

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 17 September 1987

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Chairperson:
Ms D.L. Gayler

Members:
Mr D.S. Baker
Mr M.G. Duigan
Mr G.M. Gunn
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Ms S.M. Lenehan
Mr E.J. Meier

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

The CHAIRPERSON: The procedure to be adopted will be relatively informal. There is no need to stand to ask or answer questions. The Committee will determine the approximate timetable for consideration of proposed payments, to facilitate the changeover of departmental advisers. Changes to the composition of the Committee should be notified to the Clerk as they occur. If the Minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be in a form that is suitable for insertion in *Hansard*, and it must be submitted, at the latest, by 2 October.

I propose to allow the lead speaker for the Opposition and the Minister to make opening statements, for about 10 minutes, if they so wish. The Committee will take a flexible approach to giving the call for the asking of questions, based on about three questions per member and alternating sides. Members will also be allowed to ask one brief supplementary question to conclude a line of questioning.

Subject to the convenience of the Committee, a member outside the Committee who wishes to ask a question will be able to do so once Committee members have exhausted a line of questioning. An indication in advance by members outside the Committee would be appreciated.

Questions should be based on lines of expenditure as revealed in the Estimates of Payments; however, reference may also be made to other documents, such as the Program Estimates and the Auditor-General's Report. The Minister will be asked to introduce advisers prior to commencement and at any changeover. Questions are to be directed through the Chair to the Minister and not to advisers but, of course, the Minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. I now call on the lead speaker for the Opposition to make an opening statement, if he so wishes.

Mr GUNN: The Opposition looks forward to the discussions. We do not have an opening statement to make, as there are many matters that we wish to raise in seeking information from the Government in relation to the dept and agriculture in general in this State. We shall be asking these questions against a background of the difficult period that most rural producers have faced, except those in wool, during the past 12 months. I think the exercise can better be served by commencing to ask questions.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: With your approval, Madam Chair, I would like to suggest to the Committee that it might be helpful to its deliberations if I were to give a short statement introducing the agriculture portfolio estimates which are about to be reviewed. In 1987-88, the department's main aim will be to continue to provide high priority, front line service to the farming community. This year's

total recurrent State allocation of \$64.5 million is considerably higher than the actual expenditure of \$48.5 million in 1986-87. This is because \$18.3 million of Commonwealth funds and Rural Industry Research Funds previously made available directly into a departmental trust account is now required to be put through the State's Consolidated Account as per the new Public Finance and Audit Act.

Adjusting for this, the resulting sum of \$46.2 m constitutes a reduction of \$2.3 m in the estimates for recurrent expenditure in 1987-88. This reduction mainly represents the virtual completion of the vine pull scheme, the winding down of BTB operations, full year effect of efficiency measures introduced in 1986-87, as well as further savings, the Commonwealth taking direct responsibility for the financial transactions relating to its meat inspection activities, somewhat offset by increased allocation in 1987-88 to combat plague locusts, CPI increases, and increased allocation for compensation and freight rebate relating to the BTEC scheme.

The estimated expenditure from all funding sources in the 1987-88 financial year is \$129.3 million, which includes \$25 million from Commonwealth Government and rural industry sources; \$1.2 million expenditure for development under the research centre redevelopment program; and a proposed rural lending program totalling about \$20 million.

A number of expenditure items incorporated within the various programs of the department in 1986-87 have been identified separately under the Minister of Agriculture Miscellaneous line in 1987-88, thus reverting back to the format as it existed prior to 1986-87. This reversal to the original format was undertaken in concurrence with Treasury, as it would assist in a truer representation of expenditure within the Agriculture portfolio, between those items of expenditure largely controlled through the Department of Agriculture as against those which are directly under the Minister's control.

Additional funding was required in 1986-87 to meet the cost of fruit fly outbreak of \$152 000; increased terminal leave payments of \$350 000; net salary overrun of \$132 000; and for expenditure of the joint Commonwealth/State vine pull scheme of \$368 000. This expenditure was more than offset, by a reduction in expenditure of \$5.037 million payable to SAFA for debt servicing in respect of natural disaster relief; a reduction in expenditure of \$450 000 due to the Commonwealth taking direct responsibility for its meat inspection activities; and savings of \$150 000 in the operating expenditure of the bovine brucellosis and tuberculosis eradication program.

Again, the department has undertaken a rigorous review of the deployment of human resources in line with changing needs and priorities. This is in line with the Government's strategy for more effective use of the Public Service work force, and the consequent rationalisation and reallocation of resources is reflected in the Program Estimates. Fruitful consultative mechanisms have been established with the PSA in order to effect these changes smoothly.

The proposed allocation in 1987-88 will enable the Government to undertake a number of new initiatives largely through a redirection of resources. The level of rural lending which was at an all time high in 1986-87 is expected to be at a reduced level, given preliminary indications from the Government budget. Therefore, the total allocation will include \$7.4 million for commercial loans where loans of up to \$250 000 will be available to viable rural ventures. The allocation for 1987-88 also provides for committed carry-over funding for the vine pull scheme.

The department will place a greater emphasis in the provision of enhanced farm business management advice and

counselling services to farm families under financial pressure. The newly formed Rural Affairs Unit within the department, including a rural women's desk, will complement regional counselling services and the activities of the team implementing the Governments social justice strategy. Already some 20 initiatives have been taken by the department specifically aimed at alleviating the effects of the downturn in parts of rural South Australia.

Research centre redevelopment activities are proceeding satisfactorily. The concept of a field crops improvement centre to be established at Northfield will advance a significant step with funds set aside for the design and documentation of the facility. Following the purchase of land in the Southern Hills area, the establishment of the Flaxley Research Centre will be a step closer with \$1 million being earmarked in 1987-88 for the development of the property including buildings. Proposals to develop specific facilities at the centre of excellence for wool and sheep research at Turretfield are also in hand following the recent appointment of the leader of the centre.

In the following two years the Department of Agriculture will make a significant contribution to the inter-departmental Mount Lofty management strategy review. In that time, the department's input into this project will exceed \$1.2 million to be achieved through a reallocation of resources. Inevitably some of the normal extension services to farmers in the region will be curtailed and discussions are being held with a view to alleviating the problem as best as it can be. Minor reductions and rationalisation of services are proposed mainly in the dairy technology and poultry industry services, Statewide provision of diagnostic services, some regulatory operations and accommodation requirements of head office staff in the Adelaide Central Business District.

Briefly, there are two other significant issues confronting the Agriculture portfolio. One relates to the impending locusts plague, and the other to chemical residues in livestock products. An amount of \$650 000 has already been included in the estimates to combat plague locusts, with Cabinet recently approving a further \$650 000 towards operating expenditure. Twenty-nine departmental officers together with farmers in the affected areas will form the task force combating the plague.

Detection of pesticides in meat threatens the future of our export and domestic markets worth an estimated \$25 million to South Australia. The department is currently monitoring the situation and has already redirected resources from other advisory, research and regulatory activities to address this situation. I thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide a brief resume of the agricultural portfolio estimate.

Agriculture, \$47 702 000

Minister of Agriculture, Miscellaneous, \$16 794 000

Witness:

The Hon. M. K. Mayes, Minister of Agriculture

Departmental Advisers:

Dr J.C. Radcliffe, Director-General, Department of Agriculture.

Mr R.V. Srinivasan, Director, Support Services.

Dr B.L. Wilson, Director, Animal Services.

Ms M.V. O'Brien, Senior Agricultural Scientist, Planning.

Mr B.J.R. Handscombe, Principal Rural Assistance Officer.

Mr M. Sausse, Acting General Manager, Samcor.

Mr I. Will, Corporation Secretary, Samcor.

The CHAIRPERSON: I declare the proposed payments open for examination.

Mr GUNN: I will raise the current financial position of Samcor. I note on page 19 of the Auditor-General's Report that in 1986 there was a transfer to the Samcor deficit fund of \$3 107 000. This year it appears that has increased by about \$90 000. There was very little information in the Auditor-General's Report about Samcor. Samcor's annual report has not yet been presented, but I take it from those figures that there has been a relative improvement in its financial situation.

Can the Minister advise on Samcor's actual financial position for the past 12 months? In December last year a press headline read 'Samcor loss nudges \$1 million after early spurt'. I recall the discussions that took place here last year when the report into the operations of Samcor was discussed at some length, and I questioned the Minister about the recommendations to improve Samcor's operations. I remember, for example, that the report recommended that the number of foremen be reduced from 17 to nine. Can the Minister advise what steps the board has taken to implement the recommendations of that report?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The question of debt servicing is not directly related to Samcor. It is a question of the Government taking over the debt and the relationship between interest rates increasing and the increased debt servicing charge. That would account for the figure to which the honourable member has referred. That would account for the figure to which the honourable member first referred.

The final report on the overall operation of Samcor is not yet available. However, as I understand the situation, the operation of Samcor will be much improved on the previous year. It is hoped that there will be a significant turnaround in the situation, given two factors: the seasonal factor and the implementation of a number of recommendations contained in the triennial review report. I am informed that the accounts have been audited and that the report will be presented to Parliament shortly. A profit of about \$500 000 has been made on last year's operation, which is effectively a \$1.4 million turnaround. It may even be slightly better than that.

The honourable member referred to the supervisors structure. I understand that negotiations have been finalised and that the number of supervisors in the maintenance area has been reduced to nine. There has been a reduction in the number of foremen in other areas, but that is a flexible arrangement, not a fixed arrangement as in the maintenance section. This arrangement is related more to the operation of the works. I am assured by the board that all the major recommendations of the triennial review committee have been instituted and initiated, some having been finalised. The combination of a good season and improved initiatives on the part of management at Samcor have led to a turnaround in the situation, which is good news for Samcor and South Australia.

Mr GUNN: In relation to the future operations of Samcor, in particular the old plant which is now not operational, what plan does the board have for that asset, and what arrangements will be made for the continuation of the saleyards at Samcor? Are the saleyards going to be renewed or reallocated, because some concern has been expressed about suggestions that have been made for their future use?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The question in relation to equipment has been solved, the old plant having been stripped. A feasibility study is currently being undertaken in relation to the use and location of the saleyards. That report should be available within a couple of months. A recommendation

has been made to the board about the location of the saleyards.

Mr GUNN: Does the board or the Government have any plans to dispose of any of the existing land over which Samcor has control, or will it be necessary for the board to maintain the existing holdings that are presently on the site?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: No, the board has not contemplated any future sales and I think it would be fair to say that it is probably down to little flesh on the bone at this stage, given the proposal to relocate the East End Market, and so on, to those other areas.

Mr KLUNDER: In relation to general staffing, I refer to pages 536 to 538 of the yellow book. Last year the total staffing for all programs was intended to be 896.3 and it turned out to be 910.3. I notice that that increase in staff has been compensated for by a decrease in agency support services where the staffing numbers dropped from 168 to 153.6 in the Minister's office. Can the Minister indicate whether that was a transfer of function, or was it just people being paid under a different heading?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: In the opening remarks I made some reference to the fact that we are endeavouring to put more emphasis on the extension services and that is part of a transfer of effort from the so-called administrative to the extension services, so we are seeing a maintenance of our services out in the field at the farm gate as against a reduction of some of our clerical support staff in the administrative environment within the central business district in particular.

Mr KLUNDER: There has been a reduction in support services as distinct from paying for those services under a different line. Can the Minister indicate whether the reduction in the Minister's office staff has been in the EO, the AO or the CO range?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: In relation to the previous question, over the past two years in the management services area we have seen a reduction in full-time equivalents from 21 to 13 and that relates to support facilities within management services. That gives a clearer picture of what has happened within the department. In relation to services to the rural community, that means that when we have a problem with rural assistance or an inquiry for technical advice within the department, we cannot respond as quickly and that puts added pressure on the officers involved. I think all officers here would testify to that fact.

In certain parts of the State, when there is a crisis situation, with that limited and still reducing number of officers, we are still expected to give a greater response in a shorter time. I do not think that the public have appreciated that whole dilemma. There is an increasing demand for reduced taxation and a reduced Government deficit, but at the same time there is an increasing demand for extra services and the two just cannot be matched. We are facing a situation in which we find that our staff are getting worked into the ground because of the demands and we should not expect people in a crisis situation to wait eight weeks for us to reply to a particular issue, when that time delay may have a bearing on whether or not they survive.

As Minister I do not get to see this that often at first hand, but I certainly get day-to-day reports and bump into people who are involved in the department who say the pressure is becoming enormous, whether on a CO1 clerk or scientific officer. It is worth recording the problems facing the department in providing an increased demand for services with a reduced facility to provide those services.

Mr KLUNDER: I certainly appreciate the Minister's dilemma and I am sure that other members of the Com-

mittee do also. What has been the reduction in the various classifications—EO, AO and CO—in his office?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I am sure that all members know there is a memo from the Premier regarding the ratio of EO and AO in relation to other categories in terms of, I suppose, reducing the top heaviness of departments. Let me say one thing about agriculture. The Director-General may want to comment further about this, but included in this ratio we have the scientific officer range which, in a technically oriented department, tends to work against us in the sense of meeting that ratio.

Again, the same argument with regard to the administrative and support services applies, because we face a situation in which we are required to meet a certain ratio between EO and AO or like categories to our other officer categories. Our reduced capacity in terms of providing those services is further reduced because we have to meet that ratio for those other ranges of technical and skilled officers. When it comes to what has predominantly been a technically oriented department in terms of its industry relationship, we have seen quite a significant reduction in our capacity to meet those ever increasing demands. We are looking at new horizons which I am sure we will touch on.

Dr Radcliffe: The problem we face in this regard is the fact that AO, EO and equivalent is an aggregation of a category of classifications. It is my understanding that the thrust of this policy is to encourage better management by reducing the number of senior officers. However, the end equivalent area is the area that causes us a problem, because that includes scientific officers at the level of SO2 and above. Scientific officers might, with reasonable levels of skill and performance, be expected to get into the SO2 classification within say five or six years of graduation, so the majority of our research officers and extension staff are in the AO, EO and equivalent category.

Therefore, we are faced with a dilemma of attempting to reduce numbers in that category whilst, on the other hand, as officers develop in their careers, they actually find their way into that category. About the only strategies that we have are, first, to reduce the number of actual administrative officers and executive officers, which is, as I understand it, the basic thrust of the program, and we are doing that and have reduced several positions in senior management. On the other hand, we want as far as we can to maintain the quality of our scientific staff.

If a senior position in a career range at, say, SO3 becomes vacant, we may reclassify that to SO1 to bring in some new blood to the organisation, and that is a mechanism which can to some extent help meet the objectives of the Government in achieving its reductions in AO, EO and equivalent. It is a double edged sword from management's viewpoint because we are not necessarily wanting to reduce the technical competence level of experience in the scientific staff we employ in the department who are primarily the research staff and front line experienced extension staff.

Mr KLUNDER: The answer is far more wide ranging than the one I wanted, and it is not specific enough to satisfy me. I want to know whether the reduction in the Minister's office consists of EO, AO, or CO staff and, if all of those, in what proportion?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I apologise for going a bit wider than requested. We have allocated on the ratio an allowance of 283.2 full time equivalents, and we are now standing at 285.1 FTEs for the AO1 above category. For the last period we had 15 FTE EO1 equivalent level or above, and 285 FTE AO1 equivalent level or above. The 285 includes the 15 FTE EO1 equivalents or above.

Mr KLUNDER: I am concerned purely about the reduction in the Minister's office of 168 down to 153 (page 538), and I want to know in which particular categories the reduction of 14.4 staff has occurred. Out of which ranges did those staff come?

The CHAIRPERSON: I understand that the question relates to the Minister's office rather than the department.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is not only the Minister's office; there is no reduction in the Minister's office, as shown on page 538.

Mr KLUNDER: I meant the executive, professional, clerical, and administrative staff in the inter agency support service.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: As I have already highlighted, the figure of 168 to 148.7 in relation to the executive, professional, technical, administrative and clerical support, shown at page 38, is reflected by the management services area. That is the major change.

Mr GUNN: Can the Minister say whether the Samcor board or the Government have any plans to further rationalise the operation of Samcor, and whether any consideration has been given to either commercialising or privatising the whole or any part of the operations of Samcor?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: In essence, Samcor's brief is to be run as a commercial organisation: that was established well before I became Minister responsible. Given the figures—and I am sure that we shall enjoy seeing the report and having the opportunity to absorb the contents, and at this stage I am in the same position as the honourable member—it would seem that the philosophy that has been passed on to Samcor has been adopted by the board, and I think it has been further adopted in terms of its commercial operation. There is now a significant difference in the style of operation of Samcor to that which existed, say, 20 years ago: in some ways I think probably to the betterment of the whole operation. No plans are afoot concerning any privatisation or rationalisation.

I highlighted last year, and I have made numerous comments about this in response to questions in the House from the honourable member, that the problem concerns the ongoing survival of Samcor. I am sure that the Government would be loath to see anything happen to it but, if the crunch comes in terms of its overall operation, I do not think any Minister would be able to defend the situation, if losses became horrendous. What figure should apply and when that decision would be made, I really would not like to speculate on.

At this stage I am more than delighted to hear from the Acting General Manager that we are likely to see a \$0.5 million profit for the year's operations. There might be factors outside the general control of Government, the management, or the board, in achieving the desired result, but it would seem to me that, if we can continue in that sort of vein, we will have Samcor for a long time and it will be able to continue to service South Australia. I see it as being a very important service facility to the community.

A possible almost monopolistic control of export and domestic abattoirs in this State (apart from the slaughterhouses and local killing facilities; I am talking of the larger slaughtering facilities) would be quite threatening and we would not like to have a situation with one individual company controlling all slaughtering facilities for export and domestic purposes. I think that puts another perspective on the whole situation in terms of any decision that the Government would have to make—and it is one which, fortunately, we have not had to contemplate. I have certainly thought about it and I have talked to the board about it. The board has considered the matter and has looked at

numerous contingency plans. We had a contingency plan to cover the eventuality of the situation with Holco and the Adsteam Metro Meats not turning out the way it did. Our endeavour was to protect and support Samcor's future operations. Perhaps I should finish on that positive note.

Mr D.S. BAKER: First, I note that the Minister in his opening statement indicated that expenditure has dropped \$450 000 because the Commonwealth has taken over responsibilities for meat inspection activities. I compliment the State in ensuring that we do not have a dual inspection service. However, I am concerned about the building of a bureaucracy around the South Australian Meat Hygiene Authority, and I think that needs curbing quite dramatically. Pursuant to the Act that was introduced in 1980 the job of country slaughterhouse inspectors was to oversee the upgrading of those slaughterhouses to an acceptable level, and it was considered that when that was done their role would wind down.

However, that has not been the case, and now there are some proposals being put that will dramatically increase the costs for country slaughterhouses due to these meat inspections. I note a letter from Dr Holmden, which specifies a cost of some \$300 000 for seven meat inspectors—which is \$43 000 per inspector, who are to inspect country slaughterhouses, of which there are some 78. I believe that the ones close to the city are inspected quite often, while the country ones are very rarely inspected. Does the Minister think that it might be better to hand that function back to the local government authorities, which have health inspectors, who could carry out the inspection that is required much more cheaply, bearing in mind that it is an inspection of the standard of the facility and not an inspection of the meat?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The matter of uniformity in terms of facilities has often been brought to my attention. I know that several times during my term as Minister the authority has raised with me the issue of illegal activities by various operators. As a philosophical position and also as a management position, it seems to me that there is a lot of sense in having a uniform authority controlling those facilities.

My experience in local government in terms of the Health Act has shown that there are often inconsistencies between council administrations, and I am sure that the honourable member can reflect on numerous examples. Often authorities interpret and apply regulations differently. The complaint I have had is that any inconsistency costs money, management time, and organisation. An advantage exists in having an overall centralised organisation of a Meat Hygiene Authority. From time to time we have had highly contentious debates in the community on various aspects of whether it be a slaughterhouse, abattoir, or a licence; how they operate; and so on. I can recall two or three in my time as Minister.

The Meat Hygiene Authority is looking at a working party to report on the most appropriate body to license slaughterhouses. Consideration of a review is before the authority under the Meat Hygiene Act to study boning rooms in slaughterhouses. I hope I have indicated that there is some movement and consideration of the situation.

Mr D.S. BAKER: If we follow the Minister's line of thinking, we will cut out State Governments and only have a Federal Government. One of the gripes of owners, and an added cost for slaughterhouses, has been inconsistency by inspectors that have been coming around since 1980 to police the upgrading of premises. I would have thought it would be more efficient to be done at the local level as that is the way all buildings are inspected. Dr Holmden in his discussion paper states:

At the outset one opinion that must be considered is whether the services provided by the meat hygiene section should be reduced, thus reducing the cost to Government. I feel sure the committee will agree that this is neither practical nor desirable.

If we are going to push all costs back to local slaughterhouses, we will make the smaller ones non-viable. Because it is only an inspection of premises and not a meat inspection, it would be better to hand it back to the local authorities. The Minister should look closely at how the bureaucracy will keep on imposing conditions on these people. As they are killing for a local area only, it will throw them out of business. How many inspectors are employed full time by the authority and, if any, how many are employed part time?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I do not want to go back too far in relation to the honourable member's suggestion about local authorities, but there are parallels in terms of export meat and consistencies. I beg to differ, unless the honourable member wants to bring to my attention some of the inconsistencies. We have found consistency in inspections, although I do not deny there have been disputes between the Hygiene Authority and individual slaughterhouse owners. An advantage exists in having the central facility. We have four inspectors and one clerical officer servicing the authority as secretary; one meatworks standards officer; and a principal veterinary officer, a total of seven persons full time.

Mr D.S. BAKER: Are there any part-time employees?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: No.

Mr GUNN: We have no further questions, due to the time constraint. I thank the officers of Samcor for making themselves available.

The CHAIRPERSON: We will proceed with general questions on agriculture.

Ms LENEHAN: I relate my question to program 5 on page 170 of the Estimates and refer to the vine pull scheme. As the Minister outlined in his introduction, the scheme is winding down. From a payment of over \$4 100 000, a sum of \$653 000 has been allocated to finish off the scheme. Given that the scheme is now almost complete, can the Minister say how successful the scheme has been in attaining its original aims and goals?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I am sure that many people in the community are involved in the vine and grape industry and many others interested as consumers of wine. South Australia is the pre-eminent State for wine and still holds about 60 per cent of the national production figure, irrespective of comments made and in spite of the vine pull scheme which has taken out a considerable amount of vineyards in the State. The scheme is a bandaid scheme and has its disadvantages as well as its advantages. However, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. We successfully assisted 446 grape growers at a total cost of \$6.5 million. An amount of \$4.3 million was contributed by the Commonwealth and \$2.2 million from the State.

Overall it was a reasonably expensive program. In summary, we have seen the removal of some of the poorer quality vines and lower production level vines. We have assisted a number of people who were on a knife's edge in financial viability terms to leave the industry with dignity and some funds in their pocket. In some cases it has not always been an easy decision, whilst others had welcomed it. The enthusiastic demand with the initial stages of the vine pull were quite extraordinary, and placed the department under enormous pressure. We received an additional allocation from the Commonwealth after the initial allocation was announced that helped us satisfy almost all applicants. There were 732 applications received by the rural assistance branch prior to the closing date of 30 May 1986.

Quite a heavy demand was placed on the fund. In summary, it is fair to say that there has been success and that there will be a reduction in the area of grapes taken each vintage.

Approximately 2 350 hectares of grape vines were removed, and that represents something between 25 000 to 30 000 tonnes of grapes. Last year's vintage was much more successful for a number of reasons. I have spoken with a number of grape buyers from the Clare Valley, Southern Vales and South-East districts who are quite anxious about the amount of grape vines that have been taken out. They feel that this will have an impact on premium high value grapes. In some ways it is a reflection on the fact that some wineries were not paying the prices that should have been paid for premium quality grapes. I could cite a number of examples of that; it is more than hearsay. Grape producers have told me that they were being paid at levels well below those being paid in other areas of the market: chardonnay grapes would fetch anything between \$600 and \$1 200 a tonne. In some cases wine producers were underpaying for grapes and, because the vines have now been removed, they will suffer the consequences.

I could relate a number of stories and, unfortunately, there has been a loss to the industry of some premium grapes. However, I am sure that the industry will recover as a consequence of the demand for premium wines. Members may have noticed in the press that we have had success in the export of our medium to high quality wines, and that will continue. I understand that about 30 hectares of chardonnay grapes were removed under the vine-pull scheme. So, there has been a reduction in the premium high value returns to some grape producers.

The industry has witnessed a quite significant drop in cask sales. There are a number of reasons for that, which I am sure will be raised in other questions. Our success with medium to high value wines in both the international and national markets has led to an increased demand for premium grapes, and that success will be continued. There is a degree of depression in the market for sultana grapes, among others.

The change in the pricing structure must be acknowledged. It has been proposed that a base price not be set. Previously there were two zones—the Riverland zone and the Barossa zone. As a result of discussion with the grape section of the United Farmers and Stockowners, the department will not set a base price. The legislation will be left in place. It is not my responsibility but that of the Minister of Consumer Affairs through the Prices Commissioner.

Another success has been the grape exchange which has been established with State funds through the management of the United Farmers and Stockowners grape section. It is like a level 2 stock exchange in terms of real product, and has been very well supported. The department expects that it will be better supported this year and will provide information for the grapegrower and the winemaker. I should point out that it has been well supported by significant winemakers in the State. It will operate as a very efficient and effective exchange for grapegrowers and winemakers, and the whole industry will benefit.

It will ensure that premium quality grapes, which are so sought after by the winemaker, will be retained in the market. Grapegrowers will achieve a better market price, which did not happen in the past, and they will not need to pull up their vines for financial and other reasons. Their position in the market will be retained and, as a result, they will continue production. As a consequence, our wines will maintain their place in the market and South Australia will remain the premium wine producing State. I have a table to incorporate in *Hansard* which is headed 'Common-

wealth/State Vine-Pull Scheme—Distribution of Applicants and Assistance'. I am sure that members will find it useful.

COMMONWEALTH/STATES VINE-PULL SCHEME
Distribution of Applicants and Assistance

	All applicants	Successful applicants
Barossa	160	107
Clare	70	50
Southern Hills	80	50
Adelaide Plains	30	18
Riverland	390	220
South-East	2	1
	<u>732</u>	<u>446</u>

Funds provided and hectares of grapes removed were:

	\$ million	Hectares removed
Barossa	1.9	690
Clare	1.0	360
Southern Hills	0.9	310
Adelaide Plains	0.4	150
Riverland	2.3	840
	<u>6.5</u>	<u>2 350</u>

Ms LENEHAN: My next question refers to rural industry research projects, which can be found on page 117 of the white book and on page 544 of the yellow book under the specific targets and objectives for 1987-88. The first of those objectives is to develop and promote programs for vineyard reconstruction and alternative crops. Reference is made to one of those alternative crops, as follows:

Encourage the use of almonds as an alternative crop, especially in the Riverland, through extension of and research into improved planting material and production systems.

Has an assessment been done on the effect of establishing an almond industry in the Riverland on the already existing almond industry in the Willunga basin? Is it the intention of the Minister and the department to establish and promote an almond industry on a Statewide basis, or is this aimed specifically at areas such as the Riverland where alternative crops are being considered?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: A significant percentage of almonds for domestic consumption is imported. The almond industry is moving into the Riverland. I am sure that most members recall that the metropolitan area was once a significant area of almond production. Last year almond production was about the same as the previous year, but there were improved returns. There is considerable interest in the expansion of the industry, and a couple of large projects are on the drawing board at the moment. Soil surveys have been conducted by departmental staff, and there is very strong liaison between the department and producers in the southern Adelaide plains and the Riverland. A number of industry-funded almond trials are being conducted at the moment by the department in the Murraylands and central regions. That probably answers the member's question.

This is not dissimilar to the problems that were faced about 18 months ago in the vine industry, and those with the importation of frozen orange juice concentrate from Brazil, which placed another burden on the Riverland. The Federal and State Governments have undertaken to provide assistance to avert a crisis in the citrus industry, and it has started to turn around; the lift in the market return for grapes has assisted the Riverland. The pressure on alternative crops has somewhat reduced, although it is considered to be an important point for the department to pursue, using the research facilities that are based in the Riverland.

The Director-General has some additional information for the honourable member.

Dr Radcliffe: Cooperative support is being given to the development of a major almond growing project in the Riverland. This will involve an additional 400 hectares of planting in the reasonably near future. The South Australian Water Resources Council was recently presented with a request for the transfer of irrigation rights to the Riverland from another area of the river. The Department of Agriculture has provided technical information in relation to soil quality, design specifications for an irrigation system, sprinkler requirements and the long-term necessity for backup drainage arrangements. This represents the potential for a significant increase in the almond industry which is being cooperatively supported by the Engineering and Water Supply Department, the Department of Agriculture and consultants in the private sector. The work is to be done on a cost recovery basis for the entrepreneurs who are developing the proposal. I think the project has a high probability of success.

Ms LENEHAN: The Committee has been told that a significant amount of almonds will have to be imported into South Australia. Will the research and development in the Riverland to establish an almond industry accelerate the perceived movement of the almond industry from the southern area of Adelaide to the Riverland, or will the economic viability of the almond industry in the southern area be maintained as an integral part of the total South Australian almond industry? In asking that question I am stating the fears of many of the almond growers in the southern area of Adelaide about the future of their industry.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is a commercial decision that will have to be made by individual growers in their own circumstances. However, I think it is fair to say from my own observations, that not only in the almond industry but also in the citrus and cut flowers industries and other areas of horticulture, a significant number of growers in South Australia are looking at areas all over the State to find alternative sites for production of their crops and alternative crops as well.

I am aware that a number of very large and prominent growers are looking at alternative crops in new areas, and I think there will be a movement of these growers. In saying that, I am thinking of a visit that I made to the Riverland last year and, in particular, a discussion that I had with one of the research officers. Almond growers in the Riverland region will probably focus closely on cost and other infrastructure that can be enjoyed in that area. That situation will not necessarily reflect on decisions that may be made by growers in the McLaren Vale area because I think the decision that they will make may be separate in the commercial environment and will result in their staying in that location, depending on possible planning implications in the future development of Adelaide.

I think it is reasonable to look at other industries. For example, one of the State's large apple and pear growers has moved into the Kalangadoo region in the South-East of the State. That has traditionally been potato growing, grazing, lucern and forest country. That is a major change. Many people in that industry are watching very carefully to see what is going to happen in that region. The member for Victoria would probably have first hand knowledge of the situation. Some quite significant moves are being mooted but are not being heralded outside the industry. However, people in the industry and the department are watching those developments carefully. It is a commercial situation, and it is likely that some obvious commercial decisions will be made about relocation.

The Director-General has drawn to my attention the operation of the almond co-op, which was located in Edwardstown but which has now moved to the Riverland. That is a significant movement. Another plant has moved to the Berri Vale Orchards. Therefore, it would appear that there are moves afoot to relocate.

Mr D.S. BAKER: It is common knowledge that the Meat Hygiene Authority is anxious to implement to the letter the Act and the regulations. It is mooted that the installation of stunning devices will be required in country slaughterhouses. Under the Act three or four different methods to slaughter animals can be used. If this regulation is implemented, it will be at considerable cost to slaughterhouses. Section 603 relates to the slaughtering of animals. It states that animals may be bled without any stunning when cast by suitable apparatus approved by the chief inspector for the purpose of slaughtering animals according to any acceptable religious practice. In this State many of the animals that are slaughtered are exempted under this provision. Would the Minister consider an application from country slaughterhouses for exemption under the Act? What prosecutions have taken place in South Australia in recent years under the Country Slaughterhouse Act and the Meat Hygiene Act; what proportion of those were country slaughterhouses; and what were the offences?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I will obtain a detailed report and give it to the honourable member after lunch. In relation to the first question, the stunning of animals provisions under section 603 is a community social issue. I will have to consult with the Meat Hygiene Authority on this matter. I have not had any first hand discussions with the chief veterinary officer about this matter. I note in the honourable member's opening remarks that he said it was mooted. I will take that question on notice and provide the information after lunch. I have a general view about the matter, but I think I should be more specific and give proper attention to this issue, because I am aware that, if I say something in a general sense, by the time it gets to Nuriootpa, or wherever, serious distress or discomfort can be caused because I have made a general comment which has been misinterpreted.

Mr D.S. BAKER: Considerable numbers of livestock are being bled under an exemption already.

Mr GUNN: On page 547 of the yellow book the comment is made:

Encourage the safe use of agricultural and veterinary chemicals by providing advice to farmers and other handlers and users of these chemicals.

A number of recent press statements relate to the use of DDT and dieldrin. In the *Stock Journal* dated 27 August 1987 there is a headline 'Residues "no threat" in S.A.'. On the same page there is another heading 'S.A. Government plans chemical blitz'. The article then continues:

Tough new measures to control handling and storage of agricultural chemicals on the farm are being planned by the Minister of Agriculture, Mr Mayes.

Farmers holding toxic chemicals may have to be registered and display warning signs on their properties.

I think that is going a bit far. However, in view of the need to get all DDT back into safe storage, I ask the Minister why the South Australian Government has not adopted a similar program to that of his colleague in Victoria (Mr Walker). Under a heading 'The Use of DDT Banned in Victoria from 1 August 1987' the *Rural Times* of 9 September states:

Up until 31 October we will buy back your existing stocks of DDT products and there will be no questions asked during this amnesty period. So please don't use DDT again!

It is signed by Evan Walker, the Minister of Agriculture. I understand that the Western Australian budget was handed down a few days ago and funds were provided for the buying back of these chemicals. Has the Minister or the Government considered a similar program, because I believe that the most appropriate course of action would be to get these chemicals into safe storage as soon as possible. I believe that the farmers really would want to get rid of the chemicals, but many farmers may have paid considerable amounts of money for them. In order to make sure that we do not have any further contamination, will the Minister consider, if he has not already done so, buying them back?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: We did consider that option and, in view of our situation and the likely cost of the destruction of the chemicals that we collected, together with organising and storing the chemicals that it was anticipated were in the community, we felt that we could most effectively use our limited funds in storing these chemicals safely, and then destroying them. The Victorians and the Western Australians allowed a far greater use of these organochlorins than did South Australia. Western Australia allowed an enormous amount of organochlorins to be used for agricultural purposes until it made an announcement following the agricultural council meeting in July, so we are much better placed. Over the years numerous bulletins from the department recommended that organochlorins not be used.

The ban on the sale of organochlorins has applied since June of last year. The phasing out began in the mid 1960s and in 1972 a decision was taken to cease using these chemicals as soon as suitable alternatives were found. That was recommended through various departmental bulletins. We felt that we were in a situation where people had had ample warning not to use these organochlorins and, because of the limited funds that we had and because of the contracting budgetary situation, we thought that it would be better to use those moneys, first, to actually safely store these chemicals. It will be an enormous cost and we are still working through the process, but we have identified the location for the storage of these chemicals. Obviously for security reasons I will not tell the honourable member on the record, but I am happy to tell him off record the location of that. We have to work out with the other States how we will destroy these chemicals.

The only available high temperature incinerators is in Wales. One comes by ship, but I am not sure that the fishermen and the community of South Australia would be very keen to have that boat call in and go through the process of the destruction of quantities of organochlorins and other chemicals that are being collected in the process. At the moment we find that we do not have a problem in getting the chemicals; that has been a reasonably successful program. The storage is being conducted with the cooperation of local government. As the honourable member is probably aware, a couple of accidents have been dealt with very effectively and quickly. We believe that no damage was done to the community or to any person as a result of those accidents.

We explored the situation during the Agricultural Council meeting, but no consistent or general policy was adopted. When we met in May I understood that we would have a uniform approach to this matter but, unfortunately, some of my interstate colleagues decided to run ahead of the pack. Because of our ban on sale, we were better placed than the other States. I am not sure what Queensland is doing—it is extremely frustrating to try to deal with that State. It is continuing to use DDT for the brown cane beetle, and the chemical is being used on large tracts of land. I

think that this matter has to be seriously addressed both by the Queensland Government and the Federal Government.

That is important from the point of view of the well-being of the beef producers in Queensland, because some of the large tracts of land that have been subjected to heavy use of this chemical are now being returned to grazing. Where the cane industry has not been able to return a viable income to the grower, they are now switching to grazing. That is one of the reasons why residues are being found in the samples, particularly from the Queensland area. However, I hope that those problems can be addressed at a national level.

I think that we are probably one of the best placed States to meet the standards that were agreed with the Department of Agriculture officers from the United States. I understand the thrust and principle of the honourable member's question but, at this stage, I think that we can use our money more effectively than by adopting his suggestion. I think that most of our farmers have been very responsible and, really, we do not have the same problem faced by Victoria and Western Australia. New South Wales does not reimburse for any returned chemicals and that decision is based on its situation (which was rather similar to South Australia) where there had been a general recommendation from the Department of Agriculture not to use these organochlorins. We still have yet to resolve with the Health Commission the application of these chemicals in a non agricultural environment. Obviously, the honourable member is aware that some of these organochlorins are used for the control of termites.

Mr GUNN interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is one example about which the honourable member might like to ask the Minister of Health. I am certainly not able to comment on that. That is the Minister of Health's responsibility. I have reached an agreement with him with regard to the use of these chemicals. I would like to see their use disappear totally, because of their danger to the agricultural environment. On Monday night I talked to a representative of the Wheat Research Council from Queensland and he indicated that he had seen somebody with 17 44 gallon drums of Dieldrin stored on their property. He was horrified by that fact and this person is a mixed farmer. I might say that that situation occurred in Queensland and I do not think that we are in a similar situation. Compared to Queensland, I think that our problem is quite insignificant, but I would like to see these chemicals withdrawn from the market, including for home garden use, and that will probably cause some ructions.

The Minister of Health has agreed to refer this matter to a standing committee of Ministers—the Controlled Substances Advisory Committee. That committee will consider whether or not these chemicals should be totally banned from use in home gardens. Hopefully, a recommendation will be made by the Minister of Health to Cabinet. Before long, I would like to see these organochlorins banned from sale for any purpose. I think that we can find less persistent chemicals that will be just as effective in the treatment of pests and insects in the agricultural area. They would be much safer, far less damaging and less threatening to our whole industry.

Given the crisis situation that we had, I think that this matter has been handled very successfully. No doubt there are individual stories concerning this matter—we have one or two of our own—which, in a sense, are quite tragic, where people have inherited problems that have been created by others and we have to address those problems, too.

I am looking forward to the next Agricultural Council where we can get some consolidated position on these issues

from the other States and the Federal Government. A few loose ends still need to be tied up. I am aware of them, as is the department, and I am sure that the Federal Minister is also aware of them. They have to be addressed, otherwise there will be considerable distress and, I think, financial cost to some individuals in the community caused by no fault of their own.

Mr GUNN: In view of the fact the Minister is considering tough legislation, I sincerely hope that before he implements any legislation (safe storage will be pretty difficult to organise and police) he will have full and frank discussions with the farming representatives. More importantly, it would appear from what the Minister said and from what I believe to be the case that there is a fairly urgent need to have uniform legislation covering these problems across Australia. I understand that the Federal Minister is keen on this. Is the South Australian Government supporting a uniform approach, which would obviously be in the interests of agriculture in general, and what stage have negotiations reached to endeavour to implement such a proposal?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Yes, we are supporting a uniform approach. The Federal Minister is handling that issue. A review committee has been set up to look at the question of agricultural chemicals at a national level. If I can just come back to the global issue that we face, it is highlighted by this whole residue issue and the way in which the Americans reacted. The Federal Minister summed it up, in that a number of people felt we were being subjected to an artificial tariff situation by this reaction. Information has been provided to me not by the American agricultural attache here but by people who have been involved in looking at the American agricultural industry, including some of our own departmental people who have done post-graduate studies and understand the industry in America fairly thoroughly.

There have been bans in various States since about 1972, particularly in the use of DDT, in the United States, but that does not mean there are no inconsistencies. I understand there are significant inconsistencies. For example, one case mentioned is that American companies manufacture these chemicals in another country under licence and actually ship them to Australia for use here. It seems to be somewhat hypocritical on the part of the Americans to apply bans when, in their own domestic environment, there have been bans on these chemicals.

It is fair to say that the issue has not been constructed, as perhaps some other agricultural policies have been in the United States, to prevent our entry into the market. It is a serious problem and I think we have dealt with it, and the Federal Minister has dealt with it, responsibly. He has said, 'One in, all in,' and we are being judged by the Americans as one nation, not as a single State. I do not think they see State borders as terribly relevant. They see them as they do the States of the United States. It is a national policy and we have to deal with it nationally.

I support wholeheartedly the general national approach that the Federal Minister has applied which, I might say, has been agreed. We were somewhat caught behind the eight ball because the DPI had already agreed to a national approach. When we got to the last Agricultural Council meeting, we were faced with a *fait accompli*. I think in some ways it is fair that we were faced with that. The Commonwealth Agricultural and Veterinary Council chemicals legislation as proposed was agreed to by the Agricultural Council. I will read the resolution for the benefit of members, as follows:

Council agreed to the establishment of a working party of senior State and Commonwealth officials—

our representative is Dr Wilson, who is here with us today—to report on how a single national clearance and registration scheme could be achieved. The report would need to consider:

- (a) the necessary machinery for a national clearance and registration for agricultural and veterinary chemicals;
- (b) the costs and benefits for such a scheme and including a comparison with the current financial and human resources devoted to agricultural and veterinary chemicals;
- (c) the amendments that would be required to existing State and Commonwealth legislation to interface with continuing State controls on sale and use of chemicals; and
- (d) the improvement of labelling requirements.

The working party is to report to [the next] AAC, out of session, in 3 months. This will enable full consideration to be given to the options at the next regular meeting.

I totally endorse that resolution. That is the only way we can go if we are to have a sensible approach to this whole question of agricultural chemicals.

The other point that the honourable member has raised relates to consultation. The Director-General and Dr Wilson spent two to three hours with the United Farmers and Stockowners last Friday morning and went through the whole DDT issue. I have also met with the meat section of the UF&S and I have briefly discussed the issues on numerous occasions with the Executive Officer, the General Secretary and the President. There has been ongoing consultation in relation to the whole application of the requirements and the legislative avenue as well. There will be consultation with the UF&S prior to the introduction of the legislation. I do not think we have reached the drafting stage of any legislation, but that will be before the House in this session after the Estimates Committees. I think it is also worth noting that those discussions with the UF&S have been very useful.

Mr DUIGAN: I refer to the allocation under the Miscellaneous line of some \$287 000 for the East End Market relocation study, which is also referred to under program 5 in the Program Estimates. Last year an allocation of \$2 000 was made to the East End Market relocation study. When I asked the Minister a question about it at the last Estimates Committee hearing, he indicated that some significant statements were likely to be made around early December.

Indeed, there have been a number of significant statements made about the East End Market, not only in December but just about every week and every month since, relating to the use of the East End Market site after the wholesale fruit and vegetable market has moved to Pooraka. The notes in the Program Estimates on page 544 indicate that negotiations for the establishment of the wholesale fruit and vegetable market at Pooraka are still in progress. What is the stage of those negotiations? Can the Minister provide a timetable for the construction of the new wholesale fruit and vegetable market? What will be the major purpose of the \$287 000 allocated to the relocation study?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Obviously the honourable member has a first-hand interest in the relocation. I will refer to the Director-General for a general comment, because he was Chairman of the relocation task force and would have at his fingertips all of those figures that the honourable member has requested. In some ways the situation is disappointing—although I certainly do not want to reflect on any individual or any organisation—in not achieving the package put forward with Fricker Carrington and the Government for the relocation. It is fair to say that, had the growers perhaps seen the benefits initially, the Government would have been delighted with the concept of their taking it over from the outset, but it did not happen in that way. They were not one of the tenderers in terms of the proposal and consequently, the Government stepped in. In some ways, it

could well be argued that the Government need not have a role in it at all as a commercial organisation.

Of course, there are advantages in having a commercial fruit and vegetable market in the metropolitan area—and I mention such things as efficiency, access to the market, good quality fruit, and so on. The discussions reached a point where, in our assessment—and certainly Dr Radcliffe can outline this in detail—there was no further opportunity to bring the parties together. Essentially, we were probably the meat in the sandwich. We had expended considerable time, money and effort on this matter. As well as Dr Radcliffe, Mr Ian Lewis, Chief Senior Horticultural Export Officer, was involved. There are terrific demands on his time and we could have used his time in a much more efficient and effective way than assisting in this case, but the Government decided to assist the community in this way. However, the situation had reached the point of absolute stalemate and there was no way of retrieving the situation that had developed between Frickers and the growers. We made a rational and pragmatic decision to allow the growers the opportunity to put together a package to purchase the land and to undertake the development themselves.

The honourable member is probably aware of the original proposal at Pooraka, which was to have a significant number of developments around the market site. That has a significant commercial attraction to it. Certainly, in my assessment it is very prime land due to its location in terms of the city and the northern areas. The growers got together a package and negotiations have been undertaken. It has now reached the stage where the contract is being drawn up. It is not finalised as yet, but it is almost there and I think that not too far down the track we will see the establishment of a market at that location. It will be developed in the centre of the available land; it will not involve the perimeter, which was seen as being probably more commercial, in the sense of development for other uses, and obviously that facility was not of direct interest to the marketgrowers, the people who have now taken over the scheme, because they are more interested in the market development.

In summary, I think that the negotiations could have been better, but it is probably fair to say that really no-one is at fault. Basically, it was a situation where a disparate group of growers, with competing or not necessarily complementary interests, perhaps did not understand the situation and expected the Government to undertake the exercise, not realising that it was to be done on a commercial basis, and consequently letting the opportunity slip past them. It would probably have been wiser of them to pick up the issue at an earlier time. This caused us considerable discomfort and cost, but in the long term we will see a market established. It is perhaps better that the Government should have been in and then out; in effect, we have been a catalyst in the establishment of this market. In relation to the provision of funds, about which the honourable member has asked, the amount of \$287 000 is comprised of \$275 000 for compensation for Fricker Carrington, \$10 000 to another consultant and \$2 000 for miscellaneous expenses. I now ask the Director-General to add to that.

Dr Radcliffe: Currently, some minor survey work is yet to be done to complete the paper work for the contract. At the same time, the task force, in association with the Salisbury council, is completing an SDP over the area, which will allow the project to go ahead. That is being developed between the Fresh Produce Association's consortium manager, the Salisbury council, and the task force. The SDP is in fact being prepared by the Minister for Environment and Planning, at the request of the Salisbury council. The

remaining area is being tidied up, and it is expected that possession will be taken in the relatively near future. The growers themselves have established a new company, Adelaide Produce Markets Limited, which is the vehicle by which they will actually construct and operate the market. Their design work for the site is well advanced at this stage. I believe that the project will be quite successful. Probably for the first time the growers on the one hand, and the merchants and agents on the other, have come together in a single project. Historically, they tend to be on opposite sides of the economic process, and they have tended sometimes to look at each other's objectives with somewhat biased views. I think it is an excellent result. In fact, we have the growers, merchants and agents all pulling together, and they have now taken complete charge of their own destiny.

Mr DUIGAN: Does that mean that the Government contribution to the new wholesale fruit and vegetable market at Pooraka will be the provision of the land and that there will be no capital contribution at all?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: We are not providing the land; that is one of the parts of the contract that is being negotiated at the moment. It is a totally commercial operation. The cost represents a 60:40 share of the preparation with Fricker. That amount, representing a penalty cost, has been shared with the Fricker group, in terms of getting the proposal together—the planning, geotechnical work, the SDP, and so on, as proposed by the consortium. We worked together as a consortium with Fricker Carrington. That is our one-up cost. In some ways we are probably better off being out of it in terms of its being a commercial operation. That might be debatable, because profits might have been returned to Government through investment, but we expect to recoup that \$275 000 from the sale of land, anyway.

Mr DUIGAN: Following the conclusion of all the necessary negotiations, involving such things as the company structure, the establishment of the new consortium and the identification in the SDP of the part to be allocated for market purposes, when is it expected that the construction of the new market will begin? Also, will the new Pooraka market be the clearing house for all of South Australia's fresh produce as well as being a wholesale fruit and vegetable market? Will the department be involved in ensuring that it is the only outlet and the only distribution point for fresh produce, both for that grown in South Australia and that imported from other States and overseas?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: In relation to the point about when the new market will be established, obviously the honourable member is concerned about the existing leases of the current stall-holders at the East End Market. Most of the current stall-holders have leases to the end of 1989. I have had some undertaking from the Chairman of the Adelaide market group—which does not represent both companies but he was speaking for both companies—that they would be given a fair chance, I think to the middle of 1988, before they would face eviction.

There was something in the press about that, but I have a telex in which that person confirmed that he was speaking for the two groups. Some construction will be commenced at Pooraka by the end of this year, so the pressure from the developers here on our store holders will be considerably reduced, knowing that we will have something on the deck perhaps by the middle or late next year. No monopoly exists in terms of vegetable exchange in South Australia. I have agreed with the Citrus Board to allow growers to hold store licences after they have been through the official packing process. Pressure exists for growers to be able to put their own produce on the market and it is a partial deregulation

in terms of the strong controls the Citrus Board has over the marketing of its produce.

We have seen some movement in terms of that industry, but there is no monopoly. Large traders have their own property, so it will be a focal point for most of the trade. Large retailers may go direct to the source. We can discuss other issues when questions come forward on interstate food and fresh produce. Section 92 operates in relation to that situation. I refer also to Queensland tomatoes coming in. I have recently had a meeting with all tomato grower representatives and we will establish stringent processes to prevent both treated and untreated tomatoes coming in. Untreated tomatoes can bring in fruit fly from Queensland and it worries me that a \$40 million industry will be threatened.

I will make a press statement on this issue in the next day or so and warn the public that anyone involved in bringing in those tomatoes will be looking at increasing penalties. This problem will be referred to the new Agricultural Chemicals Committee. We have asked about the treatment of those tomatoes and whether they are safe for human consumption. We will hold off allowing any Queensland tomatoes in until the committee has reported. We will descend on the people trading in these tomatoes with all possible measures, as they are threatening South Australia's valuable horticultural industry.

We know from evidence presented to inspectors that the problem is getting it and following the chain through to prosecution. From evidence from the growers with whom I met the other day, these tomatoes are appearing in local fruit and vegetables stores, in the central market and some supermarkets. I find it astounding and totally irresponsible that retailers are selling these non-treated tomatoes. I cannot believe that people are so stupid as to do that. They will be dealt with. If the penalties are not severe enough I will be amending the legislation so that they will regret ever entertaining bringing in fruit of that sort.

We are also dealing with fruit fly on another front. The industry asked whether we could do something about fruit coming in. Anyone who has lived near the Victorian border would appreciate the problem, as there are so many roads across the border and it would be impossible to stop all the fruit coming in. From Mt Gambier through to Bordertown there are so many tracks across the border that it is hard to police. It appears that there will be 58 merchants going into the new market and it will be the predominant area of trading in fruit and vegetables in South Australia.

Mr MEIER: I refer to page 547 of the Estimates where it is indicated that \$650 000 has been made available to combat plague locusts and grasshoppers. In his preamble this morning the Minister said that \$650 000 had been included with the further approval of \$650 000 towards operating expenditure. I also note the comment that 29 departmental officers, together with farmers in the affected areas, will form a task force to combat the locust plague. I will quote from a report that I wrote last year following a study of how they combat grasshopper plagues in Washington in the United States, as follows:

To gather statistics for the State of Washington—two permanent employees, one part-time employee and three or four L.A. (letter of authorization), that is, itinerant, workers for the summer from May to September, are employed. The survey commences with counting the number of grasshoppers that hop out of an area one square yard in area. Some nine squares are considered in any particular area and the count is done twice in one day. If grasshoppers reach a concentration of eight or more per square yard, control may be required. Such control is a co-operative program between the Federal and State Governments and the landowners. The Federal Government pays 100 per cent of the cost of control on Federal land, 50 per cent on State land and one third on private land. The State pays 50 per cent on State

land and one third on private land. Thus the private landowner is left to pay one third of the cost of his own land.

The report indicates that the ranchers agreed to subsidise the spray at a cost of \$1.80 to \$2.00 an acre, and the spraying is effective. Certainly various warnings are given. In view of that and the high number of people to be employed in South Australia, compared with the numbers employed in the State of Washington, what criteria is employed before action is considered necessary in South Australia and what are the cost sharing arrangements between State, Federal and local governments and private persons for grasshopper control? What type of control is envisaged for South Australia?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is a very important issue and one on which I made a press statement today. The philosophical point worth considering is that it is partially user pays in the United States. It is up to the State and Federal Governments to identify who the users are. The whole State is disadvantaged by the migratory species of grasshoppers or locusts. The monitoring program is conducted by the Plague Locusts Commission, which constantly monitors their habitat and assesses their movements. Officers from my department provide information to that commission. Early this year I was at Oodnadatta with one of the regional officers based at Port Augusta who was conducting a monitoring program for the Plague Locusts Commission. A representative from our department, Peter Birks, is on that commission, so we have a direct input from our own local scene to the national campaign.

In reference to the honourable member's opening comment, I point out that 24 officers from the Department of Agriculture and five casual rural unemployed persons will be involved in the containment program for a period of about six weeks. The Government contributes \$105 000 to the Australian Plague Locusts Commission, as do the other States. The commission will operate on a budget of about \$2.1 million for 1987-88, but there will probably need to be an increase of about \$250 000 in view of what is happening in the general environment. We are considering another contribution from the State to top up that figure. The South Australian campaign, as I have indicated in public statements, will involve an expenditure of about \$1.3 million. Of that, \$650 000 is for insecticides and the other \$650 000 is for the application of the insecticides.

Mr MEIER: Is the method of control to be aerial spraying or land spraying?

Dr Radcliffe: The department will hire both fixed wing aircraft and helicopters for aerial spraying. Indeed, we had a great deal of difficulty getting fixed wing aircraft because of limited tenders. Aerial spraying will be done primarily in those areas in which spraying cannot be carried out by landholders. A considerable quantity of spray equipment is being handled in the depots established through local government. That equipment and spray is being distributed to the landholders who, under the terms of the Noxious Insects Act, are asked to spray the locusts using the equipment, borrowed from local government, which is maintained by the department between locust campaigns. Landholders are supplied with spray, which enables them to spray on the ground.

Quite a lot of staff are used in treating or identifying and treating swarms in some of the pastoral areas for which the State is responsible rather than the area for which the Plague Locusts Commission is responsible. In general terms, the commission covers the area east of the Flinders Ranges and north of the Broken Hill road; the State covers the rest. Where there is closer settlement, the landholders undertake ground spraying but, in the more pastoral areas, aerial spraying may be used. A large enough area of infestation is

required to justify aerial spraying and, unless a landholder has 100 acres, it is better to have it done by ground spraying.

Mr GUNN: The next matter that I raise concerns the field crop improvement centre. I note on page 19 of the capital works program that approximately \$200 000 has been allocated to allow for the development, design and cost estimates of the proposed field improvement centre at Northfield. It should be pointed out that if the amount were less than \$200 000 it would not show on the capital works program. In view of the continuing public discussion and dissension in this matter, I will draw to the Minister's attention a number of comments that have been made before asking him to indicate whether the program will continue without any further consideration. At the annual conference of the United Farmers and Stockowners, the following motion was passed:

Agriculture Park:

That the 'Agriculture Park' concept be investigated by governing council for future betterment of agriculture in South Australia:

Phase 1: The proposed crop research institute be located adjacent to Waite Institute campus.

Phase 2: Establishment of Department of Agriculture at Waite.

Phase 3: Development of post-graduate courses in relation to agricultural and veterinary sciences.

I will also read from a letter which the Minister received and which was widely circulated by Mr Sparrow, Reader in Plant Breeding, as follows:

In my view it is not in the best interests of the South Australian barley industry for the Waite barley improvement program to be relocated at Northfield under the control of the South Australian Department of Agriculture.

The plant breeding staff at the Waite Institute, both academic and technical, are contracted to the University of Adelaide. How is it possible for the Department of Agriculture to, unilaterally, decide that these people be moved to another organisation and another set of employment conditions? This is no different to a commercial takeover bid and far less ethical. There is considerable danger in this proposition in that the majority of the staff do not want to move and are likely to be lost to the program if forced to do so. The inevitable disruption to the program could cost the State dearly by slowing the release of new varieties, with a concomitant loss of production and marketing opportunities.

It has become increasingly clear that there has been a long-term plan, from at least the 1981 in-house departmental field crop improvement review, to have the FCIC at Northfield regardless of valid arguments to the contrary. The department has planned to pirate the successful wheat and barley programs from Roseworthy and the Waite Institute without discussion between the parties involved as to the scientific merits of such a move. Further, the amicable relations and close cooperation between the department and the Waite Institute that have played an important part in the successful development and release of crop varieties over 25 years are being destroyed by the current actions of those in authority.

This project should now be dropped. It would be irresponsible to embark on a costly disruptive exercise in the current economic crisis in Australian agriculture.

This is a most important project. Whatever takes place will have a drastic effect on one of the most important industries in this State, namely, the wheat and barley industry. I also bring to the Minister's attention one or two other comments. An article in the *West Coast Sentinel* of September 1986 reported the views of Dr Barrie Thistlethwayte, Director of the Roseworthy College, as follows:

The wisdom of the proposed move of the wheat breeding program from Roseworthy College to Northfield should be questioned vigorously, college Director, Dr Barrie Thistlethwayte said.

He said the move would compromise the college's teaching program by removing opportunities for students to participate in the practical work of wheat breeding.

Since its establishment in 1880 Roseworthy College has had a long standing wheat breeding and improvement program and particularly since the development of its cross-breeding program in the 1930s.

Dr Thistlethwayte said it seemed unnecessary and illogical to relocate such a successful breeding program to another site, particularly when the State's budget could ill afford the high cost of

buildings and other facilities required to concentrate all field crop breeding work at one headquarters.

I could go on and quote from Jon Lamb in the *Stock Journal* and various other people who have questioned this exercise. As one who has participated in and had the benefits of the successful programs that have been developed by the Waite Institute and Roseworthy College, I look forward to the Minister's considered response after lunch.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: A question was directed to me this morning by the member for Victoria in relation to meat hygiene and illegal slaughtering. Several prosecutions have been launched under section 20 of the Act for illegal slaughtering, but none have been successful because of various quirks in the law. At Naracoorte two defendants pleaded guilty but were acquitted by the magistrate on the ground that it was their first offence. Another prosecution failed because the only Crown witness was an accomplice. At Balaklava another defendant successfully pleaded that the meat found on his premises was for his family in Adelaide, although at the time he could not remember their addresses and telephone numbers. In summary, all these prosecutions were against individuals, not against slaughterhouses.

In relation to the matter of stunning of animals, this has been a mandatory requirement prior to slaughter since the legislation came into force in 1981. However, the Meat Hygiene Authority did not enforce the requirement in relation to small stock, sheep and lambs whilst the upgrading program was taking place. Nevertheless, the authority advises that the Meat Hygiene Consultative Committee on 20 February 1985 decided that the stunning of small stock would be required, and earlier this year the South Australian Slaughterhouse Operators Association was reminded that stunning was required at slaughterhouses.

Subsequently, the authority decided that the stunning of small stock before slaughter would take effect from 1 July 1987. Only four out of 17 abattoirs do not already stun small stock. Those four have sought an extension of time to install restrainers to facilitate the stunning of large numbers of animals. The final comment from the authority is that all abattoirs will be using stunning facilities by early 1988. The honourable member suggested that stock to be slaughtered for overseas export could be exempted. That exemption does not exist. The Commonwealth Department of Primary Industry requires mandatory stunning before slaughtering.

I now refer to the Field Crop Research Institute. The funding that has been allocated will allow for completion of the design work so that the proposal can be placed before the Public Works Standing Committee. An amount of \$200 000 is being allocated in the 1987-88 budget.

In relation to the transfer of staff from the Waite Agricultural College to the proposed Field Crop Research Institute, the staff that is funded by Waite will remain. It is proposed to amalgamate under the one roof the staff that are paid for by the industry or the department to establish a central research facility in order to reap the economies of scale of that facility. There has been ongoing discussion with the Waite College in particular, Professor Quirk, and with Mr Barrie Thistlethwayte, the Director of Roseworthy Agricultural College, with regard to the establishment of the Field Crop Research Institute. The transfer arrangements have basically been successfully negotiated with the Waite staff on the basis of the funding arrangements for those staff.

The negotiations with regard to Roseworthy have been finalised in relation to the continuation of Mr Hollamby's work. It is important to note that a wheat breeder has never

been produced from Roseworthy College. In fact, wheat breeding is an ancillary activity to the educational facilities provided through Roseworthy. The new Northfield facility will be administering activities which are appropriately and properly covered by that facility and do not come under the umbrella of the Roseworthy College. It is not critically essential or fundamental to the educational philosophy of Roseworthy to have the wheat breeding facility at that college.

Taking into account Mr Hollamby's personal preference, an appropriate arrangement has been made which would be suitable to the Government and to Roseworthy and to Mr Hollamby in terms of future operations, enabling us therefore to reap the benefit of having the economies of scale of the central research facility while still maintaining out-station operations at Roseworthy. The college could therefore use that facility for the exposure of the students to the sorts of activities that are undertaken by wheat research in that type of environment.

The department is currently looking at the most efficient arrangement to reap the benefit of the sale of land, the money from that sale being intended for the future development of the Northfield facility. That is being undertaken by Mr Roger Wickes who is deeply involved in the project and the establishment of prerequisites for the future research facility. The funding of the program relies on the sale of the Northfield land, and the transfer of the dairy research centre to Flaxley depends partly on the realising of those funds to develop Northfield in the future.

The UF&S has been closely informed of all developments. Successful negotiations have taken place with the Chemistry Division, the Department of Transport and cereal chemists. Agreement has been reached with the Minister of Transport that they will transfer to the Northfield facility when construction of the building is completed and the operation of the organisation begins as one unit. We are getting all these strands together. Fundamentally, I think it is fair to say that it is basically what the Government and industry pays for (rather than what Waite or Roseworthy pays for) coming under the one roof.

Mr GUNN: I take it that the Minister is quite satisfied that the skills of Mr Hollamby, Mr Tony Lance, Mr Sparrow and Mr Russell will not be lost to the new facility. The information that I have been given is that these people were most unhappy at the thought of shifting from their current operations. Has the Minister reached agreement with Professor Quirk, who has been a longstanding critic of this proposal ever since it was originally announced?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: We do not fund Mr Sparrow. The areas that we or industry fund are being brought together under the one banner. Certain wings of the operation at Waite are not funded directly from those sources and they will probably remain. I have read articles, as I am sure the honourable member has, from Professor Quirk indicating that some research work will continue at that facility. Of course, it is part of a tertiary educational institution's brief to undertake that sort of research as part of its development.

I feel that an agreement with Professor Quirk has been reached, but I am not sure that Professor Quirk would be prepared to say that that is the case. I think Waite is prepared to offer the research facility. I think I have already placed on record in answer to a question in the House something about this, but there is no commitment of a minimum area of land—the area we are talking about is 20 hectares—to the facility in the one location. There are certain physical advantages to that. As the honourable member would know, there would be plots all over the State where the wheat growers would conduct their research in a local

environment and under normal circumstances, but it is essential to the whole organisation (and this is the minimum that was set by the working party that involved the UF&S) that we see a minimum area of land devoted to the Field Crop Institute. It would probably stretch the definition of the word 'agreement' to say that we have reached agreement but, for the want of a better word, we believe that we have achieved an agreement that is in the best interests of the industry and for the betterment and development of the State. Whether it was located at Northfield or Waite, that was the general thrust of having a central research facility. We believe that, because land is available at Northfield, that is the appropriate location.

In relation to the research people involved, Dr Sparrow, who is funded by the Barley Research Committee of South Australia, will not be requested to move before his retirement, so we are reaching a series of compromises with a number of the personnel involved in order to achieve our objective of getting the most efficient and centrally located facility and, also, to some degree, to meet the demands of the individual and the demands of the institutions.

Mr KLUNDER: In relation to previous questions about the possible buy-back of organochlorins and the need for common legislation regarding chemical residues, page 545 of the yellow book states:

Ensure freedom of chemical residues from livestock products, in collaboration with other agencies by revising relevant legislation and increasing monitoring and extensions.

While that aim might be a trifle optimistic in its scope, the intent is good. What is the department doing or planning to do to minimise DDT and other residue problems?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is a fairly broad question. Perhaps we can deal with the residue issue at two levels. First, I will deal with it at the level of what we are doing with regard to the absolute control and recall of DDT and the other organochlorins that are seen to be persistent chemicals and toxic and dangerous to humans and animals in relation to their accumulation in the tissue. The program that has been set up has been negotiated at a number of levels: with industry, with the Federal Government; and with initiatives from the State Government. We are looking at a series of increased tests of meat for export (and also at the domestic level) to establish chemical residues. That is being fully funded by industry through a voluntary levy process. There is then a traceback process which will be confirmed by the department, so we will conduct that exercise.

As I said to the member for Eyre, we have a few loose ends to tidy up. Perhaps I will ask the Director-General in a moment to address his mind to some of those loose ends. As a Government, we have to address a number of those issues, such as quarantine, possible compensation, and the cost of recurrent and additional testing once, say, a property is quarantined. We can then look at the lifespan of some of these chemicals. If there is a very high level of residue in the soil, it could be for a period of up to 40 years. Nobody suggests that animals will be quarantined for that length of time, but there could be circumstances that lead to a very extensive period of quarantine, so there are some real problems which need to be addressed and which we are really only touching on at the moment. I think that a national and uniform approach should be taken and I am sure that the Federal Minister agrees with that statement.

In relation to the program, the next level is a State position with regard to the Agricultural Chemicals Act, the Controlled Substances Act and the Food and Drugs Act. From 31 October we will ban the use of organochlorins and in the next few weeks legislation will be introduced to do that. At present we are in the call-back period for those

chemicals so, in an amnesty environment, people can deliver those chemicals to our collection points about which there has been wide publicity. We have set ourselves a task to centralise and, because of the security risk aspect, I am not prepared to divulge publicly the central storage location of these chemicals, but I will do so privately for the member for Eyre or to any other member who wishes to ascertain that information. That is one aspect of another level of the collection process

The other segment to that is bringing in bans for use, and there will be penalties involved. Also suggested are complementary alterations to the Food and Drugs Act to ban, under, I think, regulation 7 of that Act, the prescription of these chemicals. So, we will have a fairly comprehensive legislative approach to the ban of these chemicals for agricultural purposes. Ancillary to that is the issue of their domestic use in home gardens, or, say, in termite control, and that is a situation which is addressed by the Minister of Health, and he has referred it to his Controlled Substances Advisory Committee for a report. That really sums up the steps we are taking in terms of the organochlorins.

At another level, I intend to set up an advisory committee on the use of agricultural chemicals to encompass a wide range of community views, involving not only the technical people but also people who use them, such as farmers, chemical companies, community consumers, and people involved in advice on environmental aspects. On radio I suggested that someone such as Jon Lamb might be interested as a person who has a fairly wide understanding of the agricultural industry and chemicals and their use in agriculture.

That committee would look at vetting the broader application of these chemicals and perhaps the long-term implications of their use. It would be an advisory committee to give us some background information on the possible implications of the long-term use or persistent use of these types of chemicals. I think it will be reasonably comprehensive. That should tie in with the national Agricultural Chemicals Committee with which Dr Wilson is involved and which is being conducted under the banner of the Australian Agricultural Council. It might be useful if Dr Radcliffe gave some technical information in this area.

Dr Radcliffe: The current position is that since 1 May there have been 10 violations detected under the Commonwealth residue survey. Seven of those have had temporary movement restrictions imposed over them and one is formally quarantined. The other two properties have in fact already been cleared up. Also, six additional properties have had significant levels of organochlorins although they were below the MRL level and, as such, were not in violation. We have been working with those 16 properties.

We have confirmed by traceback the extent of the problem and we have already been able to release two of them. A number of the others which were not in violation have received extensive testing of livestock, pastures and soil samples, and we have been able to advise the owner that he does not have a real problem. He had been intending to dispose of the livestock and he is now able to do so. We have put in a very considerable effort to attempt to help the problems of particular individuals.

At the national level, we received this morning a telex from Noel Fitzpatrick, who is Deputy Secretary of the Department of Primary Industry and Energy, and who recently went to the United States and Japan to renegotiate a solution to these problems. He has suggested a range of traceback and analytical procedures which should be adopted by all States with the intention of reducing the need for continued lot testing, and eventually we hope to remove

the need for lot testing by having established a freedom of residue problem in organochlorins throughout cattle or meat producing properties in Australia, although it will take some months to go through that process.

Mr KLUNDER: The Minister has indicated that he is reasonably satisfied with the return of organochlorins. Can he indicate how much has been returned so far?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: About 10 tonnes of DDT and about half a tonne of other organochlorins—a couple of odds and sods thrown in for good measure—have been returned.

Ms LENEHAN: Referring to program 7 under Farm Management and Rural Community Support, and also referring to the establishment (as mentioned in the Minister's introductory speech) of a rural unit, I address my question to the establishment of a rural women's desk. How many staff have been allocated to the rural women's desk, and can the Minister outline what support and services this much needed unit will provide for rural women?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I thank the honourable member for her interest in this area because it has been of significant importance, particularly in those areas of severe financial crisis where there has been social stress, particularly for the past year and a half or thereabouts. The establishment of the rural affairs desk has come about as a consequence of some changes which were brought to my attention in about the first few months of my being in the Ministry. It is worth noting the sorts of things that will be brought under that individual banner. Liaison people work with the Women's Agricultural Bureau, Rural Youth and the South Australian Rural Advisory Council. They have been offering seminars in the local rural community, dealing with a whole range of issues of concern to the community—matters such as train crossings, education, school bus services, and so on.

To this time, the women's desk has been staffed by one person. A fair array of funds can be denoted which relate particularly to the rural affairs unit. The officer in charge, Mr Broughton, has been previously an acting chief extension officer in the department. He was appointed to the position on 31 August. He is a very experienced manager with formal training in education and has been overseas for two years in a senior management position with Sagric in Saudi Arabia. He was also founding Chairman of the South Australian Rural Advisory Council to which I referred to earlier, so he has very wide experience.

Ms Cecily Bungey is the person responsible for the women's desk. The breakup of the rural affairs unit, staffed by eight officers, will be in this order: a group services section; social research section; and a farm management economist as the principal officer, so it is a reasonably comprehensive facility.

The intention is to offer supports that are not necessarily available to the rural community and, in many ways, support services, whether public or private, do not all reach the rural community. It is more natural for people in rural areas to approach the Department of Agriculture for advice and so on. In this way we will be able to provide services and facilities.

For example, an excellent handbook with an index was printed; it will help a lot of people who may not be aware of the public or private facilities that are available. That booklet is available from the Department of Agriculture offices throughout the State, and it is an important contact with the rural community. The Rural Affairs Unit will examine what issues need to be addressed and how best they can be addressed, and it will direct those issues to other departments or private sector organisations that can offer assistance. The unit will not actually put it on the

ground. Certainly, it will advise the department as to what areas it should address; it will advise the Director-General and me as to what matters we should be considering in terms of resources.

One issue that arose before the unit was finally formulated involved the South Australian Rural Advisory Council, which has published a book listing accommodation in Adelaide for relatives accompanying or visiting patients in hospital. I know from my own experience that it is difficult and often very expensive for country people to find appropriate accommodation if their children have to visit the dentist, or if a member of the family is in hospital in Adelaide. The booklet advises the sort of accommodation that is available.

The old Dolling Court accommodation, which was run by the CWA for many years (and I have a personal interest in it, because my mother was the Secretary of Dolling Court) has, unfortunately, been removed. That was a very valuable facility for the rural community. Unfortunately, when that sort of facility disappears, there are few other facilities to fill the gap. The unit will fit in with the social justice strategy that is being developed and promoted by the Government. It will play a liaising role, giving direction and information to the social justice unit. It will be an important communicator for the Department of Agriculture and the rural community. Overall, it has a very wide brief in terms of its role in the community.

As we know, women play a very significant role not only in the household situation but also in farm management. Many women maintain the books and accounts on the farm, and they therefore have a very important role to play. The women's desk will play an important role in identifying some of their needs, whether educational or social support. There is no doubt that we could do with more resources. Nevertheless, it is a significant initiative. We will provide a toll free telephone service in the Rural Affairs Unit so that anyone from outside the metropolitan area can call Cecily Bungey for the cost of a local call. The services and facilities will be fairly accessible, and that is the important thing. It is no good establishing a unit at the black stump and no-one having access to it.

Mr D.S. BAKER: I refer to what must be one of the State's best kept secrets. I note from the last edition of the UF&S magazine that there was an article on rural loans. It was stated:

Commercial loans for established—
and I stress the word 'established'—

primary producers and agricultural business people are available at very competitive rates, free of additional charges, through the Rural Assistance Branch.

It also states that sums of \$250 000 or more in special circumstances will be provided. Why has this scheme been kept such a secret, and can the Minister say what 'established primary producers' means? If more money is available, what special circumstances apply? It would appear from the handout that any primary producer who established the correct securities (and according to the inquiries I have made of the department) could borrow amounts far in excess of \$250 000.

Mr GUNN: It appears to be a good scheme. Whom does it involve?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is available to anyone in the community. I accept the point that the honourable member made about 'established'. I qualify that by referring to 'farming community'. The scheme has not been kept under a bushel; it has been promoted. The publicity and promotion program was agreed to in July, and there has been widespread publicity. Full scale advertising and a promotional

program were launched in August. I would be happy to table the department's publicity release on this matter. A promotional brochure is available, and that is presumably the one to which the honourable member referred that was published in the UF&S journal. To accuse us of not promoting the scheme at this early stage is a little unfair, because we are now only one month into the process.

A sum of \$10 million has been set aside, and the current interest rate is 14.5 per cent per annum. In terms of general philosophy, the idea is to give viable commercial operators the opportunity to explore capital expenditure in establishing viable operations. Basically, access to those funds is on a commercial footing. The honourable member referred to sums in excess of \$250 000 being available.

Mr D.S. BAKER: Yes.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I can enlighten the honourable member on that point. If a particularly good scheme in terms of commercial viability (and I am not sure that we want to define that) is put before the department and if the applicant can advance good argument for receiving more than \$250 000, the department can agree to an amount up to \$350 000 without having to go back to Treasury for the all clear. The department negotiates with the applicant, if the financial structure and predictions in terms of cash flow indicate that the scheme is viable, in relation to a loan for that sum and at that rate. Up to \$350 000 can be provided on the basis that the scheme is viable. That involves extension of an existing activity or the establishment of a new activity. It is not curtailed by a specific definition as to whether it should be a continuation of the operation of the business organisation.

Mr D.S. BAKER: Will banks and stock firms act as agents, or will there just be direct application to the department?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Direct to the department. In fact, there is a bit of anguish amongst the banks about that—which the honourable member has probably detected.

Mr GUNN: Over the last couple of years there has been continuing controversy about programs of deregulation of statutory marketing boards. I note that the Government is reviewing all rules and regulations, and some concern has been expressed about the long-term effects that this could have on agriculture. Which statutory boards and authorities regulations, under the Minister's control, does he intend to review during the next 12 months? In particular, I raise the matter of the operation of the Dried Fruits Board. I knew little of its operations until a most concerned person came to see me about the problems he had encountered in his quest to undertake commercial production of prunes. To put it mildly, his plan was not received particularly enthusiastically by the Dried Fruits Board. It would appear to me that he has a fairly legitimate operation, but on the information that he has received so far it appears that he will be lucky if he gets permission to undertake this operation. I understand that only three people in South Australia are permitted to have a licence to produce prunes. It does appear that that is a slightly closed shop arrangement. Will the Minister say what organisations he intends to look at this year? Further, does he have any information about the policy of the Government in relation to allowing people to enter industries, such as that involving the production of prunes?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: In relation to a general overview, the Government has adopted a position with regard to regulation and not in regard to the Acts. A sunset provision will be placed on all regulations requiring the review. This process will be entered into by the department while reviewing the regulations. One of the steps will be to consider

preparation of, what is called in the British parliamentary system, a green paper, which is a paper for general discussion in the community. I think this is the most sensible way to go about it, rather than having a hit and miss review of these functions every now and then. I suppose we could go into the whole argument of quangos as against the operation of some of the less important statutory bodies.

However, in relation to the Citrus Board, for example, I have had ongoing discussions with that board about its operation, and agreement has been reached. However, a report has been prepared by the deregulation unit, which suggests that there ought to be a formal review of the operations of the Citrus Board. The review which has been suggested in this green paper report would involve the normal process. It is not to say that there would be any further deregulation or any increased regulation. So, this involves the normal process.

In relation to the Dried Fruits Board, if the honourable member wants to bring that matter to my attention, I will take up the matter with the board. A review of the operations of that board will be part of the normal process of going through the regulations. I have no plans for a review of its operations in 1987-88. We are now back to the pattern involving the standard process of review and preparation of green papers on regulations, which will be set as a formal process. I might point out that this approach that the Government has adopted puts a severe pressure on the Department of Agriculture because, of all the departments, the Department of Agriculture administers a significant number of regulations (there are some 36 Acts, with related regulations), and it will require quite a scale process to review all the regulations. They must be reviewed by the middle of 1988, and so we are under a fair bit of strain.

Mr GUNN: I thank the Minister for that information. I will certainly take up the matter about the Dried Fruits Board on another occasion. In relation to the new Act dealing with pest plants and feral animals, has the organisation which is now in place been able to come to agreement with the landowners who are concerned that they might be forced to destroy feral deer and other animals? It appears to me that these animals are not causing a great deal of harm at present. I have received considerable correspondence from the Australian Deer Association in relation to this matter. The Minister will recall that there was considerable discussion when the matter was last before Parliament, and the Combined Shooters and Firearms Council has also been involved. Can the Minister give the Committee details of the current policy of the new board?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I have a policy statement which I will table for the information of members. I can sum up by saying that I think that feral deer must be regarded as being a potential problem, as the possible host to an exotic disease. We also know from the very tragic and difficult situation that we encountered with the TB outbreak of the possible dangers that feral deer represent to the industry. The Deer Advisory Committee, to be established to advise the Animal and Plant Control Commission, will have on it representatives of all the concerned groups. So, the groups that the honourable member has mentioned will have an opportunity to have an input into the operation of the Animal and Plant Control Commission. It can be anticipated that there will be a fair bit of community discussion on this issue, with advice and information provided to the commission. I am happy to table this document, headed 'Animal and Plant Control Commission, South Australia—Policy on deer in South Australia'.

Mr DUIGAN: I refer to what was previously Program 2, but which now appears to have been transferred into inter-

agency support services, and to the activities of Sagric International. Page 541 of the Program Estimates refers to the initiatives being undertaken in overseas agricultural projects and market development, to ensure the development of what were called mutually beneficial technical and trading relationships with developing countries. The achievements pertaining to 1986-87 of the countries involved are set out. In terms of major resource variations, an indication is given that the program has been changed so that it now comes under a different heading, and indeed under that heading all the operations are now run by Sagric International Pty Ltd. My question is whether any of the \$9.95 million, which is allocated under that interagency support service item, goes to the operations of Sagric International and, alternatively, whether any of the proceeds of the operation of Sagric International Pty Ltd are returned to the department? Ancillary to those questions about the financial relationship between the two, what is the nature of the policy and developmental relationship between the department and Sagric?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The allocation of funding out of the inter-agency support services item of \$9.9 million is such that \$90 000 is allocated representing one half FT equivalent with basically support services as their main goal within the budget line. The activities of Sagric on the international front and the department are fairly close. The brief and direction that Sagric is taking is very much under the banner of promoting South Australia and the skills that we have in our State. We are taking on a much greater long-distance approach to a whole range of marketable products that we have such as education and technical and agricultural studies.

Mr DUGAN interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is, but it is bringing dollars back to South Australia because of contracts being entertained. The Deputy Director of the department is also the Chairman of Sagric, and at the moment he is also Acting Managing Director. He has two hats down there. It is Dr Harvey, who has a particular flair in this area and who exhibits those skills in developing an important avenue for us. The Director-General may want to comment about the inter-relationship between the department and Sagric.

Dr Radcliffe: Sagric International operates as an independent limited proprietary company with three shareholders, namely, the Premier, the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister of State Development. It has an independent board. It does, however, come to the Department of Agriculture and does hire staff from that department for specific project work, which represents a saving to the department in terms of its salary budget. It also hires staff from other agencies of Government and the private sector, depending on the nature of the work being carried out. Sagric International carries out certain functions for the Department of Agriculture also; for example, if the South Australian Government or its Ministers receive representations from other countries with whom Sagric International has had project experience, it will organise the programs required and prepare briefing notes, and so on, rather than that work being done by the staff of the Department of Agriculture. A *quid pro quo* exists between the two organisations for specific services that each require from the other.

As the Minister pointed out, Sagric International is broadening its base and moving towards picking up a wider range of responsibilities, some of which extend into other fields such as education, where educational skills are being marketed, or into surveying skills, where the skills of the Department of Lands are being successfully marketed in other countries. Sagric International in effect becomes a project

manager for projects which can be resourced from South Australia. The economic benefits flow back to South Australia.

Mr DUGAN: The second question relates to program 8 and is again in the area of cooperation between various Government agencies. I refer to the Program Estimates at page 547, and specifically the Land Resource Standing Committee. Under whose authority was that committee established, who chairs it and what authority does it have?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is established under the banner of Cabinet and Dr Radcliffe chairs it. I will ask Dr Radcliffe to answer the question.

Dr Radcliffe: As the Minister points out, it was established as a result of a Cabinet decision and involves all Government agencies connected with land development, particularly the Departments of Lands, Agriculture, Environment and Planning, E&WS, Woods and Forests and, where necessary, Tourism, Mines and Energy and such other departments that may have an interest in any specific issue that is being considered. It is responsible to the Physical Resources Committee of Cabinet, to which it reports its activities on a monthly basis.

The committee's primary role is one of coordinating the activities of various Government departments in the matter of land management, so we do not find a duplication of effort or departments at cross purposes with each other in terms of policy development. It is involved in new legislative proposals. I refer, for example, to current proposals under the Crown Lands Management Act; the various departments are able to make an input into the development of legislative proposals to ensure that any policy proposals that are put forward are logical and do not conflict with other areas of Government, thus being widely accepted before being put forward for public debate. The chairmanship rotates on an annual basis between the heads of various agencies.

Mr MEIER: I refer to the Labor Party's agricultural policy, issued prior to the last election two years ago, where it states:

A State Labor Government will, where necessary, introduce and encourage measures to improve the bargaining position of farmers in the marketplace. Because of the diversity of agricultural pursuits, this will involve a wide range of measures, including the development of grower bargaining associations, cooperatives and statutory marketing authorities.

Will the Minister identify whether any grower bargaining associations have been set up and what measures have been taken to encourage and improve cooperatives and statutory marketing authorities?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The key issue is the possibility of establishing certain facilitating arrangements for cooperatives. I refer to taxation considerations and financial resource implications for establishing cooperatives. A paper has been prepared for the agricultural committee to consider what methods can be put together to assist with the establishment of agricultural cooperatives. That means producing, marketing and divesting to the consumer. That is a fundamental issue that we think is important to pursue. A lot of benefits are to be had by pursuing suitable arrangements whereby cooperatives can establish and reap the benefit of investment, taxation and group financial bargaining.

One of the problems with our cooperatives is that they cannot seek the same level of equity funding that large public organisations can obtain. I have the sympathy of the Federal Minister and a number of State Ministers on this issue, and I believe that we will be able to assist cooperatives to become more efficient, to have a cheaper and better source of funding and to have better arrangements for taxation purposes. It would be a strong initiative to be able to

assist cooperatives in marketing their products from the financial base of a large public organisation.

I can think of many cooperatives that would benefit from that, particularly in the Riverland where a number of large cooperatives stall and starve because they do not have the same funding source as a public company, which can go to an equity issue and raise about a 3 per cent return. Large sums of money fund expansion and improve efficiency. In trying to encourage that development through the Federal Minister, I will place my main emphasis on that policy. It has been agreed to by the Standing Committee. A number of points are being pursued by the Federal Minister, particularly with regard to the taxation issue and I hope that at the next Agricultural Council we will see a positive response so that steps can be taken.

I am sure that the honourable member has visited cooperatives. This matter is one that cooperative managements always raise, and a couple of people from the Riverland come to mind. Every time I visit their organisation the first point they raise is the question of being able to get over the hurdles regarding funding. After all, they compete with national and international organisations that can get equity funding at interest of 2 per cent or 3 per cent. That is what it costs them to service those debts.

Mr MEIER: Does the Minister suggest that grower marketing associations should be incorporated into cooperative ventures? What of statutory marketing authorities?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I am happy to do that. There are some problems with State statutory marketing authorities, as is being exhibited with the Milk Board and, possibly, in the egg industry. An artificial barrier runs around the State which suffers a great deal of penetration when it comes to anyone from interstate or overseas wanting to cross the border. It is artificial and does not stand any decent legal test. Our energies must be redirected. I take as an example the Citrus Board. The citrus industry needs a viable and innovative marketing organisation at its helm to consider, amongst other things, the question of international markets for fresh fruit and the development of the industry in terms of alternative sources of supply, stock of trees, and so on.

Statutory marketing authorities should address themselves to this type of issue rather than the policing role that many of them have heartily adopted. In many ways that is self-defeating, because it causes friction amongst growers who do not see such boards as policing bodies. I want those organisations to have a very strong marketing aspect to their operation, and I have told them as much. The Committee touched on Samcor today. I have taken a similar sort of approach with Samcor—projecting a commercial operative image on the basis of being South Australian and providing a service to South Australia.

Mr GUNN: I note on page 171 that there is a line 'Noxious insects—Reimbursement to District Councils and other expenses'. Last year the amount was \$1 000; this year it is nothing. I take it that it dealt with wasps, and I want to know what the Government is doing in that regard this year. More particularly, I am concerned with Portuguese millipedes. How much money will be provided and what will the staff allocation be in dealing with this problem?

I recall that, some years ago, there was a considerable amount of mirth in the House when this subject was raised. However, having lived in Port Lincoln which was the home of this pest for some years, I fully appreciate the annoyance and difficulties that these pests cause to households. It is getting worse and they are causing considerable concern to the community at large. Anyone who wakes up to find them in their bed, lights or bathroom knows that he has a problem. They are very difficult to get rid of and I know that

people who live close to the Hills are really concerned, as are people at Port Lincoln and on Eyre Peninsula. Can the Minister advise the Committee what the department is doing about this problem?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The figure of \$1 000 to which the member referred was for European wasps. That matter has been handed to the Minister of Local Government and local authorities. With regard to the millipedes issue, I hope that in a few weeks I will be able to make some positive comments about the department's successes in this area. I have said publicly on numerous occasions that the Government has allocated \$276 000 for a two-year project to study the biological control (with a parasitic fly, native to Portugal) of the millipede. Dr Bailey, a senior Sagric entomologist, has been based in Portugal since late May 1986, and Dr McKillup, a contract entomologist, has been based at Northfield with a contract technical officer since December 1985. Dr Bailey has been developing techniques to obtain large numbers of parasitised millipedes in Portugal for shipment to Adelaide. A culture of the fly is now held in quarantine at the Northfield Research Laboratories.

Host specificity testing of the fly against native millipede has begun as a prerequisite for seeking permission from the Department of Primary Industry to release the fly into the field. Dr McKillup has confirmed that a nematode naturally occurring in the Adelaide Hills is pathogenic to the introduced millipede. Techniques are being developed to mass rear this nematode for release in the field. Another option is the light trap. Years ago the member for Davenport said on a popular radio program that he had invented a light trap. Dr McKillup is testing a specially designed, insecticide treated light trap that fits under doorsteps. A prototype of the light trap greatly reduced the numbers of millipedes entering a house last autumn. That is the stage that has been reached with the research. There is a reasonable amount of confidence that we will make some headway and I hope that, in the next few weeks, I can make a report to Parliament on this.

Mr GUNN: With regard to the Rural Industries Assistance Branch, a number of people are in receipt of household support under that scheme. Can the Minister indicate what plans the department has to assist these people when the household support scheme and their eligibility expire? Many of these people have pretty high debt structures but would like to remain on their farms. The problem will not go away, and I wonder whether the Minister can indicate approximately how many people are involved and what long-term arrangements can be made to assist them to leave the enterprise with dignity or be placed on a more viable footing.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I thank the honourable member for his question because I have been concerned about that matter. The number of individual families receiving household support is 252. Mr Handscombe informs me that there could be a slight increase on that figure. As the honourable member knows, the agreement between the Commonwealth and the State is for a period of three years. We are reasonably hopeful that land prices will begin to level out and the Government will not be faced with the hypothetical dilemma raised by the honourable member. Hopefully within 12 months some of those people will be nearing the end of the stated period. Twelve families have been receiving household support for two years and are now going into their third year. At the end of that period a situation may be achieved where those families can leave their properties with dignity and with something in their pocket to commence their new occupational lifestyle.

At the special rural assistance meeting with the Federal Minister a rearrangement of rural assistance was requested. The department requested an amount of \$25 million in order to ensure that these people could leave their properties with a substantial sum of money in their pockets in order to begin their new lifestyle. As the budget would indicate, that request has been unsuccessful. We are talking about families, not just about individuals. The figures that were put forward by the Commonwealth on unemployment periods indicated that most of those people who left their farms were on the labour market for only a short time before they found alternative employment. It remains to be seen whether that situation will stand the test of time, given the fact that considerably larger numbers will have to be absorbed into the regional communities. However, it can be seen as a positive sign that a good opportunity exists for those families to avoid a stressful financial situation which, of course, could lead to related social problems.

The main lending institutions are the banks and the Government is considered to be the last resort in these situations. We anticipate some properties will have to be sold if these families cannot sell their properties under normal circumstances. As the honourable member would know, there is some movement at present in land sales and there appears to have been a bottoming out of values, and that will probably help to resolve the situation. The institutions of first borrowings, the banks, will probably seek to foreclose on these families. Hopefully that situation can be avoided. I was hoping for a bit more sensitivity from the Federal Budget, but that has not been forthcoming.

I have not given up the pursuit of up-front lending or up-front cash because I think that is an obvious solution to this situation. I might say that the Federal Minister agrees. I do not think anyone would not see the sense of providing families with an up-front grant in order to re-establish themselves. Their farms can then be either taken over or managed or sold. It is preferable that these people do not have to linger and go through all the related pressures which follow from trying to break the news to their families, which must be a horrible situation for anyone. When a change in lifestyle occurs, particularly for people who have been on the land, it is important that these people retain a good image of themselves. The Federal Minister's proposal was to provide two years of household support on the first day—up front. If these people could have left their properties with \$16 000 in their pocket to re-establish themselves I think that would have been a lot better than having to linger and hope that someone might come around the corner one day and buy the property and release them from their misery.

Mr GUNN: A suggestion has been made that land banks should be established or that a property trust should be set up to assist these people. Has the department looked at these proposals?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The department has looked at the land bank proposal. The Victorian department adopted an abridged version and I think it started to get into a difficult position. We could end up in a worse situation. However, I think the situation will hold until it improves. We could end up holding huge tracts of land. That would have the effect of limiting our reserves and resources which are needed to more efficiently deal with the recovery of agriculture. We should not have money tied up in servicing what could be non-viable pieces of South Australian land. We could then find ourselves in the situation of not being able to attend to the efficient reorganisation and debt restructuring of farming units, particularly the younger farmers who might be able to survive if those resources

were available. We would then have a bank of skilled farmers that continue our agricultural industry.

I have discussed the matter with the Federal Minister and the Victorian Minister because, when the idea was put to me 12 months ago, it did sound attractive, particularly if land values could be held up because the market could be kept at a level which would allow people to come and go from the industry. Take the West Coast, for example. If the Government decided to purchase land in the far west it might end up holding an area of land the size of a shire council. In some ways it might be preferable for that land to be turned over to other forms of agricultural endeavour, but a huge loss would be realised in doing so. Those moneys which could have been devoted to reorganising the debt structure of our more viable agricultural industries would be lost. The department advises me that it would be far too risky to do this. If the future positive aspects were more clearcut this proposal of land banks could probably be entertained.

Mr GUNN: From what the Minister said, I take it that the \$250 000 arrangement really is what the Government considers to be the best option at this stage. I think that, once it becomes known that the \$250 000 is available, quite a number of people will be interested in accepting that option. If the terms are flexible enough, I am sure that people will take that option. In recent times there has been considerable discussion between people involved in the fruit industry and vegetable growing. Has the Government made a decision whether or not it intends to proceed with the farm product legislation? I understand that in New South Wales a new Act was introduced in 1983 which protects growers from people who accept fruit and then claim that there is something wrong with it, thus denying the grower payment for that fruit. Could the Minister indicate what discussions he has had on this matter and whether the Government accepts in principle that a good case has been made out for an Act similar to that in New South Wales?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is a very important question. On the surface, I am attracted by the idea of a fruit and produce Act. We have had discussions with the Horticultural Association, which takes in the old CPIC along with a few others that have been attached under that banner. We intend to set up a working party to investigate this matter. Our principal officer concerned would be Mr N. Lewis, the Senior Horticultural Export Officer. At the moment he is overseas pursuing some of our markets in Japan and Europe but, when he returns, we will be able to address this topic. We are also waiting for Tony Keane, the Executive Officer of the Horticultural Association, to return with his and his association's thoughts as to the composition of the working party, together with the terms of reference, but I am aware of the honourable member's point about producers being cheated by unscrupulous operators. It seems that it is fair and reasonable to have some sort of protection for those people who put in all that effort only to find some intermediary who, through various ill-conceived practices, cheats them.

Mr GUNN: During regular visits to the northern part of my electorate I was particularly concerned with the number of rabbits that I noted. In recent times there have been claims in the press that the rabbit population is increasing in South Australia. Has the new Animal and Plant Commission looked at this matter, because it would appear that it has passed the point where either ripping or anything of that nature can control it. This matter should be addressed. I think that those people who are concerned about the environment should focus their attention on the rabbit threat, because the rabbit will do more damage to the environment

than any agriculturalist or any person who is engaged in pastoral pursuits. I believe that a considerable number of resources will be required to control this problem.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I agree with the honourable member that the rabbit problem is a serious threat to our pastoral country. There is no doubt that it is one of the major threats that we face in maintaining not only native vegetation but also maintaining our pastoral activities in those areas. I know that the Animal and Plant Commission is very concerned about this matter and it will devote a considerable amount of its efforts to addressing the whole question. About a fortnight ago, during an answer in Question Time on this topic, I mentioned that we intended to send a senior research officer to Portugal for 12 months to find a better rabbit flea. We will look at a number of areas that may address this whole question of reducing the rabbit population by using biological control methods so that we can be more specific and maintain a far greater control over the pest.

I can assure the honourable member that this topic is of grave concern to us, yet I am being pestered by a number of people to develop commercial domestic rabbit breeding. It is quite difficult to understand how they can advocate such a thing when we know the damage that the rabbit does in the wild. I endorse the honourable member's comment that it is one of the most potentially dangerous problems faced by our pastoral areas and it must be addressed.

Mr GUNN: Last week during Question Time the Minister answered some questions about fruit fly, eradication and road blocks. Could the Minister indicate the current operation times of the road blocks? I am aware that the road block at Ceduna operates continuously while the one at Oodla Wirra operates on a part-time basis. I raise this question because I believe there is a need for these sorts of facilities to operate regularly. Can Minister indicate the periods of operation of other road blocks in the State, and whether there are any plans to increase the allocation for this area so that these facilities are manned continuously?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: In addition to the operation of road blocks at Yamba continuously and at Pinnaroo in the summer months only, in April last year we set up a lure grid in the Riverland. The operations of the fruit fly prevention program have involved a number of aspects, including road blocks, education and vigilance. When I returned from interstate some six months or so ago, I noticed that Australian Airlines did not make an announcement over the public address system advising people that they cannot bring fruit into South Australia, so we wrote to the Managers of Ansett and Australian Airlines. As a result, those public notices were reinstated, together with the bins being placed in a more prominent position where people can deposit fruit and vegetables. Further, the honourable member would be aware from my answer during Question Time last week that a number of members have been concerned because bus companies have not been addressing this issue.

We maintain fruit fly information for the public at State border roadhouses. Of course, there are also notices on the major highways. We have written also to the bus companies and advised them of our quarantine regulations concerning fruit and vegetables and we have sought from them an undertaking that they will deal with this matter appropriately. If necessary, we will have to upgrade our facilities for the collection of that fruit at various stops.

Places are available at interstate borders where bus companies can allow their passengers to alight and to deposit fruit and vegetables in those receptacles so that it can then be destroyed by the department. Oodla Wirra probably is in the member for Eyre's electorate; that facility operates

in summer months. It opened earlier last year in order to deal with the flow of traffic for the Grand Prix, so we were able to provide that service on the basis of anticipating a major event.

As the honourable member would know, we have upgraded the Ceduna facility quite significantly with the provision of all-night lighting and boom gates. When I was last there, they had not put in the boom gates, but they were going in. I was talking to the head inspector there—and the honourable member is most welcome to go and see him when he is over there—and he indicated to us that the response from the public is generally very good in that people stop and there are no hassles with them handing over fruit. They could not recall when they had a situation when someone has not stopped to cooperate with the inspection service. With that and the threat from Western Australia—and there is no question that Western Australia is saturated with the fruit fly—it is important for us to maintain that link. Fortunately, there are not too many other roads that people are likely to use from Western Australia. Our Port Augusta station provides for commercial transport on the basis of endeavouring to curtail the fruit that is carried across the border.

I think it will require us to continue to monitor what we are doing and how we are going, because the cost of eradication is quite significant. We did not have a major metropolitan outbreak last year but there were outbreaks at Kadina and Cleve, so we have kept it out of the metropolitan area. Not that that is the most significant because if we got it in the horticultural areas, it would be disastrous, but it is the most likely place for it to bob up if people carelessly bring in fruit or vegetables from Victoria or Queensland. Thankfully, we do not have much of a problem with Queensland fruit coming in, apart from tomatoes. As regards interception, 66 parcels of infested fruit were seized at road blocks out of 65 tonnes of fruit intercepted for the year.

Mr GUNN: The department provided funds for the commissioning of a study into a water project west of Ceduna. I understand that the Minister has a report. Can he indicate the findings of that report or when it will be made public, and to whom it will be made available?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The report is with the department. We are preparing a submission at the moment for it to go to Cabinet.

Mr GUNN: It has been announced in the press and through correspondence with the Minister in charge of police that the stock squad will be abolished and incorporated into the general criminal investigations area. Has the Department of Agriculture been involved or made reports in this matter because there has been an increase in the number of stock stolen, and this section of the Police Force has specialised skills, and if people are not used to handling stock, police officers—as well meaning as they may be—would not have the skill to identify the stock. These people are experienced and well known and have the support of stock agents in industry, and I wonder whether the department has been involved?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: As the honourable member appreciates, this matter is in the Deputy Premier's portfolio. I have written to the Deputy Premier first with a complaint about the lack of consultation involved in regard to the decision to disperse the stock squad into other branches, and also to ask for clarification as to how that policing program would be pursued by the dispersed officers. I am told that I have received a response from the Premier on behalf of the Deputy Premier, although I have not yet seen it, indicating that the stock squad services policing program

will be continued, and the intention is to give the officers concerned a wider experience. I cannot give the honourable member anything more than that, but I have registered my concerns with the Deputy Premier over that.

Mr MEIER: Earlier we heard a question regarding the millipede problem. What is the latest situation with respect to the sitona weevil eradication program and has the introduction of the wasps had any major impact on them?

Dr Radcliffe: Some years ago we introduced two parasites, including the trioxys, which is the one I believe the honourable member is thinking of. It has survived and multiplied, but has not had a major impact on the control of the sitona weevil at this stage.

Mr MEIER: Are plans in hand to look at some alternative means, because I am aware of the effect of the alfalfa weevil in America? I do not know what its biological background is, but it looked very similar to me, knowing the sitona weevil very well as I live on Yorke Peninsula. Whereas 96 per cent of alfalfa fields formerly required insecticides to protect heavy weevil damage, since the introduction of five different wasps, now only 7 per cent requires such treatment. I hope that we are looking at further preventive measures for the sitona weevil, particularly with its effects on medic pastures.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I think it is fair to say that the department has not put a priority on sitona. It basically has looked at other areas, because the sitona is not in a plague proportion. It is really a question of priorities, and the Director-General may want to add some further technical information to that.

Dr Radcliffe: When sitona first became established in the 1970s, it occurred in extremely large numbers and decimated crops, native plants and a whole range of species. It seems to have attracted a certain amount of interest from other native pathogens of various kinds and it does appear to have reduced in numbers. Whilst I recognise that it is still a problem, I do not believe it is still a problem to the extent it was when it was first introduced.

Mr MEIER: On page 540, a statement is made with respect to providing of training of disaster personnel in message control, map plotting and counter-disaster management. To what extent is liaison work taken with State Emergency Service crews in country areas on this program coming up for this year?

Dr Radcliffe: There is a close relationship between the activities of the Department of Agriculture and the disaster network in general terms, and exercises are conducted both centrally and in country areas. I might say that the locust control campaign which we are currently facing is also seen as training for a natural disaster exercise in so far as it involves map reading, handling of radios in emergency situations and so forth.

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

Works and Services—Department of Agriculture,
\$2 970 000—Examination declared completed.
Fisheries, \$5 186 000

Chairperson:
Ms D.L. Gayler

Members:
The Hon. P.B. Arnold
Mr D.S. Baker
Mr M.G. Duigan
Mr J.H.C. Klunder

Ms S.M. Lenehan
Mr I.P. Lewis

Witness:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes, Minister of Fisheries.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr R.A. Stevens, Director, Fisheries Department.
Mr D. Huxley, Accountant.
Mr R.K. Lewis, Research Manager.
Mr G. Rohan, Fisheries Manager.

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

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: I do not intend to make an opening statement.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: As outlined in the budget papers, the Department of Fisheries' proposed allocation for 1987-88 of \$5.2 million provides for a range of savings measures to be implemented this financial year along with additional funds of \$90 000 (\$100 000 in a full year) to provide for the finalisation of the Upper Spencer Gulf Baseline Study and the recommencement of work related to the administration of the proposed southern zone rock lobster licence buy-back scheme. That scheme was proclaimed today. A number of research programs have either concluded or been terminated as at 30 June 1987, resulting in a reallocation of resources to higher priority research projects such as aquaculture. The fisheries management branch, which includes responsibility for surveillance work, has maintained its funding at a level consistent with previous years. This section of the department is expected to finalise the installation of necessary communications systems to bring the Riverland area into the UHF radio system operated by the department.

In the capital budget, the department will be replacing its patrol vessels with new and improved non-trailerable vessels. In addition, it is anticipated that the first stage of the marine laboratory will be completed in November-December this year. Following the successful rationalisation of fishing effort in the Gulf St Vincent/Investigator Strait prawn fishery, the Government has implemented legislation necessary to rationalise fishing effort in the southern zone rock lobster fishery, and I record my appreciation for the support given to these processes by the Opposition and members of the select committee who are present today. The Government has also initiated a number of reviews on individual fisheries, including the mulloway fishery, the snapper fishery and the blue crab fishery, as part of the assessment processes of fisheries which are commercially and recreationally popular.

Present management of the State's fish resources seeks to achieve a fair and reasonable mix of fishing access and entitlements, taking into account historical entitlements and Government policies. As a general rule, most fishing groups recognise that their activities impact on the activities and welfare of other groups. Accordingly, demands for increased fishing access must be assessed in terms of their impact on the resource (including the marine and freshwater environment) and on other users, and consideration must be given to the costs which may be involved to industries outside the fishing industry itself. Above all, the economic and social implications of present and future fishing effort by all sectors on a finite resource will need to be monitored carefully.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: There is no doubt that the department has a major role not only to protect the various fishery resources around South Australia but also to main-

tain a balance between recreational and professional interests. Certainly, the professional industry is clearly defined, but it is more difficult to define the recreational industry, because there is a tourism component, thus we have a recreational cum tourism industry.

A number of my questions concern some of the problems and conflicts that exist between the recreational interests and the professional interests. First, I refer to the situation that exists in Coffin Bay in relation to applications for oyster farming leases. I want to know just where the department stands at this stage in relation to that industry. Obviously, the oyster farming industry has tremendous potential, but certainly there is quite a bit of anti the industry feeling within the community concerning the effects that it will have on Coffin Bay generally. Will the Minister provide us with an outline of the thinking of the department and where it is heading in relation to that industry?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is a complex issue, as the member for Chaffey has indicated, because it does focus all these competing interests on that one area. Fundamentally, the situation pertains to two areas. It is the responsibility of the Deputy Premier to oversee this situation, as it comes under the Planning Act. However, of course, the Department of Fisheries has a very keen interest in what is taking place at Coffin Bay from the point of view of the use and development of aquiculture processes, particularly in relation to the lease applications for oyster farming in that location. A committee, formed under the Planning Act, has been established to consider this whole proposal. The representatives on that committee must consult with the following parties: the Department of Marine and Harbors, the Department of Environment and Planning, the Department of Tourism, the Department of Mines and Energy, the Coast Protection Board, the Aboriginal Heritage Unit, the South Australian Fishing Industry Council and the South Australian Recreational Fishing Advisory Council. The broadest possible interests are being tapped in assessing the impact of this activity on Coffin Bay. The Department of Fisheries has received 23 applications for new oyster leases, for locations ranging from the West Coast to the Coorong. Oyster leases, by necessity, result in some alienation or loss of amenity of the coastline.

Due to the diversity of interests in the number of Government organisations with responsibilities pertaining to these areas, there is a need to ensure that all appropriate organisations, Government departments, and persons, as well as issues, are addressed in assessing any lease application. As a consequence, and following a Department of Fisheries initiative, the Aquiculture Committee was formed. That committee represents those departments with a major interest in this area. It comprises the Chairman of the South Australian Planning Commission, as presiding officer, and representatives from the Department of Fisheries, the Department of Lands and the Department of Environment and Planning.

The issue of licences, or leasing access, as it may be described, has gone forward. The member might recall the controversy brought to the notice of the public through all forms of the media during the last fortnight or so, and an allegation that was made about one applicant who was illegally farming in that environment. In fact, information given to that person led him to establish his farming industry.

Mr Stevens: The applicant had gone through a process of assessment prior to the department publishing its report on areas around the coastline suitable for oyster growing, he was being assessed on the old basis, and the department coordinated that. The member might recall that last year or

the year before he suggested that the Department of Fisheries should coordinate all responses rather than having an applicant going to various areas of Government separately—and the Department has in fact done that. This applicant was at a point where a lease application had been drawn up, public comment had been sought, and some very minor objections had been raised to his proposal. He proceeded to put structures in to commence the trial growing of oysters. In fact, the department had given him permission to import the spat but not actually put them out. But, the applicant was so far advanced under that system of assessment that he felt confident enough to begin constructing his oyster racks, etc. He was caught 'twixt and between, if you like. The assessment process for oyster applications changed right at the point where he was about to be given one.

The Aquiculture Committee was set up because there was a rush of applications to the Department of Fisheries, and we felt obliged to involve other departments on a formal basis in the assessment procedure. The situation in Coffin Bay at the moment is that a meeting was held last Monday, and it was attended by Mr Rohan. With the agreement of the Committee it might be helpful if Mr Rohan explained the outcome of that meeting.

Mr Rohan: The meeting was attended by invitation by me and Steve Hains, who is the Chairman of the Planning Commission and Chairman of the Aquiculture Committee. It was chaired by Mr Peter Blacker, who invited what he understood to be the main protagonists and antagonists relating to oyster leases at Coffin Bay. The intention was to allow informal discussion between the main interests, with the intention of removing some of the areas of misunderstanding that had developed. I think the meeting was reasonably successful in that sense. It also indicated some of the main areas of concern, and I think that Steve Hains, as Chairman of the Aquiculture Committee, was able to allay some fears. A lot of local concern had been allayed by the committee with the undertaking that lease applications were most unlikely to go ahead in those areas where people had indicated that they were sensitive to them for reasons that, for example, they were close to the Coffin Bay township or that they were heavily used by recreational or local interests.

At this stage I understand that the Aquiculture Committee has on its books 11 applications relating to Coffin Bay and that the committee has considered two and given approval for two. However, public hearings are still to be held for the other applications. The Committee chairman has indicated that it is most likely that not all these applications will be approved, given the concerns that have been expressed. That is where the matter stands. I understand that the issue will now be raised with the relevant Ministers and that certain action resulting from that meeting is likely to follow, in terms of assurances given following the concerns that were expressed on Monday.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: In view of the number of applications that the department has received—some 23—is there sufficient habitat or environment around the coast of South Australia to cater adequately for the number of applications pertaining to areas where there will not be a major reaction from the nearby community?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I refer that question to Mr Lewis, who is the Research Manager for the Department of Fisheries.

Mr Lewis: Adequate space has been identified in the 1985-86 report. The problem has arisen that many of the applicants want to concentrate in one location, a very desirable location, namely, Coffin Bay. So, 23 applications, *per*

se, do not create too much concern for us. The question is the balance in any one location, and that is what the debate has been about.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: From the industries viewpoint, there is a marketing advantage in centralising in certain areas of the State rather than being widely scattered throughout the State.

Mr Lewis: It would be an advantage, but we find that oyster farmers are as individualistic as fishermen, and it is a matter of their cooperating in the marketing. Having farms distributed around the State will not be too detrimental to marketing prospects, as it is a very large market into which we hope to tap.

Mr KLUNDER: I refer to programs 3 and 4 regarding surveillance of the aquatic resources and protection of the aquatic habitat. I assume that those programs are in part necessary because there are breaches against either the Act or the regulations. Will the Minister indicate whether there have been any serious breaches or prosecutions and, if so, what the courts have handed down?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is a very important function. The fishing industry, particularly the professional section, is very concerned that the department institutes its policing role. At the numerous meetings that I have had with industry representatives, the constant argument has been put forward for increased policing of the fishery. That was brought to our attention with the abalone fishery. The cost of undertaking any sort of policing is very high and, to the extent that some people would like to see our enforcement brought to bear, it would be prohibitive, bearing in mind that we are endeavouring to get a cost of recovery from the fisheries. If we increased our surveillance and policing functions, we would find that licence fees could go up dramatically, to the extent that some industry representatives want the application of enforcement.

In relation to the abalone fishery, I was outraged by an article that appeared in the *Advertiser* a fortnight ago making a folk hero of someone who had been flouting the laws of the State and taking abalone illegally. When we bear in mind the resource as it stands and the position with regard to the sensitive nature of the resource, it is extraordinary to find responsible newspaper journalists writing an article of that sort which not only makes a folk hero of the person involved but also endorses his activities as a wild west cowboy. It is part of the old Australian attitude of adventure and experience.

Many people risk their lives and spend a lot of money endeavouring to fish in the industry properly through the appropriate channels. Their income, as well as the livelihood and wellbeing of the fishery as a whole, is being threatened by the activities of these people. I was astounded to see the article, and I know that the Director was also astounded. We responded to the *Advertiser*, expressing our concern about the way in which the article was portrayed. It encouraged people to follow illegal activities which threatened not only the economy of the fishery but also the resource itself.

It is difficult, when our fisheries officers are out there endeavouring to enforce our State laws and protect the resource, for them to find articles portraying as folk heroes the people who have been physically threatening them. It is hard to comprehend and must be even harder for a fisheries officer who, in some cases, puts his wellbeing on the line.

In regard to the enforcement as a result of abalone surveillance, nine persons were apprehended relating to four separate fishing operations. A number of vessels and vehicles were seized (as we have the power to do under the

Fisheries Act), along with associated diving gear and abalone as a result of these investigations. Prosecution action has been implemented against the persons involved. Court action was concluded against an abalone poacher detected fishing in a previous year. This person was fined a total of \$4 000 which, when combined with the \$12 300 of total fines previously awarded against his diving companion, amounted to some \$16 000 in total costs for the two persons. When one considers that some of the fishermen can earn between \$250 000 and \$500 000 from taking illegal abalone, it is not much of a penalty.

In other cases of note, two recreational abalone fishermen were fined a total of \$1 500 for taking abalone in excess of the bag limit and for taking undersize abalone. A person was fined a total of \$436 (that was a second offence) for taking seven undersize fish, and a net fisherman was fined a total of \$562 for using an unregistered net in a closed area. A large number of other recreational offences were detected relating to crabs, fish netting and the taking of undersize or over the bag limit fish. I hope that that gives the honourable member some idea of the situation in regard to enforcement.

Ms LENEHAN: My question relates to the recommendation of the select committee on which a number of members of this Committee sat. I refer to the select committee into the rationalisation of the southern rock lobster fishery zone. One of the recommendations that the committee viewed as being a future means of helping the industry to be involved in self-rationalisation was the provision that licences be used as collateral. The recommendation was that the Government urgently investigate this proposal. Although I realise that it is only a short time since the committee brought down its report, will the Minister give this Committee an update of the stage that that proposal has reached and how far the investigation of that recommendation has advanced?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Having been a member on that select committee, the honourable member is aware of the various issues raised by those giving evidence to the committee in regard to the southern zone rock lobster fishery. We do not have a large department and the officers concerned have been involved in getting the infrastructure of the buy-back authority as well as getting legislation and Cabinet submissions together over the past 10 days. We have not any time to devote a great deal of attention to this very issue. There has been further discussion with Crown Law in view of the select committee recommendations. There has also been confirmation of what is happening in Victoria, so we have a better understanding of that.

Although evidence was given to the select committee suggesting that Victoria already had in place a collateral licence arrangement, that is not the case at the moment. They are considering it, so we do not have any firm example to which we can refer and which we can also refer to Crown Law: it would be useful if we did have it. We have only had a chance to pursue the question with Crown Law and not to pursue it at any length. Once the officers are able to get the buy-back authority up and running (they have yet to receive further submissions on the appointment of its Chairman and members, as well as nominations from the appropriate organisations) we will pursue the issue of licence collateral and get a comprehensive report which I will bring back to the Parliament.

Ms LENEHAN: It is heartening to know that investigations are proceeding, but it is disappointing that what we were told on the committee about the Victorian situation is not correct. Under the interagency service items not associated with the program, a sum of \$5 000 was allocated

last year for scholarships to the Australian Maritime College of which \$3 375 was actually paid out. I notice that no payment is proposed this year. What was the money used for last year and why is it not continuing?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Funding was available for sons and daughters of members of the fishing industry to attend the Australian Maritime College. Because of cost restraints and priorities, that area suffered a cut. I hope that the department will be able to reinstate that funding.

Ms LENEHAN: How successful was the program and how many students have taken up the scholarships that were offered?

Mr Stevens: The scholarships were instituted in 1977 by the then Minister of Fisheries (Brian Chatterton). They resulted in assistance being made available to approximately 15 to 20 students over that period. Usually one, two or three students took advantage of the scholarship assistance. In a number of years the amount available was not fully utilised. At present, one or two students are taking advantage of the assistance. It is made available to help with accommodation and tuition fees at the Australian Maritime College. As a result of the removal of the \$5 000 this year, the college has been written to and informed that the scholarships are no longer available and requested to make appropriate arrangements with the students concerned.

Mr D.S. BAKER: My question relates to the southern rock lobster fishery. The select committee was universally aware that financial hardship could be caused by the buy-back scheme especially if the surcharge was introduced at a reasonably high rate. I understand that the surcharge will be \$100 per pot and that will place the smaller boats in some financial hardship. In view of that and given that the Minister has not yet finalised the use of licences as collateral, will he allow licences to be used as collateral to obtain funds under the new rural commercial loans, which are funded by SAFA? That would alleviate the financial hardship on some of the fishermen.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The surcharge has not yet been finalised. I have yet to receive the proposal from the department, but I note the select committee's concerns about it. The Port MacDonnell fishermen put forward the proposal for a surcharge as a way to reduce the cost.

Mr D.S. BAKER: I understand that that is the way it will go.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is the proposal, but I have not yet finalised it. The other ports accepted the Port MacDonnell proposal. At this stage the collateral issue has not been resolved. Knowing how cautious and careful SAFA is, it could not be resolved until it is legally watertight. There would be no chance of getting moneys on the basis of the security of the licences from SAFA or from the rural assistance commercial lending facility. The legal ramifications under the Fisheries Act for collateral must be sorted out and there must be the agreement of Treasury to that arrangement, on which Crown law approval must be sought before the department can do anything. The legal problems are the only issue. The department could consider those avenues of funding.

Mr D.S. BAKER: Does that mean that although the fishermen could not use their licence as collateral, the commercial loans scheme might help those who are financially disadvantaged initially in the buy-back?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is another problem.

Mr D.S. BAKER: Will the Minister look into it?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I will consider it, but I do not think that it can be used as a source for the fishing industry. The member for Chaffey suggested that assistance could be sought under the national fisheries adjustment scheme. My

department has written to the body concerned and there is a chance that some funds could be obtained from that source. Approximately \$3 million is in that scheme.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: My next question concerns the conflict between the competing interests of amateur or recreational fishermen and the professional industry within a limited resource. The Minister would be aware of two articles in the *Advertiser* on 1 September and 11 September. The first, 'Holiday town in trouble as fish and tourists stay away', referred to the township of Edithburgh on Yorke Peninsula. The second, 'Move to ban nets to boost tourism', stated:

Net fishing in SA waters off coastal tourist towns is threatening regional tourism and should be banned, says the Eyre Peninsula Tourism Association.

I understand that the department has had meetings with people in those areas. Does the department see any light at the end of the tunnel, taking into account that the tourism industry is probably of a monetary value similar to that of the fishing industry? What effect does the department envisage on the present level of netting? Is it a major factor contributing to a falling-off in tourism and, if it is, what is the answer to the problem?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I do not think that the tourism industry is falling off. Tourist numbers in South Australia are quite encouraging and equate well with Queensland's, which has caused some Queenslanders with whom I spoke recently to scratch their head and wonder why. Of course, they are not aware of the benefits and assets that we can offer in this State to attract people here. We must find a balance between the competing aspects of the fishing industry, that is, commercial versus recreational. The tourism and fishing liaison committee has been set up to advise me on issues of concern to the whole industry. Representation on that committee is from the South Australian Inshore Fisheries Association, the Local Government Association, the Department of Tourism and the Department of Fisheries.

The committee will be chaired by the Director and I will ask him to speak specifically about those meetings which he has attended in the last week or so and to which the honourable member has specifically referred. A number of factors should be taken into account. One popular myth is that the scale fishery advisory body is an organisation of the Fisheries Department. That is not so; it is a SAFIC organisation. It has been alleged that it is biased and does not contain representation from the recreational fishermen. That is a problem that SAFIC has to resolve; it is not my problem. I can receive advice but I am not bound to take it. It is on that basis that I make that statement because there is some popular myth in the community that it is an advisory committee to the department and to me. That is not so.

A large part of the increase in effort that has occurred, particularly in the snapper fishery, has come from long line fishing and not necessarily from netting, and that has been a major argument put forward particularly by local government in some of the Spencer Gulf towns. Some of the marine scale fisheries are under severe stress and are probably being exploited to their optimum.

In my opening comments I said that the department has addressed this issue with discussion papers which are considering management options. This applies to those issues that confront the gulf towns which largely rely on tourism. I think there is light at the end of the tunnel. Some conflict between recreational, net and line fishermen has always existed. The department will try to maintain a balance so that the community will receive the best benefit. In some

areas, fairly stringent restrictions have been placed on the recreational fishery.

One hears a lot of stories about 25 tonnes of this particular fish and something like 2½ tonnes of blue crab being caught in the gulf, that they were all females and were delivered to the local fishery outlet. A lot of these stories have been checked out and in many cases they are found to have come from the local pub. In many cases the truth spoils a good story. The department is trying to strike a balance. I hope that the tourism and fishing liaison committee will assist in finding that balance between the important industries of tourism and fishing in this State. I now ask the Director to address those particular issues that were raised in regard to the meetings that have been held in the last fortnight or so.

Mr Stevens: It is probably relevant to point out to the honourable member a response to an article that appeared in the *Advertiser* from a 17-year-old lass who lives in Edithburgh. Of her own volition she responded to the article about Edithburgh being a dying town. She responded positively that there are a lot of other things in Edithburgh which attract tourists. I think her response to that article and the letters to the Editor was a much more balanced approach to the problems in Edithburgh than the one that was portrayed in the *Advertiser*.

I have been to a number of public meetings this year, the two most recent of which were in Cowell and Yorketown. In contrast to the media reports on those meetings, I thought they were positive and constructive. What I explained to the nearly 100 people that came to the Cowell meeting and the almost 200 people that came to the Yorketown meeting was that the recreational fishery comprises a number of components including active participants and non-active participants. It is complex and diverse and involves a large number of user groups. Active participants are readily easy to identify. However, non-active participants—including people who use the activity of fishing for other reasons, for example, relaxation, environmental appreciation, comradeship, etc.—are not so easy to identify.

Tourism is basically a commercial enterprise which competes for a share of available fish resources. At the same time fish consumers, including tourists who do not actively catch their own fish, are entitled to expect fish of an acceptable quality and price to be readily available from retail outlets in the particular centres to which they go. In contrast to the commercial fishery, the motives for the most active recreational fishermen to go fishing are not always to take large numbers of fish but to take enough to eat and to undertake a leisure activity at the same time. This is reflected in the Government's policy that recreational use will be limited to a level and gear allocation which allows the person to take enough fish for their immediate family needs.

In nearly all cases recreational fishermen are engaging in a leisure activity for which they are not personally charged. Many of the problem areas in the recreational fishery revolve around competition for a greater share of finite fish resources, particularly as the number of participants and total fishing effort increases. Not only are data on the impact and benefits to the recreational fishery difficult to obtain, they have also proven extremely difficult to quantify. It is therefore essential to encourage former responsible interaction with nominated representatives of all recognised groups to encourage continual liaison, as well as an understanding of the objectives and aspirations of the different users.

In relation to netting, I think it is important to recognise that the previous Liberal Government introduced transferability arrangements in the marine scale fishery which allowed people to transfer their licences, as long as those

who had net permits endorsed thereon surrendered their licence to the department. As a result of that and other measures approximately 200 net permits have been removed from the commercial sector of the marine scale fishery. In 1980 there were 426 net permits; now there are 230. I think that the commercial sector recognises that there will be increasing pressure from tourism, local government and recreational bodies generally for greater access to fish resources from those groups.

As far as the department is concerned, it is extremely important that there is a balance in the debate. The department has very good data on the commercial sector of the fishery with respect to the effort put in by net and line fishermen; it does not have anything like the same data on the effort put in by recreational fishermen. A proposal is being considered by the professional sector of the industry along the lines of what has been pursued in the southern zone rock lobster fishery, and that is that the number of net permits in the commercial sector of the fishery be reduced by a rationalisation process, that is, a buy-back scheme.

The commercial sector recognises that the policy introduced by the Liberal Government of 1982 has probably gone as far as it can in getting rid of people who wanted to transfer their licences and, in fact, only two or three net permits per year have been handed in over the past 18 months. So the commercial sector of the fishery is looking at a kind of buy-back scheme to, hopefully, reduce the number of netting endorsements in the commercial sector of the fishery from about 230 to between 130 and 150. That may address some of the pressure which is upon that sector to provide greater access for the other groups, such as line and recreational fishermen and tourists.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: The flow-on from that would possibly be in the snapper fishery. I am aware that the Minister has received correspondence from at least two sources—Mr Roland Evans and the Port Pirie Amateur Anglers Association—about the limitations on recreational fishermen and the effects of netting on snapper. What is the department's view of the effect of netting on snapper? What about the proposal to put limits on amateurs in relation to snapper in the light of the correspondence that the Minister has received?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Obviously, this is a fairly contentious issue which has been brewing in the local and the State media. I think that in my answer to the earlier question I touched on the conflict between the recreational and the commercial fishery. I think it is fair to say also that we have to try to find a balance. I think also that since 1984 the increase in long-line in the snapper fishery has been quite extraordinary. Over the past three or four years there has been about a 300 per cent increase in long-line capacity, which is quite a significant increase.

People tend to focus on the netting issue, but it represents about 10 to 15 per cent of the actual commercial catch, so it is not a significant part, although it may be seen to be so because of the ease and efficiency with which fishermen can undertake it. Of course, there are controls on that, because sometimes in the debate people conveniently ignore the size of the mesh, so it is not as clear-cut as perhaps members have been led to believe from arguments presented in the general press and certainly there is a great deal of misunderstanding about what is actually happening as various sectarian interests promote their own views in the debate.

The recreational fishing area also has absorbed enormous effort in terms of that resource and it is important that we note that. We do not know the impact of the recreational

fisherman on the snapper resource, so it is therefore important that we look at measures to address that effort also. It will be a catch-22 situation for those people who advocate (and this is the impression I gain after listening to them) a free hand to the recreational fishermen as against what is happening in the commercial area. If they expect controls not to relate to recreational as well as to commercial fishing, that is, management methods will have to be applied in an even-handed fashion across the whole fishery application, I think that they may be disappointed.

Mr Stevens: Obviously, reports come from various sectors of the fishing community about the activities of other sectors relating to dead fish on beaches, etc. I suppose that 90 per cent of the reports tend to come from the Spencer Gulf area where probably more netting is undertaken by commercial fishermen than in other areas of the State and it is a very productive area of our fish resources. The most recent example where our fisheries officer cited the catch was in relation to 7.6 tonnes of snapper which was caught by a Port Pirie net fisherman and that suddenly was blown to a catch of 25 tonnes. Despite our requests for people to come forward to validate the sudden increase from 7.6 to 25 tonnes, that has not been forthcoming. That is not the first occasion that such a thing has happened. It is built up into a very emotional and antagonistic debate. I suppose that in the discussions we are always seen as the baddies, because we are not doing something about netting.

I think that under the snapper proposals it is important to highlight that the amount of available resources in the net fishery has been set at 20 tonnes. If members recognise that the commercial catch over the past two seasons has been about 430 to 450 tonnes, we propose that only 5 per cent of that be taken by net, so that leaves 95 per cent being taken by the commercial line fishermen and an unknown quantity being taken by the recreational sector.

We are concerned about the impact of the recreational sector because, in recent years, the number of so-called pleasure boats registered with the Department of Marine and Harbors has increased quite dramatically from about 35 000 to about 55 000 vessels. Obviously, recreational boating is something that people enjoy, but some of those recreational boats are being fitted out with extremely advanced technological fish-finding equipment. That is having an impact on the snapper resource. We have to make some judgments on what we think that effort is doing to the resource and we have to get some balance, in terms of a bag limit, as to what recreational fishermen can take.

If one multiplies the bag limit suggested in the snapper review, one would find that recreational fishermen could take approximately 50 kg of snapper a day, which I do not think is an unreasonable quantity of fish and, in fact, some people would say that it is a little too fair to the recreational sector, but some people like to fill iceboxes, etc., and those people must be catered for, together with those who simply go out for the pleasure of taking fish but, in my opinion, the people who are making the most noise about the snapper fishery are the people who are filling their iceboxes.

Mr KLUNDER: On page 173 of the Estimates of Payments, the total recurrent expenditure for the year 1986-87 in actual payments is recorded as being \$5 079 000. On page 549 of the Program Estimates that equivalent figure is \$6 408 000 and the reconciliation of those figures on page 552 is shown as being due to a trust account amount of \$639 000 and inter-agency support services not paid for, \$693 000, together with funding not allocated to programs showing as a credit of \$3 000. By reference to the Auditor-General's Report at pages 100 and 101, I am able to find an explanation for the \$693 000 of inter-agency support

services not paid for, but I am not able to find a reference to the \$639 000 of trust account. Could the Minister indicate what that \$639 000 is detailed as?

Mr Lewis: In relation to the surveys, we charter vessels and, to offset that charter, we sell the catch through the normal processing companies and then we repay the money to those through the prawn fishing associations in order to pay for the vessel charter.

Mr KLUNDER: Was that information made available to the Auditor-General?

Mr Lewis: Yes.

Mr KLUNDER: In fact there is an approved deposit account within the Fisheries Department?

Mr Stevens: That is correct. There was an arrangement to facilitate very rapid consideration of tenders from prawn vessels to enable research work to be carried out in the most efficient manner. Tender arrangements were approved by the Supply and Tender Board. The incomings from the sale and catch and the outgoings to pay the prawn vessels selected for the research survey work were reviewed by the Auditor-General.

Mr KLUNDER: The \$639 000 is one side of the ledger. Can you tell me where the other side is mentioned?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: There are a number of sources of this expenditure. Perhaps we had better take this on notice. We can account for most of this.

Mr KLUNDER: I am perfectly happy for you to take it on notice.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: One other aspect through the prawn licence buy-back scheme was that we had funds from the sale of the vessel and paid them out. That is \$106 000. There is \$108 000 in terms of the sale of the catch, so that has accounted for \$200 000-odd of it. We will take it on notice.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: On page 557 of the Program Estimates, there is a comment near the bottom of the page in relation to major resource variations referring to the increase in capital expenditures due to the lengthening of the research vessel. What has brought that about? What is the need for the *Ngerin* to be lengthened? Was there some design fault in the first place? Secondly, to what extent has the vessel been used in manhours, if you like, or hours of operation during the past 12 months?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The lengthening of MRV *Ngerin* has been on the drawing boards for some time. In fact, there has been quite a discussion about when that should happen. I feel that the Manager of Fisheries Research would have liked that to occur some time ago. As I understand it, the actual structure of the vessel was designed to allow for a centrepiece to be dropped in—a stretch job.

Mr D.S. BAKER interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It was economics that governed that. The situation is that it will be a much more effective vessel by having the extra length. The added costs involved, which have been allocated in this year's capital works, will make the vessel much more effective and useful for its role and, as it stands at the moment, although from having talked to the crew and the people who have worked on it, it is an ideal vessel, this will make it even better and more appropriate, and will give it a better work capacity in terms of where it can go more effectively. I will defer to the Manager of Fisheries Research who has been actively involved in this for many years. He could also address the hours used aspect.

Mr Lewis: As was indicated, this extension was designed into the vessel right from the first day we started talking about the vessel. The amount of initial funding did not allow for it. The vessel has some characteristics such as an

oversized shaft, the right horsepower engine etc, so this can go ahead without any major changes to the system. The vessel will be split into two with 5.4 metres added to it. The main reason this is required to be added is to instal circulating tanks with chilled seawater. There are a number of other things to be done associated with that, but that is the main reason.

Concerning the activities of the vessel, we plan to put the vessel to sea for 170 to 180 working days a year. When one considers the normal fishing fleets generally work about 120 days on average, and some of the prawn fleets work from 60 to 100 days, it is a very substantial time at sea. This figure does not include maintenance days. In the first year we only operated the vessel for nine months at about 130 days as we acquired the vessel in September. In the year 1986-87 we operated it about 140 days at sea for various reasons. When the vessel operates at sea, it operates basically 24 hours a day with four hours on and four hours off type arrangements. A minimum day would be 18 hours active work. The vessel has achieved a considerable amount since it was in operation. It is the platform for conducting the Upper Spencer Gulf baseline studies for which the final cruise ended yesterday, and that program has now been written up.

It conducts prawn surveys out in Gulf St Vincent and conducts surveys into fish populations, particularly offshore fish populations. It is used for oceanographic studies and all small scale fishing studies. It is our major research platform and is also the platform on which we do the plankton studies through both gulfs and near shore coastal waters ranging from the upper South-East through to the West Coast.

Mr D.S. BAKER: We were told at length during the rock lobster select committee that fishermen were very keen for the fisheries inspectors to make regular trips to the ports and in fact accompany the fishermen on their boats when they go out to pull pots. I perceived that as being a two way deal in that the fisheries people could give advice to fishermen in the handling of spawning crayfish or crayfish generally, and they would also understand how the fishery operates and how the fishermen operate in that industry. Every fisherman said he was very keen for it to happen. It is also a cost cutting measure. Will the Minister ensure that that policy, which has been the policy in the past, is encouraged as much as possible in the future?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I have no problem in giving that undertaking to the honourable member. I suppose the one qualification is 'within our resources'. With regard to the particular fishery we are talking about, *jasus novae hollandiae*, the issue was whether or not we put the videos in all of the educational tools available, because as we know, it came through in the evidence that however often we went out and tried to convey via pamphlet or whatever or called seminars, there was perhaps a general disinterest from some sections of the industry as to what was happening. We know those sections which are vitally interested and would always come, but we are not reaching some of those others. As I understand it, the Director has already worked up a scheme by which we will be running an educational program on the handling of the rock lobster at every port. We will undertake a fairly extensive campaign to reach the fishermen.

Mr D.S. BAKER: Supplementary to that, I would like the Minister to encourage inspectors and officers of the department to go out on the boats when the fishermen pull their pots, because fishermen are no different from other farmers. The department can run all the seminars it likes; it is from on-the-job training that fishermen and people from the department get the most benefit.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I will certainly encourage the Director to encourage the officers to encourage the inspectors.

Mr Stevens: There was a meeting of the Southern Zone Rock Lobster Management Liaison Committee last Monday which representatives from all ports attended. They have asked us to do what the honourable member requested, but they also asked us to concentrate on measuring fish as they came in and to put fish through a very exhaustive measuring process to determine, first, whether any fish were under size and, secondly, whether any of the catch had been scrubbed, in other words, whether any females in spawn had been scrubbed. They have asked us to concentrate on two areas. We will undertake a program of having fisheries officers on vessels as resources are available, and I would be more than happy to do that myself again this year as the Fisheries Manager has done at all previous openings of the season. We would be delighted for the honourable member to accompany us if he was prepared to get up at 3 a.m.

Mr D.S. BAKER: The orange ruffly trawling industry has already been proved up in Portland, Victoria, and has great potential for export income. Recently, there has been an increase in activity in the Beachport area, and I am led to believe that seven trawlers will operate out of Beachport in the near future. I would like the Minister to assure us that the Department of Fisheries and SAFIC are investigating all possible avenues for proving up that industry because of its value to the South-East and South Australia generally. Will the Minister assure us that the needs of that fishery are investigated in terms of a safe haven in the Beachport area? Some propositions have already been put forward. This is a rare opportunity to prove up a fishery that could be very beneficial, and I urge the Minister to ensure that all avenues are investigated.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The honourable member has raised an important issue in terms of new fishery activities. Apart from the obvious area that is receiving a great deal of public attention—the development of aquaculture within South Australia—the prospect of new fisheries is always exciting, both financially and from the point of view of the development of the industry. I am assured by the Manager that CSIRO has devoted considerable resources to investigating the development of this fishery involving \$1 million. That development program is being monitored by our officers. We have an input, particularly in the southern trawl fishery, in which we have particular interest. Mr Rohan, who is directly responsible for that area, will comment further.

Mr Rohan: There is a relatively small area of water adjacent to South Australia in comparison with other States that participate in the south-eastern trawl fishery. About 180 vessels operate in that fishery; and four of them are based at Beachport. However, that is not necessarily indicative of South Australia's investment in that fishery. It is an unfortunate consequence that the South Australian investment tends to move eastwards where the markets are and where a lot of the fish resources have been discovered. However, it is reassuring to have found that Beachport was one of the most enduring areas for the orange ruffly catch in more recent months, and there are indications that orange ruffly could be taken in the Beachport area and around Kangaroo Island in future. There is some expectation that orange ruffly will be taken in the Great Australian Bight trawl fishery, which is closer to South Australia. The investment in the orange ruffly fishery goes past vessels and includes processors, and a number of South Australian processors have been involved in the catching sector and are making further investments, it is understood, to implement facilities

that will ensure that some of the catch comes to Adelaide for processing and subsequent export.

Mr LEWIS: I read with interest the document that has been circulated to members of the Committee this afternoon, and I thank the Director for it. I refer to 'The Economics of Commercial Aquaculture of the Yabby'. My query relates to the bad name that aquaculture of this species now has as a consequence of the unfortunate experience at Gerard, and I ask the Minister to comment on whether or not it was an inherently unsuitable project involving an unsuitable species at Gerard, or whether there was mismanagement or non-management of the project that resulted in its abject failure? I seek, by asking the question, to determine whether or not the department, indeed the Government, continues to advocate investment in aquaculture since it can not only diversify the range of fish available but also the period of time throughout the year for which those fish are available and in addition enhance the prospects for development of export industries from this State and nation. Will the Minister, for the benefit of public observers, place on record the departmental view of what happened at Gerard? I do not want him to be critical of the individuals involved but rather make the appraisal one of relevance to prospective investors who have been frightened away.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I hope that no prospective investors have been frightened away because of what happened at Gerard. I have had a number of personal contacts with yabby farming, and people are talking about an interest in developing that aquicultural activity. It is not appropriate for me to comment on what the Auditor-General has said. It has probably been recorded. Certainly, I am not the responsible Minister in the area concerned. This matter is directly related, because it involves a fishery enterprise. The department is certainly not curtailing its activities in encouraging people, albeit some caution is advised to potential investors about the risk factors involved. It must be seen in that context—that there are risks involved and that there may be more risks in this area of investment rather than in other recognised and established industries.

That is always the problem in relation to a developing industry. It is important to note that I do not think that the department has curtailed its enthusiasm for advising people because of what happened at Gerard. As I am not the responsible Minister I cannot comment in any competent sense, although I do not think it is an aspect on which it is appropriate to comment, since the Auditor-General has fairly extensively commented in his report on the activity, and the Minister responsible for this area has been involved in debate and discussion pertaining to a very similar question asked both in Parliament and also publicly. I would say that my interest is, of course, in seeing opportunities for commercial yabby farming developed in South Australia. The Department of Fisheries offers comprehensive advice in this respect.

Mr DUGAN: During the Estimate Committee hearing last year on this portfolio there was a discussion about the Copes report and, in particular about recommendation 9 (b), concerning the number of licences that should continue to exist in the Gulf St Vincent and Investigator Strait prawn fishery. At that time, in response to a question from the Hon. Mr Arnold, Mr Stevens indicated that, if it was possible to get a reduction of six vessels, that would be a good idea but that he was not sure whether it would be possible to do that.

I note that the Auditor-General's report indicates that, in fact, five licences, associated vessels and equipment were acquired by the department at a cost of \$3 million. Is the Minister able to say whether any provision is being made

(I cannot see this in the allocations for the department) in this regard or whether it is possible to determine whether the sixth licence will be able to be removed from the fishery?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I thank the honourable member for the question. There is some speculation in the community about the success or otherwise of the Gulf St Vincent buy-back proposal—or, I should say, compulsory purchase, as one has to be quite specific about what was applied in that fishery. Agreement has been reached with the industry that further discussion should be undertaken prior to the removal of further vessels beyond the five that have been removed. It is certainly related to the capacity of the fishery to reach the sums required to buy out that additional vessel, to reach the recommended six, as proposed by Copes and approved by Parliament. At the moment the situation is one of monitoring what is occurring.

The ideal situation is for us to proceed to purchase that other boat—and the licence, of course, which is the important factor. However, at this stage we have made no clear decision as to whether or not we will purchase that sixth vessel. But we certainly want to keep the matter open. I am certainly not indicating that it will not occur within the next 12 months, or that it will occur, but, as for a three year moratorium on actually purchasing that vessel, I have not agreed to that, and I believe that we need to keep our options open in order to manage the fishery appropriately.

I have some final figures on the catch for the fishery. The catch figure for the fishery this year is 221 tonnes; that is down from about 260, but we must bear in mind that we have applied the biological management program in terms of the reduction in the number of hours, which has gone from 10 000 hours fishing to 6 000 hours and which is a significant reduction in the effort that has been placed in that fishery. If one then calculates the value of the catch by the tonnage and divides it by 11 (as against dividing by 16), one finds that the fishery is probably better off as a consequence of the buy-back scheme, even though fishermen are having to pay out their former colleagues under the terms of the buy-back arrangement. I think we will proceed with our six vessel purchase but, as I have indicated, there would have to be discussion with the industry about that and consideration of the capacity of fishermen to pay, which is one of the factors that I have built into the discussions.

It must be said—and I am sure that all members, and particularly former Ministers of Fisheries, would be more than happy to acknowledge—that we have had terrific co-operation from the Gulf St Vincent Prawn Fishermen's Association, and I want to publicly record my thanks for their cooperation. They have been excellent in their relations with departmental officers, with the Fisheries Manager, and with me. Although we probably still have a few differences of opinion, which from time to time will have to be addressed, the situation in that fishery is a million times better than it was previously. I think it is significant to acknowledge the new Secretary of the association, Mr Edwards, and his function and role in that organisation, because he has played no small part in improving the quality of relations between the department, the Government and the fishery—which augurs well for the management of that fishery.

There must be a partnership between those bodies; otherwise we simply end up with the fishery resource itself suffering and a lot of unnecessary stress and aggro between the various people involved, as well as, of course, a loss to the fishery in the long-term—and that is a State resource. I think it is worth noting that we are well on the way towards seeing that fishery operating probably as well as the Spencer Gulf fishery, and in many senses it is probably better placed

than the Spencer Gulf fishery, even though two or three years ago it was worse placed in terms of the management of that resource and the exploitation of it.

Membership:

Mr Gunn substituted for Mr D.S. Baker.

Mr LEWIS: I want to talk about smoking eelers, and by that I do not mean Irish leprechauns with pipes and tobacco: I mean baby eels, if I can use the vernacular. Given that the Fisheries Department and the Minister, wisely in my judgment, have placed greater emphasis on expenditure on the Fisheries Research and Development Fund in this year's budget—and as an aside I commend the department, the Minister and the Government for their good sense in doing so, as I think economic growth will come accordingly—I ask whether the feasibility of an aquaculture production of eels has been considered, which production could then be taken commercially from the aquaculture circumstance in which the eels would be produced and then smoked, that is, hung in houses, in boxes, in which a slow combustion, without flame, of suitable fuel is undertaken. I do not want people to misunderstand me. I am not suggesting wrapping eels in ricepaper and lighting them up but rather smoking them for sale as food. Is the department contemplating investigation of that industry in the South-East?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I will make a general comment before passing it over to Mr Lewis for comment. The Government would like to direct its attention to a number of areas of research. The problem is the resources needed to do that. I am not aware of any resources available to research that avenue of development for the industry. It may have some potential. If there are any private investors who see fit to explore that, I am sure we would do what we could to cooperate with them.

Mr Lewis: We have looked at eels, along with a number of other species. They are cultured in other parts of the world, although not as much as when compared with prawns and so on. The Japanese culture them. They have a complex life cycle, living part of their life in the sea and part in fresh water. The species we list as having potential in South Australia for aquaculture research in the new sunrise industry are prawns, King George whiting, abalone, Murray cod, flounder, yabbies and eels. We produced documentation on that. We currently do not have the resources to do the extensive research and development work on all species, so we are concentrating on prawns and yabbies and getting our micro-algae culture rooms going because we have to feed aquaculture organisms. We are discussing other species with private proponents or entrepreneurs. We place the species in front of them and ask them to indicate their preference. No-one has nominated eels, although they are on the list. They go for flounder and King George whiting. We are negotiating a joint funding arrangement to do some work, and, if someone shows an interest in eels, we will certainly take up the opportunity.

Mr LEWIS: I was approached by a couple of Japanese when in Tokyo earlier this year. As Mr Lewis has told us, they do eat a lot of eels. There is no difficulty in selling all the eels available for smoking in Tasmania in that famous smokehouse in the Midlands, which smokes a number of species of fish of one kind or another. I told them that I thought we had an ideal environment in the lower South-East because of the plentiful supplies of fresh water very close to the saltwater at Eight Mile Creek and a number of other places. I was remiss in that I did not write to the department about that and should have done so.

I now have that information. In the event that they are interested in continuing when I see them later this year, I

will inform them of the department's interest in their interest. In addition to the information that the committee has already been given by Mr Lewis, will the Minister or Mr Lewis give us a rundown on how those research projects are going? How long before research on those species presently being investigated will be completed? Which species is it envisaged will be next selected for detailed analysis?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is appropriate that I ask the Manager, Research, to address those issues. I am not sure how much detail he can give in terms of predictions. It may be unwise for him to predict by day or month, but it is worth getting that information on the species being considered.

Mr Lewis: In relation to the species we have stayed with the longest, we are terminating the project because it is coming to its natural termination and the senior officer involved will be leaving early in December. He has been working on yabbies and furiously writing up this material. We will not allow him to leave the organisation until he hands in those documents. Work on yabbies will be completed before Christmas.

The other species on which we are working is prawns and we are doing two specific projects: we are looking at the effect of salinity in a laboratory situation on growth. We have five or six different salinity levels with test animals. The other is looking at artificially getting them to reproduce so that we can write a manual for potential prawn farmers who want to produce feedstock at any time of the year. We are taking impregnated females from the wild and getting them to spawn under natural processes, aiding them with light and dark regimes. Once documented, we will try to artificially stimulate them outside the normal reproductive period. Associated with that, we have to set up very clean rooms with algal cultures as the animals have to be fed micro algae.

The prawn work is being done in consultation with private proponents who are doing trial growth studies at Port Augusta and other places. The next species of interest on which we are looking to work are the King George whiting and flounder—the fish species. Two private groups basically stemming from the abalone industry and are seriously considering putting in expenditure to look at abalone aquaculture. One group sent a delegation to the United States recently to talk to people culturing abalone there. We are keeping a close eye on what they are doing, although it is a completely private operation. I am talking to the consultants that they are employing.

Mr LEWIS: I turn now from the research arena as it applies to commercial prospects and ask something that will entail research, namely, the future of the fishing reaches in the Murray River. What is to become of them and how will any decision taken by the department on that be reconciled between the professional and the amateur fishing efforts and the individuals involved in each?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: There has been considerable interest along the river with regard to the conflict between the commercial and recreational reaches. On 3 March I met with a deputation from Loxton and Renmark to discuss their concerns about the concessions for commercial fishermen along the river. Many of these fishermen supplement their income in other agricultural activities such as fruit blocking. They have established their patch over many years and it is very hard for the department to try to alter that situation. However, it causes conflict with the recreational needs as seen by the local councils, which want to develop tourism and recreational activities. The delegation also contained representatives from the field and game organisation.

I will give the member an overview of those discussions. It was agreed that one concession would be released when one individual was reviewed. The department recommended that the licence and reach allocation of Mr Fletcher will remain in force until such time as he accepts an alternative reach or hands in the licence. Reach extensions proposed for Messrs Twartz, Harvey and Hattam in the Loxton district will not proceed. The councils asked the department to review that concession. The reach allocated to Mr Twartz will not be reallocated once it is handed in by him. The reach allocated to Mr Marshall will not be extended upstream as proposed but will be extended downstream as suggested by the Renmark council as a compromise alternative. Other reach extensions and boundaries will be implemented as proposed in the department's survey of reaches and public fishing areas of September 1986. The Department of Fisheries will undertake a full review of river fishery policy in consultation with interested parties.

I have not heard from individual members of the delegation, but I understand that they have written indicating their satisfaction with it. I think that we have struck a fairly reasonable compromise. The department is currently preparing a review of fisheries relating to recreational drum nets and the overall policy. The honourable member will find that we will come up with a satisfactory solution. It must be put in context. Because of a growth in population and an expansion of a number of activities, pressure has been put on the fishery resource, and the tempers of people who have had access to it for 30 or 40 years can get very short. Their access can be misunderstood as a privilege rather than a right.

Mr LEWIS: What about the eastern side of the river south from Mannum or Blanchetown?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Do you mean the lakes and the Coorong?

Mr LEWIS: No. There are some reaches in the river downstream from Lock 1 before the lakes. What is the future of those reaches?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That will be under the review of the overall policy, and all parties, including the honourable member, will be involved in those discussions.

Mr LEWIS: I thank the Minister for that. There is still a fair amount of contention about the role of carp in influencing the availability of other native species in the lower reaches of the river, in particular, where there is a no-flow situation most of the year and in most years. In order to clear up public controversy about that, can the Minister say whether any recent research data is available on population trends in percentage terms between the various native species such as cod, callop and catfish, compared with carp in the Lower Murray, upstream from Wellington?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Because that question is of a technical nature, I refer it to the research manager.

Mr Lewis: The story of carp in the Murray River is typical of an exotic fish population explosion. When it was introduced, it exploded in numbers and in recent years those numbers have declined considerably and stabilised out. What carp do in the Murray River is probably not nearly as detrimental as people believe. Without doubt, the major effect on native fish populations is any change in the water flow and, as we know, the Murray River water flow system has changed dramatically over the years. We have very good and reliable data from the commercial sector which shows that, following a flood, depending on how long it takes a species to grow to marketable size, and the requisite number of years later, we get good catches. When you reduce the floods, even the minor floods, through water mitigation and other measures, native fish do not reproduce as well. Carp

have a two-fold effect. They prey on other species but native species prey considerably on carp, so a balance has been reached in the river. As an exotic fish we would prefer it not to be there, but it is, and it has become a major part of the commercial fishery as some of the native species decline because of the much greater periods that now occur between floods.

Mr LEWIS: The reduction in the population of native fish is not so much attributable to competition from carp as to the lack of normal dynamic change in the flow rate in the river itself under which the native fish evolved prior to the establishment of locks and barrages?

Mr Lewis: Today that is correct. When carp first entered the river they found a new niche and exploded to numbers that were not sustainable. There would have been an impact on the native fish population but, at today's level, the major effect on native fish populations is flow rates.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: The Program Estimates refer to replacement of the shark cats. Can the Minister indicate whether all the shark cats will be replaced? Have they reached the end of their effective life or are they being superseded by more suitable vessels?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The department currently deploys six shark cat vessels throughout the State. These vessels are due for replacement during the financial years 1987-88 and 1988-89. In view of the lead-time necessary to make the replacements, the department undertook a full review of its enforcement vessel requirements during the second half of 1986. The purpose of the review was to examine the means of improving the service delivery from fisheries enforcement vessels at lower cost.

The review has indicated that fisheries officers have made progressively greater use of smaller craft (5 to 6 metres) for inshore work and that there are considerable limitations to the deployment of shark cats in terms of offshore work, launching points, providing a stable work platform, and costs (when tow vehicles and trailers are taken into account). Whilst shark cats have certain advantages, it is concluded that the use of fewer but somewhat larger single-hulled vessels (moored rather than trailered) would provide a greater range and flexibility of service at lower cost.

The department is proposing to replace the six shark cats (tow vehicles and trailers) with four vessels of which two would be around 10.5 metres in length and two would be around 14.5 metres in length. There would be no increase in manpower requirements over that required for shark cats (one skipper and one crew) other than the need for the skipper to be a master class V rather than a coxswain.

The perceived advantages of the proposed vessel replacement option compared with replacing with shark cats are as follows: A substantially lower purchase cost (capital savings of some \$450 000); manpower and cost savings on launching and retrieval times; manpower savings on maintaining and registering trailers and tow vehicles; faster response to call-out from the nominated mooring site (in many cases, steaming to alternative locations may not be greater, and may be less, than the time taken to trailer the vessel to another ramp site); and providing support to South Australian based vessel builders, if successful at tender. Other advantages are: increased operating range; capacity to be used in an increased range of weather conditions; improved crew comfort; less downtime by having direct access to local manufacturer and engine suppliers; increased support for the fisheries helicopter via faster response time and faster vessels; and increased vessel life (that is, a longer replacement period).

It was considered that larger, single hulled vessels would be more suitable than shark cats for monitoring the rock

lobster and prawn fisheries. In the case of rock lobster fisheries, the department has demonstrated its capacity to conduct at-sea checks on pot allocations but has been severely restricted by the range of weather conditions in which these could be carried out. This has been noted by industry (particularly in the south-east) where representatives have made formal and informal reference to the need for the department to use more suitable vessels. In the case of the prawn fisheries, the use of larger vessels will provide a more stable work platform, which can be used in a wider range of weather conditions. The availability of such vessels will not negate ongoing discussions between industry and the department over how best to deploy manpower resources for prawn and rock lobster fishery surveillance.

The vessels will have a continuing involvement in monitoring other inshore commercial fisheries and recreational fishing. In addition, they will expand the department's capacity to undertake surveillance functions on behalf of the Commonwealth, as and when required, in the south eastern trawl, southern bluefin tuna, shark and Great Australian Bight trawl fisheries, for which Commonwealth reimbursement is received. In essence, one of the underlying themes has been the reduction in costs and capital outlay and a better operating facility for the department.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: One of the main concerns is the safety and seaworthiness of any vessel that is used by the department. We can all remember the unfortunate incident that occurred in the late 1970s and that was one of the reasons for the move to the shark cat vessels. Although they have a high operating cost they are extremely seaworthy, which is very important from a safety point of view. Has the department decided on the actual make of the vessels to be used as replacements?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The provision of a safe working platform for officers has been a predominant feature of the department's analysis. No-one wants to see the tragedy of 1979 repeated. From the point of view of the operation of the department that tragedy has numerous ramifications. The specifications are being prepared by a naval architect and it will then go to tender, so we do not have anything final that we can give the honourable member at this stage.

The Hon. P.B. ARNOLD: When is it expected that the West Beach research laboratory will become fully operational and what will be the major work program for that facility?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I hope that the honourable member will receive his invitation to the opening some time in December. We hope the laboratory will be fully operational in the new year. I understand that the building is well under construction and it is hoped that it will be commissioned in January 1988 to provide facilities to maintain marine organisms, for fisheries population dynamics, and environmental related studies. Stage 1 of the complex will contain a large aquarium room with a temperature controlled running sea water system, a wet laboratory, a dry laboratory, associated store rooms and an extensive outside 'brood stock' rearing area. In preparation, a number of projects to be undertaken in the laboratory are being developed by the Department of Fisheries; these include some projects jointly with other research organisations.

Stage 2 of the laboratory incorporates additional general laboratories, specialist laboratories for chemical analysis, oceanography, histology, and facilities for support services such as computing and administration. The department is reasonably happy with the progress of the building. The underground tanks and the actual physical building have been constructed and the internal plumbing is being installed. In relation to the second part of the question, I will ask the

manager of research to comment regarding the projects that are envisaged.

Mr Lewis: The projects are many and varied. They range from simple projects to working out things like tag shedding rates and behaviour interaction between various organisms. The department will be working on tagging experiments on rock lobster, blue crabs, a number of fish species, abalone, etc. It will also be doing sorting work associated with environmental studies. For example, to sort through the samples obtained by one crew from the upper Spencer Gulf would take four weeks solid. That would include sorting through the mud and the material to obtain the in-fauna and in-flora so that they can be named and quantified.

That is what the wet laboratory is for, with specialist equipment such as fume hoods so that we can handle the organisms and the material safely. All our oceanographic work will be done at the laboratory, including some of the water sampling, working out hundreds of samples and their salinity, etc, together with the ecology of Gulf St Vincent, etc, so we will undertake many programs there.

Mr LEWIS: Can the Minister give the Committee information about the extent to which oyster production from commercial leases has been or is about to be increased as compared with the past five years?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Do I understand the member for Murray-Mallee's question to be about what level of production there has been over the years and the increase that has shown?

Mr LEWIS: Are we getting to the point where we have a commercial industry?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: We will be happy to supply that information on notice.

Mr Lewis: We have actually written a report on what we think the expanded production will be and it will be included in this year's annual report. That takes into account our expectations with those oyster lease applications which we think will be approved. We will certainly take it on notice and will provide the honourable member with a copy of that.

Mr LEWIS: Coopers Creek is a popular destination for many people who engage in leisure activities, including fishing (with the novelty of catching a decent feed of fish in the desert which seems to attract several hundreds of people annually). I was first there in 1962, but in recent years some nefarious practices, the like of which do not bear repetition here, have destroyed parts of the fish population in some places. I do not want to accuse the Government, the Minister or the department of any dereliction of duty, but is there any surveillance of any of the activities of amateurs and unlicensed professionals in Coopers Creek, and does the Minister think that the Government needs to be responsible about the way people exploit fish stocks there? If so, does he believe it ought to be done by his department, or perhaps by the Department of Environment and Planning through the National Parks and Wildlife Service?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: As to the last question, no, it will be done through our department. We are the experts in fisheries and we intend to remain that way. We do not want anyone else poking their noses in there. I am not saying that just to protect our bailiwick, but we would prefer to manage our resources ourselves and I think that, given the resources we have, we do that very effectively and I think also that that is acknowledged. We have responsibility for Coopers Creek, for which we have a monitoring program which is undertaken on the basis of occasional visits, together with monitoring from the New South Wales and the South Australian police. On occasions, we have prosecuted people

for illegal activities in Coopers Creek, so it is something of which we are aware and about which we are concerned.

We will continue to monitor it and, if the honourable member has any other information which he feels ought to be passed on to the manager (Geoff Rohan), then would he please do so and, if he knows anyone else who has any information which suggests nefarious activities are being undertaken which do not bear description, then we will be happy to pursue that. The Director points out that under the Fisheries Act police are fisheries officers, so they can enforce the legislation. As the honourable member knows (and I have heard him on numerous occasions enunciating the various powers under the Fisheries Act) there are fairly strong powers which allow officers to enforce fairly rigidly the requirements of the Act.

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

Works and Services—Department of Fisheries,
\$1 114 000—Examination declared completed.

[Sitting suspended from 5.58 to 7.30 p.m.]

Chairperson:

Ms D.L. Gayler

Members:

Mr M.G. Duigan
Mr G.M. Gunn
Mr G.A. Ingerson
Mr J.H.C. Klunder
Ms S.M. Lenehan
Mr I.P. Lewis

Witness:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes, Minister of Recreation and Sport.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr G. Beltchev, Director, Department of Recreation and Sport.

Mr D.W. Harvey, Manager, Racing and Gaming Division.

Mr S. Wise, Finance Officer.

Mr R. Jones, Manager, Recreation, Sport and Fitness Division.

Mr G. Forbes, Manager, Management and Support Services.

Mr J.H. Doyle, Chairman, TAB.

Mr B.F. Smith, General Manager, TAB.

Mr P.J. Morrissy, Secretary, Betting Control Board.

The **CHAIRPERSON**: Does the lead speaker for the Opposition wish to make an opening statement?

Mr **INGERSON**: No, thank you.

The **CHAIRPERSON**: Does the Minister wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Yes. This is provided as an overview for members of the committee. The total recurrent budget for 1987-88 is \$7.087 million, an increase of \$974 000 over the level of expenditure recorded in 1986-87. The injection of funds into the department was largely made possible by increasing the call on the Recreation and Sport Fund (\$665 000). The Department's ability to make such a large additional call on the Recreation and Sport Fund was made possible by the success of the sports lottery. The sports lottery returned \$245 000 to the Recreation and Sport Fund

in 1986-87. Full year estimates for the sports lottery returns are \$300 000. Hence the proposed budget in 1987-88 of \$500 000 to fund sporting organisations priority projects. I will be announcing in the near future how these funds will be distributed. Additional funds come from funds accumulated in 1985-86, which will be used to fund several once-off new initiatives.

As with most other Government departments, Recreation and Sport has had a great deal of inflationary pressures and has further lost resources due to Government-initiated savings of \$154 000. However, it is important to recognise that, despite these pressures, of the \$974 000 additional funding a total of \$900 000 has been provided to program one—recreation, sport and fitness. Effectively this reflects a rationalisation of administration resources and a redirection of funds to the program areas.

The large increase in funding for capital works reflects the Government's commitment to complete several major undertakings. A total of \$6.1 million will be expended on the Gepps Cross hockey/lacrosse project this financial year, \$4.5 million on the construction of the centre and \$1.6 million on the transfer of the land from Lands Department. I have today announced that a South Australian company, Hansen and Yuncken Pty. Ltd., has been awarded the contract for the construction of the Hockey/Lacrosse complex, at a cost of \$4.735 million.

It is also pleasing to note that the surface chosen for the hockey complex will be supergrasse 10, which is an Australian-made product. The new complex will be built under the National Sports Facilities Program with a \$1.875 million contribution from the Commonwealth Government. It will be located on a 20 hectare parcel of land in the south-western corner of the 140 hectare Gepps Cross site that has been set aside exclusively for recreation and sport activities. It is intended that a board of management will be set up to manage the overall park with responsibility to me as Minister of Recreation and Sport. The board will issue licences to users, the first being the SA Joint Hockey Council, which will be responsible for the management of the hockey/lacrosse facility.

The upgrading of Adelaide Oval to accommodate the new cricket academy will cost the State \$500 000, while upgrading of the Olympic Sportsfield surface will attract an additional \$350 000. Upgrading the accommodation of SASI, required as a result of the decentralisation of cycling and cricket, will cost \$100 000. Unfortunately, there were insufficient capital funds to effectively maintain the recreation and sport facilities program, as only \$277 000 was available to fund \$18 million of projects, representing the requests that we received from associations throughout the State. This program has been suspended for one year, and only projects of regional and State significance will be funded in 1987-88. I have approved the expenditure of \$230 000 towards the cost of upgrading or building sports facilities from this line.

Six projects which will receive funding this financial year are Salisbury Indoor Stadium—\$75 000; S.A. Softball Association—\$50 000; Port Lincoln Netball Association—\$50 000; S.A. Lawn Tennis Association—\$35 000; Riding for the Disabled—\$11 345; and the S.A. Skateboarding Association—\$7 000.

Honourable members would be interested to learn that the proposed Salisbury council's multi-sport indoor stadium at Parafield Gardens is expected to cater for about 3 000 people every week. This complex will be a major boost to Adelaide's northern suburbs. In addition, the Softball Association will utilise funds made available under this

line for the construction of a second international diamond at Barratt Reserve in West Beach.

The SA Tennis Association will use its grant towards resurfacing some of its Memorial Drive courts with the rebound ace material. This will ensure that the SA Men's Open and the Rio International tournaments will continue to be held in Adelaide. It will also greatly improve our chances to attract other world class titles to South Australia. Some of the members of the Committee may have seen Mr Green tonight making those announcements about the Rio and the SA Open, which augers well for the well-being of tennis in South Australia.

In terms of workforce statistics there will be a small increase in average numbers of 0.5 FTE in 1987-88 over that recorded in 1986-87. Government initiated savings of 30 FTE positions has been offset by the creation of a temporary position of Employee Fitness Consultant, the recording of a Commonwealth funded National Employment Scheme for Aboriginals employee, the employment of an executive office to complete two commissions funded through new initiatives and approval to fund a sport scientist full-time in 1987-88. Again, it is important to highlight that the savings made in human resources were made in administrative areas. This reflects the department's desire to minimise the effect of any savings on the delivery of services to the public.

The figures produced in the program performance budgeting document present much the same trends highlighted above. The PPB figures are, of course, expended to take into account the department's deposit accounts. Both these funds have remained stable over the two fiscal years in question.

Recreation and Sport, \$7 085 000

Works and Services—Department of Recreation and Sport.
\$7 525 000

The CHAIRPERSON: I declare the proposed payments open for examination.

Mr INGERSON: My first question relates to financial figures and annual returns to Parliament. I note that each year the Department of Recreation and Sport, the TAB, the Betting Control Board and the Racecourse Development Board have their figures available for the Auditor-General but that it is usually close to December before the annual reports of any of those bodies are tabled in Parliament. Is there any reason why it cannot occur earlier?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: This can be checked out, but one of the problems concerns the actual accounting method using the accrual method; that delays getting the figures finalised from 30 June. I understand that most statutory authorities have three months within which to present their reports to Parliament.

Mr INGERSON: I ask this question because it is usually close to December before any of these reports are tabled. I note again this year that we are nearly at the end of September and most of those figures are available for the Auditor-General to see. It seems to me that it would make it simpler for Parliament generally if we could get them.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Just to correct the honourable member: the TAB and Betting Control Board reports were tabled in September last year, I have just been advised. So, they comply with the Treasury's requirement. I appreciate the Finance Officer's point that, with the accrual system, one has to wait until one closes off completely, so there would be a delay of at least a month before the figures

could be finalised. I can see no obvious reason: I will see that the department ensure that the statutory bodies get their reports in as soon as possible.

Mr INGERSON: I refer to page 558 of the yellow book, and my question relates to the very bottom line, which deals with receipts. As the Minister would be aware, the department's expenditure is adequately set out, although there is no explanation at all of the receipts. Is it possible for the Minister to provide the Committee (this could perhaps be done later) with a breakdown of the receipts. As an example, recurrent receipts are given at \$23.46 million, and that is all we know; we have no idea where they come from, and it seems to me that the Committee should be given a little more detail about receipts. The same, of course, applies to capital receipts: a figure of \$2.022 million is given, with no breakdown at all detailing from where that comes. It seems to me that, since we have details of expenditure, there is no reason why we should not have details, in broad terms, of where the department's cash comes from.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: We comply with the Treasury requirements in regard to listing the sources of funding. We can supply the honourable member with a breakdown of that amount of \$23.46 million, shown at page 558.

Mr INGERSON: My reason for asking this is that, in his report this year, the Auditor-General made it very clear that he thought that it was about time that the accounting between the Estimates and the pages in the yellow book was brought closer in line and that the accounting procedure was made more simple for all members of Parliament. It seems to me that my request is just a flow-on from what the Auditor-General had to say. My next question relates to the broad objectives of the department.

At page 561 of the Program Estimates reference is made to the need to have increasing numbers of people participating in the areas of recreation and sport and fitness. Can the Minister provide the Committee with details of the number of associations that are actually increasing the number of people participating? Can the Minister supply us with the number of associations that have increased that function by over 10 per cent—as I understand that criterion is important in some of the funding?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I cannot give the honourable member that information off the cuff, but I can certainly take the question on notice and provide those details to the honourable member as soon as possible.

The CHAIRPERSON: Information provided for insertion in *Hansard* must be submitted by Friday 2 October at the latest.

Mr INGERSON: Many sources are concerned with the principle of reducing grants for administrators, coaches, and for coaching in general, which grants are principally involved in the block funding, as the Minister would be well aware. I wrote to the associations involved asking them whether they had any concerns that they would like brought to the attention of the Committee, and I shall quote from one of the letters we received this week in response. A letter from one of the associations states:

It seems that most sports are heading towards a catch-22 situation: (a) they have increased ground rents, and (b) they have increased administration costs, versus (a) reducing block grants, and (b) stagnant registrations.

The letter goes on to say:

Income will only exceed expenditure if we achieve major sponsorship, which is also a shrinking commodity.

I have asked the question because, as the Minister would be aware, there is a sliding scale in relation to the administration and coaching grants—and I think we are all aware of the reason why. However, it is creating tremendous problems for sporting bodies, because the Government is in fact

saying to them that they need more qualified people administering the sport, whereby the sporting bodies attempt to go out and do that, thinking that they will get a block grant, only to find that that block grant is to be reduced by about 25 per cent a year over four years. Thus, we have a situation where we are asking professional administrators to do a job for which in four years time there will be no money available to pay for them. The fact that the number of those administrators is not growing is also of concern. Can the Minister tell us where the Government is going on that issue?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I accept what the member says about how some clubs or associations perceive their situation with regard to the program as it is currently operating. At the moment we fund some 74 associations which support these development plans. The theme behind it, which I inherited, basically, is to encourage those associations to acquire skills to develop their sport or recreation and, I suppose, to get them to be able to stand on their own feet. I think it is probably fair to say that the funding arrangement will finish at the end of 1988-89. We intend to review the program, and it may be that during that review there will be a change of attitude with regard to funding arrangements.

Mr KLUNDER: I refer the Minister to page 169 of the Auditor-General's Report and to his comment about a lack of agreement between the Government and the Adelaide City Council regarding the Aquatic Centre and some payments in relation thereto. Perhaps I should indicate my bias in this: only three-quarters of an hour ago I reluctantly left lane 3 in that institution, so I am interested in an answer.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I appreciate the Auditor-General's concern and thank the honourable member for bringing it to the Committee's attention. It has been a protracted discussion since the completion of the Aquatic Centre. We have reached an understanding with the City Council and we have only to finalise the agreement on a few points. I accept the Auditor-General's drawing the Parliament's attention to the issue. The department and I were protecting the Government's interests in this area, as it was a fairly open-ended proposal and could have involved some cost. If one were on the side of the City Council, one could read in a fairly open arrangement for its benefit in the future. That is fine and it should protect its interests in that regard. As far as we are concerned, we have honed up the details. There has been consultation with the Auditor-General's office and Crown Law and we are almost ready to finalise an agreement that I will be taking to Cabinet within the next few weeks.

Mr KLUNDER: I refer to page 177 of the white book, program 2. Racing and gaming does not include the \$3 185 000 of actual expenditure last year and the \$3 200 000 proposed spending for this year under the Betting Control Board, but it does appear on page 559 of the yellow book. It is a curious thing that \$3 million does not appear in the Auditor-General's Report or the white pages but does appear in the yellow book. Will the Minister explain?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The explanation is that program performance endeavours to take through all the recurrent accounts and does not take into account trust accounts. The Betting Control Board operates through a trust account and not through consolidated account.

Mr KLUNDER: Was the Auditor-General fully informed of this?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: One would assume so.

Ms LENEHAN: I refer to section 2 on racing and gaming at page 177. I pick it up on page 563 in the yellow book under 'Issues and Trends' where it states that a need exists

for rationalisation in the number of bookmakers operating at some race meetings. My question relates to that statement and to the problems recently highlighted in the media that the SAJC has recommended that the derby ring be closed at Cheltenham. I understand that as recently as last Saturday (12 September) at Victoria Park 12 bookmakers were operating in the derby. Will the Minister tell the Committee what consideration, in light of the statement in the Program Estimates, he is giving with respect to obtaining a more viable number of bookmakers to operate at the racecourses in South Australia?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is an ongoing issue that has been floating around for many years. I have had one go at it, but it has not met with overwhelming support. It is basically a problem in terms of the way in which bookmakers view their licences. I suppose they see it as a right rather than a privilege in the sense of being an asset associated with the industry and attached as a concession from the Parliament. It really is a difficult issue to sort through. I hear a lot of grumblings about the performance of some bookmakers from both small and large punters, so there is not an easy answer to it. If one puts an age limit on bookmakers we would affect a significant number who are over 70 years. We have some in their high 80s. If one were to retire out those over 70, if achievable, the argument is that we might take out some of the more effective or competitive bookmakers. If we apply a scheme that systematically allows for a reduction of bookmakers through something like a buy-back scheme, that could be an acceptable proposal. It immediately associates a value with that licence.

Mr GUNN: You are not going to make it transferable, are you?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: No way. The issue may address itself because of the changing nature of the industry. That may be of detriment to the industry as a whole and to the more colourful nature of it, but with Sky Channel and a whole range of other facilities coming on and off the racecourse, bookmakers will have to be competitive. To do that they will have to be more adventurous. We will continue to look at schemes that will offer the opportunity to young people to get into the industry by perhaps offering a more competitive edge on the racecourse. I do not have any great expectations for achieving any quick results in that area, and the issue of their performance will continue to be debated amongst punters in the community.

As to the specific situation of Cheltenham, a satisfactory compromise has been reached between the SAJC and the Bookmakers Association. Hopefully that will stay in place and we will see a continuation of the facility for the punter.

Mr INGERSON: I refer to the State Aquatic Centre and note in the preamble that that is the third year in a row that the Auditor-General has recommended to the Minister that he pick up the contract. In 1985-86 and in 1986-87 he said that an urgent need existed for the contract to be fixed. On page 561 in the Estimates of Payments a sum of \$100 000 has been put aside for the anticipated deficit at the Aquatic Centre. Will the Minister explain how that figure was arrived at in relation to the comments he made earlier wherein he said that the contract still had not been finalised? How can a figure of \$100 000 be put in a budget when the contract has not been finalised?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The figure was arrived at more from historical estimates on a prediction basis and we really are not able to confirm what actual expenditure will be, although we are close to being able to do so. That is the expected expense. We carry the deficit above \$100 000. The department has been negotiating with the City Council and that is associated with the agreement that I spoke about

earlier about how we determine by agreement what will be included to arrive at the deficit or profit. It is mainly deficit funding. When that is agreed upon, the figure will be finalised and become part of the account statement, so it will be recorded.

Mr INGERSON: I was surprised that the figure of \$100 000 should suddenly appear as a provision. Has any previous figure been paid? It is quite a significant sum to be plucked out of the air suddenly, if that is the way to put it.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I could take that question on notice but I can guess that the figure has been arrived at through looking at the operation of other aquatic centres and estimating possible turnover. It may not be that far out on the sums that have been presented for discussion.

Mr INGERSON: Has that happened before? Has there been no payment in other years?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: No, we have not had any payment.

Mr INGERSON: My next question concerns the very broad objectives of the department. I have received a number of comments that the preparation time by administrators of associations to put together their returns is long compared with the amount of detail that is looked at by the department. Could the Minister explain whether all of the requirements, the financial returns and the programs that associations need to put in for forthcoming years are really looked at by anybody? There is a lot of concern that voluntary people in sporting organisations put in a lot of time and effort to make excellent presentations to the department only to get nothing every year. Could the Minister explain that?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Given the nature of the question, it might be appropriate for the director to answer that. As the member appreciates, I do not get down to assessing the financial statement for each association.

Mr Beltchev: Approximately three years ago the department introduced a process of requiring all State associations to present a development plan that predicted what the association would plan to do in terms of program and expenditure for the ensuing three years. The funding that an organisation would receive would be based on the department's assessment of that three-year plan. Each year each organisation is required to present a three-year plan. An enormous amount of work is put into an assessment of these plans by each departmental officer. The end result is that a very detailed decision is made. It may be too detailed for the amount of money that is granted, but it is necessary to make the final assessment.

The department is currently undertaking a very rigorous assessment of the amount of resources it puts into the activity of assessing development plans. Although the process has not been completed, it is fairly clear that the amount of time, energy and information that has been required previously will be diminished in the future. The results of that will be beneficial in two respects. First, the various State organisations will not have to put as much time and energy into the detail, although they will still be required to present their plans and ambitions. Just as importantly, departmental officers will have more time to work in direct contact with the development of the plans rather than their assessment.

Mr LEWIS: Is the Minister aware that his Press Secretary is ringing sporting associations and asking whether the Opposition will be present and then saying that, if Opposition representatives are to be present, it is Government protocol that only the Minister is to speak or present awards and that only the Minister should acknowledge the presence

of an Opposition member at the function? Did the Minister direct his Press Secretary to do that? If that is the case, will the Minister tell the Committee what the real position is regarding protocol?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I am not really sure what the honourable member is driving at. I have not directed my Press Secretary to ring organisations and give instructions about protocol about who is recognised and how members of Parliament should be recognised. I have never had a discussion in a general sense about any philosophy or policy to be followed. I certainly have had discussions about individual events and one in particular, but that has not been applied in a general sense at all.

The CHAIRPERSON: I draw the Committee's attention to the fact that the Committee's purpose is to consider budget estimates. I do not see how such a line of questioning is related to the budget estimates, so from this point I will rule such questions out of order.

Mr GUNN: On a point of order, I ask under which provision of Standing Orders you, Madam Chair, make that ruling? I have had some experience at chairing these Committees and my clear understanding is that there is no such provision in the Standing Orders. The Minister of Recreation and Sport has a Press Secretary who attends such functions and who provides information to the public. That is in the lines. I can quote you, Madam Chair, chapter and verse. This question may be politically embarrassing but it is a proper question to be asked. Other questions of this nature should quite properly be asked, so if your ruling stands, Madam Chair, we will have to pursue this matter.

The CHAIRPERSON: The Chair has allowed a very wide range of questions on all sorts of policy issues, provided that they are related to the proposed expenditures for the departments and services contained in the estimates. I refer the honourable member to paragraph 2 of the Estimates Committees Sessional Orders. On that basis I rule that there is no point of order.

Mr INGERSON: I point out that on page 560 of the yellow book there is a line relating to executive, professional, technical, administrative and clerical support to the Minister's office. I understand that the Press Secretary is employed on that line and, consequently, it is a financial matter. I understand that Standing Orders provide that we can question any item that relates to a financial matter.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I do not reflect on the Chair for one moment, but I think that the members are right in principle. However, they have missed the boat. My Press Secretary is not employed under any of these lines. Page 560 shows a series of figures relating to the Minister's office. He is employed under the Department of Agriculture.

The CHAIRPERSON: A point of order has been taken and I will deal with that now. I rule that there is no point of order and call the member for Mawson.

Ms LENEHAN: In answering my last question the Minister made a statement along the lines that with regard to the rationalising of the number of bookmakers in South Australia the industry may sort itself out. I am not quite sure what the Minister meant by that.

I am concerned about this matter having recently had the honour and privilege of visiting a number of countries and looking closely at their racing and gaming situations, particularly racecourses. I would like to put on record my belief that it is important to have a fresh and dynamic racing industry which provides a service and an alternative choice to punters. I am not suggesting it should replace the TAB; I believe they are both important. Bookmakers provide colour and an atmosphere at the racecourse which in my

view is a characteristic that makes the Australian racing industry unique.

I say that having visited a number of racecourses in Norway and Sweden and having spoken with people involved in the racing industry in Great Britain. I am alluding to the fact that it may be that we are seeing the slow demise of bookmakers. I believe it is vitally important that this Parliament does something to protect the on-going attendance of bookmakers at race meetings because I think the whole industry will be poorer if we are to see the demise of bookmakers and the services that they provide.

The Minister alluded to the introduction of sky channel. Does he believe that sky channel, which has been introduced into a number of hotels, has increased the activities of SP bookmakers? Direct telecasts of all race meetings on the east coast of Australia and in Perth are provided and immediately before the race begins an update of the odds is provided. It is mentioned in the yellow book that the penalties for SP bookmaking are being reviewed. There is also a statement on page 563 that the number of TAB subagencies in metropolitan and country hotels has increased. At some stage I would like to ask how many and where they are. What do the Minister and his advisers believe is the impact on the racing industry and specifically on SP bookmaking?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I would not like to comment on the first question because any comment I make would be subject to a degree of speculation. However, I can say that I agree with the honourable member about the nature of South Australian and Australian racecourses and the folklore that goes with the bookmaker and his lifestyle; that has been tarnished somewhat by a couple of incidents in the eastern States involving prominent bookmakers, but the Government is concerned about what is happening. A comparison could be made with the fishing industry. It is very difficult to obtain a concise industry position from the people involved. In some ways they are oblivious to what is happening around them. That is where a Government has a role to play in terms of encouraging them to recognise reality whether or not we have a racing inquiry.

In relation to sky channel and SP bookmakers, the talk in the local pub or club is that SP bookmakers are operating at the tracks and obviously there is a good deal of community interest in some of them and how they operate. We are hoping to implement schemes which will encourage punters to go through the recognised and taxed systems of betting, not only from the point of view of making the system legitimate, but because those methods of punting are the methods that pay for the industry. The money is put back into the industry and that is very important.

Sky channel would be of benefit to an SP bookmaker. It would also be of benefit to the TAB. The chairman and the general manager of the TAB are here tonight. They are both fully aware of the environment. The TAB is known for its innovative attention to change. A large number of TAB subagencies have been established. The TAB is looking at all of those avenues to attack the areas where SP bookmakers may be operating. Part of the proposal is not only to extend the service to the community but to counter the possibility of illegal gambling. That activity can be confronted by offering an alternative. An additional facility will soon be offered to South Australian investors. The manager of racing and gaming, Mr Denis Harvey, works very closely with the police. It is very difficult to convict an SP bookmaker, but what the police are doing is fairly effective and what the TAB is endeavouring to establish is also very effective.

I am not sure that I have satisfactorily answered the honourable member's question which was in the form of a statement and could probably lead to an extensive debate about where the racing industry is going. It is a very important industry as viewed by the Government. It generates a turnover to the whole State of more than a billion dollars per annum. It is the third largest employer of people in South Australia and is a tourist recreational activity. It is one of the pre-eminent aspects of my portfolio, and it has therefore received considerable ongoing attention from the Government, the department and the manager. I think it is fair to say that relations between the Government and the racing industry, whilst all demands will never be able to be satisfied, are very good. The Government is looking at constructive ways in which it can assist the industry and improve the quality of the facilities and the environment in which South Australian people can enjoy horse racing, harness racing and greyhound racing. I think to a large extent that is being achieved.

Ms LENEHAN: My second question relates to the Minister's answer. I do not wish to detract from the excellent services and facilities provided by the TAB and on-course racing clubs. However, if there is evidence that there has been an increase in SP bookmaking, has the department given serious consideration to the registration and legalisation of SP bookmakers? I do not say that to be provocative, but in some places SP bookmaking is legal. They pay their taxes and are licensed and the money goes back into the industry. I believe very strongly that all sections of the industry should be contributing to its ongoing benefit and not just the legitimate and legal aspects. Has serious consideration been given to looking at some form of registration and legalisation of this form of gambling in which SP bookmakers would pay their share of the tax and some control would be exercised over their activities?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I have not given it any consideration, although I have given a couple of other proposals some consideration. At this stage, I do not really want to explore them, because they are still very much in the embryonic stage. They would address the major aspects of SP bookies, particularly for the large punter, and that is our major concern. The member for Eyre is probably quite accurate when he says that there is a country town without a TAB facility, although people there would still have telephone betting. There is always a chance, when there is a gaggle of people, that an SP is somewhere amongst them. I do not want any members to own up here, but it has been well debated.

The big SPs are operating (and this is hearsay and from what people and friends who are punters tell me), in the metropolitan area. It is obvious that the opportunities are not in the isolated country areas but, rather, in the metropolitan areas in which they need not and should not operate. Really, they are cheating the system and that is what we have to address. From what the member for Eyre said, I would have sympathy with that sort of argument, but where there are registered and legitimate bookmakers operating on course, on-course tote, TAB with telephone betting, together with agencies and subagencies, why can there not be a decent arrangement with the community whereby they use those recognised and legalised systems of betting?

Look at the industry from the point of view of the bookmaker and the SP bookie is legalised to operate off-course with telephone facilities. In that situation what will happen to the registered on-course bookmaker? It is a highly contentious issue and I would imagine that the bookmakers would be at every member of Parliament's door within two seconds if that situation arose. I do not want to go too far

with that topic, but we are looking at a couple of proposals which might assist the system.

Ms LENEHAN: I would like some guidance from you, Madam Chair, on this question, but is it my correct understanding that, in relation to the review of the role and structure of the racing industry, that would refer to the Racing Commission?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It does not refer to a Racing Commission. Many people are saying that this is a committee of inquiry to decide whether or not we will have a Racing Commission.

Members interjecting:

Ms LENEHAN: Perhaps I used the wrong word. I should have said 'inquiry'.

The CHAIRPERSON: Order!

Ms LENEHAN: Could I rephrase that for *Hansard*?

The CHAIRPERSON: No, wait: I said 'Order'! It is getting a little late and members are getting a little excited. Could we have one person at a time?

Ms LENEHAN: I meant to use the word 'inquiry' and I apologise to the Minister. In this respect I am thinking specifically of and picking up the Minister's earlier point about ongoing support for the racing industry. Are there any preliminary reports from the racing inquiry which relate directly to any measures that are being considered concerning the thoroughbred breeding industry in Australia, and particularly in South Australia?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I think it is probably fair to say that the committee of inquiry into whether or not there should be a Racing Commission (and I certainly will not pre-empt it, although there is speculation from members of the committee about that result) will touch on a whole range of issues. I would imagine that, in looking at the brief that was given, it would be totally appropriate for that committee of inquiry to look at the whole industry and the impact of the possibility of whether or not to establish a Racing Commission. If there is not to be a Racing Commission, the matter of improvements in the industry should be addressed. I would imagine that the committee would explore any developments that it feels ought to occur in the industry and that relates to all stages, because in South Australia we have a very important breeding industry.

It is a significant part of our industry and that is why we have to maintain our quality of the racing calendar and the events on the calendar, both at a metropolitan level and at regional and country levels. In that respect I refer to the employment and recognition generated from the calendar, because a lot of people do not realise how much recognition we get as a breeding State. Having received a request from the Chairperson of that inquiry to extend the time limit in which to consider the evidence placed before the committee, I would be very surprised if it did not touch on that aspect of the racing industry.

Mr INGERSON: Following on from the member for Mawson's question, I am very interested in the comments of the Minister when he said that we need to have a very competitive group of bookmakers and that obviously they need to be there combatting the SPs and also competing with the TAB. I understand that this question has been put to the Minister several times, but does he support the need for telephone betting on the course for bookmakers and, if not, why not?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I will not directly answer that tonight, because that matter is still being considered.

Mr INGERSON: It is a question to you and not to the commission.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: If it is to me, effectively it becomes policy. It is fair to say that I have some sympathy with the

concept and currently we are exploring how that might best be put in place if we can see a workable, practical and efficient method of adopting it.

Mr GUNN: Following on from the points made by the member for Mawson, in relation to the transferability of bookmaking licences, I point out to the Minister that under the laws of this State it is permissible to transfer hotel licences, fishing licences (and there has been considerable controversy which fortunately has been resolved in the right direction), taxicab licences, fuel licences and various other licences. It would appear that people who have engaged in professional bookmaking ought to have the right to transfer that licence at least to their family so that the business can be carried on. In these sorts of activities, there is value in having continuation in the family or, when the people wish to leave the industry, they should have the right to sell that licence so that either they can transfer it into some other worthwhile profession, or it can be used as superannuation.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I totally disagree with all those points. The fishermen know my views in regard to the fishery. Those views are not only from the point of view of management but also from the point of view of philosophy. I believe that people involved in the industry should be able to earn a sufficient income to establish themselves in a very comfortable arrangement both in relation to their income and to their superannuation. I do not see why anyone who leaves the industry should have a windfall gain on what is a State asset. It is an asset agreed to by Parliament and, if members refer to the history of this State, they will discover that gambling has been a very contentious issue.

Mr LEWIS interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It has provided a valuable windfall gain to individuals who, for no other reason than their own good luck, happen to fall on to a licence.

Mr INGERSON interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Well, that is questionable, anyway. It depends on whether or not one performs to merit and who will judge that in any event. The value of the licence will be set by the value of the expectation of capitalisation of future earnings, and it would be an horrendous entry cost. From what I have seen of the fishing industry, I know my views are right. The damages created in the fishing industry are horrendous—

Mr GUNN: I have seen the injustices, too, in that industry.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I ask the member to allow me to finish, because I thought I had the floor. The situation would only worsen the industry. I pose the question: what benefit would there be to the industry and the State by having transferability? Why should there be a right against someone else in the community to pass on what is a State privilege that is bestowed on someone purely by accident or by good fortune?

Mr LEWIS interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Maybe so, but I see it as being totally counterproductive to good management. If one looks at the entry costs that a bookmaker would have to pay to get in, one sees that the servicing of that debt would be horrendous. How on earth would they manage to survive when they are now saying that they cannot survive on the current turnover?

Mr INGERSON interjecting:

The CHAIRPERSON: Order!

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I think there would be expectations beyond what the figure represents, and from my knowledge of the fishing industry. I do not think that too many people do a very extensive feasibility and cost benefit analysis on what they are likely to get in return. I pose the

question back: what benefit would there be to the industry and to the State?

Mr GUNN: I could give the Minister an answer in great detail, but I do not suppose I am permitted to answer questions. At the appropriate time I will tell the Minister exactly what are the benefits and why it would be just to put into practice what I have suggested. In view of the importance of public sporting events and competitions in this State receiving support from members of Parliament and others who are invited to attend, will the Minister give an assurance to this Committee that the member for Bragg or other members who are invited will not be prevented from addressing gatherings, or handing out prizes by the actions of his Press Secretary?

The CHAIRPERSON: I have already ruled a similar question out of order. Would the member for Eyre please relate his question to a budget line?

Mr GUNN: Madam Chair, this department, in my understanding, was set up to promote and help finance sporting events in this State, and that is most commendable. The question that I have raised relates to the attendance of members of Parliament at such functions. The Minister who is in charge of that department and its expenditure, which this Parliament appropriates, attends these functions, and under our Westminster system, the Opposition is also invited to attend. It is therefore important that questions of this nature should be asked. This is a public forum—

The CHAIRPERSON: Order! That may very well be the case, and the Parliament has many forums in which such questions can be raised and such issues explored. Consideration of budget estimates is not such an occasion, unless the matter is related to an estimate of expenditure. The member for Adelaide.

Mr LEWIS: On a point of order, Madam Chair, would you indicate to the Committee where you believe that questions about the conduct of affairs in the Minister's office should be raised? Are you really saying to the Committee that because there is no allocated expenditure here under sport and recreation in the Minister's office, you would have countenanced questions about the conduct of the Minister of Recreation and Sport when we—

The CHAIRPERSON: Order! Is the member for Murray-Mallee raising a point of order?

Mr LEWIS: That is what I asked at the outset.

The CHAIRPERSON: Would you please come to the point of order?

Mr LEWIS: I did. I was explaining that.

The CHAIRPERSON: Go ahead.

Mr LEWIS: I want to know where we ask questions about the Minister and the Minister's office where it relates to recreation and sport. Do we ask those questions when we are examining the line relevant to recreation and sport, or do we ask those questions—and would you have countenanced those questions earlier in the day—under agriculture, even though they related to the conduct of the Minister's business as Minister of Recreation and Sport?

The CHAIRPERSON: There is no point of order. The kinds of questions being contemplated are quite appropriate for Question Time during the sitting of the Parliament. This Committee is dealing with budget estimates. At present it is dealing with the Estimates of Payments, Department of Recreation and Sport. Do other Opposition members have a third question?

Mr GUNN: On a point of order. I asked earlier under what Standing Order we have been ruled out, and I have tried to read it. It does not in any way relate, on my reading of it, to the matter which both the member for Murray-Mallee and I wanted to raise. Therefore, we ask you to

explain, because we are talking about the expenditure of the Department of Recreation and Sport. Heaven help me! If the Minister's attendance at a sporting feature does not relate to the expenditure and operation of his department, I wonder what the dickens it does relate to. We just wanted to ensure that in a free and democratic society the member for Bragg does not have a person paid by the taxpayer ringing up to prevent him from going. We want to know under what Standing Order we cannot proceed with that matter.

The CHAIRPERSON: Order! There is no point of order. We are dealing with recreation and sport expenditure lines, and there is no question that there are other opportunities in the sittings of the Parliament to raise such questions. We will return to Estimates of Payments and I call on the third question from the Opposition.

Mr INGERSON: When will the enquiry as it relates to the investigation into the Racing Commission—and whether we should have it—be reported to Parliament or to the Minister, whichever? As the Minister would be aware, it has been put off for several months and I wondered when he would get that report.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The proposal was the end of this month, but I understand that the Chairperson has contacted the Director today seeking a further extension of time. I have not made my decision on that. My proposal would have been for that report to be presented to me by the end of this month. I would then have presented it to Cabinet for consideration and it would have presumably been made public after Cabinet had considered it. I cannot give you any timetable. The memorandum from the Premier states that all major reports are to be presented for Cabinet consideration and then released on the decision of Cabinet. The report would in due course be released for public debate and consumption.

Mr INGERSON: As a supplementary question, is the Minister able to report to the Committee what problem is causing the delay? It seems that it has been going on for a long time, and from my discussions with many people in the industry, I understand that there have been a lot of very good reports put before the Committee.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Yes, that is the problem, I am told. A lot of good reports have been put up.

Mr INGERSON: What is making it difficult to get to a conclusion?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The problem is that they are all very busy people. I did not put an absolute time limit on them, so that it would fall over the cliff if they did not report by such and such a date. I gave them six months basically, and I hoped that they would report in that period of time. One must be reasonably flexible, given the nature of the people involved. Most of them are business people with heavy schedules, so I know that they are finding it very difficult to get everyone together for a lengthy period of time to consider the evidence before them.

I understand that a weight of evidence has been put before the committee, so all I can say now is that I will consider the request from the Chairperson, Miss Nelson, Q.C., and hope that we can get the report out, certainly before the end of the year. That is what I would be aiming to do, so that we could get some discussion going in the community as to the report and the nature of it. If issues need to be addressed as a consequence, we can do so.

Mr DUGAN: My question relates to page 563 of the Program Estimates, and I refer particularly to the statements made under the 'Broad objectives' heading about the facilitation of the rational development of racing in South Australia and to an earlier question raised concerning the racing

calendar. Does the department closely liaise with both the SAJC and the racing clubs in other States to ensure that no major racing event is put on at the same time as the Adelaide Cup?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: No.

Mr LEWIS: On a point of order: under what particular line is that question relevant to expenditure?

The CHAIRPERSON: Because I did not hear the question I will have to ask the member for Adelaide to repeat it.

Mr DUGAN: My question is in relation to Program 2—Racing and Gaming and I refer in particular to the broad objectives outlined on page 563 of the Program Estimates about the facilitation of the rational development of racing activities in South Australia. In particular, I ask about the racing calendar, which was referred to by the Minister in response to an earlier question: what, if any, role is taken by the department in working with the SAJC to ensure the integrity of the Adelaide Cup date?

The CHAIRPERSON: In that case, I rule that there is no point of order.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: In relation to the expenditure allocated under the salaries, wages and related payments line under 'Program 2—Racing and Gaming', under the control and management of Mr Harvey, the department does not have a prescribed role in the setting of dates, and in particular in relation to interstate meetings. The conference of principal clubs throughout Australia discusses these issues and determines its program. I gather that the clubs try to respect each other's major carnival events, bearing in mind that there are several notable clashes on the calendar. I think our Adelaide Cup carnival clashes with a Brisbane event, and that is of concern to the SAJC. I was recently in Brisbane and I understand that a couple of the provincial clubs are not too concerned about our pressing harder for the Adelaide Cup being the pre-eminent event. So, there is some sympathy with the Adelaide carnival being the pre-eminent event.

Mr DUGAN: My second question relates to 'Program 1—Recreation, Sport and Fitness' and to the facilities grants that are provided by the department. In particular, I noted that in his opening statement the Minister indicated that the surface chosen for the hockey complex will be Super-grasse 10, which he said was an Australian made product. During the Estimates Committee hearing last year the Minister indicated that in the review of the guidelines for the allocation of these funds the department would look to ensure that in the allocation of future funds reference was always made to Australian made products. Is that now a criterion in the allocation of funds to sporting projects and facilities?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Yes, there is a standing memo from the Premier, if I recall correctly, about using South Australian products. But it also fits in with the general realisation of our being a State in a federation and therefore purchasing Australian made products. We have endeavoured to meet that requirement to the best of our ability. As Minister, I have certainly had to pull out one or two recommendations which did not comply, and we have had the situation corrected.

Mr DUGAN: In respect of the allocation of money for facilities planning, has any money specifically been put aside for a feasibility study into the holding of the Commonwealth Games in South Australia?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: We have not set aside any funds for a feasibility study. At this time we are meeting with the major associations to ascertain their interests and their views on our bidding for and staging a Commonwealth Games.

We have to work through our local Commonwealth Games body, which is somewhat difficult at the moment, because the infrastructure is not there for us to operate through. The Director will soon be going to New Zealand and meeting with the Chairman of the Commonwealth Games Committee, Joe MacMenamie. He is going for another reason as well I hope, and that meeting might be of use in terms of getting together our bid possibility. At this stage we are still putting it together on the basis of having time to spare and we are making an assessment about the interest of the major associations and the major Commonwealth Games bodies. I hope that soon we will be able to look at organising the bid arrangements. What I have in mind may not involve a great deal of expenditure initially from the Government itself.

We could in fact look at a very commercial oriented operation, involving money coming from the private sector, to support the bid in the initial stages as well, which is partly what the New Zealanders did. I think they have put together a pretty good package, although, from newspaper reports, they seem to be under some pressure at the moment because they have not been able to meet the financial needs of the early requirements of getting their capital facilities in place. They also have a fairly ambitious expenditure program: they are looking at some \$NZ35 million, in 1986-87 dollars. In February, they had about \$20 million in the bank in terms of private sponsorship. They are getting \$5 million directly from the New Zealand Government. They were not getting a great deal out of local government in Auckland. Although they were getting some money, they were mostly getting facility use out of the local authority.

I would think that if we are going to start incurring expenditure—if Cabinet approves and supports the proposal—we will start to put the outlays together next year, by when we should have a very good view of where we are. In relation to the actual decision of the games of 1998—and I think we have to be realistic if we are going to bid—the firming up of the short list will occur after the 1990 Commonwealth Games and it will firm up prior to the Olympic Games in 1992. So, that is the timespan in which we have to work. We are well placed to go at some leisure and not to have to break the limit to get there. But we have a fair idea of where we need to go; it is just a question now of getting the associations together and getting their reactions to the idea. We have written to them and we have had a general response from them, but now it is a matter of firming up.

The situation with regard to funding has to be looked at in a commercial environment rather than Government funding as it will involve local government. Having the city council indicating its support is important and it would have to be the bid city as the host city.

Mr INGERSON: I refer to the TAB. Turnover, according to the Auditor-General, for last year was \$249.7 million—up \$12.5 million or 5.3 per cent. Will the Minister advise the Committee whether the current year's figures are up on budget or in line with last year's figure? Has the arrangement with the *Advertiser* and the extra coverage had any significant effect on the performance of the TAB in the last three or four months?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: We are up on budget from last year and there has been a 13.4 per cent increase in return to the TAB, the Government and the code. It has been a positive response for the year. The second part of the question relates to the *Advertiser*. The TAB advice is that that is so. We can make our guess at that. Given the general view of the industry, there was a degree of pessimism at the beginning of this past financial year about the situation

with the economy being in a flat spot, the casino and various other aspects. From listening to comments from the public it seems that the reception of the form guide in the *Advertiser* has been very positive and has helped to support the industry, along with 5AA.

Mr INGERSON: The extensive broadening of coverage in the *Advertiser* must have resulted in a significant cost to the TAB. Is that figure public?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I am sure that the honourable member has been party to many discussions about that figure. It is a confidential contract arrangement and, as such, the actual figure has not been disclosed to me. The figure that has been bandied around the community is reasonably accurate, but that is as much as I am prepared to say.

Mr INGERSON: Page 415 of the Auditor-General's Report lists an amount of \$8.277 million in short term deposits as at 30 June 1987. Last year \$7.88 million was invested in short term deposits. Can the Minister advise what those short term deposits are and where that sort of money comes from?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: They are short term money market investments until distribution is made.

Mr INGERSON: My next question concerns the next line which states that shares in Festival City Broadcasters amounted to \$6.387 million. Further reading reveals that that is up \$2 million. How is that funded? What effect is it likely to make, if any, on distribution to the three codes?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: A \$1 million issue of shares has been taken up by the TAB on 5AA or Festival City Broadcasters, which raised an equity base.

Mr INGERSON: According to the Auditor-General, it was \$2 million. I refer to page 418 of his report.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is a different issue.

Mr INGERSON: That is the question I asked.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is not related to shares. The structure of that has been for the acquisition of 5AU and 5RM respectively. There was a share issue in Festival City Broadcasters in order to purchase those other licence holders. That is the basis of that \$2 million. That money was borrowed from SAFA.

Mr INGERSON: What effect has that had on the codes?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I believe that there has been a positive effect in terms of providing a service to the community. I refer to the role of 5AA, 5RU and 5RM and the increased TAB form guide in the *Advertiser*, which I believe have provided support to the industry, which probably would have seen a decline on the figures from 1986-87 if those services had not been offered.

Mr INGERSON: My next question relates to the Auditor General's Report. If the loss is continuing at 5AA why is a further equity of \$1 million needed for 1987-88, and why is the situation reversed, with the TAB paying services of \$500 000 in 1987-88 compared to only \$1 400 in 1986-87?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That relates to the basis of equity on which the Festival City Broadcasters is to operate. I am referring to the \$1 million share issue. That was provided from cash from the TAB in order to give it a better structure. I know that the honourable member has on numerous occasions asked this question in the House. My general argument is that 5AA offers that service to the racing public and as such it is not able to be scientifically analysed down to the actual dollars and cents that it provides in terms of a facility to the racing industry. It is opportunity income in some ways. The overall contribution from the TAB to 5AA has been a board decision. I am not privy to, and cannot question, the Festival City Broadcasters board. As the honourable member knows, I am at arms length from it. However, the Chairman of the TAB has advised me that a

decision was made to pay for a service that 5AA offered to the TAB on the basis of a commercial operation.

I personally feel that is the appropriate way to go, and it certainly recognises the commercial arrangements that would operate in the broader environment. A proposal that was put forward by one of the proponents to buy 5AA involved a \$1 million payment on the basis of a three year contract which was to be renegotiated after that period. A fixed figure for inflation was included in that \$1 million. So it could be argued that in many ways it is not recognised in the full commercial content of the service that is provided. It is speculative as to how one would recognise that; it is capitalising an expected return in an annual lump sum payment.

Mr INGERSON: I would like to make a comment. It is interesting that this is a back flip from previous years. The Auditor-General has noted it, and any comment by the Auditor-General makes interesting reading for Parliament.

Mr KLUNDER: In his opening statement the Minister indicated that there had been an increase of \$974 000 in the recurrent expenditure for sport and recreation. According to my mental arithmetic, that works out at something over 15 per cent in money terms and 7 or 8 per cent in real terms. I appreciate that any extra money is usually spent 10 or 20 times over before it is actually allocated to a particular situation. In that extra allocation has any money been earmarked to implement the recommendations of the futures conference?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The futures conference has provided us with a valuable basis for building future consultation links with the sporting associations throughout South Australia. Also, basically, it gives us an opportunity to conduct a review of the department. Our new Director has taken up that challenge. I think the information that we have gleaned from the futures conference will be a good backdrop for the assessment of the sorts of aspirations that exist in the community and how the department meshes into those aspirations. There could be some significant economies adopted within the department, together with a redirection of priorities in relation to how we put our services on the ground for the recreation, sport and fitness community.

I think the overall view of the futures conference was that it was useful for us as a beginning. Really, I would not want to put it much higher than that. It was certainly very useful to see people who do not often get the chance to sit down and reflect on what their sport and recreation is doing getting a chance to do so. Also, they do not often get the chance to exchange ideas with other people who are involved with recreation and sport. It seems to me that it was a marvellous opportunity for people to exchange ideas. In many ways they identified the similar problems they had relating to administration, promotions, growth and participation, sourcing funds for facilities, junior sports development and all those things which are ongoing problems for any sports association. I think that we can in fact use that to address some of the major issues that face us as a department.

Mr Beltchev: The primary concern that the department now has, with the budget process reaching a conclusion, is the way in which the department's objectives, priorities and programs can be structured into an organisation that enables us to convert as much money that we have allocated to us to direct as many services as possible to the community in terms of sport and recreation programs. In a previous question I responded by saying that we consider that a lot of our energies are currently being put into areas of administration rather than into delivering a service. The whole

department is looking at every task that we do, how we do it, its effect and, more particularly, how it fits in with the total concept of what a department like ours should be fitting into as part of Government policy. In that process we are looking at alternative ways in which we can perhaps deliver the services that we currently provide to the community.

Further, we are looking at the other aspects of the sporting structure of Government, particularly the Institute of Sport, and the way in which it operates as a cooperative effort between Government, the sporting organisations and the private sector in the community to try to maximise the flexibility of services that it provides together with the use of its resources. We are addressing the question as to what kind of applicability that model would have to other areas of the department's operation.

This relates particularly to the information that arose from the futures conference. When the community tells us what they think the department can improve in its areas of operation, it is, I believe, telling us also some of the areas in which it wants some improvement. Those areas are, in particular, the questions of image and status of recreation and sport in the community as a whole.

At the moment I think that sport is seen as an activity that does not reflect the true professionalism required to run one of society's major enterprises, and the same applies to recreation. In the past, the efforts that the department has put into trying to upgrade the quality of management and administration not only within the department but also in sport generally I think, through the provision of grants for the employment of professional staff in sports organisations, will get reinforced and streamlined so that we build into our sporting structure in South Australia a basis that enables sports to be independent of Government for their survival.

Much of South Australia's sport still relies entirely on the support of Government. We have to explore with the department how to overcome that hump so that the Government is not continually trying to bail out sports. Those general thrusts that I have addressed I hope indicate that the futures conference was the beginning of a process whereby, unlike normal Government department reviews, you start off with what people think about what you are doing and you respond to that, rather than deciding what you are going to do and then asking people to agree with it. That has enabled us now to respond fairly precisely to what the community is telling us. At the same time we are trying to organise ourselves so that we as a department can provide some leadership in the area of sport.

Ms LENEHAN: I refer to program 1, the last line in the provision of payments for recreation and sporting purposes, and in the yellow book I refer to page 562 under the two broad objectives of increasing the number of people participating in recreation, sport and fitness activities and fostering and promoting equal opportunities for access to those sport, recreation and fitness activities. My question relates directly to the Happy Valley area, and I am asking it on behalf of the member for Fisher, Mr Phil Tyler. How is the Department for Recreation and Sport assisting in the provision of sport, recreation and fitness facilities for the Happy Valley community and, in particular, for that ever increasing percentage of the population, namely, young people under 19, who currently make up approximately 40 per cent or about 14 000 in number? Can the Minister briefly tell the Committee to what extent the department is cooperating with the youth bureau and the Education Department in providing equal access and equal opportunity for these thousands of young people in the Happy Valley council area?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Let me say that we do cooperate. We are establishing far greater arrangements with the other departments to look at future planning, particularly with regard to new suburbs and new developments. Of course, Happy Valley and the area of the member for Fisher are just such areas. It is fair to say that in the past we have not had a large enough input into those planning processes. I think it has been left up to planners to really plan the recreation and sport aspect, and I think the Director was alluding to that earlier on in speaking of our role.

We will upgrade our input into a significant number of these areas. I shall address some of those areas in particular. In relation to facilities at the local level, in some ways it is really like harnessing the horse after it has escaped, because we are addressing the matter after the situation has been dealt with by the planners and the suburbs have been established. But we do address the subject at that level, and Happy Valley, as well as every other area, will be subject to the same process of application and priority. This year we have given a grant to the Community and Neighbourhood Houses Association, and it has employed two recreation officers to look at those people who do not get into the mainstream of institutional recreational fitness. Those officers are addressing the issue on the basis of every district, and in relation to country areas as well. They are considering the State as a whole. A study has been undertaken of recreation facilities for young unemployed people in the western suburbs. That is a model we can use, and we will do so.

The Director is preparing a summary of our assessments as to where we fit in terms of the social justice strategy, and that will be presented to a Cabinet subcommittee in December for consideration within the budget process for the 1988-89 budget. That is another aspect of the planning process, which will cover Happy Valley and Nunjikompta and everywhere else. As that will be part of the coordination process, we will have a far greater input into all these planning aspects and interdepartmental relations in order to establish our credentials and ensure that recreation and sport facilities are provided in those areas. The honourable member can assure the member for Fisher that we will be addressing those very points that affect his electorate and all other electorates as well.

Ms LENEHAN: My final question relates to the same line, concerning the promotion of equal opportunities for access and participation in recreation, sport and fitness, and this time it relates directly to women. I note that the appointment of a women's adviser to the department has been made this year and I also note that the Minister has announced a women's week to be held from 13 to 20 March next year, as part of the Australian Bicentenary celebrations. This women's week will culminate in the world 15 kilometre road race for women, and I understand that the department has allocated \$24 000 for this. Will the Minister very briefly tell the Committee what major events the \$24 000 will be spent on? I know that many people in the community are interested in this matter.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Wendy Ey is the chairperson of the organising committee for the Athletics Association of Australia. We have employed Janet Hay to coordinate the week, and that is where the grant will be used. We are finding sponsorship from some significant South Australian and Australian companies to support various aspects of the event. It is up to the organising committee to announce the details. We have devised a journalists' panel which will advise the committee on how to promote and encourage attention and participation in the week from 13 to 20 March. Further, some significant members of the media profession

have already indicated their support and they will be involved. For example, the 15 kilometre race will probably have Rosa Motta, for example and Lisa Martin—we will have the world's top women's distance athletes running.

It is a premium effort and not looked on as anything less than that. The previous winners are world marathon champions and gold medallists, so it is going to be a very high quality event, drawing attention from around the world. In addition, we are having an international conference on women in sport and significant people of international standing will be present. We will have Ruth Fuchs from East Germany, a gold medallist javelin thrower and a sports scientist. She will be one of the key speakers. Also present will be Mary Peters from Great Britain and the Director of Sport Canada (basically its Department of Sport), Abigail Hoffman. The theme of the conference will be increasing participation by women in sport, and that is a major factor. Associated with that will be hundreds of events in that week. It is a bicentenary event and will be the major event in the bicentenary associated with women. It will be held here in Adelaide and we are lucky to have Wendy Ey coordinating it, not only from the viewpoint of the week itself but also from the athletics viewpoint.

Mr INGERSON: I refer to the athletic track at the Olympic Sportsfield. Page 171 of the Auditor-General's Report states that in 1985 \$100 000 was paid to cancel the contract at Olympic Sportsfield and in 1986-87 a further \$165 000 was paid to settle the outstanding part of that contract to make a total of \$265 000. Where is the carpet that was on the original track, who owns it, and why was the contract cancelled?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The proposal, when finalised, will be between the South Australian Athletics Association and Regupol Australia Pty Limited. The ownership will be with the Athletics Association. Our contribution will be through the cancellation figure, absorbed into the price of the contract by agreement with Regupol. That will be matched by Commonwealth funds which we negotiated with the Federal department. The top-up will come from the Athletics Association.

The cancellation of the contract in relation to the original contract as such was on the basis of Regupol seeking to have the contract cancelled due to our inability to perform in accordance with the contract. By the clause of the contract which registered that cessational incapacity to perform, we were subject to a penalty payment that we negotiated with Regupol Australia Pty Limited and that is where the \$265 000 came in. It would have been registered in the previous Auditor-General's Report as \$100 000 paid out as the first part of the penalty. We then negotiated the \$165 000, bringing it up to \$265 000. It has been absorbed into the new contract price and can be used by us to match the Commonwealth funding arrangement.

Mr INGERSON: In a question on this issue asked by the member for Mawson in Parliament, the Minister stated that the Federal Government contribution was \$350 000, the Athletics Association contributed \$75 000, the South Australian Government had negotiated \$165 000 and that a further \$5 000 came from the facility fund. I note in the member's question, and I understand it to be accurate, that all Commonwealth funding is on a one-for-one basis. Can the Minister explain what seems to be a pretty good deal?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The funding is \$165 000, \$75 000 and \$350 000.

Mr INGERSON: An outside body contributes the \$75 000.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: That is right. By negotiation with the Commonwealth, the State is able to carry over certain accounting arrangements with regard to contributions that

it makes to sport in this State on a national basis. On an accounting basis, it is recognised that the State contributes one for one.

Mr INGERSON: On page 562 of the Program Estimates mention is made that the department is discussing future development of athletic facilities with the Athletics Association. Can the Minister explain whether that facility development is at Olympic Sportsfield or whether alternatives are being considered?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: The phrase to which the member referred in the yellow book concerns a proposal that existed before the department renegotiated the new contract through the Athletics Association with the Federal Government and Regupol. Some arrangements are being considered to maintain Olympic Sportsfield as the centre for athletics in this State. The possibility of a track at the Underdale campus was considered, but since we have stitched that up, we have not had to pursue that option at this time. I am sure that further discussions will be held with the Athletics Association to explore what facilities are needed at Olympic Sportsfield.

I am of the view that Olympic Sportsfield should be the centre for athletics in this State. It is an ideal facility and is in a marvellous setting. Everyone who comes here from interstate says that it is one of the most picturesque and enjoyable athletics centres in Australia. However, the discussions about whether that site will continue to be developed to an international standard have a long way to go. A lot of hurdles must be jumped before we reach that level but my view is that the facility there should be developed, despite its lack of car parking and the problems associated with its location in a residential area.

Mr INGERSON: On 4 September after returning from Alice Springs the Minister announced through the media that sporting associations should look round for sponsorship other than from tobacco companies in particular. Did the Minister consult with any sporting associations and, if so, which ones? Is the Minister aware of the sponsorship level to sport in South Australia from tobacco companies? Is the Government prepared to increase its sponsorship to compensate?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is a very interesting topic and I do not know whether I can do it justice in a brief answer. I have informally discussed tobacco sponsorship with numerous sporting groups. The Government has not taken a definitive position on this matter but has adopted a general philosophy that alternatives should be sought to support sporting organisations in this State.

I have asked the department to prepare an issues paper to examine a number of specific ways in which it could deal with the issue of tobacco sponsorship. I refer, for instance, to a code of practice; ways of replacing some of the sponsorship; the alternatives available and some of the mechanisms that accomplish that; as the Evans and Elliott Bill suggests, an additional tax on cigarette smokers; and what the department should be looking at in terms of a national philosophy; and where it should be going.

A working party report is to be presented to the next council of sports Ministers. I hope that a firm position is worked out prior to that council. Given the events that are occurring at a local level the process may have to be speeded up prior to the issue coming to a head at the sports council.

With regard to the level of sponsorship in South Australia I have heard varying amounts from \$900 000 to \$1.2 million. That is not significant in my view considering that probably in the vicinity of \$9 million to \$11 million is put into sport from various activities. I include in that the national and international sport that is being played in

South Australia. A significant amount of money comes from other sources, and some of those sponsors are some of South Australia's major companies, which are not involved in the tobacco industry, either directly or indirectly. We are dealing not with 90 per cent of funding to sport but, at the most, with about 10 per cent. Nationally it is probably a lot less than that.

Tonight I heard a figure of about \$12 million mentioned. Conservatively, about \$200 million is put into sport in Australia by Governments. At most about \$10 million to \$12 million is provided by tobacco companies. Irrespective of the philosophical arguments involved, there are practical problems in changing over from tobacco sponsorship to other forms of sponsorship. Some of those which can be explored are the Sports Foundation, which provides tax deductibility to encourage contributions and a coordinated central organising committee of a number of entrepreneurs to encourage sports sponsorship—an alternative to the Elliott-Evans proposal. However, in my opinion it has a few flies on it.

Mr INGERSON interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I do not think the argument is hypocrisy. I think it is hypocrisy where something that is totally illegal, such as prostitution, is taxed. I see it as being an inconsistency in the Elliott-Evans situation where international sport is included. The major viewing audience would be watching the cricket and the Grand Prix, and those situations would provide a basic conflict. The major viewing audiences would be watching those sports, yet the Government would be saying, "You cannot watch other sports or get sponsorship for junior or State sports, but you can get it for international sports. There is an inconsistency in that logic which should be addressed. I want to address it rationally and sensibly in consultation with sports bodies. The department is putting the arguments forward and it is now up to the department to explore them.

Mr LEWIS: Earlier in the reply that the Minister gave to the question asked of him by the member for Mawson he said that the Director was going to New Zealand. He stated one of the reasons therefor and alluded to the other. Is the Minister and/or his officers going overseas during the course of this budgetary year and, if so, where have the funds been allocated for that purpose? How much is to be spent on it; how many are going; and for what purpose are they going? In the process of answering, I would like the Minister to disclose the other reason why the Director is going to New Zealand.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: No funds are budgeted for my going overseas during this budgetary period, so I might say to members that they again have missed the boat. There is a line in the agriculture budget for me to go overseas.

Mr LEWIS: We cannot ask you about recreation and sport visits overseas when we are on agriculture.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I do not plan to do it as recreation and sport; I plan to go under fisheries and agriculture.

Mr GUNN: We do not object to that: we think that it is sensible.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Had you asked me during questioning about agriculture, I would have been very happy to tell you what I planned to do in terms of fisheries and agriculture. The primary thrust will be agriculture.

Mr LEWIS: Are any departmental officers from recreation and sport going overseas?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I have just mentioned that the Director is going to New Zealand. We had a discussion only in the past couple of days about that matter. I think that the two purposes for which he is going to New Zealand are very sensible, bearing in mind that it is probably just the

same as a plane trip to Perth from Adelaide. One can be in New Zealand on Sunday night and back in Adelaide on Tuesday afternoon.

Mr LEWIS: What is the purpose of that trip?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I would like him to meet with Joe MacMenamie, who is Chairman of the New Zealand Commonwealth Games Committee, to find out what is happening there in terms of financial structure. When I was attending the Agricultural Council, I took a day off in Auckland to meet with him and his organising people. They are about to appoint their Executive Officer. I think that the meeting was very valuable. Because I had to attend the Agricultural Council meeting, I did not have a great deal of time, but I certainly obtained a lot of information. New Zealand is not classified as 'overseas'. The CER scheme now probably operates for everything we do. Basically, New Zealand is seen as being the same as a domestic trip, but the Director will look at its sports foundation.

Mr LEWIS: Are any international visits anticipated and, if so, what is their purpose?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: We do not have anything planned.

Mr LEWIS: Presumably, New Zealand is another nation.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is not regarded as an overseas visit. The Closer Economic Relations Scheme now puts New Zealand almost as another State. It gets the same prerequisite. The Director will look at the Hillary Commission and how that operates. Basically, that is what the New Zealand trip involves.

Mr LEWIS: We have heard so much about the facilities that are to be provided in the metropolitan area, and elsewhere I guess, for people engaging in sport and recreation, but there has been no mention made of this rapidly expanding community in the north of the State called Roxby Downs or Olympic Dam. What is there and who is responsible for providing it if it is not provided for?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: Roxby Downs is actually being looked after by the Minister of Mines and Energy. In fact, significant funds are being invested in Roxby Downs. I am not at liberty to divulge it, but we had a submission before us at Cabinet on Monday of three significant expenditures in that area. I am not sure when the Minister of Mines and Energy appears before the Committee—

Mr LEWIS: We would be out of order in asking about recreation and sport.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I personally think it would be totally appropriate.

Mr LEWIS: It does not matter what you think. It is what the Chairperson thinks.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I accept that. We have looked at the northern area. One area we have looked at is Coober Pedy.

Mr GUNN: I refer to program 1, Administration Expenses, and also to page 560 of the yellow book. I see that 26 people have had budgeted \$1 957. Obviously, in the administration of this portfolio, these administrative officers arrange the Minister's diary and organise his appointments and attendance at sporting functions. Will the Minister give an undertaking that no officer will endeavour to prevent any member of Parliament, including the member for Bragg, from attending, speaking or handing out trophies at such functions, and will he reprimand the person who has already been involved in this matter and to whom previous reference was made.

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: It is for associations to determine who attends, and I respect that.

Mr GUNN: In view of the question and the concerns that have been expressed, will the Minister make sure that under that administration, no further contact by the person mentioned earlier will take place in an endeavour to prevent

the member for Bragg from speaking at or participating in those public functions?

The Hon. M.K. Mayes: I repeat my earlier answer: it is for associations to determine the agenda of who attends those functions.

The CHAIRPERSON: There being no further questions, I declare the examination completed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 9.57 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Tuesday 22 September at 11 a.m.