

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 2 October 1980

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard
 Mr. K. C. Hamilton
 Mr. G. F. Keneally
 Mr. I. P. Lewis
 Mr. J. Mathwin
 Mr. H. H. O'Neill
 Mr. I. Schmidt
 The Hon. J. D. Wright

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Transport, \$11 151 000

Witness:

The Hon. M. M. Wilson, Minister of Transport and
 Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. F. A. Harris, General Manager, State Transport
 Authority.

Mr. A. K. Johnke, Commissioner of Highways.

Dr. D. Scrafton, Director-General of Transport.

Mr. K. J. Collett, Chief Administration Officer,
 Department of Transport.

Mr. J. S. Abraham, Assistant Commissioner, Adminis-
 tration and Finance, Highways Department.

Mr. L. G. Watson, Senior Administration Officer,
 Department of Recreation and Sport.

Mr. B. J. Taylor, Director, Recreation and Sport
 Division.

Mr. P. T. Tregoweth, Finance Officer, Department of
 Transport.

The CHAIRMAN: I have examined the minutes of 1
 October and, if there are no objections, I shall sign them
 as being a correct record of proceedings. I understand that
 members have a copy of the proceedings. There being no
 objections raised, I will sign the minutes.

I indicate to the Minister that during the answers to
 questions he may state that he will obtain information at a
 later stage for the Committee. I ask that the information to
 be provided is in a brief form suitable for insertion in
Hansard.

Mr. O'NEILL: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.
 Before you proceed, who will move and second the
 confirmation of those minutes?

The CHAIRMAN: There is no mover or seconder. This
 procedure has been adopted because, as the honourable
 member would appreciate, the members of the Committee
 change daily. The members sitting on my left were not in
 attendance yesterday, so I asked whether there were any
 objections and then signed the minutes.

Mr. KENEALLY: I wish to raise a point for
 clarification, Mr. Chairman. In your advice to the Minister
 as to how he may answer questions, I understood you to
 inform him that it would be appropriate if he were to
 answer questions with the promise that he would seek
 information. As I understand it, the whole purpose of
 these Committees is to enable members of Parliament to
 get information immediately and that this is the reason

that officers of the department are here.

It seems that if the Minister is to be able to inform the
 Committee that the questions will be answered at a later
 date, the whole purpose of this form of Parliamentary
 procedure is rendered ineffective. I ask the Minister
 whether he anticipates that he will be implementing the
 advice received from the Chair and advising the
 Committee that information will be provided later, or does
 he anticipate that he and his officers will be able to answer
 any question that members of the Committee may ask?

The CHAIRMAN: Before the Minister answers, I point
 out that the statement made by the honourable member
 for Stuart is correct. It is the intention that all the required
 information will be made available during the course of
 these proceedings. Our experience during the past two
 days has been that on only two or three occasions has
 information had to be obtained. If that is the case, where it
 is not possible for the Minister to supply the information,
 he will be asked that it be provided in a concise form.
 Would the Minister care to add anything to that?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I am happy to answer that
 question. Mr. Keneally knows that I am always ready to
 provide frank and informative answers. I am sure that we
 will be able to do so today, and I hope that there will be
 few questions on which we will have to bring answers back
 at a later stage.

Mr. KENEALLY: I appreciate the assurance given by
 the Minister. If there is an occasion when information
 needs to be obtained, I imagine that the Minister will be
 able to have a message sent back to his department
 immediately and perhaps have that information provided
 before the day's sitting is finished.

The CHAIRMAN: That has happened during the
 proceedings of this Committee. In fact, yesterday there
 were requests for documents, which were duplicated and
 produced before the Committee possibly in a matter of
 minutes.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I also wish to clarify a couple
 of points, Mr. Chairman. Most of us would have noticed
 the *Advertiser* editorial this morning which criticised the
 conduct of the Committees and the way they are being
 managed. It has been clear over the past couple of days
 that varying Ministers are adopting different attitudes in
 relation to public servants. For example, the Minister of
 Industrial Affairs chose not to allow (I think that is how his
 action was described) his Public Service officers to answer
 questions, and sought answers from them. I want to ask
 what is the attitude of this Minister in case of his not
 having all the knowledge required (and no-one expects
 him to have it all) in respect of a certain matter. Is it his
 intention to allow his officers to answer on his behalf?

The CHAIRMAN: In answer to the Deputy Leader, I
 might say that in this Committee both procedures have
 been adopted. However, it is left entirely in the hands of
 the Minister at the table, and it will be left to the Minister
 of Transport to deal with this as he sees fit. Opportunity is
 given now, if the Minister wishes, to answer the Deputy
 Leader.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I am happy for my officers to
 answer questions. Obviously, the questions will be
 directed to me. If I cannot provide all the information, I
 will ask one of my officers to do so. There are certain
 questions of Government policy and matters that may be
 before Cabinet, or going to Cabinet, which I do not think
 it would be fair to expect an officer to answer but, other
 than that, I will be happy for officers to speak directly to
 the Committee about matters of detail. I assume that the
 questions will be put to me first. I would certainly like to
 answer what I can. If I cannot provide the information, I
 will ask my officers to do so.

The CHAIRMAN: The procedure will be that all questions will be directed to the Chair. I will direct the question to the Minister, and it is then his responsibility as to how that question is answered.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I am quite satisfied with that. I want to be sure now where we are heading so far as procedure is concerned. I understand from the list provided that we will consider the following: Transport, Department of Transport; Highways; Highways Department; State Transport Authority; and Minister of Transport and Minister of Recreation and Sport, Miscellaneous. This Committee's membership will change again, with the shadow spokesman on recreation and sport being involved at the conclusion of transport matters. I want to be sure that we will conclude that part of transport in "Miscellaneous" vote before we proceed to consider the whole vote with a change of members. Is that the intention?

If we do otherwise, the people who are competent, and who have been properly elected by the House to represent the Opposition in the transport area when "Miscellaneous" is dealt with, will not be present. If "Miscellaneous" is considered at the end of the proceedings, those people who have been elected as being competent in the Opposition to look after the recreation and sport area will be present, but I think we should complete the part pertaining to transport before proceeding with the "Miscellaneous" vote as a whole.

The CHAIRMAN: On the first day of the proceedings of the Committees a motion was carried that this would be the programme for the life of the Estimates Committees, and we have been adopting this procedure. Otherwise, it would mean that there could be a split in the vote, as you understand that the agreement is that the personnel on the Committee can change only at the conclusion of a vote. The next point is that we have been endeavouring to get an approximate time for each segment. This enables other members of Parliament who are not members of this Committee to come at an approximate time so that they can ask questions. It is the intention of this Committee to carry out the procedures as laid down.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I am quite relaxed as to how the Committee wants to handle the various divisions of the Department of Transport, the Highways Department, and the State Transport Authority. I will bow to your ruling, Mr. Chairman, but we are all here and are prepared to take any questions on any one of the matters. I realise the constraints that you have with the votes and Committee membership.

The CHAIRMAN: My ruling is that we will adhere to the programme as set down and accepted by resolution and that members will be given an opportunity, if they are not on the Committee, to come back and ask questions at the appropriate time.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I have no option but to dispute your ruling. I do not think it is a proper one. I do not think it takes into consideration the composition and the need for competent people to be provided at the proper time of questioning. I can see nothing wrong with proceeding to that part of "Miscellaneous" pertaining only to transport, leaving alone anything dealing with recreation. I think the Minister indicated that he would be happy to do so. I do not dispute your ruling lightly. I have had to consider the situation, because you are there to see that expediency prevails, but I do not think it is making proper use of the Committees, and both Parties are getting criticism outside that the Committees are not working. I have suggested a method by which the Committee can work better than at present. I suggest that we do the part of "Miscellaneous" dealing with transport before we break

up. Otherwise, we will have here people who are not operating in the transport area. I am sure that procedures can be got around to do that.

The CHAIRMAN: My ruling stands. Regarding membership of the Committee, the provision is as follows:

A member may be discharged from an Estimates Committee if, at the end of the examination of any item of proposed expenditure, he delivers in writing to the Speaker or Clerk a request to be so discharged; provided that the member may nominate another member in substitution, such member indicating on the same notice his concurrence to serve.

That means that a member can leave a Committee only at the end of a vote. If we consider "Miscellaneous" in separate items, we will be splitting a vote and moving away from the normal practice of a Committee of the Whole House. I must adhere to my decision. Of course, the member has the right, if he disagrees with my ruling, to move a motion to that effect, but I should like the member, if he does so, to bring the motion up in writing.

Mr. HAMILTON: I protest, because clearly, as the Deputy Leader has pointed out, we have had criticism from the media as to the functioning of these Committees and I ask you to reconsider your ruling in the interests of this Committee so that not only this Committee but also the people of South Australia can examine the relevant documents. I believe that the Committee is being stifled by a rigid application of these rules. I see no reason why, if the Minister has indicated that he is prepared to be flexible, we cannot raise the issues in the "Miscellaneous" vote.

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest you are debating a matter that is not before the Chair. I give the reasons for my ruling. First, it is based on a motion moved and carried by the original Committee. Secondly, I am abiding by the procedure that was conveyed to members of the House prior to the Committee's meeting. Therefore, my ruling stands and you have the procedure open to you if you disagree with that ruling.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I do not want to go as far as disagreeing with your ruling. I think that would be too strong. I wanted to register a protest, because I think the way the Committee is operating is completely wrong, but I realise that you have difficulties with the forms and orders of the House. I think that next year, if this form of cross-examination lasts that long, the House ought to take into consideration the fact that, in any like programmes where departments are completely divorced from one another, the Government ought to consider a plan whereby we can alternate the different sections rather than be faced with the situation we are in today.

I should like to lodge my protest with the Premier and particularly with the Clerks so that they can examine what we have said and what we are going to achieve. I believe that some time this afternoon those members of the Committee who are considering transport matters, and who will have to leave the Committee and be sideliners, will be persisting in a lot of questions.

I believe that my suggestion would have solved that problem. I believe quite sincerely that we could have found a way around this to expedite the business and finish more quickly.

The CHAIRMAN: I can assure the honourable member that a note has been made of his comments and suggestions. When the future of the Estimates Committees is considered at the appropriate time and in the appropriate place, his comments will be taken into consideration.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: This is a new experience for members of the South Australian Parliament. The

Government recognises that we are feeling our way to an extent. I do not think that there is any doubt that over the next 12 months, after these Estimates Committees have finished, changes will be made, by negotiation, in the Sessional Orders and the methods of conducting the Estimates Committees. We are feeling our way and to that extent we all have to be reasonably tolerant of the situation at this time.

Mr. LEWIS: Quite obviously what the Minister says is valid. It reflects my own uncertainty. My earlier indication of my wish to speak was to highlight those points and seek information on something which has not yet become clear from comments made. That clarification is as to whether it is within the power of this Committee to make decisions about how it should examine the expenditure for which the Minister is responsible. Or, is that already delineated in the Sessional Orders for Estimates Committees which have been circulated?

Putting it more simply, is the Committee the master of its own work, or are the Sessional Orders the master of how we go about our task? I ask that because it has not become clear to me. It may be that I am simply wet behind the ears or that I have not listened attentively—they are both possibilities. Nonetheless, I do not think that it is reasonable for the Deputy Leader to take either the Government, the Chairman or the Minister to task if the Sessional Orders compel us to consider the business in the way that you, Mr. Chairman, have interpreted them. If by chance the Committee does have the power to reorganise its task, I would foreshadow a motion to enable that to happen where the Minister, as in this instance, has indicated his willingness to comply.

The CHAIRMAN: The brief answer is "Yes". We are bound by Sessional Orders. According to the procedure I just read, and according to the changing of personnel on the Committee, we are bound. I also accept the motion that was originally moved and accepted by the original Committee that we must abide by this schedule. However, there is a flexibility within those bounds. We must consider a vote independently and complete that vote. The flexibility arises in the matter that I am going to bring before the Committee now. What we have done in the last two days is to examine various considerations and give an approximate time so that people who want to come back who are not members of the Committee know approximately what time they will be able to ask questions. Could I ask for some recommendation on what time honourable members want to discuss the various votes?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I cannot give that sort of timing. I do not know how long-winded the Minister will be in answering questions. I have no idea how many questions my colleagues have or how many questions Government members have. I cannot provide an approximate time for each vote but I would be prepared to suggest, if it is agreeable to the Committee as a whole, that we ought to conclude the business by about 4.45 or 5 p.m., so that members who will be banished from this room at some time and will not be able to participate will know that they can have the opportunity to ask questions then.

Dr. BILLARD: They can ask questions from the back bench.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: What if the Committee does not stop and there is no opportunity? The filibustering can go on as it has in other Committees, and members will be denied the opportunity to ask questions. I want to ensure that my members do get that opportunity. If the opportunity arises and they are sitting on the back benches and are allowed to ask questions, well and good. However, if there is no other opportunity, I want to

provide them with some time at the end of the day to give them that opportunity. Rather than give an estimate of time, I would prefer to say that the Committee as a whole should finish at 4.45 or 5 p.m. so that those members, who would otherwise be denied their opportunity, can be given that opportunity. If the opportunity is there during the day, then I believe the Committee should go to 5.30 p.m.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the Deputy Leader for those comments and assure him that the Chair will endeavour to get through the business expeditiously. I would appeal to all members to be as brief as they can with their questions. I am sure that the Minister will co-operate and make the answers to the points as brief as possible, bearing in mind that today we have only until 5.30 p.m., whereas on other days we have had until 10 p.m. The member for Newland.

Dr. BILLARD: I wanted to make it clear—

Mr. O'NEILL: I rise on a point of order. I have been trying to get the call on a procedural matter for some time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I am trying to call each side in turn and I have noted the honourable member for Florey's indication. He will get the call in a moment. The member for Newland.

Dr. BILLARD: I want to make it clear that there will be six opportunities during the day when members on the back benches will be able to ask questions. They can ask questions at the end of each vote.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Members will still be here then; it is when they have to leave that concerns me.

The CHAIRMAN: The Deputy Leader's concern is that there should be time at 4.45 or 5 p.m. for those people to ask questions. The member for Florey.

Mr. O'NEILL: My doubts about this whole system are being reinforced as time goes by. I do not want to waste the time of the Committee. However, I want to place on record that I have not been impressed at all. I have been on one only Committee so far and I hope that your attitude, Mr. Chairman, will be different from the attitude of the Chairman of Committee A. He said that, as in the House in formal sittings, the Minister can answer the question in any way he likes. We were treated to seven or eight second reading speeches by the Minister of Industrial Affairs. I can only take the word of the Minister of Transport that he will not do that. According to the *Advertiser's* editorial this morning, they thought, as I did, that this would be some sort of inquisitorial Committee, where we could place the Minister under some sort of pressure and elicit direct, positive answers.

This morning's paper leads us to believe that Ministers' answers have been anything but direct and positive. I am concerned that the rights of back-benchers are being derogated, and that we are not getting the opportunities that we got under the previous system to put Ministers under pressure. I can understand Ministers being co-operative, because they know that this system suits them. They know that they will knock off at 10 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and at 5.30 p.m. on Thursdays. I hope that the Minister will keep his answers brief and to the point and not give us a serve of the sort that we had in Committee A on Tuesday.

The CHAIRMAN: It is the Minister's responsibility to handle the answers as he sees fit, and the Chair can only appeal to Committee members and to the Minister to ask and answer their questions respectively in a reasonable and acceptable manner. I point out to honourable members that it is now 11.30 a.m., and we have not yet proceeded with the business of the day. I should like members to bear this in mind, because until now the Committee's time has been profitably spent.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I think that we have made progress.

The CHAIRMAN: I hope that we will try to get on with the business of the day as soon as we can.

Mr. LEWIS: I acknowledge the accuracy of your last statement, Sir. However, there is one matter about which I am still not clear. I have understood, having participated in questioning but not as a member of a Committee, that an opportunity is given for House of Assembly members other than members of the Committee to ask questions after Committee members have completed their questions. I am not clear whether at the end of the Committee's inquiry into the Department of Transport an opportunity will be given to the other members of the House of Assembly who are not members of the Committee to ask the Minister questions on transport at that time, before the Committee proceeds to deal with highways matters, or whether those members will have to wait until the end of the Committee's deliberations on the off chance that they will have an opportunity to question all votes collectively.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Newland raised this matter earlier. The procedure is that the Committee considers each vote, and the first vote relates to transport, involving expenditure of \$11 151 000. When Committee members have no more questions to ask at the end of the vote, members other than Committee members sitting in the back benches will be given an opportunity to ask questions.

The Deputy Leader was concerned, when the Committee came to the "Miscellaneous" vote, about there being a change of personnel on the Committee. The honourable member wanted to ensure that, at that "Miscellaneous" stage of the vote, those members who wanted an opportunity to participate could so participate.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Is there any method by which we can change the membership of the Committee at, for instance, the completion of the lines for the Motor Registration Division?

The CHAIRMAN: No; the Committee membership must be changed between votes only.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Mr. Slater could have come in. However, he will now have to ask his questions from the back bench.

Mr. HAMILTON: I should like to place on record my strong opposition to the finishing time on Thursdays. That finishing time should be extended because, if one looks at the number of lines that are to be considered, one can see that there is no way in which we can get through all of them today, if the lines are to be closely scrutinised. At 5.30 p.m. the proceedings will conclude, and I do not believe that this Committee can function properly under that system.

I express my strong opposition to the sitting times, because only five hours are being allowed to debate most important matters relating to the Minister of Transport and the Minister of Recreation and Sport. I cannot see how we will get through all this business today. It is more than likely that we will not even reach the "Contingencies" allocations.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member has made his point and is getting beyond the objection that he wished to register. I explain to the honourable member that on 27 August 1980 the following was decided in relation to the Estimates Committees' Sessional Orders:

An Estimates Committee will meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 11 a.m. and shall adjourn by 10 p.m. on Tuesdays and Wednesdays and 5.30 p.m. on Thursdays. If a Committee is sitting at 12.30 p.m. or 6 p.m., the sitting shall be suspended for one hour and a half.

I understand the honourable member's objection, which

has been noted. However, this Committee has no power to alter the times for which it shall sit.

Mr. O'NEILL: If back-benchers who are not on the Committee can ask questions at the conclusion of a section and before the vote is taken, do you, Sir, intend to require the Minister to answer those questions, or can the Minister say, as happened in the other Committee, "I have already answered that question"? The reply was not available in writing and, if the member concerned was not sitting in the Chamber all the time, obviously he would not be aware of the answer. Will the Minister have to repeat his reply if a question has already been answered?

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister has the right to reply, if he so desires. Although the Minister has no obligation to answer such a question, when this has occurred in the past in this Committee, I have heard the Minister say, "That question has been asked" but then go on to give a brief answer to it again. Also, as there is no public address system in this Chamber, it has been the practice in this Committee for members to stand when speaking. However, this does not apply to the Minister or to the officers.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination. I should point out that if a member has a line of questioning that he wants to pursue, I have given the opportunity for three or four questions to be asked. To be fair, when that line of questioning is finished. I have then gone to the other side of the Committee. We have proceeded in that way.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I refer to "Professional, Administrative and Other Staff". Last year \$594 121 was voted, \$660 830 was the actual payment and \$658 550 is allocated this year. This suggests that there has been a decrease in this area. How does the Minister reconcile that with the Government's policy, outlined in the programme papers, of considering the transportation needs of all sections of the South Australian community? We have had about a 10-13 per cent increase in wages, and there should have been an increase in the allocation even if the activities involved are no different from last year. I would have hoped that the activities would increase this year, because it is a difficult and important area. Can the Minister explain the reason for the decrease?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Department of Transport, like all other Government departments, is under the policy of the Government and, like other departments, it has tried to implement the 3 per cent cuts, both in expenditure and staffing. Obviously, as with some departments, one cannot just apply a 3 per cent cut across the board. Some departments are probably understaffed and some are overstaffed—I am talking about the Government service generally. In the Department of Transport, as in other departments, we have made efforts to prune our expenditure, remembering that Government policy is not to put anyone off the pay-roll. Reductions are made merely by retirement or otherwise. To give the honourable member some exact figures, the estimates based on the staff establishment and salary levels operating at 30 June 1980 include savings made in the following areas. I think this is probably the information that the Deputy Leader requires.

First, we have made savings of \$20 000 from a reduction in staff in the Administration Division, that is, a reduction of three; the non-replacement of a mechanic at the Government Motor Garage, which gives a saving of \$5 000; and a decrease of \$25 000 in overtime for Government Motor Garage chauffeurs. The Deputy Leader will be aware that we introduced recently a scheme whereby when Parliament sits after 8 p.m. taxis are provided for Ministers and members who are in receipt of

a Government car and chauffeur, and savings result from that area.

Dr. BILLARD: At page 479 of the programme papers reference is made to the Commonwealth's contribution to research and planning, and a substantial increase is shown in the allocation for the coming year. Is the State Government free to use that allocation where it will, or is it tied in some way to particular programmes?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It would probably be helpful at this stage if we gave the Committee details of planning research and development in the department. We could also mention the Highways Department and comment on how the Federal funds are applied, as well as State funds, to planning research and development. In answering in this way we can clear up the situation. I will ask the Director-General of Transport to give the exact details.

Dr. Scrafton: A problem is that the explanation covers more than the lines to which the honourable member's question refers. The actual expenditure on research occurs in other lines on which the Minister will be questioned today. The reference on page 479 of the programme papers represents a proportion of the funds that the Commonwealth makes available for planning and research. For the Department of Transport those funds are simply absorbed into general revenue and the Treasury. The actual line under which all expenditures initially occur for transport research and development in the Department of Transport is an entry in the Loan Budget, which I understand we will be dealing with next. With my Minister's approval, I would prefer to leave the technicalities of what is covered in the line until we deal with that line, and merely talk about the financial arrangements.

In addition to that, there is a line in Revenue Budget contingencies which we will pick up in due course and which refers to a \$100 000 contribution to transport research and development. All expenditure comes from the Loan Account initially, and these revenues, including the \$229 000 to which the honourable member refers are simply offset against the department's expenditure. The department does not take into account the \$229 000, except in advising the Treasury of our budget. We give Treasury an estimate of what we can reasonably expect to be able to achieve from the Federal planning and research budget. If the amount is, say, \$220 000 rather than \$240 000, it simply means that the State picks up the balance one way or the other.

Our objective is to maximise the returns from the Commonwealth's planning and research funds in order to minimise the State Government's expenditures. Unless members wish to pursue that matter further, as we are dealing with salaries and wages lines it may be a good place to leave it, and we can pick it up in regard to expenditures under the appropriate lines in the Budget.

Mr. KENEALLY: Members of Parliament are fairly simple folk, and I think Governments take advantage of that fact when they present Budget documents to Parliament for consideration. The more information one elicits, the more confused one tends to become. In regard to the question asked by the Deputy Leader and the Minister's reply that there was a reduction of three in the Transport Planning Section, the programme papers (page 464) in relation to the Department of Transport indicate the total reduction in staff.

Can the Minister tell the Committee what the Transport Planning Section does that enables the department to reduce its manpower by three during a period that we would have considered to be a very busy one indeed because of the major transport planning that is going on? I want to know whether these people have any impact upon

the O'Bahn or NEAPTR planning, or whether their planning is totally different. What does this section do that enables it to reduce its manpower by three at a time when any reasonable person would have expected an increase in the planning section?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: On the general question of how we can reduce that staff and still go ahead with the O'Bahn planning and development preliminary design, no doubt honourable members will have a lot to say about that later. The proposed planning and development for the North-east Busway, which is the correct title, will be done by a team consisting, I think, of not only a member of the Department of Transport, Planning Division, but also seconded members from other Government departments and statutory authorities. Of course, I refer in particular to the Highways Department and the State Transport Authority. The team that will be handling this project will not be taken from the Planning Division *per se*. We are not quite sure at this stage how many people will be on the team. I hope to be able to make an announcement about that within the next couple of weeks. We are negotiating with the Public Service Board at the moment. In fact, if there are, say, 10 people on that team, as far as I can see at this stage, only the Director or Project Director will be from the Transport Planning Division of the Department of Transport.

Perhaps the member for Stuart will realise that we are not taking a lot of those officers out of the department to work on the North-east Busway team. I quite understand the question, because it could be assumed, if it had not been made clear, that if we were not using a team approach to the planning of the busway then the work is to be carried out completely by the Department of Transport, in which case the honourable member's comments would have some relevance. If the honourable member would like a detailed exposition of what the Transport Planning Division does, I will ask the Director-General to enumerate the specific projects it is working on at this stage.

Mr. KENEALLY: I would be happy to get that information in writing. Returning to the three positions that have been wasted within the Transport Planning Division, will the Minister tell the Committee what positions they involved and, if they were technical or support people, what specific work they were doing?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Planning Division of the Department of Transport is intact at the moment. There is no intention of removing the three people from that division. If three people resign, depending on what they are doing, and what their particular activities are, then it is possible that we will reduce the establishment of that division, reducing the staff ceiling by one, two or three, which is the estimate for the next 12 months.

The honourable member would realise that the programme papers, as they relate at this stage to the Department of Transport, are merely provisional documents. It is estimated that we could reduce the ceiling of the Planning Division by three, but at this stage there are no names, and there is no intention to remove anyone from the department. One person has resigned and gone to ARRDO in Melbourne (which will interest the member for Albert Park) but that position is a vital one in the Department of Transport's Planning Division and we want to replace that person. It is a provisional figure of three—

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: You hope.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I hope that the Deputy Leader is not insinuating that I hope members of my department will resign, because I certainly do not. I have a very efficient Planning Division in the Department of Transport. I have the greatest faith in those officers and

they are extremely loyal to me, as indeed they were to my immediate predecessor. I am sure that the Deputy Leader realises that. I do not hope that they resign at all.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I was not suggesting that.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: If there are resignations we will evaluate the position of the person resigning and decide whether we need to replace that person. As I said, one has already resigned, a very able officer, and has gone to Melbourne. He was a good officer, holding an important position, and we want to replace him.

Mr. KENEALLY: The Minister said earlier that the Department of Transport, like other Government departments, has to fulfil the Government's aim of reducing manpower by 3 per cent. Obviously, they do this by presenting a document to the Parliament which indicates that there will be a reduction in manpower in the department, but they do not really think that there will be a reduction at all; frankly, they hope that there will not be. At the moment, in the Planning Division, morale is high, because there are 22 officers who know that they are taking part in a game of Russian roulette, the department having indicated that by the end of the year there will be 19 employees in that division. I suppose that is worker incentive—"We are going to have 19 people here at the end of the next financial year, chaps. We have 22 at the moment. You had better do your best. There might be opportunities for some of you in Victoria, but we won't be replacing you". I do not believe that the question of loyalty of these officers in the division is challenged at all. We let the Minister know right now that we accept that the Public Service in South Australia is loyal to whatever Government is in power.

There is no question about the loyalty of the officers. To the first question we have asked, we have had an unsatisfactory answer. The Department of Transport either intends to follow Government policy of reducing staff numbers, or it does not. It does not seem adequate for the Minister to present documents that indicate that there will be a reduction of three in manpower and then to show a vote where there is quite a reduction in the amount of money provided for professional, administrative and other staff.

The Minister says, "They are just some figures that we provided for you. They are not really adequate, because we do not believe there will be any reduction. The staff of the department is the same as last year and it is hoped to be the same next year because they are doing important work." If they are not doing important work, they ought not to be there. If they are on important work, they ought to be retained. The Minister should give a more complete answer, not only for the Committee but out of loyalty to people of whom he says he thinks so much. It does not seem right to repay loyalty by not having three of them there.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I think that is an extraordinary connotation to put on my remarks. I am disappointed that the member should take that attitude.

Mr. KENEALLY: It is accurate.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Interjections are out of order.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The member says I ought to put names to two positions, and declare those positions vacant. I do not intend to do that. He is asking for specific details of who will be replaced. The Government has given an undertaking that it will not dismiss officers from the Public Service and that it will not lay off the daily-paid workers. The member knows that. Resignations occur throughout the Public Service all the time. The Government intends to achieve a 3 per cent reduction by attrition. I have already explained that we have had one resignation, which we can replace. I am not putting my

officers under notice that they will be dismissed or that their positions will become vacant.

Mr. KENEALLY: They do not have access to that document.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I understand that it is a public document. There is no resistance from me if people want to read that document.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Stuart has asked a question and the Minister is answering. I appeal to the member not to interject while the Minister is answering. There will be opportunity for further questions.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I tell the Committee again that these resignations happen in the Public Service. As I have said, I will evaluate any resignations as they occur, as will any other Government departments. This is no different from any other Government department trying to reduce numbers. I cannot give any more assurance. However, I ask the Director-General whether he would like to amplify the matter.

Dr. Scrafton: The line we are referring to is that relating to staff in the Administration, Finance and Planning Division. The question related to the document that breaks down the activities of the department in a programme sense and, although it is said that three reductions occur in the line for transport planning, in practice those people are a full complement of staff and will remain there. They may be considered redundant in achieving the 3 per cent cut and not in the transport area. The document is in error. They work in other areas of the department.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I cannot believe—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I will give the member the opportunity in a moment. I am following the procedure, and we will come back.

Mr. SCHMIDT: I refer to the Road Safety Council of South Australia.

Mr. KENEALLY: I rise on a point of order. The member for Mawson is now speaking and wants to refer to another line. At the start of the day, you ruled that a line of questioning would be allowed to continue. If we are to have questions on a new line, that renders the deliberations of the Committee much more difficult. I understood you would allow questioning to continue before another line was introduced.

The CHAIRMAN: I am sorry if the member took that interpretation. What I attempted to explain was that, where a member had a line of questioning, I would give them member the opportunity to ask three or four questions to pursue that line.

Mr. KENEALLY: Do I understand that I still have the call to follow a line of questioning?

The CHAIRMAN: If you wanted the call, but you did not indicate that you wanted it.

Mr. KENEALLY: I am indicating now. You will appreciate that there was a misunderstanding and I hope you will give me the opportunity to continue.

The CHAIRMAN: I will accept that. The member for Mawson will have the opportunity to ask questions when the member for Stuart finishes.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I still have questions on this line. Can I come back to them when the member for Mawson finishes?

The CHAIRMAN: I must say that this procedure has proved successful over the past two days.

Mr. KENEALLY: I am somewhat surprised, to say the least, with the information given by the Director-General. He has told the Committee what we felt was the situation, namely, that the information on page 464 of the Budget programme papers was incorrect. The Minister has told

the Committee more than once that his department desires to fulfil a Government commitment to reduce staff by 3 per cent, and 3 per cent of 586 (the staff number in the department last year) is about 17. We have had rhetoric about the desire to fulfil Government policy but we have no practical indication that that will happen.

I would be most unhappy to see the Public Service numbers in the Department of Transport reduced purely because of some philosophical belief the Government has that the Public Service is fat and overstaffed and that it ought to be reduced. If the Minister believes that the number in the department can be reduced even by three he must believe that three of those working in the department now are excess to requirements. The only alternative proposition I can envisage is that the Department of Transport will fulfil one of the other Government philosophical hang-ups and give work to private consultants. I want to know whether the Minister has any people in the department who are not adequately employed. Even if the matter is not on the line before us, the Committee expects that that information would be correct.

That is not unreasonable. The Parliament of the State, after all, is still a very important forum and is entitled to receive accurate information from the Minister. Failure to do so lays the Minister open to the charge of misleading the Parliament. I am not prepared to make that charge because, as the Minister said earlier, we are still in the learning stages on this procedure. However, I would surely make that charge and move accordingly if the same error was made next year. Will the Minister answer the question: is there an excess requirement within his department or will he hand out work which these officers are currently undertaking but will not be undertaking at the end of the year, as their work will be handed out to private consultants?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I answered this before in reply to the honourable member's question. No names and no jobs are declared redundant. The Department of Transport, like all Government departments, is endeavouring to make itself more efficient. The department is going through a corporate plan which was started by my predecessor, and I acknowledge that. We are doing the same in the Recreation and Sport Division; that sort of process, I am sure, will have the approval of Opposition members.

Surely the member for Stuart is not suggesting that everything is perfect in the Public Service and that everything is as efficient as it could be. This Government came to office on a platform of making the Public Service more efficient and reducing public expenditure. This department, like all other Government departments, is endeavouring to do that. I have told the member for Stuart that there are no names and no jobs put to those reductions. I also said to the member for Stuart that there are resignations from all Government departments throughout the year, and we will evaluate positions when the people holding them resign. I cannot add more than that.

Mr. SCHMIDT: I ask my question under the general heading of "Salaries and wages and related payments". I refer specifically to the Road Safety Council of South Australia. The figure voted last year was \$299 694 and was over-expended by some 10.4 per cent. This year we are proposing the figure of \$321 779, which is approximately a 10 per cent increase. Is this increase to cover an increase in wages, or does it allow for the possibility of expansion in the staff of field officers and administrative personnel?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It is merely to allow for increases in salaries and wages. There are certainly no

proposals to increase the number of field officers. There are currently 19 field officers at the Road Safety Council out of a total staff of about 25. There is no intention of increasing that number at this stage.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: During the Minister's explanation in answer to my colleague I interjected and said, "You hope" and the Minister took me to task on that. It was quite obvious from his explanation that there was no possible way that the department could be reduced unless it was by someone leaving. I was not suggesting, in any circumstances, that the Minister was hoping that people would leave, but I was saying that, if his realisation was to come to fruition, someone would have to leave. That was the reason for my interjection.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I apologise for my misinterpretation.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: The Minister may have misunderstood what I meant. The programme papers worry me. We have been told by the Director that they are inaccurate. I believe it is quite improper to bring an inaccurate document before Parliament, as it is misleading in itself. For it to get corroboration from the Minister adds a great deal to it.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I cannot get to the percentage that the Minister is talking about when he refers to a 3 per cent reduction. I would like an explicit answer on this point because it becomes important to me, as other departments are carrying out what I am intending to talk about. Is there any way in which the Department of Transport creates surplus labour? Does it say that people are no longer required? If that is the policy of the Department of Transport, I want to know the method by which surplus labour is being created and I also want to know the provision for jobs to be found elsewhere within the Government following its no retrenchment policy. In my view it is impossible to reach the 3 per cent reduction referred to. I do not know whether it is the right percentage or not. If that is the Government's policy, that is that, and I cannot change it. Maybe the percentage ought to be 1½ per cent or maybe 5 per cent. I do not know the proper situation. Is it intended to declare surplus labour within the department, and what is the formula for deciding what is surplus labour and what is not?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: What does the Deputy Leader mean by "surplus labour"? Does he mean weekly paid or Public Service staff?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I am talking about any labour that the Government decides is no longer required, bearing in mind that the Government has a strong and firm policy of letting out as much work as it can to private enterprise under the contract system. It would be quite easily done in certain areas where planning positions could be let out to private enterprise. I do not know whether that is the intention of the Government or not. If that is to be done, how will you determine what is surplus labour and transfer the amount elsewhere? There is an estimated reduction of 3 per cent in staff, but I cannot see it happening, and I do not believe that the Minister can see it happening, either, unless surplus labour is created. If that is the situation, how is it to be done?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I take it that we are dealing only with the Department of Transport. I have no intention of moving to a system of declaring surplus labour. I do not follow the trend of the Deputy Leader's question. I gather that he is saying that if we are to make those reductions we ought to declare the positions as surplus.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I did not say, "You ought

to." I asked you whether you were going to.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The answer is "No".

Dr. BILLARD: I refer to the Motor Registration Division and to page 163 of the Auditor-General's Report and page 478 of the programme papers. I recognise that there is a slight difference in the figures quoted, and I accept that they are not drawn up on the same basis.

Nevertheless, there seems to be a continuing decline in receipts from the registration of motor vehicles. That reduction was 16 per cent last year compared to the previous year, and a small decline is budgeted for the coming year. Why is this happening? Are people not registering as many cars, or are they registering smaller cars?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: There are two parts to the reply. First, the member for Newland will realise that there is a trend to smaller cars, which have a lower registration fee. This has had some effect, although not a large effect, on registration receipts. The honourable member will also realise that registration receipts are paid into the Highways Fund after administration costs have been taken out.

However, the main impact on registration fees has occurred because of the introduction of the Business Franchise (Petroleum Products) Act, which levies a fuel tax on motorists. That legislation was introduced by the former Government, and at that stage registration rebates were given to motorists to compensate for the imposition of the franchise tax. The rebates were given because the business franchise petroleum products tax was implemented, road maintenance charges having been removed. The former Government, quite correctly, decided that it would not proceed with the collection of the road maintenance tax, which was an extremely difficult tax to collect. In fact, the cost of collecting the tax almost exceeded the money received from the tax itself. When that fuel tax was introduced, registration rebates were given to motorists on a sliding scale. The present Government changed that rebate soon after it assumed office.

Mr. KENEALLY: What happened to the people who used to collect the tax?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: They are still employees of the Highways Department.

Mr. KENEALLY: Are they usefully employed?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Did the honourable member believe that we had dismissed them?

Mr. KENEALLY: I do not know.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The honourable member for Stuart will have an opportunity to ask his question.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: That explains to the member for Newland why there has been a reduction in motor registration fees. Also, there has been an 8 per cent reduction in petrol sales over the past few months, and that is reasonably significant, particularly in relation to public transport. That has had no effect on registration fees, because it does not mean that people are doing without their cars. However, I predict that in future registration fees will continue to decline.

Dr. BILLARD: I thank the Minister for reminding me of that, because I remember that there was some controversy at the time about whether the fuel tax was equal to the benefit that was going to be given in relation to lower registration fees. Can the Minister say in hindsight whether the estimates that were made at that time have proved to be correct?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Perhaps my officers can get me the exact figures while I am speaking. I understand that there has been an increase in fuel tax receipts over and above what would normally have been received from road

maintenance charges, and allowing for the rebate on registration fees. I think that the increase is just over \$1 000 000.

Mr. Jihinke: I refer the Committee to page 506 of the Estimates of Resource Allocation. If one adds up the registration fees received for the past two years (I regret that this also includes driving licences, which clouds the issue a little), one sees that they were reduced by \$2 000 000, whereas the business franchise tax referred to in the sixth line showed an increase of about \$4 000 000 for the two consecutive years.

However, the \$14 000 000 collected as a result of the Business Franchise (Petroleum Products) Act during 1979-80 was for a 10-month period only, whereas the \$18 000 000 shown as receipts for 1980-81 relate to a full year's receipts. That would answer the question.

Mr. O'NEILL: In an earlier reply, the Minister seemed proud of the fact that the Government had reduced Government drivers' overtime by \$25 000 over a period. The Minister, in that reply, referred to new system. Will the Minister outline the nature of that system, say how it operates and how much it costs, and give the Committee the names of the companies that have benefited from the change in the system?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Previously, people such as Ministers and others who had the use of chauffeur-driven Ministerial cars had those cars and their drivers at their disposal at all times. The Government, soon after it came into power, examined the matter closely to see whether there was some way in which it could reduce the cost of providing chauffeur-driven cars and also to balance that so that we would not disadvantage the drivers themselves, that being a most important point to consider.

I must make clear that the new Government has several Ministers who live in the country and, in itself, that is costly. I am not saying that that is why the Government did what it did. However, I am sure that the Committee would have been aware of that, in any case. Quite apart from the question whether there were in this Government more Ministers from the country than there were in the former Government, it was decided that we should have a close look at the whole question of the use of Ministerial cars.

I gave the matter much consideration before going to Cabinet, and it was a difficult business. I did not want to be in the position of reducing the earnings to which the employees of the Government Motor Garage had previously been entitled. The Committee will find that, at the end of this year, this will be the case: that there will have been no reduction in drivers' earnings.

However, the Government thought that it should rationalise the system, particularly in relation to late-night sittings of the House. I was concerned that at times this House would sit until 4 a.m. or 6 a.m., with the Ministerial chauffeurs having to wait in the corridors from 11 p.m. or midnight. I really do not think that that was fair on those drivers or, more particularly, on their families.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: There was no complaint.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It may be that the drivers appreciated the overtime; I do not know. I do not think the Committee could deny that it was an unsatisfactory state of affairs to have Government employees waiting outside and not knowing for several hours at a time when they would be required. For that reason, as the Deputy Leader realises, the Government instituted a system whereby, if either House sits beyond 8 p.m., the chauffeurs then (or before then, if possible) go off duty, and the people who would have used the Ministerial cars then take taxis.

[Sitting suspended from 12.30 to 2 p.m.]

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It was decided that, as we were going to use taxis, we should use a cab-charge system so that members could use a credit card system that would be charged to the department. The carriage of members of Parliament in these circumstances is a responsibility of the Department of Transport. After investigation we ascertained that two taxi companies used a credit card system (United Yellow Taxis and Suburban Taxi Service) and we decided to share the work equally. We provided those members who had chauffeur-driven cars with credit cards for those companies in equal proportions. For example, I may have a credit card for Suburban Taxi Service and another member or Minister may have a card for United Yellow Taxis. That is virtually the scheme and it is working well.

Mr. O'NEILL: How much has been paid to the companies concerned?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: So far we have received only one account, which is from United Yellow Taxis, for \$125.

Mr. O'NEILL: I refer to "Government Motor Garage, Purchase of motor vehicles—Net cost of replacements". This year \$91 000 is allocated. How many vehicles and what type of vehicles are involved? Are they four, six or eight cylinder vehicles?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The former Government started to replace the Ministerial car fleet with Holden Commodores, in a move to six-cylinder cars. I must say that I thought that it was a good move by the former Government, and I make no bones about that. Presently we have half the fleet being old Ford V8 LTD's, and their mileage is getting far in excess of the normal changeover mileage for such vehicles. Some vehicles have mileages of about 150 000 to 160 000 kilometres. Most of them are over 100 000 km. It is necessary to replace those vehicles and presently I am considering what we should do about replacements and what recommendation I should make to the Government.

Holden Commodores are, I find, excellent motor cars. I would be proud to own one myself. Unfortunately, the room in the Commodore is probably not suitable for Ministerial work, especially when one carries public servants in the back and when one is using the car as a mobile office, which most Ministers do. I am sure the Deputy Leader realises this, following his use of a Ministerial car for that purpose. I have no complaints about the car itself, but it is rather on the small side. It is extremely difficult to suggest what the Government may do about a replacement. Certainly, the Government would wish to continue the policy of the former Government and stay with six-cylinder vehicles. Unfortunately, there are few six-cylinder vehicles that would be appropriate. One is the Ford Fairlane, but that car is not manufactured in South Australia. The only car of requisite size that is manufactured in South Australia is the Holden Statesman, which is a V8. I would not like to see the Ministerial car fleet replaced with V8 cars, although I would certainly want to support our local motor industry. I suggest that the trade union movement would want to see the Government supporting the local motor industry.

Frankly, I am in somewhat of a dilemma as to what to recommend. It may be that we will have to go to Ford Fairlane six-cylinder cars because they do provide the requisite amount of room and still retain six cylinders. That is important. However, I am also investigating—it is not strictly in my Ministerial portfolio—in conjunction with the Deputy Premier the provision of more four-cylinder cars. A large part of the Holden Commodore four-cylinder car is manufactured in South Australia and could be used in the general Government car fleet, apart

from the Ministerial fleet. I think I have answered the member's question: I am reviewing Ministerial cars.

Mr. O'NEILL: Is the Minister giving an undertaking that he has no intention of returning to V8's?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I would not be inclined to go to V8's for the whole Ministerial fleet. I ask the member to bear in mind that we should support South Australian industry. I would certainly consider one or two Statesmans. This is purely specialisation. I would be willing to recommend to the Government one or two Statesmans, but no more than that; mainly because it is an excellent car and is manufactured totally in South Australia. It is no news that car manufacturers like to have their motor vehicles incorporated in Ministerial car fleets because of the prestige value. I would be reasonably unhappy if we went, say, to Ford Fairlanes to replace the present LTD's, because Fairlanes are not manufactured in South Australia.

Members will be aware that I have driven a Statesman. General Motors provided me with one to drive around for a day or so. It is an excellent and comfortable car. I am personally against going to V8's. I am sure the Committee agrees with that, but I am saying that it is possible that I might recommend to Cabinet that we get one or two Statesmans, because they are manufactured in South Australia. I am sure the member for Salisbury is aware of that. There is no commitment on this. It is quite a problem, and I am being frank about it. I am going to bring recommendations before the Government in the next month or so and, when the Government has decided what it should do, we will make an announcement.

Mr. O'NEILL: Has the Minister overlooked the fact that before the last election the Government gave a commitment to electors that it would get away from eight-cylinder cars? Does the Minister's statement constitute a reversal of that policy announced before the election?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: No, it does not amount to a reversal. Obviously, if the general Government car fleet is switching over mainly to four-cylinder cars—I can refer to the Mitsubishi cars and Holden Commodore four-cylinder cars—I would hope to see such cars in the Government service and most of the Ministerial car fleet in six-cylinder cars. I do not believe that that is negating the Government's policy to move to six-cylinder cars. We should encourage six-cylinder cars—it is as simple as that.

Dr. BILLARD: My question relates to the Road Safety Council. Page 472 of the programme papers provides an indication of a reduction in the amount that has been allocated to publicity promotion. Does this indicate a change in approach or philosophy? What does this indicate in regard to the programme of the council?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Road Safety Council, as some members would be aware, receives \$1 per year for each driving licence issued, so it receives \$3 for a licence issued for three years. That amounts in one year to about \$600 000. The figures appearing in the programme papers do not represent a decrease in Government priorities and road safety. The honourable member would be well aware that road safety is one of the most important parts of our transport policy. However, if the Committee wants fine detail on this question, I will ask the Director-General to provide it.

Dr. Scrafton: The amount to be spent on publicity and promotion in any year by the Road Safety Council depends on the nature of the programmes it has decided to run. Some are more expensive than others. It depends on the amount of advertising, television advertising as opposed to leaflets, posters and so on. The programme is estimated at \$150 000 and is simply a reflection of what the council has recommended this year. Of that \$150 000,

about \$132 000 will be Government financed, the other \$19 000 being sponsored. I think this is a good example of where honourable members ought to recognise that these are just estimates. If priorities change, if there is a bad spate of accidents occurring in a young age group, or single driving accidents in the country, the council could well change its programme during the year. It is all indicative of what the council believes are its priorities.

The expenditure reflects the capability of the council to utilise its manpower and its funding resources. Also, some of the extensions that could well occur may come from specially sponsored programmes. We may get a sponsor who comes in and wants to run a particular type of seasonal campaign or a stand at the Royal Adelaide Show. That sponsor may be willing to jointly fund something with the council, or fund completely the particular type of promotion, so the figure of \$150 000 is only an estimate.

As the Minister said, it is really not an indication of any lack of priority. Indeed, I think that the council members would want me to say that they would like to see programmes three times as big, but it is not just a matter of funds but of the staff capability to take advantage of those funds and also of the nature of the publicity and promotional activities that they can engage in.

Dr. BILLARD: Dr. Scrafton mentioned that about \$19 000 will come from sponsors this year. Is the involvement of sponsors increasing with time, or is it stabilising? Also, is there any contribution in kind that simply cannot be measured in money terms?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I had intended to mention sponsors when I first spoke. There certainly has been a great initiative by the Road Safety Council in the past 12 months to get out and get sponsors to help in the advertising of road safety matters, something I think all members would appreciate. Indeed, that is increasing. I must say that sponsors are becoming more willing to co-operate with the Road Safety Council. It is just not the sponsors in private industry, such as the big companies that use a lot of transport in their endeavours, who are doing this: the commercial television stations and radio stations are also providing the Road Safety Council with a lot of free time.

Members will perhaps recall the last pre-Christmas campaign against drink driving which was extremely successful. That was conducted on very much a shoestring budget by the Road Safety Council because it was all done in a hurry. It was worked up with a great deal of haste, but the result was excellent because of the sponsors who agreed to subsidise the programme, and because the radio and television stations gave a great deal of free time. In fact, we got double the exposure for half the cost, if I can put it that way.

Mr. HAMILTON: According to page 165 of the Auditor-General's Report, the Government Motor Garage administers the Central Inspection Authority which carries out safety inspections of vehicles as required by the Road Traffic Act. Does that mean that private bus operators are required to have their buses inspected? Is this done in a specific locality? If so, what spot checks are made after those inspections? It has been alleged to me that there are some private bus operators who, after the initial inspection by the Government inspectors, place fixed axles and bald tyres on their vehicles.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Government Motor Garage, through the Central Inspection Authority, inspects the vehicles of private bus operators every six months. That is a fairly short time between inspections compared to what happens in other States. I think New South Wales and South Australia are probably to the fore in inspection procedures, certainly regarding the length of

time between inspections. I do not think it is possible to reduce that time between inspections, because of the large number of buses that have to be inspected and the staff that would be required to do the inspections.

However, I think that the honourable member's question is a pertinent one, because I am concerned about the facilities available at the Government Motor Garage to carry out these inspections. The honourable member will realise that there was a serious bus accident in New South Wales recently. That was of great concern to me and, I am sure, to all members of Parliament. Since then, I have instituted a review of our inspection proceedings in combination with not only the Central Inspection Authority but also the Regulation Division of the State Transport Authority and the Chairman of the Road Traffic Board to see what measures we should take to improve our inspection facilities in South Australia.

Although the review is not yet completed, it seems fairly obvious to me that we need to provide new premises for the Central Inspection Authority. At the moment, I am having a look at that. It is a matter that I will have to take to Government, and I can say no more about it at this stage. We are also looking at a code of practice for maintenance of private buses, and indeed Government buses, so that after an inspection has taken place it will be incumbent upon the operator to maintain the bus in a satisfactory condition.

If the honourable member wants more information on the suggested code of practice, perhaps the Chairman of the Road Traffic Board could assist. In general, what I have said is the Government's policy. I am concerned about inspections of buses and heavy vehicles generally. I believe that we have to review our inspection procedures and have new premises for the Central Inspection Authority, because I do not believe that the present Government garage is large enough or has the necessary facilities.

Mr. HAMILTON: The question of the accident in New South Wales was exercising my mind. We have heard a lot about breathalyser tests. I gather that that is one of the matters that the Government will be looking at. If not, will the Minister consider random inspection of these buses?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I am prepared to look at that, although it would be fairly difficult to administer. I thought the member was suggesting that the Hay bus accident was caused by an alcohol problem, and I disabuse the Committee's mind on that. We will look at random inspection of buses but I cannot give a commitment until we have finished our review.

Mr. MATHWIN: The allocation for recreation and sport research is \$10 000. What type of research is envisaged? Is it research into the needs of the lesser sports and into what is required for different sports? There is a great need for the lesser sports to be encouraged and assisted. The department would know of the type of accommodation required for hockey, lacrosse, and box lacrosse, which is a new sport that is taking on in South Australia. It has become national, because recently there was a world series in Canada. I imagine the Minister would realise that some countries, particularly Canada, are spending large amounts on sporting equipment and areas to help solve youth problems and stop young people from turning to crime. The matter is important in this country, particularly in this State. If young people take part in sport, they have an opportunity to get somewhere. If they are involved in cricket, football or basketball, they have little chance to get to the top, but they can receive much encouragement through the lesser sports.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The allocation of \$10 000 for research is used mainly to hire consultants, although we

use departmental staff, and to evaluate various programmes that the department provides. For instance, there are such things as the department's outdoor recreation centres programme. There was a study into that, and that would come out of this line, perhaps not this year but in previous years. A swimming pool study has been in operation, not for an aquatic centre but a general swimming pool study to evaluate and examine the facilities for swimming in the State and what needs to be done to improve them. That sort of study would come from this grant.

A feasibility study is being carried out, or is about to be carried out, on the provision of an indoor aquatic centre in South Australia. Members would have seen the reference to that in the press, because the Prime Minister announced in his election speech that there would be a grant, and that was following representations I had made to Mr. Ellicott. The feasibility study will be funded out of this type of grant. The evaluation of the the community physical fitness programme, of which this Government is proud and in which 10 local government bodies are co-operating with the State, will come out of lines such as this. I should like that to be expanded so as to bring in more.

Regarding the larger question of providing facilities and their being used for what the member calls minor or lesser-known sports, the department already provides encouragement for them. I would like another name for that, because I do not think "minor sports" is the right description. I know the member's interest in box lacrosse, which I understand is a spectacular sport. We provide a lot of assistance in equipment and capital assistance grants to all these sports, and as much goes to the minor ones as the major ones.

There is no doubt that generally there is a lack of first-class national or international facilities for many sports in South Australia. I believe that we would be reaching the stage in the next few years where, if we were not able to help the Amateur Swimming Association to find a covered venue that would hold the requisite number of spectators, South Australia could lose national championships. Many other sports are in the same position. I am not setting any Government priorities. The Government has a Sports Priority Council, which is an excellent initiative, to advise on problems of this sort. Netball, which is played by 64 000 girls in this State, needs help with indoor facilities.

Mr. MATHWIN: I take it that it is quite apparent to the Minister that there is a need to encourage young children to participate in minor sports.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Yes.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I believe that the expediency with which this Committee has been moving has been lost by the fact that we are allowed to moved all over the place. If we could deal with the lines in sequence, I am sure that we would have progressed much further. I do not wish to argue against your ruling, Mr. Chairman, but I would ask you to think about it if this stupid system is to operate next year. I refer to the line "Compulsory blood tests", under "Contingencies—Administrative and Planning Division". I take it that that refers to tests taken after accidents where injury has occurred. Will the Minister tell me the percentage of positive tests as against negative tests?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The last figure that I have shows that 25 per cent of accident victims tested under the compulsory blood test system (and that does not include drivers only) had a blood alcohol level. The last figure for country areas was 40 per cent, and that is very disturbing. I appreciate the Deputy Leader's question, because it is an important one, and I can obtain some detailed figures for him if he wants them. The last figures, which would have been for August, show that 25 per cent of victims had a

blood alcohol level, varying from about .01 per cent to .38 per cent (at least one person with .38 per cent and several people, in fact most, over .08 per cent).

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Although I may be ruled out of order here, I refer to page 504 of the programme papers, the bottom paragraph of which states:

Whereas the figure given for 1979-80 represents actual expenditure for that year, the amount shown for 1980-81 is the total amount held by the department for the Road Safety Council (including a proportion of the year's revenue from driver licences) and represents the maximum amount that the council could spend in the current financial year. Any moneys not spent will carry over into the following year.

It seems that, if the allocation was there to be used in this important area, it ought to be used. I do not believe that we should allow a residue of money in an area of such significance to be carried over into the next financial year. All of the money available ought to be spent, provided it is spent wisely, and the situation ought not to be allowed to develop where it is in some administrator's hands to determine how much should be spent. The Government should have a firm and definite policy on using that allocation.

The CHAIRMAN: I will allow the question, because page 81 deals with the Road Safety Council of South Australia and certain aspects of expenditure.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Deputy Leader will remember that I spoke a few minutes ago about the amount allocated for road safety from revenue obtained from the issue of drivers' licences which amounts to about \$600 000 per annum. The amount to which he refers is an accumulation over the years of money in that fund. It is a special fund that is set aside: it cannot be used for anything other than road safety. As an example, the Deputy Leader will remember that his Government was prepared to provide a road safety centre at Mount Gambier. In fact, when I became Minister I took over the negotiations that had been going on, and this Government honoured the former Government's promises to provide that road safety centre at Mount Gambier. That is going to cost about \$410 000, which will come from that accumulated fund. That is the type of purpose to which it is put.

Similarly, if something came up which was considered to be in the best interests of road safety—a recommendation from either the Road Safety Council or any of the other bodies concerned with safety such as the Road Traffic Board—and as long as that money was used for road safety purposes, it would be allocated.

Mr. LEWIS: In these days, with the use of automatic data processing equipment and sophisticated mathematic techniques, is a cost benefit analysis carried out by the department (in the interests of ensuring on behalf of the general public that an allocation is spent wisely) on lines such as "Contingencies—Administrative and Planning Division—Compulsory blood tests" or "Road Safety Council of South Australia—Additions to road safety centres" and "Projects, displays, campaigns and publicity"?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: At present there are two methods of evaluation, apart from evaluation programmes of specific projects. I take the honourable member's point that there is not a specific evaluation for every project.

I said earlier that the Department of Transport and its Recreation and Sport Division had in operation at present the formulation of a corporate plan. I understand that the Highways Department is involved in the same process. Specifically, the laying down of objectives in a corporate plan, together with aims and objectives, and applying those objectives to specific projects is very much an evaluation process. Certainly, I regard this as important,

and I am pleased that we have this going on in my departments.

The other side to the question is the introduction of programme performance budgeting. Honourable members will realise that at this stage this applies to only three departments and certainly does not yet apply to the Department of Transport, although we have the programme papers, which are a provisional look at what can be done with programme performance budgeting. In the next 12 months we will be looking into programme performance budgeting and, in the application and working out of that programme, we will want to look closely at performance. This can be likened to the corporate plan exercise. Three aspects are involved. Some projects can be specifically evaluated and, by using the corporate plan and coming to programme performance budgeting, we get the evaluation.

Mr. LEWIS: I am grateful to the Minister for that information and heartened to hear that that is the way in which the department that he has the honour and responsibility to administer is proceeding. I am also pleased to note that that is happening now, whereas perhaps it was not happening to the extent that it might have happened over the preceding decade.

I thank you, Sir, because of the principle involved, for allowing the question to relate to a number of lines. However, I regret that the Deputy Leader of the Opposition is not here to understand that, if we were to pursue this on a line-by-line basis, a question such as that which I have asked would not have been possible.

I now ask another question along the same line of reasoning. Does the department, in determining its priorities, use a particular technique for the replacement of items of equipment, particularly motor vehicles? I could relate this question to the line "Purchase of motor vehicles" under the Administrative and Planning Division, in relation to the Government Motor Garage, or in relation to the Recreation and Sport Division.

If I was to try to relate the three together, as they are somewhat the same (certainly in terms of the conceptual tools that are used) and to draw attention to the fact that there are techniques that might be used, I would not be able to do so if we were to pursue the course that the Deputy Leader suggested we should pursue. What formula do we use, and does it involve discounted cash flow techniques, or do we simply say, at age eight months or after so many kilometres, that we will sell the vehicles?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The present policy is that which was followed by the former Government. The whole Government service replaces cars at 40 000 km or after two years, whichever occurs first. However, there is a Motor Vehicle Utilisation Committee, which has made certain recommendations that may alter those guidelines in relation to the changeover of Government cars.

Many things are taken into account. One must consider the depreciating value of the car when it is resold at auction and, if we go past that period of two years or over 40 000 km before disposing of the vehicle, we must weigh off the lesser amount that we may receive.

Mr. LEWIS: The trade-off?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Yes. Many other things must be taken into account. We will be dealing mainly with four-cylinder vehicles in future, and that is a good thing. However, the Motor Vehicles Utilisation Committee has recommended certain alterations, and they are presently being considered by the Government. This was a fairly detailed study, which took into account the type of thing to which the honourable member has referred.

Mr. KENEALLY: This Government is doing so many things that the former Government did that I am sure that

new members of Parliament are starting to think that they belong to a socialist Party. Just recently, an advertisement, paid for by the Liberal Party, listed the achievements of that Party in government. It was, of course, a small list, but one of the items of which struck my eye. It was stated that there were to be registration rebates for electrically-driven motor vehicles. Is the Minister able to say how much he expects that that will cost the State Government in rebates in the next 12 months?

Because we are in this pressure-cooker atmosphere, I should also like now to draw the Minister's attention to another matter. Having looked through the lines, I have not noticed any reference to the Minister's taking a trip overseas this year. However, \$4 000 is allocated to enable an officer to go overseas. That sum would certainly take one officer to Kangaroo Island for the long weekend.

If we are to have implemented in this State a completely new form of public transport, namely, the O'Bahn, does the Minister intend to refuse to go overseas to see O'Bahn systems that have already been implemented (the Minister would say that they have been implemented, although others would say that they are in the design stage only), or are we to understand that this Minister accepts completely that these systems are operating elsewhere to everyone's satisfaction and that he will impose that system on South Australia without having looked at it?

If investigations are still in progress, does the Minister intend to go overseas this year to examine such systems? I will be content, if the Minister answers both those questions, not to ask any more questions on this line, thereby enabling the member for Gilles to ask his questions.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I know that the honourable member is interested in the Government's keeping its promises, one of which was to reduce the registration fee on electrically-propelled vehicles. The Government did that on 20 December 1979.

Mr. KENEALLY: What has it cost?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The cost would not be great. This was done as an encouragement. The Government, being energy conscious, was quite serious in doing this.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Do you know how much it has cost the Government?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I do not have the figure at my fingertips, but it would be very small.

Mr. KENEALLY: Has there been one?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I do not have the figures at my disposal at this stage.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Would you provide that information later?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Yes.

Mr. KENEALLY: Has there been one?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Yes. I point out to the honourable member that there were eight vehicles registered in South Australia at the Electric Vehicle Exposition. Regarding the second part of the question, and I am trying to see the relevance between the two—

The CHAIRMAN: Before the Minister proceeds, I will explain that I did allow those two questions, although one seemed to be divorced from the other, because of the comment by the member for Stuart that time was getting on and that there were other votes to deal with.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Certainly, there was no reflection intended on you, Mr. Chairman. The member for Stuart will realise that on coming into Government in September 1979, I despatched two officers to Europe to investigate the Daimler-Benz guided bus system and other guided bus systems being developed in Europe. Now that the decision has been made, negotiations have to take place with Daimler-Benz. Of course they do, and there are

many aspects to be negotiated. The member for Florey said there have to be negotiations between Daimler-Benz and Zublin, which we understand has the patent right to the construction of the O'Bahn system and various other technical matters of that type, although I must state here that of course the guided bus system which the Government intends to implement is not an extremely technological advancement—it is a mechanically simple system—and in saying that I am referring to the mechanical guidance system and not to the electronic guidance system, which is more advanced. In specific reply to the question, I will probably be despatching the project director, who will be named in the next couple of months before Christmas.

Mr. KENEALLY: Is there no line?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Budget was drawn up before the Government's decision was made. I intended to despatch one or two officers.

Mr. KENEALLY: As Minister, do you not have a responsibility—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I have trouble answering the member because, every time I start to answer a question, the member asks another one.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the member for Stuart to refrain from asking questions. He has asked the Minister a question and, if he has further questions, at the conclusion of the Minister's reply he will have a further opportunity.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I repeat for the third time that I will be despatching the project director and another officer to Germany before Christmas to negotiate with Daimler-Benz. I expect technicians from Daimler-Benz to be here soon, say, within six weeks or so. I feel it is imperative that I should visit the system; indeed, I need to represent the Government in negotiations with Daimler-Benz, and I will probably have to travel for the purpose of negotiations and to see the system early in the next year. I cannot give the honourable member an exact time because I have many things to do here. I have much on my plate, but this is an important initiative. However, I think I can give the honourable member an undertaking that I will be going, and I thank him for his support. Of course, the funds will come from the project itself, because \$10 000 000 has been allocated to the State Transport Authority for that purpose.

Mr. KENEALLY: My main concern is that, if the Minister delays his visit overseas to view the facility, we will be so far down the track that we will be unable to change what is obviously a wrong policy. However, if the Minister visits the facility at his earliest opportunity he will be able to recommend to his Government whether or not he believes, as the Minister responsible, we ought to proceed with the guided track system. If he leaves his visit for a year, or even two years or three years, we will be too far down the track. The Minister has a responsibility to investigate what he and his Government are imposing on South Australia. His officers are not doing that—they are merely following the Government's instructions. The Minister should go at the earliest opportunity.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: That is an extremely subjective comment by the member. I assume that he has read the reports and made up his mind that it is not feasible. The member is entitled to his own opinion, but it is not the Government's opinion. The Government believes that the report of its officers shows plainly that the system is feasible. It is not a technically complicated system—it involves simple mechanics. The Government believes fully that it is feasible. However, I give the undertaking, if the member wants it, that I will visit the test tracks and

negotiate with Daimler-Benz, and I thank him for his urging and support.

The CHAIRMAN: I referred earlier to the situation concerning the remaining votes, but I omitted three Loan Estimates votes. Therefore, we have five votes to complete this afternoon.

Mr. HAMILTON: My question relates to the Road Safety Council. I have received a telephone call from a mother concerned about the trend amongst teenagers riding unicycles. The Minister may be aware that there are many teenagers riding unicycles around the streets. I understand from my conversation that the retailer of the unicycle has advised teenagers that they need only install a rear reflector and a bell to comply with the legal requirements. I am concerned about the danger to motorists and especially to the children riding these unicycles on footpaths and streets. Has this matter been brought to the Minister's attention? If it has, what action does he intend to take in respect of the riding and retailing of unicycles to teenagers?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The member raises an important question. I take it that unicycles are single-wheel cycles that can be likened to skateboards and roller skates, which the honourable member would know are fads amongst children—

Mr. LEWIS: Like yo-yo's.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I do not think that they are a traffic hazard. The former Government did not take any action against children riding skateboards or roller skates on roads or footpaths. However, I will refer the matter raised to the Chairman of the Road Traffic Board and have a look at it for him. Certainly, if it proves to be a danger, then we will have to look at it.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I want to place on record that I have five further questions that I am not going to ask on the lines down to "Recreation and Sport". It is now three o'clock and we have 2½ hours within which to finish this programme. That is physically impossible, as you would agree, Mr. Chairman, and I want you to take to the Premier the strongest possible objections from this Committee. I hope the Minister will as well. The time allowed is insufficient—it is an impossible feat in these circumstances to be able to finish all of these lines in the time allowed.

I believe that the whole system of Estimates Committees will have to be closely looked at if it is to continue, and I understand that it will. The Minister would certainly want it to continue because it is letting him completely off the hook—he is under no pressure.

Mr. LEWIS: The Committee is not about pressure; it is about information.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: It is about pressure.

Mr. SCHMIDT: Why do you not table the five questions?

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I will table them. I will ask the questions, if the honourable member wants more delay. I want my colleague, the member for Gilles, who has been sitting here all day, to be afforded the opportunity of asking some questions. If we continue in the present manner it will be well after 4 o'clock before he has an opportunity to ask his questions. My colleagues all have numerous questions to ask, so if we carry on the member for Gilles will have no chance at all to ask his questions. I am sacrificing the questions left so that we can proceed immediately to the Recreation and Sport Division in the hope that we will get to "Miscellaneous", where the real guts of this operation is.

The CHAIRMAN: The Deputy Leader's comments have been noted and at the conclusion of the Estimates Committees there will be reports made and his comments

will be noted. The honourable member for Gilles.

Mr. Slater: My questions relate to the Recreation and Sport Division, the line "Director, Recreation Officers, Administrative, Clerical and General staff" referring to salaries. Actual payments were \$826 319 and there is an allocation for 1980-91 of \$879 924. Can the Minister tell me how many persons are employed in the Recreation and Sport Division and can he tell me, not necessarily at this stage, the number of general and clerical staff and whether that includes any part-time or casual labour?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Recreation and Sport Division has a total staff of 55 under the Public Service Act and 11 full-time weekly paid officers. In addition, there are eight casual persons. The casuals mainly work in the recreation camps that the honourable member would be aware the department sponsors. I cannot recall the other parts of the question.

Mr. Slater: The eight casuals are employed on a part-time basis in the recreation camps, but are they the only persons employed in that way? Are there no other officers employed on a part-time, casual basis?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: There are some officers on contract for specific projects, but they are not part-time and would be included in the 55 officers employed under the Public Service Act. I think that the Community Physical Fitness Director, Mr. Haage, is employed under contract, and I think that the co-ordinator is employed in the same division.

Mr. Slater: Is it anticipated that the Budget allocation for this year will have any effect on staff levels for the forthcoming year?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I do not anticipate that that will have any effect on staff levels.

Mr. Slater: I refer now to the Recreation and Sport Division, the line "Community physical fitness programme". I note an allocation of \$50 000 to this line. Will the Minister tell me exactly where that allocation will be provided so far as the programmes for this year are concerned?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Does the honourable member want a breakdown as to how much goes to each council? I did mention before that the community physical fitness work is a programme using 10 metropolitan and country councils or local government bodies. If the honourable member would like, I am prepared to provide him with the exact amount allocated to each council.

Mr. Slater: To save time, I do not need the information now, but I would be grateful for it later.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I will be pleased to supply that information to the honourable member.

Mr. Slater: I turn to the recreational programme grants. Will the Minister tell me the allocation of these grants? Will there be an extension of recreation programme grants and, if so, in what areas?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The allocation of recreation programme amounts is as follows: handicapped, \$3 000; elderly, \$3 000; ethnic groups, \$1 000; others, \$12 000; a total of \$19 000. To that must be added recreation personnel, \$8 000; club administration, \$1 000; a total of \$28 000. At this stage, the recreation programme grants have just been amalgamated and it is a consolidation exercise. There is no proposal at this stage, although recreation programme grants are important, to increase that allocation. It is under review.

Mr. Slater: Is it anticipated that grants to sporting bodies and organisations in South Australia will be the same as for last year, or will there be a reduction in the amount of money given to sporting and recreation bodies by way of grants?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: There is no reduction. If my

memory serves me, there is no increase, either. There have been reductions of recurrent expenditure to two specific sporting and recreation bodies, but that does not mean that there has been a reduction in the overall amount of money supplied to sporting bodies generally.

Mr. Slater: One of those would be the South Australian Swimming Association. What was the other?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I think the Highland Games, an amount of \$3 000.

Mr. Slater: I refer to the programme papers at page 489 where they list divisional support services, and where it is stated:

Apart from the day-to-day management and administration of the Division, and the provision of executive services to the Minister, this programme also includes co-ordination and liaison with other agencies involved in the promotion and provision of opportunities in recreation and sport. These activities are basic to all programmes.

I note that the amount provided for administration services was \$321 000 for 1979-80 and has been reduced to \$253 000 for 1980-81. In what field will that reduction occur?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Can the honourable member refer his question to a specific Budget line?

Mr. Slater: I am referring to the divisional support services programme, which appears in the programme papers. I myself would be happy to know what line it comes under. The document was given to us for information and I take it that I am at liberty to ask a question on this matter, because it is part of the departmental appropriations.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I apologise to the member for not being able to give him full details but I assure him that there has been no reduction in the allocation for these purposes. I will have to clarify the reference to the document that he has, and I am prepared to let the member have that later.

Mr. Slater: It is difficult to relate the programme papers to the Estimates, but I appreciate the offer and would be grateful for the information. I take it that the amount of \$83 000 allocated for recreation camps and improvements is for general improvements at Mylor, Parnanga and the Goolwa Conference Centre. What other activities have been undertaken to upgrade Mylor and the Goolwa Conference Centre, and to what extent?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The appropriation on the line provides for maintenance, programmes, courses and catering at the three recreation camps operated by the division. For Parnanga the provision is \$10 000, for Mylor \$37 000, and for Goolwa \$36 000. Receipts by way of fees for the use of these camps during 1979-80 totalled about \$148 000. I do not know whether I can bring this in at this stage, but under the Minister of Public Works there are also programmes to upgrade these camps. I will give that information if you allow, but it is under the Loan Estimates for the Minister of Public Works.

The CHAIRMAN: As this comes under the Minister of Public Works, I suggest you let the member have it privately.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I will do that. We are recovering from a fairly disastrous fire at Mylor, when the whole catering block was destroyed. It was a miracle that the dormitories were not also destroyed. We have to spend a lot of money to provide improved facilities as well as replace the catering block, for which I think the amount is more than \$200 000.

Mr. Slater: I understand that the improvements at the Goolwa Conference Centre will go beyond the amount shown but I doubt that I can ask a question regarding Loan Estimates, because I do not think that this Committee is

going to proceed to that stage. I know the amounts and I ask what sort of work is to be undertaken.

The CHAIRMAN: In general terms, the Minister would be in order in answering, but, if the Loan money is coming from another portfolio, that presents a difficulty.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The member will doubtless realise that the alterations affect the dormitory block, the indoor recreation centre, and landscaping of the tennis court. It is to upgrade those facilities to provide additional accommodation for 22 persons in the dormitory block and the indoor recreation area and to provide for kitchen facilities and family camping. The landscaping of the tennis court is self-explanatory.

Mr. KENEALLY: I refer to provisions under "Recreation and Sport Division" and also "Miscellaneous". There are grants for the sports coaching scheme and for State and national sporting events. I express to the Minister and his department my deep appreciation for the support they are giving to young sportspersons in my district, particularly in Port Augusta. Young athletes have taken advantage of significant support provided. This is not a new scheme, but the department is to be complimented on it.

The Minister has only touched the top of the funding that will come to the area, because Port Augusta and Port Pirie are producing outstanding athletes. Can the Minister give me a report showing the number of young sportspersons who have been assisted in the past 12 months both by being brought from the country to Adelaide for the coaching scheme and by being sponsored when they go to interstate national sporting events or events approved by the Minister? Recently, a young tennis player from Port Augusta went to Darwin and his expenses had been subsidised by the Minister.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I will be pleased to get that information for the member. Does he want the number in each sports coaching scheme?

Mr. KENEALLY: Yes, for the State.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: There are about 10 different facets in the sports coaching scheme.

Mr. KENEALLY: And the grants?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I will be pleased to get that.

Mr. Slater: It was part of Liberal Party policy prior to the election to help sporting organisations that relied largely on voluntary work and fund raising. Can the Minister tell me where this funding is in the Budget?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Government more or less continues programmes that it inherited and new ones that it has instituted.

It does indeed encourage those organisations that are willing to help themselves. It is not always as simple a decision as that, however, as I am sure the honourable member knows. Certainly, it is government policy to do that and where we find that an organisation is prepared to help itself the Government certainly gives that organisation some priority. I only say "some priority" because some organisations are disadvantaged and, by force of circumstances, are unable to help themselves to the extent that they may wish. Such organisations are not prejudiced in the method of allocating funds. It is a matter of balance. Certainly the Government does encourage organisations to help themselves. I believe the member for Gilles is aware of that.

Mr. Slater: In view of that answer and in view of the fact that the Minister promised greater facilities in all sections of the community for recreation and sport with special emphasis on handicapped people (I believe that the amount was around \$100 000), what Budget funds have been provided to facilitate greater participation by all sections of the community in recreation facilities? I refer

specifically to handicapped persons, as \$100 000 appears to be a minimal amount. What consideration might be given to those sections of the community that need special help?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: This is the Revenue Budget. The main provision for handicapped people will come from the capital assistance grants, through Loan funds. Departments are negotiating with various bodies to see what can specifically be done in addition to what is being done at the moment to provide help for the handicapped. That is important at any time but, with the Year of the Handicapped about to start, it is even more important. Those programmes have been co-ordinated through the Attorney-General, who is the Minister in charge of Government endeavours in that regard.

Mr. KENEALLY: I am interested in what the Recreation and Sport Division can do for the people of South Australia. I believe that it is an important division, and it is tragic that the amounts of money that have been available to it to do the work it has to do have been so obviously limited. Since about 1974-75, when money was made available for sport and recreation in Australia, we have been able to participate in the Federal scheme that was implemented, but our ability to do anything has been reduced by the subsequent shortage of funds. Allowing for that, it is difficult sometimes to come to terms with the priorities that have been established within the division.

I see that the community and physical fitness programme will receive \$50 000 and the "Life. Be in it" programme will receive \$17 000. Both programmes are obviously directed at improving community health, which has many benefits in so many areas other than recreation and sport. In addition, grants to local government authorities (which we cannot discuss now because it comes under Loan) amount to over \$1 100 000, and we see the total amount of money available to the division. I know also that I am not able to discuss the fact that \$900 000 will be given to the racing industry in South Australia.

The CHAIRMAN: We will come to those lines later.

Mr. KENEALLY: I am sure that the Minister understands the point that I am making. It seems that somewhere our priorities are wrong and that there ought to be greater financial assistance either directly from the Government or through community groups which would benefit the whole of the community, particularly younger people who can do with this support. That does not suggest that the racing industry is not entitled to its fair share. It seems, however, that, of the total allocation available to the Recreation and Sport Division, the racing industry has got a little more than its fair share. It might be that the racing industry ought to be funded from another area.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: First, the racing industry is funded from another area—out of T.A.B. distribution, as I believe the member for Stuart well knows. I am not pretending that we have enough money for recreation and sport. I have to tell the honourable member that the Government and I are also concerned about unemployment. There is no doubt that the racing industry as such is going through a very bad time in South Australia. When the report of the committee of inquiry into the racing industry is tabled in the next few weeks, the member for Stuart will realise that. I understand that the racing industry in South Australia employs about 55 000 people. That includes everybody, not just trainers and jockeys, but caterers and their staff, stud workers, and so on. I believe that that is extremely important. Unemployment is a consideration that I expect members opposite would require me to give to the allocation of funds.

So, I can only say that the Government made that grant

to the racing industry on the basis of recommendations made to the committee of inquiry into the racing industry to take into account the employment consequences of the decision. I agree with the member for Stuart. It is necessary to have more funds to distribute to recreation and sport. The honourable member well knows that this Government has a proposal to put before the Parliament for the introduction of soccer pools in South Australia. It seems that that proposal is to be opposed. I do not wish to pre-empt the Parliament but it seems that that will be the case on what I consider to be less than rational grounds.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Will it be State or privately run?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I cannot answer that, but that proposal will bring to the sport and recreation funds approximately another \$1 000 000 a year. I am sure that the member for Stuart realises that there is a lot that the Government and the Recreation and Sport Division can do with an additional \$1 000 000 a year. In reply to the Deputy Leader's interjection, I point out that it has been stated by me in the press and in another place that the Government intends to accept the offer of Vernons Limited, or Soccer Pools Limited which is made up of Vernons Limited and News Limited, to run soccer pools in this State.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I am not concerned so much about personalities as about getting a comprehensive scheme of soccer pools going in this State. Vernons have been running soccer pools in Great Britain since the early 1920's and have great experience in running soccer pools. The English migrants who live in South Australia now send \$30 000 worth of tickets a week to Victoria and have also—

Mr. Slater: Quite illegally.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: That is another matter. I hope that the member for Gilles is not suggesting that I should legislate to prevent them doing that. About \$30 000 a week is going into the coffers of the Victorian Government because those people have confidence in Vernons.

After a great deal of investigation, I do not believe that the State Lotteries Commission (although I have no doubt that it could run an efficient soccer pool) would receive the necessary support to make it a worthwhile operation.

Mr. HAMILTON: You do not believe that.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Yes, I do, because Australian Soccer Pools Limited runs pools in Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania, and I understand that it will soon have pools in Western Australia. Of course, the size of the pool and the prizes associated with it are getting bigger. Therefore, the number of people who have confidence in it increases. I suggest that, if it is good enough for the New South Wales Government, it is good enough for this Government to go to Australian Soccer Pools Limited.

I do not believe that those people who now play soccer pools and those who would potentially play the soccer pools would wish to depart from using the Vernon operation. Honourable members may have something to say about News Limited. However, I am not concerned about the other partners. Rather, I am concerned that it is controlled by the Vernon organisation which has the experience in providing the equipment and plans so that no fraud is involved in the system. In the past, the system has been subject to fraud, and the Vernon organisation has the experience to prevent that happening. It is important that people have confidence in the Vernon organisation, and of course, they would have access to the Australian pools, which is important.

The CHAIRMAN: Because I had allowed a general

question to be asked concerning the racing industry, the Minister was permitted to give a full answer. It was fairly broad. I therefore ask the honourable member to relate to the lines whatever questions he now wishes to ask.

Mr. KENEALLY: The reference to the racing industry was part of a general question relating to the line under discussion. I am disturbed that it is not necessary for the Highways Department, Engineering and Water Supply Department or any other Government department to seek funds to finance their operations outside the Budget votes. Of course, the Highways Department has its own funds, and, the less said about that in Parliament, the better.

I do not believe that the Recreation and Sport Division should be so starved of funds that it needs to seek soccer pools or something outside of Government to enable it to have the necessary resources. However, that criticism relates not only to the present Government: it is also a criticism that I made of the former Government.

As the Minister has raised the matter of soccer pools and has referred to the importance of the Vernon organisation participating, has the Minister considered the possibility of the Vernon organisation and the Lotteries Commission being partners in running the pools in South Australia? That would provide the expertise that the Minister believes is required, and would also provide a State Government involvement in the matter.

Mr. LEWIS: On a point of order, I ask to which line the honourable member is relating his inquiry.

The CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order, to the extent that the Lotteries Commission does not come under the Minister's portfolio. It is therefore out of order for the honourable member to ask questions in this manner. Also, I am concerned that an indication has been given of the introduction of legislation relating to soccer pools, and I believe that we may be pre-empting debate on that matter. I therefore ask the member for Stuart to return to the line.

Mr. KENEALLY: I think that you have, Sir, effectively sat the member for Stuart down.

Mr. Slater: Will the Minister say whether the Sports Medicine Centre is included in the vote for the Recreation and Sport Division and, if it is not, why not? If it is associated with that division, does it relate to the allocation for community physical fitness programmes?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Sports Medicine Centre is assisted by the department in other ways, such as with low rental accommodation and in relation to upgrading its facilities. The community physical fitness network is a self-contained programme, and the Sports Medicine Centre is not associated with that line.

Mr. Slater: Is it proposed that the South Australian Sports Medicine Centre will be encouraged to extend its operations to major country centres?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I see that the honourable member for Florey has just brought a cup of tea or coffee into the Chamber. I point out that water is provided in the Chamber.

Mr. O'NEILL: This is not a formal sitting of the House, and Committee A adjourned to enable its members to have a cup of tea or coffee. However, I would not ask this Committee to do likewise, as we are pressed for time. Under what Sessional Order am I prevented from having a cup of tea or coffee in the Chamber?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It is the ruling of the Chair that there must be a limit to these matters. If the honourable member is permitted to bring in a cup of coffee or tea, someone else may bring in scones to go with it. Cups of tea and coffee are not permitted and, if the honourable member wishes to consume it, he may move to the outer precincts of the Chamber and still hear the proceedings of the Committee.

Mr. O'NEILL: Very well, as long as I do not lose my call. I will just leave my cup on the bench and think about the matter.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I ask the honourable member to remove his cup of coffee from the Chamber.

Mr. O'NEILL: I will not disagree with your ruling, but it is pretty rough. We are trying to expedite the hearings of the Committee, but this is being made very difficult indeed.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The first priority of the Sports Medicine Foundation of South Australia is to expand its present facility, which the honourable member will realise is the old national fitness facility on South Terrace. Thereafter, I understand that it will be looking to expand in country areas. However, the foundation's first priority is to expand in its present location.

Mr. Slater: What sort of assistance may be given by the Recreation and Sport Division to enable the foundation to fulfil that objective?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The department has not entered into an agreement with the Sports Medicine Foundation at this stage. The foundation realises that we are willing to help, but to what extent we are required to help we do not know at this stage because we do not have the proposals in front of us. I shall be happy to let the honourable member know when that eventuates.

Mr. KENEALLY: Can the Minister say whether there have been any changes to the Sports Advisory Council since the Government has taken office? If there have been changes, what are they, and what is the purpose of those changes?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: There have been changes. When I came into office the members of the Sports Advisory Council that I had to appoint I just reappointed. The member for Unley was a member of the council and resigned upon the change of Government, which was quite correct of him. I accepted his resignation with regret, because I believe that the member for Unley has done much for sport in South Australia. I appointed the member for Fisher in his place on the council. That was the first change. A few months ago, before June, I was approached by several members of the council who had been members since its inception. They suggested that they would like to retire from the council because they thought it was time for new blood. It was with some regret that I heard that news. I do not want to single out any particular person, but one of them was Wendy Ey. The member for Gilles would be aware of how much she has done for sport in South Australia, and I merely mention that because of the members' interest in athletics. Those people did flag to me that they wished to retire and, after consideration, I accepted their resignations and made further changes to the council, including the appointment of a new Chairman, Mr. John Halbert. Mr. Halbert is well known in South Australia for not only his sporting prowess but also for his sporting integrity in the course of his present employment as a physical education director—

Mr. KENEALLY: He is politically sound!

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: That is an unkind comment from the member. He was appointed not because of his political views. I take the opportunity of paying tribute to the former Chairman, who was Chairman for six years, Mr. Ray Stewart. He did a sterling job in the administration of sport in South Australia.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): As there are no further questions, I declare the examination on this vote to be completed.

Department of Transport \$2 252 000.

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard
Mr. K. C. Hamilton
Mr. G. F. Keneally
Mr. I. P. Lewis
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. H. H. O'Neill
Mr. R. J. Randall
The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. M. M. Wilson, Minister of Transport and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr. D. Scafton, Director-General of Transport.
Mr. A. K. Johnke, Commissioner of Highways.
Mr. F. R. Harris, General Manager, State Transport Authority.
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Mr. J. S. Abraham, Assistant Commissioner, Administration and Finance, Highways Department.
Mr. J. G. Watson, Senior Administration Officer, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. B. J. Taylor, Director, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. P. T. Tregoweth, Finance Officer, Department of Transport.

Mr. KENEALLY: Under this provision \$1 090 000 is allocated for "Transport Research and Development" and \$1 162 000 is allocated for sport and recreation facilities. How is the \$1 090 000 broken down in regard to transport research and development? What are some of the major expenditures in relation to sports facilities?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I flagged earlier that we would provide details of the transport research and development programme. I will ask the Director-General to do that.

Dr. Scafton: The lines that appear in the Loan Budget breakdown of the \$1 090 000 are in accordance with the overall corporate planning. Perhaps the easiest way to answer the question is to give some examples of what fits each line. If it meets with the Minister's approval I would be willing to give the member a breakdown of them all, but to expedite the process this afternoon I will give some examples from each line. The first line is "Transport system in South Australia". These projects, as the line demonstrates, are fairly extensive, and last year a greater part of our resources was spent on this line. We were just finishing the up-date of our own data base on South Australia, because that information had not be updated since the MATS study in the 1960's. However, this year there is not such a need for extensive data collection, and we expect a low expenditure.

There are some activities that were carried out last year to continue the southern areas transport study, which was a big job last year. As members will know, an area of concern to the current Government is the improvement of transport in the far south, and there are some residual expenditures there. Continuing work is to be done on transport innovation, but that would be much lower than in previous years. The biggest expenditure expected in 1980 will be on economic analysis of the State's public

transport system and the State's transport system in general and not just public transport. Because of the expenditure incurred in public transport and the resultant financial obligation, that is where much of the funds go. The second line "Public passenger transport system" is usually reserved for metropolitan expenditures plus operations in relation to public transport integration, studies on light rail transit, community buses, public transport marketing, and so on. They are fairly self-explanatory.

The third line "Private transport industry" and the next line concern transport research and development funds. The studies deal with the private transport industry and the conditions under which it can be stimulated to meet demands made upon it, that is, to what extent can the private sector of the transport industry undertake tasks that traditionally have been undertaken from the Government side. A large amount is not set aside for this. It is a growing problem; even in the research programmes under the former Government it was of grave concern to the then Minister. There is a break point between Government operations in the metropolitan area and private operations.

It causes much difficulty in the private sector if, say, the near hills area can no longer continue to provide the service. It is important for the Government to know just what it would cost to replace that service if it was to operate it directly through its own State Transport Authority or if it was to enter into a programme to support the private sector. That is what is meant by the third line. The fourth line "Road safety programme" deals with safety and is similar to those matters referred to by the member for Mallee earlier, as does the subsequent line "Cost effectiveness of transport".

The road safety programme is an area where the Government has expressed concern about the effectiveness of its many and various involvements in the road safety area. It will be apparent to members from discussions that have been held so far on the transport lines that road safety is being actively carried out not just by the Road Safety Council but by the Road Traffic Board, the Central Inspection Authority and by the State Transport Authority's inspection activities.

There are a number of Government areas. The Government, through the Minister, has voiced an interest in attempting to assess the effectiveness of this service. This is a big line, as members can see, and I do not think there is a great deal that needs to be said about it. It says exactly what it is, an analysis of the effectiveness of the service we are providing—whether it is possible to provide that service more effectively in other ways. We can expect to undertake a lot of work under that line; that is all I can say. It is a fairly new aspect the environmental aspect of transport; there is no expenditure to be incurred this year.

When we get environmental impact studies they are charged directly to the project concerned. Turning to interstate projects, we believe that in 1981-82 that will be a big area of expenditure, with the possibility of improving the airport, and so on, which is of great concern to the Government and we anticipate that we will be expected to do an increasing amount. The amount of \$2 000 is nominal. The other two items, "Integrated organisation structure" and "Finance and administration information", are essentially domestic, that is, relating to the Government's transportation activities—whether the organisations through which the Government transmits its transport responsibilities, the Department of Transport, the State Transport Authority and the Highways Department, plus a number of smaller organisations, are appropriate.

The Minister has already made mention of the fact that each of the large organisations is undergoing development of a corporate plan. When those corporate plans are completed, we will attempt to integrate them into the portfolio as a whole, to incorporate the three plans into one portfolio Corporate plan. From that, the Government will be able to determine whether it feels that its organisations' administrative arrangements are appropriate. They are, in summary, the contents of the R. and D. Programme. I would be happy to give the honourable member more details in writing if the Minister permits.

Mr. KENEALLY: Under the provision for research, etc., of the transport section in Australia, the Director-General says that there was an economic analysis made of the cost effectiveness of the metropolitan transport system in Adelaide. Has that research looked at the economic viability of a free transport system in Adelaide as against the current system of charging? If that is the case, is the Minister able to tell the Committee what has been the result of that research? I am well aware that such research has been done in other cities in Australia and overseas and has come up with some interesting conclusions. I would like information from the Minister as to what has happened in Adelaide.

Mr. LEWIS: On a point of order, Mr. Acting Chairman. I do not know what the honourable member means when he uses the word "free". Does he mean "no charge"?

Mr. KENEALLY: Yes, no charge.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: There is no point of order. The honourable Minister.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: This is a continuing study. It is obviously an important one. The honourable member would realise that the Government has recently provided free off-peak transport to various sections of the community in the belief that the number of people we can encourage to use off-peak public transport travel will have a great effect on the system, and especially on the deficit. The question of free public transport is an interesting one, and one, as the honourable member for Stuart has said, that has been studied elsewhere. To my knowledge, none of the other cities in Australia have moved to a free public transport system. I think that, certainly, South Australia would be in the van so far as initiatives taken in this field are concerned, especially when they are considered as a whole. Generally, the situation is worthy of study and is under review. There are no proposals, either. It is before the Government at this stage that it should move towards a free public transport system. Obviously, if that happens we will have to go into serious negotiations with the United Trades and Labour Council.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I have three questions to put to the Minister: first, have any further funds been provided for research into the O'Bahn system; secondly, if so, what features of the system does the Government believe still need study; thirdly, if not, does the Government believe the O'Bahn system is fully proved?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: There is an amount of \$10 000 000, which the Deputy Leader would realise has been transferred to the State Transport Authority by the Government.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Does that include research?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It includes research, preliminary design, overseas travel for officers for negotiations to take place and the whole financing of the North-east Busway programme. When the honourable member talks about "research", we are really talking about "investigation" rather than pure research. For instance, there will have to be a lot of investigation, as with any major construction project, into soil types and

things of that nature. They will all be part of the investigation that will be paid for out of the project moneys. The Government does, I think I have said before, accept, and has made quite public that it believes, that the system is feasible. If the Government did not believe that the system was feasible it certainly would not have gone ahead with it. We are quite sure that the system is feasible; we have made our decision and are going ahead with building it.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I also asked: if that is the case, what features of the system does the Government believe still need study?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I think I can best put it this way: whenever any major project gets off the ground a great deal of investigation has to take place. I think I mentioned that one of those investigations was soil tests. I have already said that we are going to adopt a team approach whereby we will have engineers and other people seconded to the team from other Government departments and my own. We will then immediately set up the procedure for this investigation. I can get the Director-General to give the honourable member a list of the types of things that need investigation. The honourable member has obviously had a great deal more experience in investigating major transportation programmes than I have. It would be similar to the types of investigation that would have been needed with the former Government's light rapid transit system.

Things that will have to be investigated are the type of bus that we will need, what facilities have to be provided on them, and the gradients and curves as applicable to buses *vis-a-vis* l.r.t. A lot of the work has been done and that is valuable, but it will have to be changed or modified because we are using a different system.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Does the department share similar confidence to that which the Government shares about the success of this scheme?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): I ask the Deputy Leader, if he is going to ask a question, to do it in the normal manner by asking for the call.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Will the Minister say whether the department shares the Government's confidence in the success of the O'Bahn system?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I am happy to answer that. The question was not unexpected.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Not unreasonable.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It could be argued that it could be unreasonable, because we are talking about public servants and I think that they deserve some protection. When we made the decision, the officers of my department accepted that decision. The l.r.t. team was wound down and the department immediately got on with the O'Bahn system. The officers have done it to the best of their ability. They are as loyal to me and this Government as they were to the former Government. They are exceptional public servants.

As with any major project and in any group, you will find a division of opinion. I do not know who is in favour of l.r.t. or who is in favour of the North-East Busway, or who is against it. I have not asked, nor do I believe that I should. All I can say is that there would be a division of opinion, as in any body, and the department is totally behind the project, because the officers are acting under instructions and are doing what all public servants should do, namely, the best they can for the Government of the day.

Mr. Slater: There is a reduction in the recreation and sport section of about \$329 000. In the programme papers in relation to the Loan Estimates it is stated that the reduction this year represents a decrease in the total

amount of grants to be made available to the division in 1980-81. Can the Minister state the decrease in the grants to the various bodies?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I agree that the amount looks significant, but there is a logical explanation for most of it. The former Government granted \$300 000 to the department for the construction of the Port Adelaide Recreation Centre, on the condition that that amount would be recouped from the department's loan over a couple of years, and that has happened. You are really talking about a difference of far less than that.

Mr. Slater: A difference of \$29 000.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Something like that. The level of allocation for the recreation and sport capital assistance has remained static for three years and the amount for the Port Adelaide Recreation Centre has confused the issue. You are looking at a broad amount.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): Are there any further questions? I declare the examination of this vote to be completed.

Highways, \$21 790 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard
Mr. K. C. Hamilton
Mr. G. F. Keneally
Mr. I. P. Lewis
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. H. H. O'Neill
Mr. R. J. Randall
The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. M. M. Wilson, Minister of Transport and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. F. R. Harris, General Manager, State Transport Authority.

Mr. A. K. Johnke, Commissioner of Highways.

Dr. D. Scafton, Director-General of Transport.

Mr. K. J. Collett, Chief Administration Officer, Department of Transport.

Mr. J. S. Abraham, Assistant Commissioner, Administration and Finance, Highways Department.

Mr. L. G. Watson, Senior Administration Officer, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. B. J. Taylor, Director, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. P. T. Tregoweth, Finance Officer, Department of Transport.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I realise that highways are somewhat out of bounds in the way revenue is raised, but I want to ask three questions. First, in view of the Government's policy regarding letting out contracts to private enterprise and the rate at which that is being done in other areas, is it applying in the Highways Department, for what periods are the department's term employees hired, and what is the arrangement there? To what extent does the Government plan to reduce its road gangs? If

they are being reduced, can I have any idea of how many full-time jobs there now will be lost?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Highways Department, like all other Government departments, is required to let a good deal of its work to private contractors. However, there is no way that that would be done suddenly and therefore cause problems for the Highways Department and its employees. The Commissioner and his officers can give the details later. The strategy is a three-year plan (and the Government makes no bones about it) for a swing of a substantial amount of work to go to private contract. That is major construction work mainly.

That strategy is working. I have told the Committee that no-one is to be dispensed with in the Government service, and the reduction in weekly-paid employees and all employees would take place by attrition. No-one would lose a job because of the Government's decision. The three-year strategy that the Commissioner instituted has been going for three months and he has been able to maintain a fine balance between private contracts and the work of the Highways Department. I will have to ask the Commissioner to answer regarding term employees.

Mr. Jokinke: The term employees are employed for the duration of the job for which they were originally engaged, so it would be a variable period, depending on when the individual gang that they joined was due to be disbanded. Some will take several years. It is a three-year strategy. The first departmental gang will be disbanded just prior to Christmas and will be the only gang disbanded during this financial year.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: In the light of the O'Bahn system being declared policy by the Government, how far have land acquisitions in this area progressed? I know that some houses are to be acquired. I should also like to know what arrangements are being made to relocate people and what problems it is causing.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Most of the acquisition was done in the term of office of the member's Government because of the NEAPTR scheme, which followed the same route. At the time the decision was made by the present Government, there were 30 other properties to be acquired, ranging from Tea Tree Gully to Park Terrace. The arrangements for acquisition are basically the same as under the member's Government. The facilities of the Rehousing Committee will be made available to help anyone who wishes to relocate in a specific area and in similar surroundings to those to which that person was accustomed.

I have instructed the inquiring authority, which is the State Transport Authority, that people are not to be disadvantaged either financially or on the basis of need.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: What is the present number of Highways Department houses? Were any disposed of during the previous year and will any be disposed of during 1980-81? The Minister is on the record as saying that properties now under the control of the Government generally (not only Highways) will be disposed of. What are the plans in that area?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Properties were disposed of and properties were also acquired. I do not know whether the Commissioner has the exact figures at his disposal but, as I presume the Deputy Leader would want exact figures, I will get them for him. When I announced that the Government intended to dispose of surplus properties it was just that—surplus properties, which are not required for road works or road widening, etc. The department has had to keep acquiring properties which it needs for future works, so, there will be a balance. We will let the honourable member have the figures.

Mr. O'NEILL: My question arises from the explanation

given in respect of so-called "term employees". I take it that they are people who will be hired for specific contracts. If people are referred to the department by the C.E.S. for example, for jobs, how is it decided who will get the short-term jobs and who will get the long-term ones? It seems that there is an inequity somewhere in as much as who gets the good jobs and who gets the bad ones. If there is a term job going for three months and another going for three years, who decides who will get the long-term or the short-term job? It seems a strange way of hiring people and places aspirants for jobs in a rather invidious position.

Mr. Jokinke: A lot of term employees are local people; not many come through the employment bureaux. So, it is not so much a lottery in that respect. The person usually chooses a site where he wants to go, and when he is employed in that category he is told the conditions of employment and the estimated time at which the job will terminate.

Mr. KENEALLY: I refer to the *Troubridge* crew. At the moment a film is being made called *Gallipoli*. It has been reported that the Highways Department has been contacted to see whether the *Troubridge* can be used in that film. The producers of *Gallipoli* are the notorious Mr. Murdoch and a certain Mr. Stigwood. I understand that the request has been made that the *Troubridge* and its crew be provided free of charge. Can the Minister or the Commissioner tell me whether my source of information is correct and can they give an assurance to the Committee, if it is true, that people with the undoubted resources of the Stigwoods and Murdochs of this world do not need to be subsidised by South Australian taxpayers?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It is true that the Highways has been approached, and the Commissioner will answer the question fully. However, I would remind the member for Stuart that it is more important to look at the inherent worth of the project to South Australia than to be hung up, as it were, with the principals involved.

Mr. KENEALLY: They are amongst the most affluent people around, and we are subsidising them.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I take the honourable member's point about providing a service for nothing. However, the honourable member showed some sensitivity on the question of soccer pools because the same gentleman's organisation happened to be involved. I do not believe that it is rational that one should judge the worth of a project to the people of this State on the basis of the individuals connected with it. One needs to take everything into account. Members could become obsessed and we could get to a ridiculous situation. I will ask the Commissioner to provide details on what stage negotiations have reached.

Mr. Jokinke: The company approached the Highways Department some time ago advising us of the proposed film and asking for permission to shoot some film on the ship in Port Lincoln. I asked whether such filming could be shot while the ship was in port, but this was generally not the way that they thought about it. They wanted the ship there in the evening, when the ship is not normally in Port Lincoln. I told them that we would expect the company to pick up all the additional costs involved in delaying the ship while the film was recorded. No finality has been reached but we are negotiating, and any costs which may be incurred will be recorded and debited against the firm.

Mr. KENEALLY: I thank the Commissioner of Highways for that information. I also thank the Minister for his lecture, but he has certainly not changed my views one bit. I still find it totally objectionable that the State taxpayers would be required to subsidise those companies and businesses that are well able to finance their own

operations.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I took the honourable member's point, and I did not suggest that we should do that.

Mr. KENEALLY: It would be a different argument if it was the South Australian Film Corporation rather than the people concerned, whose names I am discouraged from mentioning in this debate.

Mr. LEWIS: I note with pleasure that the South-Eastern Freeway has been open and operating successfully for some time. I am concerned about the cost of the cosmetic rehabilitation of whatever earthworks and abutments are involved along the length of the freeway and why they were necessary in certain instances.

How much have those works cost; were any of them done by private contract; could any that remain (such as tree planting, and so on) be done by private contract such as that which might be available to CITY or the Youth Action Group at Tailem Bend; and, finally, why was it necessary to grade off 1½ kilometres of naturally established grass in the area of White Hill, near Murray Bridge, apply 6 in. of sand on top of it, and then seed it, only to see it all wash away in the heavy downpour that occurred on 29 March?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I am prepared to ask the Highways Commissioner to try to cover that matter now but, if the honourable member wants the exact details, I will have to obtain them for him.

Mr. LEWIS: I should like to have this information, because Governments and the bureaucracies that support them have been pressed into pursuing a certain course of action according to agreements that they have made with pressure groups, and have not bothered to review the expenditure to be incurred in the light of developments that have arisen as a consequence of natural phenomena. This is unfortunate, and I should like to know whether it has happened (as it seems that it has), why it has happened, what it cost, and whether in future such appalling stupidity can be avoided.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I will get the honourable member a full report.

Mr. Johnke: I have a little difficulty in identifying what the honourable member is referring to as cosmetic treatment. Much landscaping work was done on the freeway in an endeavour to fit it into the landscape and to make it less obtrusive. Generally, this has worked reasonably well. Indeed, we have had a good number of compliments regarding it.

Much of the work was done by private enterprise. We engaged a hydro-mulching machine from interstate to spray the cuttings with grass seed and mulch in order to establish grass growth. Some of the tree planting is currently being done by the Woods and Forests Department. A combination of private enterprise, local government and other governmental agencies has been involved in the landscaping. I will try, as the Minister has said, to answer the honourable member's question in more detail in writing.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Highways Department, \$1 090 000

Chairman:
Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard
Mr. K. C. Hamilton
Mr. G. F. Keneally
Mr. I. P. Lewis
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. H. H. O'Neill
Mr. J. K. G. Oswald
The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. M. M. Wilson, Minister of Transport and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

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Mr. J. S. Abraham, Assistant Commissioner, Administration and Finance, Highways Department.

Mr. L. G. Watson, Senior Administration Officer, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. B. J. Taylor, Director, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. P. T. Tregoweth, Finance Officer, Department of Transport.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

Mr. KENEALLY: I would be delighted if the Minister or the Highways Commissioner could tell the Committee that this sum is to be used to divert the stormwater from Saltia Creek around Stirling and Port Augusta.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: On a point of order, is the Government's representation on the Committee in order? I see Mr. Lewis and Mr. Randall leaving and Mr. Oswald coming in. However, where is Mr. Schmidt?

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): There is no point of order. It is not necessary for any member to show himself off to the Committee when he either leaves or enters the Chamber.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I cannot say whether the Port Augusta council has requested an allocation. Because of the kind way in which we always treat the honourable member, this will no doubt be forthcoming. However, I do not know whether the Port Augusta council has made this request and, of course, that must happen first, especially as the council must pay 50 per cent of the cost of the work.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

State Transport Authority, \$8 000 000.

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard
Mr. K. C. Hamilton
Mr. G. F. Keneally
Mr. J. K. G. Oswald
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. H. H. O'Neill
Mr. I. Schmidt
The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. M. M. Wilson, Minister of Transport and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. F. R. Harris, General Manager, State Transport Authority.

Mr. A. K. Johnke, Commissioner of Highways.

Dr. D. Scrafton, Director-General of Transport.

Mr. K. J. Collett, Chief Administration Officer, Department of Transport.

Mr. J. S. Abraham, Assistant Commissioner, Administration and Finance, Highways Department.

Mr. L. G. Watson, Senior Administration Officer, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. B. J. Taylor, Director, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. P. T. Tregoweth, Finance Officer, Department of Transport.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

Mr. KENEALLY: I notice that the expenditure on such items as rolling stock, depots, workshops, and so on, has reduced dramatically, and I am fairly sure that we know the reason for this. However, it may be appropriate for the Minister or his officers to tell the reasons for the dramatic reduction in this expenditure.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The reason is that the projects involving the purchase of rolling stock and the construction of depots are all drawing to a close. That does not mean to say that there will not be any more in the future. The projects under way in those last couple of years when there was a large expenditure are now almost completed, and the amounts shown are only the tail end of the programme which remains to be paid for in the coming year. I will ask the General Manager to provide members with details.

Mr. Harris: The upgrading of bus depots that were formerly private bus depots has involved almost complete rehabilitation, including improvement of the workshops at Regency Park, at a total cost of about \$10 000 000. The 30 new rail cars cost about \$23 000 000, and much of that money has already been paid to the manufacturer as progress payments, although not all the cars have yet been delivered. A lot of the payments have been made for buses. The last order of 100 buses is to replace former private buses used in the country and on long-distance routes.

Mr. KENEALLY: None of this expenditure relates to new initiatives by the current Government. Is it the tail end of the initiatives undertaken by the previous Administration?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Yes.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I noticed in the press last week reference to a possible dispute at St. Agnes or other depots in relation to the division of Volvo buses. How many Volvo buses are presently in operation? Are more such buses ordered? If there are, how many? Has the dispute been resolved either by assurances that other buses are coming or by other assurances? How was it resolved?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I will ask the General Manager to give figures about the allocation of buses. Regarding the dispute, the Deputy Leader will know that the dispute centred around the fact that the St. Agnes depot had, until Monday last, been an exclusive Volvo depot. I am not sure when the order for 100 buses was made by my

predecessor, but the S.T.A. and the Tramways Union reached an agreement that when the new buses came on stream they would be distributed equally between the depots. However, until recently, and until the opening of the new Elizabeth depot about two or three months ago, Elizabeth did not have the facilities to service the new Volvo buses. For that reason the St. Agnes depot was left completely as a Volvo depot pending the completion of the Elizabeth depot. On its opening, it was obvious that the Elizabeth depot had to have its share of new Volvos, and that is what caused the dispute: the St. Agnes drivers thought that they were being deprived and that, as they had used the Volvos for some time, people had got used to them. Further, the North-East Road has a bus lane, and members of the depot felt that the new Volvos were far more applicable to the North-East Road and the bus lane than were the Swifts, the older buses. That is the nub of the dispute.

When it was obvious that we could not reach agreement, I asked Mr. Hedley Bachmann, whom the Deputy Leader would know well, to see whether he could arbitrate in the dispute. He spent about two weeks visiting all the depots and talking to the union as well as St. Agnes depot members. That was not successful and the St. Agnes depot held a stop-work meeting and rejected compromise terms that the authority put to the depot, which had the agreement of the Tramways Union. I then involved myself in negotiations with the depot and the Tramways Union, and last week the depot committee that I spoke with said it would talk to its members. It hoped it would be able to reach a solution this week.

The Deputy Leader would realise that last Monday 10 buses were changed over and that there was no picketing or prevention of that changeover by St. Agnes depot personnel. I can say to the Deputy Leader with the greatest confidence that the dispute is over and done with, and certainly a solution has been found at this stage. The solution, which involves better facilities at St. Agnes and other such matters, has the agreement of the union as well as members of the depot. I will ask the General Manager to comment on the distribution of buses.

Mr. Harris: Regarding the question asked by the member, there are 309 B59 buses of a type that are used on the plains services. That is the type of bus that has been transferred to the St. Agnes depot. We have had those for a few years and they are the latest type of Volvos. Additionally, we have on order 100 buses which are also Volvos. They have been painted in yellow and brown livery, with a white roof. Those 100 buses are made up of 45 express buses, 20 hills buses and 35 articulated buses. The 100 buses have been purchased to replace former private buses that were operating on the long-distance routes between Elizabeth and Adelaide and Noarlunga Centre and Adelaide, as well as in the hills areas. Those 100 buses are being used to operate those sorts of services. None is planned for St. Agnes or other metropolitan depots.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: They are in traffic?

Mr. Harris: About 40 are delivered so far, and the other 60 are still to come. The delivery of the remaining 60 buses is expected to be completed by May 1981.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: That finalises the order?

Mr. Harris: That finalises all the orders that we have placed to this time. We will be looking at replacing some of the older AEC Swifts which will have reached their retirement age of 12 years in about 1½-2 years.

Mr. HAMILTON: Regarding "Signalling and communications", I understand that the authority submitted a brief to the Minister with respect to the upgrading of equipment and that that brief was rejected. What were the reasons for

that rejection? Why were the consultants not given the okay? How far has the second brief progressed? If the Minister does not know, perhaps Mr. Harris can inform me.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I do not intend to release details of tenders to the Committee. I am sure it would be an improper thing to do. I had certain reservations about the first signalling contracts and the tenders called. I referred the matter to the authority—that is all I have done. I expect a recommendation to come from the authority soon on what it intends to do. That is all I can do. If I went further I would have to release details of the first tender.

Dr. BILLARD: My question relates to the question first asked. The Minister mentioned that there had been an agreement that the buses would be shared equally. When was that agreement reached? As the Minister would know, there was a leaflet distributed in the north-eastern suburbs in late 1978 by the then members representing that area claiming that that depot would be purely a Volvo bus depot. The agreement is in clear contradiction of what was said in that leaflet. The first figures given on the bus fleet mentioned that we have 309 Volvo buses which are used on the plains services. Why can those buses not be used in the hills? What is it about them that makes them unsuitable for use in the hills? What is it about the 35 new hills buses which makes them suitable?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: As far as the agreement is concerned, I understand, and I have seen minutes to this effect, that an agreement was reached between the former Government, the S.T.A. and the Tramways Union on the distribution of what would then have been B59 buses. I cannot give the honourable member the exact date. Therefore, I am unable to explain why a pamphlet would be distributed in that area saying, I think the honourable member said, that there had been a commitment given that it would be an all-Volvo bus depot. The agreement, as I understand, and as the Tramways Union understands, was reached in 1978. I cannot offer any explanation why it was said in the Tea Tree Gully area that it would remain a Volvo bus depot and that people out there would have air-conditioned Volkos exclusively. I will have to leave that to the honourable member's imagination.

So far as the question of the B59 buses being used on the hills route is concerned, the honourable member for Newland may have seen some of the new buses in the brown and yellow livery that the General Manager mentioned a while ago. Some of them, if he looks carefully, he will see do not have a centre door but only a front-loading door. They are a slightly different bus from the one he normally sees on routes in his own district. These buses are specially built for hills operation. The seating is designed to stop people swaying too much. There is, I understand, a super-charger in the engine to allow for acceleration up hills and to give the bus an ability to manoeuvre which is considerably improved on the larger buses that the honourable members sees from day to day. The buses are also narrower, being 8 feet 2½ inches wide as against 8 feet 6 inches for the B59 Volkos. The General Manager has passed me a note stating that the transmission on the B59 buses, the one the honourable member probably sometimes uses, is designed only for plains work, as it is only a two-speed gearbox.

Mr. O'NEILL: It is stated in the programme papers, the yellow inaccurate document, that a substantial part of the cost of 30 new rail cars has been paid already to the manufacturer. What constitutes a "substantial part", what percentage of the cost is that? We see that six rail cars have been delivered, which I believe is 20 per cent of the total delivery. If the payment is more than 20 per cent so far, is

it usual to pay for equipment before it is received?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I will get the General Manager to provide the honourable member with those details.

Mr. Harris: I do not know the exact proportion or the cost which has been paid, but the total estimated cost of the project is \$23 000 000. A lot of the parts used in the new rail cars, including the engines and transmissions, are imported from Germany. Under the terms of the contract we have with the manufacturer, Commonwealth Engineering in Sydney, we paid the cost of some of those engines when they were brought into Australia rather than when the rail cars were delivered. As a result of that, we have paid more than one-third of the cost of the cars even though only one-third of the cars have been delivered. We have been making progress payments, in effect, in accordance with value of the materials brought in from overseas and are making progress payments in accordance with work being done, then making the final payment less the retention money when the cars are delivered.

Mr. OSWALD: There is an amount of \$8 000 000 referred to for advances for capital purposes. Has any provision been made in that amount for the upgrading of the Glenelg tram line or any facilities along that tram line, and is there any provision in that amount for the continuation of the present project to provide further boarding ramps along the tram line?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The upgrading of the Glenelg tram line is to continue, but it will be paid out of the maintenance line. The question of the boarding ramps, which I must say the honourable member first brought to my attention, is being investigated by the Authority. I believe that a trial ramp is in operation. I am informed by not only the General Manager, but by the Traffic Manager, Bus and Tram, at the S.T.A., that it is proving remarkably successful, so we are going to have a look at what we can do to extend that.

Mr. KENEALLY: There is no line under the Loan Estimates for capital expenditure on the new guided busway. Can the Minister tell the Committee when he anticipates that Parliament will have the advantage of debating the capital expenditure on that project?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The line is there now and is for \$10 000 000. If the honourable member wishes to say something about it he can now speak about it.

Mr. KENEALLY: For 1980-81 nothing is proposed.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The honourable member wants this year's figure. I point out that that transfer was made at the end of the last financial year, which was just before 1 July. It was made because it was part of the Government surplus.

The Minister will recall when the Treasurer transferred part of the Government's \$30 000 000 to the S.T.A. for the north-east transport project and that is why the amount shows for 1979-80.

Mr. KENEALLY: We can anticipate \$10 000 000 worth of capital works on the guided busway this year?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I do not think the member can anticipate that. He can anticipate a goodly sum being spent on some of the things I outlined to the Deputy Leader. They would be primarily design, acquisition of houses, and the river development. I doubt that we will see much construction this financial year.

Mr. HAMILTON: I think a new North Haven railway station is to be commenced in 1981.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I understand so.

Mr. HAMILTON: Can the Minister tell me whether the circle rail link around to the Outer Harbor station from this new station will be closed? If it will be, has the Australian National Railways negotiated with the S.T.A. about the land and what remuneration will be received by

the State Government for the use of that land?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: There is no present intention to close the route. Certainly, no decision has been made. If a decision is made or is intended to be made at some stage, we will let the member know.

Mr. HAMILTON: I would like to know whether the new North Haven station is to be a bus-rail interchange or just a railway station.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It is not to be a bus-rail interchange.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): Are there any further questions? There being no further questions on the vote, I declare examination of the vote complete.

Minister of Transport and Minister of Recreation and Sport, Miscellaneous, \$52 899 000

Chairman:

Mr. E. K. Russack

Members:

Dr. B. Billard
Mr. G. F. Keneally
Mr. J. Mathwin
Mr. H. H. O'Neill
Mr. J. K. G. Oswald
Mr. I. Schmidt
Mr. J. W. Slater
The Hon. J. D. Wright

Witness:

The Hon. M. M. Wilson, Minister of Transport and Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr. F. R. Harris, General Manager, State Transport Authority.

Mr. A. K. Johnke, Commissioner of Highways.

Dr. D. Scafton, Director-General of Transport.

Mr. K. J. Collett, Chief Administration Officer, Department of Transport.

Mr. J. S. Abraham, Assistant Commissioner, Administration and Finance, Highways Department.

Mr. L. G. Watson, Senior Administration Officer, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. B. J. Taylor, Director, Recreation and Sport Division.

Mr. P. T. Tregoweth, Finance Officer, Department of Transport.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr. Mathwin): I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: What is the estimated number of passengers to be carried this year on S.T.A. buses, how does this compare with the number in 1979-80, and what was the percentage growth for 1979-80 over the previous year?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I think we carried 73 000 000 passengers this year. I cannot at this stage give the number projected for next year. There is no doubt that, in the opinion of the authority, we are seeing a change to public transport, which I think all honourable members would have projected over the past few years. I do not mind admitting that, on one or two occasions in the past 12 months, we have been embarrassed by the patronage we have had on one or two runs and we have acted to see that that does not happen again.

I believe there has been an 8 per cent reduction in petrol sales over the past few months and this has shown itself in increased patronage of public transport. It means many future problems for the State. Every country is facing the serious problem that there will be a large swing to public transport. We should encourage it. The Government believes in encouraging it but it has severe effects on the exchequer and has to be watched carefully. We must be sure we spend our money on the right things. I ask Mr. Harris to comment on the figures.

Mr. Harris: I have not the figures here but we can supply them. The Minister is correct in saying that we carried about 75 000 000 last year, and we expect an increase of about 3 per cent this year. The basis for expecting the increase is that we found it necessary to put on more buses, particularly long-distance ones, such as from Noarlunga and the Adelaide Hills area. There has also been an increase in the number of train passengers and we have had to add carriages to the trains. It is increasing and we believe it will continue this year.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: You cannot give the percentage growth?

Mr. Harris: No, but I will supply it.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Does the Government intend to apply the "user pays" principle for S.T.A. travel? If not, what proportion of costs does the Government seek to achieve from fares?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The Government does not intend to apply fully the "user pays" principle. The Government increased public transport fares as a service to the community that must be subsidised by the community. I remind the Deputy Leader that, when he was in Government, the cost recovery of fares in relation to operating costs was over 40 per cent at one stage.

I now believe that that figure is down below 30 per cent I am not sure that this takes into account interest and depreciation, in which case the cost recovery would be less and we would be looking at a figure under 25 per cent.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: That ought to be done accurately and not by guesswork. If what the Minister is saying is true, he ought to prove it.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I do not have the figures in front of me. I will be happy to get the exact figures. The reason I said that was that the Deputy Leader's question is extremely important and represents the most serious dilemma that any nation or State faces in transport at this time; that is, that we should have, and should encourage people to use, public transport but the cost recovery keeps reducing. One must either decide to go completely to a free-fare system (and that is not as simple as it sounds) or one has to maintain some balance in cost recovery. At the moment that is what the Government is trying to do. We are going to have train, tram and bus fares and I do not believe that any responsible Government can allow the cost recovery percentage to go on decreasing year after year without doing anything about it. That does not mean that it has to go up to 60 per cent (which is what it has been in the past) but we must strike a reasonable balance, and that is what the Government has tried to do. With the last fare increase, it tried to achieve something to help the system at some cost while encouraging some riders to travel in off-peak periods, which is more economical. There are things in the Auditor-General's Report which relate to that, but I will collate the information and figures for the honourable member and let him have them.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: As I understand it, the Minister said that it allowed him to give better concessions in off-peak periods. The Minister is aware that from people in the Unemployed Workers Union and from some pensioners I have received complaints persistently that the

system now operating is not to the best of their advantage. What research or inquiry was done before the policy was changed? It seems that, if we are going to change the policy, these people who are going to be affected by it and involved in it should be given the opportunity to make some submissions.

The Minister is aware that I have spoken to him and he has already knocked back seeing the Unemployed Workers Union Representatives; that was not the proper action to take. I asked whether he would receive a deputation from them led by myself. Will the Minister tell me what research was done that gave him an indication that the policy ought to be changed?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The research was done in my department. The estimated cost to the Government of applying free off-peak travel to unemployed people was to increase the Community Welfare Department's payment to the S.T.A. from \$500 000 to nearly \$700 000—in fact, a little more. How the Deputy Leader can say that no benefit would accrue to unemployed people, I fail to see. I did not consult the Unemployed Workers Union before I made the decision and took it to Cabinet. I believe that it was a humane thing to do.

I believe that it will cost unemployed people a great deal less over a 12-month period to receive this facility of free off-peak travel than it would have in the situation that applied before fare changes were made. The Deputy Leader makes the point that sometimes when unemployed people have to go for job interviews they have not got time to go around to the Department of Social Security and get a voucher which will entitle them to free travel on public transport. I agree that that is so.

However, unemployed people do not always travel in peak hours; they travel in non-peak hours also, and, when they do, they travel for nothing, whether they are going for a job interview or into the city for some other purpose. I find it hard to understand how people can say that, because unemployed people will have to pay 20c if they do not have their Department of Social Security voucher in peak hours, they will not be better off over the whole year when they receive free off-peak travel.

I did not refuse flatly to see the Unemployed Workers Union. I told them that, if they came to see me, I would not alter my decision because the Government had made a decision, which has been implemented. However, if the Deputy Leader wishes to lead a delegation to see me, I will see that delegation, just as I see any delegation that any member of Parliament wishes to bring to me.

In reply to the Deputy Leader's specific question, I did not consult with the Unemployed Workers Union or the pensioners before a decision was made. However, there is no doubt in my mind from the reports that have flowed in that the decision is a very popular one as far as the Government is concerned.

Mr. SCHMIDT: I refer to the allocation for the Bicycle Track Fund. Last year, \$21 029 was actually spent in this regard, whereas this year \$50 000 has been allocated. Will the Minister say how this money was used last year and how it is proposed to be used this year?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The proposed \$50 000 allocation for 1980-81 represents a total of \$150 000 that is to be spent, because this is a three-way split. In other words, local government will pick up the tab for \$50 000, the Department of Transport will provide \$50 000, and the Highways Department will provide the remaining \$50 000.

Details of the specific allocation of funds from the Bicycle Track Fund would appear under the names of the various councils in the metropolitan area (I should think almost exclusively). I would have to get details of the councils involved and the projects for which they were

given the money.

Also, the Government is considering its policy in relation to bicycles at present, especially in relation to whether any alteration should be made regarding the Bicycle Track Fund. I take the opportunity of complimenting the honourable member, who has shown a great interest in the provision of bicycle tracks, and so on, and who has gone to much trouble to acquaint himself with the problems that are involved. We are giving serious consideration to altering the present situation, and I hope that an announcement will be made in the not too distant future.

Suffice to say that thinking in relation to bicycle track planning is moving away from just providing a track through parklands or allocating a special bit of highway. It is realised that this will not achieve the desired objective. Thinking is moving towards providing a bicycle plan that delineates certain streets that adults and especially children, who are at great risk, can use to get from one point to another.

Obviously, with the implementation of such a plan, there has to be implementation of enforcement, safety and similar matters. They have to be combined, and the Government is working on that at the moment. The bicycle track plan is lodged with the Highways Department, and the Bicycle Track Committee includes representation from the community. In fact, the Commissioner and I are in the process of discussion at the moment.

Mr. SLATER: I refer to grants to the Adelaide Highland Games, which were voted \$3 000 last year, and the South Australian Amateur Swimming Association, which was allocated \$6 500 last year. Why is there no allocation this year?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: It was a very difficult decision to make to remove these lines from the Budget. Both organisations had received the amount shown for some years. The South Australian Amateur Swimming Association originally received a grant because it provided the personnel and organisation for the learn-to-swim campaign when it first started. That grant was made to the association for its services to the community, and so it should have been made.

The organisation provided a service to and on behalf of the community, and it should be helped by the community. However, it is many years since the association has been involved with that campaign, which is now run by the Education Department. The association has continued to receive the grant, which it has put towards administration since that time. Similarly, the Highland Games received \$3 000. It is very important, when one is looking at money for recreation and sport, that any grants for recurrent expenditure should be evaluated carefully as to their purpose.

Once one starts providing funds for recurrent expenditure, as honourable members realise, the recreation and sport treasury would soon empty. While one can provide many organisations with money under capital assistance and capital and equipment grants, as well as coaching programmes and the like, one can do that because it can be given to some organisations in one year and other organisations in the next year; it can be given to country sporting clubs in one year and other sporting clubs in the next year. If the department is going to commit itself to recurrent expenditure for anything, then it must do so for carefully considered reasons.

I said to the South Australian Amateur Swimming Association in particular that I would not see it short of funds in the next 12 months or even the following 12 months. In other words, if it was making submissions to

me for coaching programmes and the like, I would certainly consider it favourably, but I would have to take away its budgeted recurrent grant. I did that because I did not want the association to be caught short on any funds it had budgeted for, in order to give it a chance to rearrange its affairs. If it wants to put in applications to me for assistance or facility grants, we would be happy to consider them. Recurrent expenditure is something that the Government cannot apply. However, I should mention that grants are being provided for the Royal Life Saving Society and the Surf Life Saving Association.

Those organisations provide a service to the public with which the Government should assist. It is like the service that was supplied to the public of South Australia by the Swimming Association when it ran the learn-to-swim campaign. The Surf Life Saving Association and the Royal Lifesaving Society supply a significant service to the people of South Australia, and they save many lives. I am sure that nobody in the community would question their right, and the necessity, to receive grants of that type.

Dr. BILLARD: If the Deputy Leader looks at page 376 of the Auditor-General's Report, he can work out that, in 1979, 34.6 per cent of operating costs were recovered in income and, in 1980, 27.2 per cent, so the figure was dropping. My question relates to the distribution of costs between trains and buses. I am wondering, with the increasing number of passengers, how the marginal cost of catering for these extra passengers compares as between a bus system and a train system. I am speaking of the marginal cost per passenger for providing the extra service needed to cope.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I understand that the marginal cost of carrying a passenger before the fare change was \$2.40 less 40c for the fare, so the taxpayer was subsidising every train passenger by some \$2. If I remember correctly, the bus figures before the fare change was just over \$1 less 40c average fare at that stage, and so the subsidy was 60c to carry a passenger. If the General Manager has any more recent figures, I ask him to provide them.

Mr. Harris: The question may relate to a different aspect. If it is necessary for us to increase the consists of trains because more passengers are carried, it means hooking on another rail car, and the cost of operating that additional car may be comparatively small, depending on the size of the consist, because you may not need any more staff and the marginal cost would be the cost of fuel and maintenance of that car. However, when you get to the stage where more passengers are being carried and another bus is needed it requires another driver, because buses are not hooked together like a train consist. Maybe the marginal cost of carrying passengers on buses is more than carrying them on trains. I think we want to look at the figures.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Does the Government intend to reduce the number of staff in the rail and tram services and, if so, will he identify those areas in which this will occur? I cite as an example maintenance, particularly.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I am not aware of any proposed reduction in the maintenance personnel of the authority. The only reduction in staff in a particular area that I am aware of is in the Catering and Trading Division of the State Transport Authority, but that is probably not the area to which the Deputy Leader is referring.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I have that in mind for a further question, but the Minister might answer that now.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: Following a report on the Catering and Trading Division, the Government decided it should be retained.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: What alternative employment has been offered or will be offered to those in the

Catering Division?

Mr. Harris: A number of people have been transferred from the catering section to other S.T.A. areas of operation. Some women who were working in that area went as cleaners in bus depots. Other girls have been transferred to clerical positions in the Administration Branch, and one barman has been transferred to act as a rolling stock assistant in the Lonsdale depot. They have been offered a variety of jobs. I think everyone transferred is happy in the new vocation.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Has the Government plans to end the Roadliner charter service, and what staff will be employed in 1980-81 compared to 1979-80?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: In its early days the Government made plain that it did not see S.T.A. as being in competition with the private sector in tour or chartering work. However, no decision was taken. Investigations were made, as in the Catering Division. A similar exercise has been taken with Roadliner, and it is an operation that the authority has expressed a wish to retain. The Government has listened to the authority, which had decided that Roadliner should get out of tour work and remain in the charter business. I understand that at present it does a lot of work in chartering buses to private users. The General Manager informs me that there has been no change as between last year and this year, and no change is expected.

Mr. SLATER: What is the application of the \$50 000 for the Mount Gambier Racing Club?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: On coming to office, we understood there was a commitment from the previous Government to the club to help rebuild the grandstand, which caught fire about 15 or 16 months ago. We gave this matter a great deal of consideration, as with the Road Safety Centre, and decided that we should provide a special grant of \$50 000 to help the club with the rebuilding of the grandstand. There was also \$25 000 made available from the Racecourse Development Fund.

Mr. OSWALD: I refer to the line "Transport Concessions—Incapacitated persons". There is an increase from \$87 900 up to \$110 000. Will the Minister give us some indication of the area in which that increase has taken place and give us some idea as to whether the Government is considering any further areas where concessions could be granted to incapacitated people?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: The figure that the member for Morphett mentioned is a figure that was struck after discussion between the authority and Treasury. Treasury recoups the S.T.A. with the difference between the concession fare and the normal fare paid. It is an arbitrary figure struck at the beginning of each financial year based on previous records. At the end of the year it is adjusted. It is the only way that it can be done. It has been complicated this year because of changes in public transport fares.

On the question of concessions generally, I have to say that South Australia provides the most generous public transport fare concessions in the whole of Australia. That does not mean that we should not look at further concessions. The Government has already shown that it is prepared to do something by the provision of free off-peak travel for pensioners and unemployed people. Certainly I am aware that the honourable member has made certain representations for concessions in other areas through the Motor Registration Division for some disadvantaged people in the community, and I appreciate the work that he has done on that. At this stage I can say quite confidently that the Government is prepared to review transport concessions with a view to seeing whether additional categories can be added. I also have to sound a

warning that we already provide the largest amount of transport concessions in Australia.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: I have had a frank and honest admission by the member for Newland that he is a scientist and not a mathematician, and therefore the advice he offered me earlier was wrong. Will the Minister say whether the Revenue Account expenditure on Railways is to decline while expenditure on bus and tram services is to rise? If so, what are the reasons? If the rail allocation is to fall, does that mean that there is expected to be a large increase in rail passengers, or is there to be a cost-cutting exercise resulting in a reduction in rail services?

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: I cannot answer in exact figures. I guess that the honourable member is asking whether there will be a deliberate phasing down in railway services in favour of bus services.

The Hon. J. D. WRIGHT: Yes.

The Hon. M. M. Wilson: There is no policy of that kind at all. I would not regard that as equitable or desirable. I will ask Mr. Harris to comment.

Mr. Harris: The deficit or contribution made by Treasury to S.T.A. represents the difference between our total cost and our total income each year and amounts to something like \$53 000 000 or \$55 000 000 for this year. It

is the total amount we lose on tram, bus and train operations, and it is difficult to allocate the exact amount that applies to bus operations and train operations which have a lot of common costs and which can only be allocated on an arbitrary basis; for example, the administration costs. The exact figures are not therefore obtainable and can only be obtained on an apportionment basis. As the Minister has said, there has been no intention in the past and no proposals in the future to phase down railway operations in favour of bus operations.

In fact, we are buying 30 new rail cars worth \$23 000 000, and these will be kept in addition to the existing rail cars, so that we will have more rail cars to cater for the additional passengers who use our rail services.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The time having expired, the examination of this vote is concluded.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.31 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Tuesday 7 October at 11 a.m.