

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 21 September 1989

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Chairman:

The Hon. T.M. McRae

Members:

The Hon. R.K. Abbott
 Mr H. Becker
 The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore
 The Hon. R.G. Payne
 Mr D.J. Robertson
 The Hon. D.C. Wotton

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

The CHAIRMAN: The procedure will be relatively informal. I will notify changes to composition of the Committee if and when they occur. If the Minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be in a form suitable for insertion in *Hansard* and two copies must be submitted no later than Friday 6 October to the Clerk of the House of Assembly.

I propose to allow the Minister and the lead speaker for the Opposition to make an opening statement, if they so desire. I will adopt a flexible approach in giving the call for asking questions, but on the basis of about three questions per member, alternating sides, and allowing for supplementary and follow-on questions also. Subject to the convenience of the Committee, members who are outside the Committee but who desire to ask a question will be permitted to do so once the line of questioning on an item has been exhausted by the Committee itself. Questions must be based on the lines of expenditure as revealed in the Estimates of Payments. However, reference may be made to other documents, for example, Program Estimates, the Auditor-General's Report, etc.

Arts, \$37 143 000

Works and Services—Department for the Arts,
 \$870 000

Witness:

The Hon. Anne Levy, Minister for the Arts.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr L. Amadio, Director, Department for the Arts.
 Mr K. Lloyd, Chief Project Officer, Finance.
 Mr P. Bailey, Manager, Resources.
 Mr S. Saffell, Senior Finance Officer.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditures open for examination. Ms Levy, do you wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I believe it is important in discussing the Estimates for the Arts budget this year, to note that the present Labor Government throughout its term has clearly demonstrated a commitment to the development of the Arts in South Australia. Since the 1982-83 financial year, recurrent funding to the Arts portfolio has increased by 15 per cent in real terms, and moreover on a per capita

basis, South Australia is the strongest supporter of the Arts of any Australian State. This is not just an idle boast; the Commonwealth Grants Commission papers indicated that in 1987-88 South Australia spent almost \$25 per capita on the Arts. Those are the most recent figures available from the Commonwealth Grants Commission.

This figure of \$25 per capita represents about \$2 more than the amount spent in Western Australia, approximately twice the amount spent in New South Wales and Queensland, and approximately three times the amount spent on a per capita basis in Victoria and Tasmania.

It is acknowledged that since the 1986-87 financial year, mainly due to the severe reduction in Commonwealth funding to South Australia, the arts have been required to work within a context of general financial constraint. The Government has certainly been very pleased with the way in which the arts have faced these new challenges and nevertheless have continued to grow and develop. With the support of the South Australian Government, many new funding programs have been established. For example, the Government has established the Creative Development Fund for the film industry (\$50 000 per annum); a program to re-equip the Jam Factory (\$50 000 per annum); the South Australian Touring Exhibition Program (\$52 000 per annum), which provides touring exhibitions of visual arts and crafts throughout South Australia; the Multicultural Arts Trust (\$20 000 per annum); and the Statewide Touring Theatre Company (\$252 000 per annum).

In addition, there are many arts organisations throughout the State that have received substantial funding increases. For example, Contemporary Arts Centre (up from \$41 500 in 1986-87 to \$85 000 in 1989); Experimental Art Foundation (up from \$20 000 to \$37 000); Mainstreet Theatre (up from \$64 000 to \$106 000); Doppio Teatro (up from \$30 000 to \$68 000); Australian String Quartet (up from \$92 000 to \$127 000); Media Resource Centre (up from \$18 000 to \$55 000); Public Radio Services (up from \$65 000 to \$120 000); South Australian Writers' Centre (up from \$3 000 to \$16 500); Community Arts Network (up from \$22 000 to \$53 000); and the Multicultural Art Workers Committee (up from \$17 000 to \$43 000).

These increases are well beyond indexation figures and cover the complete range of the arts in South Australia. These real increases have significantly increased the equity of State support for the arts with, in particular, the areas of visual arts, crafts and design, literature and multicultural arts, all receiving large real funding increases. The arts industry has also adopted a more entrepreneurial approach in maintaining activity and planning for future development.

There are notable examples of this entrepreneurial approach. The establishment of the Regional Conservation Service by the State Conservation Centre has been to the delight of many people throughout South Australia; Carrick Hill has considerably expanded its special functions activities; the Jam Factory opened a city-based shop nearly three months ago; the regional cultural trusts have increased significantly in the provision of restaurant and cinema activities; and the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust has greatly increased its programming activities. These are all entrepreneurial approaches which have met and are meeting with considerable success. We must realise that the arts in South Australia is a very important component of the South Australian economy. It has not only aesthetic and cultural value but considerable economic value.

The work which has recently been undertaken by the department has revealed that the major cultural institutions, the arts organisations and the other arts programs supported

by the Government represent a \$61 million industry in this State. It employs the equivalent of more than 1 200 full-time people and that is limited, as I say, to the arts activities which receive Government support. Moreover, the outreach of the arts is very wide. Every person in some way or another regularly comes into contact with an arts related activity, as a part of everyone's day-to-day living. To provide an indication of this, more than 3.5 million people annually attend an arts event in South Australia. This equates to a ratio of attendance to population of almost three to one. In other words, on average every individual in this State attends three arts related activities each year.

For the current budget the recurrent allocation to the arts is \$37.143 million. This allocation represents an increase of \$2.3 million over the previous year. The major funding initiatives which occur in this budget are, first, an increase in funding for the 1990 festival. The Government provides funding of \$100 000 to continue the challenge grant system, which was first introduced at the 1986 festival. The package for the festival also includes a contribution of \$14 000 to an economic impact study, which is to be conducted during the 1990 festival so that we can get clear economic data showing the economic impact of the festival to this State.

Another new major item in the budget is the Tandanya Aboriginal Cultural Institute, which is allocated \$528 000 in recurrent expenditure. This centre, as I am sure all members know, is being developed and will officially open to the public on 1 October this year. It is located in the old Adelaide Electric Supply Company building and will encompass gallery, exhibition, performing arts, and resource and art craft workshop activities, all focusing on both traditional and contemporary Aboriginal culture. It will be a landmark for the nation.

Another initiative I wish to mention from the budget is further development in the Aboriginal arts area for which \$31 000 has been allocated to assist arts projects by Aboriginal artists and communities. Next year the line estimates of the budget will include a special line for Aboriginal arts, rather than incorporating it with other art forms, as occurs in this year's budget.

The Art Gallery of South Australia is to receive an additional \$50 000 in funding to conduct feasibility studies into the provision of increased special exhibition space for the art gallery, much needed exhibition space being high on the agenda for this valuable institution. We are also establishing a country touring fund for which \$60 000 is allocated. This funding will enable the State's performing arts organisations to tour regularly to regional South Australia. I understand that next year the State Opera and the State Theatre Company will tour throughout the regions, and other arts organisations will tour in future years.

This allocation has been warmly welcomed by all the regional cultural trusts and, in fact, by all those people throughout South Australia who are interested in having greater access to the arts organisations which mainly perform in the city. There has also been an extra allocation of \$25 000 for the Riddoch Art Gallery in Mount Gambier. This will increase the gallery's staffing base and exhibition program. The South-East Regional Cultural Trust will also be putting money into the Riddoch gallery to bring it up to an A class standard gallery, capable of receiving exhibitions of any standard. This will be a major achievement for the people in that area. It is also proposed in the budget that the Department for the Arts will undertake in the next 12 months two important reviews. First, there will be a review of the South Australian commercial film industry.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: On a point of order, Mr Chairman, given that the time allocated for the arts

budget questioning is only two hours, the Minister is taking up much of that time with her statement, thus diminishing the time available to the Committee for questioning.

The CHAIRMAN: How much further has the Minister to go?

The Hon. Anne Levy: There is only a little more. I just wish to mention the review of the South Australian commercial film industry, which is an important industry in this State. In recent months, with the establishment of the Australian Film Financing Corporation and the resurgence of the South Australian Film Corporation, we believe it is appropriate that we work in conjunction with the commercial industry to develop a series of output targets for the next three to five years.

The second review is one of the State Film and Video Centre. This comes from the success of the placement of films and videos in the South Australian public library system. We intend to consider ways in which the community's access to the full range of the centre's collection can be improved. In summary, it is interesting to note that the 1989-90 recurrent allocation to the arts represent .84 per cent of the total Government recurrent outlays. Given the cultural impact and the economic importance of the art industry in South Australia, we can argue that the South Australian Government and the people of South Australia get good value for money from this investment.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the member for Coles wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: No, I wish to question the Minister. The Minister outlined at the beginning of her statement the increases in funds to various arts bodies over the past five years. Given an inflation rate of 7 to 8 per cent over that time, it means that almost a quarter of the value of those funds has been consumed by inflation.

That has different effects in different areas; for example, inflation in the health budget runs at a much greater rate than the CPI, as it does for marketing funds for tourism. What estimate has the Department for the Arts made as to the level of inflation in arts areas in each of the past three years?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The arts are a very labour-intensive industry so that movements in average wages would contribute very largely to the inflation factors applying in the arts. I do not have specific details, but I am informed that, throughout that time, Treasury inflation figures have been used and accepted as reasonable.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I refer to the Auditor-General's Report under the heading 'Operations' (page 230). What were the main factors in the 13.5 per cent increase in expenditure by the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust in 1989-90, from \$18.175 million in 1987-88 to \$20.601 million in 1988-89?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The increase to which the member for Coles refers is accounted for mainly by the increase in entrepreneurial activities on the part of the Festival Centre Trust, which has undertaken and entrepreneured about 50 different productions: this has contributed significantly to the trust's income during that period.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I was referring to an increase in expenditure, not in income; it is up to \$20.6 million from \$18.2 million.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The increase relates to the entrepreneurial activities of the trust. In the undertaking of greater entrepreneurial activities there must be an increase in expenditure in putting on various shows, and this results in increased income.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: What was that level of income?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Festival Trust had an overall cash surplus of \$116 000, resulting largely from the increased entrepreneurial activity that it has undertaken.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I note that the operating surplus from catering operations at the centre is at its lowest for many years (Auditor-General's Report, page 231). Will the Minister explain what is involved in the catering operations and why there has been such a fall in the operating surplus?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I think the fall in catering results partly from increased competition in that area. For many years the catering section has made most of its money from the banqueting section of the Festival Centre but, recently, there has been increased competition from both the Convention Centre and the Hyatt which geographically are very close. I understand that the Festival Centre is taking a number of measures to try to reverse this situation. New catering managers have been appointed, and they are taking a more aggressive approach in the catering section.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I refer to pages 559 and 560 of the Program Estimates. What is the reason for the significant variation in capital expenditure against budget—\$6.1 million against \$7.4 million in 1988-89? How much money has been spent to date on repairs and refurbishment of the Adelaide Festival Centre? What is the estimated final cost of this work and when is it expected to be completed?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The major component of capital expenditure is the rectification of the Festival plaza. Expenditure in the past financial year was less than anticipated, but some of that expenditure is carried over into the current financial year as the work progresses. I understand that Sacon is still confident that the work will be completed before the 1990 Festival of Arts.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: At what final cost?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The final cost is \$10.7 million.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: At several recent performances at the Adelaide Festival Centre many people have commented that the seats—not the fabric covering—are sagging. What provision is made for the replacement of seats? Adelaide has always prided itself on having the most comfortable theatre in Australia. What is the estimated cost of seat replacement?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I do not know the actual cost of seat replacement, but the Festival Centre undertakes an annual maintenance and upgrading program in respect of its facilities. In the coming year, \$50 000 has been set aside to begin re-covering the seating. Other major works include the recarpeting of many of the public areas of the theatre (at a cost of \$225 000) and the technical upgrading of much of the stage equipment (at a cost of \$275 000). That work is necessary if our theatre is to remain one of the foremost theatres in Australia.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: The following question is most appropriately asked in relation to Program Estimates (page 565) under 'Development for the Arts'. Can the Minister indicate, or put on notice, what public relations and publicity and other arts consultants are employed by the department? How are they chosen? Are they selected by tender? Who is responsible for issuing the consultancies? How much money was spent in the last financial year? Who were the consultants selected, and for what purposes?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am told that there are few, if any, such consultancies. However, we will take that question on notice so that we can fully check with all the divisions of the department, which include areas like the Museum and the Art Gallery.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: I have noted from the Auditor-General's Report that the South Australian Film Corporation incurred an overall deficit of \$483 000 in 1988-89. Can the Minister say what effect this has had on the corporation's financial position and what productions are planned for 1989-90?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The past two years have certainly been difficult, not only for the film corporation but also for the Australian film industry as a whole, with the changes to the section 10BA tax arrangements and the subsequent establishment of the Australian Financing Film Corporation. There was a period when it was extremely difficult for Australian film makers to raise the required funds to ensure a relatively continuous stream of production.

Following the South Australian Film Corporation's success in producing the *Shiralee* in 1986-87, it was not able to produce another major production until *Grim Pickings* was produced in 1988-89. This lower than usual level of production saw the corporation incur losses in both the 1987-88 and 1988-89 years. These successive losses have forced the corporation to use most of its cash reserve to maintain its infrastructure and operations. As at 1 July 1989, the corporation had an accumulated cash shortfall of \$212 000. In the light of this, there is no doubt that the current financial year represents a crucial year in the history of the corporation.

However, I am happy to say that since the appointment of the new Managing Director, Mr Richard Watson, and the commencement of operations at a national level of the Australian Film Financing Corporation, a greater sense of optimism in the South Australian Film Corporation has occurred. It has already secured funding which will ensure the production of *Katie's Rainbow*, which has a \$3.6 million budget, and which is a four-hour mini-series. In addition, the corporation has almost secured funding for the production of *Golden Fiddles*, which has a \$4.3 million budget, and which also is a four-hour mini-series. It will be co-produced with a major Canadian production house.

Moreover, applications have been submitted to the Australian Film Corporation for the part funding of two major documentaries: one on the work of the cranio-facial unit (well known in South Australia); and the other dealing with victims of crime. We expect these productions to occur, and they will ensure the corporation's continued viability. In addition to this, the corporation has recently secured funding to enable the production of a pilot Australian series of 13 episodes of the Japanese series *Ultraman*. This will generate about \$60 000 in studio fees, and it is also possible that the corporation will be able to secure funding for a proposed follow-up series. I believe we should all congratulate the corporation on securing this pilot series, as it will provide significant local employment and activity in the film area. I believe we should note that this total slate of production for the corporation will have generated about \$4 million from the South Australian Film Financing Corporation, which is \$4 million into South Australia. This is certainly an impressive achievement, and if this can continue—and most people seem to believe that the Australian film industry has now turned the corner—our film corporation can look forward to a healthy and exciting future.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: Since the Premier announced to Parliament in March 1988 that the State Opera of South Australia was facing an operating deficit of approximately \$500 000, I understand that considerable work has been done to turn around the company's financial position. Can the Minister advise what steps have been taken to overcome the company's financial difficulties?

The Hon. Anne Levy: It was certainly a great shock to many people when the State Opera experienced a financial crisis 18 months ago. Many decisions have been taken which were designed to return the company to financial viability and stability. First, the Government made an advance of \$400 000 so that the company could continue, and it was then agreed that this would be repaid by \$100 000 last year and \$300 000 in the current financial year. So, these repayments became the Opera Company's financial targets. A number of decisions were made to reduce the operating costs of the State Opera Company and the major decisions included the transfer of the ownership of Her Majesty's Theatre to the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust. This relieved the opera company of the day-to-day management of the building. It also removed the requirement of the company to perform in that particular theatre. Most importantly it removed all the financial risks which were associated with operating the theatre.

Furthermore, the production divisions were closed down—that is the workshop and the wardrobe sections of the company. In future, it has been decided that the company will only occasionally build its own productions, but rather it will buy productions, or enter into joint productions with the building work being undertaken elsewhere. The company has pruned its administrative infrastructure. In all, the company's staff numbers have fallen from 25 to 12 full-time equivalents as at the end of the last financial year. We should note carefully that in achieving this staffing reduction, no staff were laid off at all. All staff either found alternative employment of their own volition or were redeployed elsewhere in the public sector. Another cost saving measure was to reduce the size of the 1989 and 1990 seasons so that the savings on production deficits will be used to improve the company's financial position. This year the State Opera Company will be mounting two productions only, though the Australian Opera will be touring to Adelaide in November, thereby providing other operas for the South Australian public.

To ensure that the public can enjoy all these productions, a joint subscription package was offered for both the State Opera and the Australian Opera productions in South Australia. It is very pleasing to note that in the past financial year, the opera company achieved its financial target and has been able to repay the \$100 000 instalment to the Government, leaving it with a cash surplus of about \$3 000.

The financial outlook certainly suggests that the company will be able to meet the target repayment of \$300 000 for this financial year. The company, its new General Manager and its board, deserve considerable commendation for the efforts that they have made in achieving the targets set 18 months ago. They have worked very hard to attract new sponsors for the company and have managed to attract several substantial sponsorships. They have also worked very hard at increasing the number of subscribers. In the current season they have increased the number of subscribers by over 30 per cent on last year's figures. Of course, that is of considerable assistance to box office revenue. Whilst the State Opera Company cannot be said to be out of the woods yet, it is well on target and I repeat my congratulations, which are well merited, to the board, the General Manager and the company as a whole.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: As the arts move into the 1990s and it becomes more important for arts organisations to seek alternative funding, will the Minister advise what the Government is doing to assist in that regard? In particular, is the Government considering more incentive funding based models and programs, designed to increase sponsorship received from the corporate sector?

The Hon. Anne Levy: There is certainly no doubt that as we move into the 1990s, organisations that have relied predominantly on Government subsidy will need to seek alternative sources of funding if they are to grow and develop. That may be regrettable, but I am sure the economic circumstances facing this country do not have to be emphasised to members. Obviously, the prime responsibility for seeking alternative funding sources rests with the individual arts organisations. However, we accept that the Government, through the department, can play a considerable role in assisting in this endeavour to attract increased funding.

The Government has taken three approaches both to increase incentive and to maximise corporate sector supports. First, the Government has introduced the system of challenge grants, which was first introduced for the Adelaide Festival of Arts in 1986. Under that program the festival receives a dollar for dollar subsidy on all sponsorships that are generated over a predetermined amount that has been agreed between the Government and the festival. In that way, the more funds the festival generates from the corporate sector, the more it will receive in Government subsidy. This challenge system has proved to be very successful and, certainly, the 1988 festival generated a record level of corporate sector support. The festival is working very hard to meet the challenge for the 1990 festival.

The Government has also established the BisArts program, which assists art organisations in their endeavours to attract more corporate sector support. This program works at both ends. First, it increases the awareness of the corporate sector to the arts industry. We hope to achieve this through the publication of regular newsletters to the corporate sector. Secondly, the program is designed to assist administrators of various arts organisations to understand how the corporate sector reacts and how they can best approach the corporate sector to stimulate interest in their particular organisation. The department has held seminars throughout South Australia for prominent individuals from the art industry and the corporate sector to discuss their views. I know that the people who have attended these seminars, from both the arts and the corporate sector, have found them to be very encouraging. It has certainly helped to increase corporate sponsorship.

In relation to increased funding for arts organisations, we have also introduced the retention of financial reserves by a number of organisations. Earlier this year, we established a series of guidelines, which will enable arts organisations that receive Government support to retain any surplus funds in a financial year, up to a predetermined level. This is a considerable shift from the previous policy of deficit funding for arts organisations. If an organisation made a profit in one year that sum was subtracted from its grant in the following year. Therefore, under that system, there was very little encouragement for arts organisations to put any funds aside as a risk reserve or for future development. The new system of retention of financial reserves will enable the management of arts organisations to take a different attitude; it will encourage them to think about the future and to give the necessary emphasis to the provision of funds for risk capital and future development.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: Is there Australia-wide involvement in the seminars?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The seminars are run in South Australia for South Australians. Some members in the corporate sector, who have representatives in South Australia, have organised for senior people from interstate to take part in the seminars. However, the seminars predominantly are attended by South Australians.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I refer to the provision of museum services, development of and acquisitions for the collections (page 561). The Ruhe collection of Aboriginal artifacts is of immense value. There is bipartisan support for its acquisition and location in the South Australian Museum. I understand that the figure quoted initially for the purchase of the collection was \$A1 million and that the collection is made up of four collections: the Spence collection, which was purchased by Mr Ruhe in partnership with Mr Reivich in 1965; the Ruhe collection, which comprises material acquired by Mr Ruhe when in Australia in 1965, 1972 and 1982; and the Davidson and Allen collections, purchased by Ruhe.

I also understand that the Ruhe family believes that South Australia is the most appropriate location for preserving the integrity of the collection and reputation of the late Mr Ruhe. I also understand that time is running out and that, if South Australia does not come up with the money soon, the collection could go overseas. Already an offer of a purchase by a Japanese organisation has been rejected on the grounds that the family would prefer it to come to South Australia but cannot wait for ever.

In the Legislative Council on 16 August the Minister said that she had written to the Federal Government drawing its attention to the availability of the collection and seeking support for its purchase by South Australia. Has the Minister received an answer to that request? If not, what does she propose to do in the absence of an answer? How much time is left before the collection could be sold elsewhere, and what action does the State Government propose to take to secure it for South Australia?

The Hon. Anne Levy: As I indicated in the Legislative Council, I have written to the Minister for the Arts at the Federal level and the Premier has also written to the Prime Minister on this matter. I do not think the Premier has yet received a reply. I certainly, at this stage, have not received a reply. I did note, and I was very glad to see, that there was bipartisan support for attempts to obtain the Ruhe collection for South Australia. Certainly museum officers have been examining the collection and indicate that it is an extremely valuable collection which would be of great benefit if we were able to obtain it in South Australia.

I did note initially that the Leader of the Opposition indicated that he would be happy to try to find sponsorship for the money required to ensure that the Ruhe collection came to South Australia, but I have not heard from him, either, as to whether he has been successful in helping to obtain the necessary funds. At this stage, I am afraid it is a question mark. I hope we may be able to resolve the situation, but I cannot give any firmer indication at this stage.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: The Minister's reply seems to indicate that she is relying on either the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition to take action in respect of this collection. I repeat: is the Minister aware that time is running out, and what does she propose to do about it?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Obviously I am aware that time is of the essence and that the Ruhe family will wish to dispose of their collection before too long. It is important that we establish what the Federal Government's attitude in this matter is.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Your letter was more than a month ago. There has been plenty of time.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! We will get back to the normal format of questions and answers through the Chair.

The Hon. Anne Levy: We are still waiting for an official response from the Commonwealth. I certainly have not yet

received a detailed report from the South Australian Museum. The museum board is considering the matter because obviously it is very concerned about the question. I understand that it is looking at the question of sponsorship and I will be very pleased to get any indication from them and from the Leader of the Opposition regarding sponsorship contributions which they may be able to generate. It is important to get this information before any firm decisions can be made at Government level.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Whilst on the subject of museums, what is the status of stage two of the museum development program, what funds have been allocated to it and when is the program expected to be completed?

The Hon. Anne Levy: As I am sure the member can see from the budget papers, there are no funds allocated for stage two development of the museum. The decision was made in 1983 to defer any consideration of stage two for 10 years, that is, until 1993, and there has been no change in that decision since then.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I refer to the development of the arts program on page 560 and note the sum allocated for performing arts which is fairly constant in real terms. Junction Theatre is one of the beneficiaries of those performing arts grants. What sums have been allocated to Junction Theatre for this year? How many new productions were put on in the last year? How many are planned for this current year? What is the standing in the arts community of Junction Theatre?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The proposed allocation for Junction Theatre this year is \$168 000 which compares with \$150 000 last year. These grants, of course, are on a calendar year basis, not a financial year basis. I do not know how many productions were put on but Junction Theatre proposes 150 performances of its productions in this year and its target is a total attendance of 18 000 people. Its standing in the performing arts community is reflected by the grant which it is given. Before any grants are made to groups they are assessed by the Performing Arts Advisory Committee, or more particularly by the theatre and community arts groups advisory panels. This system of peer review would reflect Junction's standing in the local community. I point out that Junction has also received very strong support through the performing arts unit of the Australia Council which again uses a peer group assessment procedure. So it would appear that at both a State and national level Junction Theatre is highly regarded by its peers.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: At page 569 the Program Estimates state:

The South Australian Museum continues to be limited by inadequate exhibition areas.

At this stage I am more interested in the activity indicator which shows that, thanks to work carried out at the museum and no doubt to efforts by the staff, the board, and so on, there has been a notable increase in the number of visitors peaking somewhat in the year 1987-88. In 1986-87 the museum had 433 000 visitors and in 1987-88 that increased to 562 000. That was the peak, because in 1988-89 the number of visitors was 518 000. I assume that the 1987-88 peak was due to a special exhibition put on. Can the Minister confirm the reason for the increase in that year?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The 1987-88 financial year included the bicentennial year and the Festival of Arts also occurred in the bicentennial year. There were several major exhibitions at the museum during the festival and during the full bicentennial year. Whenever there are special exhibitions there is a considerable increase in attendance. Schoolchildren visit the museum at all times, but especially when

there are special exhibitions. The bicentennial year included the First Impressions Exhibition and the Shipwrecks Exhibition. The former exhibition contained items largely collected from museums and galleries in Europe. In respect of many of the items, it was the first time that such an exhibition had been put together containing items from many different museums around Europe and put together as an exhibition relating to Australia. It was a bicentennial gift to Australia from a number of nations. The exhibition toured Australia in our bicentennial year. The Museum can correlate its attendance figures with major exhibitions. The current exhibition about ancient Macedonia is certainly boosting attendance now, and this could be reflected in attendance figures for the current year.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: On the same page this statement is made:

Plan for the consolidation of off-site research and facilities into North Terrace by 1990-91.

What is intended there?

The Hon. Anne Levy: This involves the relocation of the Evolutionary Biology Unit of the Museum which has been located at Northfield for years. It is proposed that the unit be brought back to the Museum by January 1991. Obviously, there would be considerable benefits in relocating the unit with the Natural Science Division on North Terrace, including professional, research and even management benefits. It will also result in some savings in operating costs, but the transfer will probably necessitate a series of moves within the natural science building. We will have to consider the cost of this, although it can probably be offset to some extent by the sale of surplus workshop equipment.

There is no suggestion that any services or activities of the unit will be curtailed; in fact, they may well be enhanced by the improved efficiency and the bringing together of people with similar interests. Certainly, the move will be made as soon as possible and the target is January 1991. The unit is expected to have a new head appointed soon. The advertising procedure has been gone through and interviews have taken place, but I am not sure when the announcement will be made about who the new head of the unit will be. This will obviously provide a new stimulus and interest in the work of that extremely valuable unit.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: It has been suggested to me on more than one occasion that the Museum has one of the finest coin collections in the world, but that the collection is not on display. As this may be due to the lack of space, can the Minister indicate whether there are any proposals for a special exhibition to bring those coin collections on to display?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I understand that the coin collection from the Museum was transferred to the History Trust when the trust was established. At the moment there is nowhere for the trust to display the collection.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: We still have the same problem.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Yes. The collection is in store in the Art Gallery now, although it is the responsibility of the History Trust. Certainly, I am sure the honourable member would not be the only person who would be pleased if we could display this collection, but shortage of display space is a great problem for all the moveable cultural heritage institutions in South Australia and for most galleries and museums throughout the world. It is a constant problem of having extremely valuable and worthwhile collections without having sufficient space to adequately display them.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I turn to the South Australian Film Corporation. At page 313 of the Auditor-General's Report, the corporation's strategic plan envisages that it will 'generate such income to be self-supporting within three

years'. Does this suggest that the State Government's financial support of \$500 000 in 1989-90 will no longer be required?

I should also like to know what progress has been made in broadening the public's access to the exciting range of film and video available from the South Australian Film and Video Centre, and what success has been achieved by using the library outlets. Finally, I understand that a woman film maker from New South Wales may be appointed as a member of the board. Does the Minister have confidence in the present board? I presume that she does, from what she said previously in answer to the member for Mitchell.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Certainly, if the South Australian Film Corporation were able to become self-sufficient it would no longer require Government funding. That is a long-term aim and it would then operate fully in a commercial environment and not require Government assistance. It is a long-term aim, which the recently appointed Managing Director of the Film Corporation hopes to achieve within a few years. I am sure all members would wish him luck in achieving that target.

With regard to access to the South Australian Film and Video Library, it has been made part of the public libraries system and so can be accessed through that system. Although I do not have them with me now, I can obtain the figures to date. It is a fairly new program, but I understand that it is meeting with considerable success. Strictly speaking, however, questions regarding libraries come under the local government portfolio and not under the arts portfolio.

The honourable member is inquiring about the success of the film and video library through the public libraries system and perhaps that is partly to be answered this afternoon when considering the library component of local government. As I mentioned earlier, the department has established a review of the Film and Video Centre which will largely look at the whole question of access to the resources of the centre. Some of the questions to which the honourable member referred are part of the terms of reference of that review.

I am informed that, in 1988-89, the total borrowings from the Film and Video Centre came to 112 000, of which 26 000 were made through the public library system. I know that this number is increasing through increasing use of the centre through the public library system.

With regard to the member of the board of the Film Corporation, certainly I have confidence in the current board which, in conjunction with the new Managing Director, has produced a corporate plan for the Film Corporation, part of which is aimed to achieve self-sufficiency within a few years. A vacancy on the board currently exists. Indeed it has existed for some time, and I should like to see it filled as soon as practicable to assist the board in its work with the Film Corporation. Members may recall that the Milliken review of the Film Corporation; it made many recommendations and suggested that an interstate producer would be a desirable addition to the board. All the recommendations from the Milliken review have been very seriously considered by the Government and many of them have already been implemented in relation to the Film Corporation.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: As a supplementary question, the Minister says that it is a long-term aim for the corporation to generate sufficient income to become self-supporting. I quoted from the Auditor-General's Report, where it was stated that that should happen within three years, so it is not really a long-term plan.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The figure of three years is taken from the corporate plan produced by the Film Corporation. It is certainly the corporation's aim but it is based on a

number of assumptions, and I very much hope that the plan is achievable. However, circumstances quite outside the control of the Film Corporation could interfere with the detailed implementation of the plan.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I note that one of the specific targets for 1989-90 is to complete the redevelopment of the Festival Centre plaza. I wish to ask some specific questions, and I am happy for some of them to be placed on notice and for the Minister to reply to them within the specified time. When did Cabinet approve the redevelopment, when did work commence, what was the original estimate of cost, what is the current cost, when is it anticipated that the redevelopment will be completed, and what is the estimated total cost?

The Hon. Anne Levy: My information is that the restoration and upgrading of the plaza was approved by Cabinet in August 1987 at an estimated cost of \$10.7 million. The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works estimated the cost at \$8.82 million in October 1986. Then a revised estimate of \$10.7 million was made by Sacon in July 1987. I am told that work is proceeding within budget but, as it has not yet been completed, no final figures are yet available. If I have not covered any points in this response, I would be happy to supply them.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: A broad objective under 'Development of the Arts' is:

The arts meet the demands for entertainment, educational services and the tourist industry . . .

The Minister would be aware, I hope, that recently the Hahndorf Academy was taken over by a trust. The work of the trust, which has considerable community support, is very much in line with the Government's tourism policy and attracts many tourists to that facility. What Government funds, through the Department for the Arts, have been made available to that facility? What funds could be made available, recognising that the Hahndorf Academy Trust has requested further funding?

The Hon. Anne Levy: We will certainly research that question, but I understand that at the moment no funds have been allocated or asked for.

Mr ROBERTSON: I understand that a question was asked earlier about future plans for the South Australian Film Corporation. A recent newspaper article stated that the corporation is to work with a Japanese consortium to produce what I understand is a Japanese combination of Superman and Batman and that it will be set in the South Australian outback. Will the Minister supply brief details in respect of that venture and explain how it will benefit the corporation? What additional contracts are expected to flow from the venture if it is a success?

The Hon. Anne Levy: To some extent, I have already provided information in respect of this. The Ultraman series is extremely popular in Japan, and it is planned to film 13 episodes in South Australia. If that initial venture is a success, it is possible that another 45 episodes will be made here. This will provide considerable employment opportunities for the South Australian film industry and, of course, the Japanese corporation will pay for the use of the Hendon studios where some of the filming will take place. It is a very exciting project which will create considerable employment in our film industry. People to whom I have spoken in the film industry are very excited about the filming of 13 episodes here and the possibility that there will be another 45 if the project is a success. It will make a big difference to the film industry in this country.

Mr ROBERTSON: I turn now to the area of Aboriginal arts and crafts at page 565 of the Program Estimates. The Minister would be aware of the review into the Aboriginal

arts and craft industry chaired and conducted by Dr Jon Altman. The results of the review were released in July this year by the Federal Department of Aboriginal Affairs. I understand that various arts and crafts of central Australia receive a good deal of attention in the review, including the Pitjantjatjara craft of carving various tree roots—mulga and the like—into animal shapes. The Pitjantjatjara word for that is 'punu'.

It is seen as the indigenous art form of the Pitjantjatjara people. In fact, as far as tourists are concerned, punu art is Pitjantjatjara art. Further north, the dot paintings of the Aborigines of the Northern Territory are justly famous. The Pitjantjatjara people have adapted that style to their own artistic traditions and are producing dot-painted batiks and the like.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: At the moment it is mainly on textiles.

Mr ROBERTSON: Yes, they do a similar thing with textiles. In the spirit of the encouragement of various kinds of Australian arts with significant economic potential (page 565 of the Program Estimates), I ask: what attention is being given to the further promotion of punu art and dot painting? Given the richness of the South Australian outback in semi-precious stones such as jade, is there any possibility that jade, turquoise and other semiprecious stones can be incorporated into local Aboriginal art forms? I am wearing a piece of jade which is South Australian but was not produced by Aborigines. I am also wearing a bit of turquoise which was produced by the Zuni people who live in a similar environment in the south-western States of North America. In this State we do not have a culture based on the use of semi-precious stones. Does that have any economic and tourist potential, in line with the comments on page 565?

The Hon. Anne Levy: In discussing Pitjantjatjara art, and while giving due recognition to punu art, one must not forget the batik-style art and screen-printing which is largely undertaken by Aboriginal women as opposed to the carving which is largely undertaken by Aboriginal men. The development of Aboriginal art will be very high on the agenda of the new Aboriginal arts development officer who commenced work in the Department for the Arts this week. This is very much the sort of thing with which she will be involved. I cannot comment at length. Most of our jade comes from Cowell, which is quite a long way from the Pitjantjatjara lands. The whole question of the development of Pitjantjatjara art work will certainly be very high on the agenda of the new Aboriginal arts development officer.

We are certainly well aware of the economic importance to the Aboriginal people of the art and craft work which they undertake. It is of considerable importance to their whole economic circumstances and, consequently, their standard of living. Part of the brief of the new officer will be to work with the Aboriginal Development Corporation and Tourism South Australia to foster this art and craft work, which can have a great economic impact.

So, that sort of suggestion is certainly something that can be considered. There is also the opening of Tandanya in a fortnight's time. Part of Tandanya's brief is to look at the development of art and craft work, so I imagine this is the sort of matter which will be taken up by the people there. The Pitjantjatjara people will have less contact with Tandanya than will people of other Aboriginal groups in South Australia, simply because of distance. However, I hope that something fruitful can develop there.

Mr ROBERTSON: I suppose one should note that it is important to ensure that the money from sales of Aboriginal arts goes back to the people who produce the art, rather

than to those who carry it from Aboriginal lands to wherever it happens to be sold. Obviously, as the distance increases so does the profit margin in many of these things. I imagine it is important for that officer to exercise some sort of oversight of where the profits are going.

The Hon. Anne Levy: That is a matter that I have discussed with the officer on previous occasions, and I am sure she is well aware of this problem.

Mr ROBERTSON: I mentioned the Zuni silverwork earlier. The Zuni and the Navajo are both justly famous for their silverwork. They did not mine or use such silver until such time as the Spanish conquistadors came through and began buying it and providing a market. Suddenly the Zuni and the Navajo adapted it and grabbed the technology overnight and began tumbling stones and fitting them into silver, and did quite nicely out of the passing Spaniards, which I thought showed a bit of admirable enterprise on their part.

In relation to the issue of database for the subsidised arts industry which is currently being developed, I understand that considerable effort has gone into that by the department, and that there is some thought that the database might be used as a model by other States. Is the Minister in a position to provide any details on that initiative and to offer any advice on whether it is likely to be adopted by other States? Might it be a model for the rest of Australia?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Certainly, it is on the results obtained so far. It is being regarded as a model for Australia, and considerable interest is being expressed in other States. I am sure other States will take up similar work, but as yet they have not developed it to anything like the extent we have here. I believe by providing solid, hard fact information, it will make it much easier to document the importance of the arts, not just as cultural activity, but as economic activity. I believe that this is extremely important, and is the type of argument which is likely to find favour amongst even the philistines in our society. I am referring to an organisation which I know the member for Bright has established, called the 'Philistine Liberation Organisation'.

The sort of data the work is showing up is that the subsidised arts industry in South Australia had a total expenditure of nearly \$61 million in 1988. Interestingly, the South Australian Government grants amounted to \$24.1 million, which was only 40 per cent of the total; the earned expenditure was \$29.6 million, which was 49 per cent of the total; and the other 11 per cent is made up of sponsorships, Australia Council, and other minor sources of income. In general, the earned expenditure by the arts industry in South Australia—that is, the subsidised arts industry—was 49 per cent of its total revenue. It had 3.766 million patrons, which is a 3:1 ratio for the population of this State, which indicates that, on average, every South Australian attends three arts events every year. There are indicators in terms of outputs. In 1988, there were 6 000 performances, 75 publications, 1 147 workshops and seminars, and 229 exhibitions. These are preliminary figures only, but it is indicating for the first time the considerable economic impact, as well as the cultural impact, of the arts industry in South Australia.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: The Premier made a firm commitment in 1985 that the Government would proceed with the Living Arts Centre. Will the Minister indicate the total recurrent and capital funds that have been spent thus far on the Living Arts Centre? Can the Minister say what precisely will be done this year to fulfil the Premier's undertaking in 1985?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will take that question on notice. We have the current figures, but not the historical ones. In

capital terms, there has been the major upgrading of the Lion Theatre, which has made it a vastly different place from what it was before. I believe there is still further capital work to be done on the Lion Theatre, mainly in the basement areas. An amount of \$500 000 has been allocated for that work in the budget. I expect this work to commence next week so that it will be finished in time for the 1990 festival, when the Lion Theatre provides a major home for the Festival Fringe.

In relation to the Living Arts Centre, I am sure the honourable member would be aware that numerous proposals, studies, and so on, have occurred over a number of years to try and obtain a viable living arts centre which will not be prohibitively expensive to set up. Several proposals with commercial developers have occurred, all of which have been investigated, and many of which—for one reason or another—regretfully have had to be abandoned. Discussions are still continuing in terms of trying to obtain a feasible Living Arts Centre. I cannot give any further information than that at this stage, except that discussions are proceeding. I am always also hopeful that at some time we will be able to undertake the establishment of a fully-fledged Living Arts Centre on the site.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Given that four years have elapsed, that a considerable amount of money (that has not yet been quantified) has been spent and that \$500 000 has been allocated for this year, how much longer is the Government willing to live on hope and when does it intend to cut its losses if it cannot find a feasible solution?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The \$500 000 I quoted is capital money to complete the upgrading of the Lion Theatre. There is no suggestion that the Lion Theatre, which is a heritage building, will ever be anything other than the Lion Theatre and part of the Living Arts Centre site. Of course, the value of the property is increasing considerably. If it were to be sold, the capital improvements would more than recoup any costs expended to date. No time limit has been set for trying to find an arrangement whereby the Living Arts Centre can be established.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: On the one hand the Minister says that the capital value is increasing (suggesting that the Government might realise the benefits of a sale), on the other hand she says that there is no suggestion that the Lion Theatre will ever be anything other than the Lion Theatre. Clearly, if the building was sold, it would not necessarily be used as a theatre by private interests. Incidentally, it is almost impossible to see the performing area when one is seated in the upper sections, because the barriers are so broad that they block the sight lines.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I certainly made no suggestion that the Government was considering selling the Lion Theatre or any part of the Living Arts Centre. I was merely commenting that if the honourable member is very concerned about the capital that has been expended on the Lion Theatre then a sale of all, or even a small portion of the real estate, would more than recoup any capital cost that has been incurred in relation to the improvement in capital value. I was merely pointing that out, without in any way indicating that a sale is contemplated. Of course, the Lion Theatre has a heritage classification and is a very important and proud structure in the City of Adelaide.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: The Art Gallery of South Australia, as the Minister and most interested South Australians would know, is critically short of exhibition space and, indeed, of general facilities that would be expected in a major art museum in an Australian capital. By comparison with other States, almost all of which have upgraded their art galleries, South Australia is now in a very disad-

vantaged position. Can the Minister indicate the current status of the feasibility studies that are looking at the expansion of exhibition space? Can she also indicate what the Government intends to do to enlarge the Art Gallery's facilities and exhibition space?

The Hon. Anne Levy: As I indicated earlier, there is provision in the budget for feasibility studies in relation to the possibility of increasing exhibition space at the gallery. Obviously, the feasibility studies need to be completed before any further decision can be made. The Art Gallery of South Australia has such a central location in the city, which results in both pluses and minuses. Of course, the plus is the accessibility of the gallery and its part in the concentration of cultural venues along North Terrace, the minus being that the Art Gallery is hemmed in by other buildings on its north, east and west boundaries, and by North Terrace on its southern face.

Therefore, extension for the Art Gallery is not easy to achieve, unlike the situation in other States where art gallery expansion has been far more readily achieved because of the siting of the art galleries. Certainly, once the feasibility studies are completed, we would hope that it would be possible to expand the exhibition space of the Art Gallery, particularly for touring exhibitions. At the moment, touring exhibitions seem to be playing a greater and greater role in the life of many art galleries. Unless one has sufficient space, there is the fear that touring exhibitions may by-pass Adelaide. We certainly would not want that to happen.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Will the Minister detail the components of the community arts budget, which is \$1.55 million proposed recurrent expenditure, which is double the previous year's actual and the \$1.52 million proposed for capital expenditure? I imagine that there is a large number of small grants and, if that is the case, it would obviously be preferable to have them incorporated in *Hansard* rather than to read them to the Committee.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am happy to provide those details. However, the major difference is due to the fact that there is a component of both capital and recurrent expenditure for Tandanya, which has been included in the community arts line. However, I will certainly obtain full details for the honourable member. I can indicate that that is the major reason for the change from last year's allocation. As I indicated earlier, in subsequent budgets, Aboriginal arts will be separated from other art forms, rather than included in various places, as they are at the moment.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I refer again to page 569 of the Program Estimates, under the heading 'Museums and associated services'. I note that under '1989-90 Specific Targets/Objectives', it is proposed to present at least one major touring exhibition. Does the Minister have any details about what that touring exhibition will be?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Obviously, the ancient Macedonia exhibition is the major presentation at the moment. *The Dreamings*, which is a major exhibition of Aboriginal art, will be exhibited during the Adelaide Festival of Arts next year. This is an extremely important Australian Aboriginal art exhibition, which is currently touring the United States. It has been shown very successfully in New York, Chicago and Los Angeles.

In Chicago alone over 200 000 people saw the exhibition and it has generated an enormous interest in the United States in Aboriginal art. It is scheduled to be shown in Adelaide next year. I presume that that is the exhibition referred to. The ancient Macedonia exhibition, also an important exhibition, was obtained for Adelaide only at the last minute, presumably after these Program Estimates were

put to bed. So, it would not be that one which is being referred to, but the *Dreamings* Exhibition.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I thank the Minister also for the clarification. I had thought that there may be an exhibition generated by the Museum and put on tour inside South Australia. It was a misunderstanding on my part but I was still very pleased to hear the information that came forward. On page 570, the Program Estimates state:

The South Australian Maritime Museum won the 1988 National Museum of the Year Award and a national tourism award for best heritage attractions. Other trust museums also won numerous awards.

Officers under the Minister's control who have been involved with the South Australian Maritime Museum deserve full commendation because of the fine work that has been done with that museum. As a member of the public I have actually taken out membership because of my own interest in the area. Can the Minister say what the actual award represented?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Director of the History Trust has informed me that a very prestigious award was won by the Maritime Museum, jointly with the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney. I think it may have come as somewhat of a shock to the people in Sydney that it would share an award with South Australia. While it is an extremely prestigious award, there is no monetary value to it. Unfortunately it is a glory only situation but I would certainly agree that everybody associated with the Maritime Museum is very much to be commended for and congratulated on having contributed to the winning of this award.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: At page 566, the Program Estimates state:

New storage accommodation for State Theatre, State Opera, Australian Dance Theatre and Harvest Theatre is under development.

Can the Minister say if that is available and what is actually occurring there?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The aim of having such a consolidated performing arts storage is to save cost. Common storage facilities are used by all the major performing arts companies. The State Opera terminated the lease of premises for storage when it experienced financial difficulties. A store at Pennington has been leased from the Commonwealth Transport and Storage Group. I understand the cost is \$25 per square metre per annum which includes all rates, taxes, 24-hour security and even reasonable electricity use. This storage will be a joint facility for use by the State Theatre Company, State Opera, Australian Dance Theatre, and Harvest Theatre Company. Presently there is even a little bit of space left over for future needs in storage by any performing arts companies. It will be managed by the State Theatre Company on behalf of all the performing arts organisations. Considerable efficiencies in costs for the organisations should result from having this joint storage facility.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Reference is made on page 571 to the serious state of decay of many of the State's collections of documents, books, newspapers, paintings, and so on. Which area is most seriously in need of attention, and how much is to be spent this year on conservation and restoration? I note the number of items treated last year was down on previous years, but that in itself is not necessarily an indication of the volume of work. What does the department regard as the most serious area of decay and need for treatment?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I think there would be general agreement that some of the Aboriginal collection which is held in the Museum has an urgent requirement for conservation work. There may be people in other institutions who

would disagree, claiming that some of the items under their care are in greater need of attention, but certainly there would be general agreement that it is the extremely valuable Aboriginal collection held by the Museum which is in greatest need of conservation work.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: On page 560 there is the heading 'Development of Major Arts Venues, Venue Operation Management'. Will the Minister provide a breakdown of current, recurrent and capital expenditure, for 1988-89 actual, and 1989-90 proposed?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I shall be happy to take that question on notice.

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

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

Local Government, \$87 141 000

Works and Services—Department of Local Government,
\$3 035 000

Chairman:

The Hon. T.M. McRae

Members:

The Hon. R.K. Abbott

Mr H. Becker

The Hon. B.C. Eastick

The Hon. R.G. Payne

Mr D.J. Robertson

The Hon. D.C. Wotton

Witness

The Hon. Anne Levy, Minister of Local Government.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms A. Dunn, Director, Department of Local Government.

Mr S. Tully, Manager, Support Services.

Mr E. Miller, State Librarian.

Mr U. Peisach, Manager, Financial Services.

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

The Hon. Anne Levy: I would like to provide a small indication of the variations that have occurred in the local government programs in the past financial year, as this is perhaps important for understanding the lines. The Youth Bureau programs have been transferred from the Department of Local Government to the Department of Employment and Further Education and so do not appear in these lines at all. The Support Services Division program has been expanded to include the office of the Minister. Previously, the Minister of Local Government was accommodated under the tourism lines. A four person septic tank effluent disposal unit has been transferred from the Health Commission into the local government program and the Systems Branch of the Libraries Division has been relocated from program 2 to program 1.

That will explain a number of variations from one year to another which have occurred in the lines. In the past financial year there have been several notable events in the department. There has been the relocation of the Public Libraries Branch from Norwood to Hindmarsh which has resulted in considerable savings. There has been the pay-

ment of retrospective capital library subsidies to six district councils—to the great joy of those six councils. There has been the establishment of new library services at Gumeracha, Mount Pleasant and Hallett. There has been the establishing of a foundation by the Friends of the State Library of South Australia to support the library's collection and the developing of a new community information service funding formula.

There has been the successful open week held in October to promote North Terrace cultural services, which expands beyond the responsibilities of the Department of Local Government but covers the Department for the Arts as well. We have had a major stocktake of library materials of the Bray Reference Collection, which was completed between January and February this year. The Mortlock Library of South Australiana opening hours have been changed to provide much greater access by patrons of the library. There has been an improvement of services to people with disabilities in the lending services of the library through the provision of facilities and the purchasing of a Kurzweil reading machine.

Also, the local government division invested considerable effort following the outcomes of litigation against Stirling District Council in relation to the 1980 bushfire in the Aldgate Valley. We saw the second stage of the review of the Local Government Act come into operation on 1 January this year. The department again ran the successful 'Have a say' campaign to improve the participation of people in their local government elections. The Public Records Office developed two major projects for the development of 'Guides to Records' concerning women and Aboriginal people. The department has considerably improved its occupational health performance and was rewarded with a significant reduction in premiums as a result.

A major highlight has been the department's achieving an Aboriginal employment rate which equates to 3.8 per cent of its work force. I am sure that this is a noteworthy record in South Australia and the department has continued to implement successfully plans in the area of equal employment opportunity and occupational health and safety. The current financial year promises also to be one of high achievement and projects which will receive specific attention in addition to normal workloads include the commencement of the third stage of the review of the Local Government Act, which will cover the provisions dealing with the management of land reserved for public use.

There will be work on sections of the Act relating to employees and personnel practices, and conflict of interest, and the accounting regulations. Further, 1990 will be the International Year of Literacy, in which obviously the Libraries Division will be involved. We will complete the upgrading of the foyer areas of the State Library on North Terrace and the letting of contracts for the Public Libraries Automated Information Network (PLAIN) and the Bray Reference and the Mortlock Library Automation Project.

We will see the conclusion of the review of the Building Control Branch, the commencement of a community information technology project, further improvements in the department's occupational health and safety performance, and I look forward to the introduction of revised public record legislation. I am happy to answer any questions.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: As to the first program, the provision of State Library services to the public, South Australia can be justifiably proud of the manner in which the Mortlock Library has been refurbished. However, there is much public concern that the services provided by that library for ongoing research at night and on weekends,

which is a common feature of similar libraries interstate, has not been addressed since the completion of the Mortlock Library.

The information given shows a negative growth in financing for the public library this year; actual expenditure was \$5.963 million last year, and only \$6.085 million is allocated for this year, which does not equate with inflation. The figures shown on page 550 of the Program Estimates indicate that there will be an increase of .06 full-time equivalent staff for that program, and it would appear that the recognised deficiency will continue. Is it intended to redeploy some of the personnel so that this apparent deficiency can be addressed in some alternative way?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Mortlock Library's hours were changed in July of this year, and this will provide full public access between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. on Saturdays. Previously, the Mortlock Library was open on Saturdays but it was not fully staffed and patrons who wished to undertake genealogical research did not have full access to the library's resources. However, with the change in hours, a complete service is now available on Saturdays between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. and on Tuesday evenings. These are both times when people who are employed can come in and take advantage of the full service provided by the Mortlock Library.

While the level of staffing will not change significantly, the introduction of automation, which is expected to be undertaken soon, will free up staff time considerably and will mean that they will not have to spend as much time on the more routine aspects of running the library and will be more readily available to assist members of the public with their research. The changes that have been made both in the hours and by way of automation will considerably increase the Mortlock Library's usefulness to members of the public. Since the change in hours, the full service available on Saturday afternoons in particular has been increasingly in use and much appreciated. I ask the Director to add her comments.

Ms Dunn: The program includes not only the Mortlock Library but a number of other branches of the Libraries Division. Staffing in the Mortlock Library, paid for by the State, has been fairly static over the past three years and has increased by one person this year. Staffing fluctuates from year to year depending on positions funded by the Libraries Board through its trust funds, and the PPB estimates include all the staff estimates at any time. There is no suggestion that staff in the Mortlock would be redeployed. In fact, staffing has remained consistent except for the increase of one person. However, the level does fluctuate each year as the board funds particular projects.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: How do the hours and research facilities available through the Mortlock Library compare with those in sister organisations interstate?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will take that question on notice; we do not have readily available information for interstate comparisons.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Mortlock Library currently has the only complete collection of all newspapers published in South Australia, quite a large proportion of them being country newspapers and weekly periodicals such as the *Chronicle* and the *Stock Journal*. They used to be stored in the Parliamentary Library for reference purposes but have been given to the Mortlock Library to complete the collection on the condition that they remain available. Those publications from the Parliamentary Library are packed away in temporary storage in the old tram barn in Victoria Square and are not available for public scrutiny without being recovered from that site. Does the Mortlock

Library now have a complete collection of all the country newspapers and weekly and monthly South Australian publications on microfiche or in hard copy form?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Mortlock Library has a complete collection of all the newspapers in South Australia and any which are stored are duplicate copies. All newspapers are available either as hard copies or microfiche.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: As these are the only accessible and complete references available to members of Parliament, what arrangements are there for the State Librarian and the Mortlock Librarian to be able to make that material available to members of Parliament or members of the Parliamentary Library staff? Is there unrestricted access to that collection for reference purposes? Obviously, it would not be available beyond 5 p.m. on a Saturday or evenings apart from Tuesday, and I appreciate the service that is available at the moment, but I am aware of the service that is available interstate on weekends, including Sundays. More specifically, however, is there unfettered access to that material by members of Parliament?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The arrangement is that people from the Parliamentary Library or members of Parliament can have access to anything in the Mortlock Library but only during the hours when it is open, and material cannot be removed from the library; it must be used on-site. The State Librarian indicates that the library is staffed seven days a week and that, if any member had a special request, he is sure that arrangements could be made to accommodate that.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is it true that 10 days notice must be given before gaining access to material and that a charge of 50c or more a copy is made for information which is now in the Mortlock Library but which was previously in the possession of the Parliamentary Library?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will make inquiries of the person in charge of the Mortlock Library and bring back a reply within half an hour.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: As long as the information goes on record, it does not matter whether the information is provided in half an hour or when *Hansard* comes out.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will take that question on notice.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I refer to the future direction of the Mortlock Library. We know the general direction in which it is going, that is, up. Has there been any attempt to attract corporate assistance or sponsorship to enhance the value of this facility to the State?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Friends of the State Library foundation covers the Mortlock and other sections of the library. The foundation recently reached its target in terms of promises and funds and raised over \$266 000. In two weeks there will be a ceremony when the Government's contribution, which was in the form of a challenge grant, will be handed over to the library. Major sponsorship of the Mortlock Library specifically was recently promised. Of course, the foundation's fundraising efforts will be of considerable benefit to the library as a whole—the Mortlock and other sections.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: Will the Minister provide an update in respect of the public libraries automated information network, which is mentioned in the public libraries program?

The Hon. Anne Levy: As was mentioned earlier, the automated system, commonly known as PLAIN, is jointly funded by both the State Government and local government on a dollar-for-dollar basis. There will be a reduction of book stock to public libraries through the process of a 12.57 per cent levy. The establishment of PLAIN will allow libraries to share stock by making much better use of inter-library

loans and allowing country libraries to rotate stock on a permanent basis. By accessing PLAIN, librarians will no longer have to visit the Public Libraries Branch in order to select their stock. This will now be done in an automated fashion. It will certainly result in a more effective use of library resources and a much more efficient service to the community. A request for a book from anywhere in the State should be met in about three days, so the system should considerably reduce waiting times.

The establishment of PLAIN was formally approved by Cabinet in July this year. There are 94 local authorities involved in setting up the system and each one was asked for their formal agreement to proceed with the system. The project team which has been working on PLAIN has produced a comprehensive system specification which will form the basis of calling for tenders through the Department of Services and Supply. This major initiative, with the agreement of all local government bodies in the State that provide library services, is expected to come into operation during the coming financial year. It is one of the most exciting developments in our public library system for a long time, and it will meet with great satisfaction on the part of users and staff. It is a real achievement.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: What plans does the Minister have for libraries during International Year of Adult Literacy?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Many projects are being considered for 1990, with particular emphasis in different areas. There will be programs to target the 15 to 25-years age group with career materials in a new format and special coaching materials for numeracy and literacy. We hope that there will be workshops for the development of awareness of literacy and numeracy issues. We expect that a number of libraries will be involved in these projects. The suggestion is that Prospect, Unley, Noarlunga, Whyalla and Port Augusta libraries will be involved, but that is not definite at this stage. There will be a special program of literacy for Aboriginal people. The Public Libraries Branch is appointing an Aboriginal project officer specifically for this program. There will be extensive publicity and promotion through libraries. There will also be a program, in conjunction with local government, dealing with literacy in the workplace. We hope to have a program on computer assisted learning as well as one on videos and literacy using videos in libraries. There will also be a program on literacy in community languages.

The Manager of the Public Libraries Branch, Sophy Athan, is a member of the State International Year of Adult Literacy Committee and Euan Miller, the State Librarian, is chairing the Reading 1990 Committee, which is a sister campaign to promote the worth and enjoyment of reading. Both committees have planned numerous projects. We have established a Literacy and Libraries Committee within the Libraries Division to coordinate all programs and, as I have said, we will work in conjunction with the State International Year of Adult Literacy Committee and the Reading 1990 Committee in respect of programs throughout the State.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: The State Library program mentions the establishment of a foundation. What is the purpose of the foundation and what has it achieved during the past 12 months?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I mentioned the foundation a couple of minutes ago. It was established primarily to help the library. It was set up by the group known as Friends of the State Library to provide extra resources for purchases in order to increase book stock. The Government agreed to support the foundation on a 1:2 ratio up to \$125 000 and

also promised to index this challenge grant for the next five years.

The foundation has attracted a great deal of corporate sponsorship, and will be receiving its Government contribution—the challenge grant—in about a fortnight's time. I am sure all those who care for our library are grateful to the foundation for its efforts, the success it has achieved and the benefits which will accrue to the library generally.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: In relation to the film and video centre, I asked a question this morning about what success had been achieved through using library outlets. Can the Minister provide that information now? I thought that, because we have the officers here, it would be advisable to hear from them about the success of using public library outlets for film and videos available through the film and video centre.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I said this morning that there had been 26 000 accesses. We do not have up-to-date figures at the moment, but it is growing on a daily basis. Already more than 40 libraries are making use of this facility, but each week more and more libraries come into the scheme, so the figures are obviously changing rapidly. I am sure in 12 months time we will be able to present absolutely outstanding figures.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Is it just a matter of one of the public libraries indicating that it wants to become involved in the scheme, or is it something that is a result of the centre indicating which libraries can become involved?

The Hon. Anne Levy: It is up to the library to ask to come into the scheme. Certainly, there is no rationing on the part of the film and video library. It is only too happy to get as many libraries as possible making use of its facilities.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Can the Minister supply information regarding the facilities in both braille and tapes which are now available? What priority is placed on providing such equipment for blind people by the department?

Mr Miller: We do have tapes available for blind and visually impaired people. We do not have braille books available, but we do have talking books for people to use. At present, we are negotiating with the Royal Society for the Blind to transfer its collection into the collection that the public libraries use so that the entire State will have better access to the material that is available. Its collection includes braille as well. In the discussions that we have had with the Royal Society for the Blind, we found that we have thousands of blind or visually impaired members who are using our collection, whereas they only have hundreds. So, we are meeting vast needs in South Australia through the public library system. This is why we are considering merging the two collections together. It is a high priority to do that.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The 1989-90 'Specific Targets and Objectives' refers to establishing a five-year strategic plan. Has that been implemented? What are the criteria being addressed in that particular proposal?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The State Library has decided to engage in a long-term strategic plan to address the major issues facing library and information services, and what may be expected in the next five years. We want to look at the pluses and minuses in relation to these issues and develop strategies to achieve the best possible outcomes regarding them.

The plan, which is fairly new, began with a two-day seminar for managers and representatives considering the techniques which will be required. We now have three working parties to consider key elements of developing a strategic plan: one relating to services; one relating to col-

lection management and/or storage; and one relating to information technology. Those working parties have brought in representatives both from the department and the Chief Librarians Association of South Australia. The progress which is occurring is greater in some areas than in others. The information technology group has developed a draft plan which is being circulated for comment. The collections group has done considerable work on storage, but collection development strategies will require a lot more work. The services group has the largest and most open-ended task and is further back down the track. Certainly, the library is seeking some project support to assist with the development of this plan.

Strategic plans, by their very nature, are time consuming and it is difficult to release staff—especially during the busy periods of autumn, winter and summer. It is anticipated that the draft plans will be finished by the end of this year and I am sure they will be eagerly awaited by anyone interested in the State Library.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In 1988-89 targets, we were told there was to be a consultancy service to business and industry, and for 1989-90 we are told that the library will operate a business information service. What is the scope of that business information service? Is it technical or financial? What is the format of it? Is there a fee for service and, if so, what is the basis of that fee charge?

The Hon. Anne Levy: It is intended to be on a user-pays basis, so that it will operate as a commercial operation. Initially, it has been financed from Mortlock Bequest Funds, and it is being underwritten not only by the State Library but also by the Institute of Technology and the library of the South Australian College of Advanced Education. It is a joint project. It will have to be underwritten initially, but it is expected to operate on a cost-recovery basis after two years. All the market surveys have suggested that this can be achieved.

The initial step is to employ a business information consultant who will coordinate all the services. This person will be based in the Bray Reference Library. The service is expected to be operational from January of next year, but prior to that we need to advertise and obtain the business information consultant and enable him or her to spend three months on training and preparation of the promotional materials. Of course, the charges will depend on the service required. However, it will be on a per hour basis. The result of the service will be that any business inquirer will have complete access to all the information that is available in the three libraries, not just the one.

The consultancy service is expected to generate income of nearly \$47 000 in the first year and \$62 000 in the second year. Of course, there are fixed costs, but it is expected that while there may be a loss in the first year, by the second year this is expected to turn into a profit. I understand that the establishment of this business and commercial service has been warmly welcomed by the business community. The consultant will begin work on 23 October on the necessary planning before the service opens in January next year.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I refer to program 2 in the Estimates of Payments, 'Accommodation and service costs'. Last year, the allocation on this line was \$22 000. In fact, actual expenditure increased by more than tenfold that is, \$268 650. Clearly there is an explanation for that increase, these things do not happen accidentally. Can the Minister explain what took place, bearing in mind that for the year we are now discussing, the allocation will increase substantially to \$361 100?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The increased expenditure is associated with the new premises for the Public Libraries Branch at Hindmarsh. These costs are determined by Sacon. Prior to moving to Hindmarsh, the only cost associated with the premises at Norwood were building maintenance costs. However, rent must now be paid on the premises at Hindmarsh. The move has resulted in substantial cash flow to the Government, as well as providing the Public Libraries Branch with dedicated premises at Hindmarsh, which are well designed and which are serving the branch extremely well. The sale of the Norwood property did net about \$2 million for the Government, which was certainly welcome.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I now refer to page 555 of the Program Estimates. Under the heading 'Broad Objectives/Goals' I notice that there is a reference to the institutes library systems. The document states that one of the broad objectives and goals is to complete the closure of the institutes library system. At what stage is that process? I am concerned about this issue because my first outside Parliament appointment in 1971—of which I had two—was associated with the Flinders University council and the council of the institutes, as it was then comprised. If there is anything of an historical nature in this process, I would like to hear about it.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I share the honourable member's interest in this because I was also a parliamentary representative on the institutes council at one time. The closing of the institutes resulted from the Crawford report into libraries. That report recommended that all libraries be dissolved in 1987-88 and that the properties should be vested in the respective local government authority. That has been done. However, it took a little longer to achieve than was expected. The last institute, which was at Goodwood, was dissolved on 30 June this year.

Honourable members may be interested to know that the records of the institutes association are being transferred to the Public Records Office. So, we will keep and preserve the history of this extremely influential and important South Australian institution. A history of the association has been commissioned and it is hoped that it will be published by the Libraries Board next year. Amendments to the Libraries Act, were recently passed through Parliament to cover all these changes.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: With bipartisan support.

The Hon. Anne Levy: With complete bipartisan support and many expressions of appreciation to the institutes and their part in South Australia's history. Times change and the services of the institutes have now been replaced by the free public library system throughout South Australia.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I refer to page 554 of the Program Estimates under the heading '1988-89 Specific Target/Objectives', which refers to the implementation of approved social justice strategies. Under this umbrella, is there any provision for the employment of disabled persons who might be suited to certain positions available in the library service?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The coffee shop in the State Library is currently run by disabled people. The specific target under the social justice strategy this year has been to employ young Aborigines to train as finishers, conservators and book sewers for the conservation of Aboriginal materials in the collection. Three full-time equivalent young Aborigines will be employed and trained in this conservation work on Aboriginal material during the coming year. There is no specific further targeting for disabled people in this year's social justice initiatives.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: It is very gratifying that efforts are continuing in this area.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: It was stated that work is being undertaken, for example, to establish a strategic plan, and assistance is being sought in establishing that plan. Will the Minister advise the Committee, in due course, what consultancies, by whom, for what purpose and what cost has this involved for the Library Service over the past five years?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will take that question on notice.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to the Business Information Service, can the Minister advise what provision has been made for indemnity insurance, having regard to the fact that when general information is made available people then undertake to work upon the results at their own discretion and accept any failings that might arise? Once there is a business type situation of selling information—and I am not opposed to it—what specific provisions have been made in this circumstance of providing for indemnity insurance on the basis that information given for these purposes may create some downstream problem, and what are those criteria and those contingencies?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will ask the State Librarian to comment on the details, but I point out to the honourable member that this program is not a question of selling information. What is being sold is the coordination of information and the collating of information which is in the libraries and to which anyone could have access without payment if they were prepared to do all the searching, collection and collating of the information in the library. What is being sold is the service of getting it all together to save people time.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Not the interpretation.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Not the information itself, which is available to any member of the public at no charge. The State Librarian will comment on the specific topic of indemnity insurance.

Mr Miller: As the Minister mentioned, this project has been run in conjunction with two other institutions: the Institute of Technology and the South Australian College of Advanced Education. Techsearch, which is the consultancy arm of both those institutions, will be the employing authority for the consultant whom we have appointed, and Techsearch itself has indemnity insurance to cover this matter. We have investigated that and it has been shown to be satisfactory in terms of covering the library service as part of the business service.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I appreciate the answer that the Minister gave before the Librarian spoke, but the circumstance could possibly apply of failing to give information that was available which could then upset the interpretation that the organisation makes and, in this litigious age in which we live, anybody will try anything at least once and, if successful, twice.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The response I gave to the comments the honourable member made regarding selling information is that it goes completely against the grain; information is not something which is sold but certain services can be, and are, in this situation. Indemnity is obviously an important question.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: On page 555, there is additional information about the implementation of PLAIN. Will there be an advantage from this system in respect of the operation of the Mortlock Library? What arrangement has been made to integrate that effort? Has there been any discussion more specifically with councils which will allow them early access to the PLAIN program to mutual advantage, that is, to decrease the effort of the library in providing information?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Mortlock Library will not be part of the PLAIN system. It is for the public library branch, which comes under the Libraries Board.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In other words, there is no cost benefit.

The Hon. Anne Levy: No, there is no cost benefit with the State Library. There is always the possibility that they may be integrated at a later stage but at this time what is planned is purely through the public libraries branch with the local libraries where there is considerable benefit to local government, given that it covers half the cost of the public library system.

Ms Dunn: There are three systems proposed at present. The PLAIN system is the cataloguing system for public libraries which will link them for that cataloguing purpose. There is an automated system going into the Reference Library and the Mortlock Library. There were no cost benefits in making those the same system; we investigated that. However, it is possible to integrate those two in the future once we see how that all operates, so there will be a full catalogue across the State. Local government itself is pursuing having a network system amongst councils for their own financial purposes and for the purpose of transmitting information between councils and the Government and *vice versa*. It is not cost effective to make that part of the same system, either, but it is possible that they may be integrated in the future, and indeed they may share lines for the transmission of information, although they will be separate systems. So we are likely to end up with three automated systems that can be integrated if that is beneficial. However, our advice at the moment is that it is not useful to integrate them now.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: That indicates that an investigation has been made to ensure that they can talk to one another at a later stage if that is desirable, and that was the purpose of the question. In the latter stage of 1988-89, funds were made available to a number of libraries that had been waiting for the subsidy—a wider application of funds than was originally expected. Did that completely clean the slate for libraries that have proceeded to implement their programs on the basis that they would be subsidised at some later stage, or are there still some libraries waiting on an allocation of funds?

The Hon. Anne Levy: In the case of all the libraries which had implemented their programs and were waiting for their due subsidy, their patience has been rewarded. They received their total subsidy in June this year. The complete implementation of library systems around the State, which was stage one, arising from the Crawford report 10 years ago, has not yet been achieved. There are still five libraries to be included before one can say that stage one is complete, but none of those has yet started and there is no question of anyone's waiting for a subsidy that is not yet available. I certainly hope that firm indications can be received from these five different councils regarding carrying out this library provision so that stage one can be completed soon. There is no budget allocation for further libraries in the current financial year, but it is not expected that any council, even if any of those five councils start on a library, will have completed it within the financial year.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Can the Minister identify those five councils?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The five councils still waiting are Tea Tree Gully, Yankalilla, Glenelg, Campbelltown and Barossa. They are not yet eligible for subsidy, but form part of stage one of the development of the library system around the State.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: At page 554, the Program Estimates refer to a foundation being established to increase Bray Reference Library resources. What were the achievements of that foundation?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I have already referred to the foundation which has sought sponsorship and which has worked extremely hard. To date, it has raised \$266 000, which is a considerable achievement.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: That rates a mention.

The Hon. Anne Levy: It is certainly worth emphasising the magnitude of the efforts that have been put in there. Because interest rates are so high now, while in general this may be undesirable, it does have its converse side. The foundation has decided to hold the funds and invest them until they reach \$500 000. The high interest rates will help achieve the \$500 000 target more quickly than might otherwise have occurred.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: Will the Minister describe the results of the stocktake conducted by the reference library in 1988-89?

The Hon. Anne Levy: This was the first ever complete stocktake undertaken by the State Library in over 100 years. The library opened in 1884. There were 324 668 titles checked. One can imagine the amount of work involved, and 19 202 titles were missing, which is about 6 per cent of the catalogue collection. To have only lost 6 per cent of the library stock in over 105 years certainly suggests that there has been capable management of the stock over that time. It is also interesting to note that in addition to the 6 per cent loss, there was a find of a further 9 per cent of total stocks, books on the shelves for which there were no catalogues.

I do not know whether there have been surreptitious donations to the library over 105 years, with people leaving books in the library without telling the library that they were doing so, but it has been a considerable effort by staff with pleasing results.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: Have any further benefits resulted from the Public Records Office's cooperative relationship with the Australian Archives, and are any other cooperative projects taking place with other agencies?

The Hon. Anne Levy: There has been an excellent cooperative relationship between the Public Records Office and the Australian Archives. This has continued, with the Australian Archives providing advice on computerisation of physical control records and also installing some pallet racking in the loading bay at Gepps Cross for joint use. Members may not be aware that there is one building at Gepps Cross housing our State Public Records Office on one side and the Australian Archives on the other side. While they are separate organisations, they are in the same building and there is obviously considerable cooperation between them. They can share facilities such as the loading bays and the loading and unloading facilities. Australian Archives is considering using special trolleys designed by the Public Records Office staff. This will enable much safer access to high level shelving. Certainly, all the staff at Gepps Cross have benefited from the joint use arrangements of facilities and equipment between the Australian Archives and the Public Records Office.

There have also been other cooperative projects. Staff from the University of Adelaide Law School have undertaken surveys of old records held by the Supreme Court and correctional services, and they have given lists of these records to the Public Records Office. This has certainly facilitated the proposed transfer of these records, many of which will be a rich source for the legal history of this State. I am interested to note that the staff of the Supreme Court

at present are negotiating to have a quantity of records, which were found under the floor boards of a private property, restored to the Courts Department's custody so that these judges' notebooks and all sorts of legal history material can be properly held.

Certainly, the Public Records Office is assisting in negotiations on this matter and it is probable that the records will ultimately be transferred to the Public Records Office for conservation treatment and eventually public access, so that we will all be able to see why they were hidden under the floorboards.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I refer now to stage two, moving on from the first Crawford report to what has been nominated as the second Crawford report. Has there been any major development arising from that report, because there was an investigation of other areas than the provision of libraries for councils? What is the program for other developments directly associated with that second report that are likely to surface or be worked on in the next 12 months prior to implementation?

The Hon. Anne Levy: When the honourable member refers to the Libraries Review does he refer to the second Crawford report or to stage 2 of the original report? They are two different matters. No decision has been made regarding implementation of stage 2 of the original Crawford report. Five libraries are yet to be opened to complete stage 1 of the original Crawford report. A great deal has been done in respect of what the honourable member called the second Crawford report, which we commonly refer to as the Libraries Review, and which was carried out three years ago. In fact, 105 recommendations were put forward and three-quarters of them have already been implemented. A few were rejected, such as the recommendation for a multicultural centre, which was not supported by the ethnic communities in South Australia, so it was decided not to implement such recommendations. A few recommendations have not yet been implemented; some still need further investigation and others are extremely expensive and so might have to wait a while. In general, however 75 per cent of those recommendations have already been dealt with.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I thank the Minister for explaining the difference between the two sets of reports. I recall being present when the second report was brought down and there was a fairly clear indication then that the desirable features of the first report were expected to be substantially completed before new initiatives were undertaken, otherwise it was likely that councils would never see any benefit from the first report, let alone from the second. I appreciate that five of the libraries not being completed involves more the design of the organisations concerned rather than of the Government. However, I want to be assured that a number of the substantial initiatives that were recommended in the second review had been implemented without causing any impediment to the first report. Having established that it is now three years since the second report was presented and that 75 per cent of it has been implemented, one would expect that a third report was not too far away. Nothing is static.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Nothing is static but I imagine that a review every 10 years would be sufficient unless there is some major reason to do otherwise.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I notice that there will be a follow-on in 1989-90. It would appear there is a relationship between the lending services and the Adelaide City Council and that negotiations are continuing. This may involve redeveloping lending services to provide services not provided by public libraries which appear in the 1989-90 set of targets. Am I correct to align those two organisations,

and which problems were revealed in the review with regard to the lending service and the City of Adelaide? What further change is necessary to correct any deficiency if, in fact, one was identified?

The Hon. Anne Levy: There is no real relationship and the report did not indicate that anything was wrong with the lending services. What is being discussed with the City of Adelaide is the provision of a library other than the State Library within the city. The City of Adelaide is a local government authority and it could contribute to a lending library and information centre in the city. The Libraries Branch and the City of Adelaide have held discussions regarding this matter, but at this stage it is far too early to report any results; the discussions are at a very preliminary stage.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: That being the case, what is the proposed expenditure under the 1989-90 target to redevelop lending services not provided by public libraries?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The lending services have identified programs and services which are not currently provided by public libraries and they include, for example, the development of special collections that may relate to a particular Government initiative such as social justice initiatives; liaison with city based community agencies with a view to providing outreach services, such as the Aboriginal project or youth agencies around the city; and projects such as piloting new technology. Someone needs to keep well abreast of all the latest technology changes which occur. Certainly, the lending services part of the State Library will be physically upgraded and organisationally restructured, and that will improve efficiency and result in additional resources being focused on the services and directions such as I have mentioned. Wide consultation with public libraries and other community agencies and any relevant professional bodies will then occur in order to facilitate exchanges of information and to establish these new services.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Further down in the 1989-90 targets I read: 'Further refine subsidies formula for public libraries to create more equity'. I suspect that this means more than just a statement on motherhood. What are the full implications of that statement?

The Hon. Anne Levy: At the moment, subsidies for public libraries are divided into two categories: materials and operating costs. Allocation of material subsidies to councils involves a formula that is based on the population in a council area and means that the number of items a library can purchase is directly related to the size of its potential population. It uses a mathematically weighted scale so that the number of books allowed per capita is greater for smaller populations, otherwise the collections might fall below a viable size where council areas are very small. For operating subsidies, libraries are divided into two categories, namely, the independent public libraries and the school community libraries, and this distinction applies in many areas of the country as I am sure the honourable member knows.

With respect to independent public libraries, the approach in council areas has been to provide a standard subsidy per capita of the population. Some existing anomalies are being addressed by increasing the per capita subsidy for those libraries now at the low end of the scale, while not increasing those at the upper end until we reach a situation where everyone receives the same per capita grant. I should point out that libraries at the upper end, in most cases, exceed by quite an amount the Libraries Board standard for level of service. The school community libraries category needs full investigation. School community library costs are not that large, but they vary widely, and some overview of funding

and operating costs for this category of libraries needs investigation.

This financial year will be the first of a three year projected span during which all libraries will be raised from the base to reach a common per capita subsidy. It is calculated that at the end of the three year period all but a small number of those with the highest funding will be on this common rate. However, a great deal more work will have to be done on achieving an equitable formula for depots and school community libraries. Work will continue on developing a formula in this area.

The CHAIRMAN: I am advised that the member for Elizabeth would like to ask a question.

Mr M.J. Evans: I am very interested in the question of performance indicators for public libraries. I understand from a reply I received some months ago (probably from the Minister's predecessor) that the Public Libraries Branch is working on suitable performance indicators for libraries. Will the Minister supply information on progress in respect of that project? Is it possible to make those statistics available to the public generally and to councils which run many of the libraries? This will assist councils in measuring the possibilities for their area, because they will be able to gauge whether their area is lagging behind or is ahead of standards. They will be able to see what areas of service need to be concentrated on as a comparative figure, so that those responsible at local level can take the right steps to bring their service into line, or so that they will know when their service is better than that of anyone else and they will be able to say so. I believe the expertise exists in the Minister's department to develop appropriate performance statistics. Of course, it is not simply a case of measuring volume—the number of books: it is a case of measuring the number of books per staff, per dollar, per client and so on. It is a more sophisticated exercise than simply measuring volume.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will ask the State Librarian to provide the most up-to-date information on this.

Mr Miller: Work in this area is continuing. We expect to have a new system in place for the beginning of the 1990-91 financial year. It is taking a long time to set up this system because when we started to develop our program it was decided to try to establish a national scheme so that each State would collect the same information, allowing us to make interstate comparisons. We have reached agreement with the other States to do that and I expect that the final scheme will be ratified at a meeting in Perth in December. In the meantime, we are proceeding with our own collection in partial form, and we have been doing that for the past three years. At the end of each financial year—and we do not have statistics yet for last financial year—the Public Libraries Board examines all the information. Where libraries appear to be performing poorly or below the average, they are identified and consultants in the branch visit them for assessment to see whether there is good reason for what has happened or whether they need assistance.

In respect of school community libraries—the joint use libraries with the Education Department—we have been carrying out quite extensive major performance studies, which take three days for each school community library. The study is conducted by a consultant from the Public Libraries Branch and an officer from the Education Department. The process involves interviews with the school principal, the board of management of the school community library, the school council and the local district council. There are 45 school community libraries and we work through them one by one. We investigate about six or eight libraries per year and we have been doing that for the past three years, so we are a considerable way through the pro-

gram. The results of each review are kept confidential. The school community libraries understand that when they are reviewed it is done for their benefit to help them improve. We do not believe that any weaknesses or strengths found should be promulgated.

Mr M.J. Evans: I appreciate why you would want to keep information on school community libraries confidential, but what about supplying information on public libraries to individual councils?

Mr Miller: That information is not kept confidential. The Public Libraries Branch publishes that material each year. I am quite happy to make a copy of last year's information available to the honourable member.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I refer to page 555 of the Program Estimates. Under '1988-89 specific targets/objectives' it is proposed to further investigate the library services and information needs of Aboriginal communities. I agree with that. How will this be done?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The main approach taken thus far is the creation of an Aboriginal project officer position with the Public Libraries Branch. This position has been advertised but has not yet been filled. It is expected that an appointment will be made shortly. The officer will join the public libraries consultancy team and will have a special brief to investigate the possible involvement of the lending services in-service provision and support to Aboriginal agencies. It will require consultation with Aboriginal agencies and communities around the State. It is true that the Aboriginal community in general is not well served by our public libraries system. It might help if libraries were made more relevant for Aborigines, but it must be the Aboriginal communities themselves that direct the change to occur.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I refer to the following objective on page 556 of the Program Estimates:

Continue development and dissemination of finding aids . . .
What is a finding aid?

The Hon. Anne Levy: As I understand it, it is a sort of bibliography which helps one find things in the great mass of records contained there. It short cuts a great deal of catalogue searching, or hunting through vast quantities of records. The two finding aids that have been developed—they could be called guides, indexes or bibliographies—are special catalogues all relating to a particular topic. It makes for a more user-friendly Public Record Office for people who want to find their way around and search things out.

Finding aids have been developed on women and the law, women and work and relating to a past administration of Aboriginal affairs. These are topics of considerable interest to a number of people, and it will make their lives easier.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The consolidation of secondary schools in country areas, and particularly some of the schools that have community libraries attached to them, has caused concern to be expressed that, as well as losing the schools, the communities will lose the library. There is much concern because many of these libraries are well utilised—I refer particularly to the situation at Pinnaroo where the Pinnaroo school and the community library will be lost. What can the Minister or the department do to ensure that those people who have used those libraries in the past will be able to enjoy the same facilities in the future?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The honourable member can rest assured that there will be a community library in Pinnaroo, and people need have no concern about losing their library. Considerable discussions need to occur with regard to the funding of such libraries. The Public Libraries Board has had some discussions with the Education Department. It has also commenced discussions with the local government

authority in Pinnaroo—and I am using that as an example. More negotiations need to occur before this matter is finally resolved. At this stage, I cannot indicate what the answer will be, however, I can say categorically that there will be a library in Pinnaroo.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I am advised by the people in that area that no consultation at all has occurred at this stage. There has been in regard to the school situation, but not as far as the library is concerned. I take the point the Minister has made and emphasise that there is a need for that consultation.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I assure the honourable member that full consultation with the local government authority will occur.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I believe that the question might lie part way between the libraries and the records. I refer to the discussion which was held earlier relative to the closure of institutes, and the records that have been available from those institutes. Recognising that, some of these institutes believe that they have total proprietary rights to the information that they have stored over the years, and have been loath to make it available, even with the best attention of Mr Barr. Is there a requirement by the Government that those materials be forfeited or made available, or is there an arrangement which would allow the procurement of a copy of those documents, and either the retention of the original by the original institute group or, vice versa, the retention by the public record department with a copy to the institute so that the record is not lost to the community?

Some years ago, when a number of courts were closed, a large cry was heard from local government in particular because important court records of births, marriages and deaths were lost to the community, and were then deposited in a place which was not nearly as accessible as had been the traditional organisation.

The Hon. Anne Levy: As I understand it, there is no compulsion on the ex-institutes to transfer their records to the Public Record Office. Obviously, the Public Record Office would like to receive them all so that it has a complete State collection of the institutes' records. So far, five institutes have not passed their records over to the Public Record Office, although all the others have done so already. The five communities which have not done so at present are Gawler, Lyrup, Mount Pleasant, Grange and Brighton. We would like to negotiate with these groups so that it is possible to work out some arrangement whereby one copy is held by the local community and another in the public records office. I am sure you would appreciate that, for historical reasons, it would be highly desirable to get all the records in one central place, and the Public Record Office is the obvious place. However, as I say, we are happy to negotiate with those five to achieve that objective. I am sure it should not be too difficult to achieve a satisfactory resolution whereby the State collection is complete but also individual communities have records of great interest to them.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Can the Minister say who the negotiator is?

The Hon. Anne Levy: It is the State Librarian, Mr Miller.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Does he have an agent?

Mr Miller: The State Librarian is the agent. The executive officer of the Institutes' Association is the person who has been doing the negotiating, but he is on long service leave at present, so I have agreed to take on the role. I must say that of those five institutes, three of them have dissolved in the past few months. I do not believe they are all holding out, but a couple of them have taken some time.

Additional Departmental Adviser:

Ms V. Siebert, Manager, Public Record Office.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to public records, I notice that in last year's documents and again in this year's, there is an increasing number of agencies making material available. There is a benefit to the agencies which make material available in that they do not have to use so much of their own space, with the benefit of hindsight, or looking at the activities as they are at this moment, does the Public Record Office intend providing for those who may be contributors, either corporate bodies or individuals, a schedule of how they would like these materials presented, whether they should attempt to prioritise the materials that they forward; and whether there is a preference that everything and anything is placed on the record and allowing the records department to make the decision as to what is important and what is not?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I refer that question to Val Siebert, as that issue certainly is part of the professionalism of the Public Record Office.

Ms Siebert: We do not try to take absolutely everything that everybody has and we ask contributors to submit material to a process known as 'disposal scheduling', whereby they help us to identify what is the most important material from their point of view, both in terms of their own administrative requirements, audit requirements, future reference needs and, in some special cases, where there is a lot of technical information that they may be far more capable than an archivist of specifying whether a particular technical plan is of historical significance because, for example, it is the first application of a technique. Increasingly, we do not just take unsorted, mixed transfers. We work with the agencies before we take the transfers to try to find out what is of permanent value, for whatever reason, historical, administrative or legal, and what is of temporary value. If the temporary period has expired we get Libraries Board approval for the material to be destroyed. Therefore, we do take temporary material but we do not take everything we are given. In relation to priority of processing and making it available and so on, we are somewhat governed by archival principles of trying to keep these records in their original order and in the way they are created to represent a true record of the operations, rather than to pull out the eyes and say they should be taken out of order. Therefore, the presentation is somewhat governed by archival processing principles. We are increasingly asking agencies to contribute to that processing and disposal scheduling before the balance of material is transferred.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: For the benefit of the honourable members for Mitchell, Spence, Playford, (the Chairman) and me, are the records of members of Parliament considered to be of value? There has certainly been an approach to members of Parliament in relation to their records. Will the Minister provide more information?

The Hon. Anne Levy: There has been an approach from the Mortlock Library, not from the Public Record Office. Just what category the records of members of Parliament should come into, whether they are regarded as Public Record Office documents or Mortlock Library documents, is still a matter of discussion. Obviously, it is a matter that will have to be resolved before the legislation relating to the Public Record Office is brought before Parliament next year. The records are certainly regarded as important. Speaking personally, if somebody wants my records at a later stage, they are welcome to them and I do not mind if they are in the Public Record Office or in the Mortlock Library. However, obviously, a decision has to be taken as

to the most appropriate place for their storage. They are certainly regarded as important documents and I imagine that I speak on behalf of most members of Parliament on this matter.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I refer to those members who have held substantive office, such as in the Ministry or Presiding Officers, where some of the material is of a different nature than the electorate documents of ordinary members. However, frequently there is a cross-over with material.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Obviously.

Mr ROBERTSON: My question relates to the Public Record Office and the accessibility of material in the office for reference purposes. How much use is made of those records in general? How many publications in the past year have arisen directly out of materials stored in the Public Records office?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I have mentioned previously the production of 'finding aids', which are publications produced by the Public Record Office. Two such publications have been produced, one relates to Aborigines and the other relates to records regarding women. About 1 000 customers per year use these guides. In response to requests from clients, the office issues about 10 000 documents a year. Therefore, there is considerable demand for documents and guides held in the Public Record Office.

Mr ROBERTSON: The Minister made a valid point earlier that the library service to Aborigines should be tailored not just to the needs of the community but also to the wants and desires of Aborigines in general. What efforts have been made to extend normal public library facilities to people outside conventional urban or suburban locations to country towns and beyond, to the Aboriginal lands? Has any thought been given to extending ordinary library services to those places and has any interest in library services been expressed by those communities?

The Hon. Anne Levy: At this stage there are two libraries, one at Port August and the other at Coober Pedy, which run outreach services to Aboriginal communities. However, I do not know whether these services extend to the Pitjantjatjara lands. I mentioned previously that under the social justice initiatives this year an Aboriginal project officer will be employed in the Public Library Branch. That person will research the needs of Aboriginal communities in relation to the Public Library system. Of course, this would not be limited to the outback areas, but would involve Aboriginal communities within the urban areas so that our public library system can respond more to the needs and desires of Aborigines and to service them more effectively than is currently occurring.

I do not want to be facetious but I would imagine that when this person has finished that little project, then researching the library needs of isolated people like those in the Pitjantjatjara lands would form part of a brief of an Aboriginal project officer. We are aware of the problem but are only just beginning to tackle it.

Mr ROBERTSON: Much of the TAFE activity in Aboriginal lands in the various communities, Fregon and others, revolves around teaching English as a second language. Any English courses have resource material of their own and may not need to draw heavily on public libraries but on the other hand it is clear that if those courses can move beyond basic communication English, they will fairly rapidly move to a point where TAFE is going to have access to libraries so it may be further in the future, but I can see a role for the library system in getting current material in and out of those communities to aid those TAFE courses.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

The Hon. G.T. Virgo, Chairman, West Beach Trust.
Mr R. Shattock, General Manager, West Beach Trust.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: On what date did Mr Joe Haslam resign as General Manager of the West Beach Trust and what was the reason for his resignation?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Mr Haslam left the West Beach Trust on 21 October 1988 and, after a period of leave, he commenced work in the Department of Local Government on 3 January 1989. The transfer back to the Public Service from the West Beach Trust was requested by Mr Haslam with the support of the West Beach Trust in September 1988. All the arrangements for the transfer to the Department of Local Government were confirmed on 9 December 1988 and were agreed to by the Commissioner for Public Employment as appropriate in the context of Mr Haslam's continuing public service career.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Did Mr Haslam have any disagreement with the Chairman of the trust just prior to the resignation and, if so, on what issue?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will ask the Chairman of the trust to answer that question.

The Hon. G.T. Virgo: There was no disagreement between the West Beach Trust and the former General Manager. There was a mutual arrangement entered into, as the honourable Minister has outlined.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: At any stage after the Building Trades Federation placed bans on the aborted Marineland redevelopment last July, did the Chairman of the trust or any Government Minister or other Government representative ask the union to lift the ban? If so, who made the request, when was it made, was it made in writing and, if so, will the Minister table the relevant document?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am certainly not aware of any such request but perhaps the Chairman of the trust could answer in greater detail.

The Hon. G.T. Virgo: I can only answer on behalf of the West Beach Trust as Chairman; I cannot answer on behalf of the Minister and I do not even know which Minister you are referring to. Neither the West Beach Trust nor I as its Chairman made any representations to the union in relation to the press reports of union bans. We were not officially advised that any union bans existed other than by press reports and my experience has taught me never to be guided too much by press reports because newspaper reporters never spoil a good story by telling the truth.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I believe that we have the information quite clear that no request was made. Notwithstanding that, is it only on speculation that we are able to determine why there was no request made?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I cannot give any reason why there was such speculation. The Chairman has indicated that there was no request from the West Beach Trust itself. I am not aware of any request having been made by the previous Minister, but I will certainly inquire whether any such request was made by the previous Minister but if such a request was made it has certainly not been drawn to my attention in the intervening time.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Will the trust be asking the proponents of the hotel on the Marineland site, Zhen Yun Pty Limited, to publish an environmental impact statement and, if not, why not?

The Hon. G.T. Virgo: It has been deemed by the Government that an environmental impact statement is not required for that development.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: On what date does the trust expect to hand over Marineland to Zhen Yun to allow its proposed hotel to proceed?

The Hon. G.T. Virgo: As soon as the animals are removed from the existing Marineland building.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: What line does the West Beach Trust come under?

The CHAIRMAN: Will the Minister advise what proposed payments actually relate to the West Beach Trust?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The West Beach Trust receives no funding at all through the Minister but is responsible to the Minister for Local Government. The West Beach Trust accounts are audited by the Auditor-General.

The CHAIRMAN: In your opinion, Minister, is there some proportion of your ministerial salary, office staff expenses or salaries which could be related to the activities of the West Beach Trust? Is that the way the connection is drawn because there does not appear to be any other way of doing it?

The Hon. Anne Levy: As far as I am aware there is no time whatsoever being taken by any of my staff in relation to the West Beach Trust. The Chairman of the West Beach Trust does report to me as Minister. Since I became Minister the trust has reported to me on two separate occasions and we have spent a very pleasant half an hour together on each of those occasions but apart from that I doubt if there have been any Government resources whatsoever devoted to the West Beach Trust.

The CHAIRMAN: It seems to be very difficult if there are no proposed payments, which appears to be the case, and it is not possible to quantify in any reasonable way ministerial, officers' or advisers' salaries. The matter should not really be dealt with by the Committee. On the other hand, I will ask the honourable member for Light to make a comment on that.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Minister does have a direct connection to the West Beach Trust.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Let us hear from the honourable member for Light and then we will hear from other members.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The West Beach Trust Act is with the Minister for all purposes and on the occasion last week when the Auditor-General was before the Committee in respect of a Minister's portfolio, the Chief Secretary indicated to the Committee that it was necessary for any question which related to a line, to a department or a statutory body answerable to the Minister to be asked of that Minister, in that Minister's lines. It is on the basis that information is required that I raise the question.

Yesterday in this Chamber the Minister of Environment and Planning was present when I started questioning on similar lines on what turned out to be a mistaken belief that the Minister's responsibilities for flora and fauna covered the various aspects of the dolphin management. I was advised that the question would be better asked under the Minister of Lands lines, because the Minister of Lands in that portfolio had responsibility for animal welfare. To the best of my knowledge, because I was not here, the Minister of Lands last night answered questions about dolphins because of her responsibility under legislation relating to that issue. That is the reason for my questioning in this issue.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: As a result of the comments of the member for Light I need to point out that the Auditor-General does not specify how the Estimates Committees will be conducted—Parliament specifies that. We have rules about that. I refer to the Estimates of Payments—it is in

order to have Estimates of Receipts and Program Estimates. These have been used ever since these Committees started.

One might ask why I acceded as a member of this Committee to a time later today to discuss the West Beach Trust. I agreed, believing that there were lines that would be related. In the more than 19 years that I have been here I have not been Minister for everything—although I have been Minister for many portfolios, I have not had local government—and I had no background in this area. We cannot just head off into a new direction. Members on these Committees are required to conform to the rules, which are printed. They have evolved over a period. I have no quarrel with the desire of any member to seek information. I have spent time seeking information on many matters; I have spent time providing information as a Minister over the years, but in this case I believe it would be wrong for us to proceed along these lines because there is no way that the connection can be made that we are examining Estimates of Payments or whatever related to the Committees.

The member for Light referred to the fact that when questions were asked of the Minister of Environment and Planning yesterday (and I was present and heard it), she properly pointed out that where they were not within her purview she could not and should not answer them. She did not propose to answer them. She offered two venues, as I recall. Some matters could be raised in Parliament at any time by way of question and, where the responsibility and the estimates were involved, the Minister could be questioned at the appropriate time. Should this proposal proceed, it would be entirely out of order and I ask you, Mr Chairman, to rule that way.

The CHAIRMAN: Does any other member wish to comment?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I did not mean to suggest that the Auditor-General directed how the estimates would be debated. I said that while we were discussing the Auditor-General's lines, the Chief Secretary indicated that he would not permit the Auditor-General to answer, because the specific lines were the responsibility of the Minister. Later this evening I will ask the Minister a question about the Local Government Finance Authority, which is in her portfolio area, as is the West Beach Trust. Further, I submit that the Minister and the Chairman of the West Beach Trust seem to be completely comfortable in answering questions put without malice and quietly.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! There is a point not referred to by the member for Light which could be important. I refer to page 451 of the Auditor-General's Report, which may help us. Reference is made to the West Beach Trust balance sheet of 30 June 1989. There is then reference to 'The funds employed were:' and there is further reference to 'Commonwealth and State grants' and a figure. Can the Minister say whether there were or are there to be State grants, and do they come from the payments now before the Chair?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The only information I have is that, when the West Beach Trust Act was first passed in 1954, there was the requirement for three bodies—Glenelg council, West Torrens council and the State Government—to each contribute £1 200 per year for a period of six years, which took us to 1960. From that time there has been no financial contribution to the trust by either council or the State Government. The trust has been completely self sufficient for the past 29 years.

The CHAIRMAN: There is no proposed grant for the year under discussion?

The Hon. Anne Levy: There is no allocation for the trust this year, nor has there been for 29 years.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: There is no malice in what I am saying, because I will not be here in another six months. This would be a departure from what we have always done.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I refer to the West Beach Recreation Reserves Act 1987. Section 6 provides:

The trust is subject to the control and direction of the Minister.

We are voting for funds which the Minister may employ for whatever purposes and which come within the realm of her portfolio.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: Show me the line, and I will be happy.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I refer to the interagency line, which looks after funds relative to the Minister's office.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Let the member for Light complete his statement.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I do not take it any further other than repeat section 6: 'The trust is subject to the control and direction of the Minister.' Throughout the course of 1989-90 the Minister will be making directions or decisions, as she may be required to do, and to do so she requires funds. We are currently voting funds to the Minister's office to allow that circumstance to continue.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I do not quarrel with anything put forward by the member for Light in that there is a chain of responsibility, a parliamentary link and statutory evidence but I still say that these are Estimates Committees and that our function is to examine the proposed expenditure and to require information on it; question and query the Minister and assure ourselves that we can report back to the Parliament that all is in order. It is as simple as that; that is what the Auditor-General requires us to do so that his work is made easier. Nowhere can I find the necessary link. If there is a need to examine this area, the parliamentary process caters for it perfectly. There is question time, motions can be moved, and matters can be taken up urgently. In a few days we will be back in that part of the parliamentary system. We ought not to embark on a new area. Maybe in the future it should be examined by Parliament after this series of Estimates Committees is finished and there may be a need for a revision of the system as it is. In the meantime, we have to live with the apparatus that we have, not what we would like to have or what we think we have. The apparatus we have says that this is not our area under the rules that apply.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I support what the member for Light has said about the responsibility of the Minister under the Act. On many occasions when I have served on Estimate Committees members have referred specifically to matters raised in the Auditor-General's Report. Financial matters referring to the West Beach Trust are brought forward through the Auditor-General's Report. I fail to see the difference between this situation, where we are asking the Minister to answer questions relating to the West Beach Trust, and the situation in another committee in another place where ETSA officials were questioned. The Electricity Trust is the responsibility of a particular Minister as the West Beach Trust is the responsibility of the Minister now before the table, and I can see no difference between those situations. I would suggest that it is appropriate that the Minister continue to be asked questions relating to the West Beach Trust, particularly those relating to financial matters.

The CHAIRMAN: I accept that there is no proposed payment to the trust, but is there any possibility of the West Beach Trust paying money to the State during the coming year?

The Hon. Anne Levy: No.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: If members can indicate which line in the Estimates this relates to, I will accept it, but it is not there.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: We are trying to find the document. During the course of 1989-90 the Minister will lay on the table of Parliament the report of the West Beach Trust. It will involve expenditure of funds through the Minister's office to process that report and bring it to Parliament. On that basis I believe we are legitimately querying what may be a small amount but it is expenditure of funds relating to the West Beach Trust.

The CHAIRMAN: I accept the honourable member's word; he does not have to provide a document.

Mr ROBERTSON: Under the Standing Orders applying to Estimates Committees and under which we are operating, it is indicated that there shall be two Estimates Committees known as Estimates Committee A and Estimates Committee B which shall not vote on, but examine and report on, proposed expenditures contained in the schedules. The key word is 'proposed'. We can vote only on proposed expenditure. As to the question about whether the West Beach Trust will contribute money to State coffers, I would argue that even that is not relevant; we are talking about expenditure from the Treasury to the West Beach Trust. It is quite clear to me from sessional order No. 3 that to do anything other than reject the line of inquiry being pursued by the member opposite would be quite wrong.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The annual report of the West Beach Trust is prepared, printed and completely processed at the expense of the West Beach Trust; I merely table in Parliament the prepared annual report which is presented to me for that purpose.

Mr BECKER: What is the difference between asking questions here and asking questions on notice in Parliament?

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot involve myself in this; I am a Committee Chairman and those questions ought to be addressed to the Speaker. If the honourable member wants to address himself to the point of order I will listen to him, but I cannot answer questions such as the one he has just asked.

Mr BECKER: It is a matter of principle because the Minister is requested to answer questions put on the parliamentary Notice Paper. Therefore, some time must be taken in the Minister's office in order to provide an answer. Someone once said it cost about \$50 a time.

The CHAIRMAN: That question is quite out of order here. We must deal with the point of order.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I propose to give a ruling on this matter. It does give me considerable concern. I have looked at the matter carefully and asked all the relevant questions I could think of and, coming from the background I do, if there were some way of permitting this line of inquiry, I would do so but, against that consideration, there is clearly no proposed payment. Both the documents and the Minister's statement support that. Not only is there no proposed payment but there is no financial link whatsoever that can be shown through the documents or the information coming to me from the Minister. Given that and the previous Chairmen's rulings in other Estimates Committees, I believe I must reluctantly uphold the point of order. There may be disagreement with my ruling but I have ruled and, unless there is disagreement, I must ask the Committee to proceed with the next business at hand.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I am sorry that we detained the Chairman of the West Beach Trust from his choir practice.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: A number of matters will be pursued during the next few hours. I refer to '1989-90 specific targets/objectives' at page 557, as follows:

Prepare draft bill, third stage Local Government Act revision.
Review conflict of interest provisions of Act.

Will the Minister please explain the circumstances which cause her to believe that there is a need for a review of the conflict of interest provisions?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Since the enactment of the new legislation in respect of conflict of interest in local government a large number of complaints have been received by the department relative to possible conflict of interest. We all regard any suggestion of a conflict of interest as a very serious matter and all such complaints have been thoroughly investigated. The vast number have been found not to involve a conflict of interest at all. However, it is clear that there is some misunderstanding in some local government circles as to just what constitutes a conflict of interest as defined in legal terms.

I have set up a conflict of interest review which is to look at whether there is some non-legislative means of assisting members of local councils to understand their role. It has been suggested, for instance, that a non-statutory code of conduct could be developed as a guide to members of local councils in respect of conflict of interest rules. Certainly a number of members of local councils have expressed interest in a mechanism which provides clear advice to them as to how they should abide by the conflict of interest rules in the legislation.

The committee of review which I have established will look at these questions and may well devise a non-statutory code of conduct which can act as a guide for members of local government. I do not know whether the committee has met but, if it has, it would be in the recent past. Now that the intense period for local government—in terms of setting rates, elections and so on—is over, I expect the committee to meet in the near future and report to me as soon as possible.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is the Minister able to identify who is on the committee of review?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The chairperson will be my Director of Local Government, Ms Dunn. The Local Government Association has nominated councillor Angove of the Adelaide City Council, and the Institute of Municipal Management has nominated Mr Michael Llewellyn-Smith, also of the Adelaide City Council. I have added to the committee Alderman Judith Worrall of St Peter's Council and Mayor Don McDonnell of the City of Mount Gambier. The elected representatives of local government will ensure that the experience of both rural and suburban members is taken into account.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: What are the committee's terms of reference? Does the Minister intend to extend the conflict of interest aspects of the Local Government Act to address senior staff of councils?

The Hon. Anne Levy: It is certainly not intended to relate to senior staff. The inclusion of a nominee from the Institute of Municipal Management comes about because members of the institute are concerned about the role they may have to take in providing advice to members. As chief executive officers of individual councils, members may turn to them for advice on particular matters, so obviously they are concerned about their role in administering the conflict of interest provisions. I am afraid that I do not have the committee's terms of reference, but I shall be happy to provide them for incorporation in the record.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is the Minister able to indicate whether, having regard to hindsight, activities directly related

to the subject of conflict of interest have been handled even-handedly since 1984, or whether, having reviewed the full file on conflict of interest, there are some doubts in her mind and that some actions may have been precipitous and other actions tardy?

The Hon. Anne Levy: All I can say is that any complaint in respect of conflict of interest is examined very carefully by officers of the department. If there is some doubt about a legal question, advice is taken from Crown Law. Members of the department in no way regard themselves as lawyers and as being able to make judgments on points of law. I am not quite sure to what the honourable member refers. I know that there have been occasions when Crown Law has not been very speedy in providing advice. The time taken may be a reflection of the complexity, in a legal sense, of the complaint lodged. Investigations often need to be undertaken and that can involve officers interviewing both the complainant and the member of the council concerned to fully establish the facts. I am sure there have been occasions when it has been difficult to arrange interviews, particularly where complaints have related to possible conflict of interest in councils some distance from Adelaide.

However, as far as I am aware, no discrimination whatsoever has occurred in the method by which any complaint has been investigated and the thoroughness with which investigations have been carried out, both by the Department of Local Government and by Crown Law when matters of law have been involved.

Mr ROBERTSON: I want to preface my first question with the statement that I believe that a number of councils have had some difficulty handling the change to the 35 per cent minimum rate over four years, and the gradual step-down from what for many councils was quite a high level of ratepayers on the minimum rate. A number of councils have had some difficulty cutting down gradually, and, in some cases, that has been compounded by a change in the rate base from a site value system to a capital value system. I live in the Marion council district, and I believe that the Marion council has done as well as it could under the circumstances in making that transition relatively fair, although I believe certain steps could have been taken that perhaps were not considered.

I refer to compliance with the 35 per cent minimum rate provision in the current amended Act. For those councils which have had that difficulty compounded with the difficulty of the change from site value to capital value, in general terms, how much of the change can be related to the minimum rate provisions? How much of that change, in many cases, is related to the change in ratepayers? Having asked the question, I appreciate that answer can be general only, but I want some indication, if I may, of the relative impact of those two mechanisms because as in the case of the Marion council they have certainly overlapped. I believe there is a degree of confusion in the public mind about of how much of the change can be related to each of the processes.

The Hon. Anne Levy: In general terms I believe it is quite impossible to answer such a question. One would need to look at the situation for a particular council to see what decisions had been made by that council. Obviously changing from site values to capital values would have an effect. In assessing the effect due to changing the proportion of assessments on minimum rates, one would need to know what was the previous proportion on minimum rates and to what extent that had changed. We do not have information as to what proportion of assessments were determined recently as minimum rates in the different councils.

This financial year, councils are not obliged to provide that information. The situation will change next year when councils will be required to inform the department of various statistical items, such as what proportion of assessments are on minimum rates. Marion was more than 70 per cent and Port Augusta had 82 per cent on minimum rates. Similar high figures have been recorded in various parts of the State. A survey was done a couple of years ago, but the councils have not had to provide that information since then, so we cannot monitor to see how much they have changed.

Some councils, knowing that the 35 per cent must be achieved in three years, are phasing it in in three equal steps. I understand that some councils are doing it in one fell swoop, others will be doing it in three steps, but not equal steps. So, without having more detail for a specific council, it would be impossible to work out the contribution made by the different factors. It could vary from a little to a lot depending on a whole range of parameters that would be individual to that particular council.

Certain officers in the department feel that the change from site to capital value is a major contributor, but it would depend on the relative effects of that and the change in the minimum rate proportions which that council has decided to adopt in that year. We would be happy to work out the exact proportions if we had the detailed figures, but without them it is not possible to talk other than in very general terms.

Mr ROBERTSON: I thank the Minister for that answer. I must confess that I was not aware that the figures were not available. It made the quantitative part of that question rather silly. I asked the question for a good reason, that is that two effects, overlaid as they have been, have caused people's rates in some instances to appreciate considerably. It is an extremely small number of cases, but there are one or two instances of people living on sites that are not as valuable who have capitalised those sites highly, and who suddenly find themselves facing an increase in council rates of about 200 per cent, or even more.

Perhaps in retrospect, councils might have considered mechanisms by which that effect could be ameliorated in some way. The Marion council may have gone to some lengths to offer extended payment of rates for people having difficulties and, as all other councils do, it has offered the provision of delayed payments, and the rates can be charged to an estate for people who simply do not have the assets to pay. What other mechanisms are available within the present Act? In simply using delayed payments spread over three months and the charge against the estate, has council taken advantage of all the mechanisms available by which that severe impost could be spread out and ameliorated for those people who have had to put up with it?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The two mechanisms which the honourable member has raised are certainly the main ones by which councils can assist individual ratepayers. I am interested to hear the honourable member say that Marion does offer these. I can assure him that many councils offer neither of those relief measures, and despite their having the ability to do so, the councils have chosen not to. I suppose it is theoretically possible for a council to give a rebate—and I am thinking in terms of rebates to pensioners or to people who are in the category of being asset rich but income poor.

Since the amendment to the Act, the councils do have the power to remit rates or to apply rebates, and we are thinking particularly of pensioners. Although they have this power, hardly any councils have taken advantage of that to date. That is a matter of choice. However, certainly, the

methods available under the Act are: charges against the estate; spreading of payments; and rebates in cases of hardship. It would seem that Marion council is pursuing more lines in this regard than many other councils in the State.

Mr ROBERTSON: In that context, I understand that one inner suburban council has demanded that rates be paid by the beginning of September. Of course, that gave people very little time to make the necessary adjustments. Will the Minister make comment on the role of councils and their responsibilities to residents? Does she believe that councils are doing as much as they can to cushion the blows, because it is clear that in a number of council areas where property values are relatively high and income levels are relatively low—particularly where people have retired and are on fixed incomes—this has come as a severe blow? Whilst it appears that Marion is making a genuine attempt to come to terms with the difficulties that people are having, it also appears that other councils are not making the same effort. What advice does the Minister have for those councils or for any council that might attempt to follow their model rather than the Marion model during the next financial year?

The Hon. Anne Levy: In relation to the payment of rates, it is set out clearly in the legislation that where a single rate assessment is sent for a 12 month period, ratepayers must have 60 days notice of payment. Therefore, a payment requirement issued for September would have to have been issued by 2 July or 3 July, because of the requirement for a 60 days period of notice. That requirement exists so that people are not caught by surprise, without warning, and so that they have at least two months to plan for the payment of rates.

One of the reasons for councils requiring early payment arises from changes in the Local Government Act, in that councils now have the power to draw up their budgets as early as the beginning of June for the following year. Therefore, they can ask for payment of rates by early September, whereas previously it was often October or even November before councils received most of their rate payments. The timing of this process is a matter of choice for councils. It is certainly not obligatory under the Act for councils to require payment by 1 September—it is the council's choice.

It is not necessarily a bad idea to have an early collection date, because councils need cash to continue operating. If the majority of rate payments are not received until November, councils will have to take out loans to have cash available until the rates are paid. With the current high interest rates it becomes very expensive for councils to take out loans. Of course, the cost of the interest will have to be borne by the rates. Therefore, by not having to take out loans for carry-on cash, councils can set their rates marginally lower than would otherwise be the case.

Mr ROBERTSON: I would assume that some account is taken of those people who are placed in severe financial difficulty by the imposition of the increased rates.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Certainly, but they—indeed everyone—must receive 60 days notice. I agree that, where changes are made to rates, the humane and caring councils take advantage of the provisions of the Act to soften the impact in cases of hardship.

Mr ROBERTSON: I turn now to another aspect of council activities, which hopefully is designed to minimise the rate load on ratepayers; I refer to the various entrepreneurial schemes that councils are pursuing. I note that on page 557 of the Program Estimates a specific target for 1989-90 is to encourage good practice in the various entrepreneurial schemes in which councils are involved. It seems to me

that councils have had a fairly short time under the new Act to adjust to the entrepreneurial role.

It would also seem from my observations that some, indeed perhaps most, councils have not tried very much entrepreneurial activity as yet. On the other hand, some councils have been involved in this activity. How well have councils performed this activity? Is it possible to make them more successful by appropriate training and advice? Is there any advisory mechanism available within the department to assist councils in their various entrepreneurial schemes? I ask these questions against the background of Marion council, which appears to be quite entrepreneurial and to have attempted to build shops and lease out various bits and pieces of its property in order to turn a few dollars and, thereby, hopefully, to minimise rates. It seems that there is a need, in some cases, for advice. What advice is available.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The department is happy to discuss projects with individual councils if they feel that they would like advice. Of course, the department is not in a position to give business advice. We have a Small Business Corporation and other sources of strictly entrepreneurial advice that can perform that function. Local government might consider a number of projects that require ministerial approval before they can be undertaken. Ministerial approval is required for projects that involve councils borrowing amounts of money that would result in increased debt servicing of 10 per cent where the council perhaps already spends 30 per cent of rate revenue on debt servicing. In other words, where there is a significant addition to the debt servicing of a council that already has a fairly high debt servicing commitment, ministerial approval is required.

Likewise, any project that involves some form of joint venture with parties that are not another level of Government requires ministerial approval before it can go ahead. Obviously, where ministerial approval is required, before that approval can be given, councils will have to satisfy the Minister on a number of matters, such as the requirement to consult with the community on an ongoing basis in relation to the proposal, so that the community is fully conversant with the benefits of the scheme that the council is proposing and is fully supportive of the council in doing so. The Minister may well require a report on the economic, social and environmental impact of the project or proposal, including a statement of the impact that it might have on services, facilities and businesses in the proximity.

There is a range of things which the Minister can require from the council before granting ministerial approval. Obviously, in answering these questions the viability or otherwise of the scheme will be carefully examined and, unless it is shown to be a sound measure, ministerial approval will not be given; but where it is a more minor project and ministerial approval is not required, the department is certainly happy to give whatever advice it can or point the council in the right direction to obtain the required detailed business advice.

Mr ROBERTSON: Will consideration be given to including advice on the various entrepreneurial schemes in the training schemes for elected members? In the same section of the Estimates, reference is made to training schemes for elected members. Might it not be a good idea to advise them on the availability of advice on the kinds of entrepreneurial schemes available and perhaps advise on when to jump and when not to jump in such cases.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Local Government Association itself has been considering this matter and is trying to assist its members in this regard. I am very glad to see that they regard it as one of the responsibilities of local government

that it should help itself in this way, and certainly the LGA has taken up that matter.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is the Minister able to advise the Committee on the current state of play at Coober Pedy, where the most recent suggestion of conflict of interest arose? What action has the Minister taken, particularly since the advice given to the council by the Director of the Department of Local Government was not heeded? Members of the council, regardless of the positive advice, appeared to proceed with making a decision which is illegal in that it is seeking to undertake actions which are within the province of other Government departments.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Following the slight differences of opinion which occurred in Coober Pedy not only did the Director of the department write to the Mayor of Coober Pedy but only one of the officers of the department, Mr Roodenrys, visited Coober Pedy and discussed some of the problems in the council with various people. As a result of those discussions, the District Council of Coober Pedy passed a motion at a special meeting held last week. The resolution states:

The District Council of Coober Pedy notes with concern public allegations that it is opposed to the establishment by the Coober Pedy Miner's Association Inc. of a fuel distribution centre for its members.

- It records its support for efforts by the Association to obtain an appropriate and suitable site for this purpose.
- It notes that the location for such sites should be suitable for the association's purposes and be consistent with publicly acceptable development objectives for Coober Pedy.
- Accordingly, the District Council of Coober Pedy resolves that immediate action be taken to complete the supplementary development plan for the Council areas.
- It also resolves to undertake a poll of electors in March 1990 for the purpose of establishing community views on the appropriate types of development to be undertaken in the areas which may include 'the Triangle', the jeweller's shop, the drive-in theatre site, the water conservation reserve and any other areas indicated from further consideration of the supplementary development plan.
- These views will be fully considered by Council in completing the draft plan which will be submitted for necessary Ministerial approval as soon as possible.

This motion was passed unanimously at the special meeting of the Coober Pedy District Council last week.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is the Minister able to advise that at a previous meeting an endeavour undertaken to rescind the motion (which some would say was illegal) was declined because the Mayor said it was not proper to rescind any motion of the council previously made when action had already been taken on that motion? Would the Minister also agree that in relation to any direction given to the Clerk, which is of an illegal nature, particularly when the land belongs to some other instrumentality with Government involvement, the Clerk is not able to conclude that direction illegally given?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Mayor of Coober Pedy ruled the motion out of order and this ruling was not challenged, but it was as a result—

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: If you do not have the numbers you cannot challenge very much; we saw that earlier.

The Hon. Anne Levy: It was as a result of these events in Coober Pedy that Mr Roodenrys went to Coober Pedy and, as I say, undertook discussions with all the interested parties, with the result that the motion that I have just read out was passed unanimously at the special general meeting of the council. Mr Roodenrys may care to add some comments relating to his discussions in Coober Pedy.

Additional Departmental Adviser:

Mr B. Roodenrys, Assistant Director, Department of Local Government.

Mr Roodenrys: There really was a strong degree of misunderstanding amongst the two main factions present on council. A vote by one faction on council against the proposal to assist the Coober Pedy Miners' Association to obtain a block of land was interpreted as being opposition to the association's intentions of setting up a fuel distribution centre. It appeared after some quite exhaustive discussion at the special council meeting that that really was not the case, and that the issue was one of good planning and the need to ensure that ordered and structured development takes place in future in Coober Pedy. That having been cleared up, the various parts of council very quickly reached a unanimous view to, in effect, put the application that had been voted on at a previous meeting on ice until such time as the community's views had been clearly made known.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: What is deemed to be the status of the first motion passed which has not been rescinded, but which is now in suspension by default of a subsequent motion?

Mr Roodenrys: The effect of the first motion was simply that council was asked to support, with the Department of Lands and the Minister of Lands, an application for a block of land to be made available within the area known as the Triangle in Coober Pedy. Council certainly wrote a letter in support. It may interest the member for Light to know that I have seen the letter. It certainly gave no indication whatsoever that the association should receive preferential treatment, for example, as to the price. In answer to the question, I imagine that the resolution stands, but certainly the council cannot, as a result of the decision passed at its special meeting last week, further pursue that matter until those things have been carried out.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: As a supplementary question, is it correct that the Clerk cannot be required to undertake an illegal act by direction of the council?

The Hon. Anne Levy: There are two questions: whether an illegal act has occurred is one question. Another is whether someone can be ordered in general to carry out an illegal act.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Let us allege that the first was an illegal act.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Whether there was or was not an illegal act, the honourable member is asking a legal question about whether anyone, not necessarily in local government, but anywhere, can be ordered to carry out an illegal act. I am not a lawyer, but I would have thought that that was not possible. I am happy to seek legal advice to clear up the point.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Does the Minister intend to make all this information known on this issue of conflict of interest available to the review working group, drawing attention to the various components of the most recent experience at Coober Pedy?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am certainly happy to make all the complaints about conflict of interest available to the review committee. We would suggest that the names of the people concerned be deleted so that the committee would be aware of the complaints and the situations that have arisen without necessarily being able to identify the people concerned. All of the large number of such complaints will be made available to the review committee.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: As to the alleged conflict of interest at Naracoorte about which the Minister has recently written after some 16 or 18 months, is the Minister able to advise the Committee why it took so long for that issue to be resolved? I acknowledge the Minister's earlier statement that at a distance from Adelaide it is sometimes difficult, that officers are responsible for decisions which may be

conveyed to them by Crown Law or police, but the time and the alleged loss of correspondence involved have not assisted in good public relations between the department and inquirers.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I know the case to which the member refers. It was a complex and complicated case. The necessary investigations took a considerable time, partly because some of the people concerned were not available for long periods to investigate the matter. Distance from Adelaide also did not make it easy for the investigating officers to fully investigate the situation. It took some time for Crown Law to evaluate the situation. My comments are not in any way a reflection of the Crown Law department, because I gather that it was an extremely complex matter from a legal perspective and not something which it could evaluate in a short time. I am sure we all regret the time that it did take in this case, but that was a most difficult and complicated example. When the Crown Law opinion came to me it covered many pages.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: As to the alleged conflict of interest involving the Enfield council, with a councillor submitting an account for preparation of a case and then going to the council and presenting that motion in favour of the case which the councillor had prepared, does the Minister find it difficult that there was deemed to be no conflict of interest?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I do not want to go into all the details, but I assure the Committee that the Crown Law opinion was taken. It was a case of investigations being made and Crown Law opinion being sought, with it being received and acted on. The legal subtleties were not determined by the department or me but by Crown Law.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is the Minister able to indicate how many prosecutions the department has instigated in respect of alleged conflict of interest and, without naming names, what were the results of those actions?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will take that question on notice. There have been no prosecutions since I have become Minister, but I am not familiar with what any of my predecessors would have done and obviously any prosecution would have to be authorised. My officers believe that there may have been about five in total in the history of the legislation, but we will check on the number and the outcome of them.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: I refer to page 557 of the Program Estimates and the question of fire safety. Has the department reached its target of 30 building fire safety inspections in the past year? In view of the recent fire in Sydney, what measures are in place in South Australia to prevent a similar tragedy?

The Hon. Anne Levy: In the past 12 months the committee has inspected not 30 but 55 buildings in respect of fire safety measures. While not all the buildings required attention, those that did are certainly being dealt with. It more than achieved its target—in fact, achieved it nearly twice as much. As to ensuring that a Sydney tragedy will not occur here, South Australia is in a slightly different situation from that of New South Wales, because it established fire safety legislation under the Building Act after seven people died in the People's Palace fire in 1975.

Current legislation provides for each council to establish a building fire safety committee which has the power to inspect any building and require the owner to upgrade the building to a satisfactory level of fire safety. Those requirements are enforceable in law. Committees have the power to close a building or to restrict its use if they deem it to be a fire hazard. Since the legislation was passed in 1976, councils right across the State have become involved in

upgrading buildings of the type that was involved in the recent Kings Cross fire. I have the statistics: 110 buildings of that nature have been satisfactorily upgraded and about 80 others are being upgraded as a result of the Building Fire Safety Committee Action, which is continuing, to complete the remainder of the buildings and to inspect and upgrade any other such buildings which have not yet been brought to the notice of the committees.

Since 1976 the committees have been working very actively in this area to ensure that no such tragedies occur in South Australia. The committees look for things such as adequate exits (there must be two exits in approximately opposite directions); there must be at least six metres between an exit and the nearest bedroom door; it must be possible to open doors without a key; evacuation notices must be posted on all doors; fire isolated stairs must be provided for any building more than two-storeys high; there must be a capacity for smoke-compartmentalisation so that exit paths are kept tenable as long as possible; and alarm systems must be installed where it is deemed necessary. Upgrading has occurred in 110 such buildings and another 80 are in the process of being dealt with, so we very much hope that there will never be a tragedy in South Australia of the proportions that occurred in Sydney.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: The Evaluation of properties is a matter which has caused some controversy over the last few weeks. Changes in valuation have been blamed for large increases in rates that have been assessed for some properties. I do not necessarily lay the blame on the valuation system but I think there is a problem somewhere. It is not fair on those people I know of who have no public transport, no sewerage, and no gas, if their rates have increased by more than 100 per cent over the past two years. Wages have increased by about only 14 per cent in that period. Great jumps in valuation do occur so there are some problems and some fault lies somewhere. Does the Minister have any comments on this?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Yes, the system of rates is based on valuations determined by the Valuer-General, and I point out the Valuer-General is responsible to Parliament itself and not to any particular Minister. He values properties according to their market value, based on sales of properties within different areas, and it is by comparing sales that the Valuer-General derives values for each property. Of course, it is quite possible, and there are provisions in the Act, for people to appeal against their valuation. I understand that about 7 000 appeals have been lodged with the Valuer-General this year, and this is not remarkably different from the numbers of appeals lodged in recent years; in fact, it is a lot lower than the number of appeals which came forward in some years during the 1970s. However, it is certainly possible for people to appeal against the valuation or to obtain an independent valuation and that procedure sometimes results in a different valuation being applied.

It is up to the councils as to what rate in the dollar they choose, given the valuations they receive from the Valuer-General. Councils are informed of the total value of their council area and can strike their rate in the dollar accordingly, depending on what increase, decrease or change, if any, they wish to make to their total rate revenue. It is inevitable that the value of some properties will increase more than others and this has occurred in some council areas in particular during the past 12 months; some areas have become more desirable to live in and so the value of properties has gone up because people are prepared to pay more to live in those areas. Valuations are based on market values, so considerable rises in values can and do occur and

hence, the rates, because the rate in the dollar is determined by the local council. When total valuations go up they do not need to keep the same rate in the dollar. It is quite possible for them to lower the rate in the dollar so the impact on property owners is not so great.

I should add that it is not all bad news; the fact that the valuation of a property has increased may mean that, should the ratepayers wish to sell their property, they would receive a much larger capital value and would make a gain in that respect. However, I appreciate that to some people that is not much consolation because they have no intention of selling their homes.

Some people, particularly pensioners and the elderly, are often in the situation where they have become asset rich but income poor and an increased valuation of the property (which they have no intention whatsoever of selling) is very little comfort if their rates are much higher. I would stress that councils have the power, as a result of changes to the Local Government Act, to provide relief to ratepayers when cases of hardship are drawn to their attention. They can defer payments, spread payments over time, remit payments or give rebates to pensioners as does the State Government. Councils now have the power to do this themselves, but very few councils have taken any of these measures to help people in hardship.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Are you surprised?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Some have, and they should be commended for this. The honourable member for Light asks if I am surprised at the fact that very few councils have aided people in hardship. I am surprised. I should think that councils are comprised of caring people who—like the State Government—have sympathy and compassion for people in hardship.

The State Government provides pensioner rebates in respect of electricity charges and water and sewerage charges. The State Government provides many forms of assistance to people in need. If a State Government can do this, I see no reason why local government, which is also a responsible tier of Government, cannot also provide assistance to people in hardship. It seems to me that that is a responsible thing for any responsible Government to do.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: I think it is quite fair to say that most people like to have their properties or homes valued as highly as possible, but I think councils should take into account the services that are provided. Where there are practically no services people should not be asked to pay huge increases of between \$600 and \$800. People often say that all a council does is pick up the rubbish bin once a week.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Councils can set differential rates on the basis of separate planning or building zones or in terms of some facilities which they may provide in some areas and not in other areas. It is important for councils to set differential rates. It is not obligatory for them to do so. Again, I think that one would expect any compassionate and caring council to do that.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: Will the Minister describe the major occupational health and safety measures implemented during the past year? How has the department's performance compared with the performance for the previous year?

The Hon. Anne Levy: This is really one of the success stories of the department of which we can be justifiably very proud. The department has done a great deal in terms of rehabilitation measures for anyone who has been injured. It has developed a clear policy which states its commitment to rehabilitation. A number of injured workers have been successfully placed in positions more appropriate to their

current abilities, and workers have ultimately returned to full-time work, even though they have suffered quite serious injuries, as a result of this rehabilitation process.

There has been a policy and code of practice for the prevention of RSI. That code clearly outlines preventive strategies which are adopted to minimise the risks of over-use injury. There have been a series of training sessions for managers and staff where work practices have been reviewed and, if necessary, revised to make the work place safer. There has been a good deal of emphasis on manual handling, which involves quite a lot of risks, particularly in the libraries area of the department's activities, because books can be very heavy things to move around. A whole range of initiatives have been introduced to address manual handling procedures. Staff have been trained. Better storage systems have been devised so that less manual handling is required. A joint project has been established with students of the School of Industrial Design to create sound ergonomic principles for trolleys which, of course, are widely used in libraries.

Every work related accident or incident has been examined to identify its cause, and appropriate work place modifications have been taken to minimise any future risks. As a result, workers compensation premiums for the department in all its divisions have dropped considerably. Obviously the insurance industry is satisfied that our activities are considerably reducing any possible workers compensation payments. In 1987-88 the department's workers compensation premium was \$750 000; in 1988-89 it dropped to \$335 000; and in the current year, 1989-90, it has dropped even further to \$170 000. That is a remarkable reduction in a period of three years and a tribute to the recognition of the work done in the department to reduce accidents and their consequences to workers.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to the Minister's opportunity to give certain directions, or hold various sanctions against local governing bodies, I paraphrase a question which I put to the Minister of Emergency Services, and to the Deputy Commissioner of Police in another Committee this morning. What is the normal procedure when a corporate body or an individual initiates an inquiry with the police relative to an alleged felony and, having made that inquiry, is not given the result, but the result is passed on to a Minister of the Crown? Is that normal practice?

The record will show that the expectation was that the individual or corporate body that made the initial inquiry would be advised of the results of that inquiry. In this particular situation, an inquiry was initiated by the Elizabeth council of its own motion relative to an alleged fund loss some months ago. The inquiry has been completed. The Minister of Local Government is holding the police report, and the council which initiated the inquiry has been denied access to a report on its own inquiry. For what reason has the governing body—the Elizabeth council—been denied access to the information which it itself has sought?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am not sure about this. I certainly have seen a report provided by the police to the Minister on this matter. It was provided for my information. I am sure that it was not intended or expected that I would do other than note the information in the report. I should have thought that whether or not the particular council was informed was a matter for the police, not a matter for me. I took it as a courtesy that the police provided the Minister with the information, but I would in no way regard it as my job to pass on that information to anyone. In fact, I would regard it as a breach of confidentiality for me to do so. Despite what may have been said to the honourable

member this morning in the other Committee, that was a matter between the council and the police. I believe that it would be grossly improper for me to do other than just note the information.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: If the council asked the police where the report was, and the police indicated that it was with the Minister of Local Government and, in turn, the council asked the Minister of Local Government for access to the report which it itself had initiated, does the Minister not believe that there would be a duty to pass the information on to the council? Can the Minister indicate, if not now at a later stage, whether an official request has come from the Elizabeth council for one of its senior officers—elected or otherwise—to make the information available and whether it has been denied?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am not aware of any request having been made of me. Can an answer to this question wait until after the dinner adjournment, when I expect I have another officer who will have more detailed information on this matter?

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I am quite happy about that.

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

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Earlier, when the Minister gave the Committee some information on entrepreneurial activity, she clearly indicated the importance of the Government's role in ensuring that local government in all its facets was not doing anything that was likely to create problems.

The Local Government Finance Authority of South Australia is a body to which the Minister has input and over which she has control. On page 284 of the Auditor-General's Report, footnote 12 indicates that Local Government Finance Authority Securities Pty Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary company which was formerly Hurlprey Pty Limited and which has been registered with a paid-up capital of \$2 and will be utilised when appropriate, to supplement the financial activities of the authority. Has the Minister given due regard to the manner in which a \$2 company may be used to utilise and supplement the financial activities of the authority which is under her direction?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Certainly, LGFA Securities Pty Limited was set up by the LGFA in May of this year. It was done with the approval of the Treasurer in terms of section 21 (2) (a) of the Local Government Financing Authority Act. As stated in the Auditor-General's Report, the company was acquired with the intention of supplementing the LGFA's financial activities to ensure that there was adequate scope to undertake financing arrangements for the benefit of the local government sector in South Australia. As indicated in the Auditor-General's Report, the company has undertaken no business at all to date. When it is deemed appropriate, further capital can be added to the company to enable it to undertake activities.

Certainly, the activities of this company will be reported in the annual report of the LGFA, and we have ensured that it is a legislative requirement for the LGFA to table its annual report including accounts which are audited by the Auditor-General in each House of Parliament.

I am told that the use of companies with a paid-up capital of \$2 is a very common business practice. There is very little point in capitalising a company which has done no business, but the injection of capital some time in the future may be relevant and can readily be undertaken. As I have indicated, there will always be parliamentary scrutiny of the company because it is included in the annual report of the LGFA which is tabled in Parliament and its accounts will be audited by the Auditor-General and reported on.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I acknowledge that the LGFA has been a success story which has been given bipartisan assistance by the Parliament over a long period of time. I do not question the activities of the LGFA. Rather, I query the fact that the Government, which normally goes into convulsions at the thought of a \$2 company, on this occasion seems to have no problem with \$2 companies.

The Hon. Anne Levy: As I indicated, the \$2 company has undertaken no business at this stage and it can obviously be capitalised when necessary.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Has the Minister a car or cellular telephone rented or paid for at taxpayers' expense? When was it installed? What was the cost of acquisition and installation? Also, what was the operating cost in the past financial year and this financial year to date, and will the Minister give a breakdown of local, STD and ISD calls?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I do not have a cellular phone in my car.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: I am quite happy about that. It is surprising what sort of fish you get on the hook at times.

In the SACOSS budget submissions for 1989-90, three recommendations are made by that organisation to the Premier and, undoubtedly, through him to the Minister's department. Recommendation 67 calls for the State Government to liaise with the Local Government Association to further implement State Government policy on local government and human services, in particular, to rationalise program responsibilities and to negotiate agreements. To what degree is the Government currently discussing with the Local Government Association such an integrated effort?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Negotiated agreements between councils and Government agencies in general were certainly a major recommendation of work done at a national level on local government and human services. There is strong support within local government for such negotiated agreements which will establish clear relationships and respective responsibilities between Government and local government bodies and certainly reflect a new spirit of partnership between levels of Government. They can allow local variations of arrangements to suit local circumstances while also allowing both parties to an agreement to ensure that their objectives are achieved effectively.

Local government has been particularly interested in contracts for periods of three to five years and a consequent commitment to funds for that period rather than to normal single year periods. Discussions are going on between the Government and the LGA at an informal level on a range of individual programs, and the Government is certainly happy to discuss any aspect of this where it will lead to a clear benefit in terms of services delivered on the ground. Of course, the Local Government Association was on the Government task force that developed the policy in this regard. We have frequent informal discussions with the LGA on this issue, as we do on a whole range of other matters.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: A number of questions were asked earlier—and were answered well by the Minister—about building fire safety, and so on, particularly in relation to the unfortunate incidents in Sydney. I listened very carefully to the information provided and I think I heard the Minister say that there were building fire safety committees at the local government level. Who are the people on these committees? We would all understand that the effectiveness of the system depends on the degree of competence involved in an inspection based on fire safety. I am not saying that there is anything wrong with the system, I just want to know a little more about it.

The Hon. Anne Levy: There can be a building fire safety committee for each council. The committee always consists of three members. One is an officer of the Department of Local Government who chairs all the fire safety committee meetings around the State. This arrangement ensures a consistency in the system. The other two are local to the council area. One is always the Building Surveyor of the area and the third member is either the Chief Officer or a person nominated by the Chief Officer of either the Metropolitan Fire Service or the Country Fire Services, according to which is appropriate for the council area.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I thought that that was the case, but I wanted to be sure that qualified fire officers were involved.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Yes.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I refer to page 557 of the Program Estimates under the policy area 'Assistance to Local Government'. I note that in the '1989-90 Specific Targets/Objectives' it is proposed that a program be conducted with five councils to increase voter turnout at the 1991 council elections. I am in no way being derogatory when I say that I applaud the optimism of that objective. At this stage, can the Minister indicate whether the five councils have already been selected or is that an overall umbrella statement?

The Hon. Anne Levy: There are six large councils in the metropolitan area where voter turnout is consistently low. It is these six councils, which between them represent over a third of the State's population, that we wish to target to see if more can be done to increase voter turnout. The six councils are Salisbury, Woodville, Noarlunga, Marion, Tea Tree Gully and Enfield. The average turnout for elections in those council areas in elections this year was 10 per cent, compared to 25 per cent for the rest of the State. A turnout of 25 per cent is bad enough, but 10 per cent is an appalling response.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: It is very sad.

The Hon. Anne Levy: It is very sad, indeed. Five of those six large councils have agreed, as has the Local Government Association, to participate in a program to increase voter turnout. Unfortunately, the Salisbury council has not, at this stage, agreed to participate in such a campaign. However, a committee has been formed already for this purpose, even though local government elections are at least 18 months away. That committee is chaired by a representative of the Marion council. A budget has been provided for the campaign, which is contributed to by the councils, the Local Government Association and the Government, through the Department of Local Government. It is hoped that with a long lead time and vigorous activity, that voter turnout can be improved, specifically in these five council areas.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: I applaud the Minister on the effort that is proposed and I wish it well. I refer again to page 557 of the Program Estimates and note that under last year's 'Issues/Trends' the comment was made that the quality of human resources and the adequacy of education and training for local government industry needs attention. I note that this year, under 'Specific Targets/Objectives' it is proposed that there be a review and implementation of new arrangements for education and training within the industry. Has a conclusion been reached and is there now a finite program, or proposal, as to how this area will be tackled?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I do not think we have a final answer at this stage. Certainly, the need for better education and training programs, and a greater commitment to training by councils, has been identified in the National Review of Local Government Labour Markets, which was conducted jointly through the Local Government Ministers' Council throughout Australia. It has also become very

obvious as a necessity in negotiations in relation to award restructuring, which are occurring within the local government industry, and certainly the Government wants to work with industry to ensure that training arrangements are effective and can underpin more productive local government.

The Government has initiated a review of the Industry Training Council to look at its role and its past performance. In addition, we have agreed to work with the LGA to examine the concept put forward by the association for an institute of local government studies. A working party was established by the LGA, which recently reported to me and also to the President of the LGA. Unfortunately, that group could not reach agreement that a new industry training body was required, though everyone acknowledged the need for a commitment to training and the need for further discussions between interested parties. Therefore, the exact form of any new arrangements will have to await further discussions between unions and employer bodies within the industry about award restructuring. However, we will continue our interest and our support for any industry initiatives.

Through the award restructuring arrangements there must be negotiations involving employer, employee and Government arrangements; a tripartite system which looks at aspects of training. So, we hope that further work can be done in this area.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: SACOSS recommendation No. 68 to the Government suggested the State Government support and closely liaise with local government to encourage the establishment or maintenance of community centres and neighbourhood houses and increase funding to the family support program. These issues particularly related to a local government directive, whereas I am aware that some of those support services in the past have been provided to the communities through other Ministers' lines. Is the Minister able to indicate whether this direction will be taken up as a total initiative of local government or has SACOSS been advised that it has no intention of fulfilling this recommendation?

The Hon. Anne Levy: This matter comes under the auspices of the Minister of Community Welfare. I am not aware of the state of negotiations which may be occurring between that Minister and either individual councils or the Local Government Association.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Recommendation No. 69 states:

The State Government continues to support the provision of community information at a local level in cooperation with local government through a range of agencies including councils, public libraries and community information centres. The State Government therefore needs to clarify its policy position on the funding of community based information centres.

Has the Minister addressed that issue? I am fully appreciative of the tremendous amount of work which has been done by Yvonne Allan over a long period in providing community information which has wide application over many areas of Government activity and has been under the auspices of the Local Government Department by way of grant.

The Hon. Anne Levy: A great deal has been occurring in this regard through the Community Information Support Service of S.A. and also with the Public Libraries Board. As the honourable member will be aware, there are now 19 community information centres around the State which are funded. The responsibility for their maintenance and development has been transferred to the Libraries Board in view of the close relationship between libraries and information services. There will be no further free standing community information services established but it is expected that community information will be provided in association with the public library system around the State. There are very

exciting plans for the development of information bases, which will be available through the computers being installed in all the libraries. All library information services will have access to a Statewide data base on community information, and will also be able to add local information which is relevant to the particular area. This is an extremely exciting development, it will probably take a couple of years before it can be fully implemented, but it does seem to be welcome very generally.

The 19 free standing information services will continue and there has been a lot of discussion regarding the development of a new and equitable funding base for these information services. Funding for those centres seems to have grown in an *ad hoc* manner with little rhyme or reason as to the amounts received by each information centre. In total they are to receive \$373 000 in this current year, and we are also providing up to \$100 000 for development of the community information services within public libraries.

We have been attempting to develop a subsidy system which relates to that used by the Grants Commission—without being identical—that a certain proportion (I think 50 per cent) of the funds will be allocated on a *per capita* basis, reflecting the size of the population which the centre is servicing, while the remaining 50 per cent will be distributed according to a needs formula which is related, but not identical, to that used by the Grants Commission in determining disability factors between local councils. The special disability factor has been derived by using many of the indices which the Grants Commission uses in determining its disability factors but not all of them. Obviously the type of soil in the region and the rainfall are not relevant in considering disabilities with regard to information, however relevant they may be to disabilities in regard to raising rates.

Every information centre has been promised not to have its funding cut and it will take a number of years to phase in this new formula. Those centres currently being funded above the level which they would receive on the new formula will continue to receive that amount rather than get a cut. Those centres which receive funding below the level of the new formula will, over a period of years, be brought up to the requisite level. In this way we will get a more equitable distribution of funding to the information centres. The new formula will be phased in over three years with a guarantee that no information centre will have the funding cut this year, but not necessarily in the subsequent two years after the introduction.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: After the election.

The Hon. Anne Levy: No. It is a question of phasing in and giving people warning of future likely funding so that they have time to adjust and plan for this rather than suddenly receive information.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Is the Minister able to identify to the Committee those persons who are nominally attached to the Department of Local Government who are not currently involved in the Department of Local Government and whose salary is being met in part or whole, or not at all, by the Department of Local Government? Two examples are the Deputy Director of the Department who is on leave of absence, I believe, for two years: does his substantive position still stand at the end of that period? I suspect that there is no payment to Mr Lennon whilst he is away. Mr Hermann is currently doing service at Port Adelaide, but is he paid in any way by the department? Are other officers on extended leave or on secondment from the department? If so, what are the details?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will ask the Director of the department, who has responsibility for these matters, to present the reply.

Ms Dunn: The department can provide exact details of all officers who are seconded out. To the best of my knowledge, Mr Hermann is the only officer of the department who is working elsewhere and who is being paid by the department. Mr Hermann is on an exchange program with the Deputy Town Clerk of Port Adelaide. During the 12 month exchange, Port Adelaide council continued to pay the Deputy Town Clerk and the department continued to pay Mr Hermann so that their superannuation and other benefits were not interrupted. The conditions of service are somewhat different. As a training and development opportunity and to increase the amount of expertise within the department about how local government works, we participated with Port Adelaide in that exchange. We have a small number of other officers who are seconded to other departments or who for one reason or another are on leave without pay. We can give the names of those positions, if that is of interest. The team leader of the Human Resources Team is in the Office of Housing for six months, but we have no other major staff movements. Mr Lennon is on leave without pay, but his leave is without pay from the Public Service.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In effect, his substantive position as Deputy Director is not being held over.

Ms Dunn: It is not being held over for Mr Lennon. He took leave from the Public Service rather than from that position.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In relation to Mr Hermann, would it be the expectation of the Minister or the department that by virtue of the fact that he is being paid by the department he is denied the opportunity of appointment to special leadership roles at Port Adelaide?

Ms Dunn: No.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Recently, Mr Hermann was nominated from the floor of the council to take over a role in relation to senior secretarial duties for a particular purpose and was denied that role because he was being paid by the Local Government Department and was not considered to be eligible for the position. I find it rather strange and unfortunate if, for the benefit of someone who is there for training purposes, he is denied an opportunity to fulfil a duty to the position held.

Ms Dunn: The agreement was made between the CEO of Port Adelaide council and me, rather than between the Minister and the council, that Mr Hermann would engage in all duties associated with being the manager of administration at the council. Indeed, he was the returning officer at the recent elections. He has held a number of responsible positions. He is secretary to the council, the executive officer to the council itself and has had an opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities. If the council has chosen in one area not to appoint him, it is an isolated occasion. We have been delighted with the way that the scheme has operated and we will be seeking to provide similar opportunities with other councils and officers of the department when the opportunity arises. We will seek to make those opportunities when we can.

Mr ROBERTSON: I wish to follow up the issue raised by the member for Mitchell earlier about the turnout at local government elections and the various mechanisms, devices, ploys and incentives that can be given by councils to entice their voters to get out and vote. At this time a plebiscite is being conducted by Brighton council to ascertain the views of residents on various options about amalgamations. To get a valid return the council will have to

entice a significant number of ratepayers to go out and vote on that question, otherwise any result that comes out of it will be open to some question.

I raise this issue because I was on the phone this afternoon with a constituent whose wife is disabled and who cannot vote. The constituent had rung the council to ask whether a postal vote could be sent out. The council said, 'No, you have to come in and vote. We cannot handle a postal vote. It is not a Federal or State election.' This raised the question of what powers councils have under the Act specifically to aid people with disabilities to vote, on the one hand, and on the other hand, what powers do councils have to advertise that facility? The suggestion by my constituent was that the council should have advertised the availability of postal votes, that something should have been put in the local paper to advertise that the plebiscite was on. It should have provided a cut-out advertisement in the newspaper so that people wishing to have a postal vote could fill it in and send it to the council so that a postal vote could be sent out.

I ask the question in the context that clearly the council does not have to abide by the same regulations as the Federal and State electoral officers. Normally, the council provides its own returning officers for these ballots. If we are to have a meaningful turn-out, councils need to go some way down the track not only to advertise the plebiscite but also to make it as easy as possible for people who have disabilities, are sick, are away, are ill or are out of town on the day to cast an absentee vote.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Councils have the power under the Act to have absentee and postal voting. There is no compulsion on them to do so, but they have the power to have absentee and postal voting. In fact, in the recent poll held in Mitcham the council made provision for absentee and postal voting for Mitcham residents. If Brighton council has chosen not to make such facilities available, it is a matter for the council and its electors. Certainly, there is nothing to stop them from providing these facilities. There is a provision that a council cannot have entirely postal voting; in other words, it cannot have no other form of voting, without specific permission for that to occur.

There has even been a case where such specific permission was granted. To have postal or absentee voting for cases such as the honourable member raises for people who really need such facilities to be able to participate in a poll is well within the power of any local council to implement.

Mr ROBERTSON: To complicate the issue even further, the constituent was told, 'You are over 70 and you do not have to vote, anyway.' This was not quite in the spirit of the Act.

The Hon. Anne Levy: That is totally wrong. Voting in local government elections is not compulsory at any age, and certainly at age 70 one is not disbarred from voting in council any more than in State or Federal elections. It appears that a course of education in the provisions of the Local Government Act would be required urgently for the officer who gave that information.

Mr ROBERTSON: Brighton has had a good track record in getting people out to vote, but in this instance it might have tried harder. It is in the council's interests to try harder in matters such as the plebiscite in order to get a good turn-out—otherwise the result will be open to question.

I turn now to something else related to the beachside councils and last year's amendments to the Dog Act. Have those new provisions had any effect on irresponsible dog owners—rather than the dogs—who allow their dogs to run free and to do things that free-running dogs tend to do in parks and, in particular, on beaches? I had a telephone

conversation with a constituent yesterday who complained that many of the beachside councils have not enforced the provisions of the Dog Act and that, particularly in areas of dry sand that are not regularly cleansed by the tide, there is a substantial build-up of dog faeces that has accumulated all winter and that, on the first few days of summer, there will be a fair admixture of dog faeces amongst the grains of sand on metropolitan beaches.

The Hon. Anne Levy: We have no statistics on that matter at all. It is really a matter for councils and for the courts; the new amendments came into operation only on 1 July this year so perhaps many dog owners have not yet heard about them. It will certainly be of interest to collect such statistics at a later stage but as yet we have no information on the results of the new legislation.

Mr ROBERTSON: I have some sympathy with beachside councils because they have more than their fair share of reserves to maintain—onshore reserves as well as beaches. Many of them are small and this legislation places some burden on their resources but, if they are not prepared to administer the provisions of the Dog Act, the Boating Act, backyard burning and other matters of which they have charge, the legislation simply lies there and nothing happens. Dogs are and always have been a particular problem on the beach.

I note that, during the 1989-90 year, it is planned to encourage councils to implement more effective measures to ensure equal opportunity amongst staff (Program Estimates, page 557). I know that this matter has been touched upon to some extent earlier today but what action does the Minister plan to take to support the development of equal opportunity and to encourage equal opportunity at local council level?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Certainly, the Government is fully committed to the development of equal employment opportunity in local government as much as in any other section of the economy. The Department of Local Government has supported the Equal Employment Opportunity Working Party which was established by the Local Government Association. It has also participated in a national equal employment opportunity subcommittee through the Local Government Ministers council and it is also developing proposals for draft legislation relating to personnel practices and equal employment opportunity. In addition, it is providing funds for a joint project with the Municipal Officers Association for the appointment of an EO officer this year, who will be based in that association's office to work with councils in developing EO programs. The Government is also seeking to develop an Aboriginal group apprenticeship scheme this year in conjunction with industry groups and it is participating in the development of an Aboriginal employment strategy for local government in conjunction with the Department of Employment and Training.

In addition, we assist the Industry Training Council's program 'Skills For Success' and assist organisations such as the Australian Local Government Women's Association. In conjunction with a group of women in management in councils throughout the State, we are working to develop strategies for supporting greater participation of women in council workforces. Women currently make up only 26 per cent of the local government workforce throughout the State and are fairly limited in the range of jobs they occupy. This is not unusual for women in any industry but it is felt that, through the measures suggested, more could be done in ensuring equal employment opportunities in the local government workforce.

Mr ROBERTSON: I turn to the next line on the page, where there is a statement about consultation with Aborig-

inal communities to evolve and negotiate forms of local government appropriate to the Aboriginal lands. I am aware that the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act at the moment confers powers on the Pitjantjatjara council and communities which in many ways exceed the powers of local government authorities in the rest of South Australia. I wonder whether the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act itself might be used as a model in some ways for other areas of the State and for other communities, or whether it is intended to start from scratch and, by consultation, to evolve some form of local government that is felt to be adaptable and flexible enough to accommodate the various needs of different communities. When that has been negotiated, is it proposed to write it into the Local Government Act or to somehow amend the relevant lands Acts (the Maralinga Tjarutja Land Rights Act and the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act)?

The Hon. Anne Levy: We are not trying to run before we can walk in this respect, and the question of how any legislation would be implemented comes second to the question of what one is trying to implement. There have been numerous discussions. Last year, the Government commissioned Mr Don Dunstan to consult with Aboriginal communities and to provide a report on local government in those communities and he recently presented his report, which is still being considered by the Government.

In particular, numerous Aboriginal communities have requested that we go no further on this matter at this time. It is felt that the final form of the ATSIC legislation being considered in Canberra needs to be known and its full implications worked through before we go any further in considering the local government aspect. Obviously, the ATSIC legislation could bear a strong relation to the matters that we are considering and it is felt to be premature to continue to work further towards some solutions in this regard before being fully aware of ATSIC and its implications. So, at the moment, not very much is happening in that regard but, obviously, once ATSIC is settled, we will be able to look at this question again in more detail.

Mr ROBERTSON: It may be that having the power already vested in the Aboriginal organisations on the lands is the way to go. What happens under the Pitjantjatjara Act may be most appropriate. That tends to take the power away from individual communities and give it to the council, and that may be the most appropriate form. I wondered what the people themselves thought about that. Presumably, after Dunstan's report has been looked at, we will know some of the answers.

The Hon. Anne Levy: We may. It is the communities themselves who have suggested that we should await the outcome of ATSIC before considering these matters any further, so we will certainly abide by their suggestion.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Will the Minister describe how she sees the current negotiations with respect to the Stirling council? The funds that were provided to the Stirling council to assist with the settlement of claims have, as the Minister now knows, been exhausted, and the council has now made a further request in writing for an extra \$2 million. Will the Minister say whether that funding is to be made available? Will she also indicate how she considers the total payment should be made by the Stirling council, recognising that it is to come at a later stage?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The total settlement is really 99.9 per cent worked out. Mr Mullighan, before becoming Mr Justice Mullighan, has done an incredible job in settling the various claims to the mutual satisfaction of all parties. We can be very grateful to him for having achieved this result without the further expenditure of millions of dollars on

legal fees which the previous procedure being followed was generating.

The Stirling council certainly was given a loan of \$12.5 million from the Government to pay the money owing to the plaintiffs, and it has recently requested a further sum which, I understand, is greater than definitely required for settling the outstanding claims but which incorporates a safety margin. This request is still with the Treasurer, and I cannot give any reply at this stage. In recent months, the total liability of Stirling council has been determined. For nine years that was an unknown quantity. The claimants will finally receive the compensation for which they have been waiting for nine years. Therefore, instead of being a debt to 120 different ratepayers, the Stirling council's debt becomes one debt to the Government.

With respect to the settlement of this debt, we have commenced negotiations with the council as to what proportion of that debt it can be expected to meet. There is agreement on all sides that Stirling council is not able to fund a debt of \$12.5 million or more. It has not yet been determined what is a reasonable sum for Stirling council to fund. When I say that it has not been determined, I mean that discussions are proceeding in that regard, and a figure will need to be arrived at as to what is a reasonable contribution for Stirling council to make to that debt, without imposing impossible rate rises or reductions of services to the inhabitants of Stirling. The remainder, of unknown size, which Stirling council will not be able to fund must obviously have another means of funding determined for it.

Preliminary discussions have involved the Local Government Association and Treasury officers as to different possible arrangements or schemes that could be used for meeting the remaining debt. At this stage it would be impossible to be more precise as to those arrangements. Obviously, such discussions will be lengthy and detailed. One reason for their not having proceeded very far to date is that it was fairly difficult to talk in a vacuum when one did not know what sum one was talking about. However, the actual figures should be known in the not too distant future. It is obviously much easier to talk about a specific sum than about a vague guesstimate. At least we have quantified the debt, and that certainly allows us to get to the nitty-gritty of where the hard cash will come from.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: As a supplementary question, the Minister mentioned the desire to determine the contribution of that council. As I understand it, this process has been going on for some considerable time. Certainly, the process was started during the time of the previous council, and I thought that negotiations were nearing an end at the time of the change of council. I am not quite sure what has happened since then but it seems rather strange that those negotiations are still continuing and that we have not reached a stage where the Stirling council knows what is required of it.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am certainly not aware of an agreement having been nearly reached with the previous council. There were some discussions at that stage but they were largely guesstimates rather than firm indications.

Certainly with the new council a completely different situation arose. About a month ago I received a request from the Chair of the Stirling council that detailed discussions on this matter should start, and that request has been acceded to. I may be out in my timing, but the request was received from the Chair of the Stirling council only recently.

Negotiations will obviously have to take place because there may well be areas of disagreement in terms of what is reasonable for Stirling to pay; that will involve investigation of rate revenues, rating capacity, reserves, assets,

liabilities—other than the debt to the Government—and so on. I do not expect it to be resolved too rapidly.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Prior to the elections?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I can assure the honourable member that discussions are proceeding between officers of the Treasury, the Local Government Department and Stirling council, none of whom are in any way involved in the election.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: I understand that. The Local Government Association has established an indemnity scheme. How much involvement, if any, has occurred on the part of the Government in assisting the Local Government Association to establish that scheme? Does the Minister believe that the scheme as it is now will mean that the State will never have to face the catastrophe that arose out of the 1980 Ash Wednesday fires?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I most sincerely hope the answer to the honourable member's last question is 'Yes'. Since the last disastrous fires, the Local Government Association took the initiative to establish a mutual liability scheme. Constant discussions and negotiations have taken place regarding this matter, as a result of which the Government has been able to assist and, I believe, greatly improve the scheme, particularly by agreeing to take on the reinsurance position of a State Government guarantee to meet excess liability over \$2 million in any one instance. In return for this reinsurance position, the Government receives an actuarially calculated premium. As a result of this Government indemnification, the scheme has lower premiums and greater stability than otherwise would have been the case without Government involvement.

Investigations are occurring on a national level regarding a national local government insurance scheme, and discussions and negotiations have occurred at a national level with representatives from all the States. I believe there were some fears nationally that the establishment of the South Australian scheme might in some way cut across the national scheme. As a result of the Stirling disaster, the pressure to achieve the scheme was greater in South Australia than in any other State. The South Australian LGA has set up its scheme which is now operative.

At a national level, discussions are still continuing, and it could well be another 12 months or more before any national scheme became operative. Quite obviously, South Australian councils did not want to wait for that to occur. However, we have received assurances from all sides that any national scheme which may come into operation in the future will not be incompatible with the South Australian scheme. So, it will be possible—if requested or if desired—to transfer from one to the other. We certainly did not want to hinder the establishment of a national scheme, but likewise we did not want South Australian councils to have to wait for the slower procedures which are occurring at a national level. However, hopefully with such schemes we will never have a repetition of the Stirling situation.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: The Minister or her department may be aware that a large number of councils at present are dissatisfied with certain actions of the Department of Environment and Planning (the responsibility of your colleague, the Minister for Environment and Planning). I refer to a couple in the Willunga council area; the activities of the Urban Land Trust, and the compulsory acquisition which is taking place there; and the Burnside council, with the interference on the part of the Government in its SDP. A very real general concern exists regarding the proposed changes to the Planning Act in regard to EIS procedures.

The Minister might be aware that the Local Government Association has prepared quite a stinging attack in regard to the changes that are foreshadowed in the White Paper. I am also concerned about some of the activities that are taking place in that area. Earlier this afternoon Government members referred to the decision that has been made by some councils to move away from a scheme which attracted notional value. Certainly, in my area that is causing a lot of concern about the action of council. That is why some councils are moving away from a situation where they have previously been able to provide a rural rate rebate.

I was interested in what the Minister had to say in answer to members opposite this afternoon. Is the Minister of Local Government able—and I recognise that she would have some difficulty in having a responsibility for or instructing councils in that area—to make representations to councils who have decided to discontinue the rural rebate in recent times to change that decision? Also, is she able to provide a list of the councils that currently provide a rural rebate or are working on the notional value scheme?

The Hon. Anne Levy: As I understand it councils certainly have the power to give a rural rebate if they wish. If councils choose not to, that is a matter for them and their electors. Councils are—or are supposed to be—a responsible tier of Government, and the decisions that they make on rating, provided that they are in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act, are a matter between them and their electors.

There are many things I might like councils to do but it is not my business to tell them. I noticed that the Minister for Environment and Planning in the Estimates Committee last night indicated that she had not yet received a submission from the Local Government Association, pending changes in the Planning Act, but that really is not a matter for me as Minister of Local Government. That is between the Minister for Environment and Planning and the Local Government Association.

I am sure that the member is well aware that the Local Government Association deals directly with many different Ministers in the State Government on matters which concern their portfolios. They do not make approaches to other Ministers through me and I would not for a minute suggest it is desirable that they do.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: As to page 188 of the Estimates of Payments, I refer to 'Program 4—Development and Support of the Local Government System'. I refer to the administration expenses, minor equipment and sundries line. Last year the vote was \$260 000, and \$209 720 was spent. For this year, it is suggested that we will spend \$337 000. I have no quarrel with that. I am just seeking some explanation as to where the additional funds will be used and in what way.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The variation can be put down to three factors. Obviously, inflation accounts for part of it but there is also the special allocation for social justice programs and also the operating costs from the septic tank effluent drainage scheme which has been transferred from the Health Commission to local government. So, while it appears to be a big increase in our lines, it will be a corresponding decrease in the Health Commission lines.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: It has been there for years.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Only part of it; only the subsidies, not the operating costs. Now all the people involved are instead forming a unit in the Department of Local Government, so we will have better operating costs on the subsidies and completely administer the whole scheme.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: By way of supplementary comment and not a question; I would suggest that there could have been a qualifier, which might have eliminated the

need for that question. I did note elsewhere the reference that the whole group was transferred, but it did not tie up quite with that line. Further, in relation to page 188, the Local Government Assistance Fund allocation has been reduced this year from \$172 000 to \$120 000. I would appreciate an explanation as to how we are going to effect these economies. Are things working better or do we not need the money?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I think it again relates to a transfer. The Youth Bureau is no longer under the Department of Local Government. Responsibility for the youth grants, along with the Youth Bureau, has been moved to the Minister of Employment and Further Education.

The Hon. R.G. PAYNE: Referring to the Program Estimates, at page 558, I am interested in the 1989-90 specific target/objective (which is almost a motherhood statement):

Continue to offer effective consultancy in all matters relating to financial/personnel management.

I would appreciate some elaboration or explanation of that.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I will ask the Director to answer that question as it is very much a management question.

Ms Dunn: This page covers the budget for the Support Services Division. The Support Services Division consists primarily of financial and corporate services, and there has been a move since the introduction of the Government Management and Employment Act away from the delivery of those services which centrally located people into making the managers do it themselves. The line managers are responsible for their own budgets and they are also responsible for personnel management. The staff, therefore, in this division in support services, offer consultancy services to our own managers.

To put it bluntly, we do not have officers in the personnel section any more. We have staff who ensure that our managers are being effective personnel managers when they do the rest of their jobs. That is the direction the Public Service has been moving in so that line managers have financial and personnel responsibilities, and we attempt to ensure they are very good at their jobs.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Earlier this afternoon when we were dealing with libraries, I asked the question about consultancies and the Minister undertook to obtain that information. In relation to the Local Government Department, as opposed to the libraries, might I ask whether the same information can be provided as to what consultancies have been undertaken over the last five years and to whom, and at what value? Also, for what purpose have the various consultancies have been undertaken? I believe that the Minister would be able to answer this directly—whether those consultancies are tendered for or only some of them are tendered for. What is the basis of issuing the consultancies?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I would be happy to provide that information. We do not have it available today but we will by 6 October.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The final question in relation to that is: is the Minister able to indicate whether there is any evidence within her department from the employees that dance has improved Government work?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am informed that there is no statistical evidence available relating to that.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Not amongst any of the consultancies, either?

Ms Dunn: We have had some workshops at which people have no doubt moved around. It is pretty common practice in management workshops these days. For example, in the course of improving presentation skills and public speaking, we had voice workshops during which people probably walked around counting one, two, three.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Undoubtedly, that will come forward in the information to be provided, if it did occur. I would welcome from the Minister a statement of the policy that she is pursuing on behalf of the Government in relation to boundary changes or amalgamations. What is the Government's specific policy on this issue?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Basically, the Government's policy on amalgamation is that it is the Government's responsibility to ensure that there is an efficient mechanism for boundary changes, when appropriate. It is certainly Government policy that any changes to boundaries should be taken out of the party political arena; that we strongly support the existence of the Local Government Advisory Commission and support it in its independent role in determining recommendations on proposals that are put to it regarding boundary changes. Further, the Government is of the view that proposals for boundary change should be initiated by local government or the electors of a local government area; that it is not the role of Government to put proposals for boundary change; that boundary change is a matter for local government and to the greatest extent possible should be run by local government.

As I am sure the honourable member knows, I have established a committee of review to look at the procedures that are followed by the Local Government Advisory Commission in evaluating proposals that are put before it. There are statutory requirements that the advisory commission must follow when proposals are put to it. There are also practices that the commission has evolved during the time of its existence. As the member obviously knows, the recommendation regarding the change to boundaries in the Blackwood area met with a considerable degree of opposition from some residents of the area who have not expressed their opposition prior to the commission making its recommendations, even though there had been a period of 18 months during which their views could have been expressed. The report on the Blackwood area was the 35th report from the Local Government Advisory Commission relating to council boundaries. The commission had followed exactly the same procedure for this proposal as it had done for the 34 previous proposals.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: In the same time scale?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Not necessarily the same timescale, but it certainly fulfilled its statutory requirements in all cases and had followed the same procedures to evaluate community views on the proposal before it. My setting up the review committee is in no way a criticism of the Local Government Advisory Commission, in that it had quite properly followed exactly the same procedures in this case as it had followed in the previous 34 cases. However, the Blackwood Hills proposal was the first one involving a metropolitan area and it seemed that perhaps the consultation procedures which have been adopted in rural areas were not necessarily the most appropriate procedures to be adopted where metropolitan areas are concerned. Rural communities may well be much tighter communities, with much more discussion of local issues occurring and better information services in the sense that local newspapers are read by the vast majority of the rural population and word of mouth may be a much better way of passing information around rural communities, compared with the situation in metropolitan areas.

The review committee I have established will look at the procedures used by the Local Government Advisory Commission in evaluating proposals which are put before it with particular emphasis on methods of ascertaining community views on proposals but not limited to that aspect. The committee will make recommendations which may require

changes to legislation or may merely require changes to the procedures adopted by the commission or, of course, may suggest no change. That is up to the review committee but I look forward to receiving its report which will be prepared after careful evaluation by the committee of numerous proposals of procedures which could be adopted.

The Local Government Association will be very closely involved in that review committee. It is nominating three members of the committee, and other members of the committee also have a very close association with local government, I feel it appropriate that this committee should consider all the issues relating to the procedures of changes in local government boundaries. I reiterate: local government boundary changes are really a matter for local government and my responsibility as Minister is to see that we have an efficient and workable system for changing local government boundaries when it is deemed appropriate.

Obviously we must have such a system. No-one can say that current local government boundaries are totally immutable and can never be changed so that we must have a procedure which permits council boundary changes to occur, but largely I feel it is a matter for local government and my responsibility is to see that there is an efficient system whereby local government boundaries initiated by local government for the benefit of local government can occur.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Mayor Schaeffer, Alderman Piccolo and Chris Russell are the local government nominees; who are the commissioners or deputy commissioners that are going to be the three persons sitting on the committee? I believe Mr Hayes, QC, is being nominated as one of those three.

The Hon. Anne Levy: He is chairing the committee that is looking at the Mitcham proposal.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: Who are the experts the Minister has called in to make up the complete committee of review? The Minister has stated that people with expertise will be obtained to assist.

The Hon. Anne Levy: Mr John McElhinney has agreed to chair the committee of review. The advisory commission has not yet notified me formally of who the other two nominees will be. I have heard unofficially who they are but it would be inappropriate for me to divulge their names until I have been officially informed by the commission.

People with expert contributions to make have been approached but I have not yet received final confirmation from them as to their ability to serve on the committee of review. It would be inappropriate to release their names at this stage but I shall be happy to make these names publicly available when the official notification has been received.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: At page 188 of the Estimates of Payments the last line says that the Local Government Advisory Commission will receive \$43 500 for this year. It spent only \$33 774 last year. There is a bank of councils which grows almost by the week from Peterborough District Council in the north to Karoonda-East Murray in the south, with a complete blanket of about 17 councils. There is the new council of Sturt; the possible amalgamation beyond that of Glenelg with Brighton; there is the unresolved case of Henley Beach and the counter claims by West Torrens and Woodville; there is the review taking place; there is the unresolved case at Mitcham—how is it expected that all of this work will be undertaken with such a minimal increase in funds? I realise that this is only an estimate of payments, but the set of circumstances now prevailing and the delay in finding solutions to many of those existing inquiries will blow out the figure necessary for this commission.

The Hon. Anne Levy: The honourable member might be right that it is an underestimate because the commission

has 22 proposals before it now. However, the figure quoted is the operating budget of the Local Government Advisory Commission. It covers not only sitting fees but travel and accommodation expenses when the commission travels to undertake hearings. Several of the proposals before the commission relate to the metropolitan area, and it is expected that the expenses for each proposal may well be less where there are no travelling or accommodation expenses for commission members.

Obviously, where there are proposals relating to rural areas, the expenses of the commission will be greater in view of the travelling and accommodation costs, but that does not apply to proposals relating to the metropolitan area, because all the commissioners are resident in Adelaide. The cost of the review, which we discussed in an earlier question, is not included in this line.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: The Building Code of Australia is referred to at page 557 of the Program Estimates. Can the Minister give an update on the implementation of the code?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The purpose of the implementation of the Building Code of Australia is to provide a relevant set of technical building standards that can be adopted by each State and Territory in order to achieve uniformity. This will obviously mean that building products and systems will be acceptable throughout Australia. It will also enable design professionals to design buildings for any location in Australia. It will enable building practices to keep pace with technological advances and allow innovation in building techniques.

Edition 1 of the Building Code of Australia has been established and, so that this can be applied in South Australia, we are producing the necessary administrative provisions. It is hoped that these will go to Parliamentary Counsel soon so that there can be public comment on them towards the end of the year.

We hope that any technical variations can be kept to a minimum but, if necessary, they will also be available for public comment. Our aim is to gazette both the code and the regulations in June or July of next year, after which it is expected that there will be a transition period of 12 months to allow jobs which are already under way to be completed and to allow time for designers and councils to become familiar with the new provisions.

I know the Building Inspection Branch has already held seminars and workshops with people from different councils involved in building, so they can begin the familiarisation process for the new building code. However, it seems obvious that there are great advantages in adopting a uniform code across Australia.

The Hon. R.K. ABBOTT: Have all States adopted the code?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Yes, all States are adopting the code, everyone agrees that uniformity is desirable.

Mr ROBERTSON: Does the Minister have jurisdiction over the operations of the south-western drainage legislation?

The Hon. Anne Levy: That is water resources legislation, so the E&WS Department administers it; it is the same Minister wearing a different hat.

Mr ROBERTSON: I understand that the E&WS has jurisdiction only over potable water. However, I take the Minister's advice. My next question certainly falls within the purview of the Minister's various activities, that is, the interface between councils and the Private Parking Act. Will the Minister take action to encourage councils to support the owners of shopping centres who wish to police the

provisions of the Private Parking Act, particularly as it relates to parking for the disabled?

I am aware that problems occur at Marion Shopping Centre, which have largely been overcome by Westfield inasmuch as it has put car parks near escalators and lifts that may be used by people with disabilities. However, smaller shopping centres such as the one at Hallett Cove experience problems in policing their car park.

It is clear that the owners of the centres do not have the resources to police them. It is equally clear that the police do not have time to police them and that councils do not have the will to police them unless somebody pays them to do so. There appears to be something of a Mexican standoff over car parks for the disabled in most shopping centres at the moment. Will the Minister use her good offices to persuade councils to offer more help, at a nominal fee, to owners of car parks, so that parking for the disabled can be policed and people who do not have the right to park there can be kept out of the way so that people with genuine disabilities can use them?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I agree that many owners do not have the resources to police the parking areas themselves. Of course, they have the power to enter into agreements with councils under the Private Parking Areas Act. I do not have information on all council areas, but we do know that a number of major councils have not made agreements with shopping centre owners, even though they have been approached by the owners regarding this matter. As the member states, financial arrangements are the stumbling block in some cases. It is interesting to note that the City of Adelaide and the North Adelaide Village Shopping Centre are entering into an agreement in relation to the shopping centre car park, so such agreements are feasible and workable, and it will obviously serve as a trial for other council areas and may well be the breakthrough that we are seeking.

Whyalla council has an arrangement for policing its local shopping centre carpark. It is not a negotiated agreement but merely a verbal one, and no cost is involved, but that is perhaps more possible in a country area than in the metropolitan area. The Port Pirie council is about to enter into an arrangement with one of its local shopping centres, but the details are not yet available. We plan to implement in this year's social justice budget strategies which will encourage councils and business communities to provide and enforce adequate parking arrangements for disabled people, and \$25 000 has been allocated for this purpose. We are certainly in the business of encouraging councils to enter into arrangements for the benefit of the disabled in the community.

Mr ROBERTSON: The problem faced by people with a disability in Hallett Cove reached the point where Mrs Jan Cocks actually approached people in the local shopping centre and asked them to carry an advertisement explaining the disabled sticker. She had a number of those advertisements printed, and the whole operation was underwritten by the RAA. She even raised the necessary finance to produce a 30 second television commercial which is now running on all four TV channels. I hope that they will go some way towards alerting the public of South Australia of the need to maintain clear spaces for people in wheelchairs or with various disabilities to allow them to get in and out of their cars and in and out of shopping centres. It illustrates the problem faced by disabled people in the community when they must spend hundreds of hours of their own time to organise a campaign to clear up the parking spaces at the local shopping centres.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I agree, and add the comment that Mrs Cocks has received financial assistance for her cam-

aign. We are working with her in this matter, hopefully for the benefit of disabled people throughout the State.

Mr ROBERTSON: Further to that line, one problem is that councils do not appear to have the resources to police even their own regulations, and I think particularly of parking regulations. At 5 o'clock, when all council inspectors go home, all bets are off, and people park all over the place, regardless of the restrictions that may be in force. It makes it a little hard to expect councils also to police the various other pieces of legislation such as the Noise Abatement Act, air quality regulations with respect to backyard burning, litter controls and the Boating Act relating to the use of jet skis.

It is very difficult to expect small councils in particular to allocate their resources to police those areas: yet they do have to. Can some form of education be directed to councils to suggest to them an order of priorities, perhaps by which they are able to sort out just which areas of direct or deferred power should be policed first, to get them around the dilemma of saying, 'We don't have the resources to do any of it.' It does make matters such as the parking provisions meaningless if they do not have inspectors to police them.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I am sure that the department would be happy to discuss problems that local councils may have in this area. I believe that what is a question of priorities for a particular council is a matter for that council and its electors; it is not something which can be imposed by Government on local councils. As a responsible tier of government, local government needs to make its own priorities in consultation with its electors and devote whatever resources it feels able to raise and put to those responsibilities. As a tier of government local councils face the same difficulties in raising revenue and priorities of expenditure as any other level of government, including both the State and Commonwealth.

Mr ROBERTSON: It is a philosophical point, but the Minister of Marine recently undertook to make it easier for councils to police jet skis off the metropolitan coast by training council inspectors and authorising them under the Act to prosecute people who violated the provisions of the Boating Act. I believe that that sort of action may direct council down the enforcement policing path a little more. Could similar things be done with other deferred powers, because there are many areas that simply are not policed and the excuse or alibi, or whatever, is that the resources are not there? I suspect that partly the expertise and the motivation is not there, either. What can be done to try to motivate councils to police some of these things?

The Hon. Anne Levy: Part of the method of achieving motivation is action by electors. All governments are sensitive to demands from their electors. In terms of encouragement and information, I believe that the department is happy to do everything possible in this regard. I suggest that our project with regard to parking for disabled people, is an example of the type of information sharing strategies, and how the most efficient implementation of them can be encouraged amongst local councils, and certainly the same approach could be taken with other areas. However, the decision must ultimately rest with local government itself.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: Is any provision being made for a situation that will arise before very long when there is no further opportunity for burial in Centennial Park? This is a matter which has been raised by people in the southern metropolitan area who recognise that there is only a limited time for the further use of the Centennial Park and who recognise the need for the provision of further land when the park is no longer available.

The Hon. Anne Levy: I do not think I have the responsibility for the establishment of cemeteries. I have the responsibility for seeing that they are properly administered—or some of them. Honourable members may recall that, a number of years ago, there was a select committee of this Parliament concerning the disposal of human remains and that committee, when it reported to the Legislative Council, certainly recommended re-use of burial sites, under certain carefully controlled conditions.

The select committee made numerous recommendations which have not as yet been implemented, and in terms of initiating legislation, the initiative would lie with the Attorney-General's Department. However, the select committee did make recommendations regarding some sort of rationalisation and tidying up of the administration of cemeteries and ministerial responsibilities in this regard.

On the other hand, I am unaware of any estimate as to the life of Centennial Park or any other cemetery, but I do know that it was found by the select committee that there is a continuing increase in the proportion of cremations following death, as opposed to burials. This upward trend has been occurring for a number of years and, to my knowledge, the upward trend shows no sign of ceasing. To that extent, it reduces the pressure on land availability for burials. Under our current legislation, the establishment of cemeteries can be regarded as the responsibility of councils or any group which wishes to establish a cemetery. At the moment it is not my responsibility to ensure that there are cemeteries.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON: It is appropriate for the Minister to seek information which would suggest about how much time there is before Centennial Park will no longer be available?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I understand that the trustees of Centennial Park have made an estimate that it will be 10 to 15 years before the park is full. Obviously, it depends not only on the death rate but on the cremation rate which, as I said, is increasing. However, the trustees of Centennial Park are already considering the matter of a possible new site to adequately fulfil the responsibility they feel in providing graves.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Minister made a statement at the mid-north regional organisation meeting at Eudunda about a fortnight ago in relation to boundary changes. The Minister is recorded as saying that it is a matter of economic necessity, as there was a great cost efficiency if boundaries included larger areas. Is that a reasonable synopsis of the Minister's statement?

The Hon. Anne Levy: I cannot recall the actual words of my speech but, certainly, numerous local government bodies have stated that they feel that it is essential, on the grounds of economic efficiency, that council boundary changes occur.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The Minister would be aware that Port Adelaide, Woodville and Hindmarsh councils have been involved in a series of discussions. One of the early decisions, recommendations or positions, taken by that group is that they might have a council of 50 members. That decision is recorded on 11 April 1989. I believe that it would cease to be a council and would become a nightmare with figures of that nature. Has the Minister any view, as Minister, relative to the maximum size of a council?

The Hon. Anne Levy: As Minister, I do not have any official view as to the size or composition of local councils. I can see that a balance needs to be obtained between a reasonably sized body, which is capable of functioning efficiently as a council, while retaining sufficient contact between the electors and their elected representatives. This becomes very hard to do on local issues if the number of electors per elected member is too large. What is a desirable ratio is a matter of opinion, about which there could probably be endless argument. Obviously, this is the sort of matter that would be very closely looked at by the Local Government Advisory Commission in any proposal that was put to it. These matters are very much the kind that the commission would consider and, as the members of the commission all have a local government background, I would expect that they would do so with a great deal of common sense, knowing the situation or the area so well.

The Hon. B.C. EASTICK: The record would show that the amount of money available from the Federal Government grant, which is handled by the Minister's department, went from \$57 348 225 to \$57 915 000, which is an increase of only .99 per cent. In fact, the Chairman of the commission, in the report which was signed on 24 August and which was tabled in the House quite recently, made the point that:

In the case of funding constraints, for the first time in the history of the general purpose funds, South Australia received a real reduction in its allocation in 1988-89 and this situation worsened in 1989-90, when the State's cash grant increased by less than one per cent, giving a real reduction of around 6.5 per cent.

Has the Minister prevailed upon the Premier when next at the Premiers Conference to draw attention to the very real problem which is developing in relation to local government funding?

The Hon. Anne Levy: The Premier has, in fact, already done this. This money is Commonwealth money and the South Australian Government has no say in the amount that comes to South Australia. However, the Commonwealth Government has agreed to conduct a review of the relativities between the States and the method of distribution of the funds between the States. While we have disability factors and needs taken into account in the distribution within States, the distribution between States has, until now, been done purely on a per capita basis, and the Premier has got the Federal Government agree to a review of the system by which funds are allocated to the different States. If disability factors were brought into the allocation between States as well as within States, South Australia could expect to gain a larger proportion than it has in the past. Equally, of course, the States of New South Wales and Victoria would probably get a smaller reduction and will therefore not be very happy about any review which might reduce their funding. We do hope that this review may result in a greater allocation to South Australia.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the examinations completed. I lay before the Committee a draft report.

Mr ROBERTSON: I move:

That the draft report be the report of this Committee.

Motion carried.

The CHAIRMAN: That completes the business of Committee B.

At 9.57 p.m. the Committee concluded.