to the Naracoorte caves.

We have a target this year to continue to develop the park system. We have recently seen this with the government's commitment to the protection of wildlife through the purchase of the 120 000 hectares of Paney Station for the Gawler Ranges National Park, which will be the first national park in some eight years. Another example of the commitment would be the Granite Island Recreation Park, and we have also looked at the Naracoorte caves. Currently, it is a conservation park, and we seek to reconstitute the land as a national park.

Of the five categories of reserves under the act, conservation parks comprise land that is protected or preserved for the purpose of conserving any wildlife or historic features of the land, whereas national parks comprise land that is of national significance by reason of the wildlife or natural features of the land. The Naracoorte caves clearly fall into the latter category, as they were inscribed on the World Heritage List by UNESCO in 1994 and are considered one of the world's 10 great fossil sites. The fossil material in the caves is invaluable for interpreting the geological and evolutionary history of Australia.

In terms of the ongoing management of the park, the commonwealth and state governments have made considerable investment in the infrastructure of Naracoorte caves in recent years, both in facilities and in services, improving the presentation of the world heritage value of the caves. This has included the development of the highly successful Wonambi Fossil Centre, which was opened by the Premier in December 1998. I understand that since that time visitations have increased from 40 000 visits to 80 000 visits a year, which shows how successful that has been.

Recent Natural Heritage Trust funding of \$400 000 will allow the continuation of research work being undertaken by Flinders University to expand the knowledge of the world heritage values of the site as well as enhancement of visitor appreciation of the site by improving approaches to the Bat Television Centre, the Victoria Fossil Cave, and some external presentations to the Wonambi Fossil Centre, including walking track development. We will also establish a range of curriculum-focused site programs for the greater promotion of the caves and their values within the broader education system.

I would like to take the opportunity to formally congratulate the district ranger in charge of Naracoorte, Mr Brian Clark, who recently received the Public Service Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for his vision and commitment to having the world heritage values of Naracoorte caves recognised and more widely accessible to the community.

Mr HILL: I refer the minister to a press release put out by his predecessor on Tuesday 2 February 1999, headlined 'Environment to gain \$125 million from ETSA reinvestment fund.' The press release in part stated:

South Australians will be entitled to a \$500 subsidy to encourage them to install solar power in their homes, under the state government's ETSA Reinvestment Fund. Environment Minister, Dorothy Kotz, says the subsidy scheme is one of the highlights of the \$125 million funding for the environment from the sale or lease of ETSA.

Minister Kotz then gives some of the details of the scheme: 50 000 people would get access to the solar panels; and there would be funds to establish a second band of parkland around outer Adelaide, which would involve a combination of planning management and tree planting to establish a ring of parklands from Gawler to Sellicks Hill, costing about \$50 million.

The fund will also be used to connect more than 2 000 septic units to existing sewage collection and treatment systems in a five-year program costing \$15 million, and there will be a \$16 million stormwater treatment and reclamation project. A \$10 million program will help provide an additional 300 000 split bins to increase household recycling. In addition, there will be a \$3 million one-off, comprehensive, statewide program to remove hazardous and unwanted pesticides and chemicals from rural properties. ETSA has been leased, minister, where is the \$125 million?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I do not have that press release in front of me, but I am happy to read it. As the opposition knows, we have not received all of the lease proceeds as such. Does this refer to the time when all the ministers were being asked what they would do if they received \$2 million a day extra?

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: It is a hypothetical; that is what I thought.

Mr HILL: No, it is not hypothetical. It was an announcement—'will'. Where is it?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will have to check the status of the press release. It was put out as an example of what might happen if all the funds were available.

Mr HILL: Output line 1 refers to administration and stewardship of crown lands. As I said, the expenditure outlays have reduced by \$824 000 and there appear to be some different responsibilities. Will the minister explain what is going on here? Is there a cut in the money available for doing this or have the responsibilities been referred to another department?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am advised that it relates to some transfers that occurred between our agency and the Land Management Corporation. I will ask the Acting CEO to give the committee some information on that.

Mr Holmes: The changes that are referred to relate to the Land Management Corporation's taking over responsibility for sale of metropolitan land. Revenues that were previously received for sale of metropolitan land and factored into the department's base have been transferred to the Land Management Corporation, together with staff, and that is reflected in those figures. In terms of base funding, there is no change.

Mr HILL: I refer to output class 2, animal welfare services. There is a minor increase of about \$29 000. My question concerns the indicators in the output class document, which refer to the number of reports and the information and awareness programs conducted by the RSPCA. Why are the indicators not linked directly to the welfare of animals or to the prosecutions or number of complaints about injured animals or the number of farm incidents where animals have not been up to scratch? The performance indicators do not tell us very much about what is happening with animals: it tells us how busy the bureaucracy has been.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: It is difficult for the RSPCA to know how many incidents it will handle in any one year. Dog attacks, for example, are events that happen outside the control of the RSPCA. We set targets in relation to making sure that it has appropriate policies or processes in place to deal with a wide range of incidents, so we try to cover the broad policy area of incidents rather than narrow it down and determine that the RSPCA must handle X number of animal incidents in the year. We took the view that the important thing is to ensure that the RSPCA has the right policies in place to deal with incidents in the community, and the number is secondary to that. We concentrated our resources to make sure it had the capacity to handle the incidents rather than delve down to whether it handled five more dog attacks this year than last year.

Mr HILL: I understand the point that the minister makes. It is a sensible point but it is also frustrating that we do not know from these indicators whether or not animal welfare is improving. The indicators are either meaningless or we need something in addition to provide that information.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am not sure whether that information is available in the RSPCA's annual report. It might

automatically report on the number of incidents. I do not have that in front of me, but we can source that for the member and check that point.

Mr HILL: Last week I saw a television program on SBS about the treatment of pigs in a piggery in New South Wales or Victoria, I am not sure where. A group of animal liberationists invaded the piggery as a celebration of one of their birthdays and they took footage of the condition of pigs in the piggery. It was quite horrifying because the animals were in a very bad state. What regular monitoring is there of animals in those kind of conditions, that is, piggeries, caged hens, and so on? Is it only when a complaint is made or is there a regular process of monitoring to ensure that animals are looked after appropriately?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am advised that it is part of the program of the RSPCA to manage those sort of issues. It is part of our relationship with the RSPCA for it to do the sort of activity that the member described.

Mr HILL: I would like to know the percentage of farms being investigated.

Mr CONDOUS: Will the minister provide an indication of the scale of threatened species programs in South Australia, given that the recovery of a range of threatened species in the state is currently one of the hot topics amongst the community?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: In recent years the state government has made significant inroads in reversing the historic decline of some species through some groundbreaking initiatives for the conservation and recovery of threatened species both within parks and on private and leasehold land across the state. The most significant ecological recovery projects are being undertaken as part of the Operation Bounceback and Ark on Eyre programs and the Endangered Species Program supported by the Natural Heritage Trust.

Recovery projects galvanise and are dependent upon considerable community involvement and participation and the strong community focus of recovery plans is further reflected by the excellent coordinating and development work through groups such as the Threatened Species Network, with projects such as the recovery of the Mount Lofty Ranges emu wren, and the Threatened Plant Action Group, with projects such as the recovery of threatened orchids in the Mount Lofty Ranges.

A recent review of species in South Australia demonstrated that species under threat represent around 22 per cent of 3 500 native plant species; 62 per cent of 140 native mammal species; 28 per cent of 460 native bird species; 17 per cent of 220 native reptile species; and 7 per cent of 26 amphibian species. While some excellent results are accumulating from the threatened species program, we all understand that a significant amount of work is still to be done.

With the scale of the problem as it is, the pleasing initiative has been the development of a serious commercial interest incorporating threatened species conservation within tourism and other commercial enterprises. These are exemplified by Earth Sanctuaries' initiatives in protecting endangered mammals and the arid land recovery project supported by Western Mining Corporation at Roxby Downs. Funding for the threatened species recovery program is about \$940 000 of direct funds with a one-to-one split between state resources and commonwealth Natural Heritage Trust resources. The program is a catalyst to other expenditure links to habitat restoration and threat abatement on parks and community actions off parks.

Mr CONDOUS: I note that in the Portfolio Statements there is a reference to the Ark on Eyre program launched by the government last year. Can you advise how this integrates with threatened species programs?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The Ark on Eyre program is a promotional marketing banner, for want of a better word, for the biodiversity conservation initiatives on Eyre Peninsula. It highlights a number of threatened animals that will be used to provide a focus to raise awareness and publicise issues facing conservation in that region. Ark on Eyre is promoting and encouraging community involvement in conservation programs on Eyre Peninsula, linking and coordinating existing future programs. It aims to maximise the biodiversity on Eyre Peninsula and, therefore, attract funding through a variety of resources including NHT and sponsorship.

Some of the existing programs that we have in place include: brush-tailed bettong reintroduction and fox control in Lincoln National Park and Venus Bay Conservation Park; yellowtail black cockatoos, captive rearing and habitat restoration; mallee fowl reintroduction in the Lincoln National Park in 2000-01 and captive rearing; boxthorn control work near the Sir Joseph Banks Group and Winceby Island; community work—*Southern Eyre Birds* booklet and weed control; linkages to Natural Heritage Trust projects such as Elliston sheoak rehabilitation, Driver River catchment and Tod River catchment; bilby reintroduction program on Thistle Island; stick-nest rat program on Reevesby Island; python program on St Francis Island—which I have not yet had the chance to visit; and Cape Barren geese management involving population and habitat management.

Mr CONDOUS: The Portfolio Statement refers to the extension of 'Flinders Ranges Bounceback' beyond the Flinders Ranges National Park in year 2000. As the program has been running for a number of years, can the minister outline its progress and its achievements?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As we all know, the Flinders Ranges is one of the more spectacular arid mountain regions of Australia, is an important part of South Australia's environment and is certainly an icon for tourism and recreation, such as bush walking. Much of the appeal of the region is links to its environment, in particular its native wildlife. While the region is renowned for its natural beauty, it has been severely degraded and has lost significant portions of biodiversity over the years.

Within the northern Flinders Ranges, there are two major national parks—the Flinders Ranges National Park and Gammon Ranges National Park. In the region there are also major tourism developments, significant Aboriginal lands and a pastoral community actively involved in developing sustainable land use practices. The extinction of mammals in this region is one of the unfortunate features: estimates suggest that from 12 to 23 species of mammals alone have been lost from this region. Many small marsupials, such as bilbies, bettongs and hare wallabies, once common in the Flinders, are now nearing extinction. Reversing this ongoing trend towards loss of our unique wildlife is a critical step.

Operation Bounceback and the Natural Heritage Trust initiative Bounceback 2000 have developed from programs aimed at protecting yellow-footed rock-wallabies and controlling feral animals. Since 1992 an integrated threat abatement program has been developed to achieve a significant improvement in the biodiversity qualities. Many of these qualities are now bouncing back. The program integrates feral animal management systems, vegetation recovery and

threatened species recovery techniques to achieve sustainable outcomes over a large area.

The program has focused on the Flinders Ranges National Park and Gammon Ranges National Park and has gained much support and assistance from neighbouring pastoral and tourist enterprises and the local Aboriginal community. The yellow-footed rock-wallaby, which is an icon in South Australia's fauna, is now an icon for environmental repair and restoration work. Achievements in fox, cat, rabbit and goat control have exceeded most people's hopes from 10 years ago. Strategic revegetation efforts and natural recovery processes are now leading to the restoration of highly disturbed understorey plants within this environment. The recovery of natural shrublands, grasslands and grassy woodlands is vital to the conservation of the yellow-footed rock-wallaby and to the threatened plant and animal communities within that general region.

This Natural Heritage Trust initiative has enabled expansion of these outcomes to the Gammon Ranges National Park and many northern ranges properties. The injection of resources has also enhanced local employment and economic opportunities. Continuation of this program will significantly enhance the practical outcomes and give a major boost to a community that has for many years been working towards a sustainable mix of economic activity, pastoral land use and biodiversity protection. We have supported Operation Bounceback with about \$500 000 per year over the past two years, and half the funds have come from the commonwealth NHT. That represents a significant boost to the regional economy as well as achieving, we think, an important biodiversity conservation outcome.

It is important that we recognise that critical to the success of the program has been the involvement of volunteers with a huge range of experience and expertise in the area. Achievements to date have arrived on the input of volunteer effort from groups such as Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers, the Hunting and Conservation Branch of the Sporting Shooters' Association, university and TAFE students, Greening Australia, Friends of the Flinders Ranges and others. The resources supplied to this project act as a significant catalyst and role model for other regional efforts directed at sustainable land use and biodiversity conservation. The biodiversity outcomes contribute to the unique regional identity of the Flinders Ranges as a world-class tourist destination.

Mr CONDOUS: I have a supplementary question. In your report, you said that the control of animals such as the fox, cat, rabbit and goat has led to an increase in these populations. Why does a person such as Dr Wamsley, who spends tens of millions of dollars setting up proper conservation parks which are feral free from cats and other animals, get no support from the government at all? He has areas on which he breeds bilbies, bettongs and yellow-footed rock-wallabies in abundance yet, as a result of conversations I have had with the man, I understand that he has never received any financial support from the state government to develop his work. He is doing his work by raising funds through benefactors and shareholders in the market.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am aware of Dr Wamsley's enterprise—it is not four kilometres from my home. I am aware of some of the work he has undertaken. It is a mix of arguments. Some would ask why, if Dr Wamsley has been so successful in attracting private moneys, we need to put taxpayers' money into it. If he is operating commercially and achieving great success, that is a good thing. I will ask the

acting CEO to clarify what support, if any, the government has provided for Dr Wamsley's operations over the years

Mr Holmes: A number of our officers, including David Barrington (Deputy Director of National Parks) and me, in particular, have spent considerable time with Dr Wamsley over a number of years. We have provided both technical and practical assistance and we have also been responsible for providing endangered species from time to time. There has been considerable technical and scientific support and there has been some financial support provided to Earth Sanctuaries, as well, over the years. It seems to me that perhaps the position you put is not as you have said.

Mr CONDOUS: I would like to put it on record that if he was in the United States of America he would be a national icon yet here he is considered a bit of an enemy.

Mr HILL: With respect to output class 3, which relates to biodiversity conservation, could the minister break down the spending on each of the functions that are described as 'services' in the output classes, for example, survey work, threatened species work, regulated use and destruction of wildlife to ensure ecological sustainability, and public awareness education? I refer to all the services appearing at page 10.9.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We do not have that information available today but we are happy to provide it.

Mr HILL: Last year the targeted figures under the performance indicators listed 30 threatened and endangered species for which management plans would have been developed. I note that the end of year result is only 23. Could the minister indicate why the department underperformed to that extent?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I ask Mr Best to provide the honourable member with the relevant information.

Mr Best: Instead of developing one recovery plan for each species we have started to develop recovery plans for groups of species. Instead of each recovery plan relating to one individual species, the plans sometimes now relate to four or five species. Our numbers are slightly under target, but these plans are accepted nationally. We develop the plans for animals and plants which are threatened in South Australia but which are nationally significant. The plans are then waiting to be adopted by the commonwealth government which, therefore, involves some delays in that area. All in all, we are pleased to report extremely successful implementation of the plans that are in existence.

Mr HILL: I think I understand the answer. I would like to ask the minister about the leafy sea dragon, which he recently declared the state's fish emblem. I have received some correspondence (I am sure that the minister also received it) from Mr Andrew Bowie in relation to the leafy sea dragon. Mr Bowie tells me that the Rapid Bay jetty supports a thriving colony of leafy sea dragons. He has identified at least 18 individuals—there are undoubtedly more. Mr Bowie says that the colony is absolutely unique and that there is no other like it in the world. The jetty has been visited by film crews and private individuals from all over the world solely to see these creatures. The jetty is a popular dive site and provides valuable year-round revenue for local businesses. Mr Bowie's correspondence states:

The planned destruction of the jetty, for want of a relatively small amount of money for refurbishment and upkeep, seems to me to be a short-sighted waste of a unique and irreplaceable resource.

Mr Bowie further states:

I would ask you to assure me that you will take all possible steps to ensure that this resource is protected for all South Australians.

That is not a bad question. Can the minister inform Mr Bowie and the committee what he is doing to ensure that the resource is not destroyed?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: *Phycidurus eques* is the state's fish emblem, as the member quite rightly points out. We are aware of the Rapid Bay jetty and the importance that some in the community place on that habitat for the leafy sea dragon. At officer level there have been discussions. From memory, that jetty is the responsibility of minister Laidlaw under the Department of Transport. I have asked for transport officers and my officers to discuss the specific transport issues in relation to the jetty and what opportunities there are for us possibly to secure that jetty as a leafy sea dragon habitat. Certainly, that issue is not lost on the government.

To my knowledge we have not yet resolved that issue internally within the system. However, I recognise that that area is one of the well-known habitats and indeed a readily accessible habitat for the broader community. Obviously, other habitats exist in that general area, but that site is well known to the community. We are still doing work on that matter.

The point made by the honourable member and the author of the letter, Mr Bowie, is not lost on us. I will be able to update the honourable member in terms of the outcomes of the matter later in the year. I will make a note to keep the honourable member up to date on that matter.

Mr HILL: I have another question, Mr Acting Chairman.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I have a total of three questions.

Mr HILL: You have short-changed me: I have asked only two questions.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The member for MacKillop.

Mr WILLIAMS: My first question relates to coast protection and coast management with particular reference to the metropolitan beaches. I have a particular interest in this area because I am a member of the Public Works Committee, which has dealt with several projects along metropolitan beaches that have caused a great deal of public angst. Under the heading 'target' (2000-01) at page 10.5, it states:

Improve coastal protection and amenity by developing long-term options for the protection of the metropolitan coast.

There has been significant discussion in the media of late relating to the problems we encounter on our metropolitan beaches. Could the minister explain to the committee what medium and long-term strategies will be taken into consideration for the protection of our beaches?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: In answering this question, I want to put the beach replenishment program in some perspective for the committee. Sand erosion on Adelaide's beaches has been occurring naturally for thousands of years. Development on the coast since settlement has cut off sand supply to the erosion process, making it necessary for intervention in the form of sand replenishment and other management to provide coastal protection. The last significant replenishment campaign was in 1997, when approximately 600 000 cubic metres of sand was dredged onto the beach at Brighton from a sand source offshore from Port Stanvac.

It has been estimated that this replenishment sand will erode through natural processes by about 2002-03. Therefore, obviously, more sand will need to be put on the beach at or before that time. Stopping the replenishment program would result in a loss of sand from the metropolitan beaches and leave the coast subject then to damage from even minor

storms. Advice to me is that the cost of that damage would be many times greater than the cost of continuing the protection program. That is certainly the advice that I have been given. The sand source used for the replenishment program has been depleted to some degree, and the Coast Protection Board is continuing investigations to find suitable sand to continue the beach replenishment program.

Other methods of protecting the coast may not necessarily provide or would reduce the extent of sandy beaches. The long, sandy beach that characterises the Adelaide coastline has been estimated at providing recreational tourism and property capital value benefits of between \$15 million to \$21 million per annum and, on 1993 values, that is at least 10 times the value of maintaining the beaches. Other potential sand sources are therefore likely to be more expensive to access and obviously need to be considered in terms of their environmental impact as a sand source.

Future coast protection costs for metropolitan Adelaide may double in the mid term, which is one way to describe it. These costs, both for replenishment and beach management, have averaged approximately \$1 million a year for the past 10 years. In order to minimise the future cost, investigations will be carried out into ways to improve the sustainability of our beach replenishment program. Sustainability may be improved by more effectively using sand placed on the beach in the replenishment program. This might include slowing down the sand movement or, indeed, recycling sand within the metropolitan area. Methods by which this is done will have to be considered in the future, once we establish where the various sand sources are. For the member's benefit, one full-time equivalent is funded from the project budget to project manage the investigations for a term of some three years, and other work will be done through consultants funded on a project by project basis. That will give technical advice to the staff of DEH.

Mr WILLIAMS: In the South-East of the state quite a deal of waste material is being recycled, and the minister is no doubt aware that a lot of the waste product from the sawmilling and timber industry is being converted into garden mulch and potting mixes, at a quite considerable profit to the private operator who is doing that. Recently, a business has just gone into production in Millicent recycling biodegradable waste through an enormous worm farm, producing a soil conditioner. I believe that is a quite profitable exercise. I refer to that, because I have just recently received information from the Coorong council, which is in not only my electorate but also that of the member for Hammond. That council has a proposal to take green waste from the metropolitan area to Tailem Bend. The EPA has been rather reticent to agree with some of the things it wished to do. However, that is something the department should look into, because a huge opportunity exists within that project. I suggest that it look at what is happening with the worm farm in Millicent. I have already talked to the people from the Coorong council about that initiative. What is being done about the management of waste and encouraging recycling throughout South Australia, particularly in the metropolitan area?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: In recent years, community interest in waste issues has grown rapidly due to publicity regarding new landfills, the introduction of kerbside recycling and some uncertainty regarding any future availability of some disposal sites. The integrated waste strategy for metropolitan Adelaide sets out a number of key elements aimed at improving waste management practices by all sectors and stakeholders. Those elements include: the adoption of best practice standards; the

development of a planning framework for resource recovery; refining the various planning strategies; release of a ministerial PAR on waste disposal; the orderly closure of Garden Island and Wingfield; identification of sites for green waste treatment; and reforming of institutional arrangements. The proper implementation of strategy requires information, and this has been achieved through the EPA's waste audit conducted in 1998. The audit was conducted at all metropolitan landfills and has provided an understanding of both the content and the quantity of the waste stream. The EPA will be focussing on reducing the major waste streams identified in the audit. For the committee's interest, they are soil and cleanfill, recycling green waste and other industrial waste.

The audit has been paramount in effectively planning and implementing the waste strategy. The results are assisting the EPA in developing policies and procedures for minimisation, transport, treatment and disposal of commercial and industrial wastes. Green waste processors need sites urgently to cope with expected increases in the material to be sourced from the kerbside, which is a reflection of the success of the kerbside program, and the products developed by industry from this waste material need markets (and I note that the honourable member mentioned some in his question), and the benefits are well known to the horticultural and other sectors. However, issues remain regarding the quality and quantity of the material collected. These issues are being addressed by the EPA in conjunction with the Waste Management Committee, the Department of Industry and Trade and Planning SA.

The life cycle assessment is an important environmental management tool that provides a systematic approach to assessing the environmental performance of products and processes. The EPA contributed to the lifestyle inventory data project which began in New South Wales in 1997. This project is now providing important base data for the development of life cycle assessment within Australia. Outcomes relating to commonly recycled materials such as glass, aluminium and plastics have shown that recycling does help our environment and is clearly a worthwhile pursuit. Until recently, South Australia's kerbside recycling lagged behind that of other states. However, over the past year, we have seen a pleasing increase in investment from local government and industry, and significant work in market development by the state government and industry. This should result in extensive improvements in the amount of recyclables recovered, increased participation from the community and more stable and higher prices for collected commodities over the coming years.

Today I had the pleasure of launching a \$250 000 waste program for metropolitan Adelaide which mirrors a regional program that was run last year for \$250 000. So, in effect, we have doubled that program, whereby councils, community organisations or businesses can apply for a grant of up to \$40 000 for a project, which is 50 per cent of the project cost, or \$15 000 for consultancies for improving waste management and recycling and, therefore, reducing the amount of waste that is going to landfill.

Mr WILLIAMS: Recently in the press there has been much talk about the reconciliation process. Last week or over the weekend I was interested to read a comment that, because Aboriginal cultural studies have been taken on in our schools for some years, young people are coming out of our schools who have been studying Aboriginal culture for the whole of their time in schools. The writer of the article I have read says that this is the new hope for reconciliation. Basically, they were saying that they had given up on the older generation.

Does the same thing apply to environmental issues—that the older generations are seen as being somewhat of a lost cause, with the new hope being in our youth? I mention that because I note on page 10.24 that last year, along with DEET, there was a launching of the Youth Environment Council. Will the minister provide some information about what environmental benefits have been derived from funding by his department of the Youth Environment Council?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The Youth Environment Council is one of the Government's more formal links to the young people of South Australia with an interest in environmental care. Obviously, we have a lot of informal links with the volunteer programs that are run. This is one of our more formal links. The Youth Environment Council provides advice to government regarding youth perspectives on environmental ideas and their various concerns, and obviously supports youth environment involvement in environment action groups and action projects, more to the point. The council comprises young people from 10 to 21 years of age who meet on a quarterly basis to share environmental ideas, and they contribute to policy development and develop strategies to support other young people to take an active interest in their local or broader environment. In February this year, as one of my first duties as Minister for Environment and Heritage, I had the pleasure of launching the Youth Environment Council's web site ECOSAY, which I am sure the honourable member would be interested in using. The address is www.ecosay.sa.gov.au. Associated with that web site is a community plan.

The Youth Environment Council established the web site as an opportunity to provide another communication link between young people with a common interest in the environment and to gain information about their views and concerns. The community plan was a booklet developed by delegates of the Youth Environment Council, and to guide young people—and inspire them, hopefully—to initiate environmental care projects within their schools and their various youth or community organisations. During 2000, a community plan will be distributed to all schools in the state and the key youth organisations, and workshops will be conducted by the Youth Environment Council members for young people to introduce them to strategies outlined in the community plan and support participants to develop the skills necessary to establish environmental care projects.

The community plan encourages young people to become involved in established programs—for example, programs that are known well to all of us such as Landcare, Waterwatch and Coastcare—or indeed to initiate projects linked to their specific interests. Through the Youth Environment Council activities and environmental care projects, young people are gaining knowledge of ecological processes, environmental management and leadership, decision making, communication and environmental restoration skills. As the delegates say within their community plan:

We must foster new optimism about the future and teach young people so that we have the knowledge, abilities and understandings that will allow us to take purposeful action for the benefit of all.

Mr HILL: Recently we were privileged to witness a rare flood event in the Lake Eyre Basin. The event highlights the extreme variability of the area and the urgent need to ensure the long-term protection of the environmental values it contains. In December 1999 your predecessor and then minister for the environment announced her intention to pursue a legislatively binding agreement with the other states. What is the progress of this undertaking, what departmental

funds have been allocated to the development of this undertaking and are there conservation measures to protect the region? Given the opportunity provided by the flooding, what extra moneys have been allocated for biological study and research in the area—research, I might point out, which is sorely needed—as described in the 1999 review of the Innamincka Regional Reserve?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: My understanding is that that is an issue that is handled by Minister Brindal under the divisions. I think he is up tomorrow. So, rather than waste one of your questions on me today, you might want to ask it of him tomorrow. My understanding is that the agreement is progressing but he will have all the detail there. I will alert him that you have raised that matter, so that he has an answer for you tomorrow.

Mr HILL: I refer now to output 3.2, 'pastoral management services': last year \$1.844 million was allocated; this year it is \$1.5 million—just over a quarter of a million dollar decrease in funding—yet the same descriptors and performance indicators are indicated. How can you achieve the same outcomes with a smaller amount of money?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am advised that the variation is around \$170 000 or \$180 000. Is that right—the variation you are talking about?

Mr HILL: It is \$274 000, according to my readings. Is my maths wrong? I am referring to 3.2: it was \$1.905 million last year and this year it is \$1.4 million, if I do not have my figures mixed up. So, in fact, that is half a million dollars.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I think the member might be comparing last year's budget to this year's budget.

Mr HILL: No, I am comparing output class 3.2, budget expense 1.4, with output class—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HILL: I am just explaining—with the expense of this output, \$1.905 from last year. So, they are two different documents, the same line.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will inform the member where I obtained the figure of \$174 000. My officers have given me advice on the estimated expenditure this year, the \$1.4 million—so we are consistent there—as against the estimated result of \$1.574 million, which gives us the variation of \$174 000. The advice on that is that it simply relates to revenue expenses associated with externally funded projects. Many of the projects under these programs are NHT funded, or external source funded. As I mentioned earlier (either in my opening comments or in answer to a previous question), we have taken a conservative approach to what NHT funds we may receive. So, you have to bid in. That is why the estimated result varies significantly to your budget: because you may well budget conservatively. In this case we budgeted to spend \$1.4 million but in actual fact the estimated result is that last year we would have spent \$1.57 million. So, it is a variation in relation to the expenses associated with externally funded projects.

Mr HILL: I have a supplementary question. I appreciate that the outcome is less than what was budgeted, but that is why I am comparing what was budgeted this year with what was budgeted last year. I agree with the minister: it is probably unfair to compare what is budgeted this year with the outcome from last year, but the minister's predecessor budgeted \$1.9 million last year. If you underspent that, that in itself would be an interesting question. But this year you are budgeting half a million less. Presumably, what applies this year to commonwealth funding applied last year. Why have you budgeted half a million dollars less, and how can

you be expected to achieve the same kind of outcomes in terms of performance indicators with less money?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I ask Mr Holmes, the acting CEO, to make some comment in relation to this matter. However, I just want to make these comments. This whole area relies on revenue streams, both from the public and from the commonwealth. So, there is always some movement on what you budget as to what you will eventually get, depending on how those revenue streams perform. I will ask Mr Holmes to add something to see if we can clarify the matter for the member.

Mr Holmes: If you look at the base funding for pastoral from 1999-2000 to 2000-01, there is no change in that base funding. So, I am at a loss to explain the comparison between the budgeted figure and the actual expense, or projected expense, for 1999-2000. I suspect that what is in that budgeted figure from last year's papers is some estimate of external funds, because there are considerable NHT funds and external funds in the pastoral program. But the recurrent funding for pastoral has not changed significantly between 1999-2000 and 2000-01.

Mr HILL: I accept the explanation. However, the papers are obviously deficient if they do not explain what is going on—because, clearly, more was budgeted last year than this year. If last year you included NHT funding in a more aggressive way than you are this year, perhaps that should have been explained. I now want to move on to other issues, but it is an interesting point and perhaps the minister can look at it in detail at a later time.

I now refer to output 3.3, which is native vegetation—and I apologise: I read the wrong line last time in terms of the figures. Last year, you had budgeted in the output class \$1.844 million and this year it is \$1.57 million, or a cut of about \$274 000. Once again, it is the same description in performance indicators. Why is there a reduction in the amount of money for this vitally important part of the environment portfolio, and what are the consequences of there being less money? Will there be less investigation of complaints; will there be fewer prosecutions; or will there be fewer inspectors?

Ms BEDFORD: Less vegetation to look after.

Mr HILL: That's true, less vegetation!

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As the member knows, and I think as the parliament generally agrees, South Australia has been one of the leaders in this program to conserve, manage and enhance remnant native vegetation over the past 20 years or so. Our programs are currently out under the framework of the Native Vegetation Act 1991, with financial support from the Native Vegetation Fund coordinated through the Native Vegetation Council. In 1999-2000, some \$935 000 was allocated to the Native Vegetation Fund. Of that, around \$600 000 was allocated to the fencing program for heritage agreements and a further \$70 000 to the annual grant programs to assist in the management of heritage areas.

Natural Heritage Trust funding also has supported these programs, and that support is dependent upon the state maintaining its current funding levels. The Heritage Agreement Scheme represents the cornerstone of the off-park conservation program, with over 550 000 hectares of native vegetation protected in more than 1 100 heritage areas.

Another major funding item has been native vegetation research. In the past year, the Native Vegetation Council has allocated around \$100 000 in this area, including support for the Mundulla yellows research and for the vegetation surveys in the Far North, the Riverland, the Mid North and the Mount

Lofty Ranges. Other significant budget items include financial incentives for further heritage areas and several grants to assist on-ground conservation programs such as the Mid Murray and Tatiara council districts.

It is important that funding for the program be maintained at about the current level, and South Australia has maintained its leadership status with off-park native vegetation conservation. The current heritage area fencing program needs to be sustained to satisfy the management needs of land-holders involved. On a similar basis, continued programs relating to the vegetation management and research are needed to protect the biodiversity values of native vegetation and to maintain the role of native vegetation addressing serious land management issues such as dry land salinity.

I indicate to the member that, in relation to the operating statement in the expenses on page 10.36 of the papers, the budget last year (1999-2000) was \$935 000. The estimated result is an expenditure of \$985 000, and we have budgeted for that level of expenditure again. So, we have budgeted on native vegetation funding and, in that line, an extra \$50 000 over the budget last year—in other words, the same amount that was spent last year.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: My question relates to the role of our various parks and their contribution to tourism in South Australia. Can the minister elaborate on what the parks do to encourage and promote tourism?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As many of us would know, South Australia has quite a unique and diverse landscape and, therefore, ecotourism is an important and significant economic contributor to the state. National parks form, I suppose, certainly part of the backbone of nature-based tourism and provide some core areas for ecotourism opportunities. Ecotourism, of course, has especially important responsibilities, as it is one of the few industries allowed to develop in and use many of the world's great natural sites.

Successful ecotourism experiences do not just happen; they are constructed from careful planning, an eye for detail and a careful partnership between business, the community and the environment. The Parks Agenda commits around \$30 million for parks over six years to 2002-03. This investment is reaping and will continue to reap major benefits throughout the state resulting from the upgrading of services and facilities in parks such as the Innes, Flinders Ranges, Cleland, Coorong, Naracoorte and Kangaroo Island parks. Information, interpretation, education and promotional programs have been upgraded to improve the quality of those services and to more effectively market parks and wildlife as key tourism assets.

A study of the economic contribution of parks is presently being prepared and a comprehensive, ongoing visitor monitoring and survey is assessing visitor characteristics and needs to assist park facilities and services development. The visitor statistics program is well advanced and provides essential data on visitor use and attitudes. A good example of how improved facilities and interpretation is supported by the public was provided in my earlier answer, when I commented on Naracoorte caves and the Wonambi Fossil Centre.

Visitation to that site, as I noted, has nearly doubled. I think that previously I used a figure of 80 000, but this briefing note tells me that it is 70 000. Certainly, ongoing employment opportunities are provided through the centre and the lease of the Bent-wing Cafe. Major tourism developments, funded by the Parks Agenda program and currently under way include:

- Flinders Chase National Park-Rocky River visitor precinct, including visitor centre, camping, platypus viewing and facilities at Remarkable Rocks and Cape du Couedic. In addition, funding through Transport SA has enabled sealing of the road from the entrance to Remarkable Rocks.

I am sure that those who have driven the road will be greatly relieved at that.

- Penguin habitat and interpretation facilities at Granite Island, including a new stairway to the island's plateau. This development is occurring in conjunction with the South Australian Tourism Commission and the restaurant-penguin tour lessee.
- Continuing the upgrade of facilities at the Cleland Wildlife Park, including the development of an environmental education centre.
- Construction of visitor facilities in the Coorong National Park, including car parking, camping, interpretation and a landing facility at Long Point.
- Formula Flinders: upgrade of camping and day visitor sites throughout the Flinders Ranges National Park.
- Upgrade of Seal Bay Visitor Centre.
- Development of Morialta Conservation Park as the key bushwalking area in the Mount Lofty Ranges, with links to the Heysen Trail and other Hills attractions.

National Parks and Wildlife is committed to ensuring that benefits accrue to the state through effective and collaborative partnerships with the South Australian Tourism Commission and stakeholders in the tourism industry and regional communities.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit the Innes National Park and open its new visitor centre, valued at around \$1 million, from memory. There is no doubt that that has been very positively received not only by the park staff but also by the visitors and by the community in general. It is that sort of upgrade that will help enhance tourism not only within the state but generally to our national parks in the future.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: My next question concerns the conservation value of our parks, which obviously is critical. What is being done to enhance the conservation aspects of our parks?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: South Australia has some 300 parks that conserve landscapes from the stony deserts of the outback to the mallee and the coastal heaths of Kangaroo Island. These parks, particularly by virtue of their size, are the linchpins for the long-term conservation of wildlife, but we must not lose sight of the tremendous efforts being made outside parks by government and the community in general.

National parks protect a diverse range of ecosystems that provide habitats for wild life, as well as significant geological sites and Aboriginal and European cultural sites for the benefit and enjoyment of current and future generations. Our national parks have undergone rapid growth in recent years, with significant landscapes added to the park system. Many of these areas have been converted to conservation from other land uses, and consequently bear the marks of having had their natural values eroded by neglect, feral animals and weeds, and uncontrolled use.

In recent years National Parks and Wildlife SA has given a lot of attention to reversing this decline. These investments in the environment of our parks complement the investment in the visitor facilities of our parks. It is vitally important to ensure that the very things that attract visitors to the parks are not degraded: it is the unique wildlife and landscapes that set our national parks apart.

There are three components to biodiversity conservation of national parks: removing threats to natural biodiversity; restoring habitats; and returning species. The Biodiversity Conservation program of National Parks and Wildlife SA provides a scientific biodiversity conservation management service throughout the state. The goal of the program is to establish an ecological approach to biodiversity conservation that delivers a practical and sustainable management system for protection and recovery of the state's unique wildlife and wildlife habitats.

Initiatives under the Parks Agenda program and the Natural Heritage Trust have given rise to the following advances in recent years:

- A significant reduction or eradication of key feral animal species and weed species from parks such as the Coorong National Park, Flinders Ranges National Park, Gammon Ranges National Park, Lincoln National Park, Coffin Bay National Park, Sir Joseph Banks Group Island Conservation Park, Belair National Park, Venus Bay Conservation Park, Onkaparinga Recreation Park and Cleland Conservation Park is being achieved.
- These programs have facilitated recovery or reintroduction of key threatened fauna species such as the hooded plover, the yellow-footed rock wallaby, the brush-tail bettong, the southern brown bandicoot and the stick nest rat.
- Habitat recovery and revegetation programs are repairing significant degraded areas within these parks, and a range of threatened species is benefiting from these strategies.
- A framework for the use and control of fire for ecological purposes in parks has been developed.
- A strategic and scientific approach to the management and control of abundant kangaroo species is in place for the Flinders Ranges National Park and Para Wirra Recreation Park.

A good example of this achievement is Flinders Ranges Bounceback, an ecological restoration program that has been running in the northern Flinders, from the Flinders Ranges to the Gammon Ranges National Parks. I answered some questions on that in detail earlier.

Similarly, Seal Bay on Kangaroo Island has been carefully managed for many years to ensure that visitor experiences are enhanced and impacts on sea lion populations are minimised. The resultant use of Seal Bay beach for pupping is the stamp of the success of this management program.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: The minister noted Kangaroo Island. Will he elaborate further on some of the developments that will occur in managing our parks on Kangaroo Island?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As I noted in my previous answer, the department is focusing effort and resources on tourism facilities and management infrastructure within Flinders Chase National Park, an area of great importance for both biodiversity conservation and regional tourism. Funding for these programs has been provided through a range of sources, including the state government's Kangaroo Island Tourism Infrastructure program, the Parks Agenda program and the commonwealth government's Regional Tourism program. Highlights in 1999-2000 at Flinders Chase National Park include:

- Completed upgrading and sealing of the park entrance road and Cape du Couedic road (\$4.4 million funded through the South Coast Road upgrade and Kangaroo Island Tourism Infrastructure program), including the design and construction of new car and bus parking facilities at Admirals Arch, Remarkable Rocks and Cape du Couedic lighthouse.

- Completed construction of new visitor facilities and walking trail network at Admirals Arch and Remarkable Rocks, incurring expenditure of \$240 000.
- Completed construction of new visitor access and interpretation at Cape du Couedic, incurring expenditure of \$340 000.
- Completed upgrade of heritage buildings and road access at Cape du Couedic Lighthouse Heritage Precinct and Weir's Cove, incurring expenditure of \$110 000.

In 1998-99, National Parks and Wildlife completed a comprehensive concept plan that aims to present the Rocky River Precinct, the gateway into Flinders Chase National Park, as a major tourism destination in its own right, through the provision of world class tourism facilities. The concept plan established a blueprint for future management of the site, including the following key elements:

- Construction of what will be a major visitor/administration centre complex, including quality interpretation spaces, commercial services area and staff office accommodation.
- Redevelopment of camping facilities, including the provision of an ablutions block.
- Provision of expanded and improved car and bus parking areas, with associated day use facilities.
- Creation of a comprehensive walking trail system with complementary interpretation and signage.
- Removal of current management infrastructure from the core area of the precinct to locations discrete from visitor access.
- Construction of three new ranger residences and workshop compound.
- Rehabilitation and revegetation of degraded areas.

National Parks and Wildlife is currently undertaking detailed planning and design work associated with the redevelopment of these facilities and infrastructure. The redevelopment work has been funded largely through the Parks Agenda program, with an indicative budget of around \$4.7 million over five years. Car and bus parking and the new camping area have been completed, using a mix of road upgrade and Parks Agenda funding.

National Parks and Wildlife, in conjunction with the University of Adelaide, is designing the Flinders-Baudin Research Centre that will form part of the state's Encounter 2002 celebration in April 2002. National Parks and Wildlife has funded the design and project management components of the centre along with the provision of services. The university is currently seeking funding for the construction of the centre and that is yet to be sourced: I think it is around \$800 000. As the project exceeds \$4 million in value, it will need to go before the Public Works Committee and my understanding is that a hearing date is yet to be set.

Mr HILL: The number and length of the answers to dorothy dix questions is seriously threatening the agreement I have with the minister about concluding, because I am only on output 3, there are nine or 10 output areas and we are about halfway through the time. If the minister is as loquacious in reply to members from his side, we might be here a bit longer.

Before the questions from the member for Fisher, I asked about native vegetation and I found the answer from the minister disappointing. I will give him another opportunity to answer my question, which was about the effect of the reduction in funding on the ability of officers to follow up complaints and prosecute. In so doing, I indicate to him a number of examples that have been brought to my attention

of cases where there has been illegal clearance of native vegetation and very little action on the part of the department.

I refer to a couple of cases in the South-East. At Kangaring Properties, Keith, nearly two kilometres of roadside on Beckman's Road was cleared illegally without any prosecution or follow-up. I am also told that an illegal clearance of native vegetation at the Overland Corner was conducted by a potato merchant, and I understand that involved 243 trees. I have the names of the people but I will not read them out. Another unfortunate example in the South-East, of which the minister is well aware, relates to Bonney's Camp. An individual took action and cleared a piece of native vegetation when property nearby, which had already been cleared, could have been used. Have those examples been investigated? If so, what are the outcomes of those investigations and will there be some prosecutions?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Rather than give another long, disappointing response—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Perhaps I can give a short, disappointing response. The member mentioned five or six cases, if not more, and I will have to see exactly what the position is on each of them and provide him with that information. I refer the member to the figures that I mentioned before. From memory, I believe that they show that we are budgeting \$985 000 for the Native Vegetation Fund. Last year, the estimated result was \$985 000. The previous budget was \$935 000. If last year's budget was \$935 000 and this year's budget is \$985 000, I am advised that is a \$50 000 increase.

Mr HILL: I have a supplementary question. In Portfolio Statement, volume 2, output 3.3, native vegetation management services, the total 2000-01 budget expense is listed as \$1.57 million, compared with output 4.3 on page 928 of the 1999-2000 Portfolio Statement, for which the budget expense was \$1.844 million. There is clearly a difference of several hundred thousand dollars.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: That was a statement more than a question.

Mr HILL: I will go on. I refer to output class 4, which is heritage conservation. Last year's output class expenses were \$2.838 million, as shown in the budget papers. This year it is \$2.28 million. That means \$558 000 has been cut. Will the minister explain the consequences of that cut to the protection of heritage buildings and items in South Australia?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will ask the Acting CEO to give some advice on that.

Mr Holmes: It is the same issue that has been raised before, where we are comparing the budget figures for 2000-01 with the budget figures for 1999-2000. As we have indicated, there are a number of reasons for variations. First, as we have said, there has been a different treatment in terms of how commonwealth funds have been considered this year in comparison with last year, so that is one reason for a significant difference in the figures. Secondly, there have been changes in revenue from external projects, and that is a factor that needs to be taken into account. However, as I said previously, the base funding for each of these programs has not varied greatly between the years. It is incorrect to say that there have been significant reductions in allocations.

Mr HILL: I am frustrated because I am reading the government's budget papers, comparing last year with this year, yet government officers say there is no difference in the funding. If there is no difference, the budget figures should be the same. Perhaps my error could be explained to me.

When I read the papers compared with last year, there is a cut. If the minister and his officers are saying that there is no substantial difference in outcomes, why was so much money put in last year that was not spent?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Without trying to delay the committee, because I know that members want to keep to a time frame and I am happy to do that, I will give an overview which we can reflect on over lunch and which might clarify for the member for Kurna and the committee what my officers are trying to advise. The expenditure of the portfolio is supported primarily by three incomes: commonwealth income; revenue generated by the agency through the sale of its products and sources (so-called 'own source income'); and an appropriation from government. That background is necessary to understand the fluctuations in expenditure across financial years.

The member for Kurna raised reduction in programs, and perhaps I can work through some of those issues in a broad sense. As I have already advised the committee on a number of occasions, the 2000-01 budget has been formulated on a conservative basis with regard to commonwealth receipts and hence expenditure, given the uncertainty of the timing of the approval processes associated with some of the initiatives, particularly NHT. This approach accounts for some \$6 million in difference between financial years.

Mr HANNA: You budgeted for a cut.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: No, it is subject to application to the commonwealth. Until the commonwealth signs off on the application, the department has taken a conservative approach to the budget. As I mentioned in one of my answers, there is an application process into the NHT—a basic state committee—and they apply up. The commonwealth then decides where it will spend its money. We are not clear on what the commonwealth will fund, so the department has taken a conservative approach to that, and I think wisely, otherwise next year members will ask me why we budgeted for such a high amount if we had no hope of achieving it.

Mr Hanna interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: You are asking this year's minister on this year's strategy.

Mr Hanna interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We are, but you are asking this year's minister on this year's strategy; you are criticising me on this year's strategy. That is one reason for the supposed apparent reduction in expenditure. The estimated result for 1999-2000 includes some one-off expenditure. That is due to a carryover from the previous year of the order of \$13 million. A significant proportion of this amount reflects revenue contributions received from the commonwealth for specific projects income in the 1998-99 outcome but not spent until 1999-2000. That treatment can be verified by reference to the Auditor-General's Report for the year ended 30 June 1999.

For 2000-01 there is an expected decline in the department's own source income of roughly \$8.5 million. This results from a number of one-off receipts during 1999-2000, for example, the \$1.9 million financial contribution towards the construction costs of the Cape de Couedic road, which I have referred to. It also results from conservative estimates of other income from the sale of other products and services because of a decline in land administration product sales income due to what we estimate to be a more conservative property sector during 2000-01.

Having noted the above, I am hoping that helps explain why there are some differences in figures. Importantly, the appropriation from the Consolidated Account clearly

indicates not only growth in funding during 1999-2000, evidenced by a comparison of the budget estimate and estimated result (\$108 million versus \$116 million respectively), but maintenance of this funding commitment during 2000-01. It is \$108 million increased to \$116 million as far as appropriation from Consolidated Account is concerned.

The advice to me is that the estimated result for 1999-2000 includes a number of one-off appropriation adjustments that may well mask the full extent of the ongoing base funding provided by the government. Consequently, new initiative funding announced as part of the 2000-01 budget—for instance, \$1 million for park infrastructure, which relates to this shadow minister's portfolio, and \$2 million extra for recreation and sports facilities, which relates to Michael Wright's shadow portfolio—are not clearly apparent when comparing the 1999-2000 estimated result and the 2000-01 budget. I hope that the federal funding and the other revenue sources that are outside the government's control to some extent explain what some of the variances are in a broad sense, but I make the point that the Consolidated Account appropriation has increased from \$108 million to \$116 million.

[Sitting suspended from 1.03 to 2 p.m.]

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I have a question regarding some of the work being carried out in Belair National Park. I was very impressed to notice the rehabilitation and restoration of the riverine environments in that park, particularly Minno Creek. I understand that it is being done jointly with the Patawalonga Catchment Water Board and National Parks and Wildlife Service officers. Could the minister provide detail about that excellent program?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Minno Creek has been degraded over a number of years by the introduction of plants such as olives and desert ash, and this has not held it in good stead. In 1999 the department therefore engaged water management consultants to prepare a Minno Creek restoration plan along 1.8 kilometres of the creek in Belair National Park. The plan was widely distributed to a range of stakeholders including Sturt Consultative Committee, Friends of Belair National Park, the Patawalonga Catchment Water Board (as the member for Fisher mentioned) and, of course, our own officers.

The proposal to upgrade this important watercourse received very strong support, with an emphasis being placed on the need to ensure that effective public consultation and information was provided both on the work being undertaken and on the benefits of removing exotic species and, therefore, restoring this watercourse. To that end, graphic signage was developed in consultation with the Patawalonga Catchment Water Board and displayed at the project site from early April prior to the on-ground works being implemented in early May.

Development of this project proceeded with due regard to utilising leading practice standards and the professional advice given. The works program will cost around \$48 000. It is still in progress and involves cutting out the exotic trees with minimal disturbance to native vegetation and heritage trees and, also, ensuring minimal soil disturbance to reduce the likelihood of erosion. Excess timber and mulch from this project has made available to the local residents—I do not know whether the member for Fisher has been fortunate enough to get some of the mulch!

Follow-up work will involve revegetation of the area, both naturally and by the planting of local endemic species, and will continue to involve the very active Friends of Belair National Park and other community interest groups. In addition to the very obvious benefits to the environment within the park, the cooperation between our officers, the community interest groups and the Patawalonga Catchment Water Board will ensure that the project will no doubt be a big success. Certainly, I acknowledge the member for Fisher's very strong interest in not only the friends groups of the park and Minno Creek in general but also Belair National Park.

Mr HILL: I refer to output class 5, 'national parks and botanic gardens management'. At page 10.13 there is a set of matters which come under the province of 'national parks management services'. Can the minister give a breakdown in dollar terms for each of those services; and, in particular, can he indicate what amount of money is going into tourism and other economic activities in the parks compared with issues to do with biodiversity management?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We do not have the dollar values split between the two categories that the honourable member requires. We will try to make some judgment and get a brief to him on how we allocate the split.

Mr HILL: How many officers are employed by national parks and, in general terms, what are their functions?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The figure for parks' staffing for permanent, temporary and casual positions is about 294.7 in 2000 compared to 243 in 1995. So, a total of about 295 staff are employed in the parks system. These comprise 181.8 permanent positions, 64 temporary positions, 15.4 one to five year contracts and 33.5 casual positions. Among these are 105.5 ranger positions and 46.6 specialist research technical positions, with the balance being weekly paid employees. National Parks and Wildlife has employed 45 trainees across park management and administrative areas under the government's youth training program, with an increased emphasis on park management training positions. They have also made a significant commitment to providing employment for Aboriginal people in the parks systems in the following capacities: 10 permanent employees, 10 temporary employees and three traineeships. It should be noted also that Natural Heritage Trust funding has resulted in six contractor positions.

Membership:

Mr Snelling substituted for Mr Hanna.

Mr HILL: Last year, in the outputs section under 'performance indicators-quality', one of the indicators was the percentage of each biogeographic region represented within the formal reserve system; for example, 13.94 per cent of the Gawler biogeographic region was represented, zero percentage of Finke and 58.8 per cent of the Nullarbor. In last year's documents, the description under the output class referred to 'management of national parks to achieve a comprehensive, adequate and representative reserve system'. This year, it does not have those figures under indicators, nor does that description appear in those words in the general description of output class 5.1. Is the government moving away from that commitment; if not, why are those figures not contained in the indicators; and can the minister inform us what progress has been made in each of those areas this past 12 months?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will ask the acting CEO to answer the question.

Mr Holmes: First, I will make just a general comment about performance indicators. They are relatively new and they will evolve and be improved year by year. They provide a basis for useful discussion about how best to measure performance. In relation to the National Reserve System, it is seen that it is better to work at a level of definition lower than the bioregions, given that there are, I think, fewer than 20 bioregions for the state. It is preferable to use the notion of environmental association, which gives one a greater level of detail; and so the performance indicators are now expressed in terms of environmental associations represented in the reserve system. If one looks at page 10.13, the same notion is expressed in terms of environmental associations rather than bioregional reserves.

Both sets of information are available and, in fact, the reporting that is done through the Natural Heritage Trust on the NRS system provides both levels of detail. That information is available but it was seen that a better performance indicator was the use of environmental associations.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Perhaps I can give some examples of how we have tried to progress towards a more comprehensive reserve system. The state Comprehensive, Adequate and Representative Reserve System (CARRS) program is supported by the National Reserve System program of the Natural Heritage Trust. The trust provides \$2 for every \$1 spent by the state towards the purchase of land to establish protected areas provided that the land meets certain criteria. South Australia is divided into 382 unique ecological classifications of land called environmental associations. CARRS is principally directed towards identifying gaps in representation within the reserve system of these environmental associations.

At present there are 313 environmental associations with 10 per cent of the area protected within the reserves. Of these 182 are not represented at all; 20 environmental associations have representation in the optimum range of 10 per cent to 20 per cent; and 49 have more than 20 per cent within the reserve system. All the latter environmental associations have low economic value for pastoralism or agriculture and access to mineral and petroleum is largely unimpeded. These areas are dune fields, mallee, salt lake or rugged mountains. Gaps that require filling in the reserve system are more likely to be in pastoral and agricultural regions. Targets within agricultural regions are focused on remnants of native vegetation.

During 1999-2000, two areas were purchased to establish new protected areas. I earlier mentioned Paney Station (120 000 hectares for \$916 000) to establish the Gawler Ranges National Park. The other area is Jaensch's land at Tailem Bend (241 hectares for \$25 000) to protect rare and/or threatened grassland and grassy woodland plants and animals threatened by rural living development. In addition to the state and commonwealth financial contributions to CARRS, donor funding from the Nature Foundation of South Australia can be expected; for example, the foundation provided \$50 000 towards the purchase of Paney Station.

Targets for acquisition in 2000-01 will focus on the under-represented environmental associations subject to threatening processes such as land development and grazing. Priority will be given first to places with rare or threatened species and communities, and then to new parks with high tourism and regional development potential. A project officer is also being employed to develop the regional plans aimed at improving the quality of the reserve system by identifying complemen-

tary private and other government protected areas and opportunities with these groups to establish further protected areas under the national reserve system program; and also recognising opportunities to improve the quality of the reserve system, the reclassification of reserves, adding government land to protect biodiversity, resolve part boundary issues or improve connectivity between protected areas.

Mr HILL: I appreciate the detailed answer but I must say to the minister and to the officer, Mr Holmes, that to even the casual observer the output classes or performance indicators that were used last time make more sense than the statistical measurements the minister provides on this occasion. I understand what it means when Stoney Plains or the Nullarbor are written down. The figures given this time might mean something to people in the bureaucracy but I do not think that they mean a lot to the world. Will the minister provide me with the outcomes for the past 12 months in terms of what was provided last year, that is, in terms of those 15 biogeographic regions?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Not a problem.

Mr HILL: I turn now to the resources task force report into mineral resources about which, I am sure, the minister is aware. I asked questions yesterday of the Minister for Mines and Energy. The report produced a number of recommendations about strategies for mining in South Australia. One strategy which was recommended and which has caused some concern in the environmental movement, particularly those interested in national parks, is the strategy that states, 'as a matter of urgency provide access for low-impact exploration on all lands'. That is a pretty absolute statement. There is a concern, of course, that this means exploration on lands where exploration is currently prohibited. Can the minister rule out an extension to the reserve lands on which exploration can happen, and I particularly refer to areas such as the Flinders Ranges, Flinders Chase on Kangaroo Island, Belair, Cleland, and so on?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I understood that the government had released a response to that report.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As I am sure that response indicates, we certainly are not looking at opening up the sort of areas mentioned by the honourable member, that is, Flinders, Belair and those sorts of areas.

Mr HILL: Does the minister rule out opening up any other areas of the state that are currently protected?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I can give that.

Mr HILL: I refer to the Gammon Ranges National Park, a matter about which I am sure the minister has received plenty of correspondence. I have certainly received correspondence from a range of sources. There is a proposition that BHP, which currently has a mining lease over part of the Gammon Ranges, is planning to sell it to Manna Hill Resources. The sale of this land may well lead to exploration and mining in that national park. To give the committee an indication of some of the concern, Mr Bill Hann, President of the South Australian branch of Native Fish Australia, emailed me recently. With respect to that proposition, in part, Mr Hann's email states:

We feel that the current proposal for mining in the Gammon Ranges National Park, proposed by Manna Hill Resources Limited, to be unacceptable. The Gammon Ranges National Park, and specifically Weetoola Gorge, is an amazing area of environmental significance being home to unique fauna and flora. . . We express our concern over the potential impact to the environment caused by the

initiation of mining in Weetoola Gorge by Manna Hill Resources, particularly the fish species found nowhere else in the world.

I will not read all of them but I have received a half a dozen letters from various people expressing similar concerns. I point out that Manna Hill Mining is, if not in liquidation, close to being in liquidation. It is currently being controlled under a deed of company arrangement. The company is obviously under some pressure to get a return for its shareholders and to get itself out of liquidation. I am sure that it is pushing hard to get access to mining in this area. Can the minister rule out mining exploration and mining in the Gammon Ranges?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As the member may know, I recently visited the Gammon Ranges, specifically to have a look at the area. I had never been to the area before, so I spent two days up there. I spent some time with both officers of my department and with Mr Moore and his representatives to hear both sides of the argument. I need to clarify the background to the park and how it happens to be jointly proclaimed in relation to the lease. Prior to the inclusion of Balkanoona Station in the Gammon Ranges National Park in 1982 BHP held mining licences 4059 to 4067 over a magnesite deposit in Wetoola Gorge. Under the terms of the inclusion of this area into the park, these leases and their rights were preserved, and subsequently BHP, for its own reasons, has chosen not to mine these sites, although it did have some preliminary trial holes; there are three there, from memory, and they are quite big, going into the hill. However, the company did not go on and then further mine the site, for its own reasons.

Under a rationalisation program of its Australian assets, BHP has been negotiating with Manna Hill Resources for the sale of these leases. I was not sure whether the honourable member mentioned land or leases, but I will just clarify that it was the sale of the leases. An agreement was reached between the companies, and the application for transfer of the mining leases was lodged with Primary Industries and Resources on 15 July last year. Under the terms of the constitution of the Gammon Ranges National Park, the approval of the Minister for Environment and Heritage must be sought and obtained before the transfer can proceed. As the honourable member has mentioned, Wetoola Gorge has significant conservation, recreation and landscape values, and both Wetoola Gorge and Balkanoona Creek, which flows through the gorge, are considered to be amongst some of the more significant and important features of the Gammon Ranges National Park.

This area supports the yellow-footed rock wallaby and endemic fish, as the honourable member has mentioned, and the Flinders Ranges gudgeon—this is vulnerable under the IEC and is in the threatened Australian freshwater fishes list. This part of the park is also recognised as an important bird watching site and includes one of the more popular walking trails in the north Flinders. As I have said, I have visited the site. I have asked my officers to prepare a report on all the environmental considerations in relation to the proposal to transfer the lease. When I receive that, I will have to make some judgment about it. The fact is that it is a joint proclaimed park. I as minister have to make a decision but cannot do so as yet, simply because I do not have the information before me. When I receive that information, I will make a judgment on that matter. This is not on the government's initiative: it is certainly on Manna Hill's initiative that we now find ourselves in the position of having

to make this judgment. We are waiting on the department, which had extensive discussions with the proponent about the proposal. It will give me the advice in due course, and then I will have to make some judgment from there.

Mr HILL: What time line are we looking at?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: It would still be months away rather than days. We are not deciding on it tomorrow. A complex judgment needs to be made and, even when the department gives me its advice, I may then still seek other advice just to convince myself of one argument over the other. Without putting too fine a time line on it, it will still probably be a couple of months away.

Mr HILL: A short while ago, I asked a question about the amount of money going into the parks for tourism and economic activity. On 25 May the minister put out a media release saying there was an extra \$1 million for national parks maintenance which I think was to maintain infrastructure for tourism, and so on. We invest a lot in our parks for tourism and economic purposes. What does the minister's department get out of those tourists? How does the minister cream some of the benefit from those people? Obviously private entrepreneurs in and around the parks get money, but how does the community generally get benefit in environmental terms out of those visitors?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Do you want the answer specifically in environmental terms or generally as to how the department benefits out of it?

Mr HILL: If there is a difference, both would be interesting.

Mr Holmes: The benefits are multiple. One of the primary bases is to ensure that people understand what national parks are there for. The more people you get into your parks—provided you manage them appropriately—the better you are able to sell a message and explain to them the value of conservation more generally. That is a very significant driver in managing parks. A second response is that, through our general reserves trust, the parks service collects around \$5.5 million to \$6 million each year which is channelled back into largely the provision of visitor facilities, but some of that money does go into conservation works in parks.

In terms of structuring the budget, there is clearly a balance between the amount allocated towards conservation works and the amount allocated towards tourism works. It was recognised that the infrastructure in parks was in a very poor state and for the past five years considerable effort has been put into upgrading and improving infrastructure generally. However, you would have to see a time when the shift would take place to resource in more of the conservation programs as that infrastructure is brought up to a reasonable standard.

Mr HILL: I have been contacted by a range of people—and I am sure that once again the minister has as well—about Scott Creek Conservation Park. The permission for horse riding in those parks, as one person says, 'seems to be in direct contradiction with the management philosophy and considerations'. Without reading all the letters I have, will the minister indicate his policy on horse riding in our parks?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I know about the issue to which the honourable member refers—the Scott Creek Conservation Park. I have met with Tom Hands, who I am sure has written to the honourable member and others. To his great credit, Tom is committed to that park and the associated native vegetation issues. On the other side of the argument, there are people just as committed people. In particular, I have met with a gentleman called Paul Maberack from the local horse

riding community—and I am not sure whether or not the honourable member's colleague, the shadow spokesperson for recreation and sport, has met with him. There is a group committed to enjoying the experiences of riding through different landscapes throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges. The battle between park interest groups and horse riding groups is not new: it has been around for decades, and I daresay it will continue for decades in some form or other.

I met with Mr Hands because I wanted to understand fully where he was coming from and to see whether there was any flexibility in his approach in regard to areas adjacent to but not in the park and whether horses should be allowed on those areas, given that they were not formally in the park. I also met with Mr Maberack because I wanted to see whether there was any flexibility in his argument about where exactly the horse riders might want to go or whether they could move down the hill a little or to a slightly different area. Then I asked them to meet to see whether they could sort out any compromise, which I am sure was a unique occasion for both of them. Terry Gregory might have met with them. I have not had a formal report back from that, but Tom mentioned to me informally when I was at a function with him last weekend that there was no resolution on that issue involving Scott Creek.

I will now have to sit down and make some judgment on that one issue. As a principle, I would like to try to get the two opposing arguments together, because my general experience is that, once you do that, there is usually a compromise. However, in this case involving Scott Creek, I do not think there will be a compromise. Someone has to make a judgment somewhere; I guess it will be up to me to do so, but it will be a difficult one to make.

I suppose the community has to make a judgement about what it does with horse riding. It is a very difficult area for government because horse riders, like other groups, pay their taxes and wish to experience the beautiful areas of the state. Quite often those areas are proclaimed into parks and then horse access becomes very difficult. They will have to be handled on a park by park basis. We have not had a blanket policy saying 'all are in' or 'all are out'. We tend to do it on a park by park basis in consultation with the local community. We would not be looking at changing that process. I think in the long term (and it may not be in my time as minister; I guess I am offering a bit of philosophy, having been in the position for a while as recreation and sport minister for a couple of years), the governments of the future may have to look at buying specific lands for some of these recreational activities that create some environmental issues.

Mountain bikes are another classic example. You may have to buy lands where there can be a rotating venue for them within designated areas. You might have a huge block of land where they use 10 per cent for a couple of months, and then another 10 per cent, and slowly rotate them through the land. We have started to do a little bit of work on that but it is only at the very preliminary stage, in particular with regard to mountain biking and horse riding.

I posed the question to some of the fringe groups informally about what park, if any, the horses should be allowed in, and the general response is 'none'. Therein lies the issue. We are aware of the issue and we are aware of Scotts Creek. I think eventually some land will have to be set aside specifically for these recreational pursuits. I think the policy answer will probably be long term. Whether that happens this year or next year, we will have to see. Even identifying the lands can be difficult. On any land you purchase there will be

environmental issues. Whether it be erosion into the water catchments or weeds coming in, there will always be those environmental issues. It does not matter where you buy the land. There will have to be a big community consultation process even to buy land specifically for that purpose.

I know that the equestrian community have been seeking a state equestrian park for some time. I think that is slightly different to the recreational rider who wants to ride across rugged terrain. So that, I guess, is a broad sweep of that issue which fairly summarises some of the difficulties of both sides of the policy agenda, without being too conclusive.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The member for Kaurua.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Unfair!

An honourable member: It's a compliment.

Mr HILL: Yes, it is a compliment, as my colleague says. I refer to the hills face zone. A number of issues have arisen recently as a result of an ERD Court hearing in relation to Mitcham council's zoning concerning horticultural activity in the hill's face. Andrew Garrett has come out again saying that he will have another go. I understand that Mitcham council is proposing to challenge the most recent finding in the Supreme Court, so I ask whether the government will support that action and, if that action is unsuccessful, what plans the government has to prevent the hills face zone being subject to greater horticultural activity.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The hills face zone primarily comes under planning, but I am happy to explore the question. Previously, I think, the member asked me a question in the house on this issue and I was meeting with the Mitcham council that night. That meeting did not occur because my understanding is that one of the people attending that meeting had to attend a funeral and therefore was delayed. In fact, by coincidence, believe it or not, it is tonight. So, you have asked me two questions and it is actually at six o'clock tonight assuming—

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Yes, same answer again. Same question, same answer. It is consistent. But we are meeting at 6 o'clock tonight to go through it.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: That's why we want to get up early, that's right: it's in your hands. We never express a view on whether council should take matters to court; that is a matter for those elected officers. We understand the reasons why: I attended a function with the Mayor of Mitcham last night and he explored those reasons. Certainly, it does raise the issue, particularly in relation to olives and their role in the hills face zone. I know that throughout the Brownhill Creek and Shepherd's Hill Park areas off Ayliffes Road there is certainly what is commonly known as a feral olive problem, and that will only get worse. So, I certainly understand the community's and the council's issues in relation to that. We will formally discuss with the council tonight its issues in relation to the hills face zone, and I can update the member at some time in the future on what progresses out of that.

We understand that there is a slight difference between some of the local councils and the way in which this issue is treated. My understanding is that the horticultural issue is not necessarily uniform across all councils. We want to explore the matter first with Mitcham and see exactly what its issues are and then gain a better understanding of exactly where the issue lies. I think that vineyards are a slightly different issue only from this viewpoint. My understanding is that, in some of the regulations, issues in relation to not being able to

sheds, roads, dams and that sort of infrastructure rules out vineyards, because people cannot put in the vineyards without the associated infrastructure. Generally, I think that vineyards may well be covered, but we want to explore that matter with Mitcham tonight before we move. I suppose it is unfortunate that the other meeting did not occur, so matters have not progressed as quickly as we would have liked. But that was just unfortunate circumstances.

Mr HILL: An associated issue is the mobile phone towers. There is a general problem through the community about the ability of the mini towers to be placed virtually anywhere, without any kind of environmental or planning controls, but there is a particular issue in the hills face. I realise that this is an issue which concerns federal and state governments and planning and environment, and so on, but I invite the minister to comment on the issue and whether there is some ability that the state government has to limit the intrusion of these towers into environmentally sensitive areas.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am generally aware of this issue. There was an incident at Coromandel Valley, in the member for Fisher's electorate, where I think a petition containing 1 500 signatures was presented.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I saw a media report that it was 1 500 last night, or the night before, that was presented.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Yes. I think 1 500 people have signed the petition. I think the issue there is that certainly the federal government overrides us in that respect, if it is low level. It comes down to whether it is a transmitting tower or a communications tower—'tower' might not be the right word, I do not have the regulation in front of me, but there is a difference between what is deemed to be transmission and what is deemed to be communication. I think that is where the issue lies. Again, I have had a look at that in a broad sense. I think that there is an opportunity for local councils to correct that through their own processes; it will take them three to four months. I am having the matter checked with respect to exactly what that process is. But one thing is clear: currently, the federal government can certainly override it. In relation to the Coromandel Valley matter, my understanding is that the commonwealth overrides us on that point at the moment. So, it is now up to the local elected councillors to make a decision in relation to that matter. I think that Mitcham is going to raise that tonight also in a broad sense on behalf of other councils through the hills face.

Mr HILL: I know that this is an issue of great moment for many of those people. I refer now to the Botanic Gardens Management Services; output 5.2. Can the minister say how much is being budgeted this year for each of the Botanic Gardens sites, including the Beechwood site?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I do not have a brief in front of me with that level of detail, but I will provide that breakdown for the member.

Mr HILL: I suppose it is kind of a continuing campaign I have about the amount of money that is going into the Beechwood site. I tried to find some reference to Beechwood on the department's website. I noted that, in the Botanic Gardens section, it did not come up as a separate issue, but when I dug more deeply into the website I discovered the Beechwood Heritage Garden and I noted that its openings for 1999 (and that was on 8 June, so the website is about seven months out of date, at the very best) were 26 September through to 5 November between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. and it was closed on Saturdays. I state for the record again how

appalling I think it is that this public asset is open for such a small amount of time and how most of the activity that takes place there is for private benefit. I invite the minister to comment on what plans he might have to change the circumstances there.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: No, it is not my electorate. The member raises the narrow time, I suppose, that the garden is open. I know that the autumn 2000 opening for the garden was between 16 April and 28 May, and about 2000 people visited.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will check the website. Some 2000 people visited the garden during that period. I know that the board proposed a business plan back in, I think, 1995 or 1996 to help increase the revenue generation of the garden, that would obviously assist in its maintenance, etc. But even at this point, three or four years down the track, they have not been able to secure agreement of the present owners under the terms of the existing indenture. To be fair to the member, it is not something that I have looked at in the three months that I have been minister: I have had other priorities. I live just out of Stirling, as the member is probably aware, and it is something that has not escaped my notice. I want to sit down and read the indenture agreement and find out exactly what flexibility there is, if any. I suggest that, if this has been the case since 1996, there is probably not the flexibility that the member may desire to broaden the opening times. But I am not sure of that, so I will check that. Mr Holmes' advice is that that is correct; that the flexibility is not there.

Mr HILL: Thank you, I understand the answer. It is probably an institution where the subsidy per head is greater than the state opera or state ballet, and it is extraordinary: I think the circumstances surrounding it are just awful. I agree that there is probably not a lot of flexibility, but I will keep asking questions about it and keep focusing attention on the issue.

I would now like to refer to the Environment Protection Agency; output class 6. As I indicated, I have many questions in that area. I refer to the overall budget. There has been a substantial change in the budget from this year to next year. Whether you use the figures I use or the figures you use, I think we all accept that there has been a big change in the amount of money going into this area. Some of that, I believe, can be explained—as I acknowledge—by the restructuring of the department and the creation of the new Department for Water Resources. Perhaps the minister can provide a little more detail about what has been cut. Has the cut been more than one would expect just to establish the new water department—has there been a real cut in this section, in other words?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The output net expenditure summary on page 10.26 of the Portfolio Statements indicates an overall variation of around \$8 million between the 2000-01 budget estimate and the estimated result for 1999-2000 for this output area, and I have previously advised the committee of the reasons for the apparent reduction in the expenditure budget aggregates between financial years. Notwithstanding that the government has maintained its commitment to the portfolio through constant levels of appropriate support from the Consolidated Account, as acknowledged on page 10.30, changes in the expenditure profile have arisen for a number of reasons.

They include the conservative estimates of commonwealth-funded expenditure; reductions in the portfolio's own

source income-funded expenditure due to the estimate of the sales of product; and one-off expenditures in the 1999-2000 estimated result. The reasons for the expenditure variation in this output class generally mirror the portfolio as a whole, but I give the following details.

Included in the 1999-2000 estimated result is around \$5.7 million for project expenditure, which is one-off in nature. This amount includes funding carried forward from the 1998-99 financial year of around \$2 million as well as commonwealth and other externally funded projects of around \$3.7 million. No commonwealth or externally funded project revenue and expenditure have been included in the 2000-01 budget, given the uncertainties in the timing of the commonwealth approval processes.

That explanation is not dissimilar to previous explanations I have given. There was an additional allocation during 1999-2000 of around \$1.9 million for water in water improvement areas, and a number of other one-off transactions during 1999-2000 totalling around \$0.4 million related to the impact of a twenty-seventh pay period and other accrual entries. In summary, the 1999-2000 estimated result includes funding of a one-off nature and incorporates about \$3.7 million of commonwealth funding.

In contrast, the 2000-01 budget has been framed conservatively with no commonwealth-funded expenditures, due to the uncertainties surrounding the quantum and the timing of the receipts at the time of the preparation of this 2000-01 budget. Notwithstanding these variations, the government has maintained its efforts in this area, as reflected in the relatively constant appropriation levels.

Mr HILL: I will read through that subsequently and try to understand it. I refer to the performance indicators on the outputs page. Whilst I accept that in relation to animal welfare it is perhaps a bit difficult to list prosecutions and so on, I would have thought that in the area of environmental protection it would be better to have indicators that relate to quality of air or water, inspections of foundries, or something, rather than people who attended workshops. Can some work be done on beefing up those indicators so that they are a bit more meaningful than just the number of people who attend workshops? I have to say that it looks pretty pathetic.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am happy to look at that over the next 12 months to see whether some other areas can be put in. On the workshops, of course, the EPA is required to consult—

Mr HILL: But that is virtually all you have there. Looking at 6.1, it looked as though the whole function—

The Hon. I.F. Evans: With due respect, under 6.2 you have the number of inspections of licensed premises, the number of active EPA authorisations, the number of active ozone authorisations and the number of section 7 inquiries.

Mr HILL: I concede that. I guess what I was looking for would be a reading that said that on so many days the air quality was below this level or above that level, some more absolute kind of figures: not how many times you have measured the air but what the quality of air is like; on so many days so much pollution in the air this year compared to last year, for example.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The honourable member has made his point.

Mr HILL: In relation to the dairy effluent policy and audit of compliance, will the minister give some detail of that audit of compliance and what was found? It is one of the highlights for 1999-2000.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I can give some information on the management of irrigation and drainage and dairy waste, which might cover the area that the honourable member is talking about. Primarily, I have looked at dairying along the Murray River and Murray swamps area. Dairy farming along the lower River Murray between Mannum and Wellington commenced, as we know, about 100 years ago, and we all know that it is a region important for milk production, supplying a significant proportion of fresh milk to Adelaide and cheese factories.

Flood irrigation has historically been used in the area, and the drainage water does contain high levels of nutrients as well as indicators of potentially pathogenic bacteria. The department has been developing policy options for the management of irrigation drainage water. The options will consider all irrigation drainage waters to the Murray, not only to the lower Murray, although this area has first priority.

Consultation regarding the options is being carried out with the affected parties and will be completed by the end of this year. One option includes licensing the operators to allow oversight of management of the discharge and, if this option is taken up, it would require two FTEs to undertake on an ongoing basis. The management of the irrigation drainage is an integral part of the intergovernment and dairy industry investigation into rehabilitation of the infrastructure improvements in irrigation practices in the lower Murray.

In addition to managing the return of the irrigation water to the river, dairy shed waste audits have also been conducted across the state, including the lower Murray. Dairy shed effluent should not be confused with irrigation drainage. A recent audit of the dairy farms in this area found a generally high level of compliance: none of the farms audited was found to be discharging effluent directly into the river, and all dairies inspected had installed some management system, generally at considerable cost.

Mr HILL: I refer now to the effects of the GST on CDL, which the minister highlighted as an issue before. The minister will recall that the Leader of the Opposition asked him a question about the effects of the GST on CDL back in April. At that time he was raising it with the federal government, so will the minister now provide us with the response, given that the GST will be happening in about 10 days time?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I recall that when the Leader of the Opposition raised the question we had taken it up with the federal government. There have been ongoing meetings with both industry and federal government representatives by offices of the agency. My understanding of the position as of this week is that the Australian Tax Office is likely to issue a private ruling to the depot operators to the effect that beverage containers will be brought under division 66 of the GST legislation, which makes them second-hand goods.

The effect of this ruling is that there will be no effect on the general public who return containers for refunds: they will get their 5¢. The deposit will be GST inclusive, and depot operators and the industry are generally happy with having the refunds dealt with under the second-hand goods provision of the new act. That matter is reaching a conclusion, to the satisfaction of the industry.

Mr HILL: That makes sense, if that is the case. While on the CDL issue, some lobbying has been done around the place (and I am sure that the minister has received some of it) from people in the industry arguing that the 5¢, the current levy, is too low to make the industry function properly. Also, there has been some argument that the nature of the contain-

ers covered is too narrow at the moment, because of the changes of products around the place.

I have asked similar questions in the past of the minister's predecessor, who told me that the government was reviewing this issue and that there would be an announcement in due course. Will the minister indicate the government's intention in relation to the 5¢ levy and the extent of the CDL legislation?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As members are aware, a review has been undertaken, on which the department is about to give me some advice, but I have not yet received that advice. The answer is not dissimilar to the one that the member received from the previous minister. I am not sure whether the review was completed in her time but my understanding is that the review has been completed and the officers are now formulating some recommendations to put to me. I will then consider it and the government will have to form its position after that.

I have met with KESAB and I have met with representatives of the packaging industry on the issue in the last three months and, again, it is a varying argument as to which way one should go. The environmental movement would generally push for a broadening of the container deposit legislation onto other containers, and I think it is fair to say that some industries would have some concerns about that. So, this is one of the those difficult policy areas that the government will consider only after the report has been presented.

Mr HILL: It is a very similar response to last year, but at some stage we have to address this issue. The 5¢ refund has been around for 20 years and even a cautious government knows it must be reviewed.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Perhaps when the commonwealth government rules out 5¢ pieces!

Mr HILL: That is exactly right.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Officers advise me that they forwarded the report to my office some time last week, but I have not seen it yet.

Mr HILL: I turn to the investigative arm of the EPA. Last year there were two successful prosecutions. Will the minister tell the committee what the situation has been in the last 12 months and will he give us an outline of the strength of the investigative branch of the EPA, what its shape is, what its budget is, how many officers work there, and how successful it has been in securing prosecutions in the last 12 months?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will ask Mr Thomas to answer that question.

Mr Thomas: Last year the EPA prosecuted two companies, and the preceding year it prosecuted one company under the EPA act and another under the Waste Management Act. In the previous year, the company was Mobil, and the ERD Court issued a penalty of \$24 000 for environmental harm due to release of ethyl mercaptan. This financial year, there were two prosecutions: Borrelli, which received a penalty of \$2 000 for breach of a licence condition, and that was in the Magistrates Court; and Holdens received a penalty of \$20 000 for environmental nuisance and \$9 000 for a breach of licence condition, and that was in the Environment, Resources and Development Court.

Currently there is a matter before the Magistrates Court related to Mobil and two charges have been laid, one under the pollution of water by oil and noxious substances legislation and the other for breach of licence condition under the Environment Protection Act, and that matter is under way. The EPA also has four significant investigations currently

under way but I cannot give details of those because of the chance of prejudicing those investigations.

In answer to the issue of our success, the EPA recognised two years ago that, if it was to be successful, one key initiative was to establish a dedicated investigations team. I admit that we were struggling to get successful prosecutions using just authorised officers, because it is a complex act and it requires evidence for these sorts of matters, which are essentially criminal matters, so the evidence must be beyond reasonable doubt, and it requires very experienced people to collect such evidence. We established a dedicated investigations team which initially was headed up by a senior police investigator whom we appointed to the EPA. His name was Tony Ryan, and he has two junior investigators working under him. It was a very effective team of three. Under that team we were successful with the initial Mobil matter that I mentioned.

Tragically, he died on the job, in fact, with the commencement of the second Mobil matter, which is currently before the court, and we have subsequently appointed another senior police officer, Nick Smith, to replace him and I believe that he will be equally as good as Tony, and that initiative has turned around the EPA's success in that area.

Mr HILL: I appreciate that answer and I understand that Mr Thomas cannot go into the details of the four cases currently being investigated. However, it raises the issue about reforming the EPA's penalties. In previous years the minister said that this issue was on the drawing board. I first asked this question two years ago, and the ERD Committee, having investigated the EPA, made similar recommendations, and I think that you, minister, are going through that process yourself. Will the minister indicate when changes will be made so that the EPA can more flexibly deal with some of these matters?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We are required to respond within four months to the parliamentary committee's report in relation to the EPA, and we will do so. We have asked the officers to look at the report and the reasons for the various recommendations, so we are still working through that process. I cannot give the committee a time frame. We have to look at all the recommendations and exactly what they mean, what the resource implications are, and time frame issues as part of that process.

Mr HILL: My next questions concern foundries, particularly the Castalloy foundry about which I have asked questions in the past. A member of the public rang me to say that the fumes from that foundry are still very strong and affecting health in that area. I understand that there are a large number of stacks but that only some of them are filtered, and there is at least one broken chimney, which is smoking at night at a lower level. This person said that, although they have rung the EPA, all they get is an answering service and they cannot get anybody to do anything; and I know that that complaint is similar to some of the evidence that was given to the ERD committee. In relation to the Castalloy foundry, will the minister indicate what action the EPA is taking to ensure that the air in that vicinity is cleaned up?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am happy for Mr Harvey to give a response to that question.

Mr Harvey: Castalloy is in a difficult position, being a major industry virtually across the road from a residential area, so there are difficulties that are unresolvable. I can report that in the last 12 months we have seen some substantial improvement.

One of the problems in the past, as the honourable member might recall, is that there were difficulties in consultation between Castalloy and the local community. We imposed conditions of licence, effectively imposing the need for a community consultation program, and Castalloy has taken that up, most positively, although it has taken a little time. The company organised a public meeting last December and it has since organised a community group with, mainly, representatives from the local residents' association. They meet on a fortnightly basis at the moment.

Under our licence conditions, the company is also required to develop an environmental improvement program for odour control. The consultative group that has been set up will be involved in that process. The people within the group are having their noses tested for sensitivity and accuracy in terms of monitoring odour so we can probably get, I guess, better information as to the nature of the problem. Castalloy is currently going through a fairly substantial monitoring program; there are 120 to 140 stacks and it is going through a major exercise at the moment to more clearly identify the sources of odour, which will be addressed in the environmental improvement program. That is far more positive than I could have reported 12 months ago.

Mr HILL: In relation to the Mount Barker foundry, is the EPA now satisfied that that foundry is acting within the appropriate standards?

Mr Harvey: It is at the moment because the foundry is not operating at the Oborn Road site. It has approval to establish a low pressure diecasting facility. That has not been acquired at this stage. I do not know if it has been ordered, but I expect it would be a good six months before that facility would be in place.

Mr HILL: I ask the minister about foundries, generally. Since these two issues have arisen—Mount Barker foundry in the past year and Castalloy building up over a period of time—has the EPA undertaken a survey or review of all foundries operating in Adelaide; and, if so, what are the outcomes?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The issue in relation to foundries is complex because of the very nature of the foundries. Although they all are called 'foundries', they all produce different products, use different processes, use different input products and therefore have different emission requirements and different issues associated with them. While Mount Barker has been very public this year for its own reasons and Castalloy for reasons with which you are familiar, I know the EPA has done work with other foundries from time to time, and may be Mr Harvey might want to comment on work at some other foundries.

Mr Harvey: In the past few months, we have appointed a senior environment protection officer with a substantial professional background in foundries. One of his tasks is to look at the industry in general. Over the past week he has been talking with the Foundry Council about developing common monitoring regimes for the industry. Partly as a result of our experiences at Mount Barker, we have started to have discussions with foundries in regard to improving their environmental management.

Mr HILL: I want to refer to the monitoring of air quality in South Australia. I understand that on 1 December the EPA appointed a company called Envirogen, trading as Analab in South Australia, for the operation of the Adelaide air track network. This company is based in Victoria. It beat a number of other companies, including a company from South Australia which had been operating in the interim in South

Australia. I know it was fairly disappointed not to get the contract. I am told that the company which won the contract was a 50-50 joint venture between Kinhill South Australia and Analab Western Australia, but that the new American owners of Kinhill—that is, Brown and Root—sold off its shares to Analab, so it is in fact with Analab.

The original group, Envirogen, had been operating in Victoria and had been attacked by the Victorian EPA as a result of sloppy procedures in relation to testing air quality coming out of the city link tunnels. An article in the *Age* of 25 November last year, reported that the Chairman of the Victorian EPA said that 'it had failed to install proper scientific procedures for monitoring despite holding accreditation from the National Association of Testing Authorities'. An article in the *Australian* of 25 November stated:

Environment Minister Sherryl Garbutt told State Parliament yesterday some of the monitoring equipment was cracked, faulty, often failed to work and some had been installed incorrectly.

Is the minister satisfied we have a good deal with the company operating in South Australia?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will get Mr Thomas to explain the background.

Mr Thomas: I am very aware of that initiative by the Victorian EPA and I asked my own manager for that area, Bob McLennan to investigate that straight away and answer some queries. Obviously, it had to be done sensitively because of the court action. They were satisfied that action would not give us reason to cancel the contract. We had already signed the contract. Analab is a reputable company. We do not yet know the full circumstances of that matter. I do not know whether there has been a court outcome. I do not know whether it has been settled out of court. I could not comment on that. I could provide you with further advice. I was satisfied at the time that we did not need to change our direction, if you like, as a result of that.

I think the other complication, as you point out, is that Kinhill has sold its share and while the original company was called Envirogen, one of the reasons it does not use that name here is because another company uses that name in New South Wales. There is nothing to hide there. It is purely about proprietary matters.

In terms of the actual contract, it is a contract to operate and clearly there are provisions that, if we are not satisfied with the performance, we can cancel that contract. At this stage we are quite happy. The other aspect is that we own the plant and equipment, so the EPA has ownership of the capital. We have a fair bit of control over the contract.

Mr HILL: I have a supplementary question. When the tendering process was gone through, was Envirogen clearly the best company to do the job or was it chosen on the basis of price?

Mr Thomas: I can advise that the contracting process and the tendering process was exhaustive. As well as an exhaustive selection process, it went through an exhaustive probity process. I am happy to provide detailed documentation on the probity process.

Mr HILL: I turn now to the decision by Forestry SA to burn off logs in Kuitpo Forest. I have been burning to ask a question of the minister on this issue for some time. His colleague, the Minister for Government Enterprises, said that burning off the logs was just as 'environmentally friendly as mulching the logs'. I think he was taking a narrow point and I will not try to point score against him. Can the minister advise the committee whether the EPA is satisfied with the processes that Forestry SA went through in relation to the

disposal of waste material; and whether in future it could be counselled about better ways of environmentally managing the waste?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The question is whether the EPA was satisfied, so I will have Mr Harvey answer the question.

Mr Harvey: I guess, historically, burning has been basically the practice for getting rid of waste timber in forests. It has been carried out over many years. I guess the situation has really changed because of the expectations and aspirations of people who live close by. There is no doubt that the burning at Kuitpo has caused a local nuisance and, as a result of that, we have been in contact with Forestry SA to look at alternatives. Mulching would be an obvious one that could be considered. But I have to say we are in discussions with them at the moment and no real resolution has been made.

Mr HILL: This is a legal question, I guess. Does the EPA or your department have authority over the manner in which Forestry SA disposes of its product? Does it need a licence or does it need permission to dispose in particular ways? Can you stop it from burning off, in other words?

Mr Harvey: Open-air burning is controlled under the burning policy—the burning EPP. Controls on open-air burning have been in place since 1979. Environment agencies have basically stayed away from giving permits right through that period—the past 20 years. It has generally been left to local government to undertake that task. From an agency perspective, I would certainly be reluctant to change those sorts of procedures now. The burning policy raises its own difficulties. It has exclusions that are probably ambiguous at best in terms of burning of agricultural waste material for fire prevention. It also does not allow the use of alternative technologies, for example, to be considered as part of granting a permit. It is a fairly cut and dried permit. I suspect that very few applications are rejected by local government.

Mr HILL: I think that is probably to be regretted. It might be useful if the EPA or the government can look at it more closely over the next 12 months. It might be good to ask in 12 months what action has been taken. I turn now to waste management issues and, in particular, the issue of landfill sites in the northern suburbs. I understand that some legal action has been taken in relation to the so-called dump at Dublin, which resulted in the EPA's effectively withdrawing the licence for that dump. Could the minister explain the current situation with respect to that dump and indicate what the outcome is likely to be?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: In relation to the Dublin dump, I will ask Mr Harvey to make some comments.

Mr Harvey: Integrated Waste Services appealed the licence that was granted by the authority. Since that time the matter has been in the ERD Court. Through that process we are getting to the stage where a licence should be delivered to the dump over the next several weeks.

Mr HILL: Is it true to say that the licence was withdrawn temporarily so that it could be rewritten?

Mr Harvey: No, it was all part of the court process in terms of negotiation.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The matter is still before the court.

Mr HILL: I will not pursue it. I refer now to greenhouse gas and energy conservation. I asked a question yesterday of the Minister for Mines and Energy as he has responsibility for the Office of Energy. I asked that minister who was the lead minister for greenhouse gas strategy, and I was surprised (I hope that you, minister, are not) to discover that the Minister for the Environment is the lead minister for greenhouse gas

strategy. I was looking in the budget papers for some sort of indication of expenditure in that area. Could the minister explain the nature of his responsibilities, how he coordinates it and what budget there is for South Australia's greenhouse gas strategy?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Yes, I am the lead minister for greenhouse: that is not a surprise to me.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: No, not a surprise. As the honourable member is probably aware, action plans are being developed by all states and territories to implement the national greenhouse strategies and this process is occurring Australia-wide. A web site exists for these plans, including those specific to South Australia. The plans are published and will be released by the commonwealth minister in June. Some action plans are being implemented within South Australia and mechanisms are being developed to coordinate monitoring and reporting progress through the South Australian Greenhouse Committee.

The department is working with the Office of Energy Policy and the Department for Administration and Information Services to review the reporting of energy cross-charging in rented accommodation to facilitate monitoring the government Greenhouse Target program. In that program the department has set a greenhouse gas emission reduction target of 200 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year, which will result in cost savings of about \$32 000.

Mr Hill: The Premier included a higher figure in his press release of 21 February.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I have indicated only the department figure. The figure to which the honourable member refers is certainly higher. South Australia has contributed to the production of the National Greenhouse Gas Inventory (published annually) and to the state inventories for 1990 and 1995. The National Greenhouse Gas Inventory Analysis of Trends 1990 to 1997 and the National Greenhouse Response Strategy Indicators, 1990 to 1997, were published in December 1999. The 1998 inventory is due to be finalised in July 2000. The EPA is continuing, in association with the Employers Chamber (now Business SA), to promote the Greenhouse Allies program.

This is a program of the Greenhouse Challenge in accord with the memorandum of understanding signed with the commonwealth government. I met with Business SA in the past month—and I am sure that I am right in saying this—and it has undertaken to sign up 100 South Australian businesses to the National Greenhouse Program. It has come to an arrangement, which is a good commitment from Business SA, to undertake that program with its members. The pilot program with the Motor Trades Association of South Australia (MTA) is currently being finalised and has resulted in reduced energy consumption, and hence reduced greenhouse emission and costs to members of the MTA who participate.

A similar program is currently being initiated within the Wine and Brandy Industry Association. Community awareness concerning greenhouse has been heightened through the launch, by the Premier in February, of the booklet: *South Australia: Reducing the Greenhouse Effect*. The EPA actively cooperates with the commonwealth in a Carbon Awareness Day, held in conjunction with the national World Environment Day celebration recently hosted in Adelaide. A range of issues and programs have been developed in response to the greenhouse issue.

Mr HILL: As I mentioned previously, the Premier's press statement of 21 February indicated a whole-of-government reduction of 20 000 tonnes over the next two years. Can the minister indicate the volume of reduction across the whole of our state? What is the target for South Australia generally?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We do not have a brief on the state target but we will provide that for the honourable member.

Mr HILL: I was trying to put in context the figure of 20 000 tonnes, because the Premier said in his press release that 30 million tonnes of carbon dioxide is produced each year in South Australia. The figure of 20 000 tonnes, which is the government's contribution, is less than .1 per cent of the total, so it is a fairly insignificant amount when one takes it into account overall.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The honourable member needs to keep that in context. Much of the greenhouse effect is as a result of industry and vehicle use. Government is somewhat narrow in its options.

Mr HILL: That is why I was trying to see the overall reduction.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I understand that. We do not have that brief with us but we are happy to provide that for the honourable member.

Mr HILL: I noted in one document that a target in the renewable energies strategies document—I do not know whether the minister is familiar with that—aims to replace 40 per cent of electric hot water systems with solar, which I thought was a phenomenal target. Could the minister outline strategies for achieving that target? I obtained this information from the internet. It is the sustainable energy policy under primary industries.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: If it comes under primary industries, the question needs to be directed there, surely.

Mr HILL: But are you the coordinating minister, you see. It states that 40 per cent replacement of all domestic hot water systems could be achieved.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The honourable member will find that renewable energies is handled not necessarily under this office. The honourable member will find it is under either PIRSA, or the Treasurer through ERSU may have some input.

Mr HILL: Surely, the reduction of greenhouse gas is achieved by replacing electric energy with solar energy.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: In fairness, the document you are quoting me is a PIRSA document. That is the advice you have given me.

Mr HILL: I understand that. I made the point that I was surprised to learn that you were the responsible minister for all this, when a lot of the documentation comes from other departments.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am happy to seek information from the appropriate minister and forward that to the honourable member.

Mr HILL: I would appreciate that. I refer to green waste. It has been pointed out to me that some research is being done in South Australia by CSIRO with a gentleman called John Buckerfield, who had been doing trials for about three years on value adding to green waste. It follows up a question that the member for MacKillop asked earlier today. I gather that Mr Buckerfield's employment with CSIRO was stopped because CSIRO felt that it was an inappropriate scheme, although it was doing great work to look at ways of adding value to garden waste. Does the minister know anything about this matter, and can he raise it with CSIRO to see that it continues to do this good work? It involved a scientist

called John Buckerfield, who was experimenting with garden waste and looking at ways to add value to it so that it could become a commercial product. He had been working on it for three years and done a whole lot of field trials, and it got to the stage where it was about to be useful.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am not quite sure how a CSIRO program fits in with my budget.

Mr HILL: You are coordinating greenhouse gas reduction.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Yes, but not on behalf of the CSIRO.

Mr HILL: I am asking whether you could raise it with CSIRO as the responsible minister, because it was something that was being done in South Australia, and it would benefit South Australians.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am happy to review the *Hansard* and then raise the appropriate issue with the CSIRO.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: And I will ask it about the dung beetle program on behalf of the member for MacKillop.

Mr HILL: The issue of sand management was raised previously. How is the sand replenishment going around the groyne that has been constructed at West Beach going; is the amount of sand that is having to be removed what was predicted; and what are the costs associated with that?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I ask Mr Tucker to answer that.

Mr Tucker: In terms of sand management for the West Beach facility (and I presume this is also related to the Glenelg Harbor, because it is bypassing there as well), the Department of Transport which funds that bypassing activity is currently carrying out about 65 000 cubic metres of bypassing sand both at Glenelg and at West Beach. It is all being done by dredging at Glenelg, and partly by dredging and partly by trucking at West Beach. That work is currently under way.

For the next six months from June through to December, there is likely also to be an increased amount of sand bypassing. For the next six months, from the end of June through to December, it is likely that an increased amount of sand bypassing will be recommended for both facilities. This is yet to be put to the Coast Protection Board. The default amount is 25 000 cubic metres at both locations. As I said, it is likely that that will be increased for the six months after the end of June.

Mr HILL: Why is that necessary?

Mr Tucker: The survey work that we have been carrying out shows that sufficient sand has not been bypassed to date. This is partly due to the Department of Transport's catching up on sand bypassing since the facilities were put in place and partly due to additional sand arriving at those locations over and above the average, which was expected; there is a movement of sand above and below the average which you could expect.

Mr HILL: Last year in the *Advertiser*, the former minister is quoted as saying that the EPA had started an audit of business lining the Port River and slipways to see what was entering the water. Can the minister, the department or the authority indicate what was found and what action has been taken in relation to that report?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I understood that the previous minister made those comments probably in response to reports of high concentrations of polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and also mercury in tissue samples from dolphins in the Port River. The EPA then undertook a study to assess the findings in more detail. That study had three main objectives,

obviously to assess the PCBs, mercury and cadmium in the dolphins found dead in the various locations, and also for the purpose of determining whether the levels of these pollutants found in Port River dolphins were unusually high.

A second objective was to determine possible sources of contaminants in and around the Port River estuary by undertaking a survey of sediments for PCBs and heavy metals in stormwater drains, sumps and other sites, and to determine whether fish caught in the Port River met food standards for heavy metals.

Tissue samples were analysed from 15 bottle-nosed dolphins stored by the museum. They were tested for different things. Liver tissue was tested for mercury, kidney tissue tested for cadmium, and blubber tissue was tested for PCB. These tissues were specifically chosen because they tend to accumulate the toxins of interest. Sediment samples were also taken from the 26 sites in and around the estuary and samples were analysed for heavy metals. Fish caught from the river were tested for mercury, cadmium and lead to determine whether they complied with the food standard code. Compliance with the code means that the fish are safe to eat.

The study found that PCB levels in the blubber samples from dolphins found in the vicinity of the Port River were higher than those of dolphins found at other sites around the state. However, the levels in the Port River dolphins were well below most levels reported in scientific literature over the past 10 years on dolphins found elsewhere and about 80 times less than the maximum value reported. So, it is in a range that is certainly well below most levels reported over the past 10 years. PCB arochlor 1260s were detected in sediment samples from four sites in the area, with contamination from at least two of the sites likely to be the result of recent contamination. Mercury levels found in the liver samples of the dolphins were not unusual compared to those found elsewhere around the state. Cadmium levels in the kidney samples of the dolphins were generally lower than those of dolphins found elsewhere in the state, and there is some chance that that could be related to their diet.

Monitoring the sediment showed that 17 of the 26 sites did have high lead and zinc concentrations. The source of the lead and zinc is likely to be from road run-off and indicates that more needs to be done to stop the road run-off entering the river system. Other contaminants found at high levels in the survey included copper at five sites and nickel at one site. Most of the copper and nickel results were near ship or boat building activities or where boats are repaired or maintained. These activities would need to be investigated. Testing of fish in the river for heavy metals found that they did meet the required food standard and are safe to eat.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. Evans: So I am advised. Levels were comparable with levels found in similar fish caught elsewhere in South Australia. Laboratory analysis costs associated with the survey in the audit total around \$24 000.

Mr HILL: I have two questions—

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Separately or together?

Mr HILL: Separately. The second one is a dorothy dix question really. I refer to a news item in the *City News* dated 7 June saying the council and the EPA are going through some sort of joint program to allow the council to take on some of the responsibilities of the EPA in terms of their traditional role in responding to the public's environmental complaints:

The trial would give the power to investigate, warn and prosecute non-complying businesses and residents under the Environment Protection Act.

I must say I think this is a very good idea. I raise it in the context of a case two or three weeks ago. In anticipation of the GST coming in, a builder was completing a house across the way from me, directly opposite my house, and he started up his concrete mixer at about 6.30 in the morning. It made me jump out of bed. I immediately rang the police and said, 'Someone is breaching the EPA act.' I was told, 'He needs to make a dollar, you know; I've been awake all night-what's wrong with that?'. I got no sympathy at all from the police. I was then left in the position—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HILL: Yes. Somebody is breaching the law at 6.30 in the morning. You cannot ring the council or the EPA because they are not there—what can you do? I rang up the builder and he stopped it. However, it does raise the issue of how an ordinary citizen can get compliance with a breach of—

Mr FOLEY: Even their local MP.

Mr HILL: Yes, that is right—one of those EPA guidelines. That was really an opportunity for me to say that, so I am happy for you to respond.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: No, I will let Mr Thomas respond.

Mr Thomas: Thank you, minister, for the chance. This is an issue which has received significant air play in the Environment Resources Development Committee and I gave considerable evidence on this matter. I made the point, and still make the point, that if South Australians are going to experience what I would describe as a sustainable environment protection service we have to get local government more involved. South Australia, for a variety of historic reasons, is the last state, unfortunately, to not have an equitable arrangement.

In NSW, local government does domestic noise complaints but in South Australia we supposedly still do that. We have obviously introduced a priority system such that domestic complaints are number three in priority—we do not get to do those because the big issues with licensees have to get first attention. So, we have commenced this pilot program with local government to engage them and take them through a trial period with a view to eventually handing over greater responsibility at the end of that trial. I am pleased to say that after four years of a fair amount of teeth pulling we have got to the point of a good rapport with local government on this matter. I think there is significant progress but it has been very slow. I would hope that at the end of that trial in 12 months we are in a position to start handing it over but it will require some legislative change and there will be some negotiations over budget—over some of the cost issues.

At the end of the day local government, collectively, has a much greater budgetary capability than EPA to do that sort of thing. Also it has more resources. It is there on the ground to do that sort of thing so it has to happen. It is not just domestic noise; it also applies in other areas. So, it is a very important area.

Mr HILL: I have a final question, sir. Before I ask it, I thank you for your indulgence and I thank the minister and the officers for their cooperation in providing the answers and finishing on time. My final question relates to page 10.31, 'Statement of Financial Position—plant and equipment'. The total assets of the department appear to have been devalued by about half a billion dollars over the last year. I am sure

that there is a perfectly reasonable explanation but I just want to know what it is.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The perfectly reasonable explanation to the final question is as follows. The so-called devaluation relates primarily to three matters: the difficulties experienced in preparing budget estimates prior to the end of the financial year; the outcome of asset identification and condition assessments undertaken by portfolio officers following the tabling of the 1999-2000 budget; and, obviously, the adjustment to the written down value of these assets in the estimated result for 1999-2000 following the completion and endorsement of the portfolio's 1998-99 financial statements by the Auditor-General.

The key to interpreting the marked difference between budget and estimated result is an understanding of how the figures are derived. The figure reflecting the 1999-2000 budget was based on an estimate of the written down value of assets, that is, the initial acquisition cost or replacement cost less the accumulated depreciation as at 28 February 1999. As at February 1999, the portfolio was still in the process of identifying and recognising in its financial statements the full extent of all assets controlled and administered within the portfolio. This process of 'first time' recognition involved around 30 000 assets. So, it was not an insignificant task.

In previous financial years, provisional arrangements relating to the transition to accrual accounting included in the Australian Accounting Standard 29 allowed for the exclusion of these assets from the department's statement of financial position where some doubt existed over the existence and/or value of the assets. These provisional arrangements expired on 30 June 1998; that is, full asset recognition was required in the financial statements as at 30 June 1999. Therefore, at the time of the preparation of 1999-2000 budget figuring (which was the end of February 1999), it was necessary to project the possible asset values without the benefit of the results of the comprehensive stocktake or the valuation exercise. The exercise was not finished until July 1999, five months later. The end result of this projection was that the written down value of the assets was significantly overstated with the \$700 million figure being much closer to the current estimated replacement value of the assets rather than the written down value.

The result of the asset stocktake, the condition assessment and the valuation exercise, which involved independent external advice, has enabled the refinement of asset useful lives and condition factors resulting in significant increases in the accumulated depreciation. Consequently, there is a lower written down value of the assets.

Membership:

Mr Wright substituted for Mr Hill.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Barrett, Chief Executive, RIDA.

Mr S. Forrest, Executive Director, Office for Recreation and Sport.

Mr P. Fernee, Manager, Administration and Finance, RIDA.

Mr W. Battams, Director, South Australian Sports Institute.

Mr R. Fletcher, Director, Facilities Management, Office for Recreation and Sport.

Mr L. Parnell, Director, Recreation and Sport Development.

Ms J. Burgess, Communications Officer.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I want to make a joint statement in relation to both recreation and sport and racing, beginning with recreation and sport. The government's recreation and sport program is delivered through the Office for Recreation and Sport, a division of the Department of Environment and Heritage. The vision of the Office for Recreation and Sport is to make recreation and sport a vital component of South Australia's growth and lifestyle. The office has, therefore, developed working partnerships with a range of service providers to promote the development of and participation in recreation and sport. The aim is to make a positive impact on the social, health and economic wellbeing of the community by developing a range of relevant services and programs. The office provides leadership and works with the sport and recreation industry to increase economic activity, develop world-class athletes and increase the quality and level of participation by the community in physical activity.

Industry cluster development is a process endorsed by the government and business leaders alike as a key strategy to achieve Business Vision 2010. A strong partnership between industry and government over the last two years has resulted in the development of the commercial sport and recreation cluster. After an intensive period of industry consultation, key stakeholders met to determine a vision for the industry based on increasing profits, jobs and quality of life in South Australia. In order to achieve this vision, four action teams were established to develop plans for various aspects of the industry. The teams are: event management; sports facilities and management; international training camps; and sports medicine. Each of the four action teams has chosen a different collaborative approach. The facilities team and the events team have made significant progress, establishing independent entities to generate commercial opportunities. The facilities team has created a consortium of some 11 companies and two government agencies. Promotional material, recently distributed, is responsible for the consortium's first contract, the master planning for an ecotourism site in West Bali. The events team has formed a company called Events Network, which has won a contract to host an event.

Although the formal cluster process is now complete, the Office for Recreation and Sport will continue to support this initiative through the Sport Export Program. This program assists the commercial recreation and sport industry to promote its products and services to interstate and overseas markets. Export sales have been generated in several Asian countries as well as in New Zealand and New Caledonia. International delegations also have been attracted to Adelaide to meet company representatives and inspect their products first-hand.

An international marketing plan with a series of new marketing tools, including an updated directory, will be distributed through trade offices. A web site and other publications will match the specific capabilities of South Australian companies with the requirements of particular countries. The office continues to administer funds of \$2.5 million allocated under the Gaming Machines (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act 1996 through the Sport and Recreation Fund to provide financial assistance for sporting and recreational organisations. Assistance will continue to be provided through the Active Club Management and Development program, SASI Talent Scholarships and State Sports Facilities funds.

Last month I opened the NICAN 2000 conference at the Adelaide Festival Centre. NICAN is a Commonwealth-

funded information service that promotes physical activity to and for people with a disability. The Office for Recreation and Sport was represented on the Leisure Link SA committee that won the tender to host the conference in Adelaide. The title of the conference 'Inside out: Discovering creativity through community recreation' highlighted the right of everyone to be involved in recreation and sport.

It is pleasing to report that many organisations have now begun to address the issues involved in making their facilities and programs more accessible to people with a disability. Recently, I also had the pleasure of launching the Easy Moves for Active Ageing program produced by Recreation for Older Adults. This program has been developed to better meet the needs of South Australia's ageing population and in response to research into physical activity and older people. It combines research outcomes with the knowledge and experience of leading professionals in the field of active ageing.

The South Australian Sports Institute has had a very successful year with both athletes and coaches achieving at the international level. There are currently over 600 athletes supported by SASI at the high-performance and talent levels, with full-time programs offered in 18 sports under 20 full-time coaches. In 1999, 12 athletes who were SASI scholarship holders or graduates became world champions in sports as diverse as yachting, cycling, netball and tennis.

Others have been members of Australian teams competing at world championships, and two SASI graduates have been successful on the international tennis circuit. To date, 21 South Australian athletes have gained selection to the Australian Olympic team. They will represent Australia in archery, badminton, rowing, shooting, softball, swimming, wrestling, women's soccer and diving.

The Sydney 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games are now fewer than 100 days away, and I am pleased to report that the office's 'Prepared to win' program has already hosted teams of athletes and officials from Europe, Africa, Asia and Oceania. Team officials, on inspection visits, have praised the standard of training facilities in Adelaide and South Australia generally.

In the lead-up to the Olympics and Paralympics, over 1000 athletes and officials from 23 countries will visit Adelaide for pre-games training camps. This represents 22 000 bed nights for Adelaide, a significant economic boost to the state.

The South Australian community will have the opportunity to attend some of the visiting teams' training sessions, and school children will have the opportunity to link up with different teams and countries through a program of activities developed in partnership with the Department of Education, Training and Employment.

The office has long recognised the significance of the recreational trails network. Walking trails are a key element of this State's tourist theme and a major area of interest for domestic and international markets. The State government has allocated \$5 million over the next five years for a significant upgrade of recreational trails in South Australia.

One of the initiatives of the trails project in the past year has been the Recreational Greenways Act, currently before the Parliament. A market survey of community use and awareness of trails was conducted, and yielded much useful information to improve the promotion of trails. The resulting marketing strategy will use the brand name AusTrails to promote the recreational trails network.

In closing on the Office for Recreation and Sport I would like to acknowledge the continuing commitment and enthusi-

asm of all staff at the office, who have maintained their high standards throughout the year.

In relation to racing, as we all know, RIDA was set up as the central driving body for industry reform and racing development in South Australia. Its main functions are to:

- guide the development, promotion and marketing of the racing industry and prepare and implement plans and strategies;
- manage the funds are established under the Racing Act and distribute the money for the benefit of the racing industry;
- encourage and facilitate the development of the breeding industry;
- regulate and control betting within the State with book-makers on races and sporting events held within or outside Australia;
- conduct or commission research and analysis on the racing industry.

Each of these key performance indicators has been met or exceeded, as I will now detail. As I said earlier, clubs and codes are now in a much stronger financial position and better equipped for the substantial challenges of the future. At the same time, RIDA has invested more than \$3.4 million in pioneering breeders' incentive schemes that expand across all three codes.

Importantly, these programs provide a long-term sustainable platform for the South Australian racing industry to grow. Breeders, owners and trainers have access to extra funding, which gives them the drive and incentives to produce and race more horses and greyhounds. This in turn creates more jobs, more economic activity and gives racing a viable future.

On the legislative front, the government has paved the way for the introduction of licensing of proprietary racing. The last year has also seen the racing industry agree that the only way forward is to work together. The first elements of this plan in the case of the thoroughbred code, a unified national marketing strategy, were implemented earlier this year.

There is no doubt that this is the way of the future, and South Australia cannot afford to wait to get on board. The Australian racing industry needs to further develop national strategies to assist it not only in maintaining but in increasing its share of the recreational dollar. South Australia cannot run its own race in this important and developing field.

This government firmly believes in the South Australian racing industry, a fact underlined by our financial commitment since 1993. Incorporating a mixture of capital works, industry development, training and marketing funding, RIDA has allocated more than \$30 million to clubs and codes. In addition, the codes have benefited from increased profit share from the SATAB as a result of this government's amendments to the Racing Act and the improved performance of the SATAB following the government's restructure of that board in 1996.

While there are still some issues to be resolved regarding the corporatisation of the industry and the subsequent disbanding of RIDA, the government has allocated \$3.05 million for the industry in this year's budget. These funds are being held by the Treasurer and will be drawn down by RIDA to cover its responsibilities in the transition period pending its winding up, subject to parliamentary support of the appropriate legislation. This is the same as last year's allocation and will be used to help racing take the next and most important step forward—a step towards achieving the sport's true potential.

Mr WRIGHT: I will not make an opening statement but I would like to make a brief comment about Football Park before asking the Minister a question. As the Minister would acknowledge, the opposition has been very supportive of additional seating being made available at Football Park. By and large, there has been good, solid bipartisan support for this project.

The debate has gone on for a number of years. In the lead up to the last election, the opposition was very strong in its thoughts that additional money should be made available, and an announcement was made to the tune of \$10 million from our side of the House. The debate continued for some time beyond the last election, with a number of announcements being made by the opposition.

In November last year, the Premier announced that money would be provided for additional seating at Football Park and stated that the government would be contributing \$7.65 million to the \$14 million project. Yesterday, the Premier again said that the government would be providing \$7.6 million as its contribution to the upgrade.

A search of the budget papers reveals expenditure of only \$1 million in each of 2001-02 and 2002-03, and that is in budget paper 2, page 4.8. Presumably, that is for the purchase of additional land from DAIS. The capital investment statement appears to be silent in relation to the Football Park seating, so I am a bit unsure as to where this appears in the budget papers. Will the Minister inform me under what budget lines this \$7.65 million expenditure appears?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: It was always my understanding that the member asking the question was meant to identify the budget lines and, if it was not in the budget lines, it could not be a question.

Mr WRIGHT: In my preamble, I identified that the only reference to Football Park can be found in budget paper 2, page 4.8, but we all know that the government has announced a project of \$7.65 million.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am not sure what the question is. I believe that the member is asking me where the expenditure is shown. This is a project of the Premier, it is not my project, but I understand that there is an income stream from football through the sale of land, which has been mentioned, and then there is a payment over a number of years, perhaps five or six, but there is no payment up-front this year, and that is why it will not reflect until the budgets of future years.

Mr WRIGHT: I appreciate that it is not specifically in the minister's portfolio area but, given that we are dealing with Football Park and it is a project of such significance in the sporting world, the minister would not only be aware of but also have some influence on it.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The member has acknowledged that it is not in my budget area and we are here to answer questions on my budget area.

Mr WRIGHT: If the minister is not prepared to answer questions—

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am happy to go on but I make the point that we are going outside normal procedure for the member.

Mr WRIGHT: I do not mind either way but, if the minister is not able to answer the question, and I do not say that in a derogatory sense because I acknowledge that it is not in his budget lines, I point out that, in going through the budget, I was surprised that I could not find the project in the budget papers.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The reason for that is—

Mr WRIGHT: I did not expect it all to be in the one year.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The reason is that expenditure is in future years.

Mr WRIGHT: Yes, but the project has started, so presumably some money—

The Hon. I.F. Evans: My understanding is that the cash flow of the project means that government expenditure does not pick up until future years.

Mr WRIGHT: With regard to the magnitude of the project, having expenditure of \$7.635 million, I am surprised that it has not been referred to the Public Works Committee. Is the minister able to comment on that?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I cannot comment on that. The member would have to look at whether there is requirement for it to go to the Public Works Committee. It is not on government land: it is on private land. I am not familiar enough with the public works legislation to give a clear answer on that point. It is privately owned by the football association.

Mr WRIGHT: Perhaps the chair with his experience would have better knowledge than the rest of us, but my understanding is that, whether it is private or public land, any single project for which the expenditure exceeds \$4 million is automatically referred to the Public Works Committee. I am fairly certain that I am correct in that information. I do not necessarily want an answer from the minister because, in fairness, it is not in his budget area and he has been able to clear up the issue in respect of the accrual accounting and the future expenditure. However, it will have to be drawn to the attention of the parliament at another time that, for whatever reason, this project should have been referred to public works, and I will be recommending that it is. In addition to what I have already said, it is my understanding that, with the turning of the first sod, which the Premier was down at Football Park doing yesterday, there is no choice for government, whether it be on private or public land, but to refer it to the Public Works Committee. That is what I understand the correct procedure to be.

A mixture of money is being put into this project to create 7 000 additional seats. The government will make a contribution of \$7.6 million, the contribution from the South Australian National Football League will take it up to \$12.5 million, and \$1.5 million has been provided as a grant by the AFL. The AFL made its grant conditional on an additional 2 000 seats being made available for the general public, not in the northern stand but in some other part of the ground.

It is a big surprise to me that the AFL, whose contribution of \$1.5 million is much less than that of the taxpayers, has brokered an additional 2 000 seats for the general public, which I support, whereas the government, on behalf of taxpayers, has put in \$7.5 million, yet all those seats will go to Adelaide Football Club season ticket holders who are on the waiting list and/or South Australian National Football League category 1 or 2 members, but none will go to the general public. Does the minister have a view on that?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Before the minister replies, let me give some advice to the member for Lee. This committee is required to handle matters relating to the budget line of the minister. If there is no reference to this item in the budget line, the minister may choose to answer it or not to answer it. In relation to the Public Works Committee, I suggest to the member for Lee that he use another place, either via a question on notice or question time, to ask that question.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: My understanding of the background to this project is that, prior to the last election, the

South Australian National Football League spoke to the government, and I have no doubt that it spoke to the opposition, and I note that the member for Lee is nodding to say that it did. The opposition made a commitment to give the league \$10 million so it could create an additional 5 000 seats and my understanding is that it is essentially the same deal that was put to the government. The final costings from the SANFL for the government contribution are about \$7 million to \$8 million, not \$10 million. The point that the member for Lee makes needs to be taken into context because, prior to the last election, the opposition promised to fund the same deal put up by the SANFL that the government has now funded. The SANFL, as state level administrations do, shops its program around to both government and opposition, and my understanding is that the \$10 million commitment from the opposition was to fund the same upgrade as that in the \$7 million or \$8 million project that was announced by the government this week.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: I am not noted for my knowledge of the racing industry, which was demonstrated last weekend when I made the mistake of backing a horse owned by one of the members of this parliament, but it is good for the lucerne industry. Will the minister outline projects that will help to improve, potentially at least, the viability of the racing industry?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: With the public discussion occurring in relation to the corporatisation of the industry, it is probably an opportune time to detail what could be achieved with a unified, pro-active sporting or racing industry. While the industry, market and sport is obviously different from what we have in South Australia, the basic principles adopted by the National Thoroughbred Racing Association (NTRA), which is an organisation formed by the North American thoroughbred industry, provide some very good food for thought for the Australian racing industry in general.

The guiding principle is to coordinate the national promotion and marketing of thoroughbred racing and the NTRA allowed the American thoroughbred racing industry to compete effectively—in many cases for the first time—with a multitude of other sports, gaming and entertainment options available to the North American market. Previously, the promotion, marketing and advertising of the sport had been done on a track by track basis with no cohesive strategy and no national funding. The NTRA's achievements in its first year, I think, are very impressive. It doubled the amount of national broadcast television; it worked to help create a 24-hour racing channel and the next generation of interactive television; it attracted major sponsors as well as other sports fans; and developed a widely accepted and now very well-known slogan in North America known as 'Go, baby, go'.

The American model has been successful in halting what had been a decline in on-track attendances—an issue which is being addressed in Australia; a fact underlined by the recent release of the national advertising campaign for racing. In Australia several sports such as football, rugby, basketball and soccer have developed national approaches to their industry and are now in a much stronger position to withstand competition from other sports industries and other forms of entertainment than they were 10 to 20 years ago. It is my view that the racing industry needs to further develop strategies on a national basis to assist the industry in not only maintaining but also, more importantly, increasing its share of the recreational dollar. There is no doubt that it needs to

generate additional outcome other than simply betting turnover.

In football and basketball, a number of years ago the national bodies instituted salary caps aimed at making their sports more even and more competitive. The national racing officials may consider the implementation of a national stake money equalisation scheme; not necessarily the same stake money in each state but certainly less of a differential between each state I think would assist the smaller states to maintain their industry and keep trainers and the industry viable in South Australia and the smaller states in general. Failure to do so may indeed see the racing codes in the smaller jurisdictions struggle. In my view it would be beneficial in trying to help the present codes survive, as in some instances the smaller jurisdictions become feeders to the larger states. National marketing bodies would be beneficial for each code of racing to represent all jurisdictions in negotiating the best financial results for their respective industries in such matters as broadcasting rights, marketing, merchandising and product fees. These bodies could also be responsible for event promotion in all jurisdictions.

A major issue, which is long overdue for administrators to resolve, is that of racing dates. Each of the codes should be able to produce a national calendar of racing dates and adhere to them on a yearly basis. It simply does not make sense for one state's carnival to overlap with another state. A national calendar would mean that everyone is a winner and stake money wars would not be necessary as each state naturally endeavours to attract the best horses. Furthermore, the racing industry does not have a world and regional championship like other sports. The creation of the Emirates World Series Racing Championship is seen by many as the first step taken by the thoroughbred sport to link the world's top international events and establish an annual championship to reflect what has happened in other sports in the World Cup in soccer, rugby and cricket.

The centralisation of rights is also crucial to achieving any substantial increase in income, particularly media rights income. Almost every major national and international sport has centralised its rights for the benefit of the group of events and clubs as a whole. In relation to English football, clubs have always banded together to sell their rights as a group, that is, the premier league. I think the racing industry needs to coordinate worldwide and regional competition to widen its appeal and subsequently increase its revenue from non-betting related sources, for example, television rights, sponsorship and merchandising. In spite of many obstacles, the challenge is simple: can racing operate on a united front for the benefit of racing as a whole?

If racing is to expand its appeal and revenue through globalisation, it needs to identify a limited number of blue chip companies which, through long-term partnerships and more structured sponsorship programs, can upgrade racing's commercial base. It does not matter whether it is on a local, regional or global level: the concept is the same, that is, a coordinated group sponsorship concept of limited partners each with equivalent rights but who also enjoy specific benefits.

I took this concept to the national racing ministers' conference this year and argued that we should try to develop the industry on a national basis. The ministers' conference, I am pleased to say, agreed to invite the racing heads from all the codes to next year's conference to specifically talk about how government per se can help the industry shift from its current structure Australia-wide to a more national structure.

I am very pleased, and personally proud, to have won that argument at the national conference. I acknowledge the good work of John Barrett and other officers in helping behind the scenes to secure that debate at that conference.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: Could the minister provide an update on the progress of corporatisation of the racing industry?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: In fairness to the opposition, I will give a shorter answer to this question. Corporatisation of the industry, of course, is a matter of much debate at the moment. As members would be aware, we have been through a long process of consultation on the corporatisation of the industry. Members are aware that we introduced a bill on the Racing Act on 24 May. Corporatisation of racing here will be an Australian first, and the codes, we think, will benefit through self-management and those benefits will quickly flow to the industry.

I will not go through the corporatisation plan because I think that is evident through the legislation; I will not debate that here. Corporatisation of the racing industry will give racing codes total flexibility to decide how to spend the industry's money in terms of capital works, stake money and marketing. The licensing and probity, of course, of those functions in relation to bookmakers and on-course totes will transfer to the Gaming Supervisory Authority and the Liquor Licensing Commissioner. There has been extensive dialogue between the government and the racing industry.

In fact, I can remember when Bob Bastian wrote to me in April or May last year indicating that SATRA was suggesting that we should look at corporatisation of the racing industry. In fact, Mr Bastian, at SATRA's suggestion, went to South Africa to look at a corporatised model over there and came back quite enthused about the concept. There has been extensive dialogue between the government and the racing industry. It began in April last year when we commenced the process of racing industry consultation in relation to the future operations of RIDA. Members might recall that we have given a commitment to review RIDA by June 2001—and we have brought that forward.

Comments were invited from the racing industry on the structure of the industry, including the current constitution of each of the controlling authorities. As a result of that, a discussion paper was prepared and opinions and comments were sought. Extensive consultation certainly has occurred since that time and, more recently, in mid-May I met separately with industry representatives from each of the codes to explain the draft bill in relation to corporatisation and discuss each code's draft constitution. The working parties of each code have given support in some form or other to their respective constitutions and this week, from memory, we posted out greyhound and harness. I think the racing industry is in sufficiently good shape to take on the increasing challenges for the industry, including corporatisation. It is my view that the sooner we can get them to corporatise, the sooner they will gain from those benefits.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH: Can the minister outline what the government has done to financially support the racing industry?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The racing industry since July 1994 will, by the end of this financial year, have received from the government approximately \$35.4 million more than it would have received had the arrangements that were in place at 1 July 1994 continued. This does not include any growth from the SATAB's increased turnover and profit. Indeed, this is new money to the industry. Under the current funding

arrangements, the industry will continue to get in excess of around \$7 million more than it did pre 1 July 1994.

As at 1 July 1995, the Racing Act was amended so that additional funds from the South Australian TAB capital account were payable to the racing industry. The industry now shares these funds 50-50 with the South Australian TAB. As at the end of 1999-2000, this will have netted the industry approximately \$14.3 million in additional funds. The legislation was amended with effect from 1 July 1994 to increase the industry's profit share from 50 per cent to 55 per cent, netting the industry an additional \$12 million. Also, as I am sure you are aware, Mr Acting Chairman, government appropriations have contributed an additional \$9 million to the industry since July 1996.

Membership:

Mr De Laine substituted for Ms Bedford.

Mr WRIGHT: With respect to the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, have the loan repayments which the South Australian Soccer Federation was previously paying and which were suspended for some time recommenced?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: No; the government gave the commitment to the Soccer Federation that, while the negotiations about future management were ongoing, it would pick up repayments, and that is still happening.

Mr WRIGHT: Is the government satisfied with the current management of the stadium?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As I mentioned in the previous answer, the government is negotiating with the South Australian Soccer Federation in relation to future management and ownership options of the stadium. Those negotiations have been ongoing for some time. Obviously, we want to resolve those issues sooner rather than later.

Mr WRIGHT: As the minister correctly states, these negotiations have been ongoing for some time, and I appreciate that they are delicate and perhaps even somewhat difficult. I do not expect the minister to be specific, but is the minister able to indicate a potential time period within which some of these issues will be resolved and an announcement made regarding the path we will head down?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will not tie myself to a time frame. The fact that the negotiations have taken so long, as the honourable member rightly points out, illustrates that they are very complex negotiations. I do not think it would be wise for me to try to tie myself down to a time frame. I can only say that, in everyone's best interests (those of the government, the taxpayer and the sport of soccer), we acknowledge that there is some benefit in trying to resolve the issues sooner rather than later. As the honourable member is aware, in relation to the ownership issue we are also dealing with the City of Charles Sturt.

There are issues in relation to Adelaide Force and to national soccer. Four or five parties need to be consulted, so it is taking longer than we would have wished. It is important that, whatever the result, we get it right.

Mr WRIGHT: The minister mentioned the City of Charles Sturt. I understand that the City of Charles Sturt is still the owner of the stadium, despite ongoing negotiations that the government is having with respect to ownership. How imminent is the resolution of that issue, that is, how close are we to the government's becoming the owner of the stadium and, if it is not the owner, will that have any impact on the hosting of the Olympic soccer matches to be held in South Australia?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As I have indicated, negotiations about ownership of the stadium are tied up, to some extent, with the negotiations with the federation. Approximately the same time frame will apply in that instance. As the City of Charles Sturt owns the land, my understanding is that arrangements have been put in place with respect to the Olympic football tournament which, of course, is now the responsibility of the Minister for Tourism. When I say that arrangements have been put in place, my understanding is that approaches have been made to the City of Charles Sturt and that council has indicated strong support for the Olympics. There did not seem to be an issue from the council's perspective in relation to the hosting of the event. It was quite supportive and positive.

Mr CONDOUS: What is the current level of funding that is provided to peak sport and recreation bodies for the 1999-2000 period?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As the honourable member is probably aware, the management development program has been established in the Office of Recreation and Sport, combining the Office of Recreation and Sport and former Living Health sponsorships. The management development programs give financial assistance to those organisations that provide the overall leadership direction and competition support for sport and active recreation. Applications closed on 19 March 1999 for the 1999-2000 year; some 163 organisations applied. A total of \$5 960 510 is allocated for the 1999-2000 financial year for this particular program.

Part of the program requires successful applicants—picking up on the old Living Health concept—to provide health promotion opportunities and conduct healthy lifestyle practices as a condition of funding. Applications for this year's program closed on 7 April. The recommendations will be dealt with on my return from estimates so that peak bodies such as the SANFL, basketball, soccer, etc., can get their money to enable them to continue with their management development programs for this year.

Mr CONDOUS: What has been achieved by the Office of Recreation and Sport's Prepared to Win program in attracting visiting Olympic and Paralympic teams to South Australia for training and acclimatisation in preparation for the 2000 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Sydney?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The Prepared to Win program was established to maximise South Australia's sporting and economic opportunities arising out of the Sydney 2000 Olympics and Paralympic Games. The strategies utilised by the Prepared to Win program have already been successful in attracting international teams to Adelaide for training and acclimatisation purposes. In the past 12 months, Adelaide has hosted the Polish men's hockey team preparing for the Olympic qualifying tournament; the Australian, Nigerian, Korean and Egyptian men's soccer teams; the Australian, Swedish, USA and Czech Republic women's soccer teams; the Japanese track cycling team; track and field athletes' teams across Oceania and Africa; an Austrian Olympic staging camp; three professional Japanese soccer teams; Malaysian track and field athletes; and both the Chinese and Hong Kong track cycling teams.

This has proved, we think, to be an excellent lead-up to the large contingent of athletes to be based in Adelaide from August to October for their final Olympic and Paralympic preparations. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, more than 1 000 athletes and officials from 23 countries will visit Adelaide and South Australia for pre-games training camps,

which represents, as I mentioned, 22 000 bed nights—a significant boost for the hotel and restaurant industry.

Over 400 visitors from 10 African countries will attend a month long training camp in a program established to provide opportunities to athletes from developing countries being run in partnership with the Australian Olympic Committee. Through the program, the government has addressed the issue of assisting overseas teams from developing countries that may wish to train and acclimatise in Australia in the lead up to the 2000 Olympics. As a result of ongoing liaison with the Australian Olympic Committee, the matter has been addressed within the auspices of the Olympic guidelines. The African Olympic training centre program has been running for a number of years with many young African athletes training in Australia for extended periods. With the involvement of the government, this program has been expanded in 2000 to offer a pre-games training camp for the athletes of many of the developing African nations. Ten countries have committed to the African Olympic training centre program arrangements and, as a result, will be based in Adelaide for their pre-games training prior to the Olympics.

Over 400 athletes and support staff are expected from Kenya, Nigeria, Congo, Togo, Mali, Cameroon, Swaziland, Uganda, Ivory Coast and Zimbabwe between 2 August and 2 September. The Austrian Olympic committee will also use Adelaide for its team assembly, with over 140 team members involved in its camp. A number of high profile sports from the Russian Olympic team will also be based in Adelaide, including its artistic and rhythmic gymnastic teams, diving, synchronised swimming, track and road cycling. Some of our facilities will had to be upgraded to help accommodate them. In fact, from memory we had to put \$50 000 or \$60 000 into the Adelaide Aquatic Centre to help develop a synchronised diving facility, and that will remain there for general public use after the Russian teams finish training. The standard of the training facilities available to the teams for training has been praised by virtually all the teams and officials during their inspections of the Adelaide facilities.

It is also worth mentioning that track and field athletes from Spain will train at Santos stadium, while the Adelaide superdrome will be utilised by teams from Japan, New Zealand, Canada, Russia, Austria and Australia. Other venues to be used include the Clipsal Powerhouse, the Adelaide Aquatic Centre, ETSA Park, South Australian Sports Institute, West Lakes Aquatic Centre and the Wingfield shooting range. A lot of the local community groups are keen to get involved, both sporting and ethnic community groups. They are very supportive of this program as it gives them a chance to meet people from their homelands. With the Russians we used Mr Lebedew, who was fluent in Russian. With his help, the Russians understood what they were looking for, which is a great benefit in our achieving the outcomes that we did. The office has certainly done a good job in attracting that many athletes to South Australia.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I congratulate that group of people. Of all the government has achieved outside the traditional trade areas, we have received the greatest response from this group, and it has been of the greatest value to South Australia. I ask the minister to pass on those congratulations to all concerned.

Mr CONDOUS: Are there adequate statistics examining the economic, demographic and social aspects of sport and recreation in South Australia?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The Office of Recreation and Sport remains one of Australia's leaders in providing accurate and

timely statistical information to the recreation and sports industry. The Office of Recreation and Sport has released several publications that are intended to promote the recreation and sport industry to interested stakeholders. Topics have been wide and varied. They include such things as the analysis of surf sport industry and its impact on the South Australian economy, also the economic impact assessment of an Adelaide Oval test match, and the examination of the golf industry, highlighting the export potential of its current export markets. It has also conducted a study on the prevention of injuries to junior sports participants. These fact sheets, as we call them, have been extremely popular amongst the recreation and sport industry, interested stakeholders, governments at various levels, academic students and the population at large.

Two fact sheets were released last financial year. They were: Golf—a Driving Force in the South Australian economy in October 1999. That examined the contribution to Australia and South Australia's economy through exporting golf course design basically through the Asia region and the way golf is used in the business world to secure contracts and enhance professional relationships and participant expenditure. This report also had two interviews with golf product and service exports, Peter Ormsby from Pete's Golf Factory and Neil Crafter, the Principal Golf Course Architect, Golf Strategies.

The other fact sheet released in April 2000 entitled Active Alert is a report on the prevention of activity injuries in young people. This was prepared in conjunction with Sports Medicine Australia. There were several purposes for the fact sheet, one of which was to identify the types of injuries children receive during participation in physical activity, to provide examples of preventive measures and demonstrate the effects of their implementation and, lastly, to provide avenues for further information.

An economic impact study was also undertaken by the Office of Recreation and Sport on the Adelaide to Port Lincoln yacht race. It measured the economic stimulus of the race provided to the economy of Port Lincoln, and it is expected that report will be published in July. In November 1999, the ABS released the public indication entitled Participation in Sport and Physical Activities. This report showed that South Australia had a participation rate of 56.9 per cent for organised and unorganised sport combined. The male participation rate is 60.6 per cent, while the female participation rate is 53.3 per cent. Participation is highest in the 18 to 24 year old age bracket—slightly above the national average.

Mr WRIGHT: What is the current financial performance of the Clipsal Powerhouse?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We do not own the Clipsal Powerhouse. My understanding of the Clipsal Powerhouse is that it is owned by the Basketball Association of South Australia, under a deal negotiated with the Labor government. I understood it has a financing arrangement through Treasury. That is owned by BASA. The Clipsal Powerhouse is not owned by the government.

Mr WRIGHT: I realise that. However, I thought in output class 8, facilities management, it would come in there, because it is my understanding that taxpayers' dollars are involved in a loan, and I am interested to know how BASA is going in its repayments to the government with respect to taxpayer exposure?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The question the honourable member asked me was regarding the performance of the Clipsal Powerhouse.

Mr WRIGHT: I meant from a financial point of view.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The loan is between Treasury and BASA. My brief knowledge of this issue is that early in 1998 BASA approached the Treasurer in relation to some issues it was having with the loan set up under previous governments. A financial analysis of BASA and its associated industries was commissioned by the Treasurer so that it could have further discussions between BASA and Treasury officers. My understanding is that those discussions are still occurring. I really cannot tell the honourable member a lot more than that. I have not seen latest figures from BASA. As the loan is direct with the Treasurer, it has tended to deal directly with the Treasurer.

By way of clarification, on another matter—and this might answer the honourable member's previous question in relation to public works—I understand that with Football Park the money is being used to assist paying off a loan, and, therefore, under the Public Works Act, the advice to me is that it may not need to go to public works. That might clarify the difference for the honourable member.

Mr WRIGHT: I appreciate that answer about the Clipsal Powerhouse because it has been a suggestion of the stadiums that we have some responsibility for management of perhaps one of the stadiums that has had greater difficulty. The basketball people acknowledge this and have been great hosts to us all, particularly over the past three years when we have had so much success with the 36ers.

You may not have the detail of this matter because it is in the Treasury area, but I will ask the question because it may be something that has been resolved and you are aware of it. I raise it I guess partly because of—and in the context that I just raised about—the difficulty that BASA has experienced over a fairly significant period with their repayments. I am wondering whether the government has taken up its option of putting a Treasury official on the BASA board and, if it has not, whether it intends to do so, because that may be of some benefit to BASA in terms of some of the general problems it has perhaps been experiencing.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The advice from my officers is that they are not aware of the Treasury officer going onto the BASA board but, again, you would need to take that up with the Treasurer. Just by way of clarification, I think in your introductory comments to that question you mentioned stadiums that we manage. We do not own or manage Clipsal Powerhouse.

Mr WRIGHT: No, you have clarified that.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: So, I am being asked questions about a stadium I do not own or manage, and the financial relationship is with the Treasurer.

Mr WRIGHT: Can the minister report to the committee the current financial performance of Mile End athletics and the netball stadium?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I will ask Mr Forrest to report on that.

Mr Forrest: In terms of the loan repayments I can report that it is my understanding that netball is up to date with its loan repayments and, therefore, at this stage there are no issues in terms of loan repayments with the Office for Recreation and Sport.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: Athletics?

Mr Forrest: Athletics does not have a loan repayment structure, so there are no issues there, either, Mr Chairman.

Membership:

Mr Wright substituted for Mr Snelling.

Mr WILLIAMS: The Active Club program is one of the very few sources of funds, particularly in my electorate, to small community based sporting groups which find fundraising very difficult these days with a dwindling population in a lot of country areas. I would argue that even though the populations are dwindling they still require the same facilities: you cannot build half a tennis court just because you have a small population. I have noted that the Active Club program has been traditionally funded out of gaming machine tax revenue and there has been quite a deal of publicity about those revenues of late and the increase in those revenues. Can the minister tell the committee whether there has been an increase in funding as those revenues have been going up? Have the Active Club and other programs received increases in funding commensurate with the extra tax revenue?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: We are pleased, under this budget, to be able to be doubling the amount of money to the Active Club program. I am sure that members are aware that the Active Club program is allocated \$940 000 per year; \$20 000 per electorate. That will now be doubled to \$40 000 per electorate. This, I think, is one of the more popular programs run by government—certainly by the Office for Recreation and Sport. I know that the chair has a particular interest in this program.

I am really pleased as minister to be able to announce a doubling of this program, because I suppose a lot of my time prior to entering politics was, as is the case with a lot of other members here, spent at the grassroots sport or recreation club level, whether it be as a player, administrator or supporter. To have a doubling of the amount now up to a touch over \$1.8 million going into local, ordinary every-day sporting clubs I think will be a real boon to them. We know that the Active Club program is always oversubscribed with applications; we can never get enough money for it. However, we know that those clubs to which we do provide the money are certainly very appreciative of it.

About 196 organisations were successful in obtaining a share of the January 2000 allocation of \$433 000. These organisations were spread over 47 electorates, representing some 37 different sport and recreation activities, ranging widely from scouts and kindergym to orienteering, football, tennis and lawn bowls. The types of projects being funded vary between organisations. Most demand appears to be in the minor equipment purchases, junior sport programs and clubroom development.

Being a rural member, the member may be interested to know that \$112 000 was allocated to country clubs in the January 2000 round. That represents about 25 per cent of the total amount allocated in the round. The latest funding round closed on 26 May. If I recall, I have just written to members seeking that they clarify that the clubs that have applied are within their electorates. So, those allocations should be announced in the near future. But the doubling of the money from \$940 000 to \$1.8 million takes effect, obviously, from this financial year, and we are sure that all the local members will enjoy presenting twice the amount of money that they have previously.

Mr WILLIAMS: I have a supplementary question. With respect to the doubling of that money, does the minister envisage that there will be a doubling of the number of recipients from 196 to just under 400, or will those recipients receive an increased grant? I know that the grants generally

do not come anywhere near the requests and, considering that there have been inflationary effects on the costs to which those grants are applied, how does the minister envisage administering the extra amount?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: It will not be a perfect doubling, because of the very point that the member makes. There are projects where people ask for \$8 000 and they receive \$4 000. The office now has more flexibility perhaps to offer them \$5 000, \$6 000, \$7 000 or the \$8 000, if need be. It also depends on the number of applications for the electorate. We all know that this is an electorate-based system. If there happen to be only three nominations in one round for one electorate, obviously, the amount per applicant is higher than if there are 20 applications.

We have looked at a number of ways of trying to alter that grant program to try to cover those sorts of differences, but it seems that the clear message we are receiving from all members is that an even distribution per electorate is the preferred option. So, we have not altered that context. While it is not perfect, it is certainly one of the fair ways to distribute the money. We would envisage that there will certainly be more clubs receiving it. There is no doubt that it will increase the number of clubs, but we do not rule out the option of providing slightly higher grants as the need requires.

I suppose I have taken the approach that, living in a small town (I live in a little place called Heathfield that has a deli, a couple of schools, and that is about it), I know that when you apply for a government grant you generally apply for everything you need and, if you receive a half or three-quarters of it, the community generally will chip in and pick up the rest, anyway. So, there has to be some judgment about whether you provide only three-quarters of the amount, knowing that the community will pick up the balance and therefore spread the money over a lot more communities. I know that, with respect to some grant schemes, I have definitely tried to adopt that philosophy to get the money across as many communities as possible.

Mr WILLIAMS: With respect to the same theme of grants, particularly to regional communities, there are the regional recreation and sport facilities grants. Can the minister explain to the committee exactly what funds are available under this scheme and how they are administered? The third part of my question is (and I do not mind if the minister takes this on notice): what allocations were made across the state in the last financial year under this scheme?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The name 'regional recreation and sport facilities grant' is slightly deceptive, and I will clarify that for the committee. 'Regional' does not mean country. What happens is that the Office for Recreation and Sport has regional recreation plans that are worked out in consultation with local councils and communities and, obviously, the metropolitan area has regional recreation plans. The word 'regional' in this context needs to be identified as a regional facility under that plan—or it is recognised as a regional facility under that plan. We spend about \$900 000 a year in this funding regime.

The maximum grant is up to \$150 000, and that obviously means that if you gave a \$150 000 grant to all of them you would get to fund only six grants, which is not a lot. So, it is not the norm that \$150 000 is given, although it has previously happened on occasions. The ceiling was increased in 1996 from \$40 000 to \$150 000. The reason for this was that funds allocated under the Gaming Machines (Miscellaneous) Amendment Act were then made available to provide funding

assistance to increase access to regional sport and recreation facilities.

A regional recreation and sport grants facility assessment committee considers the applications against assessment criteria set out, and the committee then provides the minister with a ranking for the projects against the assessment criteria. Using this ranking, the minister determines the allocation of funds to the individual applicants. So, the committee prepares a certain priority list and on occasions it also makes a recommendation with respect to the amount of money. As a general practice, I have not fiddled with the priority but, rather, looked at the money amounts and, adopting the principle about which I spoke earlier, by working down the priority list, I have tried to spread the money out over a greater spread of communities.

The member mentioned the grants that were allocated last year. Some of the examples include Adelaide Shores. The West Beach Trust received \$75 000 towards a skateboard facility on the West Beach recreation reserve. Alexandrina District Council received \$75 000 towards stage 2 of the Goolwa Recreation Centre project; that was to help with the installation of a single championship size basketball court. With respect to Goolwa, we put in \$75 000 and community organisations contributed up to \$320 000 towards the project. That is a typical example of how it works. Balaklava Sports Club, much to the delight of the local member, John Meier, received \$75 000. It had applied, I think, four or five years straight and not been successful, so the member was delighted that it finally got up.

The Blyth Football Club received \$32 000; the City of Mount Gambier received \$50 000; the City of Tea Tree Gully received \$75 000; Gawler received \$39 000; the District Council of Kapunda and Light received \$75 000; the Kadina Sports Club received \$120 000; the Kingston Community School received \$75 000 (which, if I recall correctly, the member enjoyed presenting); the Port Pirie Netball Association received almost \$31 000; the Lower South-East Hockey Association (which is based at Mount Gambier, although I think this would probably affect teams from the member's area) received \$43 500; Lock, on the Eyre Peninsula, received a touch under \$70 000; Daws Road High School received \$75 000 towards the three court stadium it is building in conjunction with BASA; Tailem Bend received nearly \$24 500; and the Virginia Residents Association was allocated \$75 000—although I am not sure whether that has commenced yet; I think it is waiting for some federal moneys.

There is about \$1 million in there, and that gives a pretty typical range of the spread. Those projects range from playgrounds to school gymnastics, two school gym halls, tennis and cricket club facilities, netball facilities, a general sports facility at Lock, partly enclosing a swimming pool at Kingston, irrigation schemes at local sporting clubs and separate tank effluent drainage schemes on others, so it goes to a range of projects.

Mr WILLIAMS: I was a little disappointed with the explanation of the term 'regional recreational sport facility' and, because of that, it is often argued in my electorate and I am sure in other rural electorates that we do not have in the country the opportunities that our city cousins have, in that governments spend large sums on major facilities in cities. I will not name any of those that have been in the press of late.

Does the department do anything specific for sport in country areas? Are there any other grants or initiatives of the

government that are specifically directed to sport and promoting sport in country areas?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: There is a range of programs outside of simply the facility programs, with things such as sports camps. We have 17 sports camps for upper primary age school children, with funds dedicated by our office of \$75 000 and funds dedicated by Minister Buckby's department of \$75 000. Sports involve country athletes to varying degrees, with some having 100 per cent country athletic representation.

The Country Athletics Awards Scheme awards scholarships of \$500 to 29 athletes throughout the state who participate in 20 different sports. Athletes will also attend a two-day camp as part of their scholarship, with \$20 000 funded by the office. We also have an Aboriginal Sports Talent Sponsorship program, which has provided four country athletes with funds to further their careers in their chosen sport. The athletes come from Roxby, Port Augusta and Mount Barker, and funds allocated are about \$13 000.

Through the Active Clubs Funding Program, \$112 000 was allocated to country clubs. As I noted earlier, that was around 25 or 26 per cent of the funding. Also, we help to fund and conduct community sport and recreation forums. Funds are committed here to establish communication networks between sports to enable them to have an advisory role with local government, which ensures that sport contributes to its own destiny. We contribute around \$19 500 to that, with the rural component being just under \$5 000.

We also have regional recreation and sports strategies, with \$50 000 dedicated by ORS, \$35 000 of which goes to country regions. Areas covered include the local government areas of Mallala, Gawler, Kapunda and Light, Barossa, Adelaide Hills, Mount Barker and Port Pirie. These strategies develop processes that contribute to the viability of sport in the regions. Vacs swim, a very popular program, costs around \$450 000 to \$500 000. The programs involved 8 700 metropolitan participants and about 17 200 country participants.

I have mentioned the Regional Sports Facility Grants Scheme. We also have a very good Volunteer Improvement Program, which runs management courses throughout the state in association with local councils and state sporting organisations. Funds dedicated to that by ORS are about \$40 000 and the rural component is roughly \$10 000. In addition, we have a state coaching centre that provides the opportunity to complete coaching accreditation courses by correspondence to coaches throughout the state.

Ms RANKINE: Part of the question I was going to ask was answered in one of the minister's answers to the member for MacKillop, in relation to the method of allocation. I am disappointed that we are still going to maintain the electorate by electorate allocation rather than the demographic needs and some social justice principles in the allocation of those funds. In my electorate I find that very often clubs and organisations do not apply for the maximum amount that they need. They very often under-apply.

There have been a number of occasions on which less than the full amount has been allocated. What happens to those funds when they are not allocated in my electorate? I well remember asking whether other clubs could be provided with those funds or whether other applications would be accepted, and told no. If \$20 000 or \$40 000 is not allocated in an electorate, where does that money go?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I understand—and the officers will correct me very quickly if I am wrong, I am sure—that you

get \$20 000 allocated to your electorate, \$10 000 each round. If your electorate does not take up the full allocation, if there is \$5 000 left over not applied for, then that goes into a pool and is distributed across other applications.

Ms RANKINE: Will the minister explain to me why grants in my electorate were not topped up or why other applicants were not accepted?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I can explain the second. Applications generally are only accepted by a due date. There has to be a cut-off time somewhere in fairness to the officers, otherwise when do you finalise the dollar amounts? There has to be a line in the sand where officers know that they can recommend certain expenditure levels. All grant applications government-wide have a cut-off date for that reason. I will ask Mr Forrest to comment on the first point.

Mr Forrest: As I understand it, the question relates to when an electorate does not have its full allocation allocated to it and what happens to those funds. As the minister stated, we look at where the greatest number of unfunded applications are and make a determination on that basis. Sometimes some electorates might have only one or two applications.

Ms RANKINE: Is that done for each round or at the end of the financial cycle?

Mr Forrest: If memory serves me correctly, that is done for each round.

Ms RANKINE: So, we will need to make sure that our clubs apply for the full \$10 000 each time or we do not get our full \$20 000 for the year?

Mr Forrest: It is important that people such as local members encourage their clubs to apply each time, unless they were funded in the previous round. That is the only stipulation.

Ms RANKINE: Would the minister consider having those funds transferred to the next round, at least, if not for the financial year, so that each electorate does get its opportunity to apply for its full allocation each year?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am happy to look at that. We have had occasions when some electorates simply have no applications, but I am happy to look at that point.

Ms RANKINE: Has the minister looked at expanding the eligibility criteria for applicants for these grants? The minister laughs: I do not know that it is that funny. I understand that recreation groups such as scouting organisations, etc., get the right to apply for those grants, but other organisations that provide recreational activities for youth or provide a camp or whatever are not able to be funded through the active club grants. Now the minister can make me laugh with his answer.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: There are only 40 minutes to go, so I will not take it all up with this answer, although I could, because this is a really complex policy question and something the honourable member might want to put her mind to when developing her own policy. How do you define recreation?

Ms RANKINE: Exactly.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I laughed because I was at the Blackwood footy club about three weeks ago watching the local team play, and the president of the local wine club came up and asked me whether he could apply for an active club grant. About 120 members of the Blackwood Wine Club meet monthly at the local footy club, and they claim that it is their recreation. I laughed, because I thought: that is interesting. Is it a recreation, wine tasting? If it is not a recreation, what is it? They are certainly passing their recreational time doing it, so is it a recreation?

We have had applications from gem clubs, which dig up rubies and gold nuggets and never tell us about it. Is that a recreation? I know that the member for Hanson has questioned whether chess is a recreation. It really is difficult to draw a definition that does not distribute the money to areas where it is not targeted and yet is broad enough to include those we want to cover. The general rule is that it is meant to be active recreation, but what is 'active'? Is chess active? It is certainly active for the mind and, for those of mature age or those who have some physical difficulty in being active, having an active mind is probably of the same benefit as being physically active. Defining who is eligible to apply for club grants is difficult.

Someone put to me the other day (and I have not decided whether to take this up with my officers) that we need to use an industry group as a filter group and have it judge whether an activity is a recreation, so it is not seen to be departmental officers or government making a decision. If a group goes to an industry group and convinces it that it is an active recreation, it would become eligible for a grant. If it could not convince the industry group, it would miss out.

Where the line really gets blurred is between welfare type grants and our grants, particularly grants for the elderly for a crochet group, for instance. That is their recreation but should that come under Minister Lawson's area, or does it come under recreation in my portfolio? I laughed at the question because it is really difficult for government to work out exactly where they plug in.

There is an increasing trend with our funding to tie grant moneys to physical activity and therefore health outcomes, which is probably the logical policy position for funding out of this agency, as it is out of the health agency. Other agencies such as those of disability and ageing under Minister Lawson would have to pick up others. It is unfair on the officers if we do not define the lines clearly because it becomes a nightmare for them. That is why I laughed at the proposition that sitting down sipping a Penfold's red is a recreation and people should be able to receive a grant for it.

Mr WRIGHT: My ears sprang up when the minister spoke about where money goes if it is not allocated. In that context, can consideration be given to the current ineligibility of clubs and organisations to receive two consecutive rounds of funding? Being realistic, there are more demands in some electorates than in others where fewer clubs or organisations apply on a regular basis, and the reason for clubs not being able to receive two consecutive grants is to spread it out. If we are not able to spread it out because the demand is not there in a given electorate, perhaps there is no good reason to stop clubs from receiving two consecutive grants.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am happy to explore that policy area. Some would question whether a club should get two grants in a row when, because of some political boundary, a club in a neighbouring electorate cannot get a grant. That is a policy question that would have to be considered more carefully. The other issue that raises its head from time to time is university sports clubs. Adelaide University and Flinders University have well-organised sporting clubs that are pretty well funded through student associations, but they are eligible under this scheme. The issue has been raised as to whether university sports clubs should be funded through the university system rather than through this mechanism. Again, they are currently eligible through this mechanism and have received grants, but it is one of those interesting areas.

Mr WRIGHT: By way of supplementary question, there will be some grey areas and difficulties but overall we are

delighted that the government has doubled the funding for this program. In each electorate there are grey areas and things go wrong but, in my time, problems that have been brought to the minister's attention by and large have been cleared up.

I do not have the answer to this problem, I am not necessarily suggesting that an organisation such as this should be ruled out and I do not know how much this occurs elsewhere, but in the electorate of Lee, and similarly in other electorates, there is a body of water (in my electorate it is the lake), and different clubs exist as a result of that infrastructure. In the main, most of the clubs that use that body of water, whether it be rowing or canoeing, are drawn from outside the electorate. Sometimes clubs and organisations inside the electorate miss out but those other clubs have got a grant. The clubs belong in the electorate and many of their members probably live there as well, and they say it is not fair. Having identified the problem, I appreciate that there is no easy answer, but it needs to be considered.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: That is exactly the problem with the universities. Flinders University is in my electorate, on the border road, which is South Road. It has probably 15 to 20 sporting clubs of all sorts and the probably outnumber all the sporting clubs in the rest of the electorate, and that is our problem. The local tennis club wants to know why the university system gets two or three grants while the local tennis club misses out.

I am not sure how to address this problem. At the end of the day, taxpaying South Australians are sending their kids to university, who are keeping healthy by running around being active. They are fulfilling all the aims but, as the local member, I know what my thought process is when I visit the university to present the rugby, canoe or kayak club with its cheque.

Mr WRIGHT: I am not for a moment suggesting, and neither is the minister, that these organisations miss out, but where the funding comes from is the issue. They should be able to qualify and apply but, as the minister has agreed, when it comes out of an electorate pool, there are times when one thinks that there are more genuine applicants.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: It is interesting. I know that the member for Wright raises the concept of not having it apply by electoral boundaries but, rather, by some other measure. I would ask the honourable member, 'What other measure?' I am not quite sure how we measure social justice issues in sport and recreation. For example, the member for MacKillop would argue that on any measure more money should go to the country on the basis that the rural constituency has less capacity, fewer ratepayers, fewer participants and less business and, therefore, less capacity to raise sponsorship, fewer people to fundraise and less capacity to raise rates, but they still need a full range of sporting facilities; they still need cricket, tennis, netball and bowls clubs in rural communities. On any measure, more money probably should go on social justice terms to the rural communities. Metropolitan members would then argue that, if you look up the local government indexes or ABS indexes, there are pockets of Adelaide that are doing better than others. Therefore, more money needs to be spent in certain areas. I am not quite sure whether the ABS statistics and local government statistics represent a true reflection of sport and recreation social justice. They may represent income brackets and sole parent statistics; they may also represent more social welfare type statistics; but, when you get to measure social justice in sport and recreation terms (and that is what it would have to be), where do you want

your physical activity outcomes? I am not sure whether the statistics currently available to the federal government or state government necessarily reflect that.

We had a long look at this. We have to report occasionally to the Economic and Finance Committee; when I say 'report', the officer goes along and explains where the money is spent. This issue was raised, and we had a really good look at a different way of doing it, rather than by electorate. We are convinced that the simplest and cleanest method, despite its imperfections, may be the system we have. We cannot yet come up with another way that gives a fair distribution such as this system does.

Mr WRIGHT: I basically agree with all you have said; there is no perfect way. Different individuals in this chamber may have different views as to whether it should be electorate by electorate or council by council, and so on. I am one who does not want to hand over the powers to the local council. I think they have enough as it is. There may be the odd imperfection, but I think that it is basically working fairly well.

Mr De LAINE: I have been informed that the land on which Cheltenham Racecourse is situated was bequeathed to be used always by horses. Is this true? Is the land now actually owned by the South Australian Jockey Club, Charles Sturt Council, the state government or by any other person or body?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The advice to me is that Cheltenham Racecourse is owned by the SAJC. The member would need to clarify the situation with the SAJC or through the Land Titles Office. It is my understanding—and that of the member for Lee—that the SAJC owns Morphettville and Cheltenham.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: It is also my understanding.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: It is also the Acting Chairman's understanding.

Mr De LAINE: Because of the enormous importance of the racing industry to the state's economy, if there is a move to sell the racecourse, bearing in mind that it is the only all-weather track in South Australia, will the government seek discussions with the SAJC before any sale takes place to ensure the ongoing future of the racecourse as an important training and racing facility?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I am not quite sure how I am getting questioned on a racetrack that I do not own. If the SAJC, through whatever processes, chooses to sell Cheltenham, that is and will be a matter for the SAJC.

Mr De LAINE: A previous state government funded an \$11 million upgrade of facilities at Cheltenham Racecourse. Were any conditions laid down at that time to ensure that the facility was not sold; does the state government have any equity in the facility because of this funding; and, if it is sold, is any compensation payable to the state government?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: My understanding is that the Cheltenham developments were done on an unconditional basis, but I will double-check that. It is not dissimilar to any of the funding under the Racecourse Development Board under previous governments. I doubt whether any funding has been conditionally tied. I do not think that has been a habit of government, that is, to tie those sorts of grants to the non-sale of the asset. I do not think that has happened, to my knowledge.

Mr De LAINE: I have a supplementary question. If there are no conditions but it is sold subsequently, is any compensation payable to the state government because of the

enormous amount of taxpayers' money spent there; and can something such as that be sold?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: As I said earlier, my understanding is that no conditions were attached so, if the question is, 'Would the government seek money back from the sale if it went ahead?', I can only say that the SAJC might remind us that no conditions are attached to the grant. This whole argument about Cheltenham and whether or not it is sold, as I have said a number of times, is simply a matter ultimately for the SAJC. It is a matter for it to decide what it wants to do with that course.

Mr WRIGHT: Mr Acting Chairman, I seek your advice. I have been handed a list of omnibus questions which were meant to be dealt with at the start of questioning.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: The process is that you ask the minister and he can choose how to answer them. The minister can decide whether he will answer them one at a time or whether he will take them on notice.

Mr WRIGHT: In relation to all departments and agencies for which the minister has cabinet responsibility, including relevant junior ministers, could the minister list all consultancies let during 1999-2000, indicating to whom the consultancy was awarded; whether tenders or expressions of interest were called for each consultancy and, if not, why not; the reasons for each; and the cost of each?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: My understanding of the question is that the member wants all consultancies for the whole portfolio?

Mr WRIGHT: Yes.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: The Department of Treasury and Finance accounting and policy statement No.13 requires disclosure in the annual financial statements of expenses incurred as a result of engaging consultants. Guidelines have been developed by the agency for the procurement of the services of consultants. As a result of the government's purchasing strategically policy, procurement of consultancy services is now subject to the same high levels of rigour and control as the procurement of goods. This has strengthened the requirement for competitive tendering, ensuring value for money in the procurement processes for consultancy services. The environment and heritage portfolio expended some \$1 659 898.22 on consultancies for the period 1 July 1999 to 30 April 2000.

Expenditure by the Office of Recreation and Sport and the Racing Industry Development Authority is reported separately from that expenditure. I will give that figure to the honourable member in a minute. Of this \$1.6 million approximately, an amount of \$1 430 395.71 was expended on consultancies valued at \$10 000 or more. Consultancy payments made from the DEH administered funding scheme, State Heritage Fund, amounted to \$44 260.

The letting of consultancies is covered by DEH Procurement Policy and Procedures. The policy requires that goods and services in excess of \$50 000 be procured through a tender process, unless covered by an existing panel or whole-of-government contract. The procurement policy allows for tenders to be waived with the approval of the Accredited Purchasing Unit provided that some of the following criteria is met: the need is urgent; only one supplier is able to provide the goods or services; additional quantities required under existing contract; or other special circumstances not covered above. Each case is considered separately on its merits. The payment to consultants for consultancies in excess of \$10 000 for the period 1 July 1999 to 30 April 2000 is as follows:

Diana Taylor, integrated management system, \$10 000;

Aspect Computing, year 2000 scoping, \$112 688;
 Fujitsu Australia Limited, commercialisation of software, \$307 956;
 Luminus, development of online access to satellite images, \$10 000;
 Price Waterhouse Coopers, business and strategic services branch review, \$25 928.48;
 Price Waterhouse Coopers, spatial policy and management branch review, \$30 440.38;
 V Media Pty Ltd, DEH web site alterations, \$31 988;
 Nolan ITU, recyclable organics management strategy, \$59 723;
 PPK Environment and Infrastructure, chicken industry waste study, \$19 200;
 PPK Environment and Infrastructure, review of greener purchasing, \$19 027;
 Sinclair Knight Merz, Gawler River environmental flows report, \$12 935;
 South Australia Water Corp, determination of environment water requirements for macroinvertebrates, \$13 260;
 University of South Australia, study on electronics/electrical waste, \$13 220;
 SRA Information, user requirements for WWW monitoring data study project, \$15 915;
 KH Steer, development of air quality plan for South Australia, \$40 000;
 BC Tonkin and Associates, Patawalonga catchment integrated stormwater map, \$53 400;
 M. Dugdale, NHT—Lake Eyre Basin Agreement community consultation, \$18 106;
 Ethnografix Australia, Lake Eyre Basin Agreement—consultation with aboriginal communities, \$17 610;
 Sustainable Productions, South Australian Murray-Darling Basin, salinity program consultation, \$13 360;
 G. Macintosh, South-East Select Committee implementation team, \$36 095.50;
 Centre for Economic Studies, social association of water allocation plan, \$20 000;
 Grant Thornton, final review of Aboriginal Lands Trust, \$11 317;
 Connell Wagner Pty Ltd, Y2K Mount Lofty Summit, \$12 320;
 Julie Sloan Management Pty Ltd, Rocky River development project, \$16 608.75;
 Dare Sutton and Clarke, Cape Du Coudeic Road upgrade, \$25 950;
 Larcombe, SJ and TA, develop Kangaroo Island master plan, \$104 000;
 Taylor and Cully Pty Ltd, Rocky River development project, \$29 095;
 Taylor and Cully Pty Ltd, Kangaroo Island development master plan, \$33 175.50;
 Administrative and Information Services, Rocky River development project, \$18 783;
 Complete Marketing Solutions, Kangaroo Island tourism optimisation management model, \$28 085;
 Natcom Land Management Services, central region management planning, \$10 5000;
 Wilson Parker, NHT—wetlands waterlink, \$19 950;
 Geospatial International, NHT—protected areas management, \$13 079.95;
 Market Equity, visitor surveys, \$52 444.50;
 P&O Facilities Management, asset management initiatives, \$19 728.40;

Mauncell McIntyre Pty Ltd, Morialta Kiosk and toilet plan, \$10 250;
 Phillips/Pilkington Architects, Innes National Park self-registration and ticket booth, \$10 591;
 D. Doyle, review and rewriting of 30 operating procedures, \$21 781.25;
 V. Woltersdorf, risk assessment 1998-99, \$11 074;
 Department of Administrative and Information Services, annual asbestos survey, \$11 440;
 Delta Television, performance management video, \$25 000;
 Higgins Botha, financial management review, \$37 150;
 DSC Andrew Pty Ltd, Cape Du Couedic Road upgrade, \$11 220; and
 Australian Tax Office, Kangaroo Island master plan (that is interesting—I will have to ask what that is about); \$16 000.

In relation to racing the list for 1999-2000 is as follows: Hamra Management, ongoing professional public relations advice and marketing, a fee of \$5 000 per month was awarded after public tender; KWP, ongoing development for advertising in the racing development, a fee of \$5 000 per month was awarded after public tender; McGregor Marketing, market segmentation research study, \$77 000; SAJC Morphettville development proposal, \$6 800; professional fees, development of thoroughbred constitution, \$8 000; professional fees, development of the harness and greyhound constitution, \$7 000; Ernst and Young, administrative restructure and review, \$15 000; cost benefit analysis, the Port Pirie upgrade and pro-forma for future capital submissions, \$1 800.

With respect to the Department of Recreation and Sport, my only advice is that, as at 13 June for the year 1999-2000, the figure is \$348 000.

Membership:

Ms Bedford substituted for Ms Rankine.

Mr WRIGHT: Thank you for that answer, minister. No wonder John Hill did not ask that question; I will not ask again. I now turn my attention to racing. I notice that at page 10.23 'Output Class 9', budget paper 4, volume 2, reference is made in the 'highlight' section to 'implemented capital and minor works projects for and in conjunction with the racing industry'. How much money has been spent on capital works since the introduction of RIDA year in and year out, and how does that compare with the amount of money spent on capital works when the Racecourse Development Board was in place?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Obviously, we do not have the figure from the previous structural entity to which the honourable member referred. I am advised that, since its inception, RIDA has provided funding for capital and minor works to the tune of approximately \$11 million.

Mr WRIGHT: The Acting Chairman informed me that the amount is half, and I think that his figure is pretty much spot on.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Does the honourable member mean the Chairman of RIDA?

Mr WRIGHT: No, the Acting Chairman, in this committee.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I did not make any public comment.

Mr WRIGHT: You might have made a non-public comment.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I did not make any public comment.

Mr WRIGHT: You did not say 'half'?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I did not make any public comment.

Mr WRIGHT: You did not say 'half'?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I just remind the honourable member that I am not a member of the committee.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: I understood that the member for Lee was questioning the minister about the budget and not the Acting Chairman. I am happy to chair the committee.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I suggest to the member for Lee that I am purely and simply here as Acting Chairman.

Mr WRIGHT: I understand that.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: And my comments are irrelevant.

Mr WRIGHT: We would never discount a former racing minister when he makes a comment about the expenditure for capital infrastructure. I can inform the minister of that information. The amount of money spent on capital infrastructure since the establishment of RIDA year in and year out—and we are looking at about four years compared to the previous years over a financial period when the Racecourse Development Board was in place—is half. Why is that so, and is it the case that there is no longer a demand for capital infrastructure within South Australian racing and, should that be the case, has a miscalculation been made, particularly in lieu of what happened recently with the Adelaide Cup number 1?

Mr Barrett: The capital works responsibilities since RIDA has been in place are generated from clubs to their controlling authorities: the South Australian Thoroughbred Racing Authority, the South Australian Harness Racing Authority and the South Australian Greyhound Racing Authority. It is true that, in the initial stages of RIDA's existence, whilst the venue rationalisation study was being undertaken within the industry, earlier on there was what is referred to as a freeze on the funding for major capital works pending the outcome of that inquiry. Although some commitments were made previously by the former Racecourse Development Board prior to 1 July 1996 which were honoured and fulfilled in the years that passed, since the venue rationalisation report was made public and released, together with general agreement within the industry on policy guidelines for future investment and capital infrastructure, there has been a freeing up of funds set aside for capital.

It is also fair to say that our records prior to RIDA's existence indicate that amounts of money expended by the Racecourse Development Board in the three years immediately prior to RIDA's formulation were also diverted into other areas such as maintenance of stake money. It would be fair for the continuation of subsidies to stake money to be added to the amount of \$11 million the minister has just quoted, so that there is an apples and apples comparison as between pre-RIDA and post-RIDA.

Mr WRIGHT: How did that freeze on funding come about?

Mr Barrett: The then minister requested the board of RIDA, whilst undertaking the study, not to expend funds, particularly in areas where the industry was suggesting that rationalisation could occur. At that time the RIDA board put in place significant amounts of money for minor works and medium size capital projects to enable the three controlling authorities—and the money was allocated and devolved to them in the 1997-98 financial year, and it has been topped up

on a few occasions since—to undertake projects at racecourses that require operation for those racecourses to proceed, so they are works that would impact on occupational health and safety obligations, or other emergency situations, such as the breakage of a lure at a country greyhound racecourse, which would otherwise not allow the racing club to function in terms of conducting a race meeting.

Mr WRIGHT: So, we had a minister for racing who declared a freeze on funding for capital infrastructure. Who was that minister?

Mr Barrett: I mentioned that it was requested by a former minister. It was the decision of the RIDA board to put a freeze on funding whilst conducting the venue rationalisation study. That was communicated at the time very publicly to racing clubs and racing codes. It was as a result of that approach to that study that those minor works and medium size capital works moneys were put in place within each of the three controlling authorities, the codes.

Mr WRIGHT: You said in your earlier answer that the freezing of funds was done by the then minister. Was it done by the minister or by RIDA?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Mr Barrett clarified that in his second response; that is the way I understood it.

Mr Barrett: That is correct. Although the Racing Act does specify that the board of RIDA is subject to the general control and direction of the minister, no direction was issued in that respect. It was obviously discussed. The government's objective is in pursuing a venue rationalisation study, but my recollection is that it was the decision of the RIDA board. If it was a direction, it would have been published in the annual report for that year. I do not recall any such direction; therefore, there was no publication in the annual report.

Mr WRIGHT: It is probably a moot point, anyway, because the then minister, who is the Chairman of this committee, Graham Ingerson, is on record as saying, 'Whatever RIDA does is what I want.' Whether you are now trying to clarify whether it was the minister or RIDA to a large degree is irrelevant. I have the quote. The minister is clearly on public record as saying, 'What RIDA does is what the government wants.' How long did this freeze last?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Until the report was in—at least until February 1999, I think.

Mr WRIGHT: Are you saying that we had a freeze on capital funding for three years?

Mr Barrett: I am trying to make it clear that, although there was a general freeze—and I think I mentioned that some pre-existing commitments were funded, so money was rolled out—new minor works funding was put in place. The initial amount was \$1.3 million for the three codes. Some commitments were decided upon and dealt with on a merit basis; for instance, early in RIDA's existence, it was the South Australian Harness Racing Club's turn on the international cycle to run the international inter-dominion series. Obviously, moneys were approved out of capital works funding for those important upgrades to occur and to enhance that international event.

Mr WRIGHT: With the introduction of RIDA, I understand that the old Racecourse Development Board funding line disappeared, and that money went into RIDA. As a consequence, less money was spent on capital infrastructure. Either during the lead-up or during that period when RIDA was introduced, there was a freeze on funding: what other areas did capital infrastructure money, which was about \$4.3 million to \$4.5 million per year, compete with once it went into the potpourri of RIDA moneys?

Mr Barrett: The honourable member mentioned that the previous funds from the Racecourse Development Board were frozen or dealt with in some way when RIDA was created. When RIDA came into existence by act of parliament on 1 July 1996, it assumed, by statute, the previous responsibilities and the funding sources from the former Racecourse Development Board. The figure that the honourable member mentioned—and I do not doubt that—was sourced from fractions, dividends and other commissions payable under several sections of the Racing Act from the SATAB. When RIDA came into existence, the legislation provided for that money to go into the RIDA fund, not the former Racecourse Development Board fund.

That RIDA fund was also increased in the first two years of RIDA's operation by government appropriation of \$2.5 million for the first year of operation, \$2.5 million for the second year of operation and \$2 million since. That amount of moment that has come from fractions and dividends this financial year will be approximately \$5.5 million. So, if you add the \$2 million, there is \$7.5 million for the RIDA fund. That money is expended in the racing industry on capital and minor works projects, on stake money enhancement and maintenance, on breeder incentive schemes, on strategic marketing, on industry development programs, and on training programs, vocational, educational and training programs for youth in conjunction with other funding for the Department for Education, Training and Employment.

As I mentioned earlier, Mr Acting Chairman, of that amount of money that was previously administered by the Racecourse Development Board, in the thoroughbred code (and if it was all up \$4.3 million dollars, I am not doubting that), in the two or three years prior to RIDA's coming into existence, \$1 million was put into stake money. That has continued to be honoured by RIDA since it came into existence on 1 July and not only has it been increased substantially for the thoroughbred code but also stake money supplements have been put in place in the harness and greyhound codes at the request of the racing clubs and the racing codes.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: I declare the examination of the votes completed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.2 p.m. the committee adjourned until Thursday 22 June at 11 a.m.