

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Thursday, 20 June 2024
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A

Chair:

Hon. A. Piccolo

Members:

Hon. D.J. Speirs
Hon. V.A. Tarzia
Mr J.A. Batty
Ms N.P. Clancy
Ms C.C. O'Hanlon
Ms D.J. Wortley

The committee met at 09:00

Estimates Vote

STATE GOVERNOR'S ESTABLISHMENT, \$6,539,000
AUDITOR-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$19,671,000
DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET, \$469,788,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET,
\$32,176,000

Minister:

Hon. P.B. Malinauskas, Premier.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr D. Walker, Chief Executive, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
Ms N. Chandler, Deputy Chief Executive, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
Mr R. Morris, Chief Executive Officer, Premier's Delivery Unit, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
Mr W. Hunter, Chief Operating Officer, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
Dr E. Balan-Vnuk, Chief Information Officer, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
Ms D. Dixon, State Project Lead, Lot Fourteen, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.
Mr M. Warren, Chief Executive, South Australian Motor Sport Board.
Mr J. Conway, Chief Executive Officer, Infrastructure SA.

The CHAIR: Welcome to today's hearing for Estimates Committee A. I respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional owners of this country throughout Australia and their connection to land and community. We pay our respects to them and their cultures and to elders both past and present.

The estimates committees are a relatively informal procedure and, as such, there is no need to stand to ask or answer questions. I understand that the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have agreed on an approximate time for the consideration of proposed payments, which will facilitate a change of departmental advisers. Can the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition confirm that the timetable for today's proceedings, previously distributed, is accurate?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Yes.

The CHAIR: 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 Premier undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the Clerk Assistant via the Answers to Questions mailbox no later than Friday 6 September 2024.

I propose to allow both the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to make opening statements of about 10 minutes each should they wish to do so. There will be some flexible approach to giving the call for asking questions. A member who is not on the committee may ask a question at the discretion of the Chair.

All questions are to be directed to the Premier, not the Premier's advisers. The Premier may refer questions to advisers for a response. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced. Members unable to complete their questions during the proceedings may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the assembly *Notice Paper*.

I remind members that the rules of debate in the house apply in the committee. Consistent with the rules of the house, photography by members from the chamber floor is not permitted while the committee is sitting. Ministers and members may not table documents before the committee; however, documents can be supplied to the Chair for distribution. The incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the house; that is, it is purely of a statistical nature and is limited to one page in length.

The committee's examinations will be broadcast in the same manner as the sittings of the house, through the IPTV system within Parliament House and online via the parliament's website. I think the ratings will go through the roof today.

I will now proceed to open the following lines for examination: we are now opening State Governor's Establishment, Auditor-General's Department, Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Productivity Commission and Infrastructure SA. The minister appearing is the Premier. I declare the proposed payments open for examination, and I now call on the Premier to make a statement if he wishes and also to introduce his advisers.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Good morning, Mr Chairman. I have no intention to chew up the opposition leader's time with an opening statement, except to say that I would like to express my gratitude to all the officials who have worked so hard in the development of the budget first and foremost, and I particularly acknowledge officials within the Department of Treasury and Finance who have undertaken that work under the leadership of Rick Perse, the Under Treasurer, and also the Treasurer of South Australia.

Can I thank public servants and officials from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet who have ably assisted me in the preparation for today, including developing a suite of briefings that hopefully will enable us to answer the Leader of the Opposition's questions as best we can. That effort is led, of course, through the Chief Executive, Mr Damien Walker; the Deputy Chief Executive of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Nari Chandler; and, on my right, executive director Wayne Hunter. I look forward to hopefully being able to answer the questions to the best of our ability today.

The CHAIR: Thank you, Premier. The Leader of the Opposition.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I do not propose to make an opening statement, apart from to thank the officials like the Premier has for the contribution that they made to the process. My first suite of questions come from Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, pages 13 and 14. My first question refers to the

number of FTEs for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. The number of FTEs has increased from 531 in the 2022-23 financial year to approximately 600 in the 2023-24 financial year, including two that are described as, and I quote, 'Administered items for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet'. Can the Premier explain the nature of the administered items, those two FTEs?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Is that referred to on page 13?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Page 13, if you look at the workforce summary.

The CHAIR: At the top of page 13.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We will hopefully be able to get the answer while—

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: And as part of that question, I was curious as to whether or not that was an allocation for ministers, so that might be part of the answer.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: An allocation to a minister's office?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Whether those two administered items are potentially an allocation for ministers but, regardless, I will move on and let you explore that. The next one was I referred to the significant increase in FTEs that had occurred. Are you able to provide an overview of the areas in which those FTEs have been employed?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: There are a few programs that are ending and therefore the numbers are reducing, and then there are other programs where they are going up. I am happy to provide the advice that I have received regarding some examples of that. The advice I received is as follows. Resources ending in the 2023-24 financial year include:

- Office of Data Analytics, including succession of data analytics capacity funding provided for in the 2021-22 state budget, of 5 FTEs, and once-off resources that were allocated in 2023-24 for across-government projects of 5 FTEs;
- one-off resources in 2023-24 for the Office of the Chief Information Officer for a new whole-of-government service offering an integration platform as a service, which was worth 4 FTEs; and
- one-off resources for Infrastructure SA project monitoring activities of 3 FTEs.

That is going down. In terms of additional resources in terms of FTEs for 2024-25, programs going up include 6 FTEs for the Strong Cyber Future Ready program, which is funded from the Digital Investment Fund; the new program we are establishing around the Children in the North alliance is 5 FTEs; and the Preventing African Youth Violence initiative is going up by 1 FTE.

Just to provide a bit more holistic detail that perhaps speaks more to the heart of the Leader of the Opposition's question, the increase of 68.8 FTEs between the 2022-23 actual and the 2023-24 estimated result—that is not 2024-25 but the 2022-23 actual versus the estimated result of 2023-24—is made up for by the following additional resources in 2023-24 for:

- 13.2 FTEs for the cyber and digital programs funded through the Digital Investment Fund;
- 12 FTEs for strategic policy capability and delivery;
- 7 FTEs for a transfer that has occurred in government between Creative Industries and the Music Development Office, which has come over from DIIS to DPC;
- 6 FTEs for Serving South Australia, which is our election commitment of developing a one-stop shop;
- 5 FTEs for the Office for AUKUS;
- 5 FTEs for the Office of Data Analytics capability supplementation;
- more recently, in April this year, the Cross Border Commissioner was transferred from PIRSA and I have MOG'd it into the Department of the Premier and Cabinet;

- 4 FTEs for the Office of the Chief Information Officer;
- 3 FTEs for the Children in the North program;
- 3 FTEs for Infrastructure SA monitoring activities;
- 2.3 FTEs for the DPC component of the Health Reform Office;
- 2 FTEs for activities associated with the Master Media levies;
- 1.3 FTEs for supplies and services to employees' expenses with associated FTEs—I confess I am not too sure what that is, but I am happy to find out; and
- 1 FTE for the increased the capacity of the Office for Autism.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I did not keep a running tally, but that seems to get to the 68 or so, so thank you, Premier. Has the government been able to achieve a reduction in executive numbers across government by 50, and did the Department of the Premier and Cabinet reduce its number of executives as part of this goal?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: While Mr Hunter is getting the specifics, yes is the short answer to your question initially. More recently, I think we have added a couple on the back of the budget supplementation that we sought.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: So, yes, to the overall 50?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, let me double-check. DPC's contribution to that executive reduction, and it is 50 across government, is going to be three executive FTEs. My advice is that the obligation upon the department is to have that implemented by 1 July this year. The advice that I have is that, notwithstanding the three, there are seven direct executive director roles. I will just state them: between 1 July 2023 and 9 May 2024, seven executive positions were abolished is the advice that was received. These positions were vacant and no longer required: executive director of communities and corporate—there were five executive directors, a SAES 1 position, who was the technology strategist, and then the director of strategy projects and social policy was also a SAES 1 category.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: So those are the executives of then DPC and more broadly. I may be slightly outside the scope, but has the government been able to achieve or is it on track to achieve that reduction of 50 across government?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes, that's Treasury. DTF are monitoring that, so that will be a question for them. Just to come back, notwithstanding the numbers I have just given you, these are the ones who have gone, there are others who have come in, but the obligation on DPC as part of that 50 remit is three.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Overall?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Overall, yes.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Net, three?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Net, yes—which I appreciate might sound low, given the size of DPC relative to other government departments.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I fully understand. Did you manage to get the answer on the administered items?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We are just waiting for the split between the two. As soon as I get it, I will let you know; we can send off a text.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Premier, continuing under the Workforce Summary heading, are you able to tell me or take on notice how many stress leave applications were approved in DPC over the last financial year?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice I have received from the chief executive officer is that, off the top of his head, none immediately come to mind, but we are going to double-check that for you.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: If you could take that on notice that would be great.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am happy to take that on notice, yes.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Premier, did the public sector commissioner identify morale problems in DPC in 2023-24 and bring that to any executive's attention?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am advised not that we are aware of, no—certainly between the commissioner and the chief executive, nor has the commissioner raised it with me. I would not say I meet with the commissioner on a frequent basis, but I certainly engage with her on a semiregular basis. She has never raised any such suggestion with me either, and I would expect her to, if there was an issue.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Premier, are you able to advise how many staff have resigned from DPC over the last 12 months, how many were on contract and how many were ongoing?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: At hand, we only have who is coming and going in terms of directors but not across the entirety of DPC. How many FTEs do we have in DPC?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: About 600.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Six hundred, yes. I do not have those numbers across the whole thing, but we can take that on notice. We are happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Premier, is the position of Deputy Chief Executive for Community, Culture and Place still vacant?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Could you just repeat the question so I get the answer right?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Is the position of Deputy Chief Executive for Community, Culture and Place still vacant? I believe that was the position previously occupied by Ms Alison Lloyd-Wright.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice that I have is that it is not vacant, it is still occupied by—

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: As an acting role?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, as Ms Lloyd-Wright's last day in the office was yesterday and she has taken a couple of weeks' leave before her resignation takes effect. You may or may not be aware that Alison has resigned from that role as she intends to explore opportunities outside of government.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Yes.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am very keen to put on the record my gratitude for Alison's service to the government, across different governments. The position will become vacant presumably when her leave concludes in a fortnight.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Do you intend to fill that position in its current form?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: That is under consideration.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Will someone act in that role?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice I have received is not at this stage. The group will report through to Wayne Hunter while an assessment is made about what will happen to that position in the future.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I have a question here about whether it has been advertised, but presumably not, given it is under consideration whether to fill it or not?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It has not been advertised.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: When was the previous incumbent, Ms Alison Lloyd-Wright, appointed to the role and how long after that appointment did she indicate that she was going to leave?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice I have received is that it was somewhere around October last year that she was appointed to the role. The second part of your question was: when did she announce her intention to resign?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Yes, but I think that was in the public domain—

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I found out a couple of weeks ago—

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: —unless that was different from what was in the public domain?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It was 3 May.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Was the Deputy Chief Executive for Community, Culture and Place responsible for your department's dealings with the SA Museum restructure?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes, she had a role—not exclusively, I think it is fair to say. The way it is structured is that the arts portfolios, or the arts units of government that report in through DPC, came in through Alison Lloyd-Wright's area, ultimately, and that includes the Museum.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Was she the primary executive responsible for the Museum within your department, excluding the chief executive of the Museum himself?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: As you have rightly identified, they have their own board and their own director, but in terms of the interface between that and the Department of the Premier and Cabinet it ultimately sort of escalates to Alison, yes, or to that office.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Did the previous deputy chief executive provide advice to the Premier's office regarding the South Australia Museum restructure and, if so, are you able to provide information regarding the nature of that advice?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am advised that, principally, the interface with the cabinet architecture of government in this respect would be interaction with the responsible minister's office, which is of course the Minister for Arts. As is well-known, since the issues around the Museum were publicly orated and elevated in their concern and their attention, in no small part because of the work of Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition, naturally I did start to ask questions and seek advice myself and at that point there were interactions between me, in my office, and Alison Lloyd-Wright. It is no different to when an issue is raised; the Premier's office will seek to seek briefings from any government department on any particular issue and this is not an exception.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Did you know your staff get direct briefings from Ms Lloyd-Wright in terms of verbal briefings from her; did you meet with her about this issue?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: She was certainly present at meetings I had about this issue, absolutely. I do not mind saying, that was as it started to present itself as an issue, yes, I absolutely was in meetings with Alison Lloyd-Wright. I cannot remember a meeting that I had with her one on one, or just between me and a single staff member and Alison. We were trying to formulate a response to sort of intervene in what the board was executing. I guess there were a few important meetings between myself, the CEO of DPC, Alison, the minister and representatives of the Museum. We had meetings with representatives of people who were—let's call them the concerned citizens for the lack of a better term—and Alison was present and I was grateful for the advice that she offered through that process.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Does DPC do exit interviews with staff when they resign from their contracts or positions?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am advised, yes.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Would an exit interview have been undertaken with Ms Lloyd-Wright, or planned to be undertaken?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am advised that that is something that should ordinarily occur, yes.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Has that yet happened?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Not in a formal sense as yet. I am advised that the chief executive of the department naturally had a rather lengthy briefing—not debriefing, meeting, discussion—with Ms Lloyd-Wright when she indicated that she intended to resign. Alison has been a high-quality public servant, so I would have thought that would have precipitated a conversation when the disappointing news of her resignation was made known.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: And I do not dispute her quality, Premier. She and I were both recruited to the Cabinet Office in the same interview round in 2008. I will move on to my next question. Does the Premier's office or the Premier's Delivery Unit have an ongoing involvement in the South Australian Museum restructure, including the review which is underway?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The PDU is not involved. What was the other part of the question?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Does the Premier's office, or the PDU, which you have clarified, have an ongoing involvement in the South Australian Museum restructure, including the review which is currently occurring?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The PDU definitely does not have any involvement; they have enough on their plate. I asked the Chief Executive of DPC to lead the exercise. That has been publicly announced. There is a panel of three: the Chief Scientist of South Australia along with Jim Thompson, who is the current director of the Queensland Museum. They are doing that work, and they will report through to me once that is concluded.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: When do you expect the review to be complete?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I think what we said publicly is we are trying to get a result as quickly as possible, and I think I referred to the second half of the year, but I do not mind saying that we are hoping that at some time in September there will be something we can take to cabinet.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: When that is complete, will you commit to releasing it publicly and in full?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We will certainly make known publicly the outcome of it, yes. There is still a fair bit of work to be done, I think it is fair to say, because there is the department of chief executive's role in terms of leading the examination and then we will, as a cabinet, have to contemplate whatever the outcome of that is. What we are seeking to achieve here is an outcome that best represents for the future of the Museum. I think any reasonable person would expect institutions to make sure they have got plans for the future.

I think the Museum sought to achieve that objective in a way that did not accord with what many people view as the best interests of the Museum. As I said, after I examined it myself, I think there was some legitimacy to those concerns. The exercise that the chief executive has, along with those two experts, is to come up with an alternative pathway for a plan for the future of the Museum. I have asked for that to come back through the cabinet. We will see where that lands.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Thank you for that answer. I will move on to the make-up of your office, Premier: Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 12, the ministerial office resources component on that page. Premier, can you table the job titles of all 46 FTEs in your ministerial office?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Can I table them?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Take it on notice, I guess.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I think it is all gazetted normally.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Are the specific job titles gazetted?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: From memory, I think they are, but I can check for you. What do you want us to take on notice?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: The job titles of all 46 FTEs—the names and job titles.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice that I have received is that, as per the requirement and the usual practice, FTEs in my office, the names of those people and their titles, along with their salaries, is normally gazetted.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I will move on then. Are any staff seconded to work in your office and, if so, how many and where from?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Seconded into my office?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Yes, from other parts of government or from other offices?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am happy to take that on notice again. In terms of what I can answer off the top of my head and the advice I have received, there are some people who are seconded into office administrative type roles, ASO related positions, into the office. I do not think there are any in terms of what you would normally characterise as ministerial advisers or anything like that.

That does happen potentially in some other offices. I can think of people who have been recruited from the department into those roles, but not into specific portfolios. I do not think there are any in my office.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Outside the 46 FTEs in your office, are there any other staff who are contracted to work in the office and, if so, how many and where from?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am not aware of any seconded contractors or people on contracts, but for the sake of absolute surety I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Thank you.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Not that I am aware of, no. Again, if that is wrong, I will come back, but I am advised there are none.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Do any of your staff work from home on an agreed basis? Not obviously after hours when you take messages and things like that, but work from home in the normal sense of that term and, if so, how often?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am advised there are two employees who have agreed arrangements to work one day a week from home.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Premier, I will move on to the position of the Cross Border Commissioner at Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 14 which you referred to in your comments earlier around that position being MoG'd into—

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: What page?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Page 14. It is one of the positions referred to. Has the office of the Cross Border Commissioner, obviously not the commissioner but the position itself, been cut?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am advised no.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: So both the commissioner and the office of the commissioner exist?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: There is a physical office and therefore I guess an office in Mount Gambier with an EA role. My advice is there is the commissioner and then there is the supporting office around the commissioner, which is pretty small, but yes, both are being retained. Obviously, we are in the market at the moment. I think there is a process underway at the moment. There were interviews on Friday of last week for the recruitment of the new commissioner.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Was the funding for the office moved as part of machinery of government changes from PIRSA into DPC?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: So that is part of the DPC operating budget now?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes. I can be more specific. The allocated annual budget for the Cross Border Commissioner in 2024-25 is \$525,000 and indexed ongoing. Expenditure by DPC to date on recruitment of a Cross Border Commissioner has been \$24,208, which includes advertising the position, supported by a recruitment agency.

The annual budget for the Cross Border Commissioner in 2023-24 was \$510,000. The effective transition date of the transfer of the Cross Border Commissioner from PIRSA to DPC was 11 April. Actual expenditure incurred by PIRSA in 2024 was \$295,000 as of 10 April, so \$215,000 has been transferred to DPC from PIRSA for the remainder of the costs associated with this financial year.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Why was the decision made to move it?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The previous Cross Border Commissioner, Liz McKinnon—I was very glad when she took up the role. When I heard that she left or was leaving, naturally I was quite surprised and disappointed. I rang her to touch base with her and asked her to provide me some frank and fearless views about the role and what could be done to make sure it is effective into the future. Her view was that many of the issues that constituents or complainants or whatever you want to call them raised with the Cross Border Commissioner actually related to PIRSA itself—not all, but quite a number.

I do not think I am compromising her confidence in the conversation we had. She suggested that given the nature of the role is across agencies—so they are issues with DIT, they are issues with PIRSA, and you could go on and on, with training and skills—it would be better for the role to have a central government location bureaucratically. I have to say I thought that made a bit of sense. I spoke to the local MP about it, I spoke to Damien about it and obviously the minister, hence the decision was made that it probably best sits within a central government agency, and it was a question of whether it was DTF or DPC—

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I would say DPC is a far better idea, Premier.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes, and given we want it to be viewed as a valuable agency rather than a source of savings, we thought DPC would be the better place to put it.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: It does say in that table that we referred to that there is no funding against it for 2024-25. Is that going to be topped up by PIRSA?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Which table are you looking at?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: The table at the top of page 14; the second tranche of figures there has the budget including the transfer that you referred to, but then there is nothing against the Cross Border Commissioner for the forthcoming financial year. I am just trying to understand why that is the case.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: For 2024-25?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Yes.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes, that is a good question. I have been advised that if you look at that table, it starts by saying 'Reconciliation to agency net cost of providing services'. For the 2024-25 financial year, given that the whole of the Cross Border Commissioner is in DPC, it will mean that it is funded from DPC's—

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: General.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes, so as to the budget for the Cross Border Commissioner, which for 2025 is \$525,000, I am advised that that \$525,000 sits within the overall program 1 allocation of Premier and Cabinet policy, and that allocation is obviously \$119 million.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: That makes sense, thank you.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: But I can say, to be specific, within that allocation, all functions that relate to the Cross Border Commissioner have a budget of \$525,000 for the next financial year.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Premier, you mentioned that there was a physical office in Mount Gambier and that it was staffed by an executive assistant role. Is that currently filled?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: An office manager.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: An office manager; is that currently filled? Is there a person in that role?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Is the lease for the office of the Cross Border Commissioner, which I think sits at 27 Sturt Street, Mount Gambier, an ongoing lease, or can you advise when that lease will expire and whether there is an intention to renew that lease?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: That lease would have been with PIRSA and now it has been transferred across, so we do not have that advice at hand, but I am happy to take that on notice.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Who performs the legislated role of the Cross Border Commissioner currently since Ms McKinnon's resignation?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Who is acting? In the interim period, I appointed the CE of DPC.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: You mentioned that a recruitment process was ongoing and had interviewed, but a decision has not been made yet around an appointment?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Correct. There were interviews last Friday, so presumably I will receive advice in the not too distant future about the outcome of that process. There are three people on the recruitment panel whom we have appointed: the CE of DPC; an Executive Director of DPC, Jess Pisani; and Ian McDonnell. Ian is from Mount Gambier, of McDonnell & Sons, a leader. You probably know Ian. He is a leader in the Mount Gambier business community. For your benefit, I have just been advised that the lease for the Cross Border Commissioner office that you referred to is ongoing. Currently, the lease ends in 2026.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Would it be your intention, with the appointment of a new Cross Border Commissioner, to keep that physical office in Mount Gambier?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes. I have made it clear in the recruitment process that it is very much our expectation that the Cross Border Commissioner resides in Mount Gambier—or the Cross Border Commissioner's office is in Mount Gambier, which clearly lends itself to the Cross Border Commissioner living in proximity.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Are you able to advise how broadly the role was advertised and how many regional newspapers featured the advertisement for the role? I do not expect you to have that specificity, but if you can provide that on notice, or maybe you do have the answer.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am advised that the Cross Border Commissioner position was open on 12 April 2024. Job advertisements included national, South Australian and local publications—*Fin Review*, *Tiser*, *The Border Watch*—as well as the South Australian government I Work for SA website.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Do you plan to review the position, either now or when the new person takes the role, as in review the role and how it is working? You mentioned you had a conversation with Ms McKinnon and referred very openly to the repositioning of it within DPC.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We are committed to the position. In fact, the position is established under statute, so obviously we are fully committed to the position. In terms of its operations, being a new thing, yes, I think it should be subject to ongoing—not assessment but making sure that we are doing what we can. When I spoke to Liz and she made the suggestions that she did, I have to say with the value of hindsight maybe we would have just put it into DPC from the start but, like all things, it is easy to say with hindsight.

In the ordinary course of events, I would hope to fill this position in the not too distant future, and let that individual and their office run its course for a period to establish what might be improved into the future but, from my perspective as the person who is now the responsible minister, I will be

catching up with the Cross Border Commissioner—like I catch up with other senior executives and positions accountable to me—on a semi-regular basis, and during the course of those discussions undoubtedly we will discuss what can be done to make sure the role is best equipped to be able to fulfil the objectives that we have.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Just to clarify, under the new arrangements and broader Public Service employment situation, do you employ this position, or will it be your chief executive?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Governor is the final appointer.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Does the commissioner report to your chief executive or is it a direct reporting role to you?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice I received is that under the work that has been done for the transition of DPC, it immediately reports in on a practical basis to Jess Pisani, who is an executive director in DPC, executive director of strategic engagement, but more substantially through to the CEO of DPC. I am the responsible minister, and given that it is a commissioner's type role, in the same way with the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, on occasions I will naturally be meeting with them.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Just one final clarification: in terms of the advertisement of that role, was *The Border Watch* the only regional newspaper that that was advertised in?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I will take that on notice. The advice that I have was it listed those papers, but I do not know if that means it was only those papers. I will find out.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I will move on from the Cross Border Commissioner now to the Premier's Delivery Unit: Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, program 5, page 26. The DPC website describes the function of the PDU as the following:

The government has established a Premier's Delivery Unit (PDU) to ensure priorities are delivered on time and on budget and that any challenges are addressed early and resolved satisfactorily.

Is the Premier satisfied that the PDU is delivering the government's commitment to fix the ramping crisis early and satisfactorily?

The CHAIR: Premier, can I ask that you introduce your new adviser please.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Can I introduce Rik Morris, who is the CEO of the Premier's Delivery Unit. Can you ask your question again?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Your department's website says that the PDU has a role to ensure that the priorities of government are delivered on time and on budget, and that any challenges are addressed early and resolved satisfactorily. Are you satisfied that the PDU is delivering your commitment to fix the ramping crisis early and satisfactorily?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The government's commitment around addressing ramping was more than just a descriptor; it actually was underpinned by a huge amount of policy and effort and some rather specific commitments. People remember the headline, but there was a lot of detail that underpinned it. There were very specific commitments around the number of nurses we were going to recruit over attrition, very specific numbers about the ambo offices and doctors we were going to recruit over and above attrition, and some very specific commitments around what investments were going to be made at specific hospitals—Flinders, Modbury, Mount Barker, Noarlunga, Lyell Mac. Then we went into some very highly granular detail around where we were going to put new stations, where crews were going to increase at stations, and where stations were going to be redeveloped.

The PDU does have a role in the monitoring of each of those individual commitments that were put on the public record that, quite reasonably, the government is held to account for. That is work that the PDU updates me on on a regular basis, along with a subcommittee of cabinet that we have established called the Government Performance Cabinet Committee. The members of that cabinet committee are myself, the Deputy Premier and the Treasurer. The PDU frequently reports in through that cabinet committee, elevating issues where any of those specific commitments might be struggling or where we are at in terms of times, budgets and so forth.

That exercise has actually proven to be quite useful. I could think of examples where, through that cabinet architecture, we have been able to make relatively quick decisions, particularly around dollars and where certain things might go. So, for instance, one of the commitments was the new ambulance headquarters. That is a big program and one that has been long overdue. As I know the Leader of the Opposition, being a former minister himself, appreciates, some of these things have complexity, but through that exercise we have been able to make decisions to hopefully meet the time lines that we have committed to. So, yes, there has been a lot of work that has gone into it.

Your focus, quite rationally, is on the end game—as is ours, I have to say—around what is happening with transfer-of-care data or numbers or ramping hours. Yes, of course we want to see a dramatically improved performance than is currently the case, but the underpinnings of the policy to expand and increase the capacity of the hospital system and the very specific nature of those commitments—which do not represent the entire effort of government, I have to say, but they do represent the commitments that we made—the PDU does have a role of monitoring that.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Is fixing the ramping crisis the biggest priority for the PDU?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It is certainly a priority of the government, and a lot of effort is going into it. The PDU's job is to monitor all of our election commitments, the specific ones in nature, and make sure they are being delivered against. It is my expectation of the PDU that they are all monitored and assessed. That is work that they do with a degree of diligence that I am grateful for.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I do not expect a specific answer on this, but are you able to estimate a proportion of the budget and the time in terms of FTE divisions that the PDU spends on addressing issues around ramping?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: In terms of roughly across FTEs, I am advised that all those Health commitments that I mentioned—and there are lots that I have not—does take up, I would be suggesting, over half, but approximately half of the time of the PDU, which sounds like a lot given the scope of the policy commitments that we made at the election, but there was a disproportionately large number of them in the Health area.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: It takes up about half the time, you said, give or take. Does it take up about half the FTEs as well?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: There are seven FTEs in the PDU. Some of our commitments in Health are workforce related, other commitments are infrastructure related, so there is a bit of a split in terms of how that is divvied up. Of those seven FTEs, it is not structured as though 'these two are Health' or 'these three are Health'. It is spread across, depending on the nature of the commitment. So across all the FTEs and all the hours worked—ballpark—approximately half of it is spent on Health-related policy commitments.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: How does the PDU practically oversee SA Health and fixing the ramping crisis and other Health matters? Are there weekly meetings, daily meetings or conversations?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Just to go back a step, you have to appreciate the role of the PDU. The PDU is not to oversee the Health department, the PDU's responsibility is not to make any decisions within Health; the PDU's responsibility is to monitor the delivery of the commitments that have been made in regard to Health and every other agency. To give you a specific example, and one that is in my electorate: we committed to a new ambulance station in the Woodville area—no different to Norwood or any of the other different ambulance stations.

The PDU's job is to make sure that the Ambulance Service within SA Health—have they picked that site on time? Is the money being allocated for the site? How is it going in terms of its time line, because we have to get that open and running within a specific time frame. So it is a monitoring exercise, but then it also has the capacity to engage with the department to make sure things are moving at the pace they should be and are able to take decisions and bring them into that cabinet architecture I described earlier, to be able to make decisions where choices need to be made in a more expedited time frame.

As the Leader of the Opposition, you had election commitments that you were responsible for the delivery of. Let's take the reservoirs piece. I am familiar with the fact that that would have taken a heap of work. It is not just a decision, there is actually a whole range of decisions that have to be made in order to be able to achieve the outcome. This is that: this is providing a vehicle, a mechanism, so that I am advised and decisions can be made on a quick basis specific to the commitments that we have made.

Rik is not the person who is ultimately responsible for fixing ramping; that is ultimately SA Health's responsibility. The PDU's job is to make sure that where specific commitments have been made they are being delivered upon, and any interventions and actions that are required anywhere within government to ensure time frames are being met—that that is done; and also to monitor budget.

It is obvious that there is a massive escalation in the cost of infrastructure delivery. Where a project looks like it requires more funding allocation in order to be able to be delivered, then the PDU has the capacity to be able to identify that and escalate it through the budget process so that, if it needs to be addressed, it is.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Premier, you mentioned that fixing the ramping crisis as a commitment would have lots of things that sit under it in a practical sense: infrastructure, personnel, services, programs and the like. Does the PDU monitor and potentially intervene in those programs or do you see its role as honing in on the commitment to fix the ramping crisis, or a bit of both?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Honing in on the specifics, because the specifics are what we put in place in order to be able to achieve the objective we are looking for. The PDU is not a decision-making authority. The PDU does not have the power to instruct SA Health—far from it. The PDU has the capacity to extract information from SA Health or any other agency, and we are focusing on Health for the sake of the discussion, to be able to advise me as Premier of issues that are presenting themselves and suggested interventions that the PDU has no power or authority to make, only powers or authorities that exist in other parts of the government.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: As part of its work to identify problems and challenges and projects under that ramping crisis headline, does the PDU receive data and does it receive information on ramping on a regular basis beyond what is made public?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The PDU is an extension of me in some respects, answering to me directly, but not beyond the information that the Minister for Health gets. The Minister for Health and the Department for Health are the ones that generate reports and indicators, and I get access to some of those. I get a weekly update. I speak to the Minister for Health on a highly frequent basis, as you would imagine. I get access to data and reports and so forth that I try to avail myself of, but there is not any sort of specific PDU-designed report per se, it is just getting access to the information that is being generated in any event.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Are you happy with the performance of the PDU?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am, yes. This is something that we thought about for a while. Again, any observer of government and politics knows that governments, particularly new governments, make commitments and then often they get bogged down in process which compromises the aspirations of the government and their delivery. That happens across governments of all political persuasions.

There have been various iterations of Premier's Delivery Unit equivalents around the world. Some have worked with more success than others. We looked very closely at what the Blair government did, and thought it was a worthwhile approach and adapted it to the South Australian context—it is far more modest in its nature, I think it is fair to say. It has had a value, yes. I do not want to be partisan about it, but, without being specific, I can think of former governments that made some big promises that evaporated upon their election. We are working our hardest to avoid that, and that is where the PDU has had an important role to play, from my perspective.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Has the Premier received complaints about the behaviour of the PDU in the way that it oversees timelines and budgets and deals with public sector agencies?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No. The only complaints I can think of in respect to the PDU have probably come from me to the PDU about, 'Where is this at, where is that at, why isn't this done yet?' Outside of that, I have not been advised on any.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: The opposition has been told of significant power struggles between the PDU and some of the agencies that it is speaking to about particular projects. Has the Premier had to intervene on behalf of the PDU to get things done?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I am not aware of those things, but can I just say this: say there is an issue with a particular commitment that we are trying to follow up on—a local sporting club having something built or the retirement of an infrastructure project, or you name it—there are countless—a piece of legislation that we committed to, whatever. Whatever the commitment, the PDU's job is to ruffle a few feathers if things are not going the way that are consistent with my expectations. Knowing the CEO and having observed his style, he probably does not ruffle feathers as much as I might like. No-one has advised me of any specific power struggles that are debilitating in nature.

Like I said, the job of the PDU is not just to go along and politely say, 'Where's this at?' And the department responding by saying, 'Oh, well, we're just going about it our way, thanks very much,' and then we pack our bags and go home; quite the opposite. The whole creation of the role is to generate a degree of accountability within the system to the political architecture of government. You appreciate this: the government is, and bureaucracy is, a big beast. It is unwieldy, and part of the challenge for political leaders is to grab hold of the reins to make sure that things you want to get done are getting done. I am unapologetic about those expectations.

I am very grateful for the fact that at the executive leadership of government, which is where I have an interaction, are acting with a degree of determination to fulfil the government's policy, particularly the CEO role, where I have a direct line of reporting accountability, but beyond that I am pretty grateful for it generally as well. The PDU has performed an important role. I do not want to wake up one day and see time pass us by and we have not been able to get done the things we want to get done.

It is tough. I do not want to ramble, but government departments have got jobs to do, they have services to deliver. There is just the day-to-day grind of doing the work of government. Part of the trick is to make sure that we have the capacity as a government to not just do those things but also to do the other things that represent the ambition of a program. Getting that balance right, or understanding how to do both, is one of the reasons why we established the PDU.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: There are seven FTEs in the PDU at the moment. Beyond that, does the PDU use contractors or consultants?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Obviously, it has in the past, as you inquired about with Mr Peter Hanlon, but there are none currently.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: So Mr Hanlon is not continuing to consult the PDU?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: So that relationship is no longer in place?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, not in a financial way, but that is not to say it could not be in the future. To be more specific about it, there has been zero expenditure on Mr Hanlon in 2023-24.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Would costs associated with contractors and consultants in the forthcoming financial year or in the past be captured in the line item supplies and services?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: What page are you looking at?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: That is page 26, the PDU page. It is \$400,000 in the current financial year and \$376,000.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes. My advice is that is where it would be accounted for.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: And that is the line that Mr Hanlon would have been paid for—and, not specific, but other consultants as well?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: My advice is yes, that is correct.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I will move on now to the Office for AUKUS in Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 16, highlights and targets. The establishment of the Office for AUKUS was listed as a highlight for the past year with \$800,000 allocated towards the establishment of that office. What has funding been used for?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Office of AUKUS was established post my first trip to Barrow. The AUKUS opportunity is obviously very big. Something I have been trying to impress upon the government is that it cuts across—everyone should feel as though they have a degree of responsibility in its delivery so there needs to be a degree of coordination. There also needs to be a bureaucratic interface for the commonwealth as well. That is why it has been established.

In terms of some of the things that it has done in the practical sense of its establishment has been very valuable to the government. What has taken up a lot of time, probably more than I would have thought was required, was around the land swap. That has been a challenging bureaucratic exercise.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: The commonwealth is involved.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes, exactly. I thought we were making it complicated and then the commonwealth got involved. That has taken a huge amount of work, but also it has had responsibilities in terms of the implementation of the defence industry workforce and skills plan that came out of that taskforce. The land swap, all that exercise, is now largely concluded. There are a few administrative things that have to be done for me now, but now it is more a tick-boxing exercise from here. That has freed up a lot of time.

Now the effort tends to go more towards engagement with the commonwealth around the training and skills academy, which is the priority that we have identified as a government that we want to get moving on and something I am in regular contact with Vice Admiral Mead for and about, amongst other efforts within government. Also anything that requires a cross-government coordinative sort of function, that sort of sits within the Office of AUKUS too.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Is there an allocation of FTEs for the office or are staff seconded from relevant agencies, or is it a combination?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Reading from the advice I have been given, the establishment funding currently funds three FTEs and will fund five FTEs from 2024-25 onwards. An additional 1.4 FTEs has been provided to the Office of AUKUS from within the DPC resources budget during 2023-24 to support the priority project.

The Office of AUKUS contains the following roles: Director of Office of AUKUS, Project Director—and I can tell you what their levels are, if you want. SAES 1 for the director; for the project director, MAS 3—that is a .4 FTE role—a program manager, who is an ASO 7, that is one FTE; a principal policy and project adviser, who is an ASO 7 and one FTE; and then there is one FTE of an ASO 2—one executive officer who is an ASO 2 and that is one FTE. The Office for AUKUS has provided funding of \$135,000 in the current financial year and per annum for the three years beyond that to DIS which is now DSD.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: What involvement does Defence SA have with the Office for AUKUS?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Close collaboration.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: They are close?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes, close collaboration. As you would expect, when we had a machinery of government change post the reshuffle, in that reshuffle we obviously moved the portfolio of the Minister for Defence and Space Industries. At the same time, just through coincidence, there was the resignation of Richard Price—and I put on record my thanks to him in his role at

Defence SA for some time across governments. When Richard resigned, we appointed the new CE. Matt Opie, who I think the opposition probably knows, has now been appointed to that role.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Yes.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We did contemplate whether that was a time we would want to move the Office for AUKUS. We decided against it for the reasons that I touched on earlier about it having a cross-government role, but it is my absolute firm expectation—and the minister and I have spoken about this in some detail—that those two things work hand in glove.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Does the office have a physical presence?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It is in the State Admin.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Does the Office for AUKUS have a reporting relationship with the commonwealth government regarding the AUKUS partnerships? Perhaps that is the wrong word—rather, information sharing. Are there strong relationships between them?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes, absolutely. Mainly with ASA.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: None of these questions are meant to be criticism at all, by the way. What would you say has been achieved by the office since its establishment?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Undoubtedly the land swap would be the big thing. Also, they are developing a new master plan for Lefevre Peninsula:

- supporting the commonwealth and state environmental and planning assessment process with a construction yard, which I suspect you, Leader of the Opposition, would have an appreciation that that is a big piece of work;
- partnering with the ASA to grow social licence for the submarine program across state and national levels, including local and international defence industry partners;
- supporting the implementation of the Defence Industry Workforce and Skills Plan, which I referred to earlier, including the allocation, to give a specific around that;
- working with the commonwealth and our universities in South Australia around how the allocation of the 1,000 commonwealth supported places is done; and
- coordinating engagement with community, industry and other stakeholders on infrastructure workforce and legislative elements of the commonwealth program.

I suspect there will be other instances where governments—this government and potentially future governments—have to contemplate other legislative changes that might have to come in from time to time. The Leader of the Opposition would be aware of legislation that this parliament has passed—with bipartisan support, I note—to do a few things on Lefevre Peninsula. It would not surprise me if there is a need for that again in the future and the Office for AUKUS does that work. To drive partnership between the commonwealth and the state, the Office for AUKUS is also establishing a formal governance model within the ASA. The model will drive key partnership activities, including the industrial capability uplift, infrastructure, skills and training academy, social licence and communications.

What I would say in terms of my observation and having talked to Vice Admiral Mead about this is that there needs to be an interface between the South Australian government and the commonwealth, more specifically the ASA, to get a few things happening. The Office for AUKUS is our first iteration of that effort. It has obviously gone up a little bit as the work goes up a little bit, but we are just beginning here. This effort is going to grow and, I think, rapidly escalate as we get closer to the end of the decade and the program starts ramping up.

Let me put it this way: we will continue to monitor the structure of the Office for AUKUS and examine if this is the best way to do this, having something sitting within DPC, or if it requires something more substantial again. At the moment, we think it is probably about right, but I do not mind saying that Vice Admiral Mead and I have discussed thinking about how that interface looks into the future.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: You have mentioned the land swap being a big component of the work. The skills academy: is that the part with the transfer of funds to DIS, to look after the skills academy, driving that forward, or does that also sit within the Office for AUKUS?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: DIS has done the bulk of the work around how the skills and training pieces look, but yes is the short answer to your question. There is that collaboration between the Office for AUKUS and DIS, particularly where the Office for AUKUS facilitates the engagements with the commonwealth on this.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I will move on from the Office for AUKUS now and talk about government land, which is Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 34 and the statement of financial position. The item that I want to refer to is 'Land and improvements'. The balance sheet on page 34 shows an increase in land and improvements of around \$178 million, with funding significantly increasing from \$224 million in 2023-24 to just over \$400 million in the 2024-25 financial year. What is this very significant increase due to?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Well, I do not think it is State Admin.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: No. I am not sure it is worth that much. You would have to pay someone to take it.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: If Treasury have made that estimation, I would assert that is ambitious. Anyway, we will find out.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I will ask a related question. Have any funding contingencies or allocations been made for relocating staff from the State Admin Centre to the second Festival Tower, and is this reflected in the department's financial statements and, if so, where?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, absolutely not.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Has any expenditure been allocated in the 2024-25 budget or the 2023-24 estimated result regarding any aspect of the second Festival Tower?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, not that I am aware of.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Are there any plans—and we did refer to the State Admin Centre a moment ago—to move DPC or the Department of Treasury and Finance and other government agencies from that building?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Apart from, in machinery of government, there might be small functions moving from—

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Yes, but you intend the State Administration Centre to be the home of those two agencies, so to speak?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: There are no plans currently for those agencies to be moving holus-bolus out of State Admin. But I do not mind saying this, at some point that is probably going to have to happen.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: You will probably get bipartisan support in some form.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: You know this: in most other agencies within government, the accommodation is well and truly superior to the accommodation—do not get too excited—for DPC and DTF. That is I think pretty well-known. It is an old building. Where we park our cars out the back, it feels as though there is a permanent line-up of Rawsons Electrical vehicles or some plumbing vehicles.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Fixing things.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes. The lifts seem to be having to get repaired every five minutes. It is just an old building and at some point someone is going to have to do it eventually and how that works, I do not know. I think some options have been looked at, and they have been for years, as I understand it, but no decisions have been made. There are other departments that have a residual presence in the building, I think—the Auditor-General and so forth. If we had the aspiration for state governments to be in green-star rated buildings and so forth, then we are well and truly

failing that benchmark or that test. But to answer your question, there has been no decision made by the government to move DPC or DTF as things stand today.

In terms of land and improvements, my advice is that this looks as though it is the function of a valuation. I might have to take this on notice to understand what that variation is. I will have to take that on notice.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Have any sale proceeds from the sale of the State Administration Centre, or the precinct within which it sits, including the education centre and Torrens House, been included in the forward estimates?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: There is no anticipated sale.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: No anticipated sale?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, not that I am advised, unless Treasury has done something. That is probably a question best asked next door, but my advice is no.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I will move on to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 42, the additional administered items for Department of the Premier and Cabinet, with a particular focus in these few questions on motorsport, which is included there. Which minister does the South Australian Motor Sport Board report to?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The Premier.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: To you. Have you received a report from the Motor Sport Board for the 2023 event, held between 23 and 26 November?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Can I just introduce Mark Warren, who is the CEO of the Motor Sport Board. Sorry, what was your question again?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I believe that there is a requirement for a report from the Motor Sport Board summarising or analysing each of the events held, and have you received a report for the 2023 event?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Are you talking about the economic outcomes report and so forth?

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Yes. I think there is a requirement for it to be tabled in parliament as per the act.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice I have received is that there is a requirement to table the attendance and so forth, those particulars. I am advised that has happened.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: It has happened for 2023? I was under the impression it had not been. I stand to be corrected of course.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We will double-check, too, for assuredness. I am advised that under section 27D(1) of the act the board is required to prepare and provide to me, as the responsible minister, a report setting out the total attendance at the event and have that laid before both houses of parliament. The report set out that the total attendance over the four days of the 2023 Adelaide 500 event was estimated to be 260,700.

Beyond that official report, I am advised, and I am assuming this has been put out recently, or soon, that the event for 2023 contributed \$61.6 million in economic benefit to the state, which was a 19 per cent increase on 2022, and generated \$111.3 million in economic expenditure to this state's economy. When I got those numbers, naturally my first question was, 'Where does that uplift come from?' We did better this year in terms of accommodation, particularly on the Saturday night, than what the first year was. That was to be anticipated because you recall that the dates for the 2022 event were not announced until July.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: So people had more time to plan.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: So the market had 12 months to book and, of course, on the Saturday night we also had Robbie Williams, which helped too.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: You mentioned the attendance. Was that all paying guests or does that also include complimentary tickets? Are you able to give a breakdown of that? If not now, can you take that on notice?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The advice I have been given is that attendance does include a range of people, so it does also include officials, credentialed ticketholders for people like teams, drivers, participants, corporate and media. They are all included. Apparently, that is a standard that is set across all Supercars events, that those people are included.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Are you able to give a breakdown of numbers—not today, but to take that on notice—of how many complimentary tickets versus paying tickets?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We can have a look at it. There are certainly some complimentary tickets.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I think school students and others got those.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes. The advice I have received is that certainly less than 5 per cent of all ticketing is complimentary, and the vast bulk of that 5 per cent is 3,000 school students who are given an opportunity to come along.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: How long does the sponsorship agreement with VAILO continue for? Is this the last year of that?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: This is the last year and there is an option for an additional two-year extension.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Given the revelations about the founder of VAILO's behaviour, in particular around not paying his taxation requirements, is the government concerned about that and does it plan to continue that sponsorship?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We are not concerned about it. I do not mind saying that having had the opportunity to speak to Aaron Hickmann on a number of occasions, his commitment to the event is something that we are very grateful for as a government. He has been a high-quality corporate partner of the event. All of the obligations he has under the sponsorship agreement with the Motor Sport Board and the Adelaide 500 he has honoured in full. In fact, I think there are examples where, in terms of other things, he has gone above and beyond.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: So there are no late payments of sponsorship or anything like that?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: No, and I have asked. To be specific, I can advise that certainly VAILO have no outstanding invoices under their partnership agreement with the event. Supporters of the Supercars event in Adelaide and the Adelaide 500—and clearly the government is a keen enthusiast of the event—have no reason for any complaints, only, really, gratitude towards Mr Hickmann and VAILO's support of the event.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: With regard to the option of continuing that sponsorship by VAILO, are negotiations underway?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I think there have been some really positive discussions, but nothing has been officially decided yet. Those discussions are underway.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I might pass now to Mr Batty to read in the omnibus questions. He was desperate to do so, and it will give us a break from these questions for a moment.

Mr BATTY: I will read the omnibus questions.

1. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many executive appointments have been made since 1 July 2023 and what is the annual salary and total employment cost for each position?

2. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many executive positions have been abolished since 1 July 2023 and what was the annual salary and total employment cost for each position?

3. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what has been the total cost of executive position terminations since 1 July 2023?

4. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, will the minister provide a breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors with a total estimated cost above \$10,000 engaged since 1 July 2023, listing the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier, the method of appointment, the reason for the engagement and the estimated total cost of the work?

5. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, will the minister provide an estimate of the total cost to be incurred in 2024-25 for consultants and contractors, and for each case in which a consultant or contractor has already been engaged at a total estimated cost above \$10,000, the name of the consultant or contractor, the method of appointment, the reason for the engagement and the total estimated cost?

6. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many surplus employees are there in June 2024, and for each surplus employee, what is the title or classification of the position and the total annual employment cost?

7. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the number of executive staff to be cut to meet the government's commitment to reduce spending on the employment of executive staff and, for each position to be cut, its classification, total remuneration cost and the date by which the position will be cut?

8. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:

- What savings targets have been set for 2024-25 and each year of the forward estimates;
- What is the estimated FTE impact of these measures?

9. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:

- What was the actual FTE count at June 2024 and what is the projected actual FTE account for the end of each year of the forward estimates;
- What is the budgeted total employment cost for each year of the forward estimates; and
- How many targeted voluntary separation packages are estimated to be required to meet budget targets over the forward estimates and what is their estimated cost?

10. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how much is budgeted to be spent on goods and services for 2024-25 and for each year of the forward estimates?

11. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many FTEs are budgeted to provide communication and promotion activities in 2024-25 and each year of the forward estimates and what is their estimated employment cost?

12. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the total budgeted cost of government-paid advertising, including campaigns, across all mediums in 2024-25?

13. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, please provide for each individual investing expenditure project administered, the name, total estimated expenditure, actual expenditure incurred to June 2023 and budgeted expenditure for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27?

14. For each grant program or fund the minister is responsible for, please provide the following information for the 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years:

- Name of the program or fund;
- The purpose of the program or fund;
- Budgeted payments into the program or fund;
- Budgeted expenditure from the program or fund; and

- Details, including the value and beneficiary, or any commitments already made to be funded from the program or fund.
15. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
- Is the agency confident that you will meet your expenditure targets in 2024-25?
 - Have any budget decisions been made between the delivery of the budget on 6 June 2024 and today that might impact on the numbers presented in the budget papers which we are examining today?
 - Are you expecting any reallocations across your agencies' budget lines during 2024-25; if so, what is the nature of the reallocation?
16. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
- What South Australian businesses will be used in procurement for your agencies in 2024-25?
 - What percentage of total procurement spend for your agency does this represent?
 - How does this compare to last year?
17. What protocols and monitoring systems has the department implemented to ensure that the productivity, efficiency and quality of service delivery is maintained while employees work from home?
18. What percentage of your department's budget has been allocated for the management of remote work infrastructure, including digital tools, cybersecurity, and support services, and how does this compare with previous years?
19. How many procurements have been undertaken by the department this FY, how many have been awarded to interstate businesses? How many of those were signed off by the CE?
20. How many contractor invoices were paid by the department directly this FY? How many and what percentage were paid within 15 days, and how many and what percentage were paid outside of 15 days?
21. How many and what percentage of staff who undertake procurement activities have undertaken training on participation policies and local industry participants this FY?

The CHAIR: Member for Hartley, I understand you have some questions.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Thank you, sir.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Can I just get back to a couple of things that the Leader of the Opposition has asked for.

The CHAIR: Premier.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: There were a couple of things that the Leader of the Opposition asked me for that I said I would follow up on. On page 13, early on, the Leader of the Opposition asked about FTEs—the two specific FTEs administered for the department. They are ministerial officers, and apparently it is the Premier himself and Minister Bettison. So Minister Bettison and myself individually are those two FTEs, and are counted that way for some reason. Just one other thing I want to point out—

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: It is a bit quirky.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Yes. I have a clarification in regard to something that was raised during the course of the PDU, and I do not know if this needs to be made, but it is just for the sake of transparency. You asked about consultants. There was a piece of work commissioned by the PDU by a consultant firm by the name of Australia Public Affairs in late 2022. That work was not completed until October 2023 and the invoice was settled at that point, and the value of that particular piece of work was \$33,000.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: What did that relate to?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It was a piece of work assessing distinctions in the operation across jurisdictions of sex offender registers.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: I have a couple of questions in relation to Infrastructure SA, Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 23, highlights, where it says:

- Progressed the business case for the Northern Water project and secured funding from private sector partners into the next phase of studies.

For the business case and the next phase of studies, where did that money come from, which parties were involved and what is the contribution of each of those parties to that business case and the next phase of studies?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I introduce Jeremy Conway, CEO of Infrastructure SA, as you would know. Are you talking about page 23?

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Yes.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Sorry, we have just had this movement here. You are talking about the—

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: The Northern Water project, in relation to the business case and the next phase of studies. It says that funding has been secured from private sector partners: which partners and how much?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: BHP, Amp Energy, Fortescue and Origin made a contribution.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Are we able to understand how much that contribution has been?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I think it is commercial-in-confidence, but what I would say is BHP has put the number out there, because we were at a forum together and we referred to it. From memory, that is \$77.5 million.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: And the others are commercial-in-confidence; is that your answer? There is a difference between commercial-in-confidence and not wanting to publish the answer. I am not trying to be tricky, I am just trying to understand.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: They have asked for it to be kept commercial-in-confidence.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: They have asked for it to be kept commercial-in-confidence? Okay. On the same budget page, in terms of—

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: Can I just elaborate a little bit on the Northern Water feasibility study funding because it is important. It is a \$200 million feasibility study: \$77½ million of that is coming from BHP, \$100 million is committed from the state government—this will allow you to deduce how much the others are paying—and we have now been able to secure \$65 million from the federal government, which was not the case previously, so I was very grateful for that when it was announced in the budget. If you add all that up, what do you have? You have \$165 million plus \$77 million. The other contributors are smaller by nature. My apologies: the \$65 million contributes to our \$100 million. I should be clear about that.

The other critical thing, though, that I have made known publicly—and I am not sure the significance of this is fully appreciated—is that there are significant caveats upon the state government's contribution, namely that we were able to secure agreement with BHP that in the event that BHP, who would be the principal customer of the Northern Water project, walk away with a positive finding from the feasibility study, the state's contribution is at risk to BHP. This is something that I insisted upon, given the history of these types of projects in the past with BHP, but we are very grateful for their contribution and that work is happening in earnest.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: On the same page, under targets 2024-25—the big question. It states:

- Continue progress on the Northern Water project towards the final investment decision.

When will that happen?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: We hope in 2026. We hope at some point in 2026.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: Probably January, February, early March, maybe?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: That would be nice. A lot of things would be nice at that time of the year.

The Hon. V.A. TARZIA: It is a nice time of the year. I will hand back to the leader.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: People are out and about, there is an enthusiasm and thirst for public knowledge. In all seriousness, we are working towards 2026. It is a massive program. It is so big that it is hard to put a specific time on it.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: I just want to clarify one very small thing from my question on the Cross Border Commissioner, and you may not need to change officers for this. Obviously, there is the commission itself and there is an office manager EA role, which you took on notice whether it had someone in it or not. Are there any other FTEs associated with that role?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: I have just been advised, since we last discussed it, the office manager role is also vacant, so presumably that will be getting filled by the new commissioner, when they are appointed. Not specifically per se, but, naturally, once the new person is appointed—

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: There may.

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: There may be, yes.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: In our closing couple of minutes, I would like to ask a couple of quick questions about the Tarrkarri centre, the Aboriginal art centre, Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 15, 'Investing expenditure summary'. In the budget papers, \$20 million was spent during the 2023-24 financial year on Tarrkarri. What is the status of the project?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: The government is very carefully assessing its options.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: In October, the Deputy Premier responded to a question in the house indicating the panel appointed to review the project—Ken Wyatt, Bob Carr and Carolyn Hewson—handed down their review in recent months. Are you able to say what the review recommended?

The Hon. P.B. MALINAUSKAS: It made a number of recommendations to government about the project. I think the most significant was that if you are doing it, you have to do it properly. That sounds sort of obvious on one level, but it also brings with it another degree of complexity around funding. What they are saying is that a modest version of it will not work in the way that the aspirations for that project have been set since, prior to this government.

There were forecast numbers, which I do not remember off the top of my head, but there were some pretty substantial forecast numbers about levels of visitation for Tarrkarri that were set by the former government. I think those numbers—they are big numbers. It was over a million people a year. That is a big number. I have to say that I do not mind the aspiration. I am not critical of the number. I think if we are doing this project you would love for there to be a million people a year who are going through it.

The advice that stood out to me—and I am saying this from memory—was that if you are going to get those numbers, it cannot be a modest proposition; it has to be shoot the lights out good. That is the challenge that we have before us. At the last election, Tarrkarri had bipartisan support. If Tarrkarri is pursued and invested in, I think it would be valuable if that was maintained. It would be unfortunate if a project of this nature, given the events of last year, somehow got conflated with that. That is certainly something that is in my mind. We are being methodical in the judgements that we have to make at a practical level but also in terms of a social licence as well.

The Hon. D.J. SPEIRS: Thank you, Premier.

The CHAIR: The time allocated having expired, I declare the examination of the State Governor's Establishment and Auditor-General's Department closed. The examination of the

proposed payments for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet will continue on Tuesday. I would like to thank the Premier and his advisers. I also thank the opposition and members for their questions.

Sitting suspended from 11.00 to 11.15.

COURTS ADMINISTRATION AUTHORITY, \$96,665,000

Membership:

Mr Teague substituted for Hon. D.J. Speirs.

Minister:

Hon. K.J. Maher, Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector.

Departmental Advisers:

Hon. Justice L. Stein, Supreme Court Justice, Courts Administration Authority.

Ms P. Croser, State Courts Administrator, Courts Administration Authority.

Ms L. Abrams-South, Executive Director Corporate Services, Courts Administration Authority.

Ms S. Briggs, Senior Business Analyst, Courts Administration Authority.

Mr C. Black, Finance Manager, Courts Administration Authority.

The CHAIR: Welcome back to today's estimates committee hearing. I understand that the minister, the Attorney, and the lead speaker for the opposition have agreed an approximate time for the consideration of the proposed payments, which will facilitate a change of departmental advisers. Can the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition please confirm that is the case?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes.

Mr TEAGUE: Yes.

The CHAIR: I remind members that all questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisers. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. The questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced.

Briefly, I also advise that if the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the Clerk Assistant via the answer to questions mailbox no later than Friday 6 September 2024. Members who are unable to complete their questions may submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the assembly *Notice Paper*.

The rules of debate in the house apply to the committee. Ministers and members may not table documents before the committee but may supply them to the Chair for distribution. I will allow both the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make some opening statements of up to 10 minutes, should they wish to do so.

I now proceed to open the lines for examination. The portfolio is the Courts Administration Authority. The minister appearing is the Attorney-General. I declare the proposed payments open for examination. Attorney, would you like to make some opening remarks? If not, please introduce your advisers.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Thank you Chair. I do not have any opening remarks. I am happy to go straight into questions after introducing the advisers I have with me. To my right is the

Hon. Justice Laura Stein from the Supreme Court. Immediately to my left is Penny Croser, the State Courts Administrator. Also on the front table is Linda Abrams-South, Executive Director Corporate Services, Courts Administration Authority. Immediately behind me is Stacey Briggs, Senior Business Analyst, Courts Administration Authority, and Mr Chris Black, the Finance Manager from the Courts Administration Authority.

The CHAIR: Member for Heysen, would you like to make some opening remarks or go straight to questions?

Mr TEAGUE: Go straight to questions Chair.

The CHAIR: Go ahead.

Mr TEAGUE: I perhaps conveniently start with the Budget Statement, Budget Paper 3 at page 23 and the table that is described as table 2.6, operating expenses—selected agencies. It is a question through you minister really to the CE, and I appreciate the presence today of Justice Stein on behalf of the Chief Justice. If I might ask a question then that is rather unusually directed to both Justice Stein and to the CE. Do you have all that you need in terms of resourcing from the government? Is there adequate resourcing and are you able, therefore, to undertake your necessary and important work in the interests of the justice system unimpeded by any shortfalls of funding?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to answer that question. As the Courts Administration Authority is an independent agency, they manage their budget and prioritise as they see fit.

Mr TEAGUE: That is a question I have asked at the outset of estimates on each occasion. I guess it is a way to underscore the special independence of the courts. In terms of interrogating the budget provision for the courts, I would certainly premise inquiry on that basis. I take it from the minister's answer that the minister is also satisfied that the government has made adequate provision for the courts in the budget. Is that the case as well going forward for this year's budget?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes.

Mr TEAGUE: So, staying with the table, it is at about point 4 on the page and the line item described as Courts. We see there that the courts operating expenses come to an estimated result that is in the order of \$4 million over what was budgeted for 2023-24. Are there key reasons for that having occurred?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that that is primarily explained by the Holden Hill sale and proceeds for that court complex and costs of approximately \$4 million, so a reduction in sale costs and transfer of funds to the DTF Consolidated Account as a result of that transaction, in effect coming in in the estimated result but then going out, which accounts for the \$4 million is my advice.

Mr TEAGUE: Yes. Now, this might be one of those reconciliation points, and I have in mind going to Holden Hill a bit, so I just flag that, not immediately, but we see there is a bit of coming and going on Holden Hill, so I just flag that I will ask some questions.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I suspect you may have further questions, as the last time, in terms of carryovers and how that affects budget positions in terms of infrastructure spend for the courts that we may well traverse again this year.

Mr TEAGUE: There might be a clue in that, and I am not professing the intricate knowledge of whether or not those accounting measures might go to explain what is on the face of it. The Holden Hill transaction is clearly a significant impact. So that is then accounting for the bulk, if not all, of that departure from—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is, yes, it is the majority of that.

Mr TEAGUE: If I might just stay with that line then, there is a rather granular in the circumstances incremental adjustment to the budget for this year and a further incremental reduction for the following year in terms of the estimates before returning to the round number that 2023-24 had. Given there has been relatively close adherence to what is essentially a \$100 million line item, is there a particular reason for increment down and up over the course of the forward estimates?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is in the 2024-25 budget, where it has \$99 million, that accounts for carryovers from previous years into that budget, then my advice is the 2025-26 goes back down to \$98 million not accounting for any carryovers, and then it is adjusted up through CPI to the 99 then 100. So, as you see, it is bumping up in 2024-25 as a result of the carryovers, not accounting for carryovers in 2025-26, and then adjusting up in its usual course of CPI in the two out years that you have there in 2026-27 and 2027-28 is my advice.

Mr TEAGUE: So we actually see an orderly stepwise incremental adjustment from 2025-26 on and the bump in the road is the carryover effect in the immediate short term. In that context, we have a relatively significant departure from budget that is explained, if not entirely, then by Holden Hill, and I will come to it. So before getting to Holden Hill, there is a little bit of work that has gone on capital-wise. It might be good to advert to it.

If I can go to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, the page number I am interested in is page 125. We see there, at about point 7 or 8 on the page, an investing expenditure summary table. First of all, by about point 9 on the page, we have existing projects. There are two. The first of those is the Court of Appeal office accommodation. The indication is that works on that were delayed last financial year. Is that to be concluded? Is it still on track to be concluded in June this year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that the description 'Court of Appeal office accommodation' was actually completed in financial year 2020-21 but, with approvals, there was funding from that that was approved for modification to courtrooms 8 and 18 to accommodate large, multidefendant trials. My advice is that is largely completed now.

Mr TEAGUE: So the Court of Appeal office accommodation has carried the same capital project description, but we are talking about discrete works that have been separate?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is my advice, yes. It was for that budget, and that was the title of the budget, but with approval it is being used for modification, as I said, to courtroom 8 and courtroom 18.

Mr TEAGUE: It was not funding that was left over? It was additional to the funding that was associated with the works completed in 2020-21?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It was part of the original funding for the Court of Appeal office accommodation funding.

Mr TEAGUE: So it was always part of what was to be completed?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is the Court of Appeal office accommodation project came in at significantly less than was initially estimated, so without any further funding being provisioned for it, the money that was left over, with approval, is now being used for modifications to courtroom 8 and courtroom 18 to accommodate large, multidefendant trials.

Mr TEAGUE: That is actually news to me. I hope that might be of assistance to the committee. I might be slow off the mark in that regard. My understanding was that, yes, the bulk of the work was done in that way some time ago and the facilities have been completed and so on. On the point about the funds that were left over, were they somehow able to be kept within the project, despite the project being ostensibly completed? The need for the enhancements identified, money was then drawn on from the same project, hence we see it described the same way in the budget line?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I sort of follow what the member for Heysen is saying.

Mr TEAGUE: The minister will put it much better than me.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: If the question is: is this money that was provided to what is described as the Court of Appeal office accommodation in that section on page 125 of Budget Paper 4 and then the money that was already in there under the name of that project was applied to the modifications to the courtrooms—if that is the question, the answer, I am advised, is yes.

Mr TEAGUE: That was all possible to do without a whole lot of unnecessary calisthenics?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that was possible to do, as I said, without further funding being required.

Mr TEAGUE: I think the minister might have already indicated that that work is to be completed, if it has not already, by this month?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is largely to be completed by the end of this financial year, which would be this month, being June.

Mr TEAGUE: That would make sense, because there is no budget allocation for any money in 2024-25.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Correct.

Mr TEAGUE: Incidentally, given that there is then money over from the major works that were completed in 2021 and there is no further draw on capital, does that leave any overrun or has it been more or less dollars and cents to the dollar on the new work?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is the money that was left over from that project for the courts, for the Court of Appeal office accommodation, that was then, with approvals, approved for modifications of courtrooms 8 and 18. My advice is that is expected to be fully expended on that project.

Mr TEAGUE: And no more no less.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No more no less. The Courts Administration Authority are remarkably good at managing budgets.

Mr TEAGUE: It is better than that; they are good at fashioning a budget to a new project that was not anticipated at the time the original capital was applied.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: They are very good at fashion, indeed.

Mr TEAGUE: That is particularly coherent, if I might put it that way. We have, therefore, Court of Appeal office accommodation unlikely to find its way into a starring role on the investing expenditure summary table next year.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I will still be happy to take questions as to why there is nothing against that next year if the member for Heysen wishes.

Mr TEAGUE: I note that for the benefit of the committee and I appreciate that, and I might say it has been a tremendous improvement to the court facility within the constraints of that rather ageing structure in need of significant improvement, extension and investment.

Moving to the next line item. There is the well-known necessary work on the facade repairs associated with the deterioration and the dilapidation of the Sir Samuel Way Building and the longstanding existing project of the facade repairs. The estimated completion is indicated at June 2025. As I read it, the 2023-24 budget budgeted \$10.7 million for repairs to the facade but only a tiny part of that appears to have been expended and then there is the bulk of that we see expressed in the budget. I think \$794,000 of the \$10.7 million was incurred. Is there a short-point reason for what appears to be a delay and a failure to apply the capital?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised there are a number of factors, including the nature and the complexity of the works. The heritage issues associated with the Sir Samuel Way Building are being made even more complex by the current Central Market development works happening on the western facade, and this has led to a prudent measure and stage program being undertaken over several years for this work.

Mr TEAGUE: Is it correct then to read the \$10.086 million that is set out in the budget is a carryover of what on my maths is \$9.915 million from 2023-24?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: In effect, yes, that is a carryover.

Mr TEAGUE: While we are on the maths, does that mean there is an additional \$171,000 on top of the carryover that has been applied in this year's budget?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, there is no additional money for the project. When I said yes, it is correct that there is a carryover, I am advised that the carryover and amount is in effect what is in the 2024-25 budget. That is the amount that is carried over, so the carryover is \$10.086 million. In addition, and it may assist the committee, there is an amount in the budget that is not in the capital works project but sits in the operating account that is in addition to the capital works project. The total project cost, being \$11.494 million, is what is remaining of the \$11.6 million that was funded in 2020-21 to undertake repairs to the facade of the Sir Samuel Way Building.

Mr TEAGUE: I think my maths is focussing on the 2023-24 budget of \$10.709 million, and the estimated result of \$794,000, and how that then translates to what is in the 2024-25 budget, \$10.086 million. There is not necessarily, I guess, a direct correlation between what was budgeted and what the estimated result is because there may be other funds that are drawn from the previous year's budget to some small amount that gets to the \$10.086 million?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is the estimated result is what is left after the approved carryover.

Mr TEAGUE: The numbers do not quite add up on the table, and I am not suggesting that they need to. We had a budget of \$10.709 million in 2023-24. The result was an expenditure of \$794,000, so that meant that there was an unused portion of, as I said earlier, I think \$9.915 million. If that was carried over, I would have expected to see in the bold text in the middle of the table \$9.915 million. There is only a small disparity, and there may be an explanation for it.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that there can be some variance with the figures that are being used. It is not the actual, it is the estimated result for 2023-24.

Mr TEAGUE: We will perhaps leave it there. Turning a couple of pages forward to page 128, I flagged an interest in the proceeds of the sale of Holden Hill Magistrates Court being first on the list of explanation for significant movements that is set out in the middle of that page. So far as the question is concerned, I would be glad in case there is a kind of overall explanation, if that suits the minister, for what would be of assistance to the committee just in understanding. We have had a significant sale of a significant court facility. What were the proceeds, what costs have been incurred as a result, and what has been the net outcome? I am happy to leave it at one question if it is desirable for the minister to address all of that in one go.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to do so. My advice is that on the revenue side from the budget impact of the sale of the Holden Hill facility, the proceeds from the sale were \$4 million. On the revenue side, the carrying amount of the assets held for sale is \$2.406 million, the net gain on the disposal of the asset being \$1.594 million. On the expenses side, these are the selling costs of \$1 million and the payment to the Consolidated Account being \$3 million.

Mr TEAGUE: In circumstances where there is a payment to the Consolidated Account of \$3 million, has there been a corollary benefit to the courts as a whole—and, more particularly, to the facilities of the Magistrates Court—that is either the direct result or able to be invested for the future?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that as a result of the Mid-Year Budget Review there was an expenditure authority for 50 per cent of the net proceeds of the sale, so that was half of the \$3 million. That is, \$1.5 million was approved by cabinet as part of the Mid-Year Budget Review for the Courts Administration Authority in 2024-25 to address cost pressures.

Mr TEAGUE: Operating cost pressures?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Identified by the Courts Administration Authority to spend—as we talked about it at the very start—as an independent authority.

Mr TEAGUE: And those could be, let me put it this way, not necessarily earmarked for the Magistrates Court, including its premises—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: To the Courts Administration Authority.

Mr TEAGUE: Is there an indication about how that has been applied?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It will be a matter for the council of the Courts Administration Authority to decide that.

Mr TEAGUE: So not yet but in the year ahead?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: As per usual, it will be part of the budget-setting process for the Courts Administration Authority for the 2024-25 financial year.

Mr TEAGUE: And it is not the minister's expectation that it is any more earmarked than that, and the minister and the government have in mind that that is funding that is available to the Courts Administration Authority to apply as it best—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It was a decision that was selected in the Mid-Year Budget Review.

Mr TEAGUE: In terms of the context of questions about capital works that have been subject to pretty fine-tuning in terms of budgetary expense, there is no indication that these funds are to be applied for those two significant capital works?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: As I have said, that is up to the Courts Administration Authority.

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, I got that. Is there any indication, and there need not be, as to where those funds might be applied?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No. It will be part of the Courts Administration Authority's budget-setting process.

Mr TEAGUE: Why is it not 100 per cent of the \$3 million? Why 50 per cent?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is the decision of government.

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, I know. The question is why.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: When you sit around the cabinet table next time, you can interrogate these decisions. It is a decision that cabinet has made.

Mr TEAGUE: So in terms of a payment of \$3 million to the Consolidated Account, the result of the sale of the Holden Hill Magistrates Court has been a windfall to the Consolidated Account in the amount of \$1.5 million?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: And a windfall to the Courts Administration Authority of the other \$1.5 million, so everyone is a winner and that is great, is it not?

Mr TEAGUE: The Courts Administration Authority have reduced their facilities in terms of the Magistrates Court facilities by the disposal of the Holden Hill Magistrates Court. I suppose whether that is—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is a decision of the authority.

Mr TEAGUE: Perhaps it was remiss of me not to ask this at the conclusion of the questions in terms of those facade repairs for SSW, Sir Samuel Way Building. The results of what are understandable precinct matters that you would want to tie in with, has any of that impacted on the courts' capacity to undertake the ordinary course of business? Are we talking about purely a matter of deferred capital works? Is there anything that is actually impeding the courts' capacity to conduct business as a result of that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am just unclear what the question is. Is the question: has any part of that facade project for the Sir Samuel Way Building impacted on the courts' ability to do what it does on a daily basis?

Mr TEAGUE: Yes.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The way that the court goes about what it does necessarily needs to be tailored to work programs that are occurring.

Mr TEAGUE: So it is having an impact?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, at various times. If you are doing work, it will impact on how a building is used. My advice is that the Courts Administration Authority is working with all the stakeholders that they have to make sure that the impacts are mitigated on anything that the court

does. But, yes, you cannot do work without having an impact of doing work. That is the very nature of doing something to a building.

Mr TEAGUE: The question was slightly more specifically to the consequences of the delay. So if you are not doing work, maybe that is a good thing for the short-term productivity of the court, because it is not impeded by such works. But if there are defects to the building, such as the drip of water that hits the stairs, for example, and has done for years, that might actually be impairing the capacity of the building to be used.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not understand that. When you talk about the courts precinct, do we take you to mean the Central Market redevelopment and associated works to do with that?

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, but I am focused on the facade repairs.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that in terms of the Sir Samuel Way Building facade, no, none of the works or the timing of the works is impacting on the work that the Courts Administration Authority does.

Mr TEAGUE: It might have been remiss of me not to ask that in the first place. Apart from the building falling down eventually, the facade repair is therefore something that, when it is done, it is a challenge to do it, but it is not a significant impedance in the meantime.

I move to the bottom of page 128, just a few lines further down, and performance indicators. There are numerous backlog indicators and many of them are set against somewhat unhelpful, perhaps unnecessary and irrelevant figures. I do not mean that in a pejorative sense, but the RoGS data as I understand it, with all those 10 per cent numbers that we see populating the table on page 128 and over to page 129, if the minister had anything to say about that by all means do, but I am focussed on the estimated results: the 2022-23 actuals and the 2023-24 rather than the targets, as such. I think I have a clear sense of reasons why there might be departures from targets. We are just a few lines down from where we were a moment ago.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: So the second-last dot point on page 128?

Mr TEAGUE: That is it.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: So the difference between the 18 per cent and the 25 per cent, I assume is the question?

Mr TEAGUE: Eighteen and 25, yes.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: As the member for Heysen has pointed out, the targets are not particularly useful; they are targets that are set around Australia as targets. I do not know that anyone meets the targets that are set down. These are not set, unlike most of the figures that are set. Most of the figures that are in a budget are set by the government as something that they aim to meet. These are external to South Australia and are set nationwide. In terms of the 18 to 25 percent—

Mr TEAGUE: While the minister is doing that, just to be clear, we are focused here on Sub-program 1.1: Criminal Jurisdiction. So when we are talking about the Supreme Court, including appeals, having that uptick, that is in the particular context of sub-program 1.1. We will get to 1.2 and so on in a minute, but more particularly 1.3 by comparison. Again, I am not rushing ahead to suggest the answer.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: There are a number of things that are certainly affecting some of these figures. One particular area, I am advised, is an increase in complexity of cases that sees some of these figures, the estimates, increasing. Another area is workforce issues that I am advised have an impact. It is not necessarily workforce issues within the direct court system itself but, for example, when psychiatric reports are needed as part of a process, those sorts of workforce availability issues for suitably qualified psychiatrists to provide reports that are necessarily needed as part of a process are having an impact.

This is not just having an impact on the working of the judicial system; very tight workforce issues are having an impact across many facets of society and the workforce. Certainly, the availability of things like psychiatric reports, e-crime reports and forensic reports are being affected

by very tight labour markets and time frames that are more challenging than they may have been in the past.

Mr TEAGUE: Put it this way: is the minister satisfied with the results that are set out in the first dot point in terms of percentage of lodgements that are greater than 12 months old?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am satisfied that, given the challenging circumstances for a range of reasons, the Courts Administration Authority are doing what they can to make the system as effective and as efficient as possible.

Mr TEAGUE: I move then to the top of the following page. On page 129, we see the District Court, and of course—before getting to the Magistrates Court and the different set of circumstances—it has long been the case that the stand-out for backlogs, because they are doing the heavy lifting in terms of the criminal list, has been in the District Court.

There is, relative to the Supreme Court, a significantly greater percentage of lodgements and, in turn, a significantly greater number that are more than 12 months old, and we have seen a further uptick from 2023 to 2024: now up to 38 per cent of lodgements. I am interested to know how many lodgements that translates as. What is the raw number?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have the raw numbers that the percentages are derived from. I am happy to take that on notice. We do not have that information with us here.

Mr TEAGUE: In that sense, it might be a means of giving the District Court a tick or putting in perspective what the percentage does not necessarily reveal, because there might have been a greater number of lodgements or less and it might reflect in similar or even improved performance, but on the face of the table, there is an increase in the percentage of lodgements that are pending completion greater than 12 months old. Is there any particular explanation for it in terms of the District Court?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I repeat some of the challenges that I mentioned previously—that is, complexity of cases and workforce issues, particularly in the preparation of reports that are necessarily needed—but one extra thing that I am advised in relation to the District Court is an increased election of trial by judge alone. That will necessarily mean that there is a lot of time spent writing judgements rather than a jury delivering a verdict and that does have an impact, I am advised, in the District Court as well.

Mr TEAGUE: I think it was the subject of some advocacy from me, if not getting around to having the opportunity to fund it directly, and I think there was some particular provision—short-term—for funding of additional associates in the District Court. Is it the case that that has now run its course?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No. I am advised that, at the moment, it continues.

Mr TEAGUE: The minister talks about the time taken to write judgements, and so on. Has that informed a view with regard to making that provision for additional associates permanent or extending the provision?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Again, that is a matter for the Courts Administration Authority council when setting their own budgets.

Mr TEAGUE: Is the minister aware of any particular request, suggestion or indication from the court about the means by which a further provision of resource might go some way to tackling—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The writing of judgements for judge alone trials?

Mr TEAGUE: The backlog as a whole, the 38 per cent. The minister has drawn particular attention to the challenge of writing judgements. I am not suggesting that the courts necessarily averted to that being a challenge; that is something the minister has averted to. Is there anything, that included, that has been drawn to the minister's attention that might, with the benefit of some additional resource, tackle that increasing backlog number?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think the question the member for Heysen is asking is; are there any measures that are being proposed that might reduce the backlog? Is that the question?

Mr TEAGUE: Not quite. You are a step ahead of me. The question was: has the minister had any indication from the court about what measures, should they be applied, would go some way to reducing the backlog? If the minister is considering measures, that is even a better answer.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not recall having a specific measure, that was wholly directed at reducing backlog, put forward to me. I have no doubt that the Courts Administration Authority in what they do, their deliberations and how the council operates, considers that and many other matters quite regularly.

Mr TEAGUE: But nothing in particular?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Not that I recall being directed to me, not directly.

Mr TEAGUE: Is the minister satisfied with the state of the backlogs in the District Court as it stands?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think in every area of public administration we would always like to see the public being served to the highest standard and would like to see things operating as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Mr TEAGUE: With respect, that is something of a general statement. The purpose of the question is to understand the present conditions. While they have been able to improve, we are all here to work towards it.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is my view of the world.

Mr TEAGUE: There is no particular request for provision that might improve, there is no particular measure that is being considered to be applied, and the indication is there are more judge alone trials that are taking judicial time that might be contributing to time-taking additional number of long outstanding matters. Is that a fair summary?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, not really. I think in relation to the first part of the statement, as I said, I do not recall it being put directly to me. I would be reasonably sure that the Courts Administration Authority, in how they conduct their own deliberations, will turn their mind very regularly to such matters, though.

Mr TEAGUE: I am not sure what other way of something coming to the minister's attention there is other than it being put to the minister. I am really not endeavouring to be so forensic as to expect that there might be a particular source. It does not need to be a schedule of seeing individual judges, or anything like that. It might be coming via the CAA or via the minister's office in respect of the court. The minister is indicating that there is nothing that has come to the minister's attention vis-à-vis District Court that has been identified that could address this number, and the minister's response to the question is, 'We would all like to do better,' but nothing specific.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: In terms of something being put forward as a submission that requires funding to change something, I do not recall something being directly put in relation to the District Court's lodgements. I have no doubt that the Courts Administration Authority, in each jurisdiction, will be constantly looking at the way they do business and how to make it as effective as possible.

Mr TEAGUE: Going down a couple of lines, we see that the equivalent data for the Magistrates Court on the 12-month side appears as the second dot point. There is a minor uptick on what is a relatively lower number in a Court of Summary Jurisdiction. The benchmark there for the poor old Magistrates Court is that they have to be held to account on the six months or more. That has experienced the sort of relatively similar uptick. Is there any correlation between the challenges that have driven those similar sort of upticks from one jurisdiction to the other, bearing in mind the different timeframe and the different nature of the proceedings?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that it is likely in that jurisdiction, the issue of reports and workforce issues, probably even more prevalent.

Mr TEAGUE: But no shortage of magistrates?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, we have lots of magistrates.

Mr TEAGUE: My question is: there is no indication that there is any shortage of magistrates?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No.

Mr TEAGUE: And the same goes for the District Court?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That there is a shortage of judges? Not that I am aware of.

Mr TEAGUE: No shortage of judicial officers in either of those jurisdictions contributing to the sustained number in both those respects that we have just interrogated that is causing the number to remain stubbornly high?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that the vacancies are very low in terms of judicial officers.

Mr TEAGUE: Yes. That is not really the question, either. The question is whether or not there might be a need for more of them as a means of addressing the backlog. The minister has given answers that relate to what I think the minister has described as external factors and those are noted.

Just before I leave the table, there has been some reference to the RoGS data that is used as the targets. That is used in various ways across the board. Is it serving any useful purpose? Is it indeed an aim relevantly for any of those jurisdictions to achieve, if that is the right word, outcomes in line with those RoGS data?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I guess it is a purpose as a lofty but almost unattainable ambition. I am advised that the national standards that apply those targets to all states and territories have applied since 2003 and were last reviewed in 2015. I am advised it was not changed because there was not an agreement on a suitable alternative. All jurisdictions have these lofty and unattainable targets.

Mr TEAGUE: Time does not permit an interrogation of perhaps the entirety of Sub-program 1.3: Civil Jurisdiction that we find at page 131. I just make the observation that we see the RoGS data inhabiting the performance indicator tables there and over to page 132 and we see a variety of upticks in a rather consistent manner in that there is a relative uptick in the backlog indicators for the civil jurisdiction, perhaps highlighted at the top of page 132, the ERD Court—32 up to 39—and the Youth Court—care and protection, again, according to the summary jurisdiction test, sees perhaps the greatest of those upticks, up to nearly half of the lodgements that are pending completion.

Is there anything about any of those data for which the minister would say anything different about the provision of additional resources from direct additional judicial officers through to other resources that has either been brought to the minister's attention or that is the subject of consideration in terms of measures that might be taken to alleviate it?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: One thing that might be worth commenting on is figures in the Youth Court the member for Heysen has particularly highlighted in the care and protection area. My advice is one of the reasons for the finalisation results is they reflect the ongoing use and the particular success of the reunification court process.

There were, I am advised, 255 such referrals in 2023-24 and the reunification court list has increased from two per fortnight to three lists every fortnight. The reunification court adjourns matters with interim orders for a period of up to 12 months while parents participate in a reunification program, then matters are returned to court every eight weeks for review. So the success of that program, almost counterintuitively, has had an effect on the figures that we see before us.

Mr TEAGUE: Because there is a lock-in referral. So, to take that up, is it then consistent with that—or curious or disappointing—to have a look at the table that commences at page 134 and goes over to 135 where we are now in Program 2: Alternative Dispute Resolution Services and we see some data that relates to family conference.

I am just looking at the care and protection indicator and the number of children referred to family group conference. The 23 actual was 90, the 2023-24 projection was 120, and the estimated result was 46. This is something of a segue, but is that a source of disappointment, and is there any

other explanation for that significant shortfall and I might say the projection to halve the number of children referred to family group conference by comparison with the 2023-24 projection?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is something we would find it difficult to comment on. That would be a DCP issue. They make the decision that then finds its way there, so that would be largely a DCP question. That is the gateway—

Mr TEAGUE: DCP?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Department for Child Protection.

Mr TEAGUE: With that indication, I will perhaps indicate to the minister that I might take that opportunity in due course. But is there nothing in that table, and indeed in the line above, that the minister would care to add to the remarks just now in terms of that paradox?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No. As I said, it ends up obviously in this jurisdiction, but how and why and the numbers that get there are with the Department for Child Protection.

Mr TEAGUE: Turning back to page 130 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, I am interested in the performance indicators for the Treatment Intervention Court. I am trying to find them in order to make good this proposition: there have been performance improvements, I think, for the completion of substance misuse courses, other than the percentage of participants who did not complete a 12-month program but completed a minimum of six months. I think we see that under the heading Substance Misuse. We have six-month drug treatment and 12-month drug treatment, with targets exceeded on both fronts.

But there is what I read as a note to the 12-month drug treatment program that indicates that only about half of the target has been reached in terms of the percentage of participants who did not complete the 12-month program but who completed six months. Can the minister perhaps explain how that data is then reported? Is it that there is some benefit that is gained by the partial completion, or are we needing further resources to ensure that, where there is a 12-month program, we actually see it completed according to target?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Just to check what we are referring to, in the middle table, Treatment Intervention Court, there are two dot points under Substance Misuse: six-month drug treatment and 12-month drug treatment. There is a point under that, starting with 'percentage of participants'. Are they the figures we are looking at?

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, the data to the right.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The estimated result being 10 per cent, whereas the actual was 23 per cent. What is the question?

Mr TEAGUE: The note is an indicator of the number of participants who did not complete the 12-month program but who completed a minimum of six months. You had a target for 2023-24 of 20 per cent and an estimated result of 10 per cent. Is there a resourcing issue there? Is it the suitability of the program? Is there any explanation for that against the background of what appear to be exceeding outcomes?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: We do not have advice about a specific explanation. It could be, depending on the numbers, that smaller numbers can make for bigger variances when you are looking at a subset of a subset. That could be an explanation. It could be that the target that was set was not calibrated or was more ambitious than what has occurred. But I think it is pleasing to see, in the two dot points above that, the significant increase from the 2022-23 actuals for the six-month drug treatment and the 12-month drug treatment to the 2023-24 estimated results.

Mr TEAGUE: Bearing in mind it might be small numbers, can the minister indicate the raw number that sits behind that percentage?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Again, I am happy to take that on notice. We do not have those figures here, but I am happy to take that on notice. The question is for the raw numbers for the six-month drug treatment and the 12-month drug treatment and the percentage of participants who did not complete it, so, all three of those?

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, please.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to do that.

Mr TEAGUE: Perhaps in terms of the fact that we see there is a target, can the minister explain why there is a target at that line item? What purpose is that serving?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The line item with the 2024-25 target of 15 per cent? Is that the target being referred to?

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, and the preceding one at 20 per cent.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to see if there is an explanation for those.

Mr TEAGUE: Not so much the change, but the change and why have the target at all.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: And what is the methodology and the thinking behind setting that target.

Mr TEAGUE: I am conscious of the time, Chair.

The CHAIR: You have one minute left if you want to ask another question. I suggest you use 20 seconds to ask the question.

The Hon. K.J. Maher interjecting:

Mr TEAGUE: That has not been my recent experience. Sorry about these members from other places, Chair.

The CHAIR: Now the time has expired. I did give you an opportunity, member for Heysen. The time allocated for this section has now closed. I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the Courts Administration Authority complete. I thank the Attorney-General's advisers.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$144,739,000

ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$103,603,000

Membership:

Ms Savvas substituted for Ms Clancy.

Hon. J.A.W. Gardner substituted for Hon. V.A. Tarzia.

Minister:

Hon. K.J. Maher, Attorney-General, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms C. Meador, Chief Executive, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr A. Swanson, Executive Director Finance, People and Performance, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr A. Kilvert, Executive Director Policy and Community, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr D. Corcoran, Director Financial Services, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms T. Brooks, Principal Accountant, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr J. Lai, Principal Adviser Budgeting, Attorney-General's Department.

The CHAIR: We now move to the portfolio of the Attorney-General's Department and State Records. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and I call on the Attorney-General to introduce his advisers, and to make some opening remarks, if he wishes. Following that, I call on the lead speaker for the opposition to make a statement, if they wish, or go to questions.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have an opening statement, but I am happy to introduce the people I have with me. My notes say to my right is Andrew Swanson, but it does not look much like Andrew Swanson to my right, so I might introduce Andrew Swanson to my left. He is the Executive Director for Finance, People and Performance at the Attorney-General's Department. On my right is Caroline Mealor, the Chief Executive of the Attorney-General's Department.

The CHAIR: Caroline Mealor PSM. Caroline, congratulations.

Ms MEALOR: Thank you.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Andrew Swanson is in his 43rd estimates or something approaching that. How many estimates has it been? It is the 26th estimates process that Mr Swanson is participating in.

The CHAIR: And does he know what to do yet?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: He is getting there. Behind me I have Darren Corcoran, Director of Financial Services, Attorney-General's Department; Adam Kilvert, Executive Director of Policy and Community; Tanya Brooks, Principal Accountant, Attorney-General's Department; and Justin Lai, Principal Adviser Budgeting, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr TEAGUE: I will get straight to questions. I again offer my congratulations to the chief executive on a highly appropriate, well deserved, with respect, recognition of long and dedicated and able service. Congratulations.

Ms MEALOR: Thank you.

Mr TEAGUE: I might start with Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 14. While we are kicking off, I do not propose to spend a great deal of time, perhaps if any, on State Records. If there is actually anything more pressing, then I would be happy for that to be brought to attention by any member of the committee.

I am at page 14, program net cost of services summary. We see there that there has been what I would describe as some 'relatively significant variance' in the budgeted amounts for 2023-24 and the actual spend. If I might focus on the Office of the DPP, that is program 3 and we see budgeted \$32.888 million and a spend of a little over \$650,000 in excess of that amount. Is there any particular reason for departure against what was a fairly significant increase in the actual result for 2022-23 as well? I do not have the budget amount for 2022-23, but a significant increase has then been exceeded by that amount. Is there any particular explanation for that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that the minor variance is predominantly to do with carryovers from 2022-23 to 2023-24 that have a lot to do with complex criminal cases.

Mr TEAGUE: Complex criminal cases?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, complex criminal cases. They are criminal cases that are complex.

Mr TEAGUE: They are presumably matters that have been ongoing, therefore, from one year to the next. Is there a direct explanation for their use of carryover?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: There are a number, as the member for Heysen would be aware: Alzuain, Operation Ironside and a number of very complex ongoing cases. A number have been funded in the previous year but have been rolled over for the next year's budget.

Mr TEAGUE: We see that therefore wrapped up in the single number, those are the subject of specific provision. Notwithstanding those identified complex matters that have been the subject of specific provision, has there been, for want of a better word, performance against budget or has there been greater requirement for resource for any of those matters than what has been budgeted?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that that is assessed and accounted for on a year-by-year basis. We have seen in recent years, not just in the annual budget but in Mid-Year Budget Reviews, accounting for the need for the DPP.

Mr TEAGUE: I was going to get to the Legal Services Commission perhaps a bit later, but it might be convenient to go there having touched on the DPP side. I think that might best be illustrated at page 61 of the same volume. At about point 9 of the page occupied entirely by the table are cash outflows for administered items. At point 9 on the page, you have Legal Services Commission—expensive criminal cases.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: We are trying to find where you are up to, member for Heysen.

Mr TEAGUE: Page 61, point 9 on the page: Legal Services Commission—expensive criminal cases.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Second from the bottom?

Mr TEAGUE: That is the one.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Alright, we are with you. I do not know how we are numbering the points on here.

Mr TEAGUE: It is a way of describing where something is on a page relevant to one out of 10, where there is no numbering. So no numbering but, yes, second from bottom on the table. The minister has just given an indication of that overrun of DPP budget in the order of \$650,000—I think \$658,000—largely attributable if not entirely attributable to complex criminal cases. I am including carryover from previous years. The Legal Services Commission—expensive criminal cases provision saw an actual budget outcome in 2022-23 of \$1.866 million, then the budget for 2023-24 was something short of 25 per cent of that. It was only a few hundred thousand dollars: \$422,000 for 2023-24.

The estimated result was \$7.329 million, and I say that with a bit of emphasis because it is such a radical departure from the budgeted amount for reasons that I suspect are in connection with the reasons that we have just heard, but it is a very substantially greater figure. While I am completing that run-through, the budgeted amount for the Legal Services Commission for expensive criminal cases for 2024-25 is precisely the amount of the budgeted amount for 2023-24, \$422,000, and this has been the subject of interrogation last year as well.

Is there any way of providing a bit more budget reality, if you like, to the Legal Services Commission scenario and circumstances, where we have had a significant departure last year, we now have this enormous departure on the face of it this year and yet there is this nominal maintenance of \$422,000? Has that additional nearly \$7 million come and gone or are we anticipating that the real figure for 2024-25 might be another \$7 million in excess or thereabouts?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that we do not know because it is necessarily in the future, and that is the importance of having a mechanism for funding these sorts of expensive cases. Why it is important, as I have said, with the DPP and other agencies to have that flexibility during Mid-Year Budget Review processes, as the member would no doubt appreciate given the legislative restraints about individual cases I would not be at liberty, and would be potentially breaching legislation, to name whether anyone actually has a provision of legal aid or not. We do not know what we do not know in terms of how much might be expended in any given year at the start of the year.

Mr TEAGUE: We might pause, perhaps, to consider a relatively minor amount of \$658,000 that is an overrun of the DPP for that reason, and yet an overrun or an additional amount of budget provision in the order of many millions of dollars for the Legal Services Commission at the same time. So the two do not quite balance out.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that it is not that there is a matter. With every single new matter that comes in you have got to fund the DPP more, similar to the Legal Services Commission. The DPP do extraordinary work and do almost all of it from within the existing resources and the expertise that the DPP have, so every time a new expensive criminal case comes in, the DPP does not necessarily need full funding for that matter because that is their core business and what they do. There are those extraordinary matters, particularly matters like Operation Ironside,

where it is that big a hit that the DPP cannot do it within the resources that they currently have, but many of the matters the DPP manage within the resources that they have, unlike the Legal Services Commission where there is that specific provision for the expensive criminal cases.

Mr TEAGUE: The LSC quantum for Ironside; is it the whole of the \$7 million?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have that breakdown. I am happy to take that on notice because I am not sure how much can be disclosed in relation to legislative requirements about identifying matters or potential defendants who do or do not get Legal Services Commission funding. I am happy to take that on notice and see what can be provided.

Mr TEAGUE: I appreciate the Attorney taking that on notice. If there is a point that is at the core of all this it is what, if any, meaning does the \$422,000 in the budget have; what purpose does it serve? Why would you not just have zero and then end up with a figure in the several millions, or just a line item saying, 'Don't know yet. Wait and see' and then an asterisk that says, 'Footnote: LSC is sort of used to this, that's how they do business and that's how we do business for the reasons that we describe at estimates.'

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The member is partly right. It is a nominal amount. It is rarely going to represent exactly what it is going to be in any given year, as we have seen particularly from the last two years where there have been some very long-running and extremely complex criminal cases, but it is a nominal amount. Budgets do require an amount to be budgeted against what may occur, but this is one where it is well recognised that there are many things outside the control of the Legal Services Commission and, quite frankly, the government to know exactly what is going to be needed.

Mr TEAGUE: Can I put that then two ways. First, can the minister give an indication as to the LSC's level of satisfaction, if any, with that state of affairs? Is the minister satisfied that there is operational practicality for the LSC about that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not recall a representation that had a suggestion for another way to budget for it. The scheme is legislated for the expensive criminal cases, so it is not like it is something that the Legal Services Commission would be concerned, 'Is it going to happen?' and want to see it done another way, because it is a very well-established scheme that has operated in the same manner under governments of all stripes.

Mr TEAGUE: Alright, we will park that then for a minute. The second way I would put it then is: is the minister satisfied with the way in which that is budgeted, not necessarily with a focus on the LSC as such, but with the focus on whether or not the minister is going to get a slap on the wrist from the government for going overrun on the budgeted amount? Would it be the minister's preference to say, 'Alright, against the background of reality, we've got a \$5 million provision in the budget' so that there is not such a dramatic disparity, or is the minister satisfied that—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am satisfied with the way it works, and certainly, as I said, I meet regularly with the Legal Services Commission and I do not recall a suggestion that there is a better way to try to tell what is going to come up the future.

Mr TEAGUE: Turning back to page 14 under the program net cost of services summary, going down a few on the list we get to Program 7: Legislative and Policy Services. There is, again, on my maths, an overspend of \$3.378 million or an estimated result in excess of the budget of about that amount. Is there any particular explanation for that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: In reference to that, it might be useful to draw the honourable member to page 28, which particularises some of the spending and differences in those areas. My advice is that the result is mainly due to a carryover from the 2022-23 year of commonwealth government funding received for the provision of legal services as part of the National Legal Assistance Partnership (NLAP) of \$2.4 million. So it is a carryover of commonwealth government funding for the NLAP, but it is better particularised, as I said, on page 28.

Mr TEAGUE: The Crown Solicitor's Office—the poor old CSO—meanwhile, has been budgeted a touch over \$2 million for 2024-25, and that is coming down. It is a bit over a million less than 2023-24 and it is nearly \$5 million less than 2022-23. Are they efficiencies, or is that the result of a reorganisation of some sort?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Neither.

Mr TEAGUE: Something else?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes.

Mr TEAGUE: And what is that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: If I can draw the member's attention to page 22 and we can read along together, in the middle of the page, it talks about explanation of significant movements:

The movements in income, and offsetting movements in expenses, are primarily due to changes in funding arrangements with other agencies for the provision of dedicated legal services. These arrangements are expected to be renewed during 2024-25.

Mr TEAGUE: It sounds a bit like a reorganisation. Is there anything more particular that—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, my advice is that it is not. This is due to arrangements for the provision of dedicated legal services, so the arrangements within other agencies for the provision of legal services not inherently to do with the Crown Solicitor's Office itself, but other agencies.

Mr TEAGUE: Which has reduced the workload for the CSO?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that a large part of the explanation is the funding arrangements for outposted lawyers within other agencies from the Crown and the agreements that the Crown has with the other agencies that are expected to be renewed, as they are from time to time.

Mr TEAGUE: Going to page 15, we have the investing expenditure summary, halfway down the page. The South Australia Forensic Centre has an estimated completion at June 2028. I observe there is nothing in the 2023-24 budget, and yet there was \$2.6 million spent of the total \$348 million for the centre, and there is no indication, at least in the place of that line, of when the bulk of the money is spent. Again, it is a bit like the Holden Hill line of questioning.

I would be happy for the minister to provide a wrapped up answer about why the estimated result for 2023-24 involved that expenditure budgeted. There is a relatively minor amount that is budgeted for 2024-25 in terms of expenditure, although itself a significant amount at \$14 million, and then there is a very significant capital cost relative to other areas that have been the subject of questions that is to be spent. If the minister might give an answer in addressing all of those matters, I would be grateful.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Money has been expended in the 2023-24 estimated result as a result of getting on with doing the project, and it does increase in the budget to 2024-25 as the project ramps up. As the member outlined, partly in answer to his question when he first said it, with the estimated completion in the June quarter of 2028. I think it is entirely typical of projects like this that you will see expenditure start as the project starts and then ramp up as it completes.

Mr TEAGUE: Perhaps, then, can we step through? For 2025-26 is there some further elucidation that the minister can provide?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: We do not have the figures now, but it will continue to grow exponentially as the project continues at pace.

Mr TEAGUE: Hopefully not exponentially.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Very significantly. At \$14 million, we still have the total project of nearly \$350 million. It is a very significant project.

Mr TEAGUE: Put it this way: is it going according to plan?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have any advice that there is nothing that is not going to plan. My advice is that it is going to plan.

Mr TEAGUE: And it is on time and on budget?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have any advice to the contrary.

Mr TEAGUE: Do you have any advice in accord with that proposition?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: As I said, I do not have any advice to the contrary, that it is not going on time or as planned.

Mr TEAGUE: So, you are satisfied with progress?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am very pleased that this project is being funded. As did the honourable member during his time in the role, I am exercising the duties and functions that the Attorney-General may have visited the Divett Place facility, as I have had the privilege of being able to do, and it is not a facility that I think befits the excellent work and standard of science that occurs at that building. I am very pleased that there is a provision for over a third of a billion dollars for a new South Australian forensic science centre that I think is much more appropriate, given the work they do and the standards that we have nationally and internationally for the work of forensic science in the state.

Mr TEAGUE: In addition to the \$2.6 million that has been expended on the SA Forensic Centre over a zero allocation, that is contributing to an overall estimated result in terms of expenditure at the bottom of the table of an amount a bit over \$5½ million excess to budget.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Where are we looking at for those things? Are we talking about the right-hand bottom column and row?

Mr TEAGUE: Yes. The forensic science centre accounts for \$2.6 million of that. What is the remaining amount of that blowout excess to budget accounted for?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is it is a factor of the projects that you see listed on that page. A number of them that do not relate to my portfolio area are some of the ones that are above the Forensic Centre indicate. My advice, similarly though to the Forensic Centre, is it is a ramping up of projects as they come online and particularly more carryovers being approved for the next year for those projects.

Mr TEAGUE: I turn to page 22 now. We are within Program 4: Crown Solicitor's Office, and we see the description/objective, highlights and targets on the preceding page, page 21. Page 22 has then the table program summary—income, expenses and FTEs. I am focused on the last line item of the table that is about halfway down the page that is 'FTEs as at 30 June'. We see there a reduction in FTEs of approximately 20 positions in the Crown Solicitor's Office from the 2023-24 result to the 2024-25 budget. What positions are being cut and why?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that from time to time, similarly to talking about the variance in funding, the Crown Solicitor's Office enters into arrangements with government agencies to provide dedicated legal services. I am advised that fluctuations in the FTEs shown is mainly due to the establishment or ending of these arrangements within other agencies.

The same thing as before. For example, the decrease of 20 FTEs, noting that many of the arrangements are expected to be coming to an end in one financial year, but are expected to be renewed during the next financial year. As I have said, my advice is the section we read out just below it, before the explanation of the significant movements, I think probably summarises it better than I probably can that the movements in income and offsetting in expenses, I am advised, the very similar explanation for the FTEs, are primarily due to the changes in funding arrangements with other agencies for the provision of dedicated legal services.

So it is those arrangements where the Crown Solicitor's Office enters into arrangements with government agencies to provide them dedicated legal services. They come to an end from time to time and then they are renewed. My advice is that represents the main explanation for the fluctuations you see in FTEs: the new establishment or the ending of those dedicated legal services for other agency arrangements.

Mr TEAGUE: And I certainly note the explanation of significant movements, but that might bear some further explanation in the context of what we have seen reported in terms of actuals for 2022-23, the budget for 2023-24 and the estimated result for 2023-24. None of those are disparities of anything like that quantum. So we see a budget for FTEs of just short of 210 for 2024-25.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes.

Mr TEAGUE: Am I to understand the minister's answer as being, 'Well, the estimated result for 2024-25 is almost inevitably going to be something more like the 225 or thereabouts and there is nothing to see here really. You don't get the picture on the face of the budget papers.'

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice, very simplistically, yes, that is the case. It is a matter of time as to when those arrangements are renewed or come to an end or start again.

Mr TEAGUE: I will note that for reference then subsequently. I will go to page 25 of the same paper, just a couple of pages on in Budget Paper 4, Volume 1. There is time for a question on program 6 related to the Office of Parliamentary Counsel. We see one of the two targets for the year ahead is to complete the documentation of requirements for a new drafting and publishing software system—that is the first dot point.

The second dot point, while I am at it, provides a target of continuing to provide those high-quality services for which I can attest. In terms of the second dot point, it would appear that that target is being well and truly met, so the focus is on the first dot point. Is it on track? Is it in line with expected cost? What is that? What efficiencies and services are likely to be achieved as the result of the completion of that particular work?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is it is at the very early stages of looking at a business case for what is needed.

Mr TEAGUE: And what is needed?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is why you have a business case. It is like most facets of society and certainly units that do work that, as things develop, software lacks capability compared to what upgrades might occur. That is why the Office of Parliamentary Counsel is at the very early stages of a business case, to look at what their future needs are to ascertain how their needs for drafting software may change with their drafting needs for their software systems.

Mr TEAGUE: I hope I am not pressing the point. It is the first dot point of two on targets for the program.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes.

Mr TEAGUE: Is it something that the minister has urged on parliamentary counsel as the way forward for improvement? Has it emanated from parliamentary counsel?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is what parliamentary counsel have identified that they are looking at doing.

Mr TEAGUE: To that end, there is a commitment in the budget to accord with that. Is there any more particular improvement that is said to flow from it?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No. As I said, it is the very early stages of a business case, so it would be far too early to try to make a budget provision.

Mr TEAGUE: Any indication of what it might cost or how long it might take?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: We do not have that at this stage. As I said, it is very early stages of a business case, and when you are talking about software needs I think it would be game and foolish to try to predict a cost and a length of time at that very early stage.

Mr TEAGUE: Any guarantee that anything resembling the target might actually come to fruition at any stage?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I guess we will see with the business case. Just a point of clarification that may assist in relation to our discussion moments ago on the forensic science centre, the money coming into the budget and how that looks and is profiled, I am further advised that funding for the forensic science centre was held by Treasury at the time of the 2023-24 budget, hence the 2023-24 budget showed nil for AGD at that time. The budget was only allocated to AGD during the 2023-24 year.

Mr TEAGUE: I will come back to Forensic Science SA in a moment. I have one question at page 27 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1. We are in Program 7: Legislative and Policy Services. About

halfway down the page, we see targets for 2024-25 for the Legislative and Policy Services program. The first of the targets is described as introducing legislation to implement election commitments, including:

- legislation to criminalise coercive control
- legislation to establish a public child sex offenders register
- legislation to ban political donations for future state election campaigns
- legislation to implement recommendations from the Review of the Criminal Assets Confiscation (Prescribed Drug Offenders) Amendment Act 2016.

In terms of that first dot point under targets for 2024-25, is there any indication of the particular budget allocation to any one of those commitments?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is it would be impossible to try to say for this very discrete part of work, which a number of different officers may spend a whole lot of different time on. It would be almost impossible and probably a complete waste of government resources to try to allocate—

Mr TEAGUE: Put it this way: unlike Ironside, for example, despite being unpacked as targets and dot points and given the individual line items, those are not projects that are the subject of particular budget allocation discrete from the ordinary business of Legislative and Policy Services.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is right. They are targets, and those projects, along with dozens and dozens of other individual matters—

Mr TEAGUE: Are day-to-day business.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Day-to-day business and also things that are other commitments or other pressing matters that come up, for example, the legislation that has now passed both chambers in relation to criminal assets confiscation that came as quite an urgent result of a matter that was recently before the courts. They are day-to-day matters. They are things that necessarily need to be dealt with, and then there are other significant pieces of work, apart from what you see there, that need to be done.

Mr TEAGUE: Can the minister give any indication as to progress in relation to the first of the targets for program 7?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The first target is legislation to criminalise coercive control. I have spent a lot of time talking not just to some of the officers within Legislative and Policy Services but with my colleague, Minister Katrine Hildyard, about how this program might look. I know a lot of time has been spent doing a thorough examination of other jurisdictions, particularly in the UK but also in Queensland and New South Wales, that are in different stages of development of legislation in relation to coercive control. I think it is fair to say that a lot of that initial work has been done, and it is towards the end stages of the development of that legislation.

Mr TEAGUE: I will go back to Forensic Science SA, program 8, page 29. We have had some focus on the capital commitment to Forensic Science SA and are heading towards 2028. Meanwhile, just in terms of the operations of the program at Forensic Science SA, there is perhaps what I would describe as a material variance in income for sales of goods and services—that is about two-thirds of the way down the page, the first line, an item in the program summary table for income—from the 2023-24 budget to the actual result. Is there any particular explanation for that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Sorry, is the question the difference between, for example, the sales of goods and services of the 2023-23 budget of \$2.152 million compared to the estimated result of \$1.618 million? Is that the question?

Mr TEAGUE: Yes.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is it is a reclassification that better aligns with budget items, so if you see the other income has a very similar corresponding decrease in relation to the increase, so the increase from the budget to the estimated result in other income corresponds very closely with the decrease from the budget to the estimated result in sales of goods and services. My

advice is it is a reclassification to better align these income budgets to the actual income being received. One goes up and one goes down as they are reclassified within that part of the budget.

Mr TEAGUE: So significantly more described as 'other', I suppose, whatever that means.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I leave these things to accountants who follow standards and classify things as they should.

Mr TEAGUE: Over the page, there is a performance indicator table. That is at page 30. This might be firming up the case for hastening work on the new centre. There has been a significant increase in the number of major indictable DNA cases that take longer than seven months to complete. So 2022-23 we see 88 per cent of cases completed in seven months, and that has dropped off by 20 per cent in 2023-24 and, similarly, the data point for the second line item, minor indictable DNA cases with no suspect completed within one month, is slightly less, but it is still a notable decrease. Is there any particular explanation for that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, there is.

Mr TEAGUE: What is it?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that it is mainly due to the impact of changing laboratory practices due to recommendations from the Commission of Inquiry into DNA analysis in Queensland. The member would likely be aware of some of the issues and problems that have been faced in Queensland, and the use of DNA analysis. The change to laboratory practices now means more biological samples are progressing to full DNA profiling, which results in more complex samples needing to be interpreted and reported to stakeholders.

In relation to that, too, recognising this need as a result of the recommendations from Queensland, four new positions in biology have been established to address this increase in demand in DNA analysis. I am very pleased to say that ongoing funding for these positions, as part of an additional funding of \$3.7 million over five years, was provided in the 2023-24 Mid-Year Budget Review.

Mr TEAGUE: Is there anything about this data that is connected to observations of the minister in relation to the backlogs in the court system in terms of those external factors?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Not that I am aware of. As I have said, my advice is that the new procedures needed to comply with what has fallen out of Queensland is a major part of this.

Mr TEAGUE: I go to page 60. It might be the most convenient reference point for some questions about the Victims of Crime Fund. This is the table for additional information for administered items for the Attorney-General's Department statement of cash flows, operating activities, cash inflows, and the fourth main line that is headed 'Intra-government transfers'. The Victims of Crime Fund levy line indicates that we had a budget there for transfer for 2023-24 of \$46½ million. The amount that was the subject of that transfer was just a tick over \$41 million, and then there is a budgeted amount of nearly \$54 million for 2024-25. Is there any explanation for those variances and the expected substantial increase into 2024-25?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that the increase for the 2023-24 estimated result compared with the 2024-25 budget is mainly due to a decrease in the 2023-24 estimates due to lower collections from offenders, but also additional revenue in 2024-25, partly due to an increase in the number of road-safety cameras at high-risk sites, including cameras that can detect mobile phones, that provide revenue for this line item.

Mr TEAGUE: There are a number of discrete topics in relation to these two pages and the number of references to various aspects of the accounting for the Victims of Crime Fund. I am happy to stay with those for a bit and interrogate them. If there is inspiration at any point to expand on the overall picture for the Victims of Crime Fund then I would embrace that.

I might just turn specifically on the cash outflows side to that aspect of the table that commences at the bottom of page 60 under employee benefit payments but flows relevantly over to the second line of page 61, Victims of Crime Fund. There is a budgeted amount of \$1.1 million in 2023-24 and an estimated result for 2023-24 of \$2.3 million, and we are back to the budget of just a

tick over the 2023-24 amount. Is there any explanation for that extraordinary departure, a bit over a million dollars, in employee benefit payments?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, my advice is that the difference that the honourable member has highlighted is due to a one-off funding that was provided in 2023-24 for high-risk offender and children in state care work, undertaken by the Crown Solicitor's Office. That is my advice about that differential we see in that one particular reporting period.

Mr TEAGUE: Staying with the same page, we address therefore the cash inflow side. That is anticipated to rise significantly. On the payment side, however, there is a budgeted amount for 2024-25 of \$28 million—so, substantially less than the estimated result from 2023-24, and a minor uptick on the budget for 2023-24. Is there an explanation for that substantial decrease in budgeted payments from the estimated result to the budget and, for that matter, the ongoing fairly significant disparity between the fund receipts and outflows?

The CHAIR: Before the minister gives an answer, I just indicate that the member for Newland has the next question; she has been waiting patiently to ask a question.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think what the member for Heysen is talking about is that as you go across that particular line item they are quite consistent numbers except for the \$34 million, which is significantly higher. My advice is that the decrease that we see, from that one that is significantly higher than the rest of them, is due to one-off funding that was provided in 2023-24 for higher compensation payments and related payments. This is going back to what it usually is, but of course it will be revisited and discussions with Treasury should that be maintained.

Mr TEAGUE: The second part of that question: the disparity between the inflow and the outflow.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Maybe I can take that on notice and provide more detailed accounting, but there are quite a number of other outflows from the Victims of Crime Fund that occur, not just those payments from the \$28 million. There are quite a number of other payments that occur from the fund, but I am happy to consolidate those and provide them on notice maybe.

Mr TEAGUE: Thank you.

Ms SAVVAS: I do have a list of questions that have come about as per my role as the Chair of the Occupational Safety and Rehabilitation Committee here in the parliament, mostly with respect to the equal opportunity review into the parliamentary workplace, and I would like to ask that I provide them to the Attorney for his consideration and to put them on the record so that there may be a response in the regular replies process, if possible.

The CHAIR: You will have to read them.

Ms SAVVAS: Basically, the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity was asked to do a review into the parliamentary workplace, and that report was provided in 2021. As a result of the work done in the committee, committee members have asked a number of questions. Basically, the report found that harassment is indeed prevalent in the workplace of the parliament, and that the problem and its solutions sit at an organisational and cultural level, and the report called for the parliament to demonstrate leadership to create a safe, respectful and inclusive parliamentary workplace. The questions that have come about from the committee are the following:

1. In your view, have those responsible for improving the workplace done enough, given the time that has passed?

2. Does the work done so far demonstrate the 'strong leadership in driving workplace standards' that would be expected at this point?

3. With respect to staff working full-time in Parliament House, due to the fact that they are excluded from the newly formed policies and procedures are they concerned about the effectiveness of what is being implemented?

4. In the view of the Attorney, should a compliance audit be undertaken by SafeWork SA?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to take most of those on notice. I suspect some of them may be more relevant for the Special Minister of State, the member for Kavel, the Hon. Dan Cregan. But to the extent that I am able to answer what has been put on notice, I am happy to do so.

The CHAIR: Member for Heysen, you have 30 seconds if you want to ask a question.

Mr TEAGUE: In terms of the Victims of Crime Fund, if we turn back to pages 60 and 61, the minister talked about various outflows. In terms of the treatment of interest, we see both inflows and outflows. Is there an explanation for how that is given an accounting treatment?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Perhaps I will take that on notice and provide an answer to the honourable member about the treatment of interest.

Mr TEAGUE: Together with that consolidated—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Together with the consolidated—when you put together all the payments that are made from the fund. I am happy to pay special attention to the treatment of interest.

The CHAIR: The allotted time having expired, I declare the examination of the Attorney-General's Department and State Records complete. The proposed payments for the Attorney-General's portfolio will continue after lunch.

Sitting suspended from 13:15 to 14:15.

Membership:

Mr Fulbrook substituted for Ms Savvas.

Ms Hutchesson substituted for Ms O'Hanlon.

Mr Basham substituted for Hon. J.A.W. Gardner.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms C. Mealor, Chief Executive, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms N. Saunders, Executive Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation.

Mr A. Swanson, Executive Director, Finance, People and Performance, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr D. Corcoran, Director, Financial Services, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms Y. Tregenza, Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation.

The CHAIR: We now move to the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation portfolio. The minister appearing is the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. I call on the minister to make an opening statement, if he wishes; if he does not, he can introduce his advisers. I then call on the lead speaker for the opposition to make a statement, if he wishes, or commence his questions.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have an opening statement. I am happy to introduce Caroline Mealor, Chief Executive of the Attorney-General's Department; Nerida Saunders, Executive Director of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation; Andrew Swanson, Executive Director, Finance, People and Performance, Attorney-General's Department; and behind me are Darren Corcoran and Yolande Tregenza.

Mr TEAGUE: I will open—and remain, I expect—at Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 16, dealing with Program 1: Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation. I might just indicate that I will endeavour to work through it by reference to highlights 2023-24 and, in turn, targets 2024-25 in the main. With that in mind, the first dot point highlight of 2023-24 is described as:

- Worked with the Electoral Commission of South Australia to enable the inaugural election for South Australia's First Nations Voice to Parliament and supported local and state voices once elected.

In relation to that last phrase—'supported local and state voices once elected'—what particular actions and costs were associated with that support? I am conscious of the fact that we are talking about the period of presumably, therefore, the final three months of this financial year just gone.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I can indicate, as per what I have indicated a number of times in forums in this parliament, that the costs estimated for the South Australian First Nations Voice were budgeted at \$1½ million a year, which was fairly evenly split over the payments for the Local and State First Nations Voice in terms of fees such as travel, accommodation, meeting facilities, ICT costs, sessional or annual fees. That was budgeted at \$699,000, and \$680,000 had been budgeted for the Voice secretariat to support the Local First Nations Voice.

I can indicate that to 31 May expenditure for that first element, that is the payment for the functions of the Local and State First Nations Voices, has equated to approximately \$230,000, year to date as at 31 May, and to the secretariat of about \$295,000.

Mr TEAGUE: Thanks for that information and I note that there is some expenditure over the course of the last financial year and I just indicate again that my question is rather more directed to that final phrase of the highlight described at the first dot point, that is the support to Local and State Voices once elected.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to repeat what I said initially. As I talked about the budgeting for items such as support for the Voice itself, funding is to cover items such as travel, accommodation, meeting facilities, sessional or annual fees, ICT costs. So the Voice themselves, year to date as of 31 May, at approximately \$230,000. The support that the Voice needs in terms of the modest secretariat that has been set up for the Voice has, my advice is, incurred costs as at 31 May for year to date of \$295,000. I think that pretty well covers the support for the Local and State Voices once elected.

Mr TEAGUE: What supports did Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation provide to ECSA for the elections?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Through the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, there was not a budget through Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation for ECSA. There was provision directly to ECSA for what they needed to do.

Mr TEAGUE: I note there that the highlight describes having worked with ECSA 'to enable'; so is the minister's answer that there was no money expended by Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation in relation to the election?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am not sure if there may have been phone calls to ask for advice for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, but my advice is that within the actual department of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation there was not a dedicated budget line to enable the elections to occur. There was, however, as I have said, money provided directly to the Electoral Commission to conduct those elections, which is appropriate and which happens in the ordinary circumstances of elections that the Electoral Commissioner conducts independently in a way that they do, not just for Voice elections but for local council elections, for many other elections, for state elections. Even for the upcoming APY executive board elections, money is provided directly to ECSA, to the Electoral Commission SA in the conduct of those elections in which they have many, many years of dedicated experience.

Mr TEAGUE: None of which is caught by the description in the first dot point as far as the highlight for AAR is concerned and I understand that. How would the minister describe the enabling work that is the subject of that first highlight for 2023-24 and was there any cost associated or funds employed?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that one of the primary ways that Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation worked with ECSA to enable the inaugural election, as described in the very first dot point of the highlights, was through the Commissioner for First Nations Voice, whose budget line sat within Aboriginal affairs who, I am advised, provided advice from time to time, as required by the Electoral Commission of South Australia, in relation to the elections, given the role that the commissioner played in the development of the model that was put forward and directions were conducted under.

Mr TEAGUE: I will not turn to the Budget Measures Statement for this year because there is no relevant budget measure for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation in this year's budget, as I read it. The third dot point is then the subject of the next point of interest that is the subject of a budget measure for 2022-23 as a reference point and then, as I recall, was the subject of budgeted funding for 2022-23 and 2023-24 in relation to the delivery of what was a Malinauskas Labor commitment with respect to monuments.

Against the background of the 2022-23 budget measure, the third dot point highlight indicates:

- Progressed work to identify the first six Aboriginal South Australians to be honoured with a monument or a statue and possible suitable locations.

I note for complete context the second point target for 2024-25 is:

- Continue work to identify the first six Aboriginal South Australians to be honoured with a monument or statue and possible suitable locations.

By reference to either the highlight for 2023-24 or the target for 2024-25, or both, which Aboriginal South Australians have been identified or are being considered for a monument and how would the minister otherwise describe the highlight, and to what extent have the funds that were the subject of the budget measure been deployed?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The vast majority of the funds still remain and remain to be expended, and we look forward to doing that over the next couple of years. I know that works, as the highlights of 2023-24 indicate, continue to progress, particularly in relation to possible locations. I am aware that there have been discussions with local government in relation to that particular matter. Previous work has been undertaken since this term of government in seeking very widespread views about who might be the first Aboriginal South Australians to be honoured. That work is intended to have the input of the recently elected Voice, and I look forward to that work continuing, as the targets in 2024-25 indicate.

Mr TEAGUE: The minister referred to work or connection with local councils with a view to co-funding and finding locations. Has there been any commitment or memorandum of understanding or indication as a result of any work and, otherwise, what has the work entailed with local councils?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I know that discussions have occurred. I am not aware that there has been a firm commitment or that it has progressed to the stage of a memorandum of understanding. I am happy to take that on notice, though, and if there is further information that can be added, I will bring it back. If it is at the stage of discussions, obviously I will not bring it back because there will be nothing to report.

Mr TEAGUE: In turn, is there any, therefore, indication of what locations have either been determined or considered?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think it is probably too early to speculate on that. I know I have had a couple of reports to me in meetings about the progress of it, but I think it would be too early to speculate.

Mr TEAGUE: Also too early to speculate on who might be among the first six Aboriginal leaders to be commemorated?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, indeed, and also I know there has been some discussion that has taken place over the last 18 months and in the financial year preceding the one that had the highlights, but particularly consulting with members of family before committing an Aboriginal person's likeness—particularly an Aboriginal person who has passed away—to a monument would need to occur before there was any public announcement of that sort.

Mr TEAGUE: Is there any likelihood that there will be any works that might occur within 2024-25?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is quite possible. We are keen to progress this now, as I said, that the First Nations Voice has been elected.

Mr TEAGUE: Is there any spending allocated? I have referred to the budget measure from 2022-23. Is there any spending that is budgeted for such work in the current year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I will have to take that on notice. If there is a breakdown that is apportioned to the current year, I am happy to bring that back for the honourable member.

Mr TEAGUE: Thank you. And if so, that would be appropriate and further information in addition to what is on the face of the budget in that it would come from the budgeted allocation for AAR in the year to come. That is the correct reading of the budget?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think so. If it is a question that if there is money to be expended it will sit within Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, my advice is yes, that is the case.

Mr TEAGUE: We do not see it particularised in this budget because it was the subject of a budget measure in 2022-23.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is my understanding, yes.

Mr TEAGUE: I do not mean this as a particular criticism—it might become one—the budget measure in 2022-23 referred to the total amount being spread over the two years that were the subject of those two budgets: 2022-23 and 2023-24. So is it a correct statement of the circumstances that that money has been applied but is sitting and waiting?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It may be. I am happy to check on that.

Mr TEAGUE: Allocated, but sitting and waiting?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think that is probably the effect, but if it is not, I am happy to bring back a reply.

Mr TEAGUE: Is the minister satisfied with the progress towards the achievement of the highlight and the target?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am. I am very pleased about the discussions that have been reported to me with local government particularly about locations. I know there has been, in the first year of government, a lot of work done as to the possible people who might be recognised and honoured with a monument or statue. I know we very deliberately said we were keen to get the input of the elected First Nations Voice, which has just occurred, which necessarily meant that if we wanted to get the input, we needed to wait until elections have occurred and they have, so I am keen to see progress continue on this.

Mr TEAGUE: While we are talking about generalities in progress, the minister is satisfied with what has occurred to date. This might be a matter to take on notice or I appreciate it might be sufficiently embryonic in that it is not quite there yet. In terms of the work with local councils, both as to location and as to co-funding, is there any indication that the minister can give to the committee of any anticipated total quantum that might be involved and therefore what co-funding might be required? Perhaps wrapped up in the same answer, if there is any anticipation that greater cost might be required to be expended as a result of the work that has been done so far, any indication of that would be helpful as well.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to take that on notice. If there is an answer that can be prepared, I will bring it back.

Mr TEAGUE: I highlight that point about local councils and co-funding because it is referred to in the election commitment and it is anticipated therefore prior to the budget measure but is not otherwise particular, so I appreciate that.

The following dot point highlight is a second example of where there is a highlight for 2023-24 that is matched by a target for 2024-25, and that is the engagement with key stakeholders to support the reburial, exhumation and reinterment of Aboriginal ancestral remains where they have not been buried in a culturally appropriate manner. We see that as the fourth dot point highlight for 2023-24, and then as the third dot point highlight for 2024-25 on page 16, what sites for Aboriginal ancestral remains have been repatriated from in the course of 2023-24?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Is the question: in the current financial year, what sites have Aboriginal remains been repatriated to?

Mr TEAGUE: Yes. In a sense, directed to: what does the highlight mean?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The highlight means in the allocation of \$1.5 million over four years to Aboriginal reburial and repatriation activities there have been a lot of works done to date in relation to building on the 2021 pilot program for a Kaurna ancestral resting place at Wangayarta as it is now known at Smithfield Memorial Park in the north of Adelaide.

We know that the SA Museum, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, and other agencies currently care for some in the order of 5,000 historical Aboriginal ancestral remains. Some remains are identified as to where they have come from and where their resting place ought to be. There have been, I know, discussions with the First Peoples of the River Murray, with Ngarrindjeri, in particular around the Raukkan area with Ngarrindjeri around the Coorong, and also I know around the River Murray, as the member would appreciate, this is delicate and complicated work. I know that the department, along with the Museum in particular, are continuing that work.

As I have said, there are quite a number of ancestral remains in the care of state agencies that are looking to be returned and hopefully over the coming year we will progress very significantly and hopefully have returns in places like the Riverland and around Raukkan.

Mr TEAGUE: In the context of that answer, is the minister satisfied that that work is progressing according to time and budget?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is something I am very pleased to receive regular updates on and, for smaller scale returns of ancestral remains, I know there have been working groups set up and a lot of work and a lot of very thoughtful discussions have occurred in relation to it as well.

Mr TEAGUE: Much has been publicised about certain remains at Riverlea at Buckland Park. Has there been progress by reference to the highlight and/or with respect to the target in relation to repatriation and removal?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That is a completely separate process from the highlights in here. Any decisions that are made under a determination from a section 23 application after a section 13 consultation are not part of the ancestral remains returning, as I said—the approximately 5,000 ancestral remains that are in the care of particularly state institutions or ones that have been taken in the decades and centuries gone by.

What we are talking about with land use proponents, disturbing of land, is not repatriation in the sense that they have been for a long time in the care of the state, but they have been disturbed and a solution needs to be found for what happens with those ancestral remains at the site they are at. That is a process under the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1988 rather than under the ancestral remains and repatriation program.

Mr TEAGUE: The same might be said of the reports of remains found at the new Women's and Children's Hospital site?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I can give a bit more information in relation to that. It is the same process, the application of the Aboriginal Heritage Act rather than a policy about the repatriation of remains. My understanding from advice I have previously received is that, at the Women's and Children's site, animal remains—I think they were identified as the remains of sheep—had been discovered rather than the remains of humans. I can confirm: I have just been given further advice that the bones that were found on the area of the new Women's and Children's Hospital have since been determined by an archaeologist to be from a sheep.

Mr TEAGUE: It is good to have that information for the benefit of the committee. In relation to the subject of a separate decision in relation to remains at Riverlea, that will be inherently separate from any funding that is allocated that is the subject of the highlight and target referred to.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The third dot point for the targets in 2024-25—the reburial, exhumation and reinterment of ancestral remains—as well as the highlight of the financial year we are just about to end that is the subject of dot point 4 in the highlights is separate from any process

that is occurring from the land use proponent. Where there is a determination made pursuant to an application under section 23 of the Aboriginal Heritage Act that has involved the issue of ancestral remains, that is typically a condition of any authorisation that may be granted. Often, it is an obligation on a land use proponent in relation to those sorts of reinterments or reburials, including, very strongly, negotiation with traditional owners.

Mr TEAGUE: I am focused on the highlights and targets, still at page 16, and I might be referring to the absence of a highlight and matching target. In terms of the budget measures for 2022-23, we saw what was the subject of \$2 million of funding over four years, commencing that year, including, I think, \$548,000 for 2024-25 for the implementation of the Treaty and Truth aspects of the implementation of the Uluru Statement from the Heart. Is there any indication as to how those year-on-year allocations are tracking? Is it all a matter that has been allocated, in terms of the answer to the post establishment of the Voice, but is yet to be deployed? Is there any indication of the amount that has been allocated for this year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Some of the funding that was allocated in budgets gone by was expended in the work of the setting up and doing the consultations in relation to the Voice, particularly the work and the support for the Commissioner for First Nations Voice who conducted two rounds of consultations with Aboriginal communities and organisations and individuals. I think the first round of consultations probably stood at the time as the most comprehensive and thorough consultation a state government has undertaken with the Aboriginal community in South Australia, and then that was backed up by a second round of consultation with a draft bill as a result.

In relation to a future budget expenditure, we are on the public record a number of times of wanting to engage with the Voice that is now elected, not as a negotiation body for other elements, but to take some advice on the best way forward in relation to those other elements.

Mr TEAGUE: I do not expect the minister to have the particular figures in front of him, and I am grateful for the kind of reminder as it were about funds that have been deployed prior to the Voice having been established, and I have indicated that there is an estimate in the budget measures 2022-23 of \$548,000 for 2024-25, and \$562,000 for 2025-26 that one might read into that particular budget measure that those funds are to be found—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Within the whole of the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation. I am pretty sure that is the case but, if it is not—like I have done a couple of times—if there is any variation from that, but I think that is correct, I am happy to bring it back. My advice is that that is right.

Mr TEAGUE: In those circumstances, and if it might be more convenient, I have kept a focus on the highlights and targets page. It might be more directly than applicable to the program net cost of services summary on page 14 that gives us the overall budget and estimated result. If that is the case, then there is roughly \$1.1 million in combination this year and next year that is earmarked and allocated for all three: for the Voice, albeit established now—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, and as we talked about at the very start, there is a dedicated budget for the ongoing running of the Voice, both for what is needed for the members of the Local Voice and the statewide Voice, as well as that secretarial support, so I cannot imagine that would be accounted for in the ongoing amounts, so it would be the remaining two elements that that amount would be left for.

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, and I might say without being presumptuous, that was my reading as well in broad terms, given they are both going forward post the establishment of the Voice, and the establishment then of its own funding. If not then the \$1.1 million for the two years, is there anything the minister is able to advise the committee, and with the benefit of advice, about the more particular deployment of the \$548,000 for this year in what one might expect might be more particularly focused on the Treaty and truth-telling processes?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, not yet. As I have said, we are keen, and now that the recently held elections have occurred, and the first meetings have occurred from the Local Voice, and only in the last couple of weeks the first one of the statewide Voice, to seek some guidance and advice about how we navigate the next steps in the process.

Mr TEAGUE: If I might be just even more particular about it, the process has been described as a restarting of a Treaty process and the establishment of a truth-telling process. Is it a matter in which there is funding to be deployed for the restart and/or continuation of something that had stopped, or is it to be anticipated that what might occur in this regard is new work?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It may well be a combination of each, but I am not going to presume to say exactly how that might look. In a very technical sense, it would be a restarting of a Treaty process because, of course, I think in 2016 the then Weatherill Labor government started a Treaty process that included quite advanced discussions and negotiations with the Adnyamathanha, Narungga and Ngarrindjeri nations in South Australia, including the signing of the Buthera Agreement with the Narungga nation.

In a very technical sense, we did start a Treaty process in South Australia, so we would be restarting it because one had already started. But in a broader policy sense, I do not expect it will be continuing exactly where it was left off in the four years during a change of government that elected, I think as the first Aboriginal Affairs policy decision, to stop a Treaty process.

There has been much development, not just internationally in areas like British Columbia but particularly in Australia in the Treaty space. In Victoria there have been two elections now of the First Peoples' Assembly, which is an elected treaty-negotiating body on behalf of Aboriginal Victorians. There has been the South West Native Title Settlement, the Noongar settlement, in WA which in all but name is regarded by many in this space as having all the elements that most people would consider to be a Treaty. Queensland has set up a treaty-negotiating framework that I think is now legislated. The Northern Territory has had a report of a Treaty commissioner. That has all happened in the space between 2018 and 2022.

So, in a very technical sense, yes, it will be restarting a Treaty process because there was one already started, but in a practical sense it will not be. Once we get some of the views of our elected First Nations Voice, I do not think it will be quite as simple as 'this is exactly where it was when it was cut off in March 2018 and it is restarting exactly from there'. There has been a lot that has developed in this area of thinking and policy around Australia since then.

Mr TEAGUE: In terms of the funding that is allocated, that \$548,000 that was subject to the budget measure of 2022-23, I think I have drawn the word 'restart'—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: In a sense it will be a restarting, because—I will not go on.

Mr TEAGUE: I was about to say that the context and explanation from the minister is helpful in that regard. I will just indicate I think I have drawn the word 'restart' from the Labor election commitment document that describes restarting the Treaty process, and it is helpful to have that context.

In that regard, the election commitment document refers to, over the first four years, investing more than \$2 million to restart the Treaty process discrete. The budget measure, as I recall it, was a budget measure for the Uluru Statement from the Heart implementation, which was \$2 million, and we have heard that perhaps, in rough terms, half has been deployed to the establishment of the Voice. In those circumstances, can we anticipate that there will be greater funding required in order to make up the \$2 million for the Treaty process, or is it to be wrapped up—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have the words of an election document in front of me. I suspect what was intended by the election document was that there will be a \$2 million investment in the elements of the Uluru Statement. Treaty is one of the three elements. There will be \$2 million to start Treaty, but not necessarily exclusively Treaty, is my guess of how the intent might have been in the description of the policy. It is probably closer to a third than a half of the \$2 million, as I said, expended over the two years—but almost midway between a third and a half, so far, for the cost to get the Voice established. Of course, as policies are developed, governments always look to adjust and see what budgets are needed to make sure that they are giving the best and most effective expression to them.

Mr TEAGUE: In that regard, I am quick to say I do not mean to be a source of embarrassment to the minister or to put the minister on the spot, but I do happen to have a copy of

the document to which I have referred, and it is a departure from the budget papers. I am happy to hand it to the minister if it is of any assistance.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I suspect that it was written as the \$2 million being for Treaty, but not exclusively for Treaty.

Mr TEAGUE: I just indicate it is not written that way, and that might be a matter for another day.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to spend the next half hour talking about whether something was inclusive or exclusive; it seems like a good use of our time.

Mr TEAGUE: If we were to do that, then it might be assisted if the minister was willing to take on board and have a look at the—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is a long way to travel to get those papers.

Mr TEAGUE: —election commitment document. That opportunity is there and, should the minister wish to take it up, then I would embrace it. Otherwise, it might be a matter of leaving us with the words on the page.

In any event, the \$548,000, and then the balance making up the \$1.1 million or so that is the subject of the budget measures, is neither expended nor is there any particular work that is identified to be undertaken this year in respect of Treaty or Truth, as I have heard it. Is there any further particularisation or is there any particularisation at all of how that money might be spent in the course of this year? Again, I note that it might be most convenient to refer to page 14, because it does not find expression in the targets for 2024-25, let alone the highlights for 2023-24.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think, as I mentioned before, in the current financial year that is about to close in 2023-24, there was expenditure by the Commissioner for First Nations Voice in getting the Voice set up during the course of this financial year. So, yes, there will be expenditure there. In relation to expenditure in future financial years, no, I do not have details.

Mr TEAGUE: Having had some reference to that, there is reference certainly to a target in 2024-25. In fact, the first dot point target, more or less halfway down on page 16, states:

- Support the implementation of South Australia's First Nations Voice to Parliament at local and state level.

So there is some reference to a target in that respect, notwithstanding the establishment of a separate budget.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: In terms of the budgetary impact, I think that target highlights the \$699,000 and the \$680,000, the respective components to support the statewide Voice. That would be, I think, a reasonable thing to read what that target relates to, rather than money that was in there that you have talked about in terms of \$535,000 and \$548,000.

Mr TEAGUE: Yes, I understand completely. In that sense, the first target is talking about general activity within the resources of the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation budget. It might be observed that the absence of a target for 2024-25 in respect of Treaty and truth-telling is the rather more telling aspect of the targets list. I do not know if the minister has anything more to say about that.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, that is not an observance I would make.

Mr TEAGUE: Well, it is not there.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is not an observance I would make, though; it is not a conclusion I would draw from the observance. As the member mentioned, it has been in previous budget years. The highlights and the target are a snapshot of some of the areas of the department's great work. Given the huge amount of work that I know Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation does, we would fill up five volumes of the budget papers with all of their work if you put everything in, but this is a snapshot of some of the work they are doing.

Mr TEAGUE: All the more so in light of the minister's response, would the minister express a view about the absence in those circumstances of—we have five targets for 2024-25 that are necessarily illustrative of the work of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation across a whole range of different areas, and there is no expression among those targets in relation to Treaty or truth-telling and that in circumstances where we have—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think all that can be reasonably concluded or drawn from that is that there is a huge amount of work that Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation does, and that includes this and much more, including the continued implementation of the Uluru Statement in South Australia. I do not think you can draw anything much more or less than that.

Mr TEAGUE: I am asking the minister's view, I suppose, about the targets for 2024-25. The support for the implementation of South Australia's First Nations Voice to Parliament is, however, the subject of a target for 2024-25. The minister has indicated that in the year to 31 May, there was expenditure in the order, I think, of \$230,000, and there is now a secretariat that has had expenditure of \$295,000 spent to 31 May. What action is involved, so far as Program 1: Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation is concerned, for the support for the implementation of the Voice in the year ahead?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is the budget and the people who are working in the secretariat to support the Voice.

Mr TEAGUE: In what amount?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The yearly budget is about \$690,000, I think I said? It is within about \$10,000 of \$690,000 or thereabouts. If that is wildly inaccurate, I am happy to bring something back, but I think that is quite close.

Mr TEAGUE: To put it bluntly, just for the avoidance of doubt: in terms of the dot point target, the minister attaches \$690,000 to the dot point target?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I will repeat what we said at the very start, if that is going to be helpful, or I can refer the member to *Hansard*. I am happy to do so. The amount that is budgeted is anticipated to be in the order of \$699,000 a year for the First Nations Voice in terms of the funding to cover items such as travel, accommodation, meeting facilities—the simple hiring of halls to hold meetings in Ceduna or Coober Pedy or wherever the Local Voice meetings are—sessional fees and annual fees.

I am happy to say again that it is anticipated that yearly costs will be in the order of \$680,000 for the Voice secretariat to support the Local First Nations Voice. When I said \$690,000 plus or minus \$10,000, I was \$10,000 over: it is approximately, I am advised, \$680,000 for that secretarial support to support the work of the Voice. When I talk about that \$680,000, yes, that would certainly be towards meeting the first dot point of that target, as is the remainder of that approximately \$699,000 that meets the actual costs of the body. So it is somewhere in the order of \$1½ million a year when you include those two elements: secretarial support and then travel, meeting venue hire, sessional and annual fees and information technology costs. In meeting that first dot point, the support for the Voice is about \$1½ million a year.

Mr TEAGUE: The best way to find that in the budget papers is at page 14, looking at the net cost of services for 2024-25. Is that the most convenient reference point?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that, in terms of the secretariat that supports the Voice, it will be part of—if you look on page 17—the expenses, and you will notice the explanation of significant movements, and increased expenses. The second dot point—

Mr TEAGUE: \$400,000?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, for that particular financial year, but that is probably for future budgets the best way to find the expression of the secretariat component of that.

Mr TEAGUE: Why isn't that 680—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: What is that?

Mr TEAGUE: I was going to ask you about the 400. Given the minister's indication—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: What the dot points relate to are the increases in expenses for the 2023-24 financial year in which the Voice was set up for only a small part of it. When I said the year to the date as at the 31st—

Mr TEAGUE: That was 295.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: If we need to do further indications of costs, I am happy to do it. My advice right now is that that second dot point, the First Nations Voice to Parliament, includes not just the cost of the secretariat but that part of the year that included the cost of the Commissioner for First Nations Voice in terms of those expenses as well.

Mr TEAGUE: But not the 230 that the minister referred to a moment ago in terms of the year to date as at 31 May?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to take that on notice and provide a breakdown upon looking further at that.

Mr TEAGUE: The 295 for the secretariat, in terms of the figure referred to earlier, the balance of that being commissioner costs and—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to clarify anything we need to.

Mr TEAGUE: —otherwise we certainly see the budget allocation on page 14. Is there any more particular expression of the secretariat costs that might be identified within, say, the expenses on page 17?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Not that readily comes to mind. Of course, if there are employee expenses and if there are any parts or supplies and services needed for it, I am happy to check to see if there is any way to particularise that.

Mr TEAGUE: That is one thing, particularising it, but are they actually there? We do not see any FTE movement of any consequence.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is it should be accounted for within that.

Mr TEAGUE: The FTE movement from 2022-23—and I am at the bottom of the table now on page 17—is 33.1, up to 41, coming back to 39, the subject of the current budget. Is that movement of six FTE accounted for by reference to the Voice secretariat? If so, it is both early and late.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is, yes, mainly, it would account for it. My advice at the moment is that is four point something FTEs as part of the Voice secretariat. An increase of six or so would be accounted for mainly by the Voice secretariat.

Mr TEAGUE: There is something of a curiosity there in that, never mind the budget for 2023-24, in the estimated result for 2023-24 there is an uptick of 5.8 FTE. That is a Voice secretariat uptick, is it?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is yes, that accounts for most of that.

Mr TEAGUE: I will stay on Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 17, expenses, same page and same topic, FTE, but with particular reference to the Aboriginal Lands Trust. Does Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation provide any support to ALT? While the minister is considering that, I have in mind support in relation to provision of services governance advice.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that the funding for ALT is a grant funding that comes through Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation. So my advice is that it would be that, on the fourth line, grants and subsidies for the 2024-25 budget is \$5.849 million. That comprises a number of things, but a significant portion of that is the grant funding that is provided to ALT.

Mr TEAGUE: You do not know exactly?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, I am happy to take that on notice about what component of that is the ALT.

Mr TEAGUE: Maybe in the time that we have there might be one example. There are others at Nepabunna in connection with ALT. I will just focus perhaps on Davenport. So Davenport

community, the subject of a lease arrangement, the ALT is responsible and I think it is styled as the Davenport Community Council Incorporated, an incorporated association that has the DCCI as the subtenant. Is there any support that Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation provides ALT, and when I say ALT to a tenant of ALT and DCCI, to support its governance and other regulatory compliance, that sort of thing?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised, as the member highlighted, there are a number of lands that sit within the Aboriginal Lands Trust Estate around South Australia, and there are headleases granted to organisations that run that land. A lot of these around South Australia are former missions: Point Pearce or Point McLeay, Raukkan, Koonibba and Umoona as with Davenport as well. They have a headlease to often an incorporated community council.

My advice is that part of the grants and subsidies in dot point 4 in the expenses allows a budget for ALT to do a number of things, particularly land management, looking after assets, providing support to some of those organisations that effectively have the care and control, have the headleases of the parts of those lands that form the Aboriginal Lands Trust Estate.

There is some funding that is provided to a number of Aboriginal Lands Trust communities in terms of municipal funding that goes to things like dust suppression, road maintenance and other sorts of things within those Aboriginal Lands Trust communities. I am advised there is other funding that is provided either through other state or federal agencies to some of the community organisations on Aboriginal Lands Trust land for particular projects, such as to run youth programs or domestic violence prevention programs.

In terms of funding directly from Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation that you would see within these expenses, over and above and separate from the grants and subsidies line to the Aboriginal Lands Trust, I am advised that that is not funding that Aboriginal Affairs provides, but as I have said there are other bodies, state and federal, which do provide funding for various things—municipal services and all sorts of programs.

Mr TEAGUE: I am conscious in that regard, focusing on governance, of a letter from you to a member of the Davenport community, I think dated late January this year, it might have been 24 January, indicating that where there is an association issue, DCCI, that that is actually a matter that you have referred to the Minister for Consumer and Business Affairs as an association incorporation matter. In those circumstances, is there any particular assistance that the agency can provide or is it a matter of entirely saying, 'Well, DCCI, as far as governance is concerned, not us'?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I can inform the member that depending on the nature of incorporation of those community councils, there are a number that are federally incorporated under the CATSI Act. So the office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations provides a lot of oversight, including help with governance training. I am advised that in terms of governance functions for all associations that are incorporated under state legislation, that is what CBS does. I know CBS will and has stepped in in organisations where there are governance concerns.

The CHAIR: The allotted time having expired, I declare the examination of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation complete. I thank the minister and his advisers and the members of the opposition.

Sitting suspended from 15:16 to 15:30.

Membership:

Mr Cowdrey substituted for Mr Basham.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms E. Ranieri, Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

Mr A. Swanson, Executive Director Finance, People and Performance, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms J. Barbaro, Director, Workforce Integrity, Strategy and Capability, Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

Mr S. Johnson, Director, Industrial Relations and Policy, Attorney-General's Department.

The CHAIR: We are now up to the portfolio of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment. The minister appearing is the Minister for Industrial Relations and Public Sector. The proposed payments for the Attorney-General's Department remain open for examination. I call on the minister to make a statement if he wishes and also introduce his advisers, then I will call on the lead speaker for the opposition to make a statement if he wishes or ask questions.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Thank you, Chair. How long do I have for the opening statement?

The CHAIR: Not 30 minutes.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Okay. I do not have one. With me, I have Erma Ranieri, the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, and Simon Johnson, Director, Industrial Relations and Policy. Behind us, we have Andrew Swanson, who has been with us all day, as he has for the last 26 years of estimates, and Josie Barbaro, Director, Workforce Integrity, Strategy and Capability with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

The CHAIR: Just go into questions, then, member for Colton.

Mr COWDREY: Thank you, Chair. I think I nearly retired you last year, Andrew; you are back for 26, which is good. In terms of the commissioner's budget for the last financial year, coming into this financial year, there is an increase in the budget—

The CHAIR: Can you refer to a reference, please?

Mr COWDREY: Sure, my apologies: Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 61, in regard to the commissioner's budget for the year, obviously presented in this way in terms of the grant provided to her office to undertake its duties. In terms of the increase between last year's estimated result and last year's budget and the projection for the 2024-25 budget, are you able to outline what those additional funds are going towards?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I can advise that the increase in the 2024-25 budget is mainly due to funding provided for the People Matter Employee Survey that occurs every three years.

Mr COWDREY: So there is additional one-off funding for this financial year to undertake that survey?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am further advised that the higher actual for the 2022-23 financial year is mainly due to funding for an outsourced solicitor who was working on various projects, and, as I said, my advice is that the increase in the 2024-25 budget is mainly due to funding provided for the People Matter Employee Survey of the public sector.

Mr COWDREY: In terms of highlights for the office, on page 49 of the same volume, the first dot point references the Closing the Gap commitment and the contribution that the office has made by way of a pathway—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I think I am on the wrong page. What page are we on?

Mr COWDREY: It is page 49 in the same volume. It references the Closing the Gap commitment and the contribution of the office towards that via the Aboriginal Employment Register. Are we able to have some background in terms of what that initiative entails and how many indigenous South Australians have been employed through the register in the last financial year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that the register is an employment opportunity program, that operates pursuant to section 65 of the Public Sector Act, which allows Aboriginal people to apply for all advertised vacancies in the South Australian public sector. This register enables agencies to recruit from a pool of just over 1,000 active Aboriginal candidates who have been assessed by the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment. I am advised that

an audit was undertaken in late 2023 to ensure that all profiles on the register are current. I am further advised that, through the register in the 2023-24 year, 71 Aboriginal people had gained employment.

Mr COWDREY: Was there an expectation or a target in terms of the employment level that was looking to be achieved through the program?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, in terms of the register I am advised there was not a target.

Mr COWDREY: In regard to the mention in the same bullet point, the secondment program from Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, are you able to provide some background information in regard to what is entailed there, the take-up, whether those workers are being distributed across the whole of the public sector into particular departments, and what roles, for instance, they have undertaken as part of the secondment process?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that this is a new initiative and a pilot program and one that certainly I know, from my experience as a minister in another portfolio in Aboriginal Affairs, is one that in the ACCOs, or Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, sector has been very, very strongly supported.

I am advised that it contributes towards Closing the Gap Priority 2 reform. The program was piloted, I am advised, with two employees, placed into two metro-based ACCOs (Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations), with the potential expansion next financial year following the evaluation of the pilot.

I am further advised that it operates alongside the Jawun program, which is a very longstanding program that is supported by corporate Australia which placed secondees into two regions in South Australia as well.

Mr COWDREY: Did you provide detail in terms of how many people took up the opportunity?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, I said the pilot program placed two employees with two metro-based Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations.

Mr COWDREY: Sorry, I may have misunderstood. So it is public sector employees that are doing a secondment into the ACCO?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes.

Mr COWDREY: And those public sector employees were from which particular department?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: We do not have that detail. I assume we can find that and take it on notice and provide it.

Mr COWDREY: Sure. Is that level of participation in the program in line with previous uptake in previous years?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: It is a pilot program, so it has never been done before.

Mr COWDREY: Is there a plan to continue the program?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, there is an intention to continue the program. I also know—and it is something that I know the commission and I have talked about a number of times in looking at the possibility of the program operating in two directions; that is not just public sector employees being able to be seconded into Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations, but people who work in Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations being able to be seconded into the public sector. The ability for that to happen, I think, will add great benefits to ACCOs, as well as the benefits that will flow to public sector agencies with employees being able to have experience in the ACCO sector.

Mr COWDREY: In terms of the final dot point in highlights—I will come back to some of the issues, but I just want to touch on this first—and the public sector's new strategies on diversity, equity and inclusion, in particular I would like to try to get some further information around disability.

In the latest State of the Sector report I think we had results indicating that people living with a disability made up 1.35 per cent of the workforce as of June last year, the lowest percentage since 2019. I am keen to understand (a) the Commissioner's view in terms of where disability employment is within the public sector in South Australia, and (b) how the government is seeking to

make some improvements in terms of the representation of people with a disability within the public sector.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that there is a target of 3 per cent across the public sector and that the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment is working with the DHS, in particular, to look at ways that, through awareness raising, we can increase the number. As the member points out in asking the question, as of June 2023 a number of 1.35 per cent of employees disclosed a disability. I am advised that is unlikely to be the true level of employment of people living with a disability in the public sector, but of those who have disclosed a disability.

Mr COWDREY: Is there a view, perhaps, that it has got to where the desire to disclose disability within the public sector has actually diminished over the past couple of years?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that there is a view that when questions are asked about diversity in the workforce and questions are asked about disclosing disability, there is the thought that many people see that as a physical disability rather than any other form of disability. They are looking at how to change the questions that are asked to try to capture a better and more appropriate number.

Mr COWDREY: Is there a time frame in which the government is seeking to achieve a 3 per cent target?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The ambition is by the date of 2026; that is the advice I am being given.

Mr COWDREY: In real terms—I do not know if you have this—but 1.35 per cent of the total workforce, do you have the real number in terms of total disclosures?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: If the headcount is somewhere around 110,000, 1.3 per cent would be 1,300 for the 100,000 and another 130 for the next 10,000, so it would be 1,410 or something like that, but I am happy to go away and bring back a number because it is very bad to try to do maths live in your head in front of people.

Mr COWDREY: If you could take on notice—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to.

Mr COWDREY: —also the percentages and total numbers across the years.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I can do better than that. I have just been advised a headcount at 1,572.

Mr COWDREY: Perhaps on notice again—I do not know if you have the data there—both the percentage and total numbers or headcount numbers, however you wish to refer to it, from 2019 through to this year.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: If we have that data I am happy to see if we can provide it. I am advised very helpfully that I might not need to trouble the very hardworking officers, that it is online through the reports from the commissioner's office.

Mr COWDREY: In regard to chief executive appointments, were there any appointments undertaken by the commissioner's office this year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that the commissioner's office is involved in the process for the appointment of chief executives. Is your question—

Mr COWDREY: How many was she involved with this year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that the commissioner has been involved in the recruitment process for a number of positions. They include: the Chief Executive of ForestrySA; the Commissioner for the Commission on Excellence and Innovation in Health; the Mental Health Commissioner; the Auditor-General; the Chief Executive for the Department for Environment and Water; the Chief Executive of the Office for Early Childhood Development; the Chief Executive for Defence SA; the Chief Officer of the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service; and the commissioner has also advised on the reappointment of positions, including the Chief Executive of

the Department for Industry, Innovation and Science; the Chief Executive for the Department of Human Services; and the very wise reappointment of the Chief Executive of the Attorney-General's Department.

Mr COWDREY: Very good. Were private sector recruitment consultancies done on each of those?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I can advise that in many of those recruitment processes private sector consultants were used. Would you like me to particularise them?

Mr COWDREY: Perhaps I will ask one more question before you provide a breakdown, if that is helpful. Just in terms of those consultancies, are you able to advise whether they were appointed by tender or if any were sole sourced?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that for these types of recruitment processes, the general procedure that is followed is three or four quotes are asked for from South Australian recruitment companies, and then one is selected to undertake the recruitment process.

Mr COWDREY: And that was the case with each of these?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that is the case with most of them.

Mr COWDREY: What was the process involved in those that were not adhered through the normal processes?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: As I said, my advice is for most of them that three or four quotes were requested from South Australian recruitment companies, and one of those was selected.

Mr COWDREY: Yes. How many did not adhere to that process?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: How many were not through the process of three or four quotes? Is that the question?

Mr COWDREY: Yes.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am not sure we have those exact figures here, but I am happy to take that on notice.

Mr COWDREY: What was the reason for the standard process of finding three or four quotes being abandoned in those cases?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that in one of the processes—and that was the process for the recruitment of the Chief Executive for the Office for Early Childhood Development—the necessary skills needed for that recruitment process were so specialised that it went directly to someone who had the appropriate skills to do that; that was a direct recruitment for that executive recruitment process.

Mr COWDREY: That was the only—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: As I say, I am happy to take it on notice, but that is the only one that we can think of at the moment. If there are others, I am happy to come back with an answer, but that is the only one we can identify at the moment.

Mr COWDREY: Before I come back to some of the program-based questions, in regard to code of ethics investigations this year are you able to provide a high-level overview in terms of the nature of code of ethics investigations that were undertaken and the agencies that were involved?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: We do not have the granularity to individual departments. However, I can advise that the number of investigations into code of ethics breaches has declined each year since 2021. I am advised that agencies reported 648 investigations in 2022-23, which is 14 fewer than the previous year.

Mr COWDREY: Did any of those code of ethics investigations involve ministerial or electorate offices?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is no.

Mr COWDREY: That is pleasing to hear. Going back to the highlights, again on page 49 of Volume 1, I touched earlier on the sector's new strategies, but more specifically on disability employment within the public sector. Are we able to get a little bit more information in terms of what those strategies are and how they have been rolled out across agencies?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that the diversity strategy has something like 31 components, which I am happy to read through in detail now. If the member prefers, I am advised that it is online and can be perused at the member's pleasure.

Mr COWDREY: Perhaps I will phrase the question slightly differently in terms of what activities the office has undertaken to roll out that strategy across departments. Is there training that has been undertaken?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: There are quite a number of strategies. I am happy to take it on notice and either provide an answer back or have the answer point to exactly where it can be found online. I am advised that there are actions for every agency that is listed, and I am further advised that it is all online, which is great—good stuff.

Mr COWDREY: Sure. In terms of the salary packaging changes that I think come in imminently, on 1 July, are you able to confirm details around the length of contract entered into—I believe the successful tenderer was Smart—and the procurement outcomes that were being sought through the salary packaging?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: In regard to the initial term for that salary packaging contract that the member refers to, my advice is that it is an initial contract term of five years, with possible extensions available up to five years, based on performance.

Mr COWDREY: What performance indicators are being required to be met?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am happy to take that on notice. As the honourable member will well appreciate, in commercial arrangements that are entered into between private entities there are sometimes things that are commercial-in-confidence. But to the extent that we can provide details, I am happy to take that on notice.

Mr COWDREY: I am not necessarily after specifics, but in terms of the high-level indicators that would be appreciated.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Again, whatever we can reasonably provide without breaching anything, I am happy to see what can be done.

Mr COWDREY: You have referenced the People Matter public survey. Are you able to provide an update of where that is at?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment is working with a new provider in terms of analysing those results. I am advised that they have the raw data and that is being collated and worked upon. My advice is, results should be published in the next few months.

Mr COWDREY: In the next couple of months.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: In the next few months.

Mr COWDREY: In terms of the release of that data, is that in line with previous years in terms of the timing of release?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that it is in line with previous surveys, which I think are every three years or so.

Mr COWDREY: In regard to the state Autism Inclusion Charter, I am keen to understand the actions that the office has undertaken in terms of the leadership training in the public sector.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that that strategy is led, our understanding is, by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and the Department of Human Services. My advice is that the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment provides help and advice in terms of the rollout across the public sector.

Mr COWDREY: In terms of leadership within the public sector, historically the office has provided training for people identified as having potential to become leaders within the public sector. I understand that that is still continuing. Are you able to provide an indication of the number of people who participated in that training this financial year, and what departments they are represented from?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I know that there are quite a number of leadership programs that the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment run. I have been very pleased to be involved in programs in terms of leadership for Aboriginal people in the public sector.

There are programs that are delivered in a range of areas: there is an Executive Excellence Program that aims to advance senior executives in their ability to lead teams, there is the Next Execs Public Sector Management Program aimed at managers identified as ready and capable to broaden their leadership, and there is the Manager Essentials Program that is designed for frontline managers.

These are all part of the training, through the South Australian Leadership Academy, that the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment provides to public sector employees. I am advised that 460 public sector leaders will have completed the academy's leadership development programs by the end of June 2024.

Mr COWDREY: That is total or this financial year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is, yes, that is a cumulative total. That is not in a single year, 460 in a single year.

Mr COWDREY: Yes, that seemed to be rather high.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: They would be doing nothing else if they were providing programs to that many people.

Mr COWDREY: Do you have the number for this financial year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, I do not have that here, but I can see if it can be broken down for the last financial year.

Mr COWDREY: That would be appreciated. My final question is just in regard to working-from-home arrangements across the public sector. Have there been any changes in terms of noticeable activity or particular departments that have seen changes in terms of people's election to work from home across the public sector more broadly?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I thank the member for the question. This is something that only very recently the commissioner and I had a discussion about at one of our regular meetings. The Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment does not have direct oversight of each individual department's practices in terms of workplace practices, particularly in working from home, but the understanding is we have returned to something that is very akin to pre-COVID levels across the public sector, from what the office can understand from departments.

Mr COWDREY: Has there been any desire to try to capture that through some of the surveys that are undertaken by the office, or will there be in future years?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that the office does capture in some of the workplace surveys flexible working arrangements that have existed for quite some time across the public sector.

The CHAIR: The allotted time has expired. I declare the examination of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment complete.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr M. Francis, Chief Executive Officer, ReturnToWorkSA.

Mr G. Farrell, Executive Director, SafeWork SA.

Mr A. Swanson, Executive Director, Finance, People and Performance, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr R. Templeton, Director, Workplace Education and Business Services, SafeWork SA.

Mr P. Caskey, Executive Leader, Finance and Investments, ReturnToWorkSA.

Mr B. Pfeffer, Director, Compliance and Enforcement, SafeWork SA.

Ms M. Bell, Principal Adviser, Scheme Policy and Complaints, Government Services, ReturnToWorkSA.

The CHAIR: I will now move on to the portfolios of ReturnToWorkSA and SafeWork SA. The proposed payments for the Attorney-General's Department remain open for examination. I will call on the minister to make a statement if he wishes and to introduce his advisers. I will then call on the lead speaker for the opposition to make a statement if he wishes, and we will go straight into questions.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have an opening statement, but I do have with me on my left Glenn Farrell, who is the Executive Director of SafeWork SA. On my right I have Michael Francis, the Chief Executive of ReturnToWorkSA. Directly behind me we have, for all of the sins that he commits, Andrew Swanson, who has been with us all day. He is the Executive Director, Finance, People and Performance, at the Attorney-General's Department. The swathe of people behind him are Rob Templeton, Paul Caskey, Brett Pfeffer and Mia Bell from ReturnToWorkSA and SafeWork SA.

The CHAIR: One of those names I recognise actually—Rob. The member for Bragg.

Mr BATTY: I am going to start by reading the omnibus questions.

1. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many executive appointments have been made since 1 July 2023 and what is the annual salary and total employment cost for each position?

2. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many executive positions have been abolished since 1 July 2023 and what was the annual salary and total employment cost for each position?

3. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what has been the total cost of executive position terminations since 1 July 2023?

4. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, will the minister provide a breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors with a total estimated cost above \$10,000 engaged since 1 July 2023, listing the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier, the method of appointment, the reason for the engagement and the estimated total cost of the work?

5. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, will the minister provide an estimate of the total cost to be incurred in 2024-25 for consultants and contractors, and for each case in which a consultant or contractor has already been engaged at a total estimated cost above \$10,000, the name of the consultant or contractor, the method of appointment, the reason for the engagement and the total estimated cost?

6. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many surplus employees are there in June 2024, and for each surplus employee, what is the title or classification of the position and the total annual employment cost?

7. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the number of executive staff to be cut to meet the government's commitment to reduce spending on the employment of executive staff and, for each position to be cut, its classification, total remuneration cost and the date by which the position will be cut?

8. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:

- What savings targets have been set for 2024-25 and each year of the forward estimates;
- What is the estimated FTE impact of these measures?

9. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
 - What was the actual FTE count at June 2024 and what is the projected actual FTE account for the end of each year of the forward estimates;
 - What is the budgeted total employment cost for each year of the forward estimates; and
 - How many targeted voluntary separation packages are estimated to be required to meet budget targets over the forward estimates and what is their estimated cost?
10. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how much is budgeted to be spent on goods and services for 2024-25 and for each year of the forward estimates?
11. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, how many FTEs are budgeted to provide communication and promotion activities in 2024-25 and each year of the forward estimates and what is their estimated employment cost?
12. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, what is the total budgeted cost of government-paid advertising, including campaigns, across all mediums in 2024-25?
13. For each department and agency reporting to the minister, please provide for each individual investing expenditure project administered, the name, total estimated expenditure, actual expenditure incurred to June 2023 and budgeted expenditure for 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27?
14. For each grant program or fund the minister is responsible for, please provide the following information for the 2024-25, 2025-26 and 2026-27 financial years:
 - Name of the program or fund;
 - The purpose of the program or fund;
 - Budgeted payments into the program or fund;
 - Budgeted expenditure from the program or fund; and
 - Details, including the value and beneficiary, or any commitments already made to be funded from the program or fund.
15. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
 - Is the agency confident that you will meet your expenditure targets in 2024-25?
 - Have any budget decisions been made between the delivery of the budget on 6 June 2024 and today that might impact on the numbers presented in the budget papers which we are examining today?
 - Are you expecting any reallocations across your agencies' budget lines during 2024-25; if so, what is the nature of the reallocation?
16. For each department and agency reporting to the minister:
 - What South Australian businesses will be used in procurement for your agencies in 2024-25?
 - What percentage of total procurement spend for your agency does this represent?
 - How does this compare to last year?
17. What protocols and monitoring systems has the department implemented to ensure that the productivity, efficiency and quality of service delivery is maintained while employees work from home?
18. What percentage of your department's budget has been allocated for the management of remote work infrastructure, including digital tools, cybersecurity, and support services, and how does this compare with previous years?

19. How many procurements have been undertaken by the department this FY, how many have been awarded to interstate businesses? How many of those were signed off by the CE?

20. How many contractor invoices were paid by the department directly this FY? How many and what percentage were paid within 15 days, and how many and what percentage were paid outside of 15 days?

21. How many and what percentage of staff who undertake procurement activities have undertaken training on participation policies and local industry participants this FY?

Mr COWDREY: Attorney, I refer to page 43 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1. In regard to SafeWork's FTEs listed in the table on that page, how many vacancies are SafeWork carrying at the moment?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that, at the current point in time, in terms of inspectors within the agency, there are no vacancies. In terms of the vacancy rate across the whole of the agency, it is in the order of 7½ per cent and that is due largely to an increase in new positions.

Mr COWDREY: So is that 14 positions, effectively?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, I am advised it is thereabouts.

Mr COWDREY: What is it in terms of the total FTE dedicated towards inspectors this financial year compared to last year?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that the budgeted FTE for inspectors for 2023 was 63.8 FTEs, and for 2024 it is 69 FTEs. In terms of headcount it is 68, obviously including part-time staff, and for 2024 it is 77.

Mr COWDREY: For the 14 vacancies, are we talking about the addition of staff? Are we currently carrying 69 inspectors at SafeWork or 63?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I thought you had asked for a comparison with the previous year. The budgeted FTE for inspectors for 2023 was 63.8 and for 2024 it is 69 FTE.

Mr COWDREY: Yes. You are currently carrying no vacancies, but for the next financial year are you proposing to employ six more people?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that at this point in time there are no vacancies in the inspectorate.

Mr COWDREY: So, to be 100 per cent sure, because in the 2023-24 financial year there are still six days left, is the current number of inspectors at SafeWork 63.8 or 69?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that at this point in time there are 69 inspectors, with no vacancies.

Mr COWDREY: Thank you. Can I move to industrial manslaughter legislation that was passed.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: What budget line are we particularly referring to?

Mr COWDREY: The second dot point that refers to highlights.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: This is on what page?

Mr COWDREY: Page 42.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Down at the very bottom of page 42; excellent.

Mr COWDREY: I am just interested to know: my understanding was that there was an information or learning opportunity that was going to be rolled out to businesses in South Australia to understand how they could comply with the legislation. Are you able to provide what steps have been taken in regard to that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that, since the legislation passed, SafeWork SA, as they do with a whole lot of campaigns and a whole lot of continuous education, have been rolling out

information to the community in preparation for the new laws. I am advised that there have been presentations to forums about the new legislation for various groups.

I am advised that since the beginning of this year SafeWork has conducted 41 presentations about its role which have included, in particular, information about the new laws. I am advised that in addition to the ongoing work it has been doing, a dedicated advertising campaign is currently underway to give further and better information about the new laws ahead of their commencement.

Mr COWDREY: So 41 presentations about the role of SafeWork SA generally?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: That have included, my advice is, information—

Mr COWDREY: Have there been any presentations exclusively around compliance with—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Yes, I am advised there have been a number of presentations over the last year to things like the Master Builders Association industry seminar, the Australian Institute of Health and Safety symposium, the National Safety Council of Australia Safety Conference and Apprentice Employment Network that focused exclusively on industrial manslaughter.

Mr COWDREY: In terms of the advertising campaign, what does that entail?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The advertising campaign entails direct correspondence to industry associations, unions and peak bodies; digital and printed advertising material; paid social media advertising; information in SafeWork's newsletter that is distributed each month to some 12,000 subscribers; and a dedicated page on the website detailing the new laws and information about frequently asked questions. So that is pretty good.

Mr COWDREY: What was the total expenditure of the campaign?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I do not have broken-down figures in relation to the campaign but I am happy to see if we can find them or take it on notice.

Mr COWDREY: I think someone was jumping up from behind you to perhaps provide it.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: If we get it before the end of the session—I am happy to see if we have it, but if not, I am happy to take it on notice.

Mr COWDREY: Do you have any information in regard to the expected reach of that advertising campaign in terms of total number of businesses?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: One of the dot points, I have been advised, talked about the newsletter. It is an e-newsletter being distributed each month to 12,000 subscribers, so I think it is safe to say the reach is in the tens of thousands. If there are metrics that are easily ascertainable, particularly relating to social media and other digital reaches, I am happy to see if we can find them.

Mr COWDREY: I am interested in the dot point on page 43 around targets. The case management system, I think, has now been replaced?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Sorry, which dot point?

Mr COWDREY: 'Source and engage a suitable vendor and begin implementation to replace legacy ICT system.' The case management system at SafeWork, I believe, has been replaced, so I am keen to understand what that ICT infrastructure that is needing replacement is, in particular.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I am advised that there has been an external company engaged to do a deep dive and look at what is needed for SafeWork's ICT system, and my advice is that the stage that this process is up to is shortlisting of potential vendors to provide that solution.

Mr COWDREY: Is the same vendor being tasked with both case management and the portable long service scheme, or are they two different procurement processes?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: They are totally different procurement schemes.

Mr COWDREY: In regard to the portable long service scheme, are you able to provide an update of where the government's process is with that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Sorry, is that the portable long service leave for the community sector?

Mr COWDREY: Yes.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I can advise that there has been a very large amount of consultation that has occurred on the portable long service leave scheme, particularly with groups like SACOSS and unions. I know there has been engagement with a lot of for-profit employer groups. There has been draft legislation that has been very extensively consulted on.

We are keen to see this legislation finalised over the coming months and fulfilling the election commitment to put in place a portable long service leave scheme for the community sector, very much like schemes that have been around for the construction sector for some half a century, recognising that that portability of long service leave in the construction sector recognises often the short-term nature of employment, because the employment is on a contract basis in an industry that is heavily dominated by the employment of men.

Similarly, in the community services sector, given the often short-term nature of grants to provide services, it is an area where many people do not have the required long service leave and it is a very feminised industry, and it was a very deliberate policy to have that equity in an industry dominated by women, as the construction industry has enjoyed these benefits for its workers for half a century.

Mr COWDREY: Is there a timeframe in which you would expect legislation to be coming to the house?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I have been very fortunate to have been involved personally in quite a number of the consultation sessions. There has been a very significant amount of consultation. SafeWork has done a huge amount of work in preparing issues, discussion papers and draft legislation. I am hopeful we will have something landed, as I said, in the coming months.

Mr COWDREY: Will you be proceeding with the procurement of the IT infrastructure prior to legislation being in place?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: We would necessarily need to see how the scheme ends up to look at what needs to be in place in terms of the things that support it.

Mr COWDREY: So how far has SafeWork progressed the procurement process around the portable long service leave scheme?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that they have not established a system for the portable long service leave scheme. I think it has been described that they have been working on the legislation.

Mr COWDREY: There has been no ICT purchased for that?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that, no, there has not.

Mr COWDREY: I come back to the issue of inspectors and the number of call-outs for this financial year.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Is that a line in the budget we are looking at?

Mr COWDREY: I am sure I can find one for you.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Excellent.

Mr COWDREY: Performance indicators, across the second line, activity indicators, number of compliance and enforcement visits, page 44: there is an estimated result, but do we have a conclusive number on work undertaken?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: The question is how many inspected call-outs in the year to date?

Mr COWDREY: In compliance and enforcement visits, how many times inspectors have—

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Compliance and enforcement visits by inspectors?

Mr COWDREY: Yes.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: In terms of the number of compliance and enforcement visits, which is the activity that the member has mentioned, we do not have the year-to-date number, but we are happy to take it on notice and bring it back.

Mr COWDREY: You do not have the year to date?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: No, that is what I have just said. I have just asked and we do not have that.

Mr COWDREY: I am just making sure I heard you correctly.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: We do not have that.

Mr COWDREY: Along the same line, what is the number of compliance and enforcement visits that were not attended to within 24 hours?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: Again, we do not have that detail at the table with this, but I am more than happy to take that on notice and bring back a reply for the member.

Mr COWDREY: If I can skip back to the previous dot point in terms of the IT infrastructure replacement, as you said, you are out to tender at the moment with regard to that ICT process. When is SafeWork expecting it to be complete in terms of the new case management system in operation?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that after a process there is a shortlist of possible vendors. I am advised that there will be a presentation by those vendors. My advice is that it may be up to 12 months for the full implementation of that.

Mr COWDREY: Up to 12 months after the vendor is selected?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: My advice is that the vendors are now making presentations. It will be a matter of some weeks before a vendor is selected. In terms of the new system being up and running, it is expected in about 12 months' time. I am advised there are a number of different modules that will come online sooner or later. That is what we expect to happen rather than an absolute guarantee of how these things will roll out. We know that things with ICT do not always go exactly as you predict at the very start.

Mr COWDREY: What benefits are expected from that program in terms of what efficiency does SafeWork believe is going to be derived from the rollout of the new system?

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I had a discussion with SafeWork about some of the things that you might expect will flow from having a new ICT system. I have had an opportunity, since I have been minister, to talk to some of the teams and some of the different inspector teams, and certainly one of the benefits that is being looked at through a new ITC system is the ability for inspectors in the field to be much more connected, to be able to have access to real-time information about businesses, to stop duplication in terms of what is being needed to make a report.

A lot of these things are being looked at to provide the ability for the technical briefs for investigation evidence collection, to have dynamic reporting, dashboards that are much more interactive and usable and easy reporting on the functions programs within the team that allow easy identification access and much better and vetted access to sensitive information, which in the end is aimed at making sure there is a significant reduction in those sorts of manual administrative tasks that are required now, and at the end of the day to improve service to the public.

Mr COWDREY: To finish, there is obviously very limited reference in the budget papers to ReturnToWork: Budget Paper 3, page 75, for the sake of completeness. In terms of the rate setting process for this year, obviously now with another year's worth of activity and history in terms of actual claims coming in to the program, are you able to provide any indication about the future direction of premiums and where the rate-setting process is at the moment for this year?

The CHAIR: That is the last question for this session.

The Hon. K.J. MAHER: I can advise that on ReturnToWork's website it will expose that the current rate is unchanged at 1.85 per cent and that the break even premium rate for 2024-25 is

1.72 per cent. In terms of the scheme's funding ratio, that continues to improve. For 2022-23, the scheme funding ratio was nearly 95 per cent, but the corporation is forecasting that at the end of this financial year, it will be at around 98 per cent, with the average premium rate not increasing but strengthening in terms of the scheme funding ratio from a couple a years ago at below 95 per cent to around 98 per cent, due to a whole range of factors, but, I must say, the very prudent management of the scheme by the corporation.

The CHAIR: The allotted time having expired, I declare the examination of ReturnToWorkSA and SafeWork SA complete, and the examination of the proposed payments for the Attorney-General's Department are referred to Estimates Committee B. Thank you, minister, and your advisers for your attendance today, and thank you to members of the opposition.

At 16:31 the committee adjourned to Friday 21 June 2024 at 09:00.