

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Friday 8 October 2010
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chair:

Ms C.C. Fox

Members:

Hon. M.J. Atkinson

Ms F.E. Bedford

Ms V.A. Chapman

Mr J.A.W. Gardner

Mr S.S. Marshall

Ms M.G. Thompson

The committee met at 09:00

DEPARTMENT FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES, \$1,218,540,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES,
\$157,493,000

Witness:

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

Departmental Advisers:

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

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

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

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

Ms J. Tilbrook, 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.

Ms R. Wilson, Manager, Business Planning and Development, Families SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr M. Clemow, Chief of Staff.

Ms L. McAdam, Acting Director, Community Connect, Department for Families and Communities.

The CHAIR: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Just a bit of housekeeping: 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 proposed payments to facilitate changeover of departmental advisers. I ask the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition if they could indicate whether they have agreed on a timetable for today's proceedings and, if so, provide the chair with a copy—which, I think, has already occurred.

Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure 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, 19 November 2010. This year the *Hansard* supplement, which contains all estimate committee responses, will be finalised on Friday 3 December 2010.

I propose to allow both the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements of up to 10 minutes each. There will be a flexible approach to giving the call for asking questions. Yesterday, depending on the individual, we had some 21 questions from the opposition compared to four questions from the government, but some people prefer to do three to three, so we will see how you are travelling.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIR: Indeed, member for Croydon, how you behave—but it is not just all about you, there are others in the room. A member who is not 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. I would ask you, as a matter of courtesy, no matter which side you are on, can you please make it very clear which line you are referring to, not just for me but also to the advisers who are here today.

Members unable to complete their questions during their proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the *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 committees, television coverage will be allowed for filming from both the northern and the southern galleries.

The portfolio is Family and Communities, the Minister for Families and Communities, Housing, Disability and the Ageing. The estimates of payment: Department for Families and Communities, \$1,218,540,000; Administered Items for the Department for Families and Communities, \$157,493,000. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Portfolio Statements, Volume 3, Part 10. Can I also say that it would be great if we could all be courteous and civil.

Honourable members: Hear, hear!

The CHAIR: Excellent!

An honourable member interjecting:

The CHAIR: And the members on my left, should any excitement occur—which I am sure it won't. Minister, would you care to introduce your advisers and make an opening statement.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, just very briefly; I will not take up the 10 minutes allocated for an opening statement, but I will just give a brief overview to the committee. Since coming to government, the Rann government has exercised an unprecedented commitment to South Australia's child protection system. We have had the courage to instigate independent reviews such as the Layton and Mullighan reviews, to identify both the strengths and challenges of our system and to try and ensure the problems of the past never reoccur.

This government has also made the most significant financial investment in improving child protection in South Australia. The Keeping Them Safe—In Our Care strategy provided \$190.4 million over four years to strengthen our response to the state's most vulnerable children. We have also invested \$7.5 million for two new community residential care facilities at Queenstown and Noarlunga Downs to provide accommodation for a total of 24 children in safe, discrete homes that can make them feel better about themselves.

The 2010-11 budget will provide an additional \$11.4 million to provide for appropriate placements for the growing number of children in alternative care. The additional funding will provide for more residential care places, the majority of which will be managed by the non-government sector while new and better solutions are made for long-term placements.

I recently released the draft Directions for Alternative Care in South Australia 2010-13, which builds on the work already occurring to increase placement options and stability for children and young people in care. One of the cornerstones is a new focus on other person guardianship, designed to give children greater security and continuity.

Another important measure is helping families stay together wherever it is safe to do so. In 2009-10, \$7.36 million was allocated to the Stronger Families Safer Children program, and seven non-government organisations delivered targeted, intensive family support and reunification services. In 2009-10, 325 referrals were made to the Stronger Families Safer Children program, and as a result assistance was provided to 918 children and their families.

The Department for Families and Communities has worked with other key stakeholders in delivering significant reform in youth justice in this state and is delivering a range of rehabilitation programs in the youth training centres. The government is also delivering a replacement for the Magill Youth Training Centre at Goldsborough Road Cavan at a cost of \$67.2 million, and construction is scheduled to commence in November this year.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Member for Bragg, would you care to make an opening statement?

Ms CHAPMAN: I will, Madam Chair, thank you, and indicate I will make a brief opening statement at this time. I will also be making an opening statement at the commencement of the disability division, but otherwise I will not be making any further statement.

Thank you, minister, for that contribution. I will say in opening that the concern I have is that over the eight years that I have spent in this parliament, I have observed and read of multiple reviews by this department under various ministers. They have included the Robyn Layton QC inquiry into child protection, a very substantial overhaul in relation to what was needed, and tragically we see today in this budget a number of aspects that are about to be crushed as a result of her recommendations.

We see the Maureen Pyke QC inquiry into domestic violence, including the difficulties with children in households. We have seen two extensive Ted Mullighan QC inquiries into child sexual abuse. We have had a very substantial select committee of inquiry in the Legislative Council on the operation of Families and Communities.

We have seen multiple reviews in respect of housing, the restructure of housing, in this state culminated in the Housing Affordability Act as it now is. We have seen multiple reviews, both internal and external, on the restructure of the department. That has occurred under previous ministers, and it is about to occur again under this minister. We have had the Monsignor Cappo inquiry on disability. That report is pending; the inquiry is due to report in July 2011, and a federal inquiry is happening at the same time.

We have had the, I think, \$2.5 million Sustainable Budget Commission inquiry on this matter, which has come up with a recommendation that we have another inquiry with another independent person. We are running out of people in South Australia who can even do these inquiries, so we will probably have to import them next. We have the announcement that Monsignor Cappo is to do a review on the western suburbs—this is the man who was part of the Sustainable Budget Commission report, which has been a multiple cost to the taxpayers of South Australia—and, again, to give a recommendation to the government.

It is time, after eight years, that this government starts to action some of these things; not just make promises about what it will do (announce reviews and conduct reviews at massive cost) and then come again this year with a budget recommendation, which they have told the parliament they will accept, and begin another independent review into Families and Communities. Is this situation so dysfunctional for South Australia that we have to continue to have these reviews and continue to have no real action on behalf of the government?

I appreciate the minister's contribution today saying that she has made a commitment to various projects, one of which is the Stronger Families, Safer Children project. It has been part of the recommendations and the commitment has been made. I have asked the minister in the parliament how much of that money is being allocated to the APY lands—I am still waiting for an answer on that—as clearly there are a number of children who need assistance there, and whether any other money has been allocated.

We have the staggering situation in this budget where, after all these years, we do not even have some of the figures in relation to the reporting of child abuse notifications in this state—nothing to us, nothing as a committee, nothing to the parliament, nothing to the federal authorities who regulate these matters and keep comparisons—and that is just an absurd and unsafe situation for our children.

The CHAIR: Thank you, member for Bragg. Would you like to begin with a series of questions?

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 6, page 130. Minister, have you provided a written guarantee to the City of Port Adelaide Enfield and users of The Parks Community Centre that state funding for the facility will not be cancelled as of March 2011 and that the property will not be sold?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have had direct discussions with the mayor of Port Adelaide Enfield council and it is my understanding that a letter was being prepared by the department to go to the chief executive officer of Port Adelaide Enfield council in relation to the continuation of their funding agreement.

Ms CHAPMAN: Supplementary to that, is that to cover that there will be no sale as at March 2011?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think the government has been very clear that The Parks will not be sold. In fact, let's look at the situation in relation to The Parks. I do not know the last time the member for Bragg was actually down at The Parks.

Ms CHAPMAN: About five days ago.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That was convenient.

Ms CHAPMAN: Seven days ago, actually.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And when was the time before that? Probably never.

Ms CHAPMAN: When I covered housing, minister, you might recall that that, of course, was many times with the committee that has now been abolished by your government.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Probably never.

Ms CHAPMAN: On the Housing Trust.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The fact of the matter is it is an incredibly ageing facility.

Mr MARSHALL: Neglected.

Ms CHAPMAN: Our hospital is 100 years old.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Let's be clear also: if you had been in government, it would have been gone long ago.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Indeed.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You were the ones who closed the high school down there. The heart of The Parks Centre was ripped out by you lot in 1996, so do not come in here on your high horse around all of that, because we know it would have been long gone. The fact of the matter is it is an ageing facility and the government was committed to providing the essential services the people of that area need. We were not about cutting services; we were about providing the important services those people access (housing services, child protection services, disability services) in a new customer service centre. The people of that area have made their feelings very clear. They have a very strong affection for that facility and they want it to remain.

Monsignor Cappo is now looking at the best way forward to provide those important services to the people of the western suburbs. I am sorry if the member for Bragg gets upset about having reviews into certain aspects of my department, but the fact is that we have never shied away from the fact that the issues we are dealing with are incredibly difficult, and we are actually committed to doing things better, unlike the previous government, who did not fund them and did no reform

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 6, page 130. In light of the Treasurer's advice to the committee yesterday, that savings to make up for this backflip would have to be found elsewhere, will these additional savings come from within the Department for Families and Communities, and what is the dollar amount now required?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As the Treasurer indicated, the discussion is yet to be had.

Ms CHAPMAN: Have you put in any submission?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The discussion is yet to be had.

Ms CHAPMAN: My third question again relates to Budget Paper 6, page 130. Minister, did you support the closure of the Parks as a savings measure when this was proposed in cabinet?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am a member of the cabinet, and it was a unanimous decision.

Ms CHAPMAN: What has changed since—that you might be so out of touch with the decision you made for the people who use the services at the Parks, that you decided, as minister, that it should be sold and now that it shouldn't?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am out of touch because we have responded to community concern—is that what you are saying? We have responded to the concern expressed by that community. We are not proceeding with the initiative that was in the budget. We are not proceeding with that; so, we have responded to the community concern.

Ms CHAPMAN: You may not be aware of this, but three years ago, under minister Weatherill, there were consultations at the Parks Community Centre on a number of occasions. The department convened those consultations with regard to the aspirations for the future of services at the Parks, including whether a major supermarket should be moved in there. They expressed very clearly what their position was, that is, that they wanted to retain the Parks and the services that they had. That was received by your department, so the department was clearly on notice from the community—both consumers and operators and those tenants in that facility—yet, you say that you are now hearing from the community. Where was the government, where was cabinet, where were you when cabinet received that information three years ago?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Let me be really clear. We were not about reducing the services provided by the organisations, by the departments, at the Parks. We were not going to do that at all. There were no cuts to services whatsoever. If I remember correctly, a large part of the concern in 2006 was about the retention of the swimming pool down there, and there were major concerns about the state of the pool and the cost of maintaining it. The issue that the government had was that, because of historical reasons, we have been funding local government to provide local government services. The Sustainable Budget Commission was very clear in its recommendation that local government should be taking that responsibility, that the state government should not be duplicating.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, you say that it was the decision of the government to transfer these services to local government—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No; what I said was that the government felt that local government should pick up responsibility for local government services. So, like any other council—Playford is a disadvantaged area; that council has responsibility for its pool and its sport and recreational facilities.

Ms CHAPMAN: We could go down that line, about the Marion pool being a state facility.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Marion pool is a state facility, but the Marion council was required to keep its outdoor pool open.

Ms CHAPMAN: Really?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, it was. Yes, really.

Ms CHAPMAN: What about the multimillions of dollars that the state is putting in?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No; it is not putting it into its outdoor pool.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, my question is this: having said, you claim, that there is no closure of services down there, can you explain, then, why there is a commercial kitchen down there for cooking activities which is now empty; can you explain why the soccer ovals are now not being used because they have not been maintained properly, why that group has moved out of there and the oval, apparently, is full of syringes; and can you explain why the government has consistently refused to allow the Burc College (a Turkish school in the area) to be able to occupy the empty buildings, which are now vacated there and which are actually able to be used and about which it has corresponded repeatedly with the government to try to use? This place is half empty, and you have let it run down. You say—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Because you emptied it.

Ms CHAPMAN: You say—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You emptied it in 1996.

Ms CHAPMAN: —that you have not let this run down, yet you knew for three years that the local community did not want to lose its pool and wanted to keep these services, and they are now not being used at all in some areas.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Now, services: I am talking about child protection services, housing services and disability services—all those state—

Ms CHAPMAN: That's it—no pool, no cooking lessons, nothing.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —government services—

Ms CHAPMAN: I think that you have made it absolutely clear.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —the state government was responsible for. We were putting to the Port Adelaide Enfield Council that it needed to take responsibility for recreation and sporting activities, as other councils do in South Australia. The community has spoken. It has said that it wants that facility to stay open; it wants a range of things there. We are open to working with local government. The good thing about this is that we are going to have all tiers of government around the table looking at what services that community needs and wants and what responsibility each tier of government might take in relation to that.

Ms CHAPMAN: Why did you place a \$17 million valuation on the Parks facility as the money to be recovered when the government had a second valuation indicating \$23 million, as disclosed in the Sustainable Budget Commission's leaked report?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Because we would generally err on the side of caution. Why would we inflate a figure before any planning had been done on the site and before any discussions with any potential purchasers had taken place? If we had put the high-end figure in there and that was never realised, you would be first to come in here and criticise.

Ms CHAPMAN: This leaked report also discloses that there is a question mark as to whether you are going to build a new centre to accommodate your facilities and that you may be able to accommodate them at the Port Adelaide and Woodville offices. Is that actually what is going to be happening?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: All action in relation to the Parks, in terms of any changes down there, as you well know, have been put on hold while Monsignor Cappo does his work.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, I am talking about the services that you plan to relocate completely, that is, the department services.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There will be no relocation, because Monsignor Cappo is undertaking a piece of work with all three tiers of government to assess what services are needed and wanted on that site.

Ms CHAPMAN: Given the transfer—you say rightfully—to the local government authorities of the provision of some services, the grant funding to the city of Port Adelaide and Enfield for the Parks Community Centre was cut by \$350,000 in the 2009-10 figures from the Auditor-General's Report; so, will the 2008-09 level of funding be restored?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: Will you increase it if you keep the Parks open?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are going into a consultation process about what services are needed, what local government services are needed, what federal government services are needed and who will take what responsibility. I am not going to pre-empt those discussions and that negotiation.

Ms CHAPMAN: Is Monsignor Cappo going to report to you first, and, if so, what is the time frame given to him to report to you, given that we are already a quarter of the way through the financial year, and are you then going to start discussions with the relevant parties? What is the time frame on this?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Monsignor Cappo has not been given a time frame. I am sure you have seen his comments in the media.

Ms CHAPMAN: What is your expectation as far as a report being done and your making a decision back to the Treasurer about what your options are?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Monsignor Cappo has said he believes this will take months, probably up to six months. It is a large piece of work that he is expecting to undertake, so you are best to address those questions to him. If I gave him a two-month time line, you would be coming down on me like a ton of bricks.

Ms CHAPMAN: I just want to know: are we going to bury this for this year? You have made a commitment that it is not going to be sold until this review has taken place. I want to know when we need to come back.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What we want and what we are committed to is the best outcome for the people of the western suburbs, unlike when you were in government and ripped the high school out of the Parks, which made it half empty. No apology for that.

Ms CHAPMAN: Apart from the consultation that took place three years ago with the local community which made its position very clear, has the government undertaken a business case for the closure of the Parks Community Centre?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There were a number of asset plans done across all DFC assets, but there was no business plan developed. This was a budget initiative and those things were to be worked through after the budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: This was part of an asset plan that your department prepared to present to the Sustainable Budget Commission; is that what you are talking about?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: What was the purpose of the asset plan that you are talking about?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The purpose of the asset plan was to get a clear idea of the assets the department has and what is the best use of those assets.

Ms CHAPMAN: Isn't that something you do every year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Not in such a comprehensive way.

Ms CHAPMAN: Had it been done as a result of the request by the Treasurer for each department to present to the Sustainable Budget Commission and was it presented to the Sustainable Budget Commission?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: Was there any recommendation that came from your department to the Sustainable Budget Commission that the Parks be sold?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: And you knew about it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: When?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: During the preceding weeks of preparing items to go to the Sustainable Budget Commission. What I said to the department, I was very clear—

Ms CHAPMAN: About what month, minister?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I can't tell you; I don't know off the top of my head.

Ms CHAPMAN: Before the election?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: You did not know anything from your department—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Let me just—

Ms CHAPMAN: I want to be clear about this—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No—

Ms CHAPMAN: I just want to be clear, minister, that is all. Before the election you had no idea that your department was recommending to the Sustainable Budget Commission that the Parks be put in the mix of assets to be sold.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Before the election, I did not know whether I would be re-elected and I did not know whether I would be a minister.

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, that is probably a good reason to be worried about that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Let me be really clear about what I said to the department when we knew we had to make savings and, bearing in mind, we deal, I think, at the high end of need in our community. I said to the department, 'I want you to make sure you protect our core business. We have to protect our basic fundamentals that we provide—our child protection services, our disability services—and things that are not our core business need to be considered for savings.' In my view, funding local government to provide local government services was not necessarily an unreasonable consideration.

Ms CHAPMAN: So you knew that the Parks was being recommended to be sold.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: In fact, you supported it in the cabinet.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Every cabinet minister supported it.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, I will give you two more questions on this line and then we will have a question over here.

Ms CHAPMAN: Sure, I am happy to start a new matter. Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.19, Sub-program 2.1 on family support and child safety. As I mentioned, none of the performance indicators for child abuse are available. They are listed as not available.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, what is not available?

Ms CHAPMAN: Child abuse indicators.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You know why.

Ms CHAPMAN: The computer changeover.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: My question is: did you provide data to Treasury or the Treasurer concerning child abuse notifications prior to receiving your budget for 2010-11, or did you simply go hat in hand and ask them to make a decision of funding without any data?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The really pleasing thing, I think, in relation to this budget is that there has been an injection of an additional \$137 million over four years for child protection. We are constantly meeting with Treasury about the pressures the department faces with increased numbers of child protection notifications. We are not unique around Australia in that. I think the increase has been something like 11 per cent, so we are meeting with Treasury on a regular basis in relation to the issues around the Families SA budget and child protection notifications.

Ms CHAPMAN: My question was: it may have been an increase in the preceding five years, but you had no data, apparently, for the 2010 year so, when you went to the Treasurer, did you just say, 'Give me the same as last year on the basis that I can't tell you any information,' or did you just guess? What did you tell him?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We used projected figures.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, I did say—

Ms CHAPMAN: If I can just complete this part of the question.

The CHAIR: You have actually had two extra questions since I said you could have two extra questions.

Ms CHAPMAN: I was going to finish this topic.

The CHAIR: You can come back to this topic, of course. The member for Croydon.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10, paragraph 15. Can the minister explain how the department is responding to the increased need for additional placements for children and young people under your guardianship?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have made a commitment to ensure that children and young people requiring alternative care placements are matched appropriately to a diverse range of placement options that best suit their needs with skilled, trained and supported carers.

We have demonstrated our commitment to support family-based carers with an announcement of \$7.3 million over four years for our non-government agencies to recruit, train and support carers. Of the \$7.3 million, \$1.7 million was allocated in 2009-10 to fund two additional non-government agencies—Lutheran Community Care and Key Assets. Placement developments in specialist care include:

- Key Assets, a therapeutic foster care program, which currently has nine registered foster carer households;
- an increase in therapeutic foster care placements provided by Anglicare's Fresh Start program; and
- an increase in packages being provided under the specialised placement and support program for children and young people with high and complex needs.

Furthermore, the 2010-11 state budget provides \$137.7 million, as I said, over four years for Families SA to care for children under my guardianship or custody, and the growth in numbers. This expenditure will support children in care across the full range of alternative care placements, that is, children in family-based care as well as children in therapeutic-based interventions and non-family based care. The initiatives include:

- the development of a family-based care framework and the integrated therapeutic support services framework for the delivery of placement and support services;
- the development of a care planning policy; and
- the development of the draft directions for alternative care in South Australia.

The directions will build on the work already occurring to increase family-based care placement options for children and young people in care. Key initiatives include:

- expanding the Relative and Kinship Care Program to maintain as many children and young people with familiar people in familiar surroundings, as long as it is safe to do so;
- streamlining processes on the basis that the foundation to stable and appropriate placements is clear;
- strengthening approaches for the recruitment, assessment, approval, training and support of foster carers and relative and kinship carers; and
- implementing an other person guardian program to provide for the transfer of guardianship from the parents, or the minister, to caregivers of the child so that the caregiver has all the rights and responsibilities of a parent when this is assessed as an appropriate action to take.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have a question on that matter, at Budget Paper 6, page 124. Did you consult with the Guardian for Children and Young People before you made the decision to amalgamate her office with other offices, and if not, why not?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That particular budget saving is not in any way about reducing the authority of the officers involved in that. It is about a saving in relation to the support and administration.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, you did not consult with her?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: Are you aware that she does not agree with your assessment of that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have advised the guardian and the chair of the Council for the Care of Children—all of those involved in this—that they will be consulted around the model that will be implemented before any action is taken.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, if they say it is necessary to be independent—as, of course, arose out of the Layton Inquiry and the importance of her independence. In fact, legislation now protects her reports on victims of child sexual abuse being tabled to the parliament without interference by a minister—she has that special privilege.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: She does.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, if she says it is important that she be independent, both in premises and with support staff—not sharing secretaries, etc.—would you heed that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are not challenging or impinging on the independence of anyone, particularly the guardian. We think that if we can make some sensible administrative support savings we should look very seriously at doing that.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, that is open to negotiation? You could actually make a decision then to keep them separate. Is that what you are saying? Although this has been published in the budget, you are going to talk about it with them and this could change, like the Parks?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We will be speaking with the people involved about the appropriate model that will be introduced. We think it is an opportunity to make sensible administrative savings, not savings that will in any way impact on their independence and their statutory rights.

Ms CHAPMAN: But, having outlined that program to them, what your expectation is and what you think the understanding—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We will just wait and see.

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, my question is this though, minister: whilst you are going to give them an opportunity to hear your side as to where you think savings can be made and the benefits that could arise from this amalgamation, if they say that is not the case, are you prepared to change that and not proceed with this budget measure?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They may well say this is a really good idea.

Ms CHAPMAN: If they don't.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, that is very hypothetical.

Ms CHAPMAN: A bit like the Parks people. That was not hypothetical: that was real. They were not consulted post your announcement, and they made it very clear.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: How many budget initiatives did your government consult on?

Ms CHAPMAN: I have not been in government.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, there you go. Exactly; thank you.

The CHAIR: I think we are now moving into the realms of the—

Ms CHAPMAN: We will wait for backflip number two.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, excuse me. I think we are now moving into the realm of the unknown unknowns.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are.

Ms CHAPMAN: We certainly do with this minister; she does not know anything. All right, we will come back to the Ombudsman. Have you prepared the necessary legislative amendments to allow the amalgamation of the offices under this program, and has the cost involved with the legislative change been factored into those cost savings?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There has been no decision made on the model that will be implemented, and I imagine that it is highly unlikely that any legislative change will be required.

Ms CHAPMAN: We'll see about that but—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, we will see about that.

Ms CHAPMAN: —if there is a change of offices, surely you have factored into it the fact that you are going to close some offices and put them all together, or whatever, because there have been budget savings identified and there has been, obviously, some cost to do that. I am simply asking what is the cost to do it and has that been factored in?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This measure will not begin until the next financial year. My understanding is that all of those issues have been factored into this saving.

Ms CHAPMAN: I return to the child protection indicators, that is, the information that is available and which you indicated has been presented on a projection basis to the Treasurer because you did not have the figures. Minister, you were able to provide the number of child abuse reports made to the child abuse hotline when I requested that information in a question on notice earlier this year. Why was that information not made available to the Treasurer and, indeed, published in the report?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is simply the number of calls that come in and it is—

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, it is something, isn't it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, but it is not necessarily indicative of the number of children who come into care. Sometimes there are several calls in relation to the same child. I think we have fairly solid data and I think Treasury accepts the data that we have. In fact, the rate of children in care has generally increased by around 11 per cent per annum.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, can I ask if we are still on page 124, Volume 6?

Ms CHAPMAN: No, we are back to the questions I indicated previously which are in Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, pages 10.19 and 10.20.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The issue around the changing of the computer system, just to be clear, has prevented us giving notifications by classification.

Ms CHAPMAN: Correct.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We still know the number of children we have in care and we know the number of children who have come into care.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, that is all in the report and I understand that. I am only asking about the notifications. That is the only thing that you have not disclosed in the budget.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, but we have not been able to give you that in classifications. However, as far as funding is concerned, we are able to tell Treasury the number of children we have in care and the number of children who have come into care.

Ms CHAPMAN: But, minister, hundreds of millions of dollars have been allocated to child protection notification issues and investigations and assessment about whether they are confirmed and then acting on them. So, I am talking about—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And that work is happening.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, and my understanding from your earlier question is that you had worked on the basis of a projection, there had been an 11 per cent increase over previous years and so you presented that to the Treasurer. We are now in October 2010 and I am not sure how long these computer systems are going to take for you to add it up or take it out of them or transfer, but can you tell me when those figures will be available?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told we are about 6 to 8 weeks away.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, and when that is available will you publish that information to the parliament?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We always do, I think.

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, usually they are in the budget papers, minister—and they're not.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, but we do them in the annual report as well.

Ms CHAPMAN: They are not in the annual report, they are not in the Auditor-General's Report, because you have not produced them yet. So I am simply asking, when they are available in six weeks or so, will you undertake to present that information to the parliament?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As I understand it, that is always in the annual report when we present it to the parliament, and we will have that for the annual report.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. Do you know how many abuse notifications were screened in tier 2 and 3 in the 2009-10 year and how many of those were investigated?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is what we cannot tell you.

Ms CHAPMAN: It is just that, you see, in the report you are recommending in your actual budget paper, page 10.19, you actually propose a target for 2010-11 of some 2,350.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is children in care.

Ms CHAPMAN: No, that is children expected to be confirmed on a child abuse notification.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Oh, okay. That prediction is based on estimations.

Ms CHAPMAN: All on estimations, all right.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We do not know what is going to happen in the future, do we? They are all estimations, aren't they?

Ms CHAPMAN: Okay, but you see, the last actuals were about 5,000-plus. There is actually a significant reduction. If you look at page 10.19, in the 2008-09 year it was over 5,000.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, in 2010-11 there are 2,350 child protection notifications confirmed. In 2009-10, 2,300 was the target. In 2008-09 it was 2,419. Where do you get 5,000 from?

Ms CHAPMAN: I beg your pardon. We were doing an amalgamation of those.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Where do you get 5,000 from?

Ms CHAPMAN: No, I appreciate that, there is a difference there.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: A big difference.

Ms CHAPMAN: You are able to predict 2,350?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There are targets in budget papers and actuals.

Ms CHAPMAN: Actuals, absolutely right.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And actual in 2008-09 was 2,419; the target for 2009-10 was 2,300. We cannot give you that figure yet; that will be available in 6 to 8 weeks' time and our target for 2010-11 is 2,350. Our target is less than 2008-09 because we are hoping very much that the early intervention programs that we have put in place, the Stronger Families Safer Children program is actually going to have an impact on those things.

Ms CHAPMAN: Okay. Just on that measure, do you have an answer yet as to whether any of that money has gone to the APY lands?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think I said to you in the parliament that there is an Aboriginal-specific program and there is a service provision that runs out of Coober Pedy but it is not exclusively APY lands. But it is an Aboriginal-specific program.

Ms CHAPMAN: So none of the money that has been mentioned today has actually been allocated to the APY lands; they have their own separate program?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, there is a non-government, Aboriginal service provider that is funded to provide those services to them.

Ms CHAPMAN: How much?

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

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. What is the budget for the motel type emergency accommodation for children in 2010-11, and what was spent in 2009-10?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If you are talking about interim emergency accommodation, I think, off the top of my head, that was about \$22 million. This form of accommodation, I have to say, is used as a last resort for children. As of June this year there were 48 children in interim emergency accommodation.

Ms CHAPMAN: So that means hotels?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, I do apologise for interrupting you once again, but are you still on page—

Ms CHAPMAN: 10.20.

The CHAIR: When you are moving, could you just let us know?

Ms CHAPMAN: Sure. I indicated earlier it is 10.19 and 10.20, which relates to children in protection.

The CHAIR: Indeed; but when you move, can you just let us know?

Ms CHAPMAN: Sure.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am just finding one particular piece of information so that I can give you the specific numbers on it.

Ms CHAPMAN: Breakdown of the 48.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have been very keen, since I have been minister, to ensure that children are not placed in motels, because I think the trauma that a child goes through, having been removed from their family, is significant, and to be in motel accommodation for any significant period of time is not in the best interests of that child. Motel accommodation is used in only the most urgent of situations where there are no other options. As of 30 June 2010, there were no children in motels.

Ms CHAPMAN: Where were the 48?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The 48 were in serviced apartments or bed and breakfast accommodation.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is a motel, isn't it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, they were not in motels.

Mr MARSHALL: Serviced apartments.

Ms CHAPMAN: A serviced apartment.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: Can I clarify: they were not in government facilities?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, they were not.

Ms CHAPMAN: They were in private serviced apartments or bed and breakfasts.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, that is right.

Ms CHAPMAN: Of which a departmental officer is there on three shifts a day or whatever to actually care for them.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And many of these were children with quite complex needs or were part of sibling groups who needed to be accommodated together.

Ms CHAPMAN: Sure. I understand that, minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There are circumstances where these things happen in an emergency and so people need to be accommodated as such.

Ms CHAPMAN: How much was spent?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Let me just finish telling you the story.

Ms CHAPMAN: It is a sad story, minister, and ministers before you have told me the sad story. I just want to know how much was spent.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You do not want the full picture?

Ms CHAPMAN: It is a pretty simple question. If you would like to take it on notice, I would be happy for you to.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I do not need to take it on notice. It was \$22.9 million last year.

Ms CHAPMAN: And the budget for this year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: \$27.5 million.

Ms CHAPMAN: So whatever you are doing—well, let's hope it does work. Can I ask you this: why did you set your 2010-11 target for the number of children in alternative care placed with relatives or kin at 40 per cent, given that your department's document, 'Directions for alternative care in South Australia', sets the target at 50 per cent?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Good question. We clearly want children, where possible, to be placed with kin when it is safe to do so, and that is what we are aiming to do with our new directions. The 50 per cent figure is not for next year.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is some time in the future?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is what we are aiming for by 2013.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 37, Existing Projects, which is the Cavan Youth Training Centre. Was any design documentation provided to your department following the cancellation of the prisons PPP, which included, as you might recall, the youth training centre, and did you require companies involved with the selective tender process for the preconstruction phase of this project to disclose if they had previously been involved with any element of the prisons PPP?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We directly sought the architects for this new facility out at Cavan because I understand that, in the process that had been gone through, they were standouts, and they had been involved in building the new facility in Canberra.

Ms CHAPMAN: Were Perumal Pedavoli Architects involved in the prisons PPP?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: When you say that they were 'standout', was that on the basis that they had done some work for you on the prisons PPP project?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told that it was based on the work that they had presented.

Ms CHAPMAN: For the previous project.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: How much were they paid for that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That was managed by the Treasurer, so I do not have the answer for that.

Ms CHAPMAN: You have paid them, I think, \$7 million, or something like that, for this project, to design this new facility, and you do not know how much the Treasurer has already paid for their previous designs?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is correct. It was a different facility.

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that. So, they would have been paid by Treasury for the work they did for the PPP?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I do not know. I cannot answer that. I cannot tell you whether they were or they weren't. The PPP was managed by Treasury.

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that, but your department has decided that it should be directly appointed without any further tender to do the job for the Cavan facility based on—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, I cannot hear—

Ms CHAPMAN: Certainly. Your department is now in charge of the Cavan facility, which is separate.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: As a 'standout' on the work they had done on the prisons PPP, you decided that you would directly appoint Perumal Pedavoli Architects without any tender, and you haven't got a clue how much money they have already been paid for whatever work they have done before, which was so 'standout'. Is that right? They might have done beautiful work, minister, but you have no idea how much they were paid for it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Their appointment was done in consultation, I am advised, with the Department of Treasury and crown law.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, you ascertained from the crown law office whether it was an acceptable—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: An appropriate process.

Ms CHAPMAN: —an appropriate process to give a direct tender worth multi-million dollars to design a new prison without going out to tender?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is correct. I am advised that that is what happened.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.17, which is the public and affordable housing and supply, and I quote:

...provision and management of transitional accommodation to assist Aboriginal people and families who are homeless.

Have you negotiated with the federal and the northern—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, have you moved to housing?

Ms CHAPMAN: No, this is Families and Communities. This is the Yuendumu provision.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry?

Ms CHAPMAN: This is the provision for housing, for transitional accommodation, at 10.17.

The CHAIR: I am just letting you know, member for Bragg, that this will probably be your last question on this line and then we will move to housing.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, I understand; thank you.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am sorry, that is housing.

Ms CHAPMAN: It is in housing. So, all of the provision that you have for the Yuendumu people will come out of housing and not other Families and Communities services?

The CHAIR: Perhaps we could officially move on to housing.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am happy to do that, but there are other Families and Communities services, not just housing, being provided.

The CHAIR: So, the same lines are open, minister. Did you want to give your advisers an opportunity to change over?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, they will need to change. Are we going to housing now?

Ms CHAPMAN: If the minister indicates, Madam Chair, that she has not provided any other Families and Communities services for which she will be seeking reimbursement from the Northern Territory and Australian governments, other than on housing, we will move onto housing.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The cost of accommodating the Yuendumu people is being worked out across government, and whether there would be any potential recompense from another level of government, I think, is probably highly unlikely; but that is yet to be worked through. Our priority since they arrived here has always been to make sure that they were settled and that they were safe.

Ms CHAPMAN: Sure. I appreciate that, minister, but is no request even going to be made to the Northern Territory government—or the Australian government—to meet the costs of support with respect to transport back, accommodation while they are here, food and services which they need, including medical services, and the like? We have agreements with other states in relation to the provision of services, and there is usually some recompense, but if you are telling me that you are going to absorb this, my question then is: is this cost simply going to be in this category, which identifies the provision of services for homeless Aboriginal people, in which case it might wipe out your budget for the year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No; this is being met as a whole of government exercise.

Ms CHAPMAN: Do you mean that other departments might have to pay?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is all yet to be determined.

Ms CHAPMAN: Has any other department provided any services, except the department of education?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Health and the police department.

Ms CHAPMAN: The police involvement relates to security for these families, does it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The police have been doing a range of things.

Ms CHAPMAN: Are you aware whether any of those departments have made any request for funding reimbursement from the Northern Territory or from the Australian government?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: Has any estimate of costs been done as to—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: None of that has been negotiated as yet.

Ms CHAPMAN: I appreciate the importance of providing these services for families in need, given the circumstances in which they fled their Yuendumu settlement and then Alice Springs. Is there any estimated cost so far of providing services to these families?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I understand that the departments are still doing the calculation in relation to that.

Ms CHAPMAN: Do I assume that your instruction is: do whatever is necessary to protect them and we will worry about the money later?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The member for Bragg can imagine that I had considerable concern when I was told that 101 remote Indigenous people were about to arrive in Adelaide, and we were not sure where they were going to stay. Initial indications were that they were heading to Murray Bridge. We needed to have accommodation available for them and we needed to make sure that the children were safe. We had, I think, been given some heads-up that some people on the bus may need some medical treatment.

The first priority was to make sure that they were accommodated as best we could accommodate them. Their arrival posed some challenges, because their destination changed—a bus stopped off at Elizabeth while another one headed into the city and then turned around and went back north. We were able to negotiate with Anglicare to open up its facility, and it was able to accommodate them there for, I think, just a little over a week.

They are now accommodated at Fort Largs, and I understand that they are very appreciative of their accommodation there. I have had numerous conversations with ministers from the Northern Territory about what is happening in relation to helping these people return home. They have indicated very clearly that they want to go home, but they want to go home and know that they are safe and that the women and children are safe. This week we have had people from the Northern Territory negotiating with the community down here. They have been undertaking negotiations at Yuendumu. So, working through all of those processes, our overall aim is to have them returned home safely.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have read a number of press releases so far on this issue from both you and the Premier. Have you ascertained yet whether a private person, an NGO, or a Northern Territory or Australian government agency paid for their transport to South Australia?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, everybody is pointing at someone else.

Ms CHAPMAN: Have you asked?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, we have asked.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, you have had 22 questions conservatively. I might ask if the people on my side have a question about housing.

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, Director, Business Affairs, Department for Families and Communities.

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

Mr J. Comley, Chief Finance Officer and General Manager Corporate Services, HomeStart Finance, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr D. Huxley, Director, Urban Strategy & Asset Invest, Housing SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Ms R. Hulm, Manager, Financial Services, Housing SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr M. Clemow, Chief of Staff.

Mr M. Hicks, Housing Adviser.

The CHAIR: Do you wish to make a brief statement before we move to the member for Reynell?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The past year has been an exciting time for housing in South Australia as we progress towards meeting the targets set within the National Affordable Housing Agreement and associated national partnership agreements. In fact, we have undertaken the largest construction program in two decades. By the end of the financial year, 204 of the 1,360 new dwellings under the social housing initiative of the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan were completed, exceeding the target of 173 dwellings. A further 816 dwellings were under construction at that time.

By 30 June, we had also fully expended the commonwealth government's funding of \$30 million through the Nation Building Stimulus Plan Repairs and Maintenance Program. The projects are more than 95 per cent complete, with more than 500 social housing dwellings being upgraded. A figure of \$15 million has also been committed from the National Partnership Agreement on Social Housing for 14 leveraged affordable rental housing projects, delivering 100 housing outcomes for community housing organisations. By 30 June, we had already completed 22 houses under this program and the remaining 78 were either contracted or under construction.

All of these programs are aimed at giving South Australians the best chance to have safe, secure housing. The Rann government initiated a policy requiring that every new housing development under state control includes 15 per cent affordable housing and almost 2,000 homes are already committed to be available to those low to middle income earners. The policy allows young families to be able to afford to buy where they want, close to their families, close to their lives and not be consigned to certain areas based on price. It is a great initiative.

I have already had the pleasure of visiting properties at Northgate, and I look forward to more affordable housing in government developments to ensure everyone has a chance to live their dream. The state government is also committed to indigenous housing and, under the National Partnership Agreement, we built 33 houses in Amata, Mimili and Fregon during the financial year. We have also refurbished a further 61 dwellings in remote locations through the agreement.

Our commitment to improving our responses to reducing homelessness also continued throughout the year. Stage 1 of the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness became operational on 1 July 2010. This included 14 stand-alone state-wide services and 23 regionalised services run by homelessness-preferred support providers. For Housing SA tenants, social workers have also been employed to ensure people have sustainable tenancies and access to support to make sure they do not fail.

In 2010-11 a new South Australian housing strategy will be developed which will outline the vision and directions to improve housing affordability and housing provision over the next 30 years. It will be aligned with South Australia's Strategic Plan and the 30-year Plan for Greater Adelaide. Consultation will be undertaken with the public, other agencies, local government, the not-for-profit sector and the housing industry, seeking input into the directions of a new housing strategy.

Ms THOMPSON: My question refers to Budget Paper 6, page 130. Will the minister outline what changes have been made in the way public and community housing rents are calculated within the state's social housing system?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Currently, the public, Aboriginal and community housing sectors calculate rents in different ways and some types of income are treated differently, resulting in inequities for social housing tenants. Changes will be introduced that will provide greater equity and parity across the social housing sector. The changes will ensure the state can continue to meet current and future housing needs and will ensure housing remains affordable for low income households that most need assistance.

The state government is ensuring that social housing tenants pay no more than 25 per cent of their income in rent. We are providing a long period of notice so individuals and families can plan for the changes. As a result of these changes, no tenant's rent will increase by more than \$10 per week every six months. Several changes will be implemented, as follows:

- the one-off increase provided to single pensioners in September 2009 will be assessed for rent after March 2011 for all social housing tenants;

- cottage flat rents will be adjusted after September 2011; and
- changes to the assessment of the FTB and non-dependent children's income will occur after September 2011 for public housing tenants and from the start of 2012 for community housing tenants.

Currently, public and community housing tenants get the same service but end up with different after-housing income because of rent assistance. From the beginning of 2012, community housing rents will be set so that tenants end up with equal after-housing income, regardless of which system they are in. The vast majority of this extra money will go to community housing providers for maintenance and management. These changes will create a more sensible system as we move towards a shared waiting list for all housing.

The government's commitment remains unchanged that tenants will pay no more than 25 per cent of their gross household income in rent as a result of these changes. It is important to note that rent increases as a result of these changes will be implemented slowly and, as I said, at a maximum of \$10 per week or \$5 for Aboriginal rental program tenants in any six month period.

This government remains committed to many affordable housing options such as NRAS, the Affordable Homes Program, the Affordable Housing Innovations Fund and HomeStart Finance. This is in addition to the biggest boost in social housing construction, that is currently taking place, as I said, through the Nation Building-Economic Stimulus Plan.

Ms CHAPMAN: Budget Paper 6, page 130—the pensioner rate rent increases, minister. Specifically on 20 May 2009, the Premier put out a press release in which he promised to quarantine the pension increase. Indeed, in his press release he says he will write to the prime minister, Kevin Rudd:

...promising to quarantine the Federal Government's pension increases from State housing rents.

My question is: did you advise the prime minister the government would be breaking its promise to quarantine these one-off pension increases, announced in 2009, prior to including this in the budget?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This was a difficult decision for the government to make. I think we were facing a range of very difficult options in relation to meeting our savings targets and being able to ensure that we continue to provide the important services that we do provide. This was one of those particularly difficult decisions.

This will not come into play until, I think I said, March next year. It clearly is not popular with some people, but it is a measure that we felt we needed to do. I think, over a period of three years, it is \$9 million a year that had been forgone in rent. So, it is \$27 million over three years that we felt we could no longer sustain.

Ms CHAPMAN: Did you advise the prime minister?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I didn't, no.

Ms CHAPMAN: Did you advise minister Plibersek?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I didn't.

Ms CHAPMAN: Has she contacted you about this issue?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, minister Plibersek has not.

Ms CHAPMAN: Has anyone in the federal government contacted you about this issue?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: From the best of my recollection, not. If that is not correct, I will let you know.

Ms CHAPMAN: Did you recommend this in cabinet?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There were a suite of things that went up for the budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: Did you recommend it?

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: One thing is for sure, you will never be back there.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was a proposal considered by the Sustainable Budget Commission.

Ms CHAPMAN: Did you put it to cabinet?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I understand the commission recommended that and it is in the report.

The CHAIR: Ladies, excuse me. Member for Bragg, am I or am I not right in thinking that no member of any cabinet, no matter the colour of their ideology, comments on what occurs in cabinet? They are in confidence. The minister can only speak for herself and here she cannot speak for everyone in cabinet—she just can't.

Ms CHAPMAN: I didn't ask that question; perhaps you misunderstood it. I actually asked whether the minister recommended it to cabinet.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Do you really expect an answer?

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, I do. She gave it on the other. She said she was unanimous and went on to talk about it. So, she was happy to say that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: A cabinet has endorsed these budget provisions.

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that, but did you put it to them, minister?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was a proposal put to the Sustainable Budget Commission by the department.

Ms CHAPMAN: Correct, and when you went to cabinet you supported it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am not telling you what I said in cabinet.

Ms CHAPMAN: You did half an hour ago. Let me put this to you, minister. In the event that the pensioners of South Australia—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I endorse it.

The CHAIR: Ladies, I can't hear a thing.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Excuse me, order! Now, I can't hear a thing because all I can hear is squeaking. Can we return to some sort of orderly debate where the member for Bragg asks a clear question and pauses and allows the minister time in which to answer it? Thank you very much.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Indeed. I endorse the budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Chair, she won't even let me ask the question. I mean, let's get on with this. Let me ask the question, minister, and you can answer it—that is what the chair has just said. Now, in the event that the aged pensioners of South Australia rally, protest and object to this \$27 million impost on them—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is another hypothetical.

Ms CHAPMAN: —just like the Parks have, as may be the recommendation of others who are about to have your amalgamation of advisers, etc., will you also on this matter review this budget decision, this budget announcement, and agree to consult with them?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: This is not negotiable?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have increased a range of concessions for older people. We know that this is not a popular move for the single pensioners that this impacted on. However, again, no-one pays more than 25 per cent of their income in rent. They get that and also a range of other concessions that have all been increased as from 1 July this year.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: Will the pensioners—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will tell you what the Western Australian Liberal government is doing: they are doing exactly what we are doing—exactly.

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Chair, we have an aside throwaway from an interrupting member of the cabinet having a debate with the question—

The CHAIR: Would you like to make a point of order?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Exactly what we are doing. That is what they are doing.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: May I move then to Budget Paper 6, page—

The CHAIR: I would be interested in your point of order should you wish to make one.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think he is finished—completely. That is an understatement in real terms! Will the pensioners who are captured by this revenue-raising measure be paying more per year—and I think you have indicated a cap of \$10 per six months, which is up to \$20 a year—than they will receive in concessions announced by the budget?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I would have to do a quick calculation. It depends on the—

Ms CHAPMAN: We have a calculator here.

The CHAIR: The member for Norwood has an enormous calculator.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It depends on the usage of the services, I guess.

Ms CHAPMAN: You and I could read it without glasses. The member of the committee is happy to give you a calculator.

The CHAIR: It's huge! His calculator.

Mr MARSHALL: The calculator, thank you for that point of clarification.

The CHAIR: I am glad we got that on the *Hansard!*

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It depends on their concessions. To start with, people in Trust homes do not pay council rates. I do not think—

Ms CHAPMAN: But let's assume, can I put this—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Hang on a minute.

Ms CHAPMAN: —to you, minister, because I do not want you to be answering a hypothetical. Assume for the moment that your pensioner, who is about to have up to \$20 a year—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They do not pay sewerage; they do not pay connection.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can I ask the question, Madam Chair?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They do not pay council rates. Their energy concession has gone up.

Ms CHAPMAN: Let's assume for the moment they get all the concessions—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thirty dollars in one hit.

Ms CHAPMAN: The council and electricity—not water, because they get nothing now.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That's not true.

Ms CHAPMAN: What else do they get?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That's not true.

Ms CHAPMAN: Let's assume this pensioner of yours who could—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes. They do not get a council concession, because they do not pay council rates. However, they got an increase of \$30 in one hit on their energy—

Ms CHAPMAN: We just resolved that—

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, could we give the minister a chance to answer the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thirty dollars in a year—

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thirty dollars—

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thirty dollars in energy concession—

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order! Minister, I am on my feet.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry?

The CHAIR: I am on my feet.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIR: I am on my feet, which means that no-one, including the member for Croydon, is to be talking. It is my time. Now, I think that the minister should be given a chance to answer this question. Can I also say that when one is being asked a question there is no point in having a range of subclauses in the question. One direct question at a time will be just fine. Let us listen very carefully to the answer from the minister. Thank you. By the way, it is embarrassing that I have to stand up. If it was a group of blokes and a wall of testosterone, I would understand, but it is not!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The energy concessions increased to a maximum of \$150 per annum from 1 July this year. From memory, that is a \$30 increase. I will correct that if I am wrong. It is a \$30 increase, and it will increase to a maximum of \$165 by 1 July 2012—so that is another \$15 on top of that. That is \$45 a year for that one, come July 2012. From 1 July new provisions extended eligibility for these concessions to include commonwealth low income and health care holders as well. However, if we are just talking about people in Trust houses, the water concession is 20 per cent of the total annual water bill within prescribed minima and maxima.

So, for tenants, that has increased the minimum by 5 per cent to \$58 in 2010-11 and will increase by a further 5 per cent each year to 2012-13. The maximum level of water remission increased to \$168 in 2010-11 and will also increase by 5 per cent per year until 2012-13. They do not pay sewerage, the emergency services levy or council rates, so I would expect that the concessions available could well exceed the increase in their rent in any given year, being that including the pension rise is going to create a \$7.50 increase in their rent.

Ms CHAPMAN: Have you done the calculations, minister, on what the estimated increase in their water and electricity bills will be in those time periods which, on the announcements by your government to date, will wipe out those concessions?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: People know across the state that water is expensive. I have to say that there has been an enormous drop in water consumption by trust tenants since we introduced the requirement that people pay for their water. So, on top of their pension concessions, those who are on shared meters get an additional remission of 30 per cent off their water.

Ms CHAPMAN: How many pensioners will be charged extra rent to raise the \$27 million over three years?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will get that number to you. I have it and I think I know it, but I will not just throw that number out at you without double-checking.

Ms CHAPMAN: Letters have gone out to all Housing Trust tenants, aged pensioners and otherwise. My question still refers to Budget Paper 6, page 124. Why have the revenue increases for the Housing Trust or savings initiatives as they have been described on page 124 and announced by the minister on 27 September not been included in the 2010-11 budget, considering similar revenue-raising measures were included in the budget?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, just to be clear, were you asking me whether the other measures were included in the budget?

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that you have said that since.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Are you asking me are they included in the budget papers? Is that what you are asking me?

Ms CHAPMAN: Why were those revenue increases, though, not described in the budget? We have only got 'public housing rent assessments for pensioners—adjustment.'

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Because they were not part of the budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, you have referred to it again in your opening statement about all these others.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have referred to it in answer to a question.

Ms CHAPMAN: Sorry, in answer to a question; the single pensioner change, the adult children, the cottage income, the community housing—all extra provision for that. Why wasn't that issue referred to as a savings initiatives and not just the aged pensioner rent increase?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Because those decisions had not been made when the budget had been brought down.

Ms CHAPMAN: I see, so they are not in here?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, not in the budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: I see. How much is it going to cost?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry?

Ms CHAPMAN: How much is the benefit or, you know, the savings that you are going to have from all of these other things?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will take that on notice.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think there are two issues: the first is why they are not in the budget papers. You say this is some decision that has been made subsequent to the budget coming down.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is right.

Ms CHAPMAN: And what is the value of that savings initiative going to be? They are the two things I would like, minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is not a savings initiative; it is rent revenue raising. I will get you that detail on notice.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. Was this something that was recommended by you and your department for the Treasurer to announce, that all these other measures were going to be imposed, or did the Treasurer come to you and say, 'Where else can we get money from?'

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No; these are initiatives that were put to cabinet.

Ms CHAPMAN: In the last three weeks?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: These were issues that were taken to cabinet post budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: I see. Were they a recommendation of the Sustainable Budget Commission?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Not from my recollection.

Ms CHAPMAN: Whose idea was it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: These were proposals. As with all proposals, they are worked through the department, they come to the minister, the minister either progresses them through cabinet or they do not, and we progressed this through cabinet.

Ms CHAPMAN: Is there any reason you did not put this through cabinet before the budget was announced?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Because these were not about providing budget savings; this is about ensuring the appropriate revenue for Housing SA to ensure its sustainability.

Ms CHAPMAN: Isn't that what the budget is about, minister? That is, you work out what the initiatives are?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We do not just do things at budget time; we do things outside of budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: Let me ask you this: even if it had not been a recommendation of the Sustainable Budget Commission, has your department ever put this issue to the Sustainable Budget Commission?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, not that I am advised.

Ms CHAPMAN: Have you ever put it to cabinet before and it has been knocked back?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding is that some of this had in fact been endorsed several years ago and not implemented.

Ms CHAPMAN: And not ever put to cabinet?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No; endorsed by cabinet but not implemented.

Ms CHAPMAN: I see. Several years ago?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: So you knew about this as an approved cabinet option before the election and before this budget?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was not something that was considered before the election.

Ms CHAPMAN: 'Several years ago', I think you said.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, it was, but it was never implemented.

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that, but you have a cabinet-approved change of the rules several years before and it was not implemented.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, it was not; and I took it to cabinet and it is now being implemented. It was better than looking at the option of forcibly moving people out of their houses into old walk-up flats and selling the houses off. It is a much better proposal than the sorts of proposals you were putting up at the election.

Ms CHAPMAN: It could be seen, minister, that it is much better than telling the public before the election or before the budget, and not even telling them with the budget.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am told they were announced as part of the budget process in 2006.

Ms CHAPMAN: When did you tell the Treasurer?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding is it was part of the budget process in 2006.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.12, and ask if you could advise the committee on outcomes achieved as a result of the implementation of the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, particularly in regard to the provision of housing and employment for the people of the APY lands?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As a South Australian government with an unprecedented commitment to social inclusion, we are continually focusing on closing the gap of disadvantage for Aboriginal people in communities across the state. The National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing was agreed by the Council of Australian Governments in November 2008. The agreement will provide \$291.5 million over 10 years to South Australia, which is a massive investment in some of our state's most vulnerable and isolated people.

South Australia has made excellent progress towards the implementation of commitments made under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing. During 2009-10, \$97.9 million in funding was released by the commonwealth to support the delivery of the range of commitments under the agreement.

As at 30 June 2010, 33 new houses have been constructed in communities on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara lands. As well as at the 33 new houses built in remote communities, 61 existing houses were refurbished in communities on the APY lands, in the Far North and on the West Coast. When combined with houses built under the Indigenous Community Housing Program, more than 100 housing outcomes have been delivered for Indigenous people in remote areas.

During 2009-10, I entered into a memorandum of understanding with the APY Executive, providing a long-term commitment to housing on the lands, with a Housing SA regional office established in Umuwa, which is now the central point of service delivery for housing on the lands.

The regional office currently has four full-time staff. We intend to recruit an additional two Anangu positions to this office during the 2010-11 financial year. The regional office has implemented a comprehensive responsive and programmed maintenance program for all existing houses across the APY lands to ensure that residents receive a comparable quality of service to metropolitan public housing tenants.

As new housing construction is completed, the Umuwa office will allocate properties to families in greatest need, with criteria focusing on the safety of children and overcrowding. Households will be signed onto a new tenancy agreement which establishes a public housing standard of tenancy rights and responsibilities, including property maintenance and rent collection. Housing SA has also made significant progress towards identifying long-term, sustainable employment opportunities for Aboriginal people in both housing construction and housing service delivery.

On 13 July 2010, I was advised by the Hon. Jenny Macklin (commonwealth Minister for Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs) that South Australia's 2010-11 funding had been reduced by 2.5 per cent due to the 2009-10 capital works targets not being met. I have written to minister Macklin expressing my disappointment in this decision.

Delivering a complex capital program in remote communities is subject to numerous pressures, not all of which can be predicted or controlled. During 2009-10, 11 new houses were slightly delayed because of three individual non-related serious medical problems associated with one contractor. The 11 incomplete dwellings are comprised of four in Amata and seven in Mimili. These 11 dwellings are all underway, and work is continuing to complete them.

By the end of 2011-12, we are aiming to have built 115 new houses and undertaken 158 upgrades into communities such as Amata, Pukatja, Mimili and Fregon. That is more than 250 families who will either be housed or have their living conditions substantially improved as a result of the project.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.55. Minister, have you conducted an occupancy audit of the Housing Trust properties since August 2008, and has the failure to conduct any regular occupancy audits reduced income payable to the government through the rent? I am referring to the Auditor-General's Report at page 1227.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, I am sure you know this, but the minister does not have to comment on the Auditor-General's Report.

Ms CHAPMAN: No; I am just telling her that that information I am putting in the question is from that and, also, that Housing Trust occupancy audits is at Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.55.

The CHAIR: Okay, thank you.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am just explaining that the Auditor-General has made some comment about this.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am sorry, I cannot see that line.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will just check that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you. That is the Statement of Comprehensive Income on page 10.55?

Ms CHAPMAN: It is page 10.54, my colleague tells me. I will check whether I have the right page. Yes, the performance indicators for public and affordable housing services and supply is at page 10.54, but there is a separate Housing Trust audit occupancy audit.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Where?

Ms CHAPMAN: I am looking for it, minister. If you can't find it, we are all in trouble.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I do not think it is there.

Ms CHAPMAN: All right. What is at page 10.54? I thought that you would know these backwards, minister. With respect to the number of affordable homes purchased and rental opportunities provided by Housing SA, you have a target of 51,850.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: Right, we will go back to the question. Have you conducted an occupancy audit of the Housing Trust properties since August 2008?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding is that we are currently in the process of undertaking an occupancy audit.

Ms CHAPMAN: Good.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I cannot tell the honourable member when the last one was done, but what I can tell her is that, between March 2009 and June 2010, 50,307 visits had been completed across metropolitan and rural South Australia where we had housing managers visiting our tenants in their homes.

Ms CHAPMAN: Have they been doing the audit while they have been doing that, have they?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, if you are saying: doing an audit to see whether they are still in their house, I guess that they had to be in the house for them to visit them.

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that, but, you see, an occupancy audit procedure usually—I do not know in your department—is one where you identify whether or not people are occupying a property, and you can identify from that how much stock you have that might be available, or that might be identified for demolition, or whatever.

Obviously, the Auditor-General saw this as quite a serious matter and suggested that there had been an audit back in August 2008. I think that you will appreciate, minister, that, with such a huge waiting list, it is always important to have available as much as possible. The audit process is a very important one, and, obviously, the Auditor-General thought that it was.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The home visit does exactly what the member for Bragg is suggesting, that is, the home visit takes place, the person is living in the house, so therefore those boxes are ticked. What the occupancy audits do, I am advised, is to check whether we have information about the right number of people living in the house.

Generally, the tenancy is in one name, so a home visit will determine that that person is there. The home visits talk to the people about whether they have any particular issues, and a range of maintenance things are identified that need to be addressed. What the occupancy audits do is to audit the number of people actually living in the premises—

Ms CHAPMAN: If you catch them.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —not whether it is actually occupied.

Ms CHAPMAN: If you catch them.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, if what?

Ms CHAPMAN: If you catch them. If you identify who is there. That is why you do an audit.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That is why you do the audit, and we are going through that process currently.

Ms CHAPMAN: Absolutely. At page 10.55 you have 'anticipated income'. If, in fact, you do the audits, you can check whether you have the correct amount of income and the maximum available?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We can check whether two adults earning an income are living in the house and whether there are children living in the house who are earning an income—all those factors which impact on the rent those people pay.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is why you are doing an audit now.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We are undertaking an audit now.

Ms CHAPMAN: Excellent. I refer to stimulus housing, Budget Paper 5, page 51. Why were old nursing home units upgraded to accommodate 12 guardianship children at a cost of \$1 million in 2009-10, instead of using the new construction stimulus funding to build new facilities for these vulnerable children?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The nursing home units which the member for Bragg refers to were, in fact, eight five-bedroom houses, all with ensuites, in two clusters of four and with administrative blocks out the back. We were able to use stimulus money to refurbish and upgrade these houses so that we have the opportunity to provide quality accommodation for large sibling groups. This is an initiative that I am really pleased with. We now have two sites that will accommodate 24 children in very home-like circumstances. I know the member for Bragg has not been particularly happy about that, but I think it was good value for money.

Ms CHAPMAN: You are not serious—value for money.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am very serious.

Ms CHAPMAN: You could have built brand new facilities for these children—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, we could not have.

Ms CHAPMAN: —not a renovated facility.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We got these kids into housing much faster than what we could have built new ones. We are building new ones, a lot of new ones, in fact.

Ms CHAPMAN: Much faster.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No—

Ms CHAPMAN: We will come back to that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have 14 on the trot and I think we have three that have been occupied and another one that is close to being occupied out of the stimulus money.

Ms CHAPMAN: You say it is value for money.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think you have referred to them before as units, flats or whatever: they are actually five-bedroom houses with an ensuite in each bedroom.

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that, minister. My point is that, for the money you spent, these children could have had a completely new facility, not some trumped up renovated thing that you have spent a fortune on.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It's not a 'trumped up renovated thing'. These are—

Ms CHAPMAN: These children deserve better is my point.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You never provided any better. When we bring in initiatives, we get people who are mean-spirited—

Ms CHAPMAN: You have a responsibility, minister, to the taxpayers and these children. You could have given them a decent place for that money, a new place, but you decided not to.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They are quality homes.

Ms CHAPMAN: If you think that is value for money, then you sit by it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They are quality homes.

Ms CHAPMAN: We will get to the insulation quality homes, shall we? I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.52. Has the government recovered the money spent removing dangerous insulation from four public housing properties after it was illegally fitted under the federal Labor government's now defunct home insulation scheme?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We did not illegally fit anything.

Ms CHAPMAN: That was not my question, minister. Do you want the question again? The question is: has your government recovered the money spent to remove this dangerous insulation from those four properties?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I have written to minister Combet—it was minister Combet, I think—and he indicated a willingness to reimburse South Australia for that. I am told there are ongoing discussions with the commonwealth government about the timing of the remaining inspections and reimbursement of Housing SA for the inspections and any remedial work. We have assisted the commonwealth in isolating incidents of fraud where rebates have been claimed inappropriately. We will be expecting to be reimbursed for those costs. I think we incurred not quite \$18,000 and Community Housing spent about \$6,000 inspecting their properties. We would expect that money to be reimbursed and that has been relayed to the commonwealth.

Ms CHAPMAN: Excellent. Why hasn't your department reported the illegal installation of these by unlicensed operators to the Minister for Consumer Affairs?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, why have we?

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Why would we not?

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister Gago has been asked this question. She has not been given notice of it.

Ms CHAPMAN: Why hasn't your department—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Why hasn't? Did you say 'why hasn't'?

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that we undertook early action in relation to these illegal installations to ensure the safety of our tenants and our properties, but the commonwealth is undertaking all of the investigation around the illegal tradespeople.

Ms CHAPMAN: But this is a matter of people who could be operating in South Australia and putting things in other homes, and your department has not told the department for consumer affairs. You say, 'We will wait and see what the federal department does.' Is that your answer to that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If we have not communicated that to the department of consumer affairs I am concerned about that, and we certainly will do so.

Ms CHAPMAN: Why has your department not referred this forward to the police?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is fraud against the commonwealth, and it is undertaking all of the issues in relation to that. The commonwealth is responsible for that. It is doing that.

Ms CHAPMAN: But, minister, your department has these properties. These are your properties, your department's properties.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They are, and they are now safe and we are being reimbursed—

Ms CHAPMAN: They have had work done on them by unlicensed people and they have committed a fraud, on the face of it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: They committed a fraud against the commonwealth.

Ms CHAPMAN: Are you concerned that your department has not even sent this to the police?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding is that the commonwealth is undertaking that.

Ms CHAPMAN: Do you know whether it has done it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Again, we are not in a position to determine whether or not a fraud has occurred. That is what the commonwealth needs to do, and I am sure it will refer that to the police if need be.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, you are not concerned that these people might still be operating in South Australia?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Certainly I am, if we have people operating who are not appropriately licensed. As I said, I am concerned that that has not been passed on to consumer affairs, and we will do that. But that is not fraud.

Ms CHAPMAN: My understanding regarding this program, which your department was alerted to in July this year, is that at no time have you sent out a notice to other Housing Trust tenants advising them to watch out for someone who might be out there illegally putting these insulation products into homes. Are you concerned about that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There are protocols around maintenance in trust homes, and tenants know that they need to get trust authority before they allow work to be undertaken on their homes.

Ms CHAPMAN: But, minister, you know, and you have known for months, that over 100 houses have had this insulation put in them, and you have got thousands. Why did you not instruct your department, if it had not already done so, to send a note to your Housing Trust tenants to warn them that people are on the march and could be putting this in their homes?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: By the time we found out about it, the program had actually been cancelled. It was cancelled in February.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, but you see, your department knew about it in July this year.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was cancelled in February.

Ms CHAPMAN: It may well have been, but to identify whether these people are out there still, your department sent no notice to the occupiers?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There are protocols around work being—

Ms CHAPMAN: All you needed to do was put a little announcement, for example, in a newsletter to them, to tell them—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: To send that to 45,000 people, to say, 'By the way the—'?

Ms CHAPMAN: —look, have you had somebody come and put insulation in your home and if so, could you contact the department so that we can check it? I mean, if you are seriously worried about these people, minister—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The program had been cancelled months before.

Ms CHAPMAN: People have died in this country, homes have burnt down, and you did not even tell these tenants that somebody had been out there putting home insulation in these properties.

The CHAIR: Order!

Ms CHAPMAN: You don't care about these people, their houses could burn down.

The CHAIR: Order! There seem to be a lot of raised voices. We have four minutes left until 11 o'clock. Let us have some calm questions and some calm answers.

Ms CHAPMAN: Budget Paper 5, page 51 on Housing Trust capital works: what has been the internal cost of administering stage 1 and stage 2 of the Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan housing program, that is, the total program allocation to date for each state, minus the expenses paid to contractors for construction, etc.?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am sorry, I missed that question. I have got bits of paper being put under my nose.

Ms CHAPMAN: What has been the internal cost of administering stage 1 and 2?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised we work within a capitalisation of 4 per cent, and I understand we are working within that.

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, how much?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is 4 per cent of \$404 million.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is 4 per cent of \$404 million?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Mr MARSHALL: That is \$16,160,000.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, \$16,160,000?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: In the order of that.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, 4 per cent?

Ms CHAPMAN: You see in other states, minister, a lot of this money has been sent out to NGOs, but in South Australia it has been kept in-house.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And in other states it cost a lot more than that.

Ms CHAPMAN: All right, that is what you say—thank you. My next question is on unfair wear and tear, which is Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.52 under the Annual Programs. Was there an increase in the maintenance funds directed towards unfair wear and tear in 2009-10, and what was the budget for unfair wear and tear in 2009-10? What is the budget this year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We do not have that information; I will take that on notice.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.50, the Private Rental Liaison Program. What is the budget for the Private Rental Liaison Program for 2010-11, and how many FTEs will be employed by the program and at what level?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Private Rental Liaison Officer Program currently operates from eight metropolitan Housing SA regional offices. We have them at Eastern Adelaide, in the north, the south, Western Adelaide and an Aboriginal PRLO is based at the Eastern Adelaide Housing SA office. Housing SA funds 12.2 FTE positions on an ongoing and recurrent basis.

Ms CHAPMAN: And what is the budget for 2010-11?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We will continue to fund the 12, I am advised.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. It is 11 o'clock, and the time for the examination of the Minister for Housing has expired. In accordance with the agreed timetable, I advise that the committee stands suspended until 11.15am.

[Sitting suspended from 11:00 to 11:15]

Departmental Advisers:

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

Ms Z. Nowak, Director, Disability Policy and Strategy, Department for Families and Communities.

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

Ms L. Young, Executive Director, Disability SA, Department for Families and Communities.

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

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

Ms L. Pugh, Acting Executive Director, Domiciliary Care SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr M. Massy-Westropp, General Manager Domiciliary Equipment Service, Domiciliary Care SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr C. Bruno, Director North, Disability SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr P. Willey, Director Ageing and Disability Reform, Department for Families and Communities.

The CHAIR: We are going into the disability area now. Member for Norwood.

Mr MARSHALL: The member for Bragg was hoping to make an opening statement.

The CHAIR: Minister, would you like to make an opening statement, and introduce your advisers?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, I have on my right Zofia Nowak, and Lynn Young will also be advising during this process. I am happy to do an opening statement, if that helps to accommodate the member for Bragg, in that she has not arrived in the chamber as yet.

The CHAIR: That is gracious of you, thank you.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I can fill in time for her. The 2010 state budget and associated initiatives signal more important steps in the Rann government's ongoing commitment to helping people with disabilities and their families. After inheriting a disjointed and dysfunctional system when coming to office, the government has continued to bring the needs of people with disabilities front and centre in our delivery of government services, and to bring about choice and control in the way we deliver services to people with a disability.

I am very pleased that, in the last year, this government has successfully implemented the first major steps to allow self-managed funding for people with a disability. For the first time in South Australia people with disabilities are directly receiving the funding that has been allocated for

their support. This puts them in control, enabling them to choose the services and support arrangements that best meet their individual needs and circumstances. The first phase provides a total of 50 people the opportunity of transferring their current disability support services into a self-managed funding arrangement.

This is an important milestone and one that the disability community has called for, for some time. It marks a new era in the way we engage with and respond to people with a disability, their families and carers, and it is a clear signal of our intentions for the future. The government has also signalled its intention to improve services for people with disabilities by asking the Social Inclusion Board to consider a long-term across-government blueprint for disability services in this state.

The government recognises that more needs to be done. We have recognised that the current disability service system is struggling with what individuals and families with disabilities require in the way of assistance with the day-to-day activities of life that most of us take for granted. We want to build a system that can offer people with disabilities more long-term security. We have said that we want to look at long-term solutions that build a South Australian community that promotes dignity and the inclusion of people with disabilities.

I anticipate that the Social Inclusion Board will deliver its report in July next year. At the same time, the government has also acted to inject more funding into disability services. I am pleased that \$70.9 million over four years was committed by the Rann government in its 2010-11 budget. This will assist South Australians requiring accommodation support, community support, community access and respite services throughout the state. We have also committed \$13.8 million in this budget towards disability equipment over four years, and \$4.2 million extra over four years to support children with autism.

Prior to these additional investments the state government had already increased disability funding by 85 per cent from \$124 million in 2002-03, to \$229 million in 2009-10. Last year I was pleased to announce that an additional \$31 million over four years was provided to assist families caring for a person with a disability. I am pleased to report that this funding has been allocated in the main to families with a child or young adult with a disability. Twenty-five supported accommodation places were provided to stabilise high-risk family situations. A further 64 in-home or personal support packages, ranging from three to 50 hours per week, were provided to people with rapidly deteriorating degenerative conditions to enable them to live as long as possible in their own homes.

Some 53 therapy interventions were provided focusing on stabilisation of risky and violent behaviours and 121 flexible respite packages were also delivered. There have been significant improvements in the quality of facilities and standards of care provided by supported residential facilities. The state government has worked comprehensively with proprietors in recent years on quality and standards agenda.

I must acknowledge how positively the supported residential facilities sector has responded and should be given credit for actively putting in place a range of measures such as improvement to buildings, training of staff and the introduction of guidelines in such important areas as nutrition and medication management.

The protection of vulnerable adults with a disability has been an important area of focus and investigation during 2009-10 and will continue to be high on the government's agenda during the next financial year. I have also requested my disability advisory council provide advice on a systems approach to protecting people with a disability who are vulnerable. I will be considering this advice to determine any further to measures which may be required to protect and safeguard people with a disability over and above those we have already put in place.

The South Australian government has also been working with the commonwealth government and other state and territory governments on the development of a national disability strategy. The strategy, which is currently being finalised for the endorsement of the Council of Australian Governments following an extensive consultation process, sets out a 10 year national plan for improving life for Australians with a disability, their families and carers.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Member for Bragg, would you care to make an opening statement?

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, thank you, Madam Chair. Perhaps the most vulnerable people in our community are those who are disabled and the most extraordinary people are those who care for them, including the many families across South Australia. The community's future provision for

those who are disabled in our community is one which is currently under national review and, as the minister has said, she has commissioned Monsignor Cappo to conduct a review, to be completed by 1 July next year.

What is most concerning about that aspect is not that the review is being undertaken but that the government has chosen to restructure the department responsibilities under Families and Communities, including disability, with amalgamation yet again with other departments before that review has been completed.

To not just spend the money, disrupt the organisational support and the many people in non-government organisations, I find most disturbing, particularly as it is occurring prior to Commissioner Cappo's consultation and review. He tells me in correspondence that he is being kept informed by the department about what they are doing in the restructure, but what a shameful, and complete waste of money if, ultimately, he comes back with a recommendation next year that is inconsistent with that. He is in little position to change it.

The other matter I bring to the attention of the committee today is that, on a number of occasions, the current government has provided one-off funding for disability equipment. They do this instead of increasing the recurrent budget for disability equipment. Why do they do this? Well, it is quite simple: it is to get headlines.

What is even more disgraceful than manipulating the disability community to grab a headline is that, even when they knew the Auditor-General was investigating this practice, they did the same thing earlier this year. The Auditor-General has recently reported that departmental employees have allegedly made dodgy transactions to the sum of \$5.1 million to non-government entities for the provision of disability equipment and that they made these payments to an organisation which did not even provide disability equipment.

The Auditor-General has reasoned that these people have done this because one-off funding has been provided too late in the year and that employees wanted to avoid the Treasurer's carryover policy. Members of the committee, especially the member for Croydon, will be very familiar with this practice. This is 'Stashed Cash Mark 2'. This is stashed cash disability which the Auditor-General has now highlighted.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Tell us what Justice Layton said about your mate.

Ms CHAPMAN: Kate Lennon knows all about it. And, of course, there is absolutely no excuse for this government not knowing about it; especially the minister, who sat in cabinet throughout scandal No. 1, and we are about to have scandal No. 2.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, just in terms of a factual matter, if I rightly understand it, the Minister for Disability is in fact in her first tenure in cabinet; is that correct?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Second; I became a cabinet minister in 2006.

Ms CHAPMAN: You had four years to see this.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And Minister for Families and Communities in 2008.

The CHAIR: We did listen to the minister in silence, so we will keep on listening to the member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. This shows how disgraceful this government's funding of disability services is. They will do anything to capture a headline, even when they are on notice that what they are doing is under scrutiny from the Auditor-General.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, would you like to ask three questions?

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.37, Expenses. What grant funding approvals are signed off personally by you as minister?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Those that are between \$1.1 million and \$10 million.

Ms CHAPMAN: That includes the disability equipment funding, if it is within that range?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, if there is one contract within that range.

Ms CHAPMAN: Also on disability equipment at page 10.44, there is financial commentary there on major variations. Will grant payments be made during the 2010-11 year to the Julia Farr Association for disability equipment?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised no.

Ms CHAPMAN: Last year you told the estimates committee—

The CHAIR: Member—

Ms CHAPMAN: This is the third question, if I may?

The CHAIR: Actually, I have three already.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have the grant funding question, will it be this year and the answer was no, and my third question is: last year you told the estimates committee that the Julia Farr Association had received \$2 million in one-off disability equipment funding. Are you suggesting that you came into parliament and told us that it was great that \$2 million had been provided to the Julia Farr Association for disability equipment without knowing that they did not provide that service?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Let me be really clear: as far as I am aware, money that was allocated for disability equipment was provided for disability equipment. I was not the minister at the time, but that is my clear understanding.

Ms CHAPMAN: Supplementary, Madam Chair: can I just remind you of what you said on 29 October 2009?

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, I have allowed you what I believe to be an extra question; I know you believe you have had three. There are no supplementary questions at this point in time and I would like to now ask the member on my right to ask a question.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.25, and ask the minister if she could update members present on how increased government funds are supporting the families of South Australians with a disability?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am pleased to advise that the end of financial year figures showed almost 250 families had been helped since the formation of the Family Support Assistance Panel in December 2009. The figures show that more than \$5 million has been provided so that 25 people received supported accommodation places and another 64 received extensive support packages of up to 50 hours per week. In a situation of great need, it is pleasing to know there are 239 mums, dads, brothers and sisters better enjoying their lives because of this help.

We know that 68 of these families are now receiving vital respite to allow them to continue to care for their loved ones, and a further 49 parents are seeing their children enjoy day options as part of their support. Of course, there is always more to be done in the disability sector and, even with these achievements, increasing demand contributed to the end of financial year unmet data showing an increase of 49 people registered as needing assistance. This reflects the constant battle to be able to meet the rapid growth in the disability sector across Australia.

While the government would obviously prefer to be seeing the overall unmet list drop, it was pleasing that we have been able to reduce the number of people with an unmet need for community support, such as therapy, case management and counselling. I know I have been criticised by some for acknowledging this achievement, but the reality is that this government has the courage to publish unmet need figures on the DFC website every six months.

In contrast, the opposition has attacked, and the best it was able to offer was an election promise of an uncosted super school for students with autism and a pitiful \$2.5 million a year to address unmet need. Despite knowing the unmet need figures, this was likely to have helped maybe just 25 people.

As I said at the time, the figures showed accommodation support need had increased from 1,032 to 1,097 between December and June; personal support increased from 1,075 to 1,116; community support dropped from 719 to 654; community access increased from 352 to 359; and respite clients needing assistance increased from 454 to 469. We will continue to do all we can to reduce this list, and the state government believes that the Productivity Commission's investigation into a national disability insurance scheme is an important step to the future funding of disability services.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, I was referring to a statement that you actually made to the estimates committee on 29 June 2009 as the minister covering disability, when you outlined contributions for one-off funding for disability equipment. You said:

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 so on. Clearly, you were able to present to the estimates committee—I think with some pride from the tenor of that statement—information about the funding that was being provided to that association. Are you saying to us that you did so without knowing that the Julia Farr Association did not provide disability equipment services?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Are you inferring this money was not used for the provision of equipment?

Ms CHAPMAN: This money was not used by the Julia Farr Association. In fact, the Auditor-General has made it very clear that it was stashed there. It was stuffed in there—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, it was not.

Ms CHAPMAN: It was hidden in the Julia Farr Association.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My advice is that this money was provided for disability equipment and it was used to provide disability equipment.

Ms CHAPMAN: But not by the Julia Farr Association.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It was provided for equipment and it purchased equipment. I just do not understand how you can come in here and criticise. I think we have provided something like \$44 million or \$45 million for disability equipment since we came into government; another increase in this budget; there is provision for one-off; and there is an increase in the recurrent provision for equipment. In fact, we have honoured the, I think, \$17.5 million election promise for equipment. Your total commitment to disability services in South Australia was a paltry \$2.5 million a year for four years—would not have even touched the sides.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, when you told the parliament last year that disability equipment money was paid to the Julia Farr Association, are you telling the committee now that you had no knowledge that, in fact, it did not provide those services and did not use the money itself to provide those services? Is that what you are telling the committee now?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I had not received—as you had not—the Auditor-General's Report at that time.

Ms CHAPMAN: Did you not know at that time?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That money was used for disability equipment.

Ms CHAPMAN: Did you not know at that time—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That money was used for disability equipment.

Ms CHAPMAN: —that the Julia Farr Association—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: What is your problem? You are not prepared to put any money in—\$2.5 million a year you were putting up to address the unmet waiting need.

Ms CHAPMAN: When the Premier made the announcement in a press release on this matter—I am just trying to ascertain when you knew it—in May 2008, he did not mention the Julia Farr Association. He just said 'disability adult clients will receive 540 items of equipment worth \$2.15 million'. There is no mention of the Julia Farr Association.

You told the committee last year that disability equipment was paid through various agencies, including the Julia Farr Association. My question is very simple: when you told the committee that last year, did you know that that money was not used by the Julia Farr Association to provide that equipment?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I did not know at that time—

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Don't say 'thank you', I have not finished my sentence yet. I did not know at that time that the Auditor-General had a problem with the accounting processes for this. I provided to the committee the best advice that I had at that time.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes. When did you find out that, in fact, the Julia Farr Association did not spend the money?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Why don't you ask me these questions when we do the Auditor-General's Report? We are actually doing the budget. Do you want to ask some budget questions?

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Chair, I seek your ruling on this. We have a provision for disability equipment grants. In fact, the minister opened quite extensively about how proud she is of the government's contribution.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And we continue to improve.

Ms CHAPMAN: It is referred to under 'disability equipment' on page 10.44. The minister did make statements last year, and I am entitled to ask her about actuals of last year, estimates of last year, estimates for this year and the budget. I ask, again: when did the minister become aware that disability equipment funding was not spent by the Julia Farr Association?

The CHAIR: Right. That is fine if the honourable member wishes to ask that question, but that will then be—

Ms CHAPMAN: My three?

The CHAIR: Yes.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: All those payments were made, as I understand it, before I was the minister.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. The member for Reynell.

Ms THOMPSON: My question relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.23. Can the minister please advise what strategies have been introduced to improve outcomes for residents in the Supported Residential Facilities (SRF) sector?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Supported Residential Facilities provides accommodation and care for people with disabilities (including psychiatric disability) in a group setting. The facilities are regulated by the Supported Residential Facilities Act 1992. The pension-only SRF sector is largely made up of private operators, with the number of facilities reducing from 48 in 2003 to 30 as of June this year.

As of 30 June, there were 824 residents in the SRF sector. In December 2008, the state government approved a supplementary payment of \$6.24 per day per resident paid to private SRF providers. The additional funding of \$2.26 million provided by SA Health and the Department for Families and Communities effectively doubled the value of the existing board and care funding, and was introduced to ensure the viability of private operators. The new funding also brought with it a state government commitment to report on the viability of private operators in the sector.

A SRF task force was convened and a report was completed in June 2009. The report concluded that viability has been returned to the private operators in the sector, validating the government's decision to increase the board and care funding. DFC officers visited all SRF facilities in December 2009 and reported that most had or were undertaking improvement projects which ranged from major upgrades of kitchens, kickstarting maintenance programs, replacement of floor coverings, new furniture and air conditioning upgrades in shared areas.

The SRF Association holds some ongoing concerns for the smaller facilities in the sector and their viability. I have asked DFC to examine the issue and provide a report to me by the end of 2010. The SRF Association was committed to focusing on quality and standards and there have been important developments in that area.

The priority for the association has been improving staff qualifications. I am pleased to advise that, on 23 June 2010, 42 SRF workers were honoured at a graduation ceremony at Tauondi College, Port Adelaide: 15 workers achieved Certificate III qualifications and 27, Certificate IV qualifications in disability work. Graduates now have a better understanding of and a greater insight into residents' behaviours. It gives them more confidence in dealing with residents, many of whom have complex needs. It also helps build positive relationships with these people.

The SRF Association has also moved forward on its other quality agendas and I understand that food and nutrition guidelines, medication credentialing and training in diabetes management are now being implemented. The state government invests \$9.3 million a year in the pension only SRF sector through direct subsidies and programs that support residents. We are now seeing significant improvements in residents' quality of life.

In 2010-11, there will be a strong focus on young women with a psychiatric disability. Mental Health Services has identified 12 younger women in the sector who are now eligible for the Supported Social Housing project that stems from the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan. Mental Health Services will fund and provide the care packages to enable these women to be supported in the community. The women should be housed by early next year.

Ms CHAPMAN: Back to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.44 on disability equipment carryover. On what date, minister, did your department submit a carryover request to allow funding budgeted for 2009-10 for disability equipment to be carried over to 2010-11; and why was a proposal to allocate \$7.75 million to be spent before 30 June 2010 even contemplated, given the investigation by the Auditor-General concerning the late allocation of funds for the same purpose and which had led to the improper transfer of funds to NGOs to avoid carryover policy in the previous years?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding is it was not a question of carryover, that there was an understanding that, in fact, it was not possible to expend all of that money in the 2009-10 year and that money would be transferred over so that we could progress with the provision of that equipment.

Ms CHAPMAN: I understand that, minister. It has obviously been put in after the election commitment that was made late in the financial year in the full knowledge that it could not be expended in that time and that it had caused such controversy in the previous year. The Auditor-General is already crawling all over your department about this issue concerning the two preceding years of allocation—in that instance, the Julia Farr Association—and he has alerted your department to the concern about throwing money in just before 30 June when there is not a hope in hell of those organisations being able to spend the money.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will let Mr Ullianich explain to you how this was done.

Mr ULLIANICH: If I can, I will answer succinctly. There was a significant difference in this process to what had occurred in 2006-07 and 2007-08, which is the matter that you refer to, raised by the Auditor-General.

Ms CHAPMAN: And in 2008-09?

Mr ULLIANICH: And in 2008-09. In this instance we had time. This process of identifying the need and developing the funding solution actually commenced in October last year; and a cabinet submission was prepared because it was outside of the budget process. In the preparation of that cabinet submission there was never any question of carryover. We had the time to actually cash flow, or project the cash flows that we would require, in order to orderly purchase the equipment. That, in fact, was approved as part of the cabinet submission.

Ms CHAPMAN: So my question is: what date did the department—

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, can I point this out again? I am so sorry if I am repeating myself. We are not debating the Auditor-General's Report here and there will be an opportunity to do that later in the year. I know you will be able to do this, but can we bring it back to a line in the budget?

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Chair, I am sorry you have missed this but we have already moved on to 10.44, which is this issue. We are not in the Auditor-General's Report any more.

The CHAIR: I heard you say, and I may be incorrect, 'given that the Auditor-General is already crawling all over your department'.

Ms CHAPMAN: Correct.

The CHAIR: So that seemed to be a reflection on what was happening, and what his report was.

Ms CHAPMAN: Now.

The CHAIR: Well, I would like to bring it back to the line in the budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: So we are actually on that line—if you are following this, Madam Chair—and we are talking about the 2009-10 funding that was the subject of \$7.75 million, which was an election promise in April 2010, which was paid over. There is an explanation in the budget as to why that was not spent. I am just coming back to that. My question was: on what date did the department submit a carryover request to allow that funding to be carried over?

Mr ULLIANICH: What specific line are you referring to at 10.44?

Ms CHAPMAN: I am referring to the financial commentary on major variations.

The CHAIR: Are you talking about the \$77.6 million?

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: No, it has nothing to do with the Julia Farr Centre. It is disability equipment. This is partially offset, which is .5. You will see \$2.4 million 'in additional expenditure to better keep pace', blah, blah, blah; 'the expenditure in addition' and then 'subject to the election promise'. Did you find that, Madam Chair?

The CHAIR: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, have you found it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: Excellent, thank you. What date did your department submit a carryover request to allow that funding to be carried over?

Mr ULLIANICH: I do not know what date it submitted the carryover. I would not know off the top of my head.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can you get it?

Mr ULLIANICH: If, in fact, a request was put forward.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is my request, minister.

Mr ULLIANICH: I am talking about not your request. If, in fact, a carryover request was put forward for that specific—

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes. I will wait for that.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.23. Will the minister advise what funding has been provided by the state government for early childhood intervention and therapy services to assist young children with autism spectrum disorder?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: The Rann government makes a significant investment in services for children with autism spectrum disorders and their families, and in this budget we are providing an additional \$4.2 million in assistance over the next four years.

Disability SA provides a range of services, including developmental and behavioural interventions, as well as family education and support, with an emphasis on early childhood intervention from 0 to 6 years of age. In 2009-10, \$3 million was spent on specific autism services. This commitment ensured Disability SA delivered specific intervention and support to children and helped children with the disorder to transition to school—something that can be extremely challenging for these children and their families. This assistance provided the Flinders University early intervention and research project, to provide intensive therapeutic intervention services to children up to the age of six years with an autism spectrum disorder. It also supported Autism SA for therapy for children aged up to six years, with an additional allocation for assessment and diagnosis.

Post-diagnostic counselling, family support, education and information services also received funding from the Rann government as part of this commitment. On top of this, behaviour intervention services targeted to children and adults with an autism spectrum disorder who do not have an intellectual disability, received support.

In honouring our election promise, an additional \$4.2 million over four years has also been committed in the 2010-11 state budget to support children with autism, comprising:

- \$0.5 million per annum, indexed, to SA Health to establish a multidisciplinary assessment team to work across the Women's and Children's Hospital, the Lyell McEwin Hospital and the Flinders Medical Centre;
- a further \$0.5 million per annum, indexed, will be made available to Autism SA for assessment services and to provide early intervention services for children with autism.

The Rann government also supports children with an autism spectrum disorder and their families through health and education services. We are delivering \$9 million over three years to establish six new special education units for children with a disability to cater for an extra 120 students, creating a network of 26 units in South Australian schools. Two of these units will have a specialist focus on autism spectrum disorders and become best practice centres in autism spectrum disorder learning.

This contrasts significantly to the uncosted autism specific super school promised by the opposition. Aside from the \$2.5 million a year for unmet need, this was the only offering the Liberal Party took to the last election.

Ms CHAPMAN: Back to page 10.44: did the proposal submitted to cabinet in late April for the expenditure of the \$7.75 million for disability equipment funding include the names of organisations to receive funding and the amount to be allocated to each?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised it did.

Ms CHAPMAN: Are you aware, when the previous allocation in 2009 was made—to which you referred in estimates last year and told the committee that the funding was also to the Julia Farr Association—if that was described in the submission to cabinet when that was approved?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I would refer you to page 446 of the Auditor-General's Report.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have read that; that is why I am asking the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, I think it tells you, doesn't it?

Ms CHAPMAN: No, it doesn't. When the cabinet submission was made—to which you referred in the estimates last year as being the \$2.15 million to the Julia Farr Association—was the name of that disclosed in the cabinet submission?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, I don't know—that was a cabinet submission back before I was minister.

Mr ULLIANICH: There were two cabinet submissions in two different financial years authorising the one-off funding, in 2006-07 and 2007-08.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, and did they describe the Julia Farr Association as the recipient, or just Disability SA as referred to in the Premier's statement?

Mr ULLIANICH: I have to say I am not sure of the extent to which I can speak about cabinet submissions in this forum.

Ms CHAPMAN: No, I am talking about what they are being advised by the department.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You are asking what is in a cabinet submission that goes to cabinet. They get released how often? Once every 10 years?

Ms CHAPMAN: The question is, and you have answered the question, which is that it is disclosed as to who gets the money and how much when it goes to cabinet.

The Hon. J.M. Rankine interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: We are at cross-purposes, minister. So, when the submission was made to cabinet for the Julia Farr Association to get its money in each of those two years you have referred to, was that disclosed?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We don't know.

Ms CHAPMAN: You don't know.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We don't know.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can you get that information?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: Even though you were prepared to tell the committee last year that it was paid to the Julia Farr Association? You didn't have a clue at that point—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You are asking me what is in a cabinet submission that I did not take to cabinet—and, no, I am not going to get that information for you.

Ms CHAPMAN: No, but you were sitting in the cabinet—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: And, once, again, it is not a budget question. If you want to ask me these questions, ask me these questions during the Auditor-General's Report.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is right; you do not have to answer questions, minister. You can avoid them. That is no problem.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Good.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will be making the usual comment about that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Of course.

Ms CHAPMAN: At page 10.22: which organisation received a grant a few months ago in June 2010 without formal documentation and what was the amount paid? This amount has been identified by the Auditor-General for that financial year—that is 2009-10.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, what budget line are you talking about?

Ms CHAPMAN: Page 10.22, Summary Income Statement, grant payment controls.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, grant payment controls?

Ms CHAPMAN: Under Summary Income Statement.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I cannot see the line you are referring to.

Ms CHAPMAN: It is \$148 million.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Where? I must need my glasses; I cannot see \$148 million on that page anywhere.

The CHAIR: No, it is Grants and Subsidies that the member is referring to.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, it is Expenses—Grants and Subsidies, not what you referred to it as.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am referring to it as a Summary Income Statement. You see it at the top, just above that. It says Summary Income Statement.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, I see Grants and Subsidies. Are you saying that is to one organisation?

Ms CHAPMAN: No. My question is—and the Auditor-General picked it up this year—who was the grant payment made to (that is, what organisation) in June this year without formal documentation?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Who said there was one?

Ms CHAPMAN: The Auditor-General has highlighted it.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: All right. Mr Ullianich will address you in relation to this.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you.

MR ULLIANICH: If you can imagine, we have responded to the Auditor-General on this issue and, in fact—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Is this another Auditor-General's question?

Ms CHAPMAN: I will be asking a lot of questions about the Auditor-General when it comes to that, minister. My question, minister—

The CHAIR: At the moment the Auditor-General is not here and I would bring you back.

Ms CHAPMAN: What is the name of the organisation?

The CHAIR: I am beginning to tire slightly of this shadow boxing with the Auditor-General's Report. It is not fair on the advisers. They are dealing with the material that they have in front of them.

Ms CHAPMAN: Correct.

The CHAIR: So if we could go back to Grants and Subsidies.

Ms CHAPMAN: Okay.

The CHAIR: What I have in front of me is \$148,301,000. If you would care to ask a question specific to that line that we have in front of us that would be preferable.

Ms CHAPMAN: Of those grants that were made and which have to be identified as to who they are paid to and how much, which one of those in that financial year did not have the full documentation?

Mr ULLIANICH: As I said, we have advised the Auditor-General that it was an oversight at that time.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think we are at cross-purposes. I am not seeking an explanation of what you told the Auditor-General; I am simply seeking the name of the organisation.

Mr ULLIANICH: Novita.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you.

Mr ULLIANICH: And we are in the process of rectifying that oversight with an agreement.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. Budget Paper 5, page 51, Supported Accommodation for Disability. The total budget for this item is \$8.09 million. The budget says that all of this funding will be spent in 2010-11. I note that this funding was announced by the federal government in May 2008 and it is now 2½ years later. Does that mean that this project did not even commence prior to 30 June 2010?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I can give you some fairly detailed information about the supported accommodation that we have provided and are in the process of providing. The provision of supported accommodation has been a strong focus, and we actually set a strategic plan target in relation to that. The number of group home places in South Australia has increased from 665 in 2003 to 1,035 as of 30 June this year, a 56 per cent increase.

During 2009-10, a number of projects contributed to this goal. The Department for Families and Communities contributed \$15.7 million to Minda to support people with disabilities to live independently in the community and, as of June, 47 people from the Minda campus have found accommodation in community.

Bedford's Homes for 100 project, with combined funding of \$10 million committed equally by the state government and the Bedford Foundation: by the end of 2010-11 all planned developments will either be completed or well advanced, and it is expected that 58 clients will have been accommodated under this project by 2011-12 with the remaining clients expected to be housed early the following year.

Negotiations were also finalised with the Harrow Trust for an accommodation and support service to commence in 2010-11. This project has recurrent funding to support 12 residents. The facility is being supported by \$1.65 million from the Affordable Housing Innovation Fund with the first tenants expected to move in around November.

In 2009-10, planning commenced on the Kardinya proposal, an innovative accommodation service to be built on land owned by Minda. The proposal will create 14 new community accommodation places and, in 2007, \$21 million was provided to the Julia Farr Housing Association for community housing. To date, \$12.8 million has been spent with 26 buildings purchased—not none, as has been quoted by some in this place. In total, there are 16 projects for over 81 tenants. The remaining \$8.2 million is committed to further current projects.

A range of other supported accommodation projects is planned for 2010-11. A \$30.45 million disability housing project will deliver 64 new disability accessible homes, providing 134 accommodation places for new clients or clients currently in inappropriate housing.

South Australia has combined two capital works programs to deliver efficiencies and more cost effective outcomes in all stages of the project through economies of scale. The supported accommodation for people with a disability with ageing carers program—which is what the member for Bragg is referring to I think—comprises a total of 20 homes providing 42 supported accommodation places. The Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan comprises a total of 44 dwellings providing 92 new places.

Housing SA's disability housing program leases property to government and non-government agencies with a focus on housing people with disabilities. These agencies also provide ongoing support for those with an intellectual disability, a physical or neurological disability or a mental illness.

The accommodation provided is generally long-term with a range of home modifications ranging from minor to purpose-built. Allocations to the disability housing program have increased by 99 properties since 2006-07, bringing the total number of properties allocated to the program to 295 as of 30 June this year.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, the answer to my question is—?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If you listened to the answer, I gave you all the information you asked for.

Ms CHAPMAN: Obviously we are at cross purposes. The minister gave me a comprehensive list of all the different programs she had in mind. My question is: of the \$8.09 million that the federal government announced in May 2008, was any of that money spent prior to 30 June 2010? That was my question. You can waffle it out with whatever you like, but that was the question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, I am told it has been.

Ms CHAPMAN: How much?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We do not know how much.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will take that on notice, then?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, but my advice is that those projects will be completed in this financial year.

Ms CHAPMAN: I would certainly hope so, minister, because it is two years that we have been waiting. I will just move then—

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Order! Member for Bragg, we have some procedural matters to deal with.

Membership:

Mrs Geraghty substituted for Ms Fox.

Ms Thompson elected by committee, pursuant to Standing Order 269, as deputy chair.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): The Chair advised me before she left that it was high time that the member for Florey was offered an opportunity to ask a question.

Ms BEDFORD: My question relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.23. I ask the minister to update members present on how self-managed funding is enabling South Australians with a disability to have greater control and choice about the services they receive.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am pleased to advise that we have been able to successfully implement the first phase of self-managed funding for people with a disability here in South Australia. For the first time we have a coordinated approach for people with a disability being able to directly receive the funding that has been allocated for their support. Back in June, I had the pleasure of personally signing the first of these agreements. These changes put the client in control, enabling them to choose the services and support that best meet their needs and circumstances.

Under the first phase of this program, 50 people have been given the chance to transfer their disability support services into a self-managed funding arrangement. Under this initiative, participants choose the self-management arrangement that suits their needs. Some will receive direct payments of the self-managed funds to allow them to arrange and purchase the services they require, while other participants will be supported in their arrangements by a carer or non-government organisation. Some participants are already receiving the funding and managing their own support arrangements, while others are still developing their personal support and expenditure plans and working out how they can best use the funding to meet their needs.

Many are already making the most of the flexibility of these arrangements. For example, one participant in phase 1 is a man who relies heavily on his wife for support. She also works full-time and looks after their two children. This man re-organised his personal support service to buy some domestic support and relieve some of the pressure on his wife. Another carer negotiated a more flexible respite service for his adult child so he and his wife could take a well-earned break. In fact, after the June signing one dad said to me that, after he had signed the agreement, he felt that, for the first time in over 20 years, he had his life back.

To ensure its success, extensive work has been undertaken to set up systems and processes to provide self-managed funding, with two Disability SA facilitators employed to help people transfer to these arrangements. Non-government organisations have also been engaged to provide support to participants who want assistance in managing their funding and support arrangements.

Rulings from Centrelink and the Australian Taxation Office were sought to ensure no negative financial impact on the participants. A class ruling in relation to the first phase of self-managed funding was gazetted on 5 May by the ATO. This, together with advice of an exemption from Centrelink in late 2009, means that funds do not impact on participants' assessments for benefits or taxable income. New funding agreements for self-managed funding were developed to give participants choice and control, while also fulfilling our obligations to duty of care and accountability for public funds.

This first phase is a developmental phase. It is about learning and talking with participants, their families, carers and those who work in the sector to further refine and develop self-managed funding in South Australia. Whilst the positive feedback is far greater than the negative, I stress this is a developmental stage where we will use both the good and the bad to ensure we get this right for future participants. The next phases of self-managed funding will also be informed by a committee of key people involved and an independent evaluation. We want to get to a point where all Disability SA clients have the option of managing their support and funding independently or with the support of a carer, non-government organisation or Disability SA itself.

I want to thank the 40-plus clients who have signed on to the first phase. Their involvement is not only delivering personal improvements to the way they live their lives, but it will also have a profound effect on the many more clients who sign up in the years ahead.

Ms CHAPMAN: Back on disability equipment, Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.44, Financial Commentary on Major Variations. Minister, how many people on the disability equipment waiting list who will be provided with equipment using this funding will need to be reassessed before they can be provided with the equipment?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: People's circumstances change continually. We have a range of people who require equipment. Those who were on the waiting list as of 30 June are being assessed in order of priority for their final prescription, and this has been undertaken by clinicians from Disability Services and Novita Children's Services. Many of the prescriptions are complex and, at times, require repeated modification and trialling to achieve the best fit for the client. So, all of those people being provided with their equipment will have a final assessment before that equipment is provided.

Ms CHAPMAN: An announcement was made during the election—further announcements made by premier Rann in April—for this \$7.75 million. We have heard from your departmental head that this was as a result of work that had been collated in, I think, September-October 2009. Of this one-off money, do you expect that the people—I think it is about 1,500, according to the Premier's announcement; 1,500 pieces of equipment, anyway, and it may be one or two per person, I do not know, but I assume it is one per person—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You cannot make that assumption.

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, it might be 1,500 people, but it could be less.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You cannot make the assumption that 1,500 pieces of equipment equates to 1,500 people.

Ms CHAPMAN: Correct. I am simply saying that 1,500 pieces of equipment were announced by the Premier. I agree with you that I cannot make the assumption that it is 1,500 people, because one or more pieces of equipment may be allocated for one person. So, we are agreed on that. My question is: are these people who were identified a year ago going to get their equipment before Christmas?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We do our very best to get the equipment out as quickly as possible. In fact, I can give you an idea of some of the waiting times for the provision of that equipment. Waiting times in business days, once prescribed by a clinician, for the supply of items such as hospital beds, hoists and mobile shower chairs, were eight days, nine days and three days respectively. This compares with waiting times for the same period in 2006-07 of more than 40 business days for beds and mobile shower chairs, and 17 days for hoists.

We have reduced the waiting times considerably through effective refurbishing processes combined with the use of standard equipment types, but there are some people for whom it takes longer to provide their equipment. As I said, even after the prescription and the provision of the equipment, some equipment requires extensive and continual modification. To put an arbitrary timeline on it is just not possible. We have the money, and we are working through as quickly as we can to get that equipment out. I am assured that, to the best of their ability, they will have their needs met during this financial year.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): I advise that the time agreed for examination of proposed payments relating to the Minister for Disability has now expired.

Departmental Advisers:

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

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

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

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

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

Ms L. Pugh, Acting Executive Director, Domiciliary Care SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr M. Massy-Westropp, General Manager, Domiciliary Equipment Service, Domiciliary Care SA, Department for Families and Communities.

Ms L. McAdam, Acting Director, Community Connect, Department for Families and Communities.

Mr M. Clemow, Chief of Staff.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Minister, do you have an opening statement?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Just a brief one, Madam Acting Chair. South Australia has the highest proportion of older people in the nation with one in seven people aged 65 years and over, and we know that this number is expected to increase to one in three in 2051.

With this in mind, it is imperative that we respond now to ensure that we have programs and services in place for the future. We also need to acknowledge the extent to which we rely on the economic and social contributions of older people to our community and how to recognise their hard work. Four years on, a number of initiatives have consolidated the implementation of Improving with Age—Our Ageing Plan for South Australia. These projects focus on choice, independence, safety and security and providing appropriate services and information.

In September last year, I released the State of Ageing in South Australia report, which identifies the implications of an ageing population and makes the most of the collective expertise of our research community. It also contributes to informing policy, which furthers the implementation of our state's ageing plan.

As part of the celebrations for International Day for Older Persons just a week or so ago, I launched Senior Wise, an early intervention program to enable older South Australians to maintain their independence, make informed decisions and stay connected to their communities. It is a volunteer-based program consisting of three main elements: home visiting, navigation, information and advice; community awareness; and senior-friendly business certification.

In 2010-11, \$189,000 has been allocated to the Seniors Information Service to finalise the planning and development and to commence the first phase of the Senior Wise service; and the state government has allocated a further \$3.1 million over the next four years to incorporate 25,000 home visits as a new component of the Senior Wise program.

This was part of an election commitment, which also included \$2.9 million over the next four years to expand access to personal alert systems for older South Australians. The personal alert systems will enable older people living alone who are at risk of falls to access immediate emergency assistance. This will help older people to stay independent and in their own homes longer. The Home and Community Care program is a joint state and commonwealth government initiative which funds the provision of basic maintenance and support services for frail older people, younger people with disabilities and their carers, and continues to fund important services for people around the state.

DFC, through Domiciliary Care, is the state government provider of home-based care for frail older people, younger people with chronic health conditions and people requiring palliative

care who live in the metropolitan area. This service is also the auspice of the Adelaide Aged Care Assessment program and the metropolitan demonstration site for Access2Home Care. This year Domiciliary Care received \$57 million in funding from grants and revenue.

The DFC equipment program assists older people, adults and children with disabilities with their equipment and home modification needs. In addition to servicing clients of Domiciliary Care, Disability Services and Novita Children's Services, equipment and home modifications are also provided to clients of external agencies using the Domiciliary equipment service. In the 2010-11 state budget, the government has allocated \$13.8 million over four years to the DFC equipment program for the ongoing provision of disability equipment.

The Office for the Ageing also administers grants for seniors and positive ageing development grants, which are provided annually to community organisations throughout the state. These organisations include clubs, educational and training institutions, arts and cultural groups, museums, libraries, theatres, self-help groups, recreation and supporting groups and volunteer agencies, and help older people remain connected to their communities. In 2009-10, 19 positive ageing development grants were approved, totalling almost \$200,000. These one-off grants of up to \$25,000 must fit into one of three themes: enabling choice and independence; participation and learning; or positive perceptions. In 2009-10, 82 grants for seniors grants were approved, totalling almost \$187,000, and these are one-off grants up to \$5,000 for smaller tasks such as buying equipment or paying for an instructor to run activities.

The ageing of our population not only provides challenges for governments and service providers but it also provides opportunities to ensure that older South Australians can maximise their independence and play a vital role in South Australia's future while living life to the fullest.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Member for Bragg, do you wish to make a statement?

Ms CHAPMAN: I will make a short statement. I note the government's contribution in this year's budget to the section of families and communities dealing with ageing and working with partner organisations directly in delivering services in the community. It always disappoints me that the provision for ageing services always seems to be seen in a bit of a dull and negative light and that our ageing is something to be concerned about. It is true that we are about to go through the balloon bubble of the baby boomers—I am one of them, but fortunately I am at the end of the baby boomers—when a number of people will require higher levels of services.

I recall the statistics that, starting in 2010, the older ones are beginning to die off but there is still a significant pool coming through over the next 30 years. Whilst we have a continuing exodus of our young people net each year from South Australia and our birth rate is low—not quite as low as Japan, but it is low—then this matter is of some concern for the foreseeable future. However, I am confident that, once we have moved through that baby boomer bubble, this will not be regarded as a subject of concern by governments and that it is something to hang around our necks.

In fact, I had the privilege of serving as chair of the Home and Community Care Council for a number of years before coming into the parliament and the funding contribution at the commonwealth and state levels (although that has slightly changed now to a 62:38 contribution: it was a 60:40 contribution) was well received, and I am pleased to see the government is continuing to maintain its contribution. It is important that we look at the positive side, and whilst there are some active ageing programs announced by the government, I think we need to understand the significance of the desire of the ageing community to want to continue to participate in a working life. Clearly, there still needs to be some industrial and superannuation issues to enable that to occur.

The bulk of volunteers are from our senior community—they certainly are in my electorate—and the call by the Sustainable Budget Commission for volunteers to pay for police checks, that having been presented as a legislative reform under this government, I think is shameful. The government had conceded during the course of those debates that it would not require them to have multiple police checks but they could use one for multiple organisations, but the thought of them now having to pay for their police checks I think is a shame.

Clearly, health and aged care services are significantly supplemented by state governments—and may be even more so, when we come to the health agreement. Whatever is going to fall out of that between the federal and state governments is yet to be seen. But I think we need to look on the positive. I recall giving a speech to the Australian retirees association. It was titled 'Sex in the 70s'. It was actually about estate planning and making sure that the second, third

or fourth common law or lawful spouse was provided for in addition to multiple children and grandchildren who wanted to have control of the funds. I did receive a letter of complaint after that address from one person who attended because he was most disappointed I had not been talking about putting Viagra on the PBS list, which is what he expected my topic to be.

The valuable contribution that senior members of our community make should be enhanced rather than governments always looking at the negative. However, having said that, I acknowledge that services that are important are provided for the aged. Perhaps the biggest slap in the face for our aged community (specifically, pensioners) in this year's budget is the announcement by the government that it will harvest \$27 million in rent from Housing Trust pensioners over the next three years. For the government and particularly the minister to say today that that matter is completely non-negotiable I think is a crying shame.

However, on the positive side, there are some aspects which I am pleased to note are being at least maintained, but I will ask the minister to clarify whether there will be any move to require volunteers in the aged community to pay for police reports, which is now imposed on them by legislation, before they can provide service to the community as volunteers. I am happy to make that my first question.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: My understanding of police checks—and I might be totally wrong in this—is that they were made available free to people who volunteered in specific community organisations. I do not recall any change to that, but I am happy to take that on notice and get back to the member. I am not quite sure where the member for Bragg has determined that—

Ms CHAPMAN: It is not clear from the budget, from what I can identify, whether they are going to be expected to do that, but as the Minister for Ageing are you aware of any move by the Treasurer to make them pay?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am not aware of any changes, and I am happy to take that on notice. I agree with the member for Bragg. I think the expectations of this current generation of people, and the next wave of people who would be considered to be our older South Australians, will be considerably different from what it has been in the past. That is why there has been such a lot of research undertaken by the Office for the Ageing in collaboration with our higher education and tertiary institutions. It is one of the reasons why we also provided \$613,000 over the next two years to improve flexible working arrangements for older South Australians.

So, DFC has the lead in that, and we will be undertaking strategies to support choices in employment and to be a bit responsive to the impact of older people, understanding that they are important to our economy and have a high skill level. We have to look at labour supplies and workforce plannings. What we plan to do is:

- review government legislation to remove biases against mature age employment;
- work with industry and the public sector departments to develop more flexible working arrangements for those nearing or considering retirement; and
- conduct a community awareness campaign on age discrimination in the workforce.

The DFC, through the Office for Ageing, will work with the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology on implementing these flexible working arrangements for our older workers.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, I reckon he is one of those right at the other end that she was talking about earlier. He is at the high end of the baby boomers.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will just indicate at this point, before the member for Norwood has some penetrating questions, that there are the omnibus questions and I am happy to read them in or table them and be taken as read by the minister. What would the minister prefer, or you, Madam Acting Chair?

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): It is not possible to table documents.

Ms CHAPMAN: No, okay.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): It is possible to provide copies to the chair of a page for distribution to other members of the committee.

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, I will read it quickly then.

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 above \$10,000 in 2009-10 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?

3. For each department or agency reporting to the minister how many surplus employees will there be at 30 June 2010, and for each surplus employee what is the title or classification of the employee and the Total Employment Cost (TEC) of the employee?

4. In the financial year 2009-10 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on projects and programs was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2010-11? How much was approved by cabinet?

5. Between 30 June 2009 and 30 June 2010, 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 2009-10, 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 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, what was the responsibility of the minister? Will the minister list the total amounts spent to date on each project?

8. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many Targeted Voluntary Separation Packages will be offered in the financial years 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Madam Acting Chair, could I have clarification? Is it appropriate to ask omnibus questions in relation to hearings that have already been completed?

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): It has been the practice. We have been fairly lax about the way we apply the—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Because I think much of that does not apply to ageing at all.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think I have made it clear in the questions, that it is to each agency to the minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have already had those hearings.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): The minister's question was quite an appropriate one in terms of the fact that she is being asked to provide information in roles in which she is not currently appearing. However, it has been the practice that a single individual will accept the questions for all portfolios relating to their responsibilities.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Okay. In the past my experience has been that omnibus questions have been asked at the start of the hearing.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): It varies. Sometimes it has been at the end. However, the question is 'Will the minister provide' and the answer can be whatever the minister chooses.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Thank you. I will consider it.

Ms CHAPMAN: If the minister has not received the omnibus questions I am happy to provide a list of them.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Of course I have not received them, because you have not provided them.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am simply saying—

Mr MARSHALL: We offered to but then—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, that is not true.

Mr MARSHALL: We offered to table them, I am sure.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Order!

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You have a ruling that you cannot table them.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Does somebody have a question? Member for Norwood, did you have a question?

Mr MARSHALL: I was just responding, sorry.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Does anyone have a question?

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, we do.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): I know the member for Florey does, but I was offering the opportunity to members on my left.

Mr MARSHALL: Madam Chair, I would be very happy to ask my very first question.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): We could go to lunch.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr MARSHALL: We are looking at that very soon. It is my great pleasure to ask my first question here at estimates. Of course, my question is to the Minister for Ageing and, in particular, it relates to the community care services provided by Domiciliary Care. I am going to be referring to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.29. I suppose I am a little bit confused, this being my first estimates, so I would like a point of clarification. If we look at the number of hours provided—

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): You seek clarifications from the chair and you ask questions of the minister.

Mr MARSHALL: I will ask the question then, sorry.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Thank you.

Mr MARSHALL: My question relates to the total service hours provided by Domiciliary Care. I note that in 2008-09 the actual number was 261,000 and yet the budget for 2009 was set at 410,000 hours. My question relates to why that target was set so much lower than the actual for the previous year, especially when you look at the actual estimated result for 2009-10, which shows an increase on the 2008-09 year of some 10,000 service hours. Again, this current budget is being set back at the 2009-10 target of 210,000. I am wondering if you could point out to the committee why you have set that target so low, given the recent performance in that area.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Sorry, what was the budget paper?

Mr MARSHALL: Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.29, sub-program 4.2: Domiciliary Care, in the performance indicators, total service hours, which is the top of the table.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Thank you.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If you have a look just above the service hours in the performance commentary you will see an explanation in relation to those hours.

Mr MARSHALL: The only explanation I can see is, 'Only priority 1 referrals were accepted, and additional services to existing clients were capped.' Is that the explanation you are referring to?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes, that is right. There was a capping of services so that it was priority 1 people. However, in the main, I think from memory, that is about 85 per cent of people who had registered. Again, if my memory serves me correctly, people were referred to other organisations that could provide that service, but they decided or preferred to remain with Domiciliary Care.

Mr MARSHALL: Is it prudential, when the target in 2009-10 was set at 410,000 hours and the actual estimated result in the budget papers is 471,000 hours, for the department to again set the budget at a level which is lower, or do you intend significantly cutting the number of hours of

domiciliary care provided in South Australia? If so, how do you assume that the unmet need will be satisfied?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: We have a budget in which we have to operate and there are circumstances where that has had to be exceeded but we will set our targets within our budget parameters.

Mr MARSHALL: Just as a follow-up to that, I suppose, the actual spending or net cost of the program in 2008-09 was, in fact, \$56 million or thereabouts and the budget for this year, two years later, has actually been set at \$49 million. So a point of clarification: is that a significant reduction in the amount of money the state government is putting into domiciliary care in South Australia?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Mr Ullianich will give you an explanation.

Mr ULLIANICH: In actual fact, there has not been any cut in dollars. It is simply a different way that commonwealth income has been recognised from one year to the other. I refer you to page 10.27, which is the Summary Income Statement. In 2008-09, there was a change in commonwealth-state arrangements with respect to funding.

Mr MARSHALL: 60 to 62 per cent for the federal government, is that the one?

Mr ULLIANICH: No, the actual funding ratios were the same: 62:38 per cent, that did not change. But if you have a look at the way we recognised income from the commonwealth government, there was a change about halfway through. In fact, the new arrangements were put in January 2009. So you see that virtually only half of the commonwealth income of \$58 million was recognised in 2008-09. Now, because you recognised a lower income, and the rest was coming in as appropriation, because that was being paid, there is no drop in income.

Mr MARSHALL: The net cost is lower for the state government but the dollar figure for the program has not been reduced, is what you are indicating. I do point out, however, that the total service hours have fallen significantly from the 2008-09 actual of 461,000 down to 410,000 as the target. I just wonder how prudential that is given that last financial year there were actually 271,000 hours incurred in domiciliary care. So, forecasting for a significant reduction in domiciliary care hours in South Australia is an order of magnitude reduction.

Mr ULLIANICH: The minister touched on that and there is some more complexity to that question. In part, yes, it is very much a case of living within your means but there is some more information there.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: As of June 2010, we had 7,590 active dom care clients. This is a decrease from 7,877 clients as of June 2009, so the number of clients had actually gone down.

Mr MARSHALL: Yes, but I do not see that as being a positive considering that we have already, in your ministerial statements, seen that there is an increasing need. I cannot imagine that the need is decreased, just the state government's service provision to that need.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Domiciliary care is not the only way that people are receiving services. As I said, some people chose to stay with domiciliary care but there has been a massive increase in the home and community care services that have been provided. I think this year it is expected to be in the vicinity of something like \$175 million, up from \$169 million in last financial year.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Have you concluded your line of questioning, member for Norwood?

Mr MARSHALL: On that topic, yes.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): The member for Croydon.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I refer the minister to Budget Paper 1, page 9. Can she tell the committee how the government is helping frail, older people in a lower income stay independent in their own homes?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This is another 2010 election commitment that we are honouring, with measures to help older people remain happy, healthy and in their homes for longer. We are investing \$2.9 million over the next four years to expand access to personal alert systems for older South Australians. The Personal Alert Systems Rebate Scheme will enable older people living alone, who are at risk of falls, to access immediate emergency assistance. This will them stay independent and, as I said, in their homes longer.

The personal alert systems are devices that can be used to alert someone, such as a neighbour, friend, relative or monitoring centre, in an emergency. Monitored personal alert systems utilise a lightweight pendant worn on the wrist or around the neck. By pressing a button on the pendant, a signal can be sent to a pre-arranged contact and a pre-arranged response is put into action.

The Personal Alert Systems Rebate Scheme will provide a one-off amount of up to \$380 for purchase and installation and up to \$250 per year for ongoing monitoring services. The personal alert systems rebate will commence in April. This enables consultation with key stakeholders and the development of policy and program guidelines. It is expected that 100 people will receive the rebate in this financial year, and a total of 2,400 people will receive the rebate over four years. Priority for the rebate will initially be older pensioners and Aboriginal people who live alone, are at risk of a fall and have a referral from an appropriate health professional.

This builds on the work that we initiated with the Red Cross and their teleservice. They operate a teleservice for older people who need the security of someone checking on them during the day, and we have provided additional resources so that, during emergency situations such as the heatwaves that we have experienced, people can now register with the Red Cross and they are contacted during those particularly stressful times, when otherwise they may be fine on their own.

Mr MARSHALL: My question relates to HACC service provisions. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 10.28. This page contains a table at the bottom of page 10.28, which are performance indicators that relate to various services provided by the department, but the ones that I wish to refer to are the HACC services. In fact, it states that the table indicates that the 2009-10 target was exceeded.

Can that be explained? Because, when I look at the 2009-10 target for the total hours of HACC service, it states quite clearly that the target was 3,858,300 hours and, in fact, what was estimated in the final results was 3,726,900. Then, if you look at the line below, the number of people receiving HACC services fell dramatically by some 6,800, I think, if my arithmetic is correct. So there is a shortfall in the target and I am wondering whether the minister could explain that.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: If you have a look on page 10.29 at footnote (b), it explains that we have adopted the commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing's methodology for counting clients. So, previously both the carer and the care recipient received a service and we counted that as two clients; it is now just counted as one client.

Mr MARSHALL: So that would be the second line, the number of people receiving HACC services.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: But it would also be indicative—

Mr MARSHALL: Impact on the total hours?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: —of the hours, I would imagine.

Mr MARSHALL: The note is for the second line, not for the first one: the total hours of HACC services. In fact, if you look at the actual HACC service hours provided in 2008-09, it was 3,907,900 hours, and the target for this current financial year, two years later, has fallen. This is after the minister has made it quite clear to the committee that the service requirement is actually higher.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will get clarification of those numbers for you, but what I can tell you is that, since 2001-02, funding in South Australia for HACC services has increased by 85 per cent.

Mr MARSHALL: You would expect that over a nine-year period.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: But 85 per cent—and last year—

Mr MARSHALL: I thought it might have been higher, actually.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Let me finish. Last year, it was \$162.2 million, so funding grew by \$12.5 million (or 8 per cent) to that figure from the previous year. We are expecting in the next financial year that increase to continue. I cannot find the figure here, but I think it is something like \$175 million—

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Perhaps you need reminding that this is not a debate.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It increases to \$174 million in this year, so you can be assured that there is more money going into Home and Community Care services than ever before.

Mr MARSHALL: I just do not understand that, minister, when the table provided in the budget actually shows a reduction in the number of hours provided.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I will get an explanation of those figures for you. I will take that on notice, but I can tell you that, last year, we had a considerable increase—\$12.5 million—and we are having another considerable increase this year from \$162 million to \$174 million.

Ms CHAPMAN: In the targets for 2010-11 on page 10.13, you say that you are going to 'Continue to implement initiatives and projects from 'Improving with age—our ageing plan for South Australia'. One of the announcements made by one of your colleagues in the ministry, the Minister for Education, is a cap on access to re-education for people aged 21 or under, which obviously means that older people—they are all aged over 21, I suppose—will have to pay for the opportunity to access education. Did you confer with the Minister for Education before he made that decision, and did you as the Minister for Ageing obtain any legal advice on whether that was in breach of the Discrimination Act?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am part of cabinet and I endorse this budget. You can refer the rest of those questions to the Minister for Education.

Ms CHAPMAN: My question is whether you have you done anything on it, not what he has done. Have you or your department put any submission to the Minister for Education on this issue, and have you or your department obtained any legal advice on that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Issues in relation to the Education Department should be referred to the Minister for Education.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will take that as a no.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You can take it how you like. You can refer questions about education to the Minister for Education.

Ms CHAPMAN: My question is also on the restructure of the department, which is to take place later this year. My understanding is that it is an amalgamation of some of the department of ageing services with disability. Can you advise the committee on what is actually going to happen and what cost saving you expect to get out of it?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: You made some reference earlier about undertaking some reform despite Monsignor Cappelletti's work for disability services across government. Let me make this point very clearly: the work we are doing, and have been undertaking for some time, has been endorsed by Monsignor Cappelletti, and the work he is doing, we believe, will complement the work that is being done in our department. So, there is no conflict in relation to undertaking that work.

The Ageing and Disability Service Improvement project intends to develop a statewide community care system for frail older people and people with a disability which will be delivered through the Department for Families and Communities.

It will provide for consistent decision making, equitable access to quality services and support to eligible people appropriate to their level of need regardless of their age or location. The Ageing and Disability Service Improvement Project positions the department to provide the most effective services to frail older people and younger people with a disability in preparation for the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) reform of the Home and Community Care (HACC) Program.

New models of service delivery, along with improved funds management and integrated intake and assessment, are at the heart of the current service improvement changes. People with a disability and frail older people will enter the service system through a single entry point. Once assessed, there will be four levels of service provision, these include—

- Level 1—brief information or referral to another service;
- Level 2—basic community early intervention;
- Level 3—basic community package support; and
- Level 4—intensive support.

People will be able to move between levels as their needs change, and they may receive services from level 2 in addition to receiving levels 3 or 4.

A new integrated ageing and disability service system within DFC will comprise four functional areas:

- intake and assessment;
- funds management;
- government service delivery; and
- policy planning and research.

Initial information sessions outlining the proposed changes were conducted between 28 June 2010 and 12 July 2010 with staff, employee associations and key external stakeholders. Around 500 people attended these sessions. In addition, the chief executive will continue to meet with key stakeholders in both the ageing and disability sectors, such as the Chairperson of Disability Speaks, the Public Advocate, the Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner and the Executive Director of the Council on the Ageing.

All information sessions were well received, I am told, and concerns that were raised focused on how the changes will occur and the potential impact on clients. Working parties have been established and further consultation will occur with staff and key stakeholders.

In addition, a human resource transition working party will be established in November this year to oversee the transition of staff into the new structure. A website and email address have been established to communicate with all stakeholders. A consultation paper has been posted on the website, along with a PowerPoint presentation that has been used in the information sessions and a series of frequently asked questions.

The service improvement changes are likely to be in place from December this year, and this enables South Australia to be well positioned for the new COAG arrangements that start transitioning from June 2011.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have a question relating back to page 10.13. Minister, again, you identify your proposed targets for 2010-11, and about point four on that page states:

...improve and expand the community passenger networks to ensure older South Australians in regional areas do not become isolated.

How much money have you allocated in this year's budget to do that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that there is \$400,000 for this year, but \$800,000 per year after that.

Ms CHAPMAN: How much was it last year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I am advised that we currently spend about \$6.4 million on HACC transport and \$1.4 million on community passenger networks (CPN), which includes HACC money, and that this additional \$400,000 this year and \$800,000 after that is additional money.

Ms CHAPMAN: Will only certain regions of South Australia have access to these services or is it a funding arrangement that is applicable to any applicant wherever they may reside, presumably provided some transport service is available?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: During this current financial year, we will be completing the review of the existing community transport funding and guidelines. We will be looking at that, developing new policies and guidelines that enable greater control and standardisation of the CPN services across the state, and identify an appropriate auspice arrangement for a CPN service in the Upper Spencer Gulf, covering Whyalla, Port Pirie and Port Augusta.

Ms CHAPMAN: Do I take it from that then that other areas in South Australia will not have access to this?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, other areas currently have it. It is currently operating in all 12 regions across South Australia.

Ms CHAPMAN: The other matter under the targets says:

Contribute to the implementation of flexible working arrangements for older workers.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: What is proposed in this year and how much money is allocated?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I think I answered a question on that.

Ms CHAPMAN: You mentioned before about the—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, I didn't. I actually answered a question on that, but I am happy to go through that again for you.

Ms CHAPMAN: I just did not have an amount, that is all.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No, it did have an amount. Heaven forbid anyone should say you don't listen. Over two years, \$613,000 is being provided for Families and Communities to develop a range of strategies including: reviewing the legislation to remove biases, as I said, against mature age employment; working with industry and public sector departments to develop more flexible working arrangements for those nearing or considering retirement; and conducting a community awareness campaign on age discrimination in the workplace. We will also be working with the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology on helping us develop those flexible working arrangements for our older workers.

Ms CHAPMAN: Heaven forbid, minister, that you didn't listen, but my question is: how much are you going to be spending this year?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: \$341,000; \$613,000.

Ms CHAPMAN: Which one.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: \$341,000 this year and \$272,000 in 2011-12.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well, \$613,000 over two years.

Ms CHAPMAN: If you had answered in the first place, we wouldn't have to go—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Goodness gracious.

Ms CHAPMAN: She only read the 6—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: I read all of that out—

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): Order!

Ms CHAPMAN: She read the consolidated figure.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: When I answered the question, I read out—but you weren't listening—\$613,000 in funding over two years will be provided to the Department for Families and Communities: \$341,000 in 2010-11 and \$272,000 in 2011-12, but you weren't listening.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, minister.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That's okay.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): The member for Croydon, I understand you have an additional question you want to ask.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I refer the committee and the minister to Budget Paper 6, page 126, the active ageing policy launched, good Lord, just before the state election. Can the minister show us what the government has been doing since then to carry out the policy, including the home visiting scheme?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: This government is committed to making our state a place where older people feel safe and valued, and we are making a state where older people stay involved or become newly involved in every aspect of community life. This government had a clear plan for senior South Australians at the last election, a plan that listened to the desires of older people to remain in their own homes with the right support for as long as possible. For that reason, we have committed \$3.1 million over four years for a home visiting scheme to ensure eligible older South Australians can receive 25,000 visits. The home visiting scheme will provide older citizens with the right information, the right choice and the right advice, and the opportunity to participate in their community at the time that is right for them.

Upon winning government, we took immediate action on the home visiting scheme and, to maximise its success, have built this scheme into the existing Seniors Wise SA program. Members will recall I announced this program as a concept at the 2009 International Day of Older Persons. Consequently, a pilot project is under way and progressing well. Seniors Wise SA is a new concept for Australia. Our program is being designed in South Australia, with inspiration from a very successful, long-lived program in the United States of America. Seniors Wise SA has three parts that all contribute to the same goal. These include:

- home visiting, navigation, information, advice (home visiting is the backbone: the service is centred on meeting the older person's individual needs);
- community awareness (building a positive, productive, age-friendly community); and
- a senior-friendly business certification (a win-win for both business and the community: it will provide better service for the older customer and better business alignment with an invaluable sector of our population).

Ms CHAPMAN: In regard to the leaked budget submission report in this area, there is a proposal for a recommendation—

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: You mean the Sustainable Budget Commission.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, I am sorry, the Sustainable Budget Commission—the leaked report, not the final one. There is a recommendation to cease the SA Spectacle Scheme. Do you rule out that?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: In relation to the recommendation for GST savings on energy concession payments, do you rule that out?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: That was an intergovernmental matter and nothing to do with seniors.

Ms CHAPMAN: Seniors do receive concessions.

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: It is an intergovernmental saving that we have made.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, it has happened and therefore that is going to affect—

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Joe will explain it to you.

Mr ULLIANICH: It is simply a ruling that we have from the ATO whereby energy concessions were GST-able. We now can recover that, so it is just a saving that we have made.

Ms CHAPMAN: There is also a recommendation which is not GST but is to reduce the council rate concession. Is that ruled out?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: There is also a proposal that may well affect your portfolios of disability and ageing, and that is the services of the Public Trustee. There is a recommendation of the Sustainable Budget Commission in the leaked report that there be a transfer of function of the client trustee management to the Public Trustee which would, in effect, give a saving from your department. Is that ruled out?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No. In fact, that is in the budget.

Ms CHAPMAN: And that leaked report says that the Public Trustee will now charge for those services. Have you made any assessment as to how many of your clients, in disability and/or ageing, will be affected by this?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: There is an eligibility criterion. Again, from memory, I think we have about 700 clients for whom Disability SA has been managing their funds. I have had concerns raised with me by families of people with a disability about the appropriateness of that. It seemed to me to be an odd thing for the department to be doing, when we have an agency like the Public Trustee equipped to do exactly all of those things. Now, the Public Trustee does have a fee structure, but there is eligibility criteria around that. It is an income-based fee structure, as I understand it. I am told 200 of the 700 clients were already using the Public Trustee.

Ms CHAPMAN: Of the federal funding which you receive for this portfolio, which is in the Portfolio Statements, you will recall that for the last two years—and you have mentioned it today—

federal funding has been under the national and state ageing agreement, through HACC and other services. Has there been a new agreement signed with the commonwealth regarding what their funding will be in the forward estimates?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: No. This is the third year of the agreement and no new agreement has been signed. I think you will recall that there has been some discussion in COAG about the commonwealth taking over service provision for all people over 65. That has not yet been finalised, as I understand.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, when does our current agreement expire?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Next year.

Ms CHAPMAN: The month?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: On 30 June next year.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, what is your understanding then of what services they will take over?

The Hon. J.M. RANKINE: Well again, that is up in the air and still being negotiated. My understanding from preliminary advice was that the federal government would take responsibility for all services for those people who are 65 years and over, and that is part of the reason we have been doing the work we have been doing within our department, so that we can streamline the provision of services, irrespective of people's age. But that is really up to COAG; we are the recipients of those decisions.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have no further questions.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Thompson): In that case I think we might have a couple of early minutes. There being no other questions, I declare consideration of the proposed payments for the portfolio of Families and Communities completed.

[Sitting suspended from 13:13 to 14:15]

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$146,381,000

ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$51,292,000

Membership:

Ms Fox substituted for Mrs Geraghty.

Mr Pisoni substituted for Mr Gardner.

Witness:

Hon. G.E. Gago, Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister for the City of Adelaide.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Maguire, Chief Executive Officer, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms A. Gale, Assistant Commissioner, Consumer Affairs.

Mr A. Swanson, Director, Business and Financial Services, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms D. Contala, Executive Director, Finance and Business Services Division, Office of the Chief Executive, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr. P. White, Commissioner for Liquor and Gambling, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms R. Burner, Adviser.

Ms H. Shepherd, Chief of Staff.

Ms N. Kilvert, Adviser, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms A. Barclay, Adviser.

The CHAIR: Good afternoon, everyone. As I am sure you are aware, 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 proposed payments to facilitate changeover of departmental advisers. I ask the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition if they could indicate whether they have agreed on a timetable for today's proceedings and, if so, provide the chair with a copy.

Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure 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, 19 November 2010. This year the *Hansard* supplement, which contains all estimate committee responses, will be finalised on Friday 3 December 2010.

I propose to allow both the minister and the lead speaker from the opposition to make opening statements of up to 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 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. I would like to make that very clear. In fact, I will repeat it: the questions that you are asking must be based on lines of expenditure—and I would like to be told quite clearly, as would the clerks, where they are from.

Members unable to complete their questions during their proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the *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 committees, television coverage will be allowed for filming from both the northern and the southern galleries.

Mr Marshall interjecting:

The CHAIR: Member for Norwood, you never know. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to Portfolio Statements Volume 2, Part 5. We will be dealing with consumer affairs initially. Minister, would you care to make an opening statement?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Thank you, Madam Chair. I welcome parliamentary examination of the budget papers in my portfolio areas of consumer affairs and liquor licensing. I will be making a very brief opening statement. The operations of the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs continues to provide a free and accessible conciliation service for consumers. Demand for the service remains high, as it is a cost effective dispute resolution for consumers. OCBA also manages the marketplace through a program of regular checks and specific programs targeting various regions, trades and practices and is vigilant in the monitoring of safety standards, particularly for babies and young children.

Many products that do not comply or are found to present significant risk have been recalled or withdrawn from sale during the past year, and these include a number of items. The ongoing education campaign continues to alert parents of the dangers of looped blind cords to young children. OCBA continues to inform consumers and traders about their rights and obligations through media alerts, regular radio interviews, community radio stations, information on our website and other publications.

The other area of my responsibility is the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner, who is responsible for exercising statutory functions under the Liquor Licensing Act. The operations of the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner include licensing and approval of venues, organisations and persons; compliance inspections and financial and technical investigations and audits; complaint conciliation and disputes resolution; legislative review; barring reviews; and the processing of dry area applications.

During the 2009-10 financial year we saw the continued use of police barring orders under the Liquor Licensing Act—which has proved to be very successful—and also introduced a number of amendments to the Liquor Licensing Act, including making it easier for licensees to determine if a person is intoxicated.

I now welcome examination of the budget papers, but before I start I would like correct the Portfolio Statements for the Attorney-General's Department. An error has been identified in the 2010-11 Portfolio Statements. This relates to the allocation of costs between Program 5, Liquor Regulatory Services and Programs 6, Gambling Regulatory Services. Madam Chair, to correct the record I was going to seek leave but I understand that, instead, I supply for distribution.

The CHAIR: As long as it is only one page.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is one page, and it is of a statistical nature to correct the figures. I should say this adjustment only impacts on the allocation of costs between programs. There is no change to the total 2009-10 estimated result of the Attorney-General's Department.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Member for Unley, would you care to make an opening statement?

Mr PISONI: No opening statements, just straight into questions, Madam Chair. Minister, I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 5.35, Liquor Regulatory Services. In July, the government published two discussion papers, one of which outlines a range of options in liquor licensing, including a new annual fee for licensed venues. Does the budget include the expected revenue to be raised as outlined in the office's discussion papers 'A Safe Night Out', and 'Review of the code of practice for licensed premises' and does the minister still believe that the fees will raise around, I think the figure you used on radio was, \$5 million per annum?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: In terms of the annual fee being included in the budget, I think that was the first question, whether the revenue gained from the annual fee is included in the budget papers?

Mr PISONI: Yes.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, no, it is not, and in terms of the budget estimate of revenue derived from that fee, as outlined by the proposals that were in the discussion paper—because that might change—I am advised it is around \$5 million. I believe \$5 million is the estimate.

Mr PISONI: You have said publicly that the enforcement costs associated with liquor licensing and gambling is \$3 million per annum. If you have a look at your expenses and so forth in your regulatory services, you are looking at a figure there of \$1.941 million by the looks of it. Can you clarify what the costs are and what the new costs will be once you implement the recommendations of 'A safer night out' and collect that \$5 million, and perhaps even tell us details of the additional compliance staff, how they will be employed, salary levels and so forth?

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Chair, can I clarify: is this an amended page 5.35?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes, it is amended.

Ms CHAPMAN: Is the only deletion the explanation, subparagraph (a) on the bottom? Under 'Other' under Expenses, we now have a No. 5 instead of minus 240, and we have a deletion of the reference on subparagraph (a). Are there any other corrections?

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that that is all that is different. Sorry; with that kerfuffle, can you repeat the question?

Mr PISONI: I was asking for the cost of compliance. You have said publicly that the associated costs are around \$3 million. I am asking what additional compliance staff will be employed, where will they be employed and what salary levels will they be on, and then when will it start? It appears from the budget papers that it is certainly not going to be the 2010-11 year, because you do not have the fees included in the budget, nor do you have what appear to be the expenses included in the budget.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, in terms of any additional compliance staff that may be employed, we have not anticipated that requirement as yet. As I said, we are still in the consultation phase, or just completed consultation. We have not signed off on a particular model yet, so we do not have the details needed to work out exactly what resources we might need

for that. We do not have those details as yet in terms of additional staff, and we do not have an anticipated start time. Obviously, we would hope to have any proposed legislative changes through both houses by the first half of next year. That is a very rough estimate.

Mr PISONI: So, where does the \$3 million in compliance enforcement costs come from?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that that is just the normal ongoing costs.

Mr PISONI: That is not the cost of the new scheme?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No; that is not included. I am sorry, I thought I made it clear that none of these matters are included in this budget paper. They are matters that are yet to be finalised in terms of consultation, and we are yet to sign off on a model. So, no costings for any of the proposed new fee arrangements or any other regulatory burdens that might result from the reforms proposed are included in this budget.

Mr PISONI: We had handed to us changes in the budget as we sat. Are you able to explain how the actual from the 2008-09 budget of \$1.944 million has now become a non-applicable figure, or a zero figure, by the look of it?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that there was a provision for a doubtful debt raised in 2008-09 due to commercial discussions occurring at that time between SKY CITY and the South Australian government. The matter was resolved in 2009-10. The impact of these transactions is shown as 'Other expenses,' however, the numbers are being reflected in error in Program 5 instead of Program 6.

Mr PISONI: So where did that \$1.944 million end up?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It was placed in liquor instead of gambling as a shortcut.

Mr PISONI: So, there has been an addendum for the gambling pages as well?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes.

Mr PISONI: I refer to page 5.36 of the same budget paper. How many inspectors were employed in 2009-10, and in what capacity, and is it expected to be the same number for the 2010-11 year?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, in compliance, we have a total of 29 FTEs: 11 are employed in the casino; 10 in liquor and gambling; wagering, three; investigators, two; and financial investigators, three.

Mr PISONI: So, what do you have in place? You have 11 at the casino; they are at the casino exclusively, are they?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the 11 in the casino currently work exclusively in the casino. However, that is currently under review.

Mr PISONI: That is under review because you are concerned that they could be familiar with other staff and they could be turning a blind eye? Why is that under review? Is the system not working?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, in effect, this is a gambling question because they do belong to the casino. However, just very briefly, because I do not want to cut across another minister's portfolio responsibilities, I have been advised that we are looking at improving efficiencies and streamlining our inspectorship right across the board in terms of improving efficiencies and doing things better.

Mr PISONI: I move to page 5.29, Operational Licensing Services. Can the minister confirm or otherwise that a plumbing or electrician apprentice, after completing their off-the-job training (which could be within two years before their official apprenticeship is completed), can walk into OCBA with their completion papers for their off-the-job training and be issued with a licence for plumbing or electrical work, and, if so, why is that?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Is the honourable member asking about an apprentice who has completed or not completed their off-the-job training?

Mr PISONI: I will try again. An apprentice can complete their TAFE component—their off-the-job training—well ahead of the contract of training being completed, walk into OCBA, pay a licence fee and be a fully licensed electrician or plumber.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I think the example was whether a plumbing apprentice can be licensed once they have achieved their certificate of competence. That certificate of competence has to be signed off by both the employer and the accreditation organisation and this could occur before the training contract has been completed. However, by being able to be signed off in terms of their certificate of competence, they have been required to demonstrate that they have reached a competence standard that is accepted not only for on-the-job training but also with respect to academic requirements to be able to be licensed.

Mr PISONI: Have apprentices achieved sign off without the approval of their employers?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised not that we are aware.

Mr MARSHALL: My question relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, in particular Sub-program 3.3: Compliance and Enforcement, page 5.30. At the previous committee, we heard from the Minister for Housing that she has not reported any alleged acts of fraud in the illegal installation of insulation in South Australian Housing Trust homes by unlicensed operators. Will you now investigate this matter and/or report this matter to the police for prosecution, if appropriate?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the Minister for Housing (Hon. Jennifer Rankine) recently stated that insulation has been installed in 332 Housing Trust and 62 community housing properties under the commonwealth home insulation program. I understand that the Minister for Housing has written to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy Efficiency seeking funding for immediate inspection of the properties involved.

Mr MARSHALL: I understand that, but the issue is that these were unlicensed installers. They should be licensed by your department. I am wondering whether you will refer this to the police for investigation or whether you will instigate prosecution proceedings yourself for these unlicensed installers in relation to these properties.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I been advised that, since July 2009, OCBA has scrutinised 253 installers. Of these, I am advised that 177 installers have complied with SA licensing legislation or are applying for a licence and 61 installers are currently under investigation by OCBA. The remaining 15 installers are being scrutinised for possible enforcement action. Incorrectly installed insulation obviously can pose a fire hazard, increasing the risk of roof space fires if insulation is installed too close particularly to halogen downlights, older electrical wiring or other devices in the ceiling space, and so those steps were taken.

Mr MARSHALL: Just as a supplementary; you are saying to the committee that around about 70 unlicensed installers of insulation have been operating in South Australia. What level of comfort can you give to the public that this is being pursued with some alacrity?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I can only reiterate that, of those that have been found deficient, I have been advised that 61 are currently under investigation and 15 are possibly looking at enforcement action—that is, action taken against them. That is at this stage. Also, licensed contractors are subject to legal sanctions under the Building Work Contractors Act 1995, which includes loss of licence and a maximum penalty up to \$20,000.

Mr MARSHALL: It really is to the point that several people around Australia have lost their lives because of this problem. Hundreds of fires have been reported. What confidence can the people of South Australia have in the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs in relation to how quickly it is investigating these licence breaches and pursuing them as vigorously as they possibly can?

The CHAIR: Does this question relate to the line?

Mr MARSHALL: Yes, absolutely. This has occurred over a long period of time and there have been—

Ms BEDFORD: This relates to this morning's questioning.

Mr MARSHALL: And the minister deferred it. She said we had to bring it up with this minister.

The CHAIR: To clarify, it is not actually about the number of people; initially you mentioned 61 being investigated—

Mr MARSHALL: No, because—

The CHAIR: I have not finished yet. You mentioned 61 people being investigated and 15 people having some sort of action taken against them. You talked about a round number of 70 people. But now we are talking about the time frame in which they are being investigated?

Mr MARSHALL: Yes. I refer back to sub-program 3.3 on page 5.30 and I look at the net cost of the sub-program. This is for compliance and enforcement. If you look at the estimated result for 2009-10, it was \$2,851,000. The government in its budget has reduced the amount of money going into this area of compliance. There are 61 who have not been investigated and only 15 who have been investigated out of the 76 who are alleged to be in breach. This seems to be extraordinarily slow process on a such a vital, life-threatening licence breach.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I draw to members' attention that, in effect, this problem really has largely come about from the federal government's insulation initiative which really only came into place in July last year. So, to suggest that this has been going on for years and some extraordinary length of time is completely misleading.

South Australia is very fortunate because it is one of the very few states—I think the only state—that requires insulation installers to be licensed, whereas other states have not required that. We have seen what has occurred in other states, where the problem has been much larger than here in South Australia. We have seen examples interstate of people losing their life. That has not occurred here in South Australia. We have had very minimal problems associated with it, and that is because we have a much more highly regulated industry in South Australia—albeit not perfect but, certainly, far more regulated than any other state. So, the outcomes have been quite positive.

There is very little foil installed here in South Australia, so we have not had to face the problems of risks associated with foil, and our officers have been very actively and aggressively pursuing and scrutinising installers. They have identified 61 who are currently under investigation, and 15 are possibly facing action. So, I think that does indeed show a high level of diligence and a very vigilant department.

The CHAIR: Just to clarify that: from what I understand from what you have said, we have only been dealing with this since July last year—is that correct?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The problem was certainly exacerbated.

The CHAIR: Right. I think the member was discussing a time frame for current investigations. Is that something we can put a time frame on, or is it more of an organic process?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Well no, Madam Chair, evidence has to be collected.

The CHAIR: Organic process.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: People have to be found. We have got to be able to put together a case to demonstrate a breach if we are going to prosecute that way. That can take time, and these can sometimes be quite complex personal circumstances, but I can absolutely assure members that OCBA is working very hard in relation to this. They are very diligent and they are working as fast as they can to resolve these matters.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, in addition to the scrutiny, through a licensing process, of those who are competent to install the insulation—into which you conducted some investigation, I think in March last year—what was clear this morning was that the Minister for Housing acknowledged that there had been illegal, that is unauthorised, installation into Housing Trust properties. The terms of the proposal by the federal government was that this insulation was available to non public housing properties, and in fact, dozens were actually done.

The minister, or anyone else, is not blaming the tenants because, presumably, Billy the installer has come along and knocked on the door and said, 'I can put insulation in your house for free.' They have said, 'Yes, that's fine; that's great', and they have come in. What the minister has also acknowledged is that they have now found out about that in the middle of this year—that is, some months ago—and that they have conducted their own investigation of this public housing stock and, of those, they have actually found four that were significantly derelict in the installation, and they had to ensure that they were removed.

She has further stated that she has reported that to the federal authorities with a view to getting some money back, because I think it has cost about \$18,000 from her department to fix this

up. But the fraud that she has described, of actually going along and installing this in someone's home, is clearly a criminal offence, if that is correct. She has admitted this morning—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: I think the minister needs to have the full story here. She has admitted this morning—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, she is obviously not aware of it and we have not got time to wait for *Hansard*, so I would appreciate, Madam Chair, if the member for Croydon would stop interrupting. So, we are at the stage, minister, where the minister this morning admitted that she has not told you or your department about this and that she has not reported it to the police. The question, as asked by my learned colleague here, the member for Norwood, is whether you will be doing an investigation on this issue—not last year's issue, but this issue—and/or referring it to the police.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Excuse me, sorry. Can I just bring up a timing issue? Have you had a chance to discuss everything you want to before three?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am not too sure which part of the budget papers that the member for Bragg is referring to.

Ms CHAPMAN: Compliance and enforcement.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Which bit?

Ms CHAPMAN: Page 5.30, sub-program 3.3 is the compliance and enforcement section of your department. It is allocating \$2.8 million, which is lower than last year's, and I am asking whether you are going to do something about this.

The CHAIR: And that is completely reasonable and I do not have a problem with that.

Ms CHAPMAN: The minister, obviously, was a bit concerned, so I thought I would make it clear.

The CHAIR: I am just talking about an issue of timing in relation to the many portfolios that the minister has, but we are all on track?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am happy to take that on notice given the time.

The CHAIR: Do you have any more questions that you would like to ask?

Ms CHAPMAN: No, I am happy to move to the Office of Women.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Maguire, Chief Executive, Department of Justice and Attorney-General's Department.

Ms V. Swan, Director, Office for Women.

Mr A. Swanson, Director, Business and Financial Services, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr G. Baynes, Executive Director, Building Communities Division, Attorney-General's Department.

Membership:

Mr Pederick substituted for Mr Marshall.

Mr Williams substituted for Mr Pisoni.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I will make a short opening statement, and I indicate that I will forgo government questions. Obviously, the Rann government is very committed to gender equity and positive change for women. In July 2009 we saw the historic passing of the amendments to the Equal Opportunity Act. These amendments, which are now in force, make it unlawful to discriminate against a person on a number of grounds such as religious dress, caring responsibilities, disability including mental illness, learning difficulties or illnesses such as HIV and

hepatitis C. This is a big win for women as the laws also make it unlawful to refuse to sell goods or services to a breastfeeding mother or refuse nursing mothers access to educational services. The amendments go a long way towards making the workplace, marketplace and educational institutions fairer for all South Australians.

The year 2009 saw also the expansion of the Family Safety Framework to an additional three sites. Developed by the Office for Women in conjunction with other key South Australian government agencies, the framework provides an action-based integrated service response to families experiencing domestic violence who are at high risk of serious injury or death.

In September 2009 there was a landmark day in the fight against domestic violence when we saw the introduction of a bill to overhaul existing domestic violence legislation and the launch of the Don't Cross the Line anti-violence community awareness campaign.

Amendments to the domestic violence legislation, passed by parliament in December 2009, give police and courts greater powers to prevent and stamp out family abuse. These reforms to domestic violence legislation bring South Australia in line with recent reforms in other Australian jurisdictions.

The CHAIR: Thank you. The member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. It is with pleasure again that I am in this committee. I have some questions to ask of the minister in relation to the status of women. Perhaps the most stunning decision that was announced during the budget in respect to this portfolio was the announcement that the government would have a Building Communities Division. This is an amalgamation of all sorts of offices including recreation and sport, racing, youth, women, veterans' affairs, the Guardianship Board, public advocate, volunteers, Multicultural SA, Equal Opportunity Commission and the Native Title Claims Resolution Unit. What a hotchpotch! I have not heard of anything so absurd in its combination since we had the infants, Imbeciles, and married women's act. However, I will be asking the minister some questions about how this is going to work, what it is going to be called, etc. in due course.

But it is concerning to note the demotion that women clearly have under the Rann government. Whilst the minister has had this portfolio for some time, and I am sure that she will be ably assisted today by Ms Swan, I notice that three out of her four advisers are men. No personal criticism of Messrs Maguire, Swanson, and Baynes, but it does seem a little odd when we are here to have the prestigious presentation of the government's highly-acclaimed, or the least attempting to claim some, contribution to women in this state.

I will be very interested to learn from the minister this year what the percentage each of the ministers has in the breakdown of their staff in the advance toward the stunning target, but I will listen fully with interest. My first question is: which minister will be responsible for the Building Communities Division?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that no one, single minister will be responsible. It will involve several ministers which includes those whose current portfolios will be part of Building Communities. So, women, youth, veterans' affairs—whichever ministers currently have responsibility for those areas will remain responsible for policy matters within those areas.

Ms CHAPMAN: Is Mr Baynes the CEO of Building Communities; is that how I heard he was introduced?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I understood you to ask which minister would be responsible.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, I did, and now I am asking is Mr Baynes the chief executive of the Building Communities Division?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the new department head will be put in charge. The position will be held by a deputy chief executive of Building Communities and that position is currently being advertised.

The CHAIR: I am sorry; Mr Baynes is a person you introduced as coming in. What is his position? Is he just the acting executive?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that Mr Geoff Baynes is Executive Director, but that is part of the old structure of the agency. The agency will be completely redesigned and restructured and new positions put in place, as with the one I have just described, the new deputy chief executive.

The CHAIR: The member for Florey.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No; we are forfeiting questions. We are reducing the amount of time for women to half an hour.

Ms CHAPMAN: So the position is that there will be a deputy executive position to be appointed, which will sit across all of these areas?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: New positions; it will be a completely new structure.

Ms CHAPMAN: Let's go to the one that you are in charge of, which is the Office for Women. Is that going to still continue with the same name?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The policy area will remain. We have not yet decided on whether we want to rebadge the name of the office, but the role and functions will remain the same, if not, I believe, be enhanced and improved under these new efficiencies and streamlining of structures. So, the policy role and function will remain; it may or may not be rebadged. As I said, we have not decided on that. I think I have answered the question.

Ms CHAPMAN: Will the Women's Information Service continue?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, at this point in time, we plan to continue the service as it is; however, we are currently reviewing that service as well. We see this as an opportunity to realign services to ensure that they remain contemporary services that meet the current public expectation and the anticipated demand. We are looking at that service. We are committed to continuing it at present, but we are reconsidering it.

Ms CHAPMAN: Is one option being considered that, instead of having a Women's Information Service, there is going to be a sort of 'building communities information service'? Is that one of the options you are considering?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: That may be possible; however, we are looking at targeting resources where they are actually needed, and I believe that there is a specific need for women, so it is likely that there will be some gender lens aspect to the service. It has not been finalised yet, so those details are still being worked through, and it is hard to say exactly what that will look like. However, we are very much committed to making sure that women's services continue to be provided and that they be provided by those who have expertise in that particular policy area.

Ms CHAPMAN: On the same topic, what is the current number of FTEs for the Office for Women and WIS, and how many of those positions will be responsible for the task they each do after the amalgamation? I mean, minister, this is a \$9.9 million saving, so some work must have been done to calculate how that is going to be saved. It may not be in your Office for Women; maybe that is going to be quarantined, or maybe you do not yet know what is going to happen to it.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that the 2009-10 estimated FTE result is around 20, and the anticipated 2010-11 result will be around 19 FTEs. The savings that will be achieved will result from the consolidation of particularly common business functions in areas such as policy development, grants management and administration, program delivery and corporate support and administration. The new Building Communities Division, forming part of the AG's Department, will provide significant reform and change. One of the main drivers for this change has been the increase in the size of the department over recent years, and also machinery of government changes.

To maximise organisational strengths and address current structural limitations, the majority of the department's existing business units are being harmonised within the areas of organisational performance, building communities and business and consumer services. Core capabilities will be brought together in centres of expertise and made available across the department to improve services to the community. So, as you can see, similar core role functions will be provided; they will just be structured in a different way. There may be some changes but, generally speaking, we plan to minimise the impact on frontline services wherever we possibly can.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, can you assure the committee that, in this restructure, we are even going to retain a minister for women, or Minister for the Status of Women—whatever it is going to be called—and that that is going to be maintained? I note that prime minister Gillard took some weeks after the announcement of her reshuffle to even have a minister for women. So, it may be something that is being copied, as to whether we are even going to have one.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: My position is safe.

Ms CHAPMAN: Excellent.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: As I said, the title of the agency is yet to be decided. There may be some rebadging, but the focus will remain a dedicated one, with a very dedicated minister for women, or whatever my title might be.

Ms CHAPMAN: When do you expect the head of this Building Communities Division to be appointed?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that we expect before Christmas.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am still on Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 5.34. There are only two pages on this in the budget, but I will refer to it. This section advises that, as at 1 June 2010, the percentage of women on state government boards and committees is 45 per cent, and sharing of committees is 34 per cent. I ask this question every year, minister, and I will ask it again this year: as at 30 June 2010, what is the percentage breakdown of female representation on each of those as members and chairs for each minister?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The honourable member can be directed to the annual report. We table the results by minister; it is broken down by minister. It is tabled in parliament. It is publicly available. All the honourable member needs to do is to go and have a look. It is all there on the public record.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, the minister is saying that each minister has placed on their website the percentage of women members of each member of board and chair? I have not seen that but, if the minister assures me that is the case, I am happy to have a look at it. Some of them refer occasionally, when they are proud of an appointment level, to their annual reports, but it is not universal from my understanding.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am sorry; I need to correct the record. It is not by minister: it is by portfolio. It is a report that is tabled in parliament outlining that information. It was tabled on 15 September, and that is what is on the public record. What each individual minister chooses to do in terms of their website is a matter for them. The honourable member would need to ask them.

Ms CHAPMAN: Absolutely. That is the chair and the members of boards, and if you say that is right I will have a look at it. What about the gender balance of staff of each minister?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that that is not reported.

Ms CHAPMAN: Does the material that was tabled on 15 September include a percentage number as distinct from an actual number of women?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I do not know. All the honourable member needs to do is to have a look. I do not know.

Ms CHAPMAN: I assume that you have tabled it, minister.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes, I did.

Ms CHAPMAN: You did?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: And that ministers report this to your office and you then table it in the parliament?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, minister, you cannot recall now whether or not it has a percentage figure?

Ms CHAPMAN: No. Does the honourable member have any idea how many reports I table?

Ms CHAPMAN: I have no idea, minister, but what I would ask, as you cannot remember, is that, in the event that you did not include a percentage in that tabled report, will you take that on notice and provide it to the committee?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I would need to look at the report and consider it in its entirety.

Ms CHAPMAN: But my question is: in the event that there is no percentage reference in there—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have answered the question. That is my answer.

Ms CHAPMAN: Would you do that? We have asked in previous years and you have provided it?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: What, you are not able to calculate? You are not able to work out your figures, your percentage function on your calculator? It is quite simple.

Ms CHAPMAN: That depends on what is on there, minister. I am simply asking this. It may be there.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have answered the question, Madam Chair.

Ms CHAPMAN: If it is not there and if the primary information—

The CHAIR: I think that I just heard the minister say that she would get back to the member for Bragg on this.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, minister, I appreciate that. The women in leadership targets in the strategic plan have either not been met or are unlikely to be met, according to the latest review. That was as reported in the 2010 progress report this year. Will these targets be changed in the future, and when does the government believe the targets—if they are going to keep them and not change them—will be met?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is apparent that it is most unlikely that we will meet those targets. The strategic plan targets are currently under review. There is a process that involves very extensive community consultation and major stakeholder involvement where targets are reviewed and reset for the future, so that is currently underway. No doubt these targets will be looked at in that process. It is always disappointing when we do not meet our targets. However, I want to say that I believe in setting these gender targets, and particularly in relation to boards and committees, I believe that has helped lift South Australia's performance.

When the Rann Labor government came into power, we inherited an abysmal record from the Liberal government, roughly 33 per cent of women on boards and committees. It was disgraceful. In that time, we have been able to increase that performance significantly. We are now just under 46 per cent, which is very pleasing. We have also increased our number of chairs significantly, as well. We have not met the target, but nevertheless there has been a significant increase.

I am absolutely convinced that, if the government had not been brave enough to set these ambitious targets—aspirational—and hold ourselves out to be publicly accountable and being required to report publicly every year, my view is that we would never have succeeded in achieving as high a percentage. I think we are leading the nation but, if we are not, we are close to leading the nation. Yes, we are leading the nation, I have been advised. It is something we can be very proud of, even though, as I say, we have not achieved that target yet, we have certainly led the way.

Ms CHAPMAN: As I have said before, when the Labor Party gives some safe seats to women we might accept that.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: You could give up your seat, Michael. Still at page 5.34, the Premier's Women's Directory. The minister might remember that this was an initiative of the former Hon. Diana Laidlaw, except it is now called the 'Premier's Women's Directory', a bit like the Premier's Women's Council. I think it took him nearly two years to appoint one but, anyway, we will get back to the directory. The report tells us that 752 women are suitable for board and committee positions. That is very encouraging, minister, but how many of that group have been appointed?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I just need to qualify first. I think I said that South Australia was leading the nation. I am not absolutely certain that we are, but we are certainly one of the leaders nationally. I just wanted to clarify that. In terms of the information around the members on our directory who have been successfully appointed, we do not have that information, I have been advised. They are used by both the public and private sectors and the organisations do not feedback to the directory in terms of how often they use it, who they use and how many of those applicants are successful. So that information is not fed back to us.

Ms CHAPMAN: Just on that, minister, perhaps the situation has changed, but I recall under the Hon. Stephanie Key as minister for women that this directory was not automatically available to the private sector, it was only available to government departments. In fact, I recall looking into it at one stage and could not get access, but minister Key organised to ensure that I

could. When you mentioned then that it is for the private sector to access as well, how long has that been the case?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that the private sector can have access to the directory, and I will need to take on notice at what time that became available to the private sector.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am still on Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 51.7, targets and highlights for the Attorney-General's Department. One of the two highlights listed in this year's budget for 2009-10 is that the Office of Women 'led the implementation of the family safety framework to Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Elizabeth'. In last year's budget papers one of the targets was to 'lead the intended rollout of the family safety framework across South Australia'. I think you will appreciate the difference. Now it is Port Augusta, Port Pirie and Elizabeth; last year it was to send it out across South Australia. My question is: how many regions have been covered so far; and are there plans to further extend this program?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that we are, indeed, rolling this out in a staged approach. Family safety meetings are now being held in six regions throughout South Australia on an ongoing basis. As well as the initial sites at Holden Hill, Noarlunga and Port Augusta, we have now also established a framework in the Elizabeth, Port Adelaide and Port Pirie regions, and I am advised that negotiations are currently under way for a further rollout.

Ms CHAPMAN: Where will that be?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that we are looking at the possibility of the South-East, so negotiations are occurring there, and we are looking at two regions in the metro south. Again, these have not been finalised; we are still negotiating.

Ms CHAPMAN: The word 'program' is often not a very useful description. You mentioned meetings being convened. Is that the program, that there is some notice in the local paper, meetings are scheduled, or people go on a one-off? Is it a series of lectures that invited public members attend? Is it a person stationed in these towns to follow up with women at risk? Can you explain what the program actually is?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the family safety framework meetings are, I guess, most simply described as case management of those women, in particular, who have been identified at high risk of domestic violence. It is about coordinating a cross-agency response to meet these women's needs and to ensure that services are, if you like, enveloped around that particular individual's needs and move with that person.

The representatives from the agencies that are key players include, obviously, representatives from SAPOL, corrections, families and communities, health, drug and alcohol, mental health, women's DV, education and children's services. Again, it depends on the individual and their particular needs as to which agencies will take a focus. So it is an inter-agency case management type of meeting.

Ms CHAPMAN: It is not a public meeting convened?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No.

Ms CHAPMAN: They are identified by the various agencies and then they are given some support through the system to access services. Is that really what I understand it to be?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: Right. Finally, on page 5.17, one of the targets and highlights in previous budgets was the state Aboriginal women's gathering. There is no mention of it in this budget and the Office for Women website places great importance on this as the annual event, which has in the past been organised and funded by the Office for Women. Is there provision still for this gathering to take place in November this year?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, yes, we have planned for that state Aboriginal women's gathering this year on 3 November.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. Where will that be?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: From 3 to 5 November.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. I have no further questions. I think that concludes the half-hour that we agreed. I will quickly will run through the omnibus questions. I know I cannot table them, Madam Chair.

1. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of the baseline data that has been provided to the Shared Services Reform Office for 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 above \$10,000 in 2009-10 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?

3. For each department or agency reporting to the minister how many surplus employees will there be at 30 June 2010, 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 2009-10 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on projects and programs was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2010-11? How much was approved by cabinet?

5. Between 30 June 2009 and 30 June 2010, 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 2009-10, 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 grants, and whether 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 what are the responsibilities of the minister? Will the minister list the total amounts spent to date on each project?

8. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many Targeted Voluntary Separation Packages will be offered for the financial years 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14?

I will provide a copy to the minister.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I would like this opportunity to quickly correct the record. I said in one of my answers that it was myself that tabled the report listing boards and committees by gender—a compilation of boards and committees. It has been drawn to my attention that on that particular day it was, in fact, the Hon. Paul Holloway who tabled that report in parliament.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Bedford): There being no further questions I declare the examination of the proposed payments adjourned and transferred to Committee B.

DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE, \$687,904,000

ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE, \$13,412,000

Membership:

Mr Goldsworthy substituted for Mr Williams.

Mr van Holst Pellekaan substituted for Mr Pederick.

Mr Griffiths substituted for Ms Chapman.

Witness:

Hon. G.E. Gago, Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister for the City of Adelaide.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Hallion, Chief Executive, Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure.

Mr M. Grillo, Executive Director, Service SA.

Mr M. Palm, Manager, Budget and Investment Strategy, Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure.

Mr P. Welling, Director, Service SA.

Ms J. McConchie, Director, E-Government, Service SA.

Mr B. Gagialis, Chief Finance Officer, Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure.

Ms J. Roache, Chief Executive, SA Lotteries.

Mr I. Clayfield, General Manager, Financial and Corporate Services, SA Lotteries.

The ACTING CHAIR (Ms Bedford): I declare the proposed payments reopened for examination and refer members to the Portfolio Statements Volume 3, Part 7. I will ask the minister to make a statement if she wishes.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Service SA provides the South Australian community with a one-stop contact point for government information services. Service SA systems are used to manage the collection of approximately \$1.6 billion per annum in revenues and delivers a range of information services to citizens and businesses on behalf of state and local government organisations through an integrated network of shop, call centre and online delivery channels.

During 2009-10 Service SA actively worked towards expanding the range of government services and information available online and making it easier for citizens and businesses to access services and transact with government through its integrated network. In line with the strategy, in 2009-10 online photo licence renewals and online recreational boating registrations were introduced. Service SA recorded a growth rate in excess of 30 per cent with online registration and licensing, financial and non-financial transactions between 2008-09 and 2009-10, with approximately 2.1 million transactions conducted online and \$603 million in revenue collected through this channel. We are also seeking to expand a range of government services and information available online and also work through SA Rural Agents services to help us service regions.

In terms of SA Lotteries, since 1967 SA Lotteries has been promoting and conducting lotteries for the purpose of creating prosperity for the South Australian community, primarily through prizes to players and profits to hospitals. SA Lotteries promotes and conducts the games of Saturday X Lotto and other games. SA Lotteries' annual turnover is more than \$360 million. SA Lotteries returned \$96.7 million to the Hospitals Fund in 2009-10, taking the total since 1967 to more than \$2 billion, with \$8.7 million being contributed to the Recreation and Sport Fund since 1987. Each year, SA Lotteries games pay more than \$200 million in prize money to local players, and 95 per cent of SA Lotteries turnover is returned to the SA community by way of prizes to players, agents' commission, SA suppliers, and return to government.

The CHAIR: Would the member for Goyder like to make a statement?

Mr GRIFFITHS: No, that is not required, thank you, Madam Chair. I will get straight into questions, if I may. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 7.46, where it talks about performance indicators. Minister, in your opening statement you referred to online transactions, and I think I heard you say that it was over 2 million transactions out of the 5.3 million transactions. Are you able to provide a breakdown of that 2 million as to what number of online transactions occurred for vehicle registration, recreational boat registration, driver's licence renewals, seniors card applications and marine licence applications please?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: We do not have that level of detail with us today. We will have to take that on notice and bring back a response.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I refer again to the same budget line on page 7.46. Can you provide details of the accommodation charges that have been reallocated from Service SA to sub-program 8.4 in relation to commercial property management; and are these charges rent or lease costs for accommodation for Service SA centres?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised it is a reallocation. Unfortunately, with the amount of time it might take to find that level of detail, I think it might be better to take that question on notice and bring back a response. It is only reallocation, though, I can assure the member.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I refer to page 7.46 which relates to the telephone calls that come into Service SA. My understanding of that is that in 2009-10, 71 per cent only of these calls were answered. I understand also that a target is for that to be above 85 per cent. How do you intend to achieve that increase in calls being answered?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that we have, in effect, achieved that. We are currently sitting at 91 per cent, so we have more than exceeded our target of 85 per cent. Last year, unfortunately, we did not meet that target and that was due to a 16 per cent increase in core volume. I have also been given a figure for the movement in accommodation. The largest movement was in an area of transport safety and regulation in 2009-10 and that was a \$3.5 million change in allocation of corporate costs from a Service SA program to, as I said, a transport safety and regulation program to reflect the new department structure.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Madam Chair, may I ask a supplementary in relation to the answer provided by the minister?

The CHAIR: Sure.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister, my recollection is that you mentioned there was a 16 per cent increase in calls coming in over the 2009-10 financial year, which created the pressure and resulted in a 71 per cent response rate only. My presumption, therefore, is that that would have started to occur fairly early in the financial year. The trigger points, I would have thought, would have been instantly measured and you would have thought, 'Wow! We're not responding as quickly as we should be here to the calls that are coming in from South Australians.' Was there a decision made to deliberately withhold resources increasing to ensure that a better response rate was achieved, or why was it just left to meander, seemingly, for the 12-month period and only achieve 71 per cent?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, in fact, we did respond using a number of different strategies in terms of re-allocation and restructure of resources, so we did not just let things meander along. Service SA implemented a virtual call centre strategy to help improve call waiting times for customers, with that number 131 084, for driver and vehicle licensing services. That virtual call centre technology is being utilised by Service SA to facilitate a flexible and scalable call centre model that can be physically located potentially anywhere. The technology simply requires a telephone, PC and internet access, but can be managed centrally. Technology allows for a view of individual operators as well as call centre overall performance. We also moved a number of services online. We promoted EzyReg to help alleviate calls.

I have just been given a little further information in terms of where the 16 per cent increase in calls occurred. I have been advised that was largely due to transactions flowing from legislative and regulatory changes. Some examples are unregistered and uninsured vehicles, proof of service, surrender of plates, notice of disposal, change of address, graduated licensing scheme, and other changes that were brought in. It was difficult to predict at the time in terms of what level of response would be needed. So, we have monitored and assessed those, restructured our service in a number of areas and, as you can see, we have now achieved an excellent rate of 91 per cent. They are a very good agency.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Sorry to be pedantic, but there is still a follow-up question to that for me.

The CHAIR: But you have had lots of questions and a supplementary and the poor old member for Florey has got nothing.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: This is a supplementary to the supplementary.

Mr GRIFFITHS: It is; it is entirely based upon the information provided to me by the minister.

The CHAIR: I will let you have the supplementary to the supplementary, on the understanding that after that it is the member for Florey's turn.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Thank you. Minister, thank you for that detail. In recognising the increase from 71 per cent recorded for 2009-10 to 91 per cent now, which is very commendable, my presumption therefore is that the changes structurally must have occurred fairly late in the year for it to have such a full benefit in the first four months of this financial year. Indeed, I pose these questions to you on the basis that the drop from the previous figure of 85 per cent to a 71 per cent response rate actually equates to something like 200,000 calls that were unanswered.

I presume many other members of the House of Assembly would have had contact about this. You have spoken about issues that you took up during the 2009-10 financial year but, for me,

the key point was: when were changes implemented to ensure a better response rate? Can you confirm whether it was very late in the 2009-10 financial year, please?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that these were, in fact, one-off changes, and we were unable to anticipate their full impact in advance. It is believed that most of those probably did occur in the second half of that financial year.

Ms BEDFORD: My question actually follows on from some of the information that you have been talking about. I refer the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 7.46, which refers to program performance information and, in particular, the section entitled, 'Performance Commentary.' Can the minister inform the committee how the costs of doing business are being lowered for citizens and businesses by promoting access to services through the single online entry point, www.sa.gov.au?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The common internet site for government provides customers with a single place to access government information and services. Customers are able to find information and services they require with relative ease as the information is presented by topics of interest to citizens and businesses rather than by a specific government agency. This information has been developed through many group testing sessions.

The single entry point online, www.sa.gov.au, was first able to be accessed in July 2009. The benefits include easy, accessible information for customers online; customers experience a reduction in time, effort and costs when transacting with government; and a reduction of red tape. I am pleased to advise that, in June 2010, the common internet site has displayed over 1,300 pages of core content covering 12 topic areas and has recorded an average of 100,000 visits and over 360,000 page views each month.

The common internet site also provides staff in other agencies with the opportunity to truly focus on their core business and the needs of their customers to deliver the most effective and appropriate information. The success of the site has also been acknowledged in that it won an e-Government Award for innovation in delivery of services at the Australian Information Industry Association (South Australia) Awards and was also acknowledged in a paper published recently by an international organisation for the advancement of structured information standards.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 7.46. As I understand it, DTEI uses dual receipting systems, which Services SA has to manage. Can the minister advise whether the use of these dual systems (which I understand to be GRL and TRUMPS) is used to process the majority of registration and licence transactions? What strategies have been implemented to reduce the complexity of the reconciliation and reduce the risk of errors by receipting staff?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: We have done quite a lot. I am advised that the honourable member is correct, dual receipting systems are currently in place. Service SA is constantly reviewing its bank reconciliation system to ensure an effective and streamlined system to meet business needs now and into the future. During 2009-10 Service SA went to market to acquire a commercially available, off-the-shelf automated reconciliation system to support the financial control function, principally in relation to TRUMPS transactions.

The acquisition, costing \$953,000 over five years, will result in reduced operating costs of around \$200,000 annually and will provide Service SA with a single, integrated database from the point of sale all the way through the business to the payment to government client agencies. The contract was successfully executed with Chesapeake System Solutions Inc. for the acquisition and implementation of an off-the-shelf, automated bank reconciliation package.

Also, just for the record and for the honourable member, we now have the specific figure for the transfer of accommodation charges to sub-program 8.4—and the figure is \$1.645 million.

Mr GRIFFITHS: With respect to the same reference, page 7.46, I am advised that Service SA will introduce a new survey in the 2010-11 financial year to produce a comprehensive measure of customer satisfaction across the delivery network. Can the minister provide details of this new survey tool, including how surveys will be circulated to customers?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that we have already implemented a common measurement tool based on a Canadian system. It is currently already available over the counter in the form of this small brochure. I do not think I am allowed to refer to such things in the house; I am not too sure what the rules are here. That has already been handed over to customers, and we are about to roll this out online.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Supplementary to that question, given the government's announcement to change the registration periods and to no longer have the labels on vehicles, and given that Service SA centres will handle the calls that relate to these matters, is there any ability for customers to have any form of survey about their thoughts on that matter, or is it just blindly going through?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that in April, May 2010, Service SA undertook a customer survey to determine customer preferences in relation to the delivery of registration and licensing services. This survey asked customers four questions, including why they chose to come to Service SA and renew their registration etc., and if the registration label was no longer provided over the counter, would they use another method of payment? I am advised that over 1,500 responses were received. When asked why they chose to come into a Service SA centre to renew their registration, 58 per cent of customers indicated that they attended to receive their registration label at the time of payment.

In relation to the impact of the label on customers' payment preferences, 66 per cent of customers indicated that they would use another service channel should the registration label not be available over the counter. Migration of service uptake to other channels not only reduces the cost of delivery but it also reduces the pressure on queue waiting times whether face-to-face or call channels. I have been advised that the numbers are relatively small. The modelling anticipates the majority of those on six month renewals will go to three and the majority of those on nine month renewals will probably shift to 12. That is what the modelling was based on.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I must apologise to Lotteries SA people who are here for not asking any questions. I do respect the enormous amount of work they do and certainly the funding that it provides to a variety of wonderful causes in South Australia.

The CHAIR: There being no further questions for the Minister for Government Enterprises, I declare the examination of the proposed payments adjourned and transferred to committee B.

[Sitting suspended from 16:02 to 16:18]

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, \$17,703,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
\$2,510,000

Witness:

Hon. G.E. Gago, Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister for the City of Adelaide.

Departmental Advisers:

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

Mr M. Petrovski, Director, Office for State/Local Government Relations, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Mr A. McKeegan, General Manager, Corporate Services, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Mr K. Pugh, General Manager, Local Government Policy & Financial Sustainability, Office for State/Local Government Relations, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Ms L. Jacka, Senior Policy Officer, Office for State/Local Government Relations, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Ms P. Peel, Deputy Chief Executive, Sustainability, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Ms H. Shepherd, Ministerial Chief of Staff.

The CHAIR: I declare the proposed payments reopen for examination and refer members to the Portfolio Statements, Volume 1, part 4. I understand the minister will make a brief opening statement.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Office for State/Local Government Relations in the Department of Planning and Local Government is a division responsible for providing policy advice to the Minister for State/Local Government Relations.

On the relationship between state government and the local government sector, some of the key priorities include the accountability and audit framework reforms. These reforms are about good public administration, transparency and increasing public confidence in South Australian councils. The Local Government (Accountability Framework) Amendment Act 2009 was assented to on 10 December 2009 amending the Local Government Act. These amendments came into effect on 1 July 2010 and are progressively being introduced and are designed to ensure that councils meet standards of accountability appropriate for public administration.

In terms of the Outback Communities Authority, following the passage of legislation in December 2009, a new outback management body, the Outback Communities Authority, was created and came into operation on 1 July 2010. Outback communities will have a greater say in decision making and in setting the long-term strategic directions in the authority's five year strategic management plan and its annual business plan and budget.

In terms of local government elections, legislative reforms have been made to the local government election process ahead of this year's local government elections. These reforms are informed by an independent review of the local government elections in 2008 and are about improving election processes and increasing voter participation. Some of the changes included: providing for a central promotion campaign for the local government elections requiring each council to implement a caretaker policy and requiring the LGA to set up a website containing candidates' profiles.

In terms of the Local Government Reform Fund, I would finally like to refer to an example in which state and local government have worked closely together to plan strategic initiatives. The state government, working with the Local Government Association, submitted a bid for the Australian government's Local Government Reform Fund, securing \$2.65 million out of a total allotted sum so far of \$16 million. The successful bids included three local government reform projects that will assist South Australian councils in the management of their infrastructure and other assets and improve their financial sustainability.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We will start at the very beginning in terms of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.15. In the Summary Income Statement, under the line Employee Benefits and Costs, there is a decrease from the 2008-09 figure of \$2.248 million down to a projected figure of \$1.62 million for 2010-11. Does that reduction relate to a decrease in the number of FTE employees in the Office for State/Local Government Relations?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the short answer is no. The decrease in the 2009-10 estimated result and the 2010-11 budget from the 2009-10 budget and the 2008-09 actual is due to the effective integration of the Office for State/Local Government Relations into the Department of Planning and Local Government during 2009-10. The budget for corporate support staff is now consolidated for the whole department under the urban development and planning program.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Given your answer, minister, as a consequence of that restructure, if you like, or amalgamation into the department, has there been any reduction in the FTEs of any staff in the Office for State/Local Government Relations over the last two years ?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Are we talking about 2009-10, 2008-09, 2007-08? Is that what you are asking about, for those three years?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: And this year, 2010-11.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Sorry, your question is exactly—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Given your answer that—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Is there a reduction in FTEs?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Basically no, but because the savings are from restructuring other aspects into the department, all I want to know is if there has been any reduction in FTEs in the Office for State/Local Government over the budget period from 2008 to 2010-11?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The State/Local Government Relations program workforce is as follows: 2008-09 actual, 22.3 FTEs; 2009-10 estimated result, 22.3 FTEs; and 2010-11 budget, 16.4 FTEs. The reduction of 6.1 FTEs from 2009-10 estimated result to 2010-11 budget is due to the reallocation of 6.1 FTEs to the Urban Development and Planning Program for the establishment of corporate service areas within the department of Planning and Local Government. So, technically, the answer to your question is no, but given there has been a change with the explanation I have just given. It is a qualified answer.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Sure. On the same page but under the heading of Supplies and Services, the answer may be the same as the previous one but I am going to ask the question anyway. What is the cause of the significant decrease from \$758,000 in 2008-09 to \$181,000 in 2010-11? That is approximately an 80 per cent decrease.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that supplies and services include the cost of maintaining the office, such as office supplies, travel, staff training and development—the total being \$64,000 for 2009-10. The decrease in the 2009-10 estimated result in the 2010-11 budget from the 2009-10 budget and the 2008-09 actual is, again, due to the effective integration of the Office for State/Local Government Relations into the Department of Planning and Local Government during 2009-10. Key corporate support services are now consolidated for the whole department under the Urban Development and Planning Program. Another reason is the contribution towards the efficiency savings allocated to the Department of Planning and Local Government.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Has Shared Services got anything to do with this or is this just a restructure and integration into this new Department of Planning and Local Government?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the short answer is no and the long answer is no. We are consistent.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: If we turn over to page 4.16, looking at Net Cost of Sub-program, can you tell us what the reason is for the reduction in the 2008-09 year of \$2.982 million to the 2010-11 year of \$1.871 million?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the short answer is the same answer as before; that is, the net cost of providing services, that drop, is due to the movement in expenses—employment benefit costs, supplies and services etc.—in response to the integration.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Does that mean that, in relation to the integration, there has been a reduction in these budget lines that we have identified; but has there been an increase in corresponding budget lines in another part of the department? Are you just moving costs from OSLGR to within another part of the department?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised it is outside the realms and responsibilities of my portfolio and that would be a matter for Paul Holloway to answer.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You cannot answer it.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I can only talk about the budget as it pertains to state and local government relations.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: These guys are nodding.

The CHAIR: The committee will need to address the advisers through the minister. It is not about what people may or may not be doing with their heads.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: He is scratching his leg and moving accordingly. The short answer is it is about improved efficiencies, but for the details of that and any budget implications to planning you would need to refer those questions to the Hon. Paul Holloway.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Okay. I remain on the same page, and under the heading of Performance Commentary it states:

Provided support and guidance to councils in the areas of administrative and financial governance.

Given the fact that the government has taken an investigation into the Burnside council due to concerns of areas of administrative and financial governance, can the minister advise the projected total costs of the McPherson investigation? The sum of \$1 million is quoted as the cost.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the 2009-10 cost of the investigation involved staffing costs of around \$500,000, legal support of \$287,000 and operating costs of around \$114,000, which is a total expenditure of \$901,000.

That includes the costs of the fees to the investigator, Ken McPherson, of \$307,205, including all on-costs. The Burnside investigation has been funded from within the existing resources of the Department of Planning and Local Government. The department has been operating within its capacity to ensure that it was best placed to meet efficiency savings required by all departments in the current climate and in the knowledge that the investigation would require appropriate funding. As a result, in this instance the department was able to reallocate resources to the investigation including the use of unspent funds that resulted from decisions to delay the filling of certain vacant positions.

In terms of 2010-11 estimate expenditure, I have been advised that is estimated at \$197,000, with the total estimated expenditure \$1.098 million. I have said in the past that this is the cost of ensuring that a thorough and proper investigation occurs. As we are aware, there were complaints made and an investigation has been put in place. This is the cost of ensuring that our local government meets the highest standard that is required and expected by the public. After all, they are public offices; they collect moneys in the form of council rates, so they are rate collectors, and they are responsible for ensuring accountability and transparency. There is a high level of public trust associated with that and we have to ensure that, as I said, the highest possible standards are kept in place, and if that is what it costs then that is what it costs to ensure the integrity of our local government sector.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: So the money is coming out of a specific budget line in the Department of Planning and Local Government; it is not coming from the Office for State/Local Government Relations?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that is correct.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Have you met with Mr MacPherson during the course of the investigation to discuss the progress of the report? If you have, how many times have you met with him?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No, I have not met with the investigator to discuss the progress of the report.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: If you have not met with him, how have you gathered the information to issue a number of ministerial statements giving excuses for the long delay?

The CHAIR: What are you referring to, member for Kavel?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Performance commentary, page 4.16, 'Provided support and guidance to councils in the areas of administrative and financial governance.' This is exactly what this is, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: I do not have an issue with that, if you can just make it clear.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Originally, minister, it was going to take 12 weeks; that is what you said. Now we are out to a staggering 14 months and it is still going along. You initiated the investigation and have issued these ministerial statements giving excuses as to why it has been delayed. Don't you have a responsibility to ensure that the investigation is on track?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Obviously members would be aware that this matter is before the court, so I am very much limited in what I can now discuss about any details relating to the investigation or matters around that that might relate to those matters before the court. So, I am very limited in what I can actually talk about at the moment. However, in terms of keeping myself abreast of the progress of the report, I certainly did do that, and I did that through liaising with the Director of State/Local Government Relations (I met with him and he relayed information), and also through correspondence from the investigator.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: That is an answer, but if you are spending over \$1 million in taxpayers' money on an investigation, I would have thought that a minister would have the responsibility of personally checking on the progress of the report and not leave it to a government official. I know what you are saying in terms of being careful because the matter is in court, but we are not talking about the content of the report or any issue around that; this is about the process during the past 14 months leading up to the matter going before the court. That is all, minister.

The CHAIR: Can I just interrupt here before you respond, minister? I may have misunderstood, and I hope that I have. The minister finds herself in a slightly difficult situation because I suspect that, had she had the communication alluded to with Mr MacPherson, she might be castigated for having interfered in that process.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Point of order, Madam Chair. I do not know if it is actually in order for the chair to interpret and prompt and give a reason for the minister to respond to a quite legitimate question.

The CHAIR: I think I am setting a parameter there; however, if you would like—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It is difficult for her because it is a difficult question.

The CHAIR: It is difficult for her because it involves matters that are, as we also know, sub judice, and I would just like to be very careful about where we, as a committee, are going with that.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes; I understand that.

The CHAIR: I am not in any way trying to stop you from asking a question; I am just trying to make sure that we are within the correct boundaries.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am happy to answer the question, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: I would just like to make very sure that we are within the correct parameters for this committee.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Obviously, Madam Chair, I am being very careful for the reasons that I have outlined. I am not able to give as full an explanation as I might like under normal circumstances because of that. However, I am and have always been extremely mindful of the importance of the independence of the investigator and the independence of that process from any ministerial interference. I have managed communications along the way with that in mind. From the outset, I was very careful to ensure that a process of the highest integrity was maintained and that it was, indeed, a proper, robust and diligent process that remained, at all times, at arm's length from the government.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Am I correct in saying that Mr Petrovski, the Director of the Office for State/Local Government Relations, was the conduit in terms of the communication between yourself, minister, and Mr MacPherson?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: As I am aware, yes.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We have established that; that is good. In any of the meetings, discussions or conversations—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: And correspondence, as I have outlined.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: —whatever we want to call the communication—between the director and Mr MacPherson, have any allegations of criminal conduct been raised?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised no.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We will cast our minds back to 22 July 2009, some 14 months ago, when the minister issued a press release announcing the Burnside council inquiry. In your release, minister, you state:

While no evidence of corruption was uncovered among preliminary information gathered by my department, should any become apparent it will be immediately referred to SAPOL's Anti-Corruption Branch for it to investigate.

Given that statement, minister, did the director in his discussions with Mr MacPherson request that he raise any issues with the director where there may be any evidence of corruption in the course of the investigation? The previous question was: did Mr MacPherson raise any allegations of criminal conduct? No, he did not. However, given the ministerial statement at the very beginning, did the director request that, if any evidence of corruption came to light, Mr MacPherson should then refer that to the director?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The short answer to your question is no. However, I did receive assurance that, if an ongoing criminal matter did arise, he would refer that to the appropriate authority.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: How does that tie in with what was reported in the press, where there have been allegations—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: You have got to be joking? In your dreams! That is an outrageous question, Madam Chair; I can't—

The CHAIR: Member for Kavel, I do not think that anyone in this room thinks that the minister can be responsible for the way she is or indeed is not reported by the fourth estate.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: It is in standing orders you do not ask questions of that kind. You can't ask whether media reports are true.

The CHAIR: It is something that we just—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: That was not the question, actually. I referred to the media statement, that was all. I did not put any interpretation of veracity on it.

The CHAIR: I will repeat this: the minister is responsible for her own actions and the things that she says, not for how she is or is not reported by the fourth estate.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Has the minister's office, the director or the Office for State/Local Government Relations been given any advice from crown law in relation to the matters running up to when the—

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Point of order, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Excuse me, member for Kavel, a point of order. It is the first one I have heard today, so obviously I am quite interested.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Clearly any member of the house, but especially a minister, would have legal professional privilege covering what legal advice he or she received. The question is essentially an attempt to breach that privilege.

The CHAIR: What would be the point of order that you are bringing?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The point of order is that—

Mr Goldsworthy interjecting:

The CHAIR: This is a conversation between me and the member for Croydon. I am sure he can explain himself if given the opportunity.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The Minister for State/Local Government Relations has legal professional privilege, as any other citizen does, for advice received by a lawyer, and therefore she is under no obligation to disclose to the committee the content of that advice and the member is out of order in asking.

The CHAIR: I do not think there is a point of order per se; however, I do take your general point and perhaps we should move away from it slightly, member for Kavel.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: If we run the line that the member for Croydon is trying to run, the minister can answer any question in any way she sees fit. She might not be under an obligation to answer it but I am asking the question, and if she does not want to answer it, she does not answer it. All I want to know is whether any crown law advice has been sought or given in relation to the investigation running up to the point where the injunction action was taken. I fully understand about the issues about not being able to talk about any matters around the injunction itself, the court proceedings and so on. I fully understand that, I have been in this place long enough, even though I am not a lawyer, to understand that point. However, this question is about the period running up to the court action, as were my other questions.

The CHAIR: Minister, are you prepared to—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am prepared to say that I have received relevant advice.

The CHAIR: You have received relevant advice.

Ms Thompson interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Pardon, I can't hear you because we have interjections across the way here.

The CHAIR: I think you will find that the member for Croydon did not say a word.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: No, the member for Reynell did.

Ms THOMPSON: The member for Reynell is also astounded by what is going on.

The CHAIR: Thank you, member for Reynell. I think the minister said that she had received relevant advice. Draw from that what you will, member for Kavel.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I refer to the same page, Performance commentary. I have listened to what the minister said previously in relation to wanting a full, unfettered, and all those adjectives in relation to the investigation. Given the minister's statement—and I am quoting again:

Mr MacPherson is an experienced investigator who has the necessary forensic skills to promptly and decisively cut through any smokescreens and weed out the relevant information if there are any allegations of unlawful activity or failure to meet obligations at Burnside.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: This is the minister's quote, member for Croydon, it has nothing to do with me. I am just repeating what the minister said. So, before you butt in, you want to work out what is going on, not just chip in in a totally irrelevant manner. So, with three extensions of time, I understand, over the 14 months, we still really do not have any end in sight. Do you have any idea, minister, when the final report is likely to be finalised?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The member is well aware that this matter is before the court, so the timing of this is now out of my hands. So the answer is: no.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Have you received any advice that would give any indication how long the court proceedings might take?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Do you have any idea how long they might take?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It could be six months?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have answered the question. I have said I have no idea.

The CHAIR: We are now venturing into the realms of the unknown unknowns, as compared to the known unknowns—or, perhaps this is a known unknown, because the courts are, in themselves, an organic process that we cannot predict.

An honourable member: George Bush.

The CHAIR: No, that was George W. Bush, and it wasn't him: it was Donald Rumsfeld who talked about the known unknowns. But, it was quite interesting, because—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You are quoting from the life of US politicians.

The CHAIR: I am, and there are the unknowns that we know and the unknowns that we do not know, and this is an unknown that we do not know. The minister is not responsible for predicting the time frames of a court.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I refer to the same page. Is the minister comfortable that the terms of reference for the investigation have been adhered to?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have already stated quite clearly and reminded all members that this matter is before the court. I am not able to answer any question that might go to matters that relate to the issues that are being investigated.

The CHAIR: I think the majority of people in this chamber do understand that, minister.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Although I normally would enjoy giving a more fulsome answer, on this occasion I am not able to do so. It would be irresponsible of me to do so.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We will go back. I understand that you think we are moving into the area in relation to the court hearing and so on, so we will take a step back to where my other questions have gone in relation to the process leading up to when the court action was taken. Did the director, because he is obviously the conduit, in his discussions with Mr MacPherson over that period of time (13 months, or however long it was before the court action was taken) check with Mr MacPherson that the investigation was being kept within the terms of reference?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The question the member asks is a matter that is directly before the court at this moment.

The CHAIR: The actual timing of what occurred leading up to—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Matters around the terms of reference and powers around that, so it goes directly to the matters that are before the court and I am not able to talk about these matters at this point.

The CHAIR: Member for Kavel, I am not a lawyer either, but I do think that we are getting a persistent message in relation to this particular line of questioning.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: So, what are you saying—I am not allowed to ask any more questions?

The CHAIR: No, I am not saying that at all. If you say that I am saying that, you are being very naughty. What I am saying is that, if you persist with this line of questioning, I think you are just going to keep on getting the same answer. This is what I have gathered.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Oh well, when you are in opposition, patience and persistence are virtues.

The CHAIR: Okay, but you only have 30 minutes left.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: That's all right—30 minutes.

The CHAIR: Okay; well, if you want to keep on asking the same question and getting the same answer, fine. I am just trying to help. I am here to help.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We know that, Madam Chair. You are a very helpful person, I know.

The CHAIR: I am helpful. Do not chuckle at me.

An honourable member interjecting:

The CHAIR: He cackled at me. All right, let's have another question.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Right then, we will move on. Seeing we are not getting the answers that we are looking for, we will move on to another point. On the same page, however, under the heading of Net Cost of Sub-program, in relation to the minister's decision to allow the revocation of the community title over the St Clair reserve land, did the minister meet with any representatives from the local community, in particular, anyone from the Save St Clair action group? Basically, did you engage in any community consultation, minister, seeing the decision was yours to revoke the community title?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Indeed, I followed the revocation process. The Local Government Act 1999 sets out a framework for the classification of land owned by a council or under a council's care, control and management, as community land. My role in the community land revocation process is to make a decision whether or not to approve a council's proposal. After considering all relevant information, I must satisfy myself that the council has complied with statutory procedures as set out in section 194 of the act—and then the process goes on. My decision on the proposal is based on that information.

With the revocation proposal put forward by Charles Sturt council, the process that they are bound by means that they are required to consult extensively with their local community. It is a while ago now and I cannot remember the exact steps that took place, but it involves things like putting public signs on the land that is about to be revoked and writing to local neighbours in the surrounding area to inform them of the changes and invite them to place a submission before the local council.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Well beyond the legislative requirement too.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: As the member outlines, they certainly went well beyond the community consultative requirements placed on them by the act. I satisfied myself that they had met their requirements under the act in terms of their consultative process. I noticed that they had far exceeded that. They gave me copies of, I think, all of the submissions that they received, including the petition and the wording of the petition. I read all of those, including all of the submissions opposing that proposal, as well as those supporting them. So, I was very well informed of the range of different views of the local community.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The Ombudsman dismissed all the complaints.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Point of order, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Excuse me, minister.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: The minister does not need prompting from the member for Croydon. For goodness sakes, he is just a serial—

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Offender.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: —a serial offender, and he admits it.

The CHAIR: And what would your actual point of order be?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Well, tell him to be quiet; he is disrupting the—

The CHAIR: Tell him to be quiet. Does it perhaps relate to interjecting?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: —procedures of the committee.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: If I could finish my answer, although I did not meet with that group, I did certainly satisfy myself that I was aware of the broad range of community views and sentiment around that proposal and the nature of their concerns.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You quoted the particular act that outlines how that whole process is to run but is the act silent on whether or not you, as minister, can engage yourself in any form of community consultation in relation to these matters?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the act is silent on that.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: If the act is silent it means that you could if you wanted to. Did anybody from the community, particularly the Save St Clair group, request a meeting with you?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised—and to the best of my knowledge, because it was some time ago—that no, there was no request to meet with me about that land swap. That is the short answer. I would need to double-check my records but, to the best of my knowledge—and my advisers are shaking their heads as well—we did not receive any request to meet with that group—or any other group, for that matter.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Nobody from that community emailed, rang, wrote, or communicated in any manner that they wanted to come and talk to you about it?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that we did receive correspondence that expressed a range of views but, to the best of our knowledge, I received no requests from anybody to meet with them about that prior to finalising my decision.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Thank you for that.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I will check my records and we will amend the record accordingly.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: So you will come back and correct the record if you are wrong.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes. I have been as open and direct with you as I possibly can. To the best of our knowledge, no—but it was a long time ago.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It was not that long ago; it was about this time last year, wasn't it?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: A year is a long time, as a minister, considering how much correspondence I receive and my day-to-day workload. That is a detail that I just do not carry around in my—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It's tough at the top!

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is a tough job. The member is absolutely right. It is a tough job but I am up to it.

The CHAIR: Member for Kavel, do you remember who asked to meet you in July 2009?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: If somebody wrote to me I think I would remember. I have a reasonably good memory—just ask my staff—because I check up on things fairly regularly. Moving on, Madam Chair—

Ms Thompson interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Is that right, Gay? Listen to them over there.

Members interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You know when you are going all right, don't you, when you get insults thrown across the chamber?

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You know when things are tracking all right when you get some insults chucked over.

The CHAIR: Apparently it is better if they are talking about you than not talking about you.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Do you think? We will move on because time is getting on.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: You bore in with your forensic examination.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Thank you, member for Croydon, for your encouragement.

The CHAIR: Let's just carry on.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We have lots of questions.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We have lots of questions left. On page 4.17 under Income—Commonwealth revenues, can you tell us what resources have been utilised either from the minister's office or the Office for State/Local Government Relations to ensure that the federal government maintains the top-up funds for the identified local roads grant? It was \$16 million from June 2011. I guess the question is: have you, your ministerial staff or OSLGR lobbied the federal government for that identified local roads projects, to put it in a bit simpler fashion?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Given that the supplementary local road funding is in its last year of its current program, I have written to the Hon. Simon Crean, Minister for Regional Australia, Regional and Local Development, to raise the issue of the ongoing local road funding to address shortfalls created by the historical allocation beyond the 2011 horizon. I have also been advised that this issue has been raised at officer to officer level between my agency and the appropriate commonwealth agency.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: How long ago did you write that letter, minister?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It would have been since he became the new Minister for Regional Australia.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: So, since the federal election?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: That's right.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Which was about two months ago.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Yes. You have a good memory.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Have you got a response?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Not as yet, that I am aware of, but I should stress that this issue is raised at officer to officer level and has been for some time.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Because, as you have said, it has been an historical problem because there is the debate that we have 11 per cent of the nation's road network. We have about 8 per cent of the population but we only get about 5.5 per cent of that grant funding.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I beg your pardon, was there a question?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Not really, just a statement.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: A rambling.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It was not a rambling I can assure you, minister. It was factual information.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Here we go, we have more interjections, more barbs chucked across the chamber.

Ms THOMPSON: I don't think he has any questions.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No, he hasn't.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Have you got any questions there, Goldy?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: We could do a dorothy. We could do a dixer, if you like.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Now that the battle has finished we can move on.

The CHAIR: You can always call upon me for protection.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: The next question refers to the same page, same line, 'Income—Commonwealth revenues.' On 28 February this year, minister Albanese announced \$1.65 million from the Local Government Reform Fund for 'financial management projects' and it is understood \$1 million has been allocated to the Adelaide City Council's integrated design strategy project. Can the minister advise where this government revenue is included in the budget papers, because there is a reference of \$2.65 million on page 4.16 in the Performance Commentary?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that we have not received those funds as yet.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You have not got them yet?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I refer to the same page and the same heading. In relation to the \$1.65 million funding from the federal Local Government Reform Fund—

The CHAIR: \$1.65 million or \$2.65 million?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: What did I say?

The CHAIR: You said \$1.65 million, but there is \$16 million and \$2.65 million.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Perhaps if we wait for the explanation, we might understand.

The CHAIR: I just do not know which figure you are talking about and I want to know.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It is from the previous question, Madam Chair.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: So it is sequential?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Indeed; so, in relation to that \$1.65 million from the federal Local Government Reform Fund, which was applied for in a proposal entitled, 'Improving SA councils' asset and financial management practices', it was successful in gaining full funding for project 1, the Asset and Financial Management Council audit; project 6, asset and financial management technical support; and part funding for project 4, building regional collaboration capacity. However, project 2, which is workforce planning; project 3, climate change adaptation; project 5, data management; and the balance of project 4 still require funding. Can the minister advise how much the government is committing towards those projects?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that at this point we are, in fact, not proposing to commit funding, because we hope to obtain the remaining funds needed from the remaining \$9 million of commonwealth funding.

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: Minister, the Outback Communities Authority, as you know, is very important to the electorate of Stuart, which I represent. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.15. Can you tell me, please, whether the ongoing operational costs for the new Outback Communities Authority versus Outback Areas Community Development Trust, which operated previously doing broadly the same work and covering the same geography, will be essentially cost neutral to the government or operationally cost more or cost less than it did under the old regime?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that we expect that it would be cost neutral.

The CHAIR: Does the member for Stuart have another question?

Mr VAN HOLST PELLEKAAN: No, Madam Chair.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I might say, Madam Chair, that I am very grateful to the opposition for being so cooperative in the arrangements for this particular part of the estimates.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I refer to the same budget paper, Volume 1, page 4.15. Minister, what is the current status of your State/Local Government Forum, which I understand first met in August 2002?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The short answer is that it is in a state of flux and review, but I believe I should provide some explanation. When I first became minister, it was clear to me that the forum was no longer serving the purpose that it intended. I spoke to the President of the LGA at that time and also to a number of others who had been members of the forum. It had a very aggressive agenda at a particular point in time because there had not been that intergovernment opportunity for communication for a long time. So, it played a very important role that had not been able to be filled before. However, the matters that could benefit from that forum had pretty much been exhausted and it had become very lacklustre. Even the president at the time admitted to that.

We discussed what should happen to the forum and how we could perhaps change it to better meet the contemporary needs of councils at that point in time and also assist the government. In the meantime, a new president of the LGA came on board and, again, we met and had discussions around that. She was also very keen to see the forum change in some way; however, the problem was that no-one at that time—or even since then, I might say—had a very clear view about how we could evolve and move the forum forward. There had been views put forward but not ones that were satisfactory to all parties.

In the last state government election, local government put forward its position in its election demands or wish lists, if you like, that the forum be reviewed, and the government agreed to review that.

I think that I have met with the LGA, if I recall, twice since then. The forum has been on the agenda both times. We have discussed moving that forward and we are still doing that. There are, again, a range of different views about how that might look, and we have yet to come to an agreement about that. However, we do continue to discuss what would be the most suitable and useful forum or model for communication to move us forward. It is not for want of trying.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: When did it last meet?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It would be sometime ago. Someone behind me is saying February. The forum last met in February, prior to the election, and it discussed the issue of the 30-year plan.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: February this year?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes. There has been no request for another one, I have to say, by any party.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Minister, when were you appointed the Minister for State/Local Government Relations?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised it was August 2008.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Have you attended any of the meetings?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: What meetings?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: The forum meetings.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You go along?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes. I have attended all of them that have occurred whilst I have been minister—all of them, 100 per cent.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: How often has it met since you have been a minister?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Once.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: In February this year?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: That is correct.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: A month before the election?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: That is correct.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I know that you cannot talk for the previous minister but, from August 2008 to February this year, the forum met once and you attended that meeting?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: One hundred per cent.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You would be good at Rotary. Does the minister have any idea how long it will take to finalise discussions with all the relevant parties so that an effective vehicle can be formed—a new revised forum? It has not meant since February and, obviously, there have been issues that it is not effective. Does the minister have any idea when the thing will be up and running?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I meet with the LGA on a monthly or six-weekly basis, generally. In fact, I think the issue of the forum has been on just about every agenda—just about, I might be wrong so I qualify that by saying 'just about'; certainly most agendas—since I have become minister.

There is a view from all parties that we should proceed to put some meaningful model in place. However, there is no firm view about what that would look like. The LGA has not called for any forum meetings, so it is not pushing for it for the reasons I have outlined. The forum, in its current form and under its current terms of reference, has run out of puff. It is simply not working and it is not meaningful for the stakeholders involved. There is a general view around the stakeholder table that there is no point proceeding with a forum that is not meaningful. No doubt the LGA is talking with its constituents on what they might want and what they might see as a meaningful way to have an ongoing communication around inter-government matters but, as yet, they have not been able to put forward a detailed proposal that all parties can agree to.

We are committed to continue to work with them to resolve that. I have asked them to think about the model that they might like. No doubt, as I said, they are consulting with their people and, as with most local government issues, I am sure they are met with a wide range of different views about how to move forward. I am committed to continuing to liaise with the LGA to ensure that we do have meaningful forums. There is no point in wasting people's time; they are all busy people.

The CHAIR: Member for Kavel, I would draw your attention to the time.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Sure; the omnibus questions.

The CHAIR: We have already done them. Were yours not included?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We haven't done them in this committee.

The CHAIR: Sure, if you would like to read them again, do by all means.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: No, I will seek leave to table them.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: You can't table them—a statistical nature only.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: They have been doing that in the other committee.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am just saying what the Chair has said here—statistical only.

The CHAIR: There was a period of about 1½ hours when I was not here this morning and I am not quite sure whether, during that time, the omnibus questions were read in. If they were not, I apologise.

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The CHAIR: I thought she said she had read out an inclusive list. Read them out, please do.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Okay, I will read them out. The omnibus questions for budget estimates 2010-11 are:

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 above \$10,000 in 2009-10 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?

3. For each department or agency reporting to the minister how many surplus employees will there be at 30 June 2010, and for each surplus employee what is the title or classification of the employee and the Total Employment Cost (TEC) of the employee?

4. In financial year 2009-10 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on projects and programs was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2010-11? How much was approved by cabinet?

5. Between 30 June 2009 and 30 June 2010, will the minister list job title and total employment cost of 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 the year 2009-10, 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 grants, and whether 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, will the minister list the total amounts spent to date on each project?

8. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many Targeted Voluntary Separation Packages (TVSPs) will be offered for the financial years 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14?

The CHAIR: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the proposed payments completed. Thank you very much, minister. Thank you, members of the committee.

At 17:35 the committee adjourned until Monday 11 October 2010 at 10:15.