

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Monday 29 June 2009
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chair:

Ms M.G. Thompson

Members:

Ms F.E. Bedford
Ms V.A. Chapman
Mrs E.M. Penfold
Mr T. Piccolo
Mr D.G. Pisoni
Ms L. A. Simmons

The committee met at 13:30

DEPARTMENT FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES, \$1,008,395,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES,
\$143,606,000

Witness:

Hon. J.M. Rankine, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for the Northern Suburbs, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms J. Mazel, Chief Executive, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr P. Fagan-Schmidt, Executive Director, Housing SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr J. Ullianich, Executive Director, Financial Services, Department for Families and Communities.

Ms S. Barr, Acting Director, Business Affairs, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr G. Myers, Coordinator Strategic Projects, Business Affairs, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr G. Storkey, Chief Executive Officer, HomeStart Finance, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr D. Huxley, Director Corporate Services, Department for Families and Communities.

The CHAIR: The estimates committees are a relatively informal procedure and as such there is no need to stand to ask or answer questions. The committee will determine an approximate time for consideration of the proposed payments to facilitate the changeover of departmental advisers. I ask the minister whether the following program has been agreed from your perspective, and I will ask the same question of the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Minister for Housing, 1.30 to 2.30; Minister for Disability, 2.30 to 3.30; Minister for the Northern Suburbs, 3.45 to 4.15; Minister for Families and Communities, 4.15 to 4.45; Minister for Ageing, 4.45 to 5.45. Is that your understanding, minister?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is my understanding, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Deputy leader, is that your understanding?

Ms CHAPMAN: Correct, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure that the chair is provided with a completed request to be discharged form. If the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the committee

secretary by no later than Friday 17 July 2009. This year the *Hansard* supplement, which contains all estimates committee responses, will be published on 2 October 2009.

I propose to allow both the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements of about 10 minutes each. There will be a flexible approach to giving the call for asking questions, based on about three questions per member, alternating each side. Supplementary questions will be the exception, rather than the rule.

A member who is not a part of the committee may, at the discretion of the chair, ask a question. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced. Members unable to complete their questions during the proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the House of Assembly *Notice Paper*.

There is no formal facility for the tabling of documents before the committee. However, documents can be supplied to the chair for distribution to the committee. The incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the house, that is, that it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length.

All questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisers. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. I also advise that, for the purposes of the committee, television coverage will be allowed for filming from both the northern and southern galleries.

I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Portfolio Statement, Volume 3, Part 2. Minister, do you intend to make an opening statement?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will make a very brief opening statement. This year we welcomed a new era for social housing here in South Australia with a renewed focus from the commonwealth government. After a decade of neglect from the Howard government, we have now entered into new commonwealth and state government funding arrangements, providing the Department for Families and Communities, through Housing SA, with a unique opportunity to modernise and expand our social housing system.

The new National Affordable Housing Agreement, which commenced on 1 January 2009, and associated national partnership agreements, have resulted in unprecedented funding levels for housing programs. These consist of:

- \$291 million over 10 years to build new and upgrade existing indigenous housing;
- \$60 million over four years for improved homelessness services;
- a further \$22.1 million from 2007-08 to 2012-13 through the joint state and commonwealth government initiative 'A Place to Call Home'. The initiative includes the Ladder housing development in Port Adelaide and Common Ground in Port Augusta;
- the National Rental Affordability Scheme, expected to deliver 3,800 new affordable rental homes;
- \$30 million over two years for new high needs social housing; and
- \$477 million for construction of around 1,500 new social housing rental dwellings, including \$30 million for additional upgrading of up to 400 existing dwellings through the commonwealth Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan.

We have already begun work on stage 1 of the social housing component of the plan, committing to deliver 248 new social housing dwellings across South Australia at a cost of \$51.8 million. Stage 1 is to be completed by June 2010.

Under the National Rental Affordability Scheme, 422 outcomes were awarded to South Australian applicants to help stimulate the supply of new, affordable rental dwellings. The second round of applicants for the scheme should be advised of the outcome of their submission by the end of June 2009.

Our Affordable Housing Innovations Fund has continued to create new affordable housing, with commitments of approved projects delivering 432 housing outcomes. The Affordable Housing Innovations Fund was a key initiative of the Housing Plan for South Australia and was established with an upfront investment of \$15 million and projected revenue of \$93 million from the sale of social housing to existing tenants available for reinvestment in the new affordable and high-needs project partnerships.

We have continued to provide home ownership opportunities for eligible, low and moderate-income earners through the affordable homes program, with 216 customers purchasing properties through the program, including 90 sales through the property locator catalogue. We also continue to increase housing options for people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Deputy Leader of the Opposition, do you have an opening statement?

Ms CHAPMAN: No, thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Then we will proceed with questions.

Ms CHAPMAN: The portfolio statement is largely comprised in Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, but I will be referring to some of the other volumes relevant to the budget papers published. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, pages 12.4 and 12.49. What staff provision from within your department, minister, on top of the ministerial staff listed on page 12.9, has been made to assist you in your duties as minister? Has this increased from last year, and have any specific budgetary provisions been made for consultants to be used to assist you specifically as minister, as occurred last year with Ms Margaret Wagstaff?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised the department provides seven staff in my office.

Ms CHAPMAN: Has that increased from last year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Last year I wasn't in this portfolio.

Ms CHAPMAN: So you do not know from your predecessor?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am sorry, I do not have his figures but we can get those for you.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. I think the third part of my question was about the budgetary provision for consultants in the forthcoming year.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have no provision in my office budget for consultants.

Ms CHAPMAN: No, I am talking about the department.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Does the department have a budget for consultants?

Ms CHAPMAN: The department provides you with seven staff; and what is the provision for this year, the 2009-10 budget year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am getting confused. Are you talking about what consultants are being provided or what staff are being provided?

Ms CHAPMAN: At the moment you have the seven staff provided by the department and a further part of my question is: has there been any specific budgetary provision in the budget year '09-10 for consultants to provide you with advice?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The department will, obviously, have a budget for consultants. I do not believe any of those have been decided as yet. There is a budget for consultants for the Department for Families and Communities.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes; and how much is it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that the projected budget figure for the department is \$880,000 for 2009-10.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 3, page 3.21. Why has the HomeStart Finance dividends and tax equivalents almost doubled from last year's budget to this year's budget? Budget to budget it has gone from \$8 million to \$15.5 million, although I noticed that your estimated result for last year is \$11.2 million. It is predicted that it will plummet back to \$12.5 million in 2012-13.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You are talking about the income tax equivalent?

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes. There is a dividend and ITE for HomeStart Finance. The 2008-9 budget was \$8 million. The estimated result was \$11.2 million. Next year it is to go up significantly, and then \$15.5 million in 2011-12, and then drop back down again to \$12.5 million. I am seeking your explanation, minister, as to why it is proposed to double from last year to the forthcoming year and then continue upward trending and then plummet in the 2012-13 year.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There is quite a bit of discussion about that. I will let Mr Ullianich explain it to you.

Mr ULLIANICH: There are two elements in response to that question. First, with respect to the dividend increase from \$8 million to \$11 million, last year HomeStart received a community service obligation (CSO) payment for the first time, and essentially that flows through to the bottom line. I do not know whether you would like a definition of a CSO.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, please.

Mr ULLIANICH: Essentially, a community service obligation payment is made by Treasury to commercial agencies—I believe that SA Water, for example, receives CSO payments—for those activities which it undertakes and which would otherwise be non-commercial but which are conducted for government policy reasons. Therefore, an amount is paid to them which recognises that they are not earning a commercial rate of return on that operation. Last year was the first time HomeStart received such a payment. That payment comes in as revenue and therefore has the effect of increasing profit, and that is why there is a small jump in the dividend.

The future years are really dependent on the profit HomeStart anticipates to make over that period, and the tax and dividend payments are a reflection of the profits anticipated in future years. The dividend payment is based on 80 per cent of after tax profit.

Ms CHAPMAN: The second part of my question, minister, was that it then seems to plummet from 2011-12 to 2012-13. Is this some premonition about what will be happening with the commercial market situation?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Mr Storkey will explain that to you.

Mr STORKEY: The reason for that is that we have had a fixed guarantee fee for the coming year (0.75 per cent), which is a guarantee fee that we pay to the Treasury; and, in the following years, it is assumed that we will go to a more market-based guarantee fee which we expect could be as high as 1 per cent. We are forecasting that we will be paying greater guarantee fees from the year after this coming year.

Ms CHAPMAN: Just to clarify that, do you mean in the 2012-13 year where there is a big plummet?

Mr STORKEY: Yes, it is also based on—

Ms CHAPMAN: Do you see how there is a continuous increase until 2011-12 up to \$15.5 million, which would reflect a continued policy position (whatever that is), and then suddenly it drops back to \$12.5 million?

Mr STORKEY: I am talking about the difference between 2009-10, \$14.5 million, and the 2010-11, \$12.5 million. Then we have made some estimates as to what we think will happen to the government's borrowing based on the commonwealth guarantee which is provided to the states and which is being passed on to us for the length of time that that commonwealth guarantee is there.

Ms CHAPMAN: Just so that I am clear on that, then, you are expecting that that will continue to be at an increasing rate until 2011-12, and then suddenly you will lose \$3 million in the 2012-13 year as a result of that commonwealth guarantee being withdrawn or reduced? What is happening there?

Mr STORKEY: I do not know the reasons for 2012-13. They are based on a model that predicts the future, but I could find the reasons for the dip in 2012-13. I am explaining the difference between 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, I appreciate that, but that is not the year I am asking for. It is that 2012-13, because it suddenly drops off. There may be some change of policy or some new fee that gets introduced at that point. If that could at least be looked into, I would appreciate a response.

Mr PICCOLO: I would like to draw the minister's attention to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 1.52, in relation to public and affordable housing services supply. Will the minister please outline how non-fair wear and tear or damage wear and tear maintenance is managed in South Australian Housing Trust properties?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We all know that, every now and again, this issue pops up in the media and people are concerned about issues in relation to the cost of non-fair wear and tear in our Housing SA properties. It is a condition of tenancy that tenants are required to sign up to a

condition that they must keep the premises and the surrounding area clean and in good condition and that they pay the cost of all repairs, except repairs that are necessary as a result of fair wear and tear.

Under these terms, Housing SA considers non-fair wear and tear to be any deterioration of, loss of or damage to a property that did not arise out of or in connection with fair wear and tear. This may include damage to floor coverings, glass breakages and damage arising from wilful or reckless acts. It may also include accidents, such as toddlers running through screen doors. Whilst they are accidents, they are, nonetheless, the responsibility of the tenant.

When this damage occurs, the tenant is given an opportunity to carry out the repairs or to employ someone else, such as a qualified tradesperson, to rectify those damages. Where that does not occur to the satisfaction of Housing SA, the tenant is given 48 hours' written notice that contractors will be calling to carry out the works at a specified time and that they will be held responsible for those costs.

I think it is important to place some of the facts on the record in relation to this, because I know that they are bandied about quite often and a lot of misconception is put out there when people choose to have a go at the trust or trust tenants. Last year, the total bill for non-fair wear and tear in vacated houses was \$2.1 million; \$700,000 less than in 2006-07.

Interestingly, what fails to be acknowledged in campaigns that are held to demean Housing Trust tenants is that this figure compares very favourably with a decade ago. That figure a decade ago was \$2.1 million. People like to create the impression of trashed houses and feral tenants, and so on, again, plainly ignoring the facts.

It is true that some tenants do the wrong thing, but those people account for about 3 per cent. Of the 6,500 damaged vacant houses over the past three years, just 3 per cent required more than \$5,000 worth of work and, in fact, almost half of all these vacancies ended up with bills of less than \$500 and a lot were not much more than that. The data shows that more than 4,100 properties (so, almost two-thirds of so-called trashed houses) incurred bills of less than \$1,000. The latest data shows that 2,622 vacancies from 1 July 2008 to 31 March 2009 incurred tenant charges of \$1.519 million, and the majority of charges (62 per cent) were less than \$1,000.

I would also like to make the point that we recoup something like 97 per cent of those charges and I reiterate that that is an excellent debt recovery record when we are looking at the largest landlord in South Australia, with in excess of 45,000 properties. On my calculations (and not those of the officials), it works out to about \$2 per house per year of unrecovered costs for non-fair wear and tear.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.11. Will the minister please advise how many portable housing outcomes will be delivered across South Australia as a result of the commonwealth government's \$42 billion Nation Building Economic Stimulus Package, when these will be achieved and how many will be targeted for homeless people?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As I said, it is an exciting time for social housing, with the Rudd government's nation building plan, and that is to build 20,000 homes across the country as part of the housing economic stimulus package. South Australia's share is \$477 million, and that is expected to provide 1,500 dwellings and upgrades to about 400 homes that are not currently suitable for occupation.

On 1 March, the commonwealth government approved funding of \$29.98 million for upgrades to 391 existing social houses here in South Australia and on 1 April it approved \$51.8 million for 246 new dwellings. However, we were able to increase that to 248 under the stage 1 project. Included in the first lot of social housing to be built will be the purchase of 20 apartments at Mawson Lakes, and this was sufficient to get the construction of four apartment blocks underway there. It is exactly the sort of result that the federal government was looking for—innovative solutions to social housing that would really keep the building industry on track.

We are working very hard on our stage 2 proposal, which needs to be lodged with the federal government by tomorrow (so, I am expecting that the i's are dotted and the t's have been crossed), and that should deliver 1,250 new dwellings. It is a massive opportunity to get the right mix of housing here in South Australia, and I instructed our officers from the very start to look at what our critical needs were here in South Australia and to target those areas. So, we will have housing developed here that meets the needs of some of our most vulnerable people: specific allocations for domestic violence victims, people with disabilities and children exiting state care and, of course, there are specific targets around homelessness.

Under the national partnership agreement, we are required to commence all the upgrades under the plan in 2009, complete the construction of stage 1 houses by 30 June 2010 and complete 75 per cent of all new construction under the plan by December 2010. So, I am looking forward to receiving the federal government's agreement to our stage 2 proposal.

Ms SIMMONS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.11. Will the minister please advise how many new affordable rental properties will be created in South Australia as a result of the National Rental Affordability Scheme and how much funding will the state government contribute to the scheme?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Before I answer the member's question, I will clarify an answer I gave to the shadow minister a little while ago in relation to the budget for consultants. The Department for Families and Communities' budget for consultants is as I said—\$880,000—but the South Australian Housing Trust has a budget of \$615,000 for consultancies.

At its March 2008 meeting, the Council of Australian Governments agreed to implement the National Rental Affordability Scheme (NRAS), a new commonwealth-state initiative to provide incentives for the construction of new affordable rental housing. The NRAS aims to provide funding to:

- increase the supply of affordable rental dwellings;
- reduce rental costs for low to moderate income households; and
- encourage large scale investment and innovative delivery of affordable housing.

The commonwealth has committed \$623 million over a four year period for this program to stimulate the supply of up to 50,000 new affordable rental dwellings nationally. The state government has committed \$7.5 million.

NRAS runs over four years and it is divided into the establishment phase, which covers the allocation of rental incentives and the delivery of new affordable dwellings in 2008-09 and 2009-10, and the expansion phase, which extends to the allocation and delivery of new dwellings in 2010-11 and 2011-12. As a minimum, South Australia is aiming for its per capita share of incentives in each phase. This equates to about 1,000 new affordable rental dwellings during the establishment phase and a follow-up of 2,800 during the expansion.

In July 2008, the first call for expressions of interest under NRAS was made by the commonwealth, closing in September. The Department for Families and Communities allocated additional resources for a project facilitator to:

- develop relationships with the commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) and not-for-profit housing providers; and
- generate interest for the private investors in South Australia and nationally to take up the NRAS incentives in the coming expansion phase.

In November, the commonwealth Treasurer announced a transitional safety net for charities that wished to participate in NRAS by amending the tax laws for those with public benevolent institution status. The safety net will expire at the conclusion of the establishment phase, which is for the delivery of dwellings by the end of June 2010.

In December, FaHCSIA announced that all six applicants from South Australia had been successful in receiving national rental incentives in response to the first expression of interest call: 422 NRAS outcomes were awarded to South Australian applicants of a national number of 2,587—so we scored 16 per cent, basically doubling South Australia's per capita share for new affordable rental dwellings. All six South Australian applicants were not-for-profit organisations and five of the six included proposals for capital funding from the state government, in addition to the ongoing rental subsidy offered under NRAS.

In late December and early January, Department for Families and Communities called for expressions of interest for proposals from not-for-profit organisations looking to qualify as a preferred housing provider, whereby NRAS incentives could be combined with state capital funds of up to \$40 million to deliver rent discounted dwellings that could better target high needs households. On 27 March this year, 17 applications were received by DFC in response to this call. The assessment process commenced with confirmation of capital funding amounts and total outcomes yet to be determined.

On the morning of 7 May, the federal housing minister (Tanya Plibersek) and I jointly opened the Adelaide Benevolent Society's redevelopment project in Hampstead Gardens. This project involved the construction of 12 one-bedroom units on a site owned by ABS at a total cost of \$1.2 million, which was entirely funded by the ABS. These 12 properties were the first completed houses in South Australia approved under NRAS, meaning ABS is eligible for the \$6,000 commonwealth and \$2,000 state government incentives paid annually per unit over a 10 year period. That day, I also opened the Bendigo and Adelaide Bank court development in Logan Street. This project involved the construction of 16 rental properties in the city under partnering arrangements between the Housing Trust, Unity Housing, Adelaide Bank Charitable Foundation, Adelaide City Council and the Wyatt Benevolent Trust.

The Affordable Housing Innovation Fund grants of \$2.6 million were provided to the project, with a total capital cost of \$4.1 million. Four 'high need' and 12 'affordable' rental housing outcomes have been delivered through this project. Unity Housing was also successful in attracting NRAS incentives for the Logan Street development. Applicants from South Australia have been successful in attracting rental incentives for 362 new affordable rental dwellings to be delivered in the establishment phase and 60 new affordable rental dwellings to be delivered in the expansion phase. In 2009-10, DFC will continue to work with stakeholders to attract a further 638 rental incentives for the establishment phase and beyond.

Mr PISONI: I must say, very detailed answers for the government questions. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.49. Minister, I refer to the dot point second from the bottom regarding the highlight 'continued to target housing to those in greatest need'. How many homeless people are still living in the Parklands? I particularly refer to the South Parklands adjacent to Parkside and Eastwood in my electorate of Unley.

The CHAIR: Minister, the Premier did answer this question in relation to his portfolio responsibilities of social inclusion. I am not sure whether it also falls within your portfolio.

Mr PISONI: It is in the highlights of the department, Madam Chair. I know that you do not want the minister to answer questions, but it is in here.

The CHAIR: Order, member for Unley!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The latest rough sleep account that we undertook indicated that we had 53 people sleeping rough in the city of Adelaide. That is down from 108 two years ago. We set ourselves a target of halving those numbers and we have reached that target in two years. Fifty-three people sleeping rough is 53 people too many, and that is why the state government has injected an enormous amount of money into addressing homelessness. The initiatives put in place by Monsignor Cappo have had an incredible effect, and I can get the numbers from here somewhere. I think we have impacted on something like 20,000 people who were either homeless or at risk of homelessness.

In relation to the specific park that you are talking about, I cannot answer that question at this point in time, but what I can tell you is that we have half the number of people sleeping rough, and we will continue to work on those who are in the park. A range of programs are operating out there in relation to those people, such as the Street to Home project. People are out there at night working with those people and engaging with them.

Mr PISONI: So, will you bring back a number to the house of how many people are sleeping in the South Parklands?

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I can give you a number on any given night but, as you would know, numbers fluctuate, and that is why we have been quite specific about conducting our rough sleep account at the same time each year. We do two counts in the same month each year to make sure that we are comparing apples with apples. I could go out there tonight and tell you that there is no-one there, and you might come back tomorrow and say that there were five people there the next night. So, at any given point in time, these people move around, but there is a swag of initiatives that we have actually put in place to address homelessness.

I have, in fact, invited the member for Stuart to come and visit one of the facilities that we have just recently completed, and that was the redevelopment of Afton House on South Terrace. I would be happy for the member for Unley to join us when we go and visit that facility, where I think we accommodate something like 95 people. Some old terrace houses have been redeveloped and some low-lying apartment buildings have been built at the rear. There is 24/7 support on site and rooms specific for those people who are coming off the street who might be daunted by being put

into a house or some other sort of accommodation. So, it is specifically targeted at the group of people that you are talking about, those we want to get off the streets and engage with services to make sure they get the health services, the mental health services and the drug and alcohol services that they need, and a safe place to sleep.

Mr PISONI: The second dot point on that same page refers to an increased supply of affordable housing through partnerships and new housing developments. Can you advise the committee what you have planned at the Glenside site under the development plan? The government has been conducting so-called consultation processes about the sale of the open space on the Glenside site. Through that consultation process, members of the public have been told that part of the development plan will include affordable housing. When I have raised the question of affordable housing in the Public Works Committee in regards to projects further north, the key has been that the cost of land is what makes housing affordable, according to officers from Housing SA. Are you able to advise what plans you have for affordable housing at the Glenside Hospital site?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding is that there will be the 15 per cent component on that site for affordable and high needs housing. Of course, I would like to have a lot more there and, indeed, I would love to have been able to use some of the economic stimulus package money to perhaps have a supported residential facility on the site. I was very keen to do that, as the member for Bragg raised the issue of the need to provide accommodation for people with specific needs.

Ms CHAPMAN: Keep the land and you can still do it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We do not have the time. Under the economic stimulus package, we have to have the houses built and done, and the land at Glenside will just not be available. So, we actually could have used the commonwealth money to do that. Out of the stimulus package, I hope to have at least a 50-bed supported residential facility built. I would very much have liked to have had that on the Glenside land, but that just simply is not possible because of the time constraints. But there will be 15 per cent affordable and high needs housing.

Mr PISONI: Can you define 'affordable'? Is it a price, a rent, is it achieved through market forces, or are their subsidies?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The definition of 'affordable' that we have used to date has been \$213,000 or less, and there is an income limit for those people who can access that housing.

Mr PISONI: So, 15 per cent of the housing for sale at Glenside must be sold for \$213,000 or less; is that correct?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is the definition, and we may need to look at it, but that is as I understand it at the moment.

Mr PISONI: What is the estimated income from the sale of the Housing SA property in Fashoda Street, Hyde Park—I think it was eight flats—that the government has difficulty in managing and so, consequently, has now decided to sell; and where will the money end up?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We do not have the figure for the sale price, but all proceeds would be reinvested in housing.

Mr PICCOLO: I ask a question about the Playford Alive project in Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.49. As the minister is aware, this project is dear to my heart, as it is in my electorate. Will the minister advise the committee how the Playford Alive project will deliver improved accommodation, services and facilities? What funds have been committed by the state government to the project?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This is really a fantastic project out at Playford. The urban renewal project we now call Playford Alive is a major regeneration and community renewal in the northern suburbs. It involves the redevelopment of Smithfield Plains and Davoren Park, known as the Peachey Belt, as well as the release of undeveloped land at Munno Para, Munno Para West, Andrews Farm and Penfield.

The Department for Families and Communities' contribution to the project, through Housing SA, is the renewal and redevelopment of all public housing assets in Smithfield Plains and Davoren Park to facilitate community engagement and involvement, training and employment outcomes for the local community and improved ways of providing key services to those in need.

Funding of the Housing SA Peachey Belt redevelopment component of the Playford Alive project was approved by the Public Works Committee in February 2008, and it involves \$150 million of expenditure and \$100 million of revenue over a 15 year period.

The Department for Families and Communities has endeavoured to secure the long-term economic and social sustainability of the community living in the Playford Alive project area. An example of this is the development of a community master plan, Community in Transition, as a complementary plan to the physical master plan for the Playford Alive project.

We know that it is important that we need not just to provide new and redeveloped homes for people but also to engage with the people in that area and ensure that they benefit from all the economic activity happening out there. We have established a working party, with membership from local, state and commonwealth government agencies, as well as non-government agencies, to support the development and delivery of the plan.

We have identified and agreed a set of state government priorities for the project area for inclusion in the plan. The DFC has supported the relevant departments to develop proposals for the priorities, which are being pursued through individual agency budget prioritisation processes.

The first stage of the redevelopment of the Peachey Belt has commenced, including the relocation of Housing SA customers and the demolition of 38 dwellings to create land for redevelopment, and 41 dwellings have been scoped for upgrade. The relocation of Housing SA customers for stage 2 is currently underway.

The first land release of 16 allotments in Smithfield Plains was launched in April, and these allotments were developed ahead of schedule to allow homebuyers to take advantage of the commonwealth government's First Home Owners Boost grant and form the first major release, which will deliver 4,500 homes over the next 15 years.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.11. Will the minister advise how the Ladder project at Port Adelaide will break the 'no home, no job, no home' cycle for homeless young people? What funds have been committed by the state government to the project?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Florey for this question. This is really quite an exciting project, which again is in partnership with the commonwealth government. Broadly, the Ladder project is a housing model for young people that aims to prevent homelessness, youth unemployment and alienation of young people at risk.

It is based on a successful national and international housing model, and it is aimed at providing these young people with stable housing linked to life skills, education, training and workforce participation. It requires that tenants commit to individual action plans that will enable them to achieve independence and employment. Each tenant residing at Ladder will be provided with a case manager, who will work closely with the young person to ensure their action plan is working successfully.

The AFL is a key partner in this project, together with the AFL Foundation and the AFL Players' Association. A focus for the program is to develop business and community support, as well as developing a mentor program incorporating local sporting personalities. Mentoring will begin with these young people as they move into Ladder and will be provided from past and present AFL footballers and elite South Australian sportspeople.

It provides an opportunity to partner with the commonwealth government's A Place to Call Home initiative, with the commonwealth government and the state government providing matching funding to a total of \$9.5 million. The old Black Diamond Hotel building in Port Adelaide has been purchased, and it will provide 23 self-sustaining units and up to eight commercial leases capable of providing a rental return.

The project office will be opened in Port Adelaide in the next financial year to provide the general public with information on the project and give Ladder a presence in the Port Adelaide community. Once the renovations are completed, the site will be open for tenants.

I place on record my appreciation of the support of the Port Adelaide Enfield council in relation to the Ladder project. I think there was a bit of mischief-making going on there, with people being whipped up and made afraid of a very worthwhile project that will house at risk young people. Port Adelaide Enfield council has been very steadfast in its support, and we very much appreciate that.

Ms SIMMONS: Minister, that was a very comprehensive answer. I visited the project down there at Port Adelaide the other week, and I must say I am very impressed by what I saw there. My

question relates to the National Affordable Housing Agreement on Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.11. Will the minister please advise what benefits there are to South Australia as a result of the new National Affordable Housing Agreement, which came into effect from 1 January 2009?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This agreement provides \$6.127 billion funding nationally over five years from 2008-09 and consolidates existing housing and homelessness special purpose payments. Specific national partnership agreements cover the following areas:

- The National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing will result in \$291 million over 10 years to build 241 houses and upgrade 206 dwellings in remote indigenous communities in South Australia.
- The National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness will provide \$29.56 million over four years to improve and reform homelessness services in South Australia. The South Australian government will match this with \$30.42 million funding.
- The National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing will provide \$29.87 million over two years to South Australia to support the development of new social housing stock.

The National Affordable Housing Agreement and each national partnership agreement require detailed implementation plans, which are being negotiated with the quality government. These plans will establish outcome based targets, including service reforms. The COAG Reform Council will report annually in December to COAG on performance data relating to the National Affordable Housing Agreement indicators.

The allocation of funding to each jurisdiction under the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan initiative is contingent on the jurisdiction agreeing to implement a number of reforms in the social housing sector and making a detailed progress report, as I said. These reforms have been grouped into three broad areas:

- more choice and greater social and economic opportunity for social housing tenants;
- more housing providers and increased supply; and
- more efficient use of resources and greater accountability in social housing provision.

Ms CHAPMAN: You have mentioned the significant funds coming in from the federal government under various programs it has announced in its federal budget for public and social housing, but with that has been the announcement by minister Plibersek that there are to be no corresponding attempts by state governments to reduce their obligation and contribution to public housing. My question relates to the same provision on page 12.50 and Budget Paper 5, page 5.1. How is it that the state's contribution to public housing, construction and redevelopment is plummeting from \$168.977 million from 2008-09 down to \$81.765 million in 2009-10, when clearly the federal government has said you are not allowed to chop out your own budget just because it is giving you a whole lot of money for social housing?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Where is the budget line you are talking about?

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, at page 12.50, and Budget Paper 5, page 5.1. See the massive drop that you are committing to give public housing this forthcoming year from last year? My question is how you are getting away with that, given minister Plibersek's edict.

The CHAIR: Order! The questions are not to contain pejorative statements: members are to ask questions.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have to comment about minister Plibersek. The proposals we have been putting to the commonwealth government have been really well received, and I think it has been very appreciative of the fact that South Australia is endeavouring to be incredibly innovative in relation to the housing stock we want to provide and our willingness to work with non-government organisations in boosting their stocks.

In relation to the provision of housing, I did not expect that the shadow minister would raise that issue, based on past performance, but I am advised that this budget will provide for a further 700 homes. That will be 407 funded from \$81 million in Housing SA with new homes, community housing and the normal regeneration projects; 240 funded from the \$25 million Affordable Housing Innovations Fund; and 45 funded from the Remote Indigenous Housing Plan with the federal government.

When I look back at the loss of public housing over the years—the new builds—when we were talking about getting about 2,000 new homes online, we have not been able to do something like that since the mid-1980s. I think it was in 1987 that 2,680 new homes were created for public housing in South Australia. In 1998 there were 34.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think the minister is confused. I asked an entirely different question, not in relation to the number of houses.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Construction of houses; that is what you were asking about, weren't you?

Ms CHAPMAN: No. I asked why there was a reduction from last year to this year with the state's contribution dropping from \$168.977 million allocated last year, whereas in the forthcoming year you are allocating only \$81.765 million. Are you able to build a whole lot more houses at half the price or half the size? There may be some explanation, but I would appreciate it if you could explain that, especially in light of the federal minister's —

The CHAIR: Order! Allow the minister to concentrate.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I understand that there will be \$11 million going into NRAS, so that is part of that money that you are talking about, and we have had discussions with the commonwealth. There will be—

Mr PISONI: Why is it less?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, \$13 million is going into NRAS, so it is reclassified as a grant payment in order to provide capital funding for the NRAS project.

Mr PISONI: Well, where is it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is in the NRAS program.

Mr PISONI: So, it has been shifted.

Ms CHAPMAN: Just so I am clear about that, are you saying—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, it is reclassified, and there is—

Ms CHAPMAN: —that in addition to the \$81.765 million, there are some other categories that you are reading out now which are in addition to that to make up some difference? Is that what you are saying?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The commonwealth is aware of all of this. It is a \$65.1 million reduction, as required by Housing SA's financial viability strategy to repay the debt, but we are providing 700 more houses, a whole lot more than what you provided in 1998 when it was 34.

Ms CHAPMAN: If it is going to be applied towards debt, how much is the debt currently to the commonwealth?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told that we could give you an estimate, but we will take that one on notice and get the exact figure for you.

Ms CHAPMAN: The estimate is?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I said we will get the exact figure for you.

Ms CHAPMAN: With that, could you also provide how much you are going to be repaying off that debt in the forward estimates?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, we will do that as well.

Ms CHAPMAN: My third question, if I could go back to HomeStart, on which I was asking some questions about before. Budget Paper 3, page—

The CHAIR: I am sorry, deputy leader, I had not checked the time. The time for Housing has expired. We will now move to the Minister for Disability. Thank you to the Housing advisers.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms S. Carman, Executive Director, Office for Disability and Client Services, Department for Families and Communities.

Ms J. Pickering, Executive Director, Domiciliary Care SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr P. Willey, Director, Personal Support and Development, Disability SA.

Mr C. Bruno, Director North, Disability SA.

The CHAIR: Minister, do you have an opening statement?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, a brief one. As we all know, the Disability portfolio faces many challenges, but in the past year the Rann government has again shown a commitment to improving the lives of tens of thousands of South Australians. The largest challenge facing the disability sector remains the rapid growth in clients and need. The most recent data shows a growth of 28 per cent in people assisted and 42 per cent in services provided since 2003-04.

Last year, more than 19,000 people received disability services, which were provided or funded by the state government. The unit cost of disability support is also increasing because people with disabilities are ageing and their care needs increase. Something for which South Australians should be very proud is the fact that the state government provides services to 41.2 per cent of the disability population; well above the national average of 30.5. This clearly shows that we provide important services to a broader range of people with disabilities.

The government has consistently increased funding to the Disabilities portfolio since coming to office. More than 80 per cent more funding is available now, compared to 2001-02. As members will know, the Rann government, despite the current financial climate, has managed to provide for a \$23 million increase in the state budget. Despite these increases and commitments, there is no doubt that more needs to be done.

Along with other states, we continue to have a significant unmet need and we continue down the road to meeting the accommodation needs of people formerly housed in Highgate House. With knowledge of these challenges, the government is committed to working towards its vision of a better life for all South Australians, including people with disabilities.

These strategies will provide choices that reflect the uniqueness of individual people, opportunities to be involved in community life, better housing outcomes and ensure that the government is an inclusive employer of people with a disability. The strategies also include the development of:

- sustainable policy options to improve choices for people with a disability;
- a suite of accommodation models which respond to individual needs;
- a comprehensive funds management system for disability services in the government and non-government sectors;
- medium and long-term planning for supported residential facilities;
- state level plans to respond to new national initiatives; and
- plans to improve service quality and collaboration with the non-government sector.

In 2008-09, Disability SA continued to work towards the targets in South Australia's Strategic Plan. I am delighted to report that through the Disability SA Promoting Independence Strategy, 50 people with disabilities gained employment in the public sector and another 100 have been recruited onto the Disability Register. This is significant progress towards the government being an inclusive employer of people with a disability. Approximately 80 people were able to move into community living from institutions and 85 new school leavers were provided with post-school day option programs.

The CHAIR: Deputy leader, do you wish to make a statement?

Ms CHAPMAN: No, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: We will proceed straight to questions.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, at page 12.22. Under the National Disability Agreement, in what way has the commonwealth changed the way that it calculates its per capita funding for disability services compared with the National Disability Agreement?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Mr Ullianich will address that issue for you.

Mr ULLIANICH: Under the new arrangements between the state and the commonwealth, as part of the implementation of the new agreements, the commonwealth determined to commence funding South Australia on a per capita basis. Previously, under the commonwealth-state disability agreement, South Australia had been receiving more than its population share for commonwealth disability revenue. That was in the order of about 10 per cent and, progressively, under these new arrangements, we will be moving towards our actual population share, which is in the order of about 7.3 per cent. However, the state government has stepped in to effectively maintain that previous level of funding.

Ms CHAPMAN: Why did the state agree to this change (which is obviously a massive reduction in commonwealth funds) which the state government now has to supplement? When was South Australia advised of that? When was it made public, apart from today?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As I understand it, that information was public when the agreement was signed. Let us not lose sight of the fact that, whilst we concede that there is still a long way to go to meet the need here in South Australia, part of that agreement gave us an indexation of 6 per cent. I will check that but, off the top of my head, I think it was 6 per cent indexation that we received on the base amount. Certainly, the funding that has gone to Disability Services, as I pointed out in my opening remarks, has increased enormously and has nearly doubled since we have been in government. That does not mean to say that I would not like to have more money and it does not mean to say that there still is not need there—there is.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, it is my understanding that you think that South Australia got a fair deal out of the commonwealth agreement, including its forthcoming financial year's commitment?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As far as the disability budget is concerned, we have been well and truly able to hold our own so that we can maintain services here in South Australia and look at addressing the increasing need that is occurring.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, we have been ripped off.

The CHAIR: Order!

Ms CHAPMAN: I will move to page 12.22. I think you have answered the indexation point and you think it is six, but you are going to check that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: How much of this indexation has been passed on to the non-government agencies?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Non-government organisations, as you would be aware, are very significant providers of disability services here in South Australia. Approximately 50 per cent expenditure on disability services is made to those NGOs. I understand the issue in relation to indexation is currently under negotiation with non-government organisations.

Ms CHAPMAN: So they will get some amount as a share of the 6 per cent or whatever it is that you are going to get—is that what you are saying?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that the funding to NGOs, as a proportion of total disability expenditure, is projected to increase from 49.1 in 2007-08, to 52.1 in 2008-09, based on the April 2009 data, and that the current funding is being negotiated.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am not disputing the funding. It was only in relation to what share of the indexation you are going to get that you are going to pass on to the NGOs.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is being negotiated.

Ms CHAPMAN: You say it is under negotiation. Hopefully, they will get something. From the same page, what proportion of non-government organisation income is estimated to be from investment-related services or other sources of income which would be suppressed by the global financial crisis?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think that figure varies depending on the organisation itself. Many organisations are, in the main, wholly dependent on state government funding. Other organisations have been very innovative and have set themselves up to be quite independent. I would imagine that the impact would be greater on them than those that are just reliant on continuing government funding, so I cannot give you a figure on that. In fact, the non-government sector has not been able to give me a figure on that, either.

Mr PICCOLO: I draw the minister's attention to Budget Paper 3, page 2.29, in relation to disability services. This is of interest because it involves one of my constituent councils. Will the minister please advise how the state government is assisting young people with disabilities exiting the school system into employment?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Friday last week I had the pleasure of going to the Para West campus with the Premier and Monsignor Cappo to make some funding announcements about social inclusion initiatives over the next four years amounting to \$19.1 million. Part of that was for funding for a major social innovation called Building Family Opportunities that will work with families experiencing long-term joblessness. It is focused on areas in South Australia that have been identified as having not only significant disadvantage but also areas where we can see significant economic and employment opportunities, such as Port Augusta, Playford and Port Adelaide Enfield.

This is about working with the families to break that intergenerational problem of long-term employment. The other part of the funding, \$9.5 million, is for the Pathways Coordinator program to improve the social and economic participation of young people with a disability, and that is as a result of the social inclusion report 'Choices and Connections'. I can advise that 19 recommendations were made to support young people with a disability to transition school to training or work. The Pathways coordinators will coach, mentor and advocate for identified students from year 9 before they can be lost from the school system.

The report recommended using the support, training and resource tool START to identify young people at risk of falling through the gaps, and the establishment of the Pathways Coordinator to mentor these young people. It is a significant investment in the future of young people with a disability. By smoothing that transition from school, we can ensure that they are not left behind. START assessments are already underway at a number of secondary schools, and we expect the Pathways Coordinator program will be launched later in the year.

We will require the assistance of the commonwealth government and all levels of government to work together to ensure that these young people are connected to the services they provide. As I said, the programs will begin in Port Augusta, Playford and Port Adelaide Enfield regions. The programs will help a minimum of 400 long-term jobless families and 500 young people with disabilities by 2010, and we expect it to increase after that time.

Ms BEDFORD: My question relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.11. Will the minister advise how the state government will provide people with disabilities more control over funding that has been allocated for their support needs?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Finding ways to improve choice for people with disabilities is a priority in our five-year strategic plan. What we are talking about here is self-managed funding approaches, also known as individualised funding. They have been recognised nationally and internationally as another means by which government can provide more choice and control for people with a disability. These approaches have given those people control of the funding that has been allocated for their support needs and enables them to choose how, where and when they get the supports they need.

Some self-managed arrangements are already in limited operation in the disability system here in South Australia, and these allow a small number of individuals to choose their own workers and to make the decisions about when and what type of support best suits their needs. A self-management approach is also used in the Day Options program in Disability SA, where some clients are able to use their funding allocation to create their own individualised package of learning and life skill services.

Broader scale implementation of self-managed funding represents a generational change to the way in which the needs of people with disabilities and their carers are met. In February last year the Rann government announced that work was underway to provide opportunities for people with disabilities who are keen to take up the option of individualised funding. Since becoming the Minister for Disability in July last year, I have worked closely with senior departmental officials looking at the next steps in delivering the individualised funding option.

I can advise that Disability SA is now finalising plans for trials to start this year. This exercise will be very important as it will allow clients, carers and departmental officials to better understand the processes, requirements and potential benefits. From my discussions, it is clear that many people and their carers are still going to want some administrative support, so it is also important to recognise that individualised funding will not suit everyone. Earlier this year I met with Simon Duffy to discuss the 'in Control' operations in the UK.

It was interesting to note that, despite the decade long operation of Simon's group, it is still very much in the early days in terms of implementation of individualised funding. The service system will require substantial development, as, historically, funding in some service types has been allocated to an organisation rather than an individual. The right checks and balances and mechanisms need to be in place to ensure that the choice and control being offered is real.

Many people with a disability rely on support arrangements to manage the essential tasks of daily living. Any changes to their support arrangements must be well considered to ensure that those essential services are not disrupted. Therefore, a phased and planned approach is essential.

Phase 1 of the implementation is planned to commence in October 2009. It is anticipated that this will deliver self-managed funding to 50 people with disabilities living in South Australia. This will be restricted to the day options and community support brokerage programs in this initial phase. We will monitor this trial carefully to learn what type of self-managed funding arrangements best suit our local needs.

People with disabilities already in receipt of these services will be invited to nominate to participate, with participants required to commit to working with DFC for research and evaluation purposes. Whilst phase 1 is underway, DFC will continue to work through the system developments required to support broader scale implementation. This will include: finalisation of the assessment and allocation tool (the tool named D-Start will provide a statistically robust assessment and allocation mechanism); development of funding allocation benchmarks; industry development to ensure that the sector is ready to provide an expanded range of service options; and design of the processes and mechanisms required to deliver self-managed options.

Ms SIMMONS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.22. Can the minister please advise how the state government has responded to critical viability issues in the supported residential facilities sector?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As members know, the SRF (supported residential facilities) sector is largely a user-pays private business sector with residents on pensions basically paying up to 80 per cent of their pension entitlement for their board and care. In 2003, in the wake of the threat of a number of imminent SRF closures, the Rann government approved a five year funding package to improve care for those living in SRFs and to prevent further closures of those facilities. This funding resulted in residents receiving a range of additional services, and those residents affected by the closure of facilities were assisted into appropriate alternative housing and support arrangements.

These and other measures, such as the fire safety subsidy and the resident board and care subsidy, also provided assistance to proprietors to enable them to ensure adequate support and living environments for residents. Late last year, private operators again voiced their concerns about their viability. The state government responded quickly to this impending crisis and, in early December, approved a supplementary payment of \$6.24 per day per resident paid to the private proprietors on condition that proprietors commit to genuine reform. The 2008-09 budget for the original board and care subsidy is \$2.16 million. The additional funding of \$2.26 million has effectively doubled the value of the existing board and care subsidy.

The first payment was fast tracked and paid in early January 2009 because of the dire financial circumstances of some proprietors. The payment brought with it a commitment from proprietors to work on medium to long-term reform. This very important reform is being undertaken by a government task group made up of representatives of DFC, the Department of Health and the SRF proprietors. The proprietors group has taken the lead on developing the quality agenda focusing on a set of standards to provide better services to residents.

The state government is also working on updating a 2003 financial viability study to provide some insight into the impact of cost pressures and the significant resources that we have injected over the last six years. This work will continue during 2009-10 and we will also be exploring the option of a purpose-built facility (as I think I have already mentioned) for vulnerable women, a concept that is supported by my advisory committee on SRFs as an important step in finding other options for people whose needs cannot adequately be met in this sector.

Ms CHAPMAN: I again refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.24, with respect to disability services waiting lists. Can the minister provide a breakdown of the unmet need in South Australia? Why is this information not included in the budget papers, consistent with the commitment from the Labor Party in a letter from Nick Champion to Dignity for the Disabled dated 1 March 2006, which states:

All existing waiting lists for disability services should be outlined in both the annual report of the Department for Families and Communities and the budget papers each year.

The CHAIR: Minister, I recognise that you are not responsible for Mr Nick Champion, the member in another parliament, but you might have some comments in relation to the matter.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I accept that the member is not the shadow for disability, but the unmet waiting need is put on the web and is regularly updated. We made that commitment and we have honoured it. I note that this is the first time those sorts of figures had been provided. They certainly had not been provided by previous governments. The next update is due early in July.

Ms CHAPMAN: As this information is on the website and you have all the numbers there in each category, what level of priority do you need to be for DFC to be actively seeking funded supports for you?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Category 1 or 2.

Ms CHAPMAN: What is the estimated cost of clearing the waiting list?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I do not have figures in relation to clearing the waiting list, because the number of people on there, or registration of services, varies depending on the individual circumstances.

Ms CHAPMAN: I appreciate that, minister. My understanding is that we are back to a long list again and this has previously been cleared in a one off. You have not done any estimate then of what it would cost?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Are you talking about equipment or are you talking about accommodation?

Ms CHAPMAN: No, to clear the disability services waiting list, which, as I understand it, is different from the equipment.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No. The unmet need (which is published on the web) identifies all the different services. It is accommodation, equipment, home services, all those sorts of things.

Ms CHAPMAN: No assessment has been done as to what it would cost to clear those that you currently have published in those categories.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I am sorry I do not have that amount for you.

Ms CHAPMAN: While we are on waiting lists, I will go to the equipment list, which is also referred to at page 12.27. Since the 2004-05 budget, each year the government has provided a one-off payment of \$5 million plus to clear the equipment waiting lists, effectively making it a recurrent payment. However, there is no such payment this year. How many adults and how many children are waiting for equipment and what is the average time that children had been waiting as at June 2008 and June 2009?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you for acknowledging that the state government has put in considerable amounts of money in one-off funding to clear those equipment waiting lists for children and adults with disabilities. Last year, Novita Children's Services received nearly \$2.5 million, the Julia Farr Association, over \$2 million, \$200,000 for the Royal Society for the Blind and an equivalent amount for CanDo4Kids, and an additional \$2 million was allocated to redevelop the hydrotherapy pool complex at Novita Park Services.

The interesting thing about equipment is that there has been a consolidation of Domiciliary Care and disability equipment, which means we have been able to provide a lot more equipment in relation to our budget, and in 2008-09, I think we cleared the adult waiting list for equipment. I do not think I have the figure for the waiting list for children. However, because of the implementation of improved systems for maintaining and reusing existing equipment, we have been able to provide (I think) about \$1.6 million worth of refurbished equipment on top of the normal budget for equipment. Yes, the value of the refurbished equipment was \$1.652 million worth of equipment.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is very interesting and I am sure it is important, but my question was: how many adults and children are on the waiting list as at those dates?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have just said that the adult waiting list was cleared and I do not have the figures for children.

Ms CHAPMAN: You said that for June 2009.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: My question was also for June 2008.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will check the 2007-08 number for you.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, and in both cases for children.

Mr PICCOLO: I refer the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.12, Objective 3: Disability, which outlines the government's initiatives in the area of supported accommodation for people with disabilities. Can the minister explain how the state government is increasing the number of people with disabilities housed and supported in community-based accommodation?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This is an important issue for people in the disability sector and it is a key priority for the state government, and it is reflected in our State Strategic Plan target, which is to double the number of people with disabilities appropriately housed and supported in community-based accommodation by 2014.

Disability SA is using three key strategies to meet the target. We want to assist people with disabilities living in institutions to return to the community, create new community accommodation options for people waiting for accommodation and increase the supply of appropriate housing stock available to people with disabilities.

An average of 62 new group home places per year is required from 2008-09 to 2013-14 to achieve this target. The government is on track to meet this target, with an additional 27 group home places created in the first six months of 2008-09. This brings the total number of group home places in South Australia to 1,035, an increase of 56 per cent since 2002-03.

The Strathmont Centre Redevelopment and Community Living Project has been a major contributor to the increase in group home places. This project aims to relocate 150 residents from Strathmont to supported community living in purpose built group homes. From July 2006 to July 2008, 18 purpose built group homes were completed, which enabled the 90 residents to relocate from Strathmont. In 2008-09, a further 25 residents moved to five purpose built community houses, bringing the total number of residents moved to supported accommodation to 115. The remaining 35 residents will relocate in 2009-10.

Housing SA data also shows that allocations to the disability housing program have increased by 87 properties since 2006-07, bringing the total number of property allocated to 281 as at May 2009. In addition, Housing SA has achieved a further 2,724 property allocations to people identifying as having a disability for that same period.

The Minda Project 105 has also contributed towards the achievement of the SASP target T6.10. It aims to provide accommodation in the community for 105 people with disabilities. Minda received \$15.65 million as part of a \$25 million one-off funding provided by the Department for Families and Communities to support people with disabilities to live independently. Part of this capital funding was used to purchase new community group homes.

As at April 2009, the Minda Project 105 has housed 57 people in the community. Of the 57 people housed, 35 moved from the Minda campus and 22 were referred from the Disability SA accommodation waiting list. During 2009-10, a further 30 people will move from the Minda campus at Brighton to community living, and 20 people waiting for accommodation in the community will be housed. In 2006-07, the state government, through the Affordable Housing Innovations Fund, contributed \$5 million one-off funding, matched by \$5 million from the Bedford Foundation, to fund the Bedford Homes for 100 project.

Potential tenants will be selected from both the Disability SA and Bedford waiting lists of people suitable for, and interested in, community-based living. Housing stock for the project will comprise a mix of new developments constructed by Housing SA or acquisitions from existing housing stock. An amount of \$1.75 million was spent in the first year of the project, resulting in the purchase of seven properties. Nine clients were placed in accommodation during this time.

In 2008-09, a total of \$5.1 million was budgeted to be expended, with up to seven dwellings in Dover Gardens, Daw Park and Port Pirie being developed. Two Disability SA clients will be newly housed in the Port Pirie development. At the end of 2010-11, up to 33 new homes housing up to 70 people living with a disability will have been developed by the Bedford Homes for 100 project.

Ms BEDFORD: That should have been my question, but I will ask another one. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.12. Can the minister please advise on the implementation of Person Centred Active Support in Disability SA's supported accommodation services?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Person Centred Active Support (PCAS) is being introduced into Disability SA accommodation services to provide support to people with disabilities. The goal is to support these individuals to be actively engaged in their own lives in a meaningful way.

The methodology challenges the hotel model of service delivery, where support staff traditionally do things for people, and individuals living with a disability become passive observers in their own lives. The model trains staff to support people to participate and have control and decision-making about their own lives, in both their home and the community. The underpinning framework focuses on the concepts of choice, respect, building relationships and people's networks, individuals' valued roles in society, dignity, personal competence and self-determination.

Disability SA accommodation services supports about 800 people with disabilities, and employs approximately 1,000 direct support staff. The model involves training staff in best practice and supporting individuals with disability, families and support teams in its implementation. The PCAS model is being introduced into all new and existing accommodation services across Disability SA over five years, and is on target for the 2009-10 financial year to be introduced into 20 group home services.

Ms SIMMONS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.22. Will the minister please advise what milestones have been achieved since the introduction of the Companion Card?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Companion Card program was introduced in South Australia on 3 December 2007 and is co-managed by the Department for Families and Communities and the National Disability Services (South Australian Division). The Companion Card enables people who provide essential attendant care support to people with permanent disabilities to access free entry to community events or activities and public transport.

The card scheme will limit the barriers experienced by people with a disability in accessing community facilities and cultural events. The card, which is free and valid for up to five years from the date of issue, can be used interstate in Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania, Queensland and New South Wales. From July 2008 to May 2009, 1,233 applications have been received, with 1,075 Companion Cards allocated to eligible persons. In total, 2,329 applications have been received since the launch of the Companion Card, and 2,207 cards issued.

The peak body, National Disability Services SA (NDS), works in partnership with Disability SA in promoting the card. NDS has recruited over 146 businesses, organisations and venues that have officially registered to support the Companion Card program, and will issue a companion ticket at no charge to holders of a Companion Card. Affiliate organisations include: the Adelaide Festival Centre; the Adelaide and Monarto zoos; the Royal Adelaide Show; the South Australian National Football League; the State Theatre Company; and Wallis and Hoyts cinemas.

During 2009-10, the Department for Families and Communities will continue to work with the commonwealth, state and territory governments on the development of a national Companion Card, and National Disability Services SA will continue to promote the card and enrol new organisations in this very worthwhile program.

Ms CHAPMAN: While we are on Companion Cards, I note that in the list of some of those participating in that program are some government funded organisations. Do you require that all your government departments, and those that receive government funds, provide Companion Cards, or is it only those that want to join up, including your departments and government funded entities?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, which organisations are you indicating? I do not have a comprehensive list of them here.

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that, but it is the list of people who join up after they have been interviewed by your officers who go out and try to get them to join up—football clubs, etc. My question is: do you require this of all your government departments and government funded organisations?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is a difficult proposition to do exactly that because I understand that some performances, for example, may have different funding arrangements. So, it cannot be just a blanket recognition of the card simply because of the interaction with a whole range of private organisations.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think we are at crossed purposes. I am not talking about private organisations. For example, if the government says, 'We are subsidising this opera to X thousand

dollars,' and it is a significant financial contribution, in that situation, where it is a government funded activity, do you require that they offer Companion Cards to those who are disabled?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Festival Centre has signed up.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes; I understand that, but I am talking about individual performances.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is pretty much a case of individual negotiations because of the commercial arrangements of some entities. I will give you examples of some of the other government programs that are available: our national parks recognise the Companion Card, as do the History Trust of South Australia, the Migration Museum, the South Australian Maritime Museum and the State Theatre Company, and we heavily fund the Zoo. There is a range of those sorts of organisations, but it all depends. A lot of those recreational activities are voluntarily doing that.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.22: individualised funding. The performance commentary states:

In addition to the priorities discussed above, the following initiatives are planned for 2009-10:

- continue work on improving choices and control for people with disabilities which includes furthering individualised, self management options for people with disabilities;

What work has been done on furthering individualised self-management options in 2008-09?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If you read *Hansard* after we finish, I think you will find that I have answered that question. A lot of work has been done in the past year in relation to individualised funding. I have had numerous discussions with a range of people on whom it would impact. I understand very well that, whilst some people are incredibly supportive of it and very keen to take it up, there are a number of people for whom it would just become an additional burden.

So, we have been working very carefully in relation to how we might introduce individualised funding and, as I said, we expect to offer 50 packages around October this year so that we can assess how we go and make improvements along the way. Again, in England I met with the Simon Duffy, where I think individualised funding has been operating for about 10 years; however, it is still very much in its infancy in relation to take up.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, the 50 that start this year are really a trial. Is that what you are saying?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: People will be offered the 50, and we will work with them so that we can assess how it goes to make sure that we get it right. Obviously, there will be variations of individualised funding; it will not be one size fits all. It will not be knocking on someone's door and saying, 'Here's your bucket of money; you are now responsible for it.' I think it will be very much horses for courses.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to page 12.24: autism waiting lists. Will the minister advise how many children are waiting for assessment of autism and related disorders? What was the average time children have been waiting as at June 2008 and June 2009?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will take that question on notice, rather than keep you waiting.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to page 12.27: the Statewide Complex Communication Needs project. Given that the Statewide Complex Communication Needs project was not given ongoing funding, on what basis did the government decide that the needs served were relatively low priority needs?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No-one made that assertion at all. The state government provided \$2.37 million in one-off funding to Novita for equipment, \$900,000 of which was used for the Statewide Complex Communication Needs project. It was a time-limited project to enhance its existing equipment program. It ran for 14 months and was very successful in raising awareness for the availability and use of electronic devices for people with complex communication needs. It ended in December 2008. Disability SA and Novita Children's Services, however, continue to prescribe and supply electronic communication devices to clients with complex communication needs.

Ms SIMMONS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.24. Will the minister please advise how accommodation vacancies and funding for new accommodation places are allocated by Disability SA?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Accommodation vacancies are allocated to people with disabilities who are identified at having a category 1 unmet need for supported accommodation.

The definition for unmet need is that they are basically those who are in most urgent need of housing. Priority is given to those people with disabilities under the age of 50 and in residential aged care facilities, children under my guardianship and those people unable to be discharged from hospital due to a need for supported accommodation.

All people with disabilities who are identified as category 1 for supported accommodation are referred to the accommodation placement panel to be matched against a suitable funded vacancy. All government and non-government organisations providing supported accommodation register their funded vacancies with Disability SA accommodation placement panel, and in this way accommodation vacancies are allocated to the person in greatest need. Once matched against a vacancy, people with disabilities, their families, carers and other key parties can choose to accept or decline the vacancy offered. Declining an offer of accommodation does not affect future offers of supported accommodation.

Mr HANNA: I refer to subprogram 4.2, page 12.27, because it has to do with equipment being provided by Disability SA or Domiciliary Care. A constituent of mine who has had cerebral palsy since birth sought in 2008 a steering wheel twist group hand control device to enable him to drive the car, and he was sent for an occupational therapy assessment. After some time he was sent for another assessment, which appeared to him to be the same thing and, at this point, with neither a yes or no, this year Disability SA has suggested he do a third occupational therapy assessment. The irony of the situation is that the cost of the three assessments would be more than the \$1,100 piece of equipment he was after. I know you do not have the specifics, but I just wonder how that can happen.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We will certainly investigate the issues. If you give us the person's details, we will find out what has happened.

Mr HANNA: I will do that behind the scenes. Thank you, minister.

Ms CHAPMAN: My question relates to the transition of community accommodation at page 12.12. This identifies a highlight of 2008-09 as 'moved approximately 80 people to supported community accommodation or more appropriate accommodation'. My question is, in relation to these places, what proportion involved people already in another form of supported accommodation, and how many were for people not previously in supported accommodation? How many of each classification of priority need were housed, and why did the department not report in its annual report the status of the heritage clients of the former Julia Farr Services, as is required by the Julia Farr Services (Trust) Act 2007?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Again, I think I gave quite a detailed answer a few minutes ago on exactly this issue and about accommodation for people with disabilities, regarding where they were coming from and how we have housed them.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is why my question is more specific as to what the breakdown is.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You clearly were not listening; I am shocked. We had the disability housing program. An average of 62 new group home places per year is required to achieve our SASP target. We had 27 group home places created in the first six months of 2008-09, bringing the total number to 1,035, which was an increase of 56 per cent since 2002-03. The Strathmont Centre redevelopment is obviously a major contributor to the increase in group home places.

Ms CHAPMAN: We may be at cross purposes, minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, 'relocate 150 residents from Strathmont'.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, I am not talking about Strathmont. Perhaps if I could repeat my question you would appreciate—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thought you were talking about people in institutions.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am saying that specifically your highlights state, 'moved approximately 80 people to supported community accommodation or more appropriate accommodation'. Of those 80, what proportion were already in a form of supported accommodation and how many were people not previously in supported accommodation? It is a breakdown of those 80.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is what I am trying to tell you.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am not talking about the thousands or percentages; I am talking about those 80.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I am trying to tell you.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: In 2008-09, 25 residents moved to five purpose built community houses from Strathmont. That brought the total number up to 115, and there will be another 35 this year.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can we skip to the Julia Farr section?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is not only Julia Farr. Under the Disability Housing program, there was an additional 87 properties, bringing the total number up to 281. I do not have a breakdown of whether they are from institutions or not; I would assume not. A further 2,724 properties were allocated to people identifying as having a disability, so not from an institution.

The Minda 105 project: as of April 2009, 57 people have been housed in the community. Of those 57 people, 35 moved from Minda and 22 were referred from the Disability SA accommodation waiting list. Next year a further 30 will move from the Minda campus at Brighton to community living, and 20 people waiting for accommodation in the community will be housed through that program.

The Bedford Homes for 100 project: we have seven dwellings in Dover Gardens, Daw Park and Port Pirie currently being developed. At the end of 2010-11, up to 33 new homes, housing up to 70 people living with a disability, will have been developed by the Bedford Homes for 100 project. I understand they are also a mixture of Disability SA and Bedford clients, but I cannot give you the breakdown because it has not happened yet.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, will you get that information and make it available, and explain why—

The CHAIR: Order! The time has expired, deputy leader. I have been very generous in allowing this to continue.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Do you want the Julia Farr figures as well? I will get those for you.

Ms CHAPMAN: I want an explanation as to why this information is not in the annual report, as required by the Julia Farr act.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told that it was an administrative oversight, for which we apologise.

Ms CHAPMAN: You're joking! I look forward to the addendum.

The CHAIR: The examination of the Minister for Housing and Minister for Disability has been completed. We will resume for examination of the Minister for the Northern Suburbs. Thank you to the advisers.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, \$18,002,000

ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, \$2,215,000

Membership:

Mr Griffiths substituted for Ms Chapman.

Hon. I.F. Evans substituted for Mr Pisoni.

Witness:

Hon. J.M. Rankine, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for the Northern Suburbs, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr I. Nightingale, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Mr A. McKeegan, Acting Manager of Finance, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Mr M. Hemmerling, Executive Director, Northern Connections.

The CHAIR: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, Part 4. Minister, do you have an opening statement?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, I do have a very brief one, Madam Chair. Last July members would recall that the Premier announced that a new portfolio would be established for the northern suburbs and I was very proud to be appointed minister. In April this year the Northern Connections office opened in Elizabeth and we have appointed Mal Hemmerling as Executive Director. Mal will work closely with leaders from all three levels of government as well as industry and local community and service groups.

It is an exciting time for the northern suburbs. Not since the establishment of Elizabeth have we had this level of construction and development in that area. It is a unique time with unique opportunities. Despite these worrying economic times, great opportunities exist in the northern suburbs. The biggest housing regeneration project this state has seen is starting at the same time as we are building the biggest road in almost 50 years, the Northern Expressway. Children's centres are being built in the communities, and the schools that were built during the 1960s are being replaced with new state-of-the-art super schools.

The future of the Lyell McEwin has never been brighter, with more than \$300 million currently being spent. All of this is happening ahead of the arrival of the new army battalion, the 7th Royal Australian Regiment.

As I said, the future is bright for the northern suburbs. Resident associations in the Peachey Belt and the people who now work so hard on the Playford Alive community group have spent decades trying to get things moving. We have community houses and sporting and community clubs across all council areas, run by hundreds of volunteers who, every day, make a difference. They are the spirit of the northern suburbs and they deserve every accolade.

The Northern Connections office is not about creating another layer of bureaucracy; it is not another service delivery centre. The role of Northern Connections is to better link the programs that are already in place and better inform people so that they know what services are available. The rest of the state needs to hear the good news about the northern suburbs and I want people to know the great work that agencies and the community sector are doing for these residents.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Member for Goyder, do you have an opening statement?

Mr GRIFFITHS: Just a brief one, if I may, Madam Chair, and recognising the fact that I am asking these questions on behalf of the Hon. Mr John Dawkins, who has parliamentary secretary responsibility for this area, but also, even though I am a regional member of parliament, I am quite often a resident of the northern part of Adelaide, on the other side of Grand Junction Road, though, but travel through the northern suburbs quite a bit.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: Only just on the other side of Grand Junction Road.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: Within the electorate of Robyn Geraghty actually. But I do recognise, though, that communities—especially in the north where there are great opportunities for the future—do need resources devoted to them to ensure that those opportunities become a reality. So there are some questions we want to ask, even though there are only two pages devoted to this area in the budget papers.

Minister, I refer to the estimated result for 2008-09 in Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.12—the \$195,000 that was anticipated to be spent for employee benefits and costs. Given that the office only opened in April, as you alluded to in your opening comments, can you provide me with some information on where that \$195,000 has gone?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is an estimated result; it is not an actual result. People were working—not necessarily in the office, but were still undertaking duties in relation to the northern suburbs. So, I would imagine that that is included in part of that. But that is not a final figure, as I understand it.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Okay, but if the office opened on 17 April, when were the people actually devoting time and having their wage costs allocated from this budget line?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Where were they working from?

Mr GRIFFITHS: No, when did they actually start working on the Office of the Northern Suburbs so that the budget line actually appears? It appears to me that \$195,000 for 2½ months of an office being open is an exceptionally large amount and does not translate into a full 12-month year period. So, I just need some sort of itemisation of that \$195,000.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There was one staff member who commenced work immediately following my appointment as Minister for the Northern Suburbs. Another person has since come online, and then Mr Hemmerling. There is a senior policy officer and an administrative officer who were operating—but, as I said, that is an estimated result.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I understand that but those people were working far earlier than 17 April date, though.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They were, yes. What I am saying is that people commenced work immediately after the appointment.

Mr GRIFFITHS: If I compare the costs of the Office of the Northern Suburbs to the cost of the Office of the Southern Suburbs, even though it is not your portfolio responsibility, the southern suburbs office was some \$394,000; the estimated result of the northern suburbs is \$491,000. Do you have a comment on why it seems that it is a significantly greater cost to operate the Office of the Northern Suburbs?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Office of the Northern Suburbs, the Northern Connections, actually has an office in Elizabeth, so the cost of fitting out that office and tenanting that office are reflected in this budget. That is not the case in the southern suburbs; it operates under a different model.

Mr GRIFFITHS: As an extension of that answer, when was the lease entered into with the Office of the Northern Suburbs?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Our tenancy, from memory, commenced on 15 April. We started paying rent on 15 April.

Mr GRIFFITHS: For what period is the lease?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is for 10 years with a renewal of five years.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I note that in the 2009-10 budget year for supplies and services and grants and subsidies it is anticipated that \$331,000 will be spent. Will you outline some of the activities and projects which it is anticipated this money will go towards?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Have you combined 'supplies and services' and 'grants and subsidies'?

Mr GRIFFITHS: I said that, yes.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The lease costs for the office are included in those figures, plus telecommunications—basically the running of the office and the grants and subsidies. We have that budget line so that we can work through some projects with community organisations and/or local government that we think are appropriate.

Mr GRIFFITHS: How much is the lease cost, then? Is that a major component of that \$244,000?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The lease costs are \$59,000.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I take it that is a commercial rent for that area?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I would assume so.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I notice that the performance commentary talks about a Northern Connections consultation group. I am advised that the five councils that form part of that group

were told earlier this year—I think March—that a forum was to be established. When will that occur?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have had discussions with all the mayors involved in that area, because I was very keen to have buy-in of local government. I think that there have been occasions where rivalry between local councils has meant that some have not bought in quite as well as they may have and others have been a little intimidated by the process. Also, an organisation, Northern Futures, looks at a range of employment, training and education initiatives, and there are a number of resident organisations.

I have met with the vast majority of those, and I know that Mr Hemmerling has been busily working with them and getting some consensus about how that group might operate. It has not necessarily been quite as simple as we thought it may be, but Mr Hemmerling is working on those issues as we speak currently.

Mr HEMMERLING: Yes, it is a process of getting agreement between the local government organisations and the non-government bodies. As you would appreciate, it is a very significant area in terms of the amount of work that is being done and the number of projects that are there. One of the first initiatives we have done is to try to compile a list of all the initiatives that are going on out there, and we are up to about 350 and still going. To try to get a framework within which that takes place in a coordinated and cooperative manner is the task of the office.

So far I have met with all the councils, bar two which had to defer the meetings (we are having those in the next couple of weeks), to try to develop a framework, taking into account that existing organisations, such as Northern Futures, are already there with a role, particularly in terms of education, employment and the engagement with the community in that area. We have other areas, such as the social areas and all the other initiatives, that we are trying to work with as well.

The simple answer to it is, yes, we need to get a body that is there, but we need to have it in a way so that its role and function is clearly understood, as well as how it relates to the Northern Connections office.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I can understand the need to consult with each of the groups initially to make them aware of the initiative and what the intentions are. I take it that the forum is a joint—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We were not talking about a forum. We have already had a forum.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I apologise. Will the consultation group, though, meet collectively?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What we had been discussing is, I guess, a strategic group that can also help make the connection so that people understand who is doing what, so that local government will know what the state and federal government is doing and that we understand community needs and that different agencies are doing different work. We want a group of people around the table who can, again, make all the connections and join the dots about the things that are occurring.

Mr GRIFFITHS: My review of the budget on a wider scale identifies that there is some money, \$1.2 million, for Gawler across the forward estimates for a corrections facility or some level of facility. Was the Office of the Northern Suburbs consulted as part of that project team to receive support in the budget?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I do not think the office was consulted about that, no.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I find that interesting, and the minister might want to check the situation. I would presume that sort of initiative would be quite important in one of the five councils identified for the area in which this office will operate, particularly taking into account the database to which Mr Hemmerling refers, that is, the 350 initiatives. This government-funded project would have come up for discussion.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Let me take that on notice and I will check it out for you.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Can I ask, through you, Madam Chair—is it still my right to ask questions?

Mr Piccolo interjecting:

The CHAIR: I see that the member for Light is very eager to say something, so I think I will give him an opportunity.

Mr PICCOLO: I understand that consultation is occurring at the moment with the various member councils and also other agencies.

The CHAIR: Does that save the minister getting further information in reply?

Mr GRIFFITHS: It does from my point of view. However, for the record, for the benefit of the parliamentary secretary, who is shadow minister in this area, I would be grateful if we could be provided with detailed information on that. With respect to Mr Hemmerling, is his position full-time or is he acting at the moment?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Mr Hemmerling is on loan to us from Attorney-General's Department.

Mr GRIFFITHS: For how long will this loan arrangement be in place?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: He finishes with AGD at the end of August.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Will the role then be full time?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Then his role will be with the Northern Connections office.

Mr GRIFFITHS: It has been quite interesting to review the information that I have looked at with respect to the Buckland Park development. I know that it is a very large-scale development. Do you believe that the office will be involved in that development?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Buckland Park development is one of 50 major projects in the northern suburbs, and I imagine that we would be involved in that.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Was that 50 major projects that are occurring?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is one of 50 very significant projects in the northern suburbs. There are a lot more of those out there, but I am talking about 50 big ones.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Similarly, coming from a regional area, I am interested in how some smaller communities are also supported by organisations. Is it envisaged that the townships of Virginia, Angle Vale, One Tree Hill and St Kilda will also be supported by the office and engaged as part of the process?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have included, I think, five councils in our area of responsibility: Light Regional Council, Gawler, Playford, Salisbury and Tea Tree Gully. I would have been very happy being just the minister for the north, quite frankly, as opposed to being restricted to some of the suburbs. If there are developments, projects or initiatives occurring in which we need to be involved, we will be.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Beyond the boundaries of those five council areas?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If there is a big government project that I think impacts on our region, obviously, we want to collaborate and work in partnership with people.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I agree. It is always difficult when you put a line as to where you are servicing and where you are not: people on the other side get upset. So, I encourage you to undertake that philosophy.

Mr Piccolo interjecting:

Mr GRIFFITHS: No, but we always considered the needs of communities beyond the boundaries.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What I am referring to is if something is occurring that will impact or provide opportunities for employment or training. Obviously, we want to be involved in those.

Mr GRIFFITHS: On a recent visit to the member for Light's electorate I met with a service provider there that is not funded to provide services in that area but is very supportive of activities occurring within the electorate, and that is wonderful to see. I want to ask a question in relation to the Gawler East development. Has the Office of the Northern Suburbs been involved in that, or will it be involved?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Mr Hemmerling is meeting with representatives of all the major players out there; the major developments. I think that he has had discussions with Delfin.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Can the minister or Mr Hemmerling outline the issues that have arisen from those discussions? Certainly, I think transport is an important issue for that area of the state. Has that been part of the focus of the discussions?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that there is a ministerial DPA out for discussion at the moment, but that is being handled through the office of the minister for planning. This is in relation to Gawler East.

Mr GRIFFITHS: So, it is completely separate from the activities of your office at this stage?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, that is the planning proposal. It is the first step.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister Conlon talks quite often about transit oriented development opportunities occurring within the city area. Is the Gawler East project identified as one of those TOD opportunities?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told not specifically.

The CHAIR: There being no further questions for the Minister for the Northern Suburbs, I declare the examination of the proposed payments adjourned to 1 July.

DEPARTMENT FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES, \$1,008,395,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES,
\$143,606,000

Membership:

Mr Venning substituted for Mrs Penfold.

Witness:

Hon. J.M. Rankine, Minister for Families and Communities, Minister for the Northern Suburbs, Minister for Housing, Minister for Ageing, Minister for Disability.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms J. Mazel, Chief Executive, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr J. Ullianich, Executive Director, Financial Services, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr D. Waterford, Executive Director, Families SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Ms S. Barr, Acting Director, Business Affairs, Department for Families and Communities.

Ms J. Tilbrook, Acting Senior Coordinator, Business Affairs, Department for Families and Communities.

Dr D. Caudrey, Executive Director, Office for the Ageing, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr P. Bull, Executive Director, Organisational Development, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr S. James, Manager, Special Investigations Unit, Department for Families and Communities.

Ms L. McAdam, Manager, Concessions and Anti-Poverty Services, Department for Families and Communities.

The CHAIR: I declare the proposed payment re-opened for examination and refer members to the Portfolio Statement, Volume 3, Part 12. Before I invite you to make a statement, I remind everyone that, if the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the committee secretary by no later than Friday 17 July. This year the *Hansard* supplement, which contains all estimate committee responses, will be published on 2 October

2009. I remind everyone that questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced.

Members unable to complete their questions during the proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the assembly *Notice Paper*. All questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisers. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. I also advise that television coverage is permitted from the southern galleries now, which they were not in the past. Minister, do you wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I do not.

The CHAIR: Member for Davenport, do you wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: No. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.14, the Magill Secure Care Facility. You have recently stated that the cost of replacing that facility would be \$100 million. Is that \$100 million after the sale of the current site or is it \$100 million before? Does the money from the sale of the existing site go towards the new project and, if so, what is the estimate of the sale price?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding of the public-private partnership that we were proceeding down included the sale of the land. The PPP included the land. The \$100 million is the construction cost.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Regardless of whatever price you get for the sale of land, the cost is \$100 million. Does your agency get the proceeds from the sale of the Magill facility or does that go back to Treasury and used for other purposes and, if so, what is the latest estimate for the sale of the land?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No. My understanding of the costing of the PPP was that took into consideration revenue that would be received from the sale of Magill.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: After we get the revenue from the sale of Magill, it will still cost us \$100 million?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are staying at Magill.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: You were moving under the PPP. Two weeks ago, on radio, you said that it was going to cost \$100 million. What I am trying to clarify is that the cost of construction is \$100 million, regardless of any sale of Magill.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Budget Paper 3, page 2.4, talks about prisons and secure facilities, and there is a contingency figure of \$50 million. Can any of that contingency be used for a contribution towards a new secure facility such as a new Magill?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are looking at what moneys we need to undertake works at Magill out of that contingency fund. That is what Treasury has provided that money for.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Is there a limit to how much of that \$50 million you can get access to, or is it up to \$50 million, or are you restricted to \$20 million or \$5 million? How much of that can possibly be contributed towards Magill for a new Magill?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It will be for works at Magill and we will be putting our submissions forward for that consideration. I have not been told that we have a particular share or a particular limit, other than there are funds available to do works that are needed for Magill.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Why did the budget not simply reflect that amount, because on page 12.14, which talks about the investing payments, for Magill Secure Care for sustainment, there is nothing; for the youth training centre sustainment, there is nothing. In the capital works investing strategy statement, there is nothing. How much are you intending to spend on Magill this year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That amount of money has not yet been decided.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: You called off the PPP four or five weeks ago—you would have known earlier than that that cabinet was discussing it. There is no figure at all. It could be \$10,000 or it could be \$10 million. There is no guide at all.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is why the budget set aside \$50 million, so we could work through those issues.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Is that a competitive process? Is it possible you could put a submission to cabinet and get nothing? Are you up against prisons, for instance?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I would like to think it is a cooperative process.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The cooperative process out of cabinet dealt you nothing for Magill. It dumped the whole project. I will move to your comments, minister, in relation to the programs at Magill. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.14 again. In answer to a question by the Leader of the Opposition in the house on 18 June, you said, 'The Leader of the Opposition refers—'

The CHAIR: Order! Can the member supply that debate? The minister is not expected to answer anything about any document that is not before her. The only papers that are before her are the budget papers.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: With respect, Madam Chair, I can ask her about a public comment.

The CHAIR: No.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Are you seriously telling the estimates committee, Madam Chair, that you cannot ask a minister about a public comment?

The CHAIR: I am seriously telling the estimates committee that questions in the estimates committees are about matters in the budget. It is not possible for a member to bring in here any statement, any public comment or any other document and assert what may or may not be in it and expect the minister to reply. You have now provided that to the minister. No other members of the committee have a copy. I do not know whether or not it will be a legitimate estimates question; I suspect not.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Well, let me ask the question. Minister, page 12.14 refers to Magill. You publicly said in the house on 18 June that the Guardian for Children and Young People has complimented the programs run at Magill. Do you stand by that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Everything I have heard the guardian say has reflected confidence in the staff and in the programs that we are running out there.

The CHAIR: This is not the time to ask new questions about the guardian for children. That is appropriate in question time.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I will go to the question of programs. My understanding, minister, is that the guardian for children has prepared a report into the programs offered at Magill and it has been scathing. Are you familiar with that report? What action has the department taken since it has received that report?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have a Rehabilitations Program Committee which is working on a range of programs out in our juvenile detention centres. The interim plan and the set of standards guided some additional programs that we delivered in 2008-09, and they have included cultural employment and individually tailored behavioural programs. We have also commissioned a cultural awareness program, and we are currently investigating sex offender and auto-crime prevention programs out there.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: In the report issued by the Guardian for Children, there are things like:

The consultation revealed the uniformly high levels of dissatisfaction with the way in which programs are currently structured.

Respondents, both internal and external to Families SA, expressed strong support for renewed efforts to improve the quality and range of programs.

So, when you go public and say that the Guardian for Children and Young People is happy with the programs, the reality is that she has actually produced a report that is quite scathing of the programs.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And did you hear what she had to say on the radio? I am referring to what I heard her say when she was criticising the government's decision that we could not proceed with Magill. I think on a number of occasions she took the time to commend the staff at Magill.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Minister, I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.18, which raises the issue of the Mullighan report, child safety and all those things. The Mullighan report recommended harbouring laws. Where the government is up to in relation to the introduction of

those laws? There is a lobby group asking for a healing centre. What is the government's position on that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The government committed to bringing legislation in as a result of the Mullighan inquiry in this term of parliament, and we will be doing that. In relation to the healing centre, I have had discussions with post-care services people on a couple of occasions, and I know that some of them are very keen on a healing centre. I think that is a matter still under consideration.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, Program 2. In 2008, the government announced what it claimed to be \$190 million extra over four years, the vast majority of which I understand is going to non-government agencies, while at the same time Families SA has had a cut in its budget by a 3 or 4 per cent efficiency saving. How do you expect the public sector agency to do more with less?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: A couple of things. I would very much hope that we will start to see some dividend in the money that we are investing in that earlier intervention with our non-government organisations. Already there have been many referrals to those organisations to work with families, so we expect that will have an impact. But there is a clear undertaking that none of the savings will be targeted at direct service provision.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Minister, you say that you are hoping that there will be a reduction in notifications. The reality is that, in the budget papers—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I did not say that. I did not say 'notifications'.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Well, you indicated that you thought there would be some dividend from investment in the non-government agencies.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: But all of your measuring points, all your performance indicators, indicate that the notifications, etc., are going up at the same rate they always have. So, where are your measuring points for the dividend? You are investing all this money in the non-government agencies but the notifications are still going up at 10 per cent.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If we can stop children from coming into care, we are going to save a considerable amount of money. The money that we are investing with the non-government organisations is targeted at what we would probably determine as being tier 2 notifications—families that have come to the attention of the department, families that may be at tipping point. We need to sustain those families and stop children falling into care and, if we can have reunification of some families, work with those families to get unification.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Minister, you mentioned the tier 2 notifications. Can you give me some advice on how many of the tier 2 reports are actually being allocated and dealt with? My advice is that it is about only half of the tier 2 notifications. Is that true?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We publish those data reports on a regular basis—every three months, I think.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Then we should know the answer.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I'm sorry, I do not carry everything around in my head. To give you a snapshot, as of 31 May there were 1,168 tier 1 notifications; 85 per cent were responded to and 15 per cent are still in the process of investigation. That is 100 per cent of the tier 1s, that is, those children at imminent risk of harm. Tier 2, there is a larger number, that is, 12,036, of which 45 per cent were responded to and 14 per cent are still under investigation.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: So, 59 per cent are dealt with. What happens to the other 41 per cent?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As I understand it, they are registered as 'Carer Concern'.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Sorry, they are registered as?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As 'Career Concern'. It stays on the database so that if there is another—

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: So, 59 per cent are dealt with and 41 per cent are basically noted.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes. It is a different level of category as well. So, you have 100 per cent—

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Tier 2 is different from tier 1; I understand that. Given the pressure on the system (and we are talking about your front-line staff to a large degree), there was an enterprise bargaining agreement pay rise in October 2008. I understand that, as result, the departmental budgets were cut by another 1.5 per cent. Is that true and, if it is, why did that occur?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, why did the budget—

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Well, there was a 4 per cent efficiency dividend. They have gone through the process of an enterprise bargaining agreement, and my understanding is that another 1.5 per cent was cut to the system. We have just talked about the 41 per cent of tier 2 notifications that are not being dealt with, and I just wonder what the philosophy of the government is. Why is it that you are penalising the workers for getting a wage rise?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are not—

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Well, you are, because you are penalising them because they get a wage rise and then you say, 'Now we are going to cut your budget as a result. Thanks a lot.'

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As you would know, the Department for Families and Communities is a very large department, and it will be looking at where we can make some appropriate savings. They will not be front-line services. The \$190 million over four years, the money being provided in relation to non-government organisations, will be targeted at those families in tier 2 we have been talking about.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: That's nice, but—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It's not nice; it is very important.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: —can you explain to me why the 1.5 per cent was cut? Treasury asked you for a 4 per cent dividend, and they are giving up the 4 per cent. There is an enterprise bargaining arrangement, and there is another 1.5 per cent. Why is that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There was also additional growth money for us to employ new social workers, which we have done.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: How much was that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The growth formula was \$142 million over four years to cater for the growth in child protection. That included \$124.5 million over four years to ensure that children in care are in appropriate accommodation and \$17.6 million over four years to address the expected increase in child abuse and neglect notifications.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: At what point do you think we will be able to say that 100 per cent of tier 2 notifications will be dealt with? Currently, we have 59 per cent—

The CHAIR: Order! The member for Davenport will allow the minister decent consulting and responding time without interruptions.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have not yet had 12 months' operation of this new system, so I think it would be a bit early to predict when that will occur. What I would like to see is an eventual significant reduction of tier 1 notifications, tier 2s escalating into tier 1s.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.19: children under the guardianship of the minister. How many children under the guardianship of the minister have no allocated worker? My understanding is that it is close to 150.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My advice is that none is unallocated.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Let me get this right: every child under the guardianship of the minister has a social worker allocated to them.

Mr WATERFORD: Every child under guardianship has a worker within Families SA allocated to them. In some instances, it is a supervisor, but in the vast majority of cases it is a front-line social worker.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: So, some do not have a social worker allocated.

Mr WATERFORD: All the supervisors are social work qualified.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Following onto a similar point, how many young people under the guardianship of the minister have had their statutory annual review?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: For this year?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: For this year or for last year. I think I can give you the figure for the year before. If you have a year-to-date figure, I will take that or, if you have last year's figure, I will take that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will take that on notice and get that for you.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Will you also confirm on notice that the 2006-07 statutory annual review figure was about 35 per cent of the children under the guardianship of the minister?

The CHAIR: It does not matter whether or not it is on notice; the subject for examination is this year's results.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I understand what you are trying to do with your ruling, but the budget papers actually go back a number of years.

The CHAIR: I am not trying to do anything.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: You are allowed to clarify what is in the previous years.

The CHAIR: Order! Member for Davenport, please do not interrupt the chair. The subject of today's examination is this year's budget papers. If you can point to a place where the budget papers go back to 2006-07 then we can take questions on that. If you cannot, that is not part of the process for today. Does the member for Davenport have another question?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Yes, I have a few, actually. Page 12.17 in Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, refers to district office staffing. My understanding is that there has been an agreement to employ between 13 and 15 new officers for the district offices. Has the government had any advice that that will still leave 50 per cent of the cases unallocated and children not being attended to? In other words, there will still be a shortfall after the employment of those 13 to 15 new officers. Has the government received any advice to that effect?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am assuming you are talking about child protection notifications as opposed to guardianship children, or are you talking about guardianship children not being allocated?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: No, the first one, not guardianship.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Child protection notifications. It would be lovely if the employment of 13 people meant that all of our notifications were investigated.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: You have had no advice that there would be a shortfall?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I cannot imagine that an additional 13 people would mean that we have all the notifications, bearing in mind that we are getting large increases in notifications investigated. The \$190 million is about targeting. It is not just the people employed in the office. It is with the engagement of the non-government sector that we hope to have a significant impact on those.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: This is what I do not understand, minister. You keep talking about the significant impact but, all on all your performance indicators—the level of notifications, the number of children coming under the guardianship of the minister, the number of domestic violence payments—every one of those indicators is still going up, so where is the delivery for this investment of \$160 million or whatever it is?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It has only just started; give us 12 months.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Yes, but the budget goes forward 12 months. You are talking about the next 12 months. At this time next year, your budget papers show it will be no better off. The non-government sector is getting more money; the government sector is getting a 4 per cent dividend efficiency cut and a 1.5 per cent enterprise bargaining cut, and all the parameters show that the measuring points—the notifications, the number of children under guardianship and domestic violence—are all going up. Why wouldn't the papers show them starting to level off?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I can only reiterate that we are putting the largest injection into child protection and caring for children we have ever done in this state, and I would like to see

some outcomes from that. I am sure that in the next 12 months or so we will start to see that occurring.

The CHAIR: Member for Davenport, would you mind going back over that question and stating the figures accurately? As I read those targets on page 12.18, in fact, all the indicators are not going up significantly, so perhaps you could specify which ones you are concerned about.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The minister has answered my question to my satisfaction at this stage, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: It does not matter. There are still inaccuracies on the record.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I cannot believe the chair is entering into debate. You are here to chair the questions, not enter the debate, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: I am concerned about the accuracy of the record.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: To satisfy the chair, I will give the minister an example. The number of children coming under guardianship (on page 12.19, if the chair wishes to look) will be going up 25 per cent. In 2008-09 there are 1,556 and in 2009-10 there are 2,085; that is 500, which in 1,500 is in fact 33 per cent.

The CHAIR: Will you clarify the page?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Page 12.19, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: The problem is that I was looking at page 12.18.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: There is an example for the minister. I understand your previous answer. I only did that for the clarity of the chair. In relation to Volume 3, page 12.17, what is the anticipated cost of the C3MS Program, including transition, and is it true that Families SA purchased a licensed version of the product that has considerably fewer features than the licence bought by DOCS in Victoria and, if so, why?

The CHAIR: I think there is a bit of a problem with the references here.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I gave the reference, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Budget Paper 4, Volume 3; is that what you are talking about?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Yes.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think you gave the wrong page.

The CHAIR: Page 12.17 is about Aboriginal families.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The minister knows what I am talking about.

The CHAIR: The minister is not the only person here. Minister, will you translate for us?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes. We have taken over the Connected Client and Case Management System (C3MS). It was a Victorian system that was developed at a cost of over \$35 million, I understand, and was provided to the South Australian government at no cost by Victoria. We developed a business case and were provided with a budget to enhance the existing system but decided to go ahead with the Victorian system. We are currently in the process of rolling that out.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Under the new system, will the department still be required to generate and maintain a physical paper file, as required by the legislation, or is it the intention to go to a paperless system?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We will, obviously, comply with all the provisions of the state record-keeping legislation.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: In relation to workplace learning, Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.32, I understand that Families SA is considering funding a number of highly paid positions in order to implement a workplace learning program. I understand that someone called Mr Tony Kemp has made a recommendation to employ four either ASO6s or ASO7s for further training. Is that true and, if so, at what cost?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am sorry, I have no information about what you are asking. I am happy to get back to you about it.

The CHAIR: The time for examination of the Minister for Families and Communities has expired. We will now move to issues relating to the Minister for Ageing.

Membership:

Mrs Redmond substituted for Hon. I.F. Evans.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms S. Carman, Executive Director, Office for Disability and Client Services, Department for Families and Communities.

Ms J. Pickering, Executive Director, Domiciliary Care SA, Department for Families and Communities.

The CHAIR: Minister, do you have an opening statement?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. As Minister for Ageing, I am very proud of the state government's continued measures aimed at allowing older South Australians to maintain their independence. Not only has the ongoing implementation of Improving with Age, our ageing plan for South Australia, continued to see a significant number of projects implemented across the state, but two exciting new transport initiatives will also have great benefits for seniors.

From Wednesday, all South Australians with a Seniors Card will be able to travel for free on public transport during interpeak periods. This is not only important because it allows people to attend their health appointments and remain connected to the community, but it also signifies very good public policy as it encourages people to use our public transport system during less busy periods. This is in addition to the joint federal government commitment to allow reciprocal rights for concession holders when they travel on interstate metropolitan systems.

Other important initiatives include the continuation of the Circle of Friends project, which focuses on connecting older people in our communities. A couple of months ago I had the privilege of inviting many participants of this Masonic Homes program to Old Parliament House and advised them of a further funding allocation. This is just one small program which allows older South Australians to remain a part of their community and feel that they are making a valued contribution.

Much of our work in the Ageing portfolio is in conjunction with the commonwealth government, and we continue to work on future directions for community care reform to improve the services for older and frailer residents. Funding for services to frail, older people, people with disabilities and their carers, are jointly funded through the Home and Community Care program, which provides services to help people from their groups live independently.

In 2008-09, a significant increase in HACC funding of more than \$11 million ongoing was approved for services across South Australia. Approximately \$8 million of this increase in funding enabled new and expanded services, and \$3 million was allocated for indexation to existing services. One of the new programs, the Access2HomeCare sites—one metropolitan and one country—has been operating successfully in South Australia. As at 31 May this year, 2,147 calls had been made to the Access2HomeCare telephone number, and more than 1,607 referrals had been made to enable people to successfully access the services they required.

In closing, I briefly mention the response of the Office for Ageing and Domiciliary Care during the extreme heatwave earlier this year. By ensuring Home and Community Care funded agencies had extreme weather procedures in place, linking with the Red Cross Teleservice and recruiting volunteers across government, approximately 6,000 vulnerable old people were contacted to ensure their safety and wellbeing.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Member for Heysen, do you wish to make a statement?

Mrs REDMOND: Just briefly, Madam Chair. First of all, may I start on a positive note by saying that I do welcome the couple of initiatives that the minister spoke about, as well as the initiative for the removal of land tax on residential aged care facilities. The only comment I make in relation to the free travel for seniors is that it is a terrific initiative but it is of little benefit to those in regional South Australia. I think we need to perhaps think about some of our regional communities a bit more. Subject to those comments, Madam Chair, I am happy to commence questions. First of all, may I ask whether the omnibus questions have been read in for the minister?

The CHAIR: Not that I have heard, member for Heysen. The minister seems to be indicating no.

Mrs REDMOND: In that case, if everyone is happy, I will do those at the outset so we do not run out of time at the end. The omnibus questions are as follows:

1. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of the baseline data that was provided to the Shared Services Reform Office by each department or agency reporting to the minister, including the current total cost of the provision of payroll, finance, human resources, procurement, records management and information technology services in each department or agency reporting to the minister, as well as the full-time equivalent staffing numbers involved?

2. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors in 2008-09 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier, cost, work undertaken and method of appointment? In relation to this question I note that, in previous years, we have restricted that to consults over \$10,000 and I expect that we do not want anything below that figure for the response to this question.

3. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many surplus employees will there be as at 30 June 2009, and for each surplus employee what is the title or classification of the employee and the total employment cost of the employee?

4. In the financial year 2008-09 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on projects and programs was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2009-10, and how much was approved by cabinet?

5. (i) What was the total number of employees with a total employment cost of \$100,000 or more per employee and also, as a subcategory, the total number of employees with a total employment cost of \$200,000 or more per employee for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister as at 30 June 2009; and

(ii) Between 30 June 2008 and 30 June 2009, will the minister list job title and total employment cost for each position with a total estimated cost of \$100,000 or more

(a) which has been abolished and

(b) which has been created?

6. For 2008-09 will the minister provide a breakdown of expenditure on all grants administered by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing the name of the grant recipient, the amount of the grant and the purpose of the grant, and whether or not the grant was subject to a grant agreement as required by Treasurer's Instruction No. 15?

7. For all capital works projects listed in Budget Paper 5 that are the responsibility of the minister, list the total amounts spent to date on each project?

Thank you, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Thank you.

Mrs REDMOND: In the Ageing portfolio, first of all, I refer the minister to the financial commentary in Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, at page 12.8. The part of the commentary I am referring to—and I realise that part of this is Housing Trust and, therefore, not part of what we are examining at the moment—is that under the two dot points there is a statement that the total expenses of the portfolio are forecast to increase by \$11 million to \$1.513 billion, compared to the 2008-09 estimated result of \$1.502 billion. This is mainly due to additional expenditure associated with the national partnership agreements on homelessness and remote indigenous housing (I recognise that that part is not what we are talking about here today) as well as additional spending in programs to support disabled and elderly South Australians. These increases are partially offset by once-off funding received in 2008-09 for several programs, and the impact of savings measures announced as part of the 2009-10 budget. Will the minister advise how much of that \$11 million, which is talked about in that first line that I read, is for disabled and, more particularly, elderly South Australians?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I refer you to Budget Paper 3, page 2.29, additional support for disability services for the 2009-10 budget, \$3.071 million. I will get back to you about the ageing component—I assume that is part of the \$11 million increase in HACC growth funding. It has an

expenditure and savings initiatives table, operating initiatives, disability services additional support, \$3.071 million. There is an increase of \$11 million in HACC funding and that is commonwealth and state funding.

Mrs REDMOND: What I am getting at is what is the impact on the ageing sector? We are not really talking about disability, we are just talking about ageing. Because the figures in the budget combine disability and ageing much of the time I am trying to excise how much is related to ageing specifically.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: In the 2008-09 year Home and Community Care funding grew by \$11 million, or 8 per cent. In '09-10 there will be another increase of \$11.8 million, and in '10-11 there will be an increase of \$12.5 million. That is an 8 per cent increase, followed by a 7.9 per cent increase, followed by a 7.8 per cent increase.

Mrs REDMOND: Can we just stay at that table, 'Families and Communities—expenditure and savings initiatives', and then over the page is the continuation of that. I just want to be clear about the figure which appears under the separate heading, about 10 lines down, that is headed 'Savings initiatives/Savings target'. For the years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 there is just a dash, nothing, and then suddenly in 2012-13 there is a savings target of \$3 million.

I have a two-part question on that. First, is that \$3 million part of the \$750 million that the government has announced in the budget it will save at sometime in the future without specifying where or how it will save it; and, secondly, of that \$3 million, how much is anticipated to come out of the elderly component, the Office for the Ageing?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The department has not yet developed its strategies for reaching that \$3 million saving target; but that is why it is that far out, basically.

Mrs REDMOND: It is clear that there is to be a \$3 million savings target—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Across the Department for Families and Communities.

Mrs REDMOND: —but there is no indication as to how that will be divided up among all the sectors of Families and Communities and the Ageing sector in particular?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As I am advised, that work has not yet been done.

Mrs REDMOND: Can I go back, because it is connected with—

The CHAIR: Minister, did you have something to add?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, thank you.

Ms SIMMONS: Could we have a question from this side, Madam Chair?

The CHAIR: I am sorry, my advice was otherwise.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Madam Chair, I am happy, again, to make the offer to dispense with Dorothies and cut the time by half, but that is up to the member for Heysen. I am happy to continue taking her questions for half an hour if she would prefer, or we can—

Mrs REDMOND: No. If we are going to go through this charade of the estimates process as it exists in South Australia, we can go through the charade of having Dorothy Dixers as well. I am sure the audience will be most interested.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They might answer some of your questions. I thought you might have other things to do today.

Mrs REDMOND: I have got plenty of questions.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No. I thought you might have had other things to be doing today, that was all.

Ms SIMMONS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.12. Will the minister please provide an update in relation to the increase in recurrent funding from the HACC program during 2008-09 and how this will improve services in South Australia for the frail aged?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Obviously, this issue interests the member for Heysen as well and, perhaps, I can give a little more detail about HACC funding and the services in South Australia. Basically, the Home and Community Care program funds the provision of basic maintenance and support services for our older frail South Australians and some younger people with disabilities and their carers. Interestingly, since 2001-02 the total HACC funding in South

Australia, I am told, has increased by 71 per cent from \$87.7 million in 2001 to \$149.7 million in 2008-09.

We know how important these services are to allow older people maintain their independence. In October last year the commonwealth Minister for Ageing (Hon. Justine Elliot) and I jointly announced the South Australian HACC Triennial Plan, which outlines the strategic directions, priorities and allocations of funds from 2008-09 to 2010-11. Over the three years there is expected to be a 25 per cent increase in funding from 2007-08. For 2008-09 HACC funding grew, as I said, by \$11.1 million (8 per cent) to \$149.7 million.

The commonwealth contributed \$92.3 million and our state provided \$57.4 million. Currently, 150 agencies are funded by Home and Community Services, so that answers part of the member for Heysen's omnibus question. Total base HACC funding of \$149.7 million was allocated in the following ways: \$69 million to South Australian government agencies, which included \$23.7 million for Domiciliary Care SA; \$64.7 million to non-government organisations; and \$16 million to local government agencies.

These funds mean a continued expansion of basic HACC maintenance and support services. The Department for Families and Communities estimates over 95,600 people will have been assisted by HACC services in 2008-09, this is an increase of 3,600 from the previous year. The services obviously go a long way in supporting the independence and community connections that our older people have.

The triennial plan funding for the HACC program over the next two financial years will be \$161 million in 2009-10 (as I said, an \$11.8 million increase, which comprises \$99.3 million of commonwealth government contribution and a matching state government contribution of \$61.8 million); and \$173 million in 2010-11, which represents a \$12.5 million increase (comprised of \$107 million of commonwealth funding and a matching contribution of \$66.6 million from the state government).

Mr PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.26, with respect to seniors and also the Seniors Card. Can the minister provide some detail about the level of support provided by the state government to help South Australians on low or fixed incomes with the cost of household and other expenses?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The state government currently provides support of over \$120 million to assist South Australians on low and fixed incomes with their household expenses. Concessions are divided across five areas and the anticipated expenditure for 2008-09 includes water and sewerage concessions, energy concessions, council rate concessions, emergency services levy concessions and public transport concessions. These funds assist about 140,000 home owner/occupiers with their energy, water and sewerage and council rates and emergency levy costs.

While there is a range of criteria, homeowners can receive up to \$120 towards energy accounts; up to \$40 for their emergency services levy accounts; up to \$190 for council rates for pensioners and other Centrelink allowees; up to \$100 for council rates if self-funded retirees hold a state Seniors Card; up to \$95 for sewerage accounts; and 20 per cent of water costs, with a minimum of \$95 per annum and a maximum of \$200. A further 50,000 tenants receive \$120 per annum support with respect to their energy costs.

I am advised that only one of these concessions was ever introduced under a Liberal government (it was an interesting little piece of analysis), and that was a concession for the emergency services levy. So, it brought in a new levy and provided a concession for it, and I think that was because the member for Chaffey was bouncing up and down in this chamber that we managed to get that concession.

We have also extended support for water costs to a further 40,000 tenants who can demonstrate that their landlord passes on the full cost of their water usage. For these rental households, the level of support for water is 20 per cent of the total cost of water with a minimum of \$55 or, if the total costs are less than \$55, the total cost of their account up to a maximum of \$160.

The most recent state budget contained further good news regarding concessions. From 1 July 2009, additional funding of \$2.3 million over the next four years has been provided to enable improved delivery of concessions to residents of residential parks across South Australia. An increasing number of South Australians live in homes that are part of the lifestyle villages in residential parks, and I know that the member for Light has lobbied long and hard about protections for people living in those sorts of facilities. So, I am sure he will be pleased to know that this has

happened. There is a complex blend of arrangements for charging these residents for energy, council and water and sewerage charges. The government has a proud record when it comes to concessions to make life easier for everyday South Australians. So, I am very pleased with those initiatives.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.26. Will the minister advise what funding has been allocated by the state government to provide opportunities and choices for older people to be involved in and connect with their communities and to continue to participate in activities of their choice?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I thank the member for Florey for her question. I know she has a lot of involvement with seniors organisations in her electorate and also organisations that service those people. Grants for Seniors and Positive Ageing Development Grants have been very important in providing community organisations throughout South Australia—whether they are clubs, education and training institutions, arts and cultural groups; a whole range of organisations—the opportunity to enable them to ensure that older people in their community have an active role and are able to exercise their rights as citizens.

In 2008-09, 16 Positive Ageing Development Grants were approved, totalling \$200,000, and 55 Grants for Seniors were approved, totalling \$135,267. The Positive Ageing Development Grants are one-off and are worth up to \$25,000. They need to fit into one of three themes: enabling choice and independence, participation in learning, or positive perceptions. Some of the excellent initiatives funded by the Positive Ageing Development Grants include:

- Marion Life Community Services Inc., which provides older people in the southern Adelaide region with an interactive financial literacy course (I think Madam Chair would have been pleased to hear about that);
- Australian Retired Persons Association SA Inc., to accredit its members in leadership skills and first aid: this training provides learning opportunities and mentoring skills for the development of members in the club;
- UnitingCare Wesley Port Adelaide Inc., to engage with 200 to 300 isolated aged people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to access and participate in community activities and interact with others in the community to relieve isolation and enhance their wellbeing.

I was further pleased to support Masonic Homes to continue the Circle of Friends initiative, created to empower older people within the southern Adelaide region who are isolated, lonely and frail.

The second one-off funding program is Grants for Seniors—worth up to \$5,000—to help organisations with smaller tasks, including buying equipment or paying for an instructor to run activities. The Grants for Seniors included: Lifeline Country to Coast, \$5,000 for a seniors skill enhancement project; Pooraka Farm Neighbourhood House for learning more about the local culture project; and the Mallala RSL Sub-branch also received a grant. In addition, \$50,000 was provided to the Council on the Ageing to celebrate the Every Generation Festival last October.

Mrs REDMOND: I was going to go back to where I started to ask some further questions, but I will come back to those. I have a question on each of the two answers the minister gave. First, the minister was talking about statistics and concessions, and closed with the comment of making life easier for elderly South Australians. Whilst I am sure that our elderly South Australians appreciate the concessions, my question is: has any statistical information been prepared as to the relative value of the concessions as against the average cost of the rates?

The point I am trying to get at is that, when concessions were introduced, they often represented a third (or even more) of the amount of the rates that people were paying on their homes, but, subsequently, the value of houses has increased. Of course, many of our elderly people are asset rich but income poor and they have relatively low, often fixed or even diminishing incomes in certain economic circumstances such as we have at the moment. Is there a statistical analysis of the relative value of the concessions that our elderly people get over a period of time?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will take that question on notice. I do not have the information that you are looking for here. I am of the understanding that it may not be the exact work that you are asking for, but I understand some work has been done.

Mrs REDMOND: The next question was from the member for Florey and you responded, amongst other things, about 200 to 300 isolated aged people with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and some special assistance that had been given to them—and again I am

sure that that is welcome. However, my question is: what information do we have at this stage about the culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds of our ageing population, because, clearly, as people progress into dementia, if they have come from overseas, they will frequently lose their new language and be left in a situation of only being able to converse in their original language. That seems to me to provide a big warning bell for us, because we all know that we will have a massive increase in our ageing population as we baby boomers come through.

Have we done any analysis yet of what the needs are likely to be in the various communities that we have represented in this state with people who are reverting to their original language? Are we planning for how we will address that both in terms of programs like the one the minister referred to (which, as I said, I am sure is welcome) and the provision of appropriate people to staff the places where they might be living, because I see this as a major problem that will hit us?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that we have done research about people's age and background, so we have a lot of that data, and we have been funding specific HACC programs for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to support them. A lot of research has been done. The Office for the Ageing undertakes research and engages people to do significant research projects.

Mrs REDMOND: As a tangent to that, has any work been done on further developing the program that was introduced at the Tailem Bend hospital, which, largely, is a hospital that operates as a nursing home and at which they have introduced a computer program which can, for instance, communicate on behalf of people who have lost communication skills, whether through losing their ability to speak because of a stroke or through losing their language because of dementia, or for whatever reason?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that we are aware of the program and that it appears to have been successful, but I do not believe any other work has been done out of the Office for the Ageing in relation to that specific program. I know the one you are talking about. It was as seen on TV?

Mrs REDMOND: Yes. I was actually at the launch. By way of information for the minister, one of the benefits is if you have people who cannot communicate. One of the examples given was a place which had a staff which was largely comprised of Indonesian people, but what they were able to do was translate instructions into Indonesian for a particular patient, so that when a staff member came on duty, they could press a button on the computer and be reading in their own language the details of that particular person, their history, their likes, their dislikes, what they were able to do, what they needed help with and so on. I would recommend it as a highly valuable program.

Ms SIMMONS: This is a subject dear to my heart. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.26. Will the minister advise how much funding has been allocated by the commonwealth government to enable the state government to provide concessions to Seniors Card holders who use public transport services outside their home state, and how much funding has been allocated by the state government to enable Seniors Card holders to be able to travel for free on metropolitan Adelaide public transport services from 1 July 2009?

Mr Venning: That's a complicated question. You wouldn't know the answer to that, would you?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, I do. If you had been paying attention, Ivan, you would know as well because, in 2007, the Labor Party promised during the election campaign a national transport reciprocity agreement to provide concessions to Seniors Card holders who use public transport services outside their home state. I am really pleased to say that all Australian states and territories are now partners to this agreement, with the exception of Western Australia.

Mr Piccolo: Liberal.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I was not going to say that, but it is true.

Mr Venning interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, it is disappointing that the Liberal government in Western Australia has not yet signed up to that. Nevertheless, the South Australian national partnership agreement with the commonwealth was endorsed by the Premier on 24 December, and this agreement will see more than \$1.4 million over four years being allocated to the South Australian government, along with a \$66,000 sign-up bonus. Funding will be provided via a national

partnership payment for the first four years, after which it will be provided through general revenue assistance, indexed on an ongoing basis

Before the initiative was implemented on 1 January 2009, the South Australian Seniors Card only entitled the holder to public transport concessions in South Australia. The new agreement now means that seniors travelling to Sydney can access seniors' fares on the Sydney Harbour ferry service or, if they travel to Melbourne, they will get cheaper fares and enjoy the experience of riding the Melbourne trams.

Seniors can also access concession fares on bus and train travel in all other Australian states and territories, as I said, except Western Australia. Likewise, seniors visiting South Australia are now able to access concession fares on our South Australian public transport. A more uniform system across Australia will help seniors travel interstate to see family and friends. In making it more affordable for seniors to travel around the country, we will also help communities and businesses that are dependent on tourism.

The Premier, the transport minister and I were also very pleased with our recent announcement of free public transport to all holders of a Seniors Card during off-peak times on weekdays and public holidays. Older South Australians can travel on trains, trams and buses on the Adelaide metropolitan system from 1 July 2009, interstate seniors included. The scheme will be provided at a cost to the South Australian government of \$10 million per annum.

The benefit of this system is that it makes good use of public transport infrastructure which may otherwise not be used to its maximum capacity in off-peak times. It will also help seniors and the elderly ease some of the financial pressure during this period of global economic downturn. It is another great incentive to get out and about, and to encourage seniors to stay active in the community.

This system also helps meet South Australia's Strategic Plan target of increasing public transport use to 10 per cent of weekday passenger vehicle kilometres travelled by 2018, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The current, approximately 50 per cent ticket concession available to state Seniors Card holders and other concession groups for peak-hour travel on public transport services will also be maintained.

Ms SIMMONS: Minister, having lobbied long and hard for this before coming into this place, I am so delighted with that answer.

Mr PICCOLO: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.12. Can the minister advise the committee how South Australia is contributing to the Council of Australian Governments' requirements to improve access to community care and how the Access2HomeCare initiative will make it easier for older people to obtain services that meet their needs? I think one of the pilots is actually in my region.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is, and obviously that is why the member for Light has asked me this question. I think this is a really good initiative. It is obviously a difficult process when someone who is older becomes frail and needs to access a range of services and find out what those services might be and how they might access them. Going through numerous assessment processes just makes the whole circumstance that much more stressful for the older person concerned and their family.

Access2HomeCare is a demonstration project, and it is one of 10 operating nationally. It is aimed at making access to community care services for frail older people and their carers much easier. I launched this initiative on 31 October and, as the member for Light said, one is operating in his region, servicing lower North Gawler, Barossa and Yorke Peninsula areas. The other is operating out of the western Adelaide metropolitan region.

Access2HomeCare operates a centralised 1300 telephone number which takes inquiries and referrals from older people, their carers, service providers, GPs, hospitals and the general public. Staff conduct a telephone-based screening of their eligibility for home and community care services and then provide information and referral to the appropriate HACC services in their region. Previously, older people seeking community care services may have made telephone calls to a number of service providers in order to access the help they needed to live independently at home. With Access2HomeCare, they can make just one call in order to be assessed. They are then referred to the services available in their region and can access the help they need.

As at 31 May, 2,147 calls had been made to the Access2HomeCare telephone number, and more than 1,600 referrals had been made. The total funding for the development and operation of Access2HomeCare in 2008-09 was approximately \$1.1 million, with \$868,000 one-off funding

from the commonwealth government, through community care reform initiatives, and \$225,000 HACC funding.

In 2009-10, the Department for Families and Communities will seek to consolidate the Access Point project, enabling frail older people and their carers greater access to this very streamlined service. Access2HomeCare will work with the commonwealth government to further the implementation of a nationally consistent assessment tool for community care services. This will result in improved assessment outcomes and consistency for service users and ensure that South Australia remains at the forefront of community care reform.

HACC funding of \$300,000 will be available to continue the operation of Access2HomeCare in these demonstration regions in the coming year. An allocation of \$900,000 has been identified in the HACC triennial plan for access points in 2009-10.

In 2009-10, the Department for Families and Communities will consolidate the Access2HomeCare project to further ease entry into the community care service system. It is hoped that a wider range of services may be available to people and their carers via this process. The scale and time frame for further enhancements to Access2HomeCare is dependent on the outcome of the national evaluation of the Access Point Demonstration Projects currently being undertaken by the commonwealth project, with further funding by the commonwealth government for community care reform initiatives.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Volume 3, page 12.12. Will the minister outline the progress to date of Improving with Age: Our Ageing Plan for South Australia and provide examples of how the plan is assisting South Australians?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think this is another really good news story for older South Australians. Over 60 projects, worth over \$6 million, have been successfully implemented since the launch of Improving with Age: Our Ageing Plan for South Australia. The government continues to fund the implementation of the ageing plan, with \$460,000 being allocated during 2008-09.

The commonwealth government provided \$1.4 million, through the South Australian Community Care Innovation Fund, and the Department for Families and Communities, through the Office for Ageing, continues to implement projects from the ageing plan. It builds on current government reporting systems and develops new research initiatives. Key priority areas of the ageing plan include:

- enabling choice and independence in where we live, getting around, connecting to our community and staying healthy;
- valuing and recognising contribution in our work as grandparents, as carers and as volunteers;
- providing safety, security and protection in our homes and communities and as consumers;
- delivering the right services and the right information, timely, responsive and tailored to the needs of individual; and
- staying in front, through research, innovative practices and collaboration with others.

Initiatives include \$424,000 over three years for the Medical Device Partnering Program. This initiative is a collaboration between South Australian researchers, end users and industry to develop cutting edge medical and assistant devices for older South Australians and bring them to the market.

The objective of the Medical Device Partnering Program is to provide an easy product development process from early stage concepts right through to manufactured products; for example, a facial recognition with diary option to assist people with dementia. This uses computer technology in a person's home with dementia. It includes facial animation, dialogue, speech and vision to enhance independence and relieve anxiety associated with the inability to retain new information about daily activities.

The activities may include administering of medication and reminders about daily tasks; the diary could also be used to assist a carer to maintain their usual activities, such as going to work, with reminders set up for the person with dementia about the whereabouts of the carer and when they might return. This project has been developed following a focus group between Alzheimer's Australia SA consumers and the Medical Device Partnering Program. Further initiatives include:

- \$227,000 for the implementation by the Aged Rights Advocacy Service of actions to prevent abuse of older South Australians, and these include a statewide awareness raising campaign incorporating Aboriginal communities' elders;
- \$40,000 towards South Australia's Dementia Action Plan 2009-12: Facing the Challenges Together, developed in partnership with SA Health;
- \$90,000 towards the development and completion of the State of the Ageing report, a joint approach to research through the Office for Ageing and a university round table involving three South Australian universities;
- \$77,500 for a post-doctoral research fellowship to bring together ageing research in South Australia to provide a mechanism which links policy into practice;
- \$38,000 for the establishment of the Ngarrindjeri Elders Community House to enable Home and Community Care funded centre-based day care activities to be delivered to Ngarrindjeri elders. A property in Murray Bridge has been made available by Housing SA for that initiative; and
- ongoing funding for the Circle of Friends project, which establishes informal support networks of individuals around isolated older people, including those with a disability.

In 2009 DFC will continue to implement initiatives and projects from Improving with Age—Our Ageing Plan for South Australia, and continue to build on current across-government reporting systems and develop research initiatives. Key priorities for 2009-10 relate to social inclusion, safety and security, active ageing, research, dementia, transport and financial planning.

Mrs REDMOND: If we can stay on those highlights and targets that appear on page 12.12, the highlights at times seem to exactly reflect—only in the past tense rather than the future tense—the targets as listed so, for instance, the 'continued expansion of basic Home and Community Care maintenance and support for frail older people and their carers' was a highlight for last year but becomes 'continue to expand basic Home and Community Care maintenance and support for frail older people and their carers' as a target for next year. That does not seem to be particularly edifying.

I notice that in the previous budget of 2007-08 we had an apparent completed implementation and development of the second round of Kickstart projects the minister just referred to, that is, the second round of Kickstart projects from Improving with Age—Our Ageing Plan for South Australia, and the reference to 'continue to build to across government reporting systems and develop research initiatives'. Again, in this year's highlights that is listed, yet in the previous budget papers of 2007-08 it was listed as already implemented and developed as something that had already been achieved. Is there an explanation for why these keep cropping up and reappearing in the present and future tenses?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No; the Improving with Age is an ongoing plan, and new money is allocated each year. With regard to the continued expansion of Home and Community Care, for the organisations and people receiving those services, I have outlined the fact that this year there will be an \$11 million increase and that we will be expanding and reaching a lot more people and allowing a lot more people to remain in their homes independently. I think that is a very appropriate highlight and should be a continuing target.

Mrs REDMOND: Fine. I have no difficulty with the idea that it be a continuing target but, again, what work has been done to identify, first, how we define frail older people and their carers? I suspect it is a bit of a tautological definition: that a frail older person is one who cannot do things for themselves and therefore needs the assistance of the HACC funding. I would be interested in what the definition is, but also, how are we keeping tabs on whether the increase of \$11 million, which I welcome, is keeping pace with the growth, or the expected growth, in the frail, older community that is, obviously, more frail and more elderly in South Australia than in any of the other states or territories?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told that the 8 per cent increase that we have had in HACC programs is greater than the increase we have in people coming into the service—it is keeping up with it.

Mrs REDMOND: So, we are not falling behind at this stage?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Mrs REDMOND: So, what gap is there between need and provision? I accept what you say, that we are keeping up, but we could be keeping up with a huge gap between the level of need in the community and the level of provision. Perhaps Dr Caudrey could also indicate what the anticipation is, because the ageing of our population is going to escalate quite suddenly as the baby boomers come through. Is there planning in place to increase the funding at an exponential level?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There are three consecutive years of increased funding, accumulating to, I think, a 25 per cent increase over three years, but I can let Dr Caudrey expand on that for you.

Dr CAUDREY: It does also interact with commonwealth funded programs, because the commonwealth also has large packages, like community aged care packages and extended aged care at home packages, and the target of 113 places per 1,000 people over the age of 70 is an increase, and more of the packages are community care packages.

The problem we have had in the past is that HACC is meant to be a program that is narrow—it is wide but not very deep—and that sometimes when there are no commonwealth programs available Home and Community Care gets sucked in to providing bigger packages than it is meant for. If the commonwealth does its bit with larger packages then the Home and Community Care program can do its bit, and there is adequate funding to do that with the growth that is in the system.

Mrs REDMOND: Through the minister, is the impact of that problem that because you are already servicing a person and you need to spend more money providing those services, does that mean that you cannot actually keep up the provision of the 113 per 1,000, or whatever the figure was?

Dr CAUDREY: That is a commonwealth figure of the number of places it is providing. With the Home and Community Care program we are providing services for 94,000 people, which will grow next year, so the increase in reach is there because the increase in funding is there.

Mrs REDMOND: I will go back to where I started because I had another question on the very first page that I was asking about, which was Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 12.8. There are two paragraphs.

The first paragraph under that second dot point talks about the total expenses forecast to increase by \$11 million, and in the next paragraph the total income from government to be received by the portfolio is forecast to increase by \$228.5 million.

I am looking for some explanation. My reading is that, if you have an increase of \$11 million in your expenses and an increase of \$228.5 million in your income, you are way ahead. I want to know whether that is a correct reading, because that is the way it sounds. I would have thought that if that is coming about because of commonwealth government payments going up, then surely the expenses would go up by the amount that the commonwealth payments are going up by.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Mr Ullianich will take that question.

Mrs REDMOND: It is my aim in life always to ask questions that the minister has to hand over.

Mr ULLIANICH: This is a fairly complex thing to respond to because, on the one hand, you are looking at expenses that could be a reference to net expenses and, as I alluded to in an earlier session, there have been changes in the manner in which funding is flowing to the agency as a result of the changed financial arrangements with the commonwealth.

Previously, the agency basically had three sources of funding to fund its expenses: direct appropriation from the state; commonwealth revenue; and some moderate fee income from its own fees and charges.

What has happened with commonwealth is that, previously, some programs that were funded through the commonwealth directly to the agency are now going to Treasury initially and then Treasury provides that to us by direct appropriation. When that happens the net expenses go up because net expenses impact on the state, relative to the previous year.

In response to that question: yes; whilst revenues are going up considerably, some of that is going directly into housing. A lot of the big dollars coming into the agency relate to housing. So,

when you are talking about the \$1.5 billion in expenditure, that \$1.5 billion is eliminating the transactions as between the DFC (the agency) and the Housing Trust.

So you would have to gross that expenditure figure up if you wanted to get the whole expenditure and compare that to the increased revenue. It is a bit complicated to explain, but it is just because we are eliminating transfers between the agency and the Housing Trust which is capitalising the expenditure, or else you would be double counting.

Mrs REDMOND: Thank you for that explanation. I have to say that it would be worth trying to put some sort of explanation in because, as I said, when consecutive paragraphs say the total expenses are going up by 11 and then the next paragraph says the total income is going up by 228 the obvious conclusion is that—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You're in the money!

Mrs REDMOND: —you're in the money. If that is not the case, I think it would be worth explaining that in the next paragraph.

Mr ULLIANICH: Yes.

The CHAIR: Thank you, everyone. The time allocated for the examination of both the Minister for Families and Communities and the Minister for Ageing having expired, I declare consideration of the proposed payments completed. Thank you to the advisers and thank you, minister.

At 17:48 the committee adjourned until Tuesday 30 June 2009 at 09:00.