

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 21 September 1993

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Chairman:

The Hon. J.C. Bannon

Members:

Mr M.K. Brindal

The Hon. Jennifer Cashmore

Mr K.C. Hamilton

Mr J.A. Quirke

Mr R.B. Such

The Hon. J.P. Trainer

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Children's Services Office, \$53 846 000

Departmental Advisers:

Dr I. McPhail, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Education, Employment and Training.

Ms S. Page, Acting Director, Children's Services Sector.

Mr G. Lewkowicz, Director of Resources, Children's Services Sector.

Ms E. Les, Acting Director, Policy Planning and Programs.

Ms K. Versteegh, Assistant Director, Youth Programs, State Youth Affairs.

Mr R. Symonds, Assistant Director, State Youth Affairs.

The CHAIRMAN: Mr Such, I take it you are leading for the Opposition. Would you like to make a statement prior to the Minister making hers?

Mr SUCH: I want to focus on the tragedy that confronts our young people in South Australia and the fact that this Government has sold out our young people. At this late stage, just prior to an election, this Government is coming up with some policies and initiatives which are far too little and far too late.

At the moment we have in our society a generation gap which is wider than it has ever been before and which has been exacerbated by this Government and the Federal Government. We have a situation where older people are frightened of young people, and this has been exacerbated, as I indicated before, by the policies and lack of initiative of this Government.

At over 39 per cent, South Australia has the highest youth unemployment in mainland Australia, and that is an outrage and a disgrace. We have young people who, through no fault of their own, cannot get jobs or training. We now have a situation where we have young, unemployed people who are so ashamed that they do not come out during the day. They are, in effect, nocturnal; they watch videos during the day.

Through no fault of their own they cannot get work, and they are so ashamed that they sit at home, often with the support and knowledge of their parents, who likewise are embarrassed and ashamed that their children cannot get work. It is a situation that has been created by this Government. We

have seen little action by this Government to address that tragedy.

This Government has had no youth charter. We have Government departments and agencies which have no policies that are specifically directed at young people. Their approach to young people, if any, has tended to be hostile and unwelcoming. Is it any wonder that our young people are hostile and aggressive? We can be thankful we do not see more evidence of negative behaviour, given what has happened to and been foisted on young people by this Government.

In the lead-up to an election, after nearly four years in office and nearly 20 years going back beyond that, this Government, in its dying days, is now talking about a youth statement, a youth employment strategy. That is an outrage, when young people have their hopes shattered and their dreams destroyed.

Even at this stage we have not seen those documents, policies and initiatives. We have seen some last minute, cobbled together attempts to create the illusion that this Government is serious about youth employment. We have had statements in the budget about 1 000 trainees being taken on board by this Government when in actual fact there has been no signed agreement with the Commonwealth. This Government is piggy-backing on Commonwealth funding in the hope that through job skills, and Career Start it can provide the illusion that it is actually spending money and doing something positive for young people.

In respect of the traineeships, it has been a last minute attempt to create an illusion in the community. Of the 400 that were on board in terms of traineeships, fewer than 150 of them have a job within the Government or can expect to get one.

We have had a deceitful and deceptive campaign of recent days to try to create the impression that this Government is concerned and interested in the welfare of our young people. Our young people are terrific people and do not deserve the sort of treatment that they have received from this Government. We notice that this Government does not have a youth affairs portfolio any more. That is an indication of the importance it places on youth matters. Recently, the head of the Youth Affairs Department left. Now we can expect, given the record of this Government, that there will be no replacement for that person. Young people are not getting a fair share of Government resources, whether that is at the Federal, State, or local government level. Young people miss out, teenagers miss out and then the community is surprised that they get themselves into difficulty. Some of them exhibit behavioural problems, whether it is expressed in terms of graffiti, vandalism and so on.

The community and this Government cannot have it both ways. If you ignore young people and treat them unfairly and inequitably then you can expect that sort of reaction. We notice that as a community young people are fed a diet of violence through videos, films and magazines and then, shock, horror, the community is outraged because of crimes that are committed against people. What can we expect when we continually allow that sort of material to be foisted on young people? It is fundamentally a Federal issue, but this State Government has sat on its hands in terms of raising some of those concerns in addressing fundamental questions about values which are taught in schools. It is not surprising that we see this sort of behaviour by a minority of young people and we can be thankful that the majority of young

people have enough good sense and stability to withstand the negative onslaught from this Government.

We have reached the stage where we now have a cycle of unemployment extending from grandparents through parents down to children; an outrageous situation and most noticeable in areas which are represented by members opposite. So much for social justice for our young people. When we have reached a stage where young people can have shoes taken off them in Rundle Mall, then we have to seriously question the direction in which this Government has been leading the State. There are many more things that could be said, but this Government has finally discovered young people in the dying days of its rule, in the lead-up to the election, but, tragically, what it is doing is far too little and far too late.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am happy to address some of the matters that the honourable member has raised. I will be addressing those within the questions and under the appropriate lines. I would like to make a statement, particularly with respect to the formation of the new department. This is the first Estimates Committee under which we have seen the formation of this department. The formation of the Department of Education, Employment and Training was among the first four of the new departmental structures to be announced. It brings together the children's services Office, the Department of Education and the Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education. These departments have a strong unifying theme and their closer relationship will provide the opportunities for South Australians to enter and re-enter the care, education and training services of the State in a way that is not limited or affected by traditional bureaucratic boundaries created by departmental structures. Strong educational purpose underlines the development.

Early childhood education, particularly the establishment of fundamental literacy and numeracy skills, can be enhanced by the strengthening links. In turn, the post-compulsory sector, where vocational education and higher education are increasingly linked to the SACE experience, demands innovative organisational curriculum and articulation linkages unknown just a few years ago. The boundaries between the conventional areas of care, education and training, and the older departments that represented them, are becoming increasingly blurred. This dynamic is creative and challenging and the new arrangements provide an environment in which the demands of the learning community can be matched by organisational flexibility and responsiveness. The approach to the creation of the new department is based on, firstly, a re-affirmation that children and students are our primary focus. Secondly, it is based on a vision that all South Australians will be able to realise their personal, intellectual and employment potential and a mission statement that emphasises the provision of high quality care, education and training which is flexible, responsible, responsive and equitable and which stresses the pursuit of excellence and community and industry participation.

Thirdly, there is recognition that the size and scale of the new department requires a decentralised approach to organisation. Therefore, an organisational concept has been developed that provides for a three sector approach, based on the existing Children's Services Office, the school education and vocational education, employment and training areas. This acknowledges the different histories, structures and practices of these sectors. An Office of the Chief Executive (which will include strategic planning, coordination, budgeting, youth affairs and higher education functions) will act on behalf of the departmental executive to facilitate a high level

of cross sectoral activity, and work to achieve outcomes that meet educational needs and enable the best use of facilities.

Fourthly, the provision of corporate services across a wide area of activities is being examined, and an approach is under way to decide on those which will be provided DEET wide and those which will continue to be supplied by the sectors. Finally, staff, union and client involvement through a wide ranging communication, consultation and working party involvement is drawing on the creativity and the skills of those working with us. I expect that the functional statements and organisational structures will be available for announcement in mid-October.

As indicated, we will look at the budget lines in a number of sectors, the first of these being children's services. South Australia is in a position to respond positively to the demand of the future for children's services and we are currently engaged in the largest expansion in child-care places ever undertaken in the history of this State. South Australia is a national leader in access to preschool education programs, the move to develop nationally consistent child-care regulations and the development of an accreditation system for child-care centres.

The new Commonwealth-State child-care program will result in the establishment of 80 to 90 new child-care services over the next three years. It is estimated that, when fully implemented by the Children's Services Office, this will result in a total of 610 new jobs in the children's services industry. The State Government has a long-standing commitment to the provision of 12 months of preschool education for all children prior to starting school. A very high value is attached to the service by the community, and over 95 per cent of all young children participate in preschool services. Currently, over 16 000 children attend CSO preschools each week.

In small rural towns and remote and isolated areas of the State, CSO early childhood programs provide children and families with essential educational and developmental opportunities. The CSO centres are often the prime focus for family support, and a new model of service provision, the play centre, has been developed to meet the needs of small remote country communities. There has been a marked increase in participation in early childhood service by such groups as Aboriginal children and children of newly arrived migrants. With the movement away from an institutional approach to the care and education of children with disabilities, mainstream early childhood services must respond to the needs of these children and their families.

Mr SUCH: I would be pleased if the Minister would take on notice the first series of questions, which refer to boards and committees. I will table the document.

The CHAIRMAN: It is an omnibus question that is being asked in every Committee. The questions can be read, but I do not think the Minister will be in a position to answer them. In order to save time, in all Committees we are simply having the questions put on notice. We will provide the Minister with a copy as soon as possible.

Mr SUCH: As to youth affairs, what is the rationale for having State Youth Affairs as part of CSO? Where will it fit within the new DEETSA structure and how will it and its officers relate to the rest of the department? Is it intended to replace the former Director of State Youth Affairs and, if not, why not?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The honourable member has raised the general concept of youth affairs. First, this Government is committed to supporting youth affairs and,

when I became Minister for this large portfolio, I brought youth affairs under the direct responsibility of the then Chief Executive of the Children's Services Office, Mr Brenton Wright. I believed it was important to place youth affairs with one of the Directors of the department because in that period there were three separate departments and I elevated youth affairs in importance within Government.

From that time on the commitment shown by this Government and myself as Minister has been second to none and I shall be happy to refute some of the rather outrageous and emotive statements made in the honourable member's introductory statement. They are nothing more than cheap political rhetoric and I will have no problem in addressing the questions of youth unemployment, youth retention rates within our school and training sectors and this Government's commitment to providing work experience and meaningful employment within the public sector. We have led this country in our commitment to working with the Federal Government to provide for those experiences.

When the honourable member sees the statistics and looks at what is really happening he may be a little embarrassed because of the way in which he has taken something that he obviously did not write himself and used it to set a most unfortunate tone for today's proceedings. This is my sixth Estimates Committee and I can assure the honourable member that I have worked constructively, positively and cooperatively with all members, whether they be Opposition or Government members. As to the specific aspects of the questions, youth affairs is no longer with the Children's Services Office, which is a sector of the new department. It has been moved to within the main overall structure and framework of the new department—DEETSA. I will ask the Chief Executive, Dr McPhail, to explain to the honourable member where the new area of youth affairs sits within the department and to address some of the other points. I may need to get the honourable member to repeat some aspects of his question, because there were a number of strands to it and not just one simple question.

Dr McPhail: In regard to the development of the new department the Minister in her introduction mentioned that there would be a corporate office or an office of the Chief Executive which would have the function of facilitating and managing the cross-sectoral issues that are so much a pattern of the new organisation. The Minister mentioned in her statement that the boundaries between the sectors are now increasingly blurred by the major dynamic that is occurring within the whole care, education and training activity.

We are proposing that under the leadership of Dr Adam Graycar, who is considerably more senior than the Director who has just accepted a package, the youth affairs responsibility will be located along with Dr Graycar's interests in higher education. We will have a higher education and youth affairs section directly within the office of the Chief Executive. Matters relating to youth affairs will come directly to the departmental executive, which is me, the heads of the three sectors and the heads of the corporate service of the organisation.

We have done this on the grounds that youth affairs cannot be easily related, nor should it be limited, to one particular segment of education training, and in fact much of the activity to do with youth affairs has a very high inter-agency component. By placing it directly within the office of the Chief Executive we have an opportunity to allow it to work at the cross-sectoral and inter-departmental level which is

required for this highly sensitive and very important area of interest.

Mr SUCH: I refer to Program Estimates, page 280. Can the Minister give some more detail about the youth statement, including its foci and any other aspects which relate to that statement?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: We have already announced the release of a major youth statement, and this certainly is part of our strategy and program. The youth statement identifies issues of importance to young people in South Australia and outlines what activities Government departments will undertake to meet their responsibility to young people over the next 12 to 18 months. This statement will provide the basis for the community to measure the Government's performance in adequately meeting young people's needs and will provide departments with a clear strategic plan which will be modified annually, as appropriate. In other words, the statement will outline strategies that will be responsive to the changing needs of our young people in South Australia.

The 1993-94 youth statement outlines the South Australian Government's commitment to addressing youth unemployment, and I would be very happy to take up each of these areas separately if that is the wish of the committee or to deal with them as separate questions. The youth statement will also address the needs of Aboriginal young people, a very important group within our community and a group that needs special attention paid to it in terms of policy, services and an implementation strategy. It will look at increasing young people's participation in all aspects of community life—social, economic, cultural and political. It will look at providing opportunities for young people to participate in decision making processes on issues with relevance to young people. It will recognise the rights of young people and will look at developing and strengthening strategic partnerships between government and non-government service providers at the national, State and local level. It will look at improving young people's access to services and improving the range, relevance and quality of services provided for young people.

While the 1993 statement covers activities of Government departments and agencies, we hope that in the future these statements will be a much more cooperative and extensive venture between all levels of government and the community sector. It is important that we look at positive aspects with respect to young people. Some of the statements contained in the honourable member's introduction do nothing to promote the cooperative understanding of the issues and problems facing youth. I remind the Committee and all members that we were also once young and we also faced many of those challenges, issues and problems and, rather than condemning young people and talking about them as hiding during the day and coming out at night like some kind of stigmatised young fugitives from society, perhaps we should be looking at the great achievements of our youth and exactly where they are to be found within the community. I would like to answer that more fully in a future question, in the interests of allowing every member to have access to questions.

Mr SUCH: I am not suggesting it is the fault of the young people who are hiding during the day; they are embarrassed because of what this Government and the Federal Government have done to them. The Program Estimates, on the same page, refer to a youth statement for this financial year and for next financial year. Will these statements have a different

focus each year or will they involve a minor update or change from year to year?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thought I had answered that question. I said that we would be looking at reviewing the statements on a yearly basis to ensure that they are relevant to the changing needs of young people. Anyone who works with young people or the parents of adolescents who are moving into adulthood will know that one of the most dynamic areas within our community is that which relates to youth. That can take in youth as defined from early adolescence through to the 25-year age group. Generally speaking, for the purposes of a common understanding, we talk about youth as being the group from 15 to 19. I assume that is the age group to which the honourable member is referring. However, we will not have a youth statement which is set in tablets of stone and never changes: it must be dynamic and reflect the changing needs and requirements of young people, but it will have an underpinning philosophical basis which will move forward from year to year. In other words, we will not be throwing out one year's statement and starting again from first principles; we will review the statement and move forward with it. We are looking at cooperative planning between all levels of government and the community, and we are talking about moving towards that in future years.

Mr HAMILTON: Before I ask any questions of the Minister, I should like to respond to a couple of things. On 15 September this year I completed my 14th year in the Parliament. As you would know, Mr Chairman, having been a former Premier of this State, I have a long memory and I have no difficulty in responding within Party forums or in the Parliament to diatribe. I want to respond to a couple of points, and one relates to unemployment.

The member for Fisher, who is a member of the Party that couched the term 'couch potatoes' and ridiculed the unemployed as dole bludgers, has the gall and temerity to ridicule this Government, which has been prepared to do whatever it can to assist the unemployed. I take strong exception to that diatribe and the gutter-sniping stuff. Well may he grin sickly about my attack upon him, about which I make no apology.

The other point relates to television violence. I have a long and vivid memory of being in Opposition, and I can remember asking a question about television violence of the member for Coles who was then a Minister. That matter was hand-balled by the then Minister who said, 'That is a matter for the Federal Government to determine.'

I want to put on record what this Government has done in relation to that matter. A new classification, which bridges the gap between M and R rated films and videos, was passed by Parliament earlier this year. I should have thought that the honourable member would recall that. The new MA mature adult classification makes it unlawful to sell, hire or deliver an MA film or video to people under the age of 15 years, other than their parent or guardian, or to exhibit such a film to people under 15 years of age unless they are accompanied by a parent or guardian. This Government has supported and participated in the national censorship scheme, as other States have done, since 1971 by accepting the classification of films given by the censorship authorities which are in place to perform that task. Federal and State Governments have now agreed to introduce national uniform classifications for violent video games, especially violent arcade games that are readily accessible to young people.

The honourable member ignores those facts and what his own people have said in the past. I am sick and tired of young people being put down. I am sick and tired of people like the

honourable member, leading up to an election which we all know is not far away, wanting to have a cheap political shot. I reject his diatribe.

I have a commitment to education and I believe I have done whatever I can in that respect in the 14 years that I have been in this Parliament. On 19 June 1982 I was asked by the then Minister of Education to open the West Lakes Shore Kindergarten. I deemed that a privilege. Indeed, many others assisted in obtaining the provision of the West Lakes Shore Kindergarten. I pay credit to the then member for Mount Gambier, as Minister, for recognising the work that I and many others had done in getting that kindergarten and giving me the honour, as an Opposition member, of opening it.

Knowing that I was coming before this Committee and wanting to ask questions of the Minister, I went back to that speech on 19 June 1982. I said, 'Personally, I am a great supporter of pre-schools and see them as a fundamental and basic right for all children in the community.' I went on to say, 'Equality of education for all citizens and their children is a fundamental right that should be available to all Australians, irrespective of their social or ethnic backgrounds.' I also said, 'Governments, no matter what their political persuasions, must offer equal education opportunities to all and at the earliest practical stages of their life.' I am a great believer in that. I further went on to say, 'It is my personal opinion that there are not enough speech therapists, psychologists and special education people made available to the Kindergarten Union and I would hope that, whatever Government is in power, it will recognise these needs.'

I have a deep appreciation of what has been made available by successive Governments before and since I have been a member of Parliament in relation to a member of my own family. This particularly applies to the Woodville West Kindergarten, where I had a child who stuttered terribly but, within a matter of weeks, that kindergarten assisted my son, and he has grown up to be a balanced and mature adult. I just wanted to put on the record my feeling about these issues. I make no apology for the fact that I get emotional about them, but I feel angry about the diatribe that I have heard from members opposite.

My first question relates to page 277 of Program Estimates. What steps is the Children's Services Office taking with respect to child protection?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I realise that the honourable member has been talking about a personal experience with regard to young children within the pre-school and child care area. It is very important that we should look at the services that are being provided within the pre-school sector. Not only have we looked at providing extra services for special needs, but also we have looked at how we can provide services to ensure the protection of children.

The Children's Services Office has developed a child protection policy which emphasises the importance of the prevention and notification of suspected abuse of children. To date 95 per cent of CSO employees have received training in the mandatory notification of child abuse. A substantial number of mandatory notification of child abuse training services for child care workers have also been run by CSO staff in collaboration with the Lady Gowrie Child Care Centre and the Health and Welfare Child Protection Unit. These sessions continue to be offered.

Many pre-schools and child-care centres are providing preventive programs covering child protection skills and social skills development based on the Protective Behaviours Training Program and the Safe Start, Safe Future Manual for

Early Childhood Services. It is important to note that two sectors of the department have come together, namely, the CSO, in collaboration with the Education Department and, indeed, working with the Catholic Education Office, and the Independent Schools Board, in steering a major evaluation of the Protective Behaviours Program which is currently under way. This is another example of the way in which all the sectors providing education in this State work very cooperatively and positively together. I pay a tribute to the Catholic Education Office and the Independent Schools Board which work with the Education Department sector and the CSO sector of my department.

CSO is also represented on the State Child Protection Council, relevant subcommittees and on various child protection forums and working parties at regional and State levels to ensure effective inter-agency collaboration. The CSO is represented on the Community Education Subcommittee of the South Australian Child Protection Council and, of course, is involved with a whole range of issues and discussions to implement the findings of a national research project concerning community perceptions of child abuse and child protection issues.

We have had staff development focusing on domestic violence and children and sexualised behaviours in children, and this is a new initiative. Support for parents and families is also provided through child-care services. I refer, for example, to occasional care, plus parenting sessions and special services and staff support. CSO continues to support the Care Link project at Elizabeth/Munno Para and this project aims to reduce the incidence of child abuse and to provide support services to prevent family separation as a consequence of physical and emotional abuse.

It is important to note that in the context of the current situation with the Federal Violence in Schools Committee which is currently taking evidence in South Australia this Government is committed to early intervention. We must work within our children's services area and work with children and their families and communities to identify the causes of violence—and not just violence but other forms of aggression towards children—and to look at the ways in which children are being mistreated within the community.

If we can look at identifying those kinds of issues and problems early, and ensuring not only that we put in place child protection policies and programs that take place within child-care centres and pre-school kindergartens but also work with families and extended families, and work within the home and work in an inter-agency approach with Family and Community Services, the Health Commission and other service providers, as well as non-government agencies, we will see a diminution rather than an escalation in the kind of negative things we are seeing happening to young children within our community.

It is not enough to talk about how we deal with this in our schools. We have to go back to early childhood and work with families, work with the community and work with young children to ensure the care and protection of every child within our community.

Mr HAMILTON: When I opened that kindergarten in 1982 I said:

If we have these specialists available and if these specialists are able to pick up the needs of a child at a tender age then they would be more able to cure them or provide permanent solutions.

I would not disagree with one word that the Minister said in relation to that. That is echoed repeatedly by a colleague of mine, the Federal member for Port Adelaide, who has a deep

and abiding interest in this matter, particularly in the formative years of a child's life. If we teach children the right way and assist them with their particular problems, it may well be that we will not be looking at those problems in secondary or other areas. It may well be that the thrust of education should be turned around to look at the formative years of a child's life rather than putting as much emphasis on secondary and other education. Could the Minister outline the additional services being provided for children with special needs by the Children's Services Office?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank the honourable member for his question and his deep commitment to the outcomes for young people. It is true to say that this Government and I as the Minister have made it very clear to the community that we must get it right in the childhood years: the nought to eight age group. While we must concentrate on the whole question of learning and developmental areas we must also identify special needs. The quicker and earlier we can identify special needs then the quicker and earlier we can implement the special resources needed to address those needs.

The honourable member, in his earlier question, gave an example with respect to something like stuttering and speech pathology. It has been shown time and again that we must get those resources into our child-care centres and through our CAFHS centres. Many of those services are provided in children's services outlets, such as kindergartens, child-care centres and in our rural areas, and we are working across the sectors. I want to congratulate the CSO because it is reaching out to other arms of government and indeed working with non-government areas to provide a range of services.

The honourable member has specifically asked me to address the question of what are we doing within the CSO to provide for children who have special needs. Those special needs range across a whole area of departmental, behavioural and other aspects. I would like to give the honourable member some specific answers.

First, we believe it is vitally important to involve parents and community members in the provision of these services. They will not be successful unless they have the commitment and involvement of parents and other community members. Major policy objectives which have been developed by CSO are to develop the abilities of mainstream service providers to cater for children with disabilities and to encourage the provision of support services in community based settings. Specialist staff—and the honourable member will be pleased to hear this—including pathologists, social workers, special educators and psychologists are employed in each region to provide assessment and direct services to children and their families and to support early childhood staff to respond appropriately to their needs.

The CSO provides an integration program which funds additional staff time in the pre-school to support children with moderate to severe disabilities. I would like the honourable member particularly to note that there has been a 100 per cent increase in the number of children receiving this service over the past 12 months. This has gone from 207 children to 428. At the same time the level of integration support from other agencies has dropped in total hours despite this increase. A major contributing factor to this situation is the current restructuring from segmented to mainstream services, and I must say that the CSO is continuing to participate in the early intervention network to improve inter-agency effectiveness. I will be watching with great interest how effectively that inter-agency work starts to deliver a range of services on the ground to those families and children who have special needs.

We have intensive speech and language programs. These are operating at Warradale and Valley View, in conjunction with the Crippled Children's Association, with additional pre-school sites planned for this year. Joint initiatives with other specialist disability agencies provide programs for the two to six year olds in community based pre-school settings in 13 metropolitan and three country areas, and I believe we will be looking at expanding those in the future. The budget for clinical and remedial services for children with disabilities in 1993-94 is \$1.96 million. I think this indicates the commitment that this Government and the CSO have to providing that very early and vitally important support for children who have special needs.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to page 278 of the Program Estimates. I ask for details of the State-Commonwealth Children's Services program and in particular I point out to the Minister that she would be well aware of my concern in relation to out of school hours care and additional day care places etc. The Minister would be aware of the correspondence I have directed to her officers in relation to the needs in the western suburbs and particularly in relation to the needs in the Semaphore Park area. I put the Minister on notice that, whilst I may not have been successful this time, I expect to be successful next year or the year after. I would hope that her staff will be made aware of that. I intend to pursue that until such time as I am successful because there is a need and I have given a commitment to the people in that area. I would ask the Minister for the details of the State-Commonwealth children's services program.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank the honourable member for his commitment. Both he and the member for Henley Beach have been totally fearless in their pursuit of children's services within their local areas and particularly with respect to child care. In this State we are seeing the largest expansion of child care provision that has ever been undertaken in the history of South Australia, and this will be taking place over the next four years under the agreement that I signed earlier this year with the then Federal Minister (Peter Staples). I would remind the honourable member of the commitment that the Federal Government has made to matching our requirement, to ensure that we were able to sign the agreement for child care in South Australia.

We have certainly taken child care further than it has ever been taken before. What we agreed to was the provision of 890 additional long-day care places and 890 additional family day care places, and I understand we have now seen a further 200 new family day care places agreed to. We have seen another 2 520 additional out of school care places, and I agree with the honourable member that they are critical. They are critical in a number of areas, particularly for families with children whose parents need to work and also from the point of view of the benefits that are gained by children who are part of these out of school care programs.

These places will directly benefit children of parents who are working, seeking work or undertaking training. They will be established in the areas of high need and, as the honourable member has said, the areas will be identified by a comprehensive planning process involving the analysis of current child populations and existing child care provision. I must say that, while the honourable member puts very clearly on the agenda the needs in Semaphore Park, he has been most understanding of the fact that the places have been allocated on a needs basis and, in relation to the way in which we are working through the priorities, I am sure that

Semaphore Park will not be far down the line in terms of receiving some of these places in future years.

Mr HAMILTON: I will remind you!

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will be delighted to be reminded. We have the new strategy well in hand and the Government is committed to timely implementation of services under this 1992-96 national child care strategy agreement. To facilitate the process, a joint Commonwealth-State implementation scheme has been established. Approval was given in June this year for 34 new outside school care places and the services are now operational. I would like to acknowledge the work of the departmental officers who have been involved in getting those places up and running. Four sites have now been approved as part of the 1992-93 allocation of places. I would like to name those sites because one of them might well be in the member for Coles' electorate or certainly nearby.

One of them is the Magill child-care centre which has a 20 place extension to the existing service. We have the Campbelltown Primary School with a 47 place service, Gawler East with a 47 place service and Seaford Rise with a 47 place service. With the exception of Seaford Rise the services will be operational in June/July of 1994. Seaford Rise is expected to be completed by September next year. Public consultations are planned through South Australia in the months from July—they have already started—through to September with the view to identifying community needs for the establishment of services for the 1993-94 and 1994-95 financial years, in keeping with the Children's Services Office vision for the provision of several different service types on the one site. In other words, we want to provide a one stop shop. We are about service delivery to the clients and not expecting families to travel quite some distance around their own communities. Let us have the one stop shop approach.

In line with that, a proportion of the new long-day care places will be collocated with existing children's services; usually collocated with preschools or with school communities. The integration of preschool and child care services will be of particular benefit to the smaller rural communities where the establishment of stand-alone child care would not be viable; it would not be appropriate to service those communities. Families in these isolated communities have, until now, been unable to access long-day care. I hope that Opposition members who have been making statements in Parliament over a period—and I refer particularly to the member for Murray-Mallee—will be gracious enough to acknowledge that this is a very big move forward for the families living in rural communities. It is a commitment by this Government to recognise the needs of families right across South Australia wherever they happen to live and work. Finally, the budget for the 1993-94 State-Commonwealth Children's Services program is \$3.54 million. That indicates the very deep and ongoing commitment of the Government to this sector of the vital learning and life process of education and care.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I refer to child-parent centres, on page 272, and express my appreciation for the additional places in Magill and Campbelltown Primary Schools, which, in the latter case, will be the new electorate of Coles. For some years, kindergartens in the Children's Services Office have been staffed according to an average attendance formula, while child-parent centres in the Education Department have been staffed on an enrolment formula. DEET South Australian sources have informed the

Liberal Party that the Government wants to alter the staffing formula of the child-parent centres to make it similar to kindergartens but that this has been deferred by the Government until after the election. Has DEET been asked to make an analysis of this proposal and, if so, how much money would be saved if the child-parent centre formula was changed? Will the Minister reveal the results of this analysis?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I ask for the honourable member's indulgence for a moment because this actually comes under the education sector. The honourable member's question related to the staffing allocation and formula with respect to child-parent centres *vis-a-vis* what is happening within the kindergarten sector of the CSO—

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Average attendance, as distinct from enrolment as the formula for staffing.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will ask the Director of the Children's Services Office to respond to that and then I will ask the Chief Executive Officer of the department whether he would like to make some comments.

Ms Page: The honourable member referred to some differences in the way staffing has been allocated between the two sectors within DEET SA, and it is the case that there have been some differences in the past, based on the fact that those systems developed independently, with child-parent centres being part of the school system and kindergartens being community managed facilities quite independent of schools. So, it is very timely that, now we are an amalgamated Department of Education, Employment and Training, we look at whether the differences in the way we staff our services still make sense or whether we need to change them. So, there has been a review and it will continue.

There are no immediate decisions relating to staffing, but some of the differences between the two sectors relate to not just staffing on attendance and enrolment but also the staff-child ratios and the kinds of specialist support staff that are available through either the CSO or the Education Department. All those matters are currently under review.

Dr McPhail: The Director of Children's Services has outlined it very accurately. At this stage no decisions have been taken, and it is simply looking at the way in which we can harmonise the policy between the two areas, recognising that child-parent centres are part of schools, whereas the kindergartens are under a different structure, which imposes some differences between them.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Still on page 272, the subject is Aboriginal communities and their early childhood needs. A study by Anne Glover into the early childhood services needs of Aboriginal communities in northern country areas of this State was published in July this year. Briefly summarising some of the content, she said that the range of agencies involved in the funding of related services puts a great deal of pressure on communities that wish to initiate programs. She went on to say that the sheer number of agencies with which communities must deal poses significant problems, many of which could be alleviated by a more coordinated approach by the agencies involved.

She stated that without collaboration there is the potential for factionalism within communities, for duplication and for overadministration. Does the Minister accept that there has been duplication and overadministration, and what action is the Minister taking with other Ministers to rectify this problem?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am very aware of the report to which the honourable member refers, and in fact read it over the weekend. It would be appropriate to put on the

public record my thanks and appreciation to Ms Glover for that report, which was a very in-depth consultation taken with Aboriginal communities in the north of South Australia to ascertain what they thought about the current provision of services, particularly early childhood services for their children. It is no secret that Aboriginal communities and families living within the cities have not tended to use the services provided in the early childhood area as extensively as have other segments, particularly Anglo-Saxon segments, of the community.

We in the CSO believed that it was important to identify what Aboriginal people wanted and what they found lacking in our services, so that we can make the services (particularly things such as family day care, child-care and preschool education) relevant to the needs of Aboriginal communities. That is what underpinned the report and the research Ms Glover undertook. The honourable member asks whether it is correct to say historically that there has been overlapping between a range of Government agencies. The simple answer to that is, 'Of course there has.'

When we look at the responsibilities and the way they have been shared from the Federal Government, and at the programs that have been delivered at Federal Government level, at State Government level and, I guess, through voluntary agencies, that has historically been correct. I believe we are now moving very rapidly not only to alleviate and to change that overlap but to be much more responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people. Within my portfolio, I believe the days of paternalism and chauvinism (where bureaucrats and white advisers came into Aboriginal communities and determined what they thought were best for Aboriginal communities) are long gone.

Ms Glover's report highlights this approach, in other words, sitting down with Aboriginal families (in this case particularly with the mothers, grandmothers and aunts) and saying to the communities, 'What is it that you want us to work with you to provide in terms of these early childhood services?' This is exactly what we are doing. I have had the privilege of meeting with some of our field officers in places such as Port Augusta and Whyalla and receiving direct feedback about the way in which they are looking to provide services to Aboriginal communities with respect to everything from child-care type services and family day care right through to preschool education.

I have a whole list of things we are actually doing, but it would be more relevant to the Committee just to quickly pick up on the policy direction that the CSO and the education sectors of the department are taking. I would refer members back to the Aboriginal deaths in custody royal commission and its report, in which one of the major recommendations was the highlighting of the need for early intervention programs for Aboriginal children to ensure that they receive skill development in literacy, numeracy and support to families, so that we can look at changing some of the outcomes for young Aboriginals and their families.

This is happening within the CSO, and I would like to ask Ms Page to take up some of the specific programs we are putting in place to work across agencies and with the non-government sector to provide these very necessary services.

Ms Page: In relation to the specific issue that the honourable member raised, Ms Glover's report (which we commissioned and which we have found particularly useful in looking at the needs of northern rural communities), I am pleased to say that we are collaborating with the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Training

and the Commonwealth Department of Health, Housing and Community Services jointly to plan and work with the local Aboriginal communities. There are three DEET funded Aboriginal preschools, in Ceduna, Port Augusta and Port Lincoln, and under the joint Commonwealth-State child-care program we are looking to see how best we can meet the needs of those communities in relation to children from the years of nought to six, as well as the needs of their mothers.

We have set up processes with those local communities that involve the ATSIC regional councils and the local communities looking at how the existing services could be built on, as well as where there are gaps in service provision. That relates particularly to additional work coming from Ms Glover's report. As well, we have commissioned Ms Glover to do some additional work in the homelands, which she has yet to do. In relation to other Aboriginal services strategies, the Children's Services Office is sponsoring the first Australian national early childhood conference, to be held in September and October of this year (in fact, it begins next week), focusing on the needs of Aboriginal children and families in the early years.

This conference is bringing together prominent Aboriginal people from all over Australia involved in the early childhood sector either as service providers, users or community members, to share and promote more effective service delivery to Aboriginal children and families. A document, 'Learning about Aboriginal children and their culture: curriculum guidelines', has been produced by the Children's Services Office with the close cooperation of all our Aboriginal staff and with community members. That curriculum document is published and will be circulated shortly, and will be launched at our conference next week. We have also been promoting the International Year of the World's Indigenous People through a range of posters, a video and a television commercial featuring Aboriginal designs and families.

I am pleased to say that we were given an award for excellence by the Australian Marketing Institute for the promotional activity involved in that area. Promotional grants have also been available to local early childhood services to organise Aboriginal cultural experiences, to establish dreaming trails in their own environment and to display art and craft work related to Aboriginal learning. Other initiatives involve looking at the relevance of our existing services, such as the family day care program where we would have expected home based care to be attractive to Aboriginal families.

We have found that some of our standards surrounding those programs have meant that they have not been as attractive to Aboriginal families as we would have liked in the past and so we are putting much effort into recruiting Aboriginal field staff and care providers and looking at whether we need the kinds of standards that we need in an urban environment in rural Aboriginal communities. We are looking at being more flexible around some of those issues such as fencing and safety requirements as well as issues around police checks and so forth.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: In view of the time and importance of going to the Education Department matters, I ask the Minister to take this question on notice. At page 281 the section headed 'Major resource variations' contains a reference to 'long-term car hire'. For what purposes are cars hired and at what cost?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: We will take that question on notice.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: Does the Minister find it surprising that a member opposite, whose Federal colleagues popularised the phrases 'dole bludger' and 'couch potato' in order to stigmatise the young unemployed of Australia, should make an opening statement in which he seems to imply that the Government of this State is totally responsible for youth unemployment and has simply left young unemployed persons to their fate? Can the Minister outline some of the measures the Government has undertaken to try to alleviate the situation?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: In answering the honourable member's question it is important to put the true picture on the record about what is happening to young people in our community. It is not fashionable for certain sections of the media to look at where our young people are, particularly those in the 15 to 19 age group, and it is easy to throw around statistics such as 38 and 40 per cent. When we ask people what those figures mean, it has been my experience that people do not know. They say it means that 38 or 40 per cent of young people in the 15 to 19 age group are out on the streets, either harassing old ladies or, as the honourable member seems to think, being the perpetrators of graffiti.

Mr SUCH: I did not say that.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: If you read the statement, you will find that that is what is being said. I would put on the record exactly what the situation is with young people in the 15 to 19 age group in South Australia. First, I refer to unemployment statistics. In the latest statistics for August we find that full-time unemployment for young people aged 15 to 19 is 9 500, which is 9.5 per cent of the total teenage population of 100 300. That is far too high, but it is 9.5 per cent of that age cohort: it is not 38 or 40 per cent. This 9 500 compares with 10 200 in July this year and 11 300 in August 1992. The interesting statistic is that it compares to the 14 300 in August 1981. If you compare August—

Mr Such interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The honourable member does not like comparing the number of young unemployed people. In August 1981 there were 14 300 young unemployed and now in August 1993 there were 9 500. Is the Opposition prepared to be honest enough to acknowledge that that is the situation, because it is interesting that those are the facts. As to what is exactly happening with young people, the rest of the 90.5 per cent are either in full-time education, in full-time training, in part-time work or full-time work or are at universities.

We see that 90.5 per cent of young people in the 15 to 19 age group are meaningfully involved in education, training or full or part-time work. Let us get the facts on the record and stop trying to stigmatise young people. Let us stop casting round for some sort of election gimmick and not make young unemployed people the scapegoat. This Government will not be part of that. I am pleased to answer the second part of the question about what we have done as a Government. The Government has done a whole range of things.

The most important is that we have shown the leadership to the private sector by working with the Federal Government to commit to a further 1 000 places within the public sector. Those places range from everything from child care through to gaining engineering experience in the public sector. It involves a six to 12 month program and any discussions with young people involved in those programs, as I have had, indicates that they are highly successful. Not only are these programs successful in terms of giving young people work experience; they also provide a work record, on-the-job and

off-the-job training and enable young people to win jobs, which they are doing on their own merits within the public sector and the private sector.

We already have 400 of those within Government. We have committed to a further 1 000 and, if we could get the private sector to match this commitment, we would certainly be going a long way to getting rid of the problem that we have of young unemployed. We have also announced within this budget the extra 1 000 places within the TAFE sector to ensure that we can provide additional training. I was part of announcing the stage 5 development of the Light Square Campus of TAFE last week. When that stage 5 is completed, it will provide a further place for 2 200 students and will be able to provide a child care facility so that people who do have family responsibilities will be able to have child care on campus at Light Square. A whole range of other initiatives have been undertaken with respect to providing employment, training and support for young people. I ask the Assistant Director of Youth Affairs to add to some of those.

Mr Symonds: The State youth strategy was initially put into place in 1989 and its function is to improve access to education, employment and training for disadvantaged 15 to 18 year olds through individual and community grants, policy development, information provision and the linking of services at the local and State level. The strategy has been particularly successful. For example, in the past 12 months, more than 3 000 young people have been assisted through the offices of the State youth strategy.

In this year the strategy has been increased from four locations and in 1994 will be operating in eight locations, which will include a number of country areas as well. The strategy offers youth assistance grants to unemployed young people, and a total of \$116 000 will be distributed directly to those young people. Those grants are very small grants which assist people into employment and training. It might pay training costs or pay for clothes for somebody going for a job interview or cover transport costs for people coming from rural areas.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I would like to conclude this part of the question by saying that it is important to note the retention rates in year 12, which have increased from 38.9 in 1981 to over 92.7 in 1992. It is important to recognise that what we are seeing is a cohort of young people who are having access to more and to a higher level of education than their parents or grandparents would ever have dreamt of. Surely, if we are to move forward to become internationally competitive and have world best practice in everything we do, we must start with a well educated and highly trained youth work force, otherwise we will not be able to compete internationally; we will not have the flexibility within our work force and training programs that we will need if this country is to take its place on the national stage. Surely, it would be more productive for the Opposition to work with us in developing strategies and programs for training, education and employment for young people than continually to try to undermine young people and undermine the joint efforts of the State and Federal Governments which are starting to prove to be highly successful in terms of education, training and therefore employment of our young people.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: The member for Stuart is unable to be on the Committee today, but she has asked me to raise a question on her behalf, in relation to the four major programs of the estimates that are listed on pages 276 and 279. In what way are the provision of care and education

services for young children in rural areas and the needs of those rural families being met?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I want to put on the public record in answering this that as Minister I believe that one of the most important areas in education is in the early and formative nought to eight years age group. I certainly hope Opposition members will have some questions on this sector of life's learning cycle because, if they do not, I think it will be very clear to the media and everybody else that they are not committed to this vitally important area in the nought to eight age group. I am delighted that the member for Coles has at least indicated some degree of support and interest in what is the most critical learning period in every human being's life. As a Government we are committed to this, and I am just as committed to seeing successful outcomes for rural and Aboriginal children as I am to seeing successful outcomes for children who live in an urban environment. I feel very strongly about this issue.

With respect to what is happening for care and education services for young children and how the needs of rural families are being met, since 1988 new preschool facilities have been established in 12 rural locations, including Port Broughton, Rendelsham and Eudunda. This year a new preschool is to be constructed at Strathalbyn. Since 1988 we have established 35 new play centres in remote and isolated areas. A review of these services has revealed a very high level of enthusiasm and satisfaction from the communities concerned. There has been close liaison with the Education Department in staffing and location of these services. High need rural areas will be a focus for consideration under the newly announced Commonwealth-State child-care strategy.

Family day care is of particular importance in meeting the child-care needs of families in rural South Australia. New schemes recently established include schemes on the Eyre Peninsula, Meningie and Point Pearce, on Yorke Peninsula. As part of the Commonwealth-State child-care strategy, funded outside school hours care services have been established in a number of country areas including, in the past year, services at Reidy Park, Mount Gambier and Naracoorte Primary School. The new occasional care program which commenced implementation in 1990 has seen the establishment of services in 17 country areas, including Streaky Bay, Renmark and Minlaton. A major review of the needs of Aboriginal communities in the northern country has now been completed, and the initial focus was on Ceduna, Port Lincoln, Port Augusta and Koonibba. An Aboriginal family day care project officer has been appointed and will be based in Port Augusta.

I think it is important to acknowledge that we are not just talking here about the kind of services and facilities for children within the highly populated areas; we are taking this vitally important part of education and care right to the rural communities and providing those services where they live and where they work.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: My next question relates more to my constituents in the western suburbs. The Program Estimates, at page 277, refer to multicultural services for children. In order to respond to the multicultural nature of the South Australian community—and I have in mind particularly my western suburbs constituents—what services developments has the Children's Services Office undertaken in this area?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank the honourable member for his question. In our multicultural society it is important that we as a community and Government recognise the

importance of multicultural services. The Children's Services Office has a very strong commitment to multiculturalism, which is inclusive of all children's services programs. In other words, we do not just tack on these programs in particular areas: they become part of the mainstream of delivery of our services and programs.

This commitment is reflected in the Children's Services Office's multicultural plan strategies. The strategies include participation in the development of the Commonwealth/State migration settlement plan to identify existing settlement services and address gaps in service provision through a process of inter-agency consultation.

Through our ethnic schools preschool pilot project, we are involving six centres—this was established in July this year—to look at opportunities to provide bilingual experiences and learning for four-year-old children attending the service. The aim is to develop and trial a model of bilingual early childhood education.

We are also looking at an anti-racism policy and strategy, and this is currently being developed. Two multicultural family day-care schemes have been established in the western and northern regions respectively. There is continued employment of bilingual staff. As I go round our preschool education services, I am always delighted to meet and see the number of bilingual staff who are now starting to emerge and have emerged over a number of years within the centre. They support children from non-English-speaking backgrounds to participate in the preschool services.

The country region is assessing the feasibility of several multicultural strategies, including an anti-racism workshop for staff. There is an artists in residence project, which in this instance involves an artist of African background who will share cultural and artistic features of the African community with selected rural communities. The budget for multicultural services for children this year is \$237 000.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer the Minister to page 272 of the Program Estimates relating to the vacation care program. A recent letter from the Marion Out of School Hours Care Hub Group states:

Recent changes to funding agreement relating to vacation care programs have disadvantaged existing programs. Newly funded programs may offer fee relief to users as part of the funding package. Existing funded programs do not have this option.

Using a 30-place program as an example, existing programs were recently given a rise of one cent per child per hour. This amounts to \$15 per week. Realistically this will have no effect on fee relief for these programs. In comparison, a newly funded program would have access of a minimum of \$990 per week to offer in fee relief.

We feel insulted, discriminated against and unable to offer the best possible service to our users. We request that you take immediate action to resolve this obvious error in the funding allocations.

We recommend equitable fee relief within the OSHC and vacation care sectors immediately to all families, and that in the near future fee relief be introduced in line with that available to families in long day care, occasional care and family day care.

Will the Minister explain the reasons for the different funding approach for existing programs and is she supporting a review of the current policy?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The fee relief and guidelines are laid down by the Commonwealth Government, not by the State Government and the Minister. Yesterday I had the opportunity to raise the issue of the provision of child-care with the Federal Minister for Family and Community Services, Senator Rosemary Crowley.

There are some anomalies with respect to the way in which not just fee relief but operating subsidies are received.

I raised with Senator Crowley the need to ensure that there are no anomalies within the two areas. One is the way in which we receive operational subsidies for ordinary centres in South Australia *vis-a-vis* the centres which are provided within our TAFE sector. We do not receive operational subsidies for TAFE-based child-care centres, so I have put that on her agenda.

I am aware that there is an anomaly in the way in which fee relief is provided with respect to a range of services. I am also aware that we must look at occasional care and after school hours care in the same way as we look at fee relief for long day care.

I guess I must have pre-empted the honourable member's question—I must have had a premonition or we are on the same track—in raising with Federal Ministers (because I also had a meeting yesterday with the Hon. Ross Free), the need to look at the provision of facilities that meet the needs of the community and the need to look at increasing the numbers of occasional care places and after school hours care places because we are finding that is where the need is. I will ask Ms Stephanie Page to pick up the specific point about the differences in fee relief in these two areas.

Ms Page: The reasons for the different funding arrangements are basically historical and the fact that the children's services program is jointly funded and has developed over the years. Most of the vacation care places to date have been the responsibility of the State Government, with a Commonwealth Government block grant, so we have had total control over how vacation care develops. In fact, the State Government has put at least as much as, if not more than, the Commonwealth Government into vacation care. On the other hand, the before and after school program has been jointly funded between the Commonwealth and the State—mainly Commonwealth funding with some State funding.

This has meant that children who need before and after school care generally need vacation care as well, and it has been somewhat disjointed. Under the new Commonwealth/State child care agreement, the expansion of places will now be year-round places; that is, the places will be before and after school and vacation care places. Unfortunately, the Commonwealth has not been prepared to fee relief State Government expenditure in the same way as it has been prepared to fee relief before and after school care. We have made many representations on this matter, and we have had an agreement from the Commonwealth that there will be a review of before and after school care and vacation care. We are hoping that we can make some good sense of both service types in order to meet better the needs of families with children in the five to 12-year age group.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to the Program Estimates at page 274. What is the reason for the proposed 25 per cent increase over the proposed budget for last year for the number of FTE executives, professional, technical, administration and clerical support staff?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will ask our financial manager to answer that question.

Mr Lewkowicz: In terms of the salaries and associated costs, there is an increase of about \$300 000, which is mainly related to the payment of additional cost for a twenty-seventh pay. This year there is no twenty-seventh pay for straight-up salaries, so in some areas the budgets have been reduced because of that, and because of Treasury requirements we have had to pay extra on-costs for the twenty-seventh pay from last year. That twenty-seventh pay was actually paid last year.

There have also been additional charges for superannuation because Treasury has asked the Children's Services Office and other agencies to put in additional provisions for additional superannuation. There has been a provision for a national wage increase by way of the reserve. In terms of specific FTEs, I would say that most of that would simply be a reinstatement of vacancies, but I will follow that up in more detail for the honourable member.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I apologise. I should have pointed out that the twenty-seventh pay has affected a number of the budget lines right across the whole department. Because of the enormous size of the employment base that one extra pay makes a huge difference in terms of actual to projected expenditure this year.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: At page 277 of the Program Estimates for Children's Services Office, under the heading '1992-93 Significant Initiatives/Improvements', it is mentioned that the office negotiated a new system for placing access assistants to support children with disabilities in pre-schools.

I preface my question by stating that on Saturday I represented the Opposition at a parent advocacy group seminar at Adelaide High School, and noted the concern of many parents who wished their multiply disabled children to be in mainstream education. The parents were concerned at the lack of support that the children were given and at the placement of a maximum daily hour assistants formula, which in some cases was insufficient for the children. What is the new system that is being negotiated? What consultation took place with parent groups before it was implemented, and what is the cost of the system?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I would like to State the Government's policy. This Government has done much to work with parents of children who are multiply and severely disabled to bring them into a mainstream learning and educational experience. We have certainly moved away from the traditional models where these children would have been put in very separate facilities and remained there for the whole period of their lives. What we have done not just within the Children's Services area but right across the educational spectrum is provide for the individual needs of each one of these children.

That is an enormous task because every child has to be individually assessed. The needs of every child, as I am discovering, are very different and to provide the level and the quality of those services has had enormous resource implications with respect to employing the appropriate personnel as well as funding the specific one-to-one relationship. Sometimes it even needs to be more than one-to-one in terms of the level of disability of the child, and particularly for very young children. We have done, I think, quite an enormous amount to move down this path.

I know from talks with my interstate colleagues that South Australia is considered to be the most advanced State in the country with respect to working with parents, the community and families to provide for these needs. That is not to say that we have arrived. There is certainly a whole range of areas in which we have to continue to work and move forward with respect to consultation. However, I would ask Stephanie Page to answer the honourable member's specific question.

Ms Page: I think the honourable member's question related to additional moneys for access assistants for children.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: What is the new system and what is the cost?

Ms Page: I am advised that access assistants are controlled by the Child, Adolescent and Family Health Service. I will explain how we assess the needs of children in pre-schools.

The honourable member would be aware that there is increasing pressure on the Children's Services Office to provide integrated and mainstream services for children with disabilities. We are attempting to meet that demand through our integration program, which involves integration teachers working with children in pre-schools as well as integration assistants.

We assess the needs of children through our special educators in collaboration with centre staff and parents. Our policy is that the director of the centre is responsible for the integration of those children and the specialists or additional staff that we place with a centre merely augment the work of the existing centre staff.

We have been very successful in that we have a 100 per cent increase in the number of children with disabilities in kindergartens over the past few years. Mr Lewkowicz advises me that our proposed budget for services for children with disabilities for 1993-94 is \$563 000. That is for salaries, and for contingencies the figure is \$113 000. Does that answer the honourable member's question?

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: To some extent. Can I put a supplementary question on notice since the purpose of budget estimates is to measure our outcomes against inputs? Has the office done an analysis of the difference between the previous cost of educating children in special schools, many of which have now been closed, as against the cost of supporting children in mainstream schools? I am now looking not at educational and human outcomes, which I realise have the greater priority and importance, but at the comparative financial inputs under both systems.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It is important to note, when we were talking about access assistants, that this year there was a move of those assistants coming across to Government from the Crippled Children's Association and the spastic centres of South Australia. The Government picked up the responsibility. Those access assistants were then put under the wing, if you like, or under the responsibility of CAFHS (Child, Adolescent and Family Health Services), and the Education Department has picked up the cost of transportation of children.

In fact, there was some very fruitful and, I believe, successful negotiations and discussions with not only the parent community of these children but also with the actual care providers: the access assistants themselves. Certainly we can look at those figures. If I heard the member correctly she was talking about the financial outcomes in terms of what was spent on children when they were within these special centres and what we are now spending on children by putting them into a mainstream learning environment. It is also important to acknowledge that it is about the best possible outcome for those children and their families.

I cannot stress enough that we have a commitment. I have given this commitment to the families of these children: we are looking at placing each child in the most appropriate care and learning environment for that child. In some cases it will be in annexes and in some cases they must remain within a special learning environment.

In other cases it will be in a mainstream environment within a classroom situation. We are providing a whole range of collaborative early intervention programs working across

Government with other sectors. It is a matter of focusing on the needs of individual children and, as I said, some of those are very large indeed.

Mr QUIRKE: Firstly, I would like to say that the occasional care arrangements that were introduced into my electorate at Ingle Farm Kindergarten earlier this year have been an enormous success. Indeed, in the middle of that area, which is one of the areas of considerable poverty in my electorate, there is a large number of single mothers in that area whose only access to child care is the occasional care arrangements set up at Ingle Farm Kindergarten. I congratulate the department on that because the Department of Health had a similar arrangement but did not see fit to maintain it, which caused some considerable disagreement in my electorate. I think the CSO is to be congratulated for stepping into the breach there. Can we see more of these sorts of arrangements? They are enormously successful. They simply give a break to parents for half a day, at very moderate cost, and I believe they are also of considerable educational benefit for very young pre-kindergarten children.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: We cannot over-emphasise the fact that occasional care is now emerging as one of the important and necessary service provisions that the department is undertaking. It is not just about providing child care for people in the work force, but many people in the work force see occasional care as one of the range of care provisions that they access. It might be that they have a family member who looks after a child one or two days a week. They then need care in an occasional setting. One of the important things is that it gives parents, particularly sole parents, not only a very necessary break to be able to pursue vitally important and necessary doctors' appointments, shopping requirements or other personal commitments but also an opportunity to have a little bit of time on their own. Time and again, research and studies have shown that quality is an important aspect in relation to the way in which people relate to their children.

It is not a matter of being a good parent because you are there 24 hours a day, seven days a week without any break at all. It is a matter of the quality of time that you spend with your child, whether you read to your child, whether you interact in terms of developing language and/or conversational skills, or whether it is just offering protection, and getting back, of course, to the fundamentals of feeding and clothing and providing a safe environment; to be able to do all things. In other words, for the care giver to be everything from a teacher through to a doctor and everything along the way is an enormous demand on parents. As a community I do not think we have sufficiently recognised what a huge demand and responsibility it is for parents.

By providing occasional care we are, as a community and a society, recognising the valuable role which parents—and in most cases it is the mother—play in the upbringing, the care and the responsibility of young children. I am deeply committed to extending occasional care so that it can be accessed by parents, whether they are sole parents or whether they are in a two-parent family relationship. Specifically, the honourable member asked whether we have any programs to extend occasional care. The answer is, yes, and I will ask Stephanie Page to give you those specific details.

Ms Page: Under the last child care growth strategy, the Commonwealth and State announced that they would fund an additional 160 occasional care places. Subsequently, the State Government also funded occasional care places out of the social justice budget. We have been very pleased to have

developed 54 occasional care services in kindergartens, community services, neighbourhood centres or child-parent centres, and we have another three to go before we meet that commitment. We are placing those services on a needs-based planning model. Some of these services cater for children from 0-5 and other services cater for children from 2-5. We have recently conducted an external evaluation by Queensland University. We wanted an independent evaluation because this occasional care program is quite unique in Australia. It is the only one that fully integrates occasional care into other early childhood services. Most other occasional care services are purpose-built stand-alone facilities, which have not had very much success, for a variety of reasons. The review that is just being completed by Queensland University will tell us a lot about parent and staff satisfaction. In fact, the findings are very positive and we will be very pleased to make those public in the future.

Mr QUIRKE: The Ingle Farm Kindergarten building is getting a little bit ancient. As I understand it, a couple of years ago there were some discussions which went at least to a preliminary plan stage of relocating that particular facility to the Ingle Farm Primary School site. I was involved with some of those negotiations. Unfortunately, they were shelved at the time, as I understand it for budgetary needs. Has there been any further progress on that or any other evaluation of the needs of the Ingle Farm community for that particular facility?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am not aware of specific negotiations going on at the moment. I would like to inform the honourable member that what he is suggesting is very much in line with the policy and philosophy of the new department, and that is, the collocation of services. In other words, to provide for the needs of the client group, in this case parents who have to deliver children to various areas where they need care or where they are going to schools or pre-school education. I would be pleased to ask the facilities branch of the new department to revisit it and have a look at this particular matter with respect to Ingle Farm and whether collocation can be looked at in the future. I would be happy to provide the honourable member with a reply once the facilities branch of the department has had a look at this matter.

Mr QUIRKE: There are a number of kindergartens in my electorate that have suffered the same problem as some of the schools in terms of declining numbers over the years. In particular, there are several kindergartens in my electorate whose numbers have declined quite sharply over the past decade. Are there any plans of amalgamation of kindergartens at this stage in the Para Hills area? Can I reassure my constituents that the facilities at Para Hills Kindergarten, Para Hills West and North Ridge in particular will be continuing and providing services to my community?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I would like to answer the first part of the question from a broad philosophical position. We are always reviewing the relevance and appropriateness of services, whether it is in child care, kindergarten, the schooling sector or within institutions of vocational education. I think that is one of the quite appropriate and in fact necessary roles of a department such as this. If we find that a pre-school kindergarten has falling enrolments to the extent that the number of sessions offered are so low that it becomes inappropriate to continue, then what has happened in the past is that there have been extensive negotiations with the parent community and with neighbouring pre-school kindergartens to see whether we can make sure that access to pre-schools,

which is a Government policy for all children, is made available.

We are also concerned about the quality. We have to ensure that we provide a service of the highest quality. One of the things that I have asked the department to do, and they are already off and running on this, and this relates not quite so much to the honourable member's area but in country areas, is where we have declining enrolments, through a range of reasons at pre-school kindergartens, but an increasing demand for occasional care and child care, I am saying to the department, and I think quite sensibly and appropriately: why not look at the provision of those services on a one stop shop type approach where we can provide a range of children's services, whether it is occasional care, long-day care, after school hours care or pre-school education? Indeed, I am delighted to say that that is happening and that we are negotiating with the relevant unions and with the various communities to take a commonsense and appropriate approach to the delivery of children's services. I am not aware of any plans to close any kindergartens at this stage. I do not believe that there are any such proposals on the drawing board, and the honourable member would be the first to know about them if there were; so I think he can rest easy.

Mr SUCH: We would have been delighted to have had more time on this line, but, given the size of the education budget and the DETAFE aspect as well, time is against us. I would like to pay a tribute to the staff who work in the various agencies of the CSO, and suggest that this matter now be concluded.

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

[Sitting suspended from 1.3 to 2 p.m.]

Education, \$912 205 000.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr I. McPhail, Director-General of Education.

Mr B. Treloar, Director, Education Resources.

Mr G. Edwards, Associate Director-General of Education.

Mr L. Phillips, Assistant Director, School Building Services.

Mr K. Boaden, Assistant Director, Personnel.

Ms M. Wallace, Acting Associate Director, Curriculum.

Ms M. Hedges, Director of Education (Schools).

Mr D. Meldrum, Director of Education (Schools).

Mr BRINDAL: When I started teaching 25 years ago, South Australia unquestionably had the highest standard of education in this country, but over the past 15 years we have seen a deterioration such that I (and the member for Fisher as well) came into this place specifically for the purpose of trying to do something about education in South Australia. Sadly, despite our years here as members of the Opposition, probing and questioning, not much has been done. After virtually 20 years in control of our schools this Labor Government stands condemned by the state of education today.

I want briefly to look at a number of points, and I want to stick to facts rather than rhetoric. Learning outcomes for children is one area, and I note the House of Representatives standing committee report of late 1992 entitled 'Literacy

challenge'. That report states that up to 20 per cent of students leave primary school with some form of literacy problem. Closer to home I note that Mr Rod Sawford, a member of the House of Representatives and a noted educationalist in this State claimed that school figures were around 40 per cent.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: I note that the Minister says by interjection this was written by Mr Lucas. It was not written by Mr Lucas, I assure the Minister. It comes from my feeling and 25 years in education. It comes, Minister, because I care about children and about teachers in this State. For too long I have seen a procession of Ministers more interested in political rhetoric and the machinations of Government than they ever have been in the children we are supposed to be educating in South Australian schools.

The Hon. J.P. Trainer: How can you make that reference to political rhetoric and keep a straight face?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Interjections are out of order. Mr Brindal is making a statement. Please ignore the interjections and proceed with the statement.

Mr BRINDAL: The report concludes that these figures are only 'guesstimates' because most systems, including the South Australian system, refuse to establish processes to record accurately the number of students suffering learning difficulties. The report's findings are a national disgrace, and this Minister and all members of this Labor Government should hang their heads in shame rather than chortling opposite over speeches of individual members. Never before in my experience or, I believe, in the experience of the member for Fisher has the morale of teachers in South Australian schools been so low.

If the members for Playford and Albert Park want to know about education, I suggest they go into the schools in their electorate, the schools they pride themselves on representing so well, and ask the teachers in those schools what their morale is like. If they go and ask a few teachers in any school in this State what morale in the Education Department is like, members opposite might learn some sorry lessons that have been well learned by members on this side of the House. Teachers feel isolated, frustrated and angry as a tidal wave of increasingly complex problems sweeps over them.

Staffing policies treat some of our best teachers like garbage, and it is no wonder that some of the best queue up to leave the system whenever they are given the chance. In my opening remarks I would like specifically to mention the school of Alberton. Alberton Primary School council has currently passed a motion of no confidence in the administration, I believe, and I also believe that, in consequence, the administration has passed a motion of no confidence in Alberton Primary School. That is a measure of just how happy the parents are down there with the education their children are receiving.

I am also told that the current Deputy Principal of the school two years ago was a temporary relieving teacher on contract and has now on merit beaten all those other teachers in South Australia who are apparently not good enough to win the same position on merit, and now controls a school as complex as that. If the Minister can answer these points I will be grateful, because it is the concern and outrage that I feel that I want addressed.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I do not need to be threatened by the honourable member. I am here to answer questions. I have made myself available, and I do not need to be threatened.

The CHAIRMAN: Ignore the rhetoric, Minister. Carry on, Mr Brindal. You do have a right to ask questions, of course, so, if you have questions, do not ask them rhetorically; wait and you will have your turn.

Mr BRINDAL: Certainly. Frankly, we thought when this Minister was appointed to this job, that we might see a change from previous years, because in her previous portfolios she was known for her energy. Sadly, I have to report—

The Hon. J.P. Trainer: I don't remember your saying that at the time.

Mr BRINDAL: If the honourable member wishes to keep interjecting he could at least get the record straight. The Minister will tell the honourable member that I have often acknowledged where she has done good things in the past, both in the House and in correspondence with her. So, I suggest that he confine himself to facts. Increasingly, the Minister is required to perform ever more onerous duties. She has been given responsibility for something like 25 per cent of this State's entire budget, and it must be more and more difficult to fulfil. The Minister herself in a recent radio interview said that it takes two Opposition members full time just to shadow her. The question I would ask is whether she is so good or whether this Government has given her too much responsibility for even her talents to copy with. The Minister has had to take on and has taken on more personal staff than any other Minister, including the Premier. She has also, quite coincidentally, taken on an extra media secretary.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: That is absolutely wrong.

Mr BRINDAL: The Minister has more personal staff than 90 per cent of the primary and junior primary schools in this State, schools such as Grange Primary, which has 430 students and only 18 teachers. The Minister has 19.4, according to our figures. When she became Minister, she had to move senior Education Department members out of the recently renovated ninth floor to fit in her personal staff. Government spending of more than \$550 000 has been spent removing asbestos from her office and other offices on her floor (and \$1 million is to be spent on a Central Office upgrade to remove asbestos) while, for example, the Conyngham Street child-care parents and staff cannot even have an appointment to see the Minister about getting asbestos removed from their centre. I find that quite unacceptable. We could talk about the maintenance backlog, about the discipline, about the excellence that is under attack in schools such as Brighton, but time is against us.

I conclude by saying that I and every member of the Opposition believe it is an absolute disgrace that we should be presented with this amount of work to do in this Committee and given this little time. This morning the Minister said she thought this was a very important area, and that was in relation to the CSO, and it is an important area. We spent two hours examining \$53 843 000. This is a billion dollar budget and this Government gives us about 3½ hours to discuss it—

Mr Hamilton: Who set up the system? Your lot set up the system.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr BRINDAL: This Government gives us a 3½ hour time slot to discuss it. The Minister is responsible for about 25 per cent of the expenditure in this State and the Minister should get about 25 per cent of the time to answer questions on expenditure before this Committee.

Mr Hamilton interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: If members opposite think it is good enough to come in here and pontificate for three hours on a

billion dollar budget, then surely they will be answering to the people of South Australia, and the people of South Australia will make their judgment on this Minister and this Government.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Mr Chairman, on a point of order, the interjections are beyond bearing for the members of the Committee and I ask you to call for them to cease.

Mr Hamilton interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! I have called them to order. The speech is pretty inflammatory for Committee proceedings. It is not the sort of speech that we normally have, so I am giving licence on both sides.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I do not intend to reduce the proceedings of this Parliament and this Committee into a personal attack on individual members of Parliament. It does not do the institution of this Parliament or the citizens of this State one bit of good to start attacking people personally and I certainly do not intend to do that. This is my sixth appearance before the Estimates Committees and I have to say that never in my time before the Estimates Committees have I seen an approach like the one being taken now by the Opposition. I am extremely disappointed because I do not believe that it furthers the cause of education, employment or training in this State one inch.

I certainly hope that the honourable member will take up the issues of Alberton, the allocation of resources within my office and all of those other measures about learning outcomes, the back to school grants money to address facilities and a range of other issues, particularly with respect to literacy. I refer the honourable member to the budget publication put out by me with respect to the allocations in this budget. It is not appropriate for me to address every one of those questions now, because it would take longer than the time allocated. I have prepared a short statement and I would be pleased to share it with the Committee.

The schooling sector within DEETSA aims to develop the intellectual potential and creative capacities of our students in all their dimensions so that they can contribute towards making Australia a culturally rich and internationally competitive nation. The schooling sector is committed to excellence, justice, achievement, efficiency, imagination and a passion for learning and teaching. South Australia is continuing its commitment to national collaborative curriculum activities to ensure that the best possible curriculum is available to all the students in our schools.

A commitment to a high level of accountability to the public with regard to our schooling system will also be maintained. The monitoring student achievement program is designed to provide parents and the community with relevant specific information about the achievements of our young people in schools. In addition, the Education Review Unit, which is just approaching the completion of its first review cycle, will embark on the next review cycle within a revised and enhanced framework. A continuing commitment to improving the learning environments for staff and students by making further improvements to the school buildings and facilities is made in this budget, with a capital works and maintenance program of \$95.749 million, which is an increase of \$11.62 million on the 1992-93 financial year.

A commitment to redressing disadvantage also continues to be the focus for the schooling sector. The social justice budget for this sector this year is \$96.748 million, which represents an increase of \$6.74 million on last year's

allocation. School card funds have been increased to \$16 million to help an estimated 93 000 students, while \$12 million is allocated to Aboriginal families and nearly \$37 million will be spent on programs for people with a disability. Literacy has been identified as a key issue, both nationally and internationally. Literacy will be a major focus of Statewide programs with special assistance to schools with high numbers of students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Literacy focussed schools will receive \$240 000 in State funds, which will complement the programs currently funded by the Federal Government. With respect to the other matters raised by the member for Hayward in his introduction, I shall be pleased to deal with those matters openly and frankly and put the facts on the table for the Committee through the question process.

Mr BRINDAL: As to the Program Estimates (page 285) and teacher award negotiations, in recent days the South Australian Institute of Teachers has threatened widespread industrial action over the stalled negotiations with the Minister of Education, Employment and Training for a teachers award. Eight days ago a confidential Cabinet submission jointly signed by the Minister of Education, Employment and Training and the Minister of Labour Relations and Occupational Health and Safety was submitted to Cabinet on this issue.

Cabinet sources have informed the Liberal Party that the submission was deferred and was to be considered yesterday. Sources within the Department of Labour have informed the Liberal Party that there is a major concern about the huge costs of caving in to all of the union's demands. For example, section 5 of this confidential Cabinet submission under 'Costs' states:

Anticipated revenue implication is in the order of \$42.1 million.

The Liberal Party has also been informed that this estimate is conservative and might be much higher. It is clear that the increased costs of this magnitude would have to lead to further cuts in teacher numbers and services.

Section 4 of the Cabinet submission outlines a number of options and the submission recommends the essentially revenue neutral option 2, which excludes significant sections of the union's demands. Has Cabinet agreed to the recommendation to support option 2 and, if so, when will SAIT be advised?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: As the honourable member would know only too well, Cabinet discussions are confidential. Obviously, he does not aspire to ever be in Cabinet, because I am sure he would know that. So, I do not intend to comment on Cabinet decisions, certainly not before they have been communicated to the Institute of Teachers and, in fact, it might not even be appropriate at that point.

I would set the record straight on a number of matters. The honourable member talks about an award. From the day that I became Minister in this portfolio I made it clear that I supported consolidation into one award of the five separate awards that currently exist for teachers in South Australia. I have not resiled from that. The institute and I are in agreement about that matter, and I believe it will proceed quickly. As to possible funding increases, the institute has made it clear that it wants a cost neutral approach to the implementation of an award, and that is certainly my belief and intention.

This budget has clearly said to the teachers of South Australia, 'We are committed to ensuring the highest quality of education within our State because, in fact, within the schooling sector of the budget we have had an increase in the

allocation of funding.' That is something the Opposition does not want to know or hear about. The Government's commitment to maintain the quality of education in this State is unquestioned.

The second point I want to make is that the honourable member makes the point that, if there was to be an increase in the budget for education in terms of conditions being sought by teachers, that would automatically lead to a reduction in teachers. I would have thought that at this point, when we have teachers who have very substantial remuneration, and in fact I believe now second only to the ACT in this country, who have teacher pupil ratios which are the best in this country and who have a range of other provisions such as preparation time and a whole range of other things like country incentives which again are second to none in this country—it would be a strange union indeed that could possibly be accused of pushing to ensure that they then remove numbers of teachers, because that is what the honourable member has said. I think the union will be very interested to hear that the Opposition is suggesting that it is pushing for extra resources to be spent at the expense of teachers.

It is not the case, and the union is making it very clear that it is not talking about an ambit claim for extra conditions; it is talking about ensuring that the provisions it has at the moment are maintained. One has to ask oneself why it is doing this. It is doing this because it is looking across the border and seeing what is happening in Victoria, where \$145 million was ripped from education in Victoria, where schools are closed with no reference to the communities, to the education sector or to anybody else and where, if you speak to teachers and the parent community in places like Western Australia and New South Wales, you find that they are devastated by the attack of conservative Liberal Governments.

The teachers in this State know that this Government has had a long commitment to education, and we will maintain this commitment. It is in this budget, and it will be maintained. That is my commitment, and with respect to the kinds of things the Opposition is now talking about in respect of proposed increases and so on, I can assure the honourable member that my negotiations with SAIT will be about resolving the matter. They will be about an equitable outcome for the most important people in this sector—the children being educated. We are about outcomes for children and at the same time maintaining the professionalism and professional conditions for teachers. We are not in the business of destroying education in the public sector, as has happened in conservative States.

Mr BRINDAL: As a supplementary question: in view of what the Minister has just said, will the Minister confirm that the Education Department has decided to brief a prominent local QC in regard to this matter, rather than use Crown Law and, if so, who has been appointed and what is the anticipated cost?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It is my intention and that of Cabinet to work to successfully resolve this matter with the Institute of Teachers, and it is not my intention to brief QCs or to proceed in this manner. We wish to have the thing resolved in a reasonable and sensible manner, and that is my intention.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to page 285 of the Program Estimates, on the subject of further teacher cuts. Senior sources within the Education Department have informed the Liberal Party that the Arnold Government is commencing

another round of cuts in staffing numbers within the Education Department. We have been informed that the personnel section of the Education Department is already working on cuts of up to 200 teachers and other staff positions from schools for next year. This is on top of the 1 500 teacher positions made since the 1985 election promise of no cuts to teachers in schools.

A number of secondary school principals have already contacted my office and indicated that last week the Education Department started a new round of targeted separation packages. Deputy principals have been given up to this Friday to indicate an expression of interest, with an understanding that they will be gone from the school by the start of term 4. Will the Minister confirm that a new range of targeted separation packages has been offered, with a view to further reducing the number of teachers and other staff in schools next year, and what is the target for this further reduction from now until the end of the financial year?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am sure the honourable member will be disappointed to learn that whoever is giving him this information could not be further from the truth. In fact, I am pleased to inform the Committee that letters have been sent offering targeted separation packages to quite a number of deputy principals in South Australia and, rather than reduce the number of teachers in education, what this is aimed to do is to achieve a rejuvenation within the teaching ranks of the Education Department. In other words, the deputy principals who take the targeted separation packages will be replaced, and they will be replaced from positions within the system and, as the honourable member knows, there are some surplus positions already within the system because of the fact that we have people who have returned from the country areas and we have had a problem with placing everybody within the system. In fact, rather than reducing, we are not only maintaining our numbers; we are saying to teachers that we believe that the future for teaching and for the professional development of teaching lies in retraining programs, broadening their skills and providing promotional opportunities. These targeted separation packages will provide that; they will provide opportunities for younger teachers to be able to have access to management and administrative positions that they have not had in the past. So, it was a good try, but I am sorry, it is quite wrong; we are not looking at reducing teachers and as far as I am concerned I find that rather offensive.

All schools will be staffed absolutely to the formula; I have made that clear and I will say it again. For assistant and deputy principals, the formula will apply. That is what is happening; school staff will be allocated on the formula that has been negotiated with the institute. If there are excess deputies—if there are people who take TSPs and who are not currently in schools—surely the honourable member would not be so financially irresponsible as to suggest that we should replace those people. The aim of running a modern education system is to ensure that we provide for the needs of students and that we do so in an efficient and economically sound way. The community demands that, I support its demands for that and that is what I am achieving. This is the first budget with which I have been involved as the Minister. I believe it is an extremely responsible budget; it looks on the one hand to maintaining quality of education issues and outcomes for children, and on the other hand ensuring that we are accountable to the people of South Australia for good financial management within this whole sector.

Mr BRINDAL: I am sure the whole Committee would applaud the Minister's aims but not necessarily agree that she is achieving them. I refer to page 290 of the Program Estimates, concerning the former Director-General of Education. Late last year the Minister took a decision to replace the former Director-General of Education (Dr Eric Willmot) on the grounds of health, with Dr Ian McPhail. Dr Willmot was asked to move to the Arts portfolio. Senior Education Department sources have informed me that, at the time of the change, Dr Willmot insisted that as a condition of his going he take two staff positions with him to the Arts Department and that the Education Department continue to fund those positions. Did the Minister agree (as a financially responsible economic manager) to the Education Department funding two staff in the Department for the Arts for Mr Willmot after he left the Education Department and, if so, what justification is there for this extraordinarily good management of Government money? Are these positions still funded, what positions are they, and in what budget line do we find them included in the estimates?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I did not get involved in these negotiations. However, I believe that two people went in a temporary capacity with Dr Willmot. I am informed that one of those people has now moved from Dr Willmot's personal area into a full-time position within the Department for the Arts and Cultural Heritage. I will see whether my financial adviser can enlighten us about anything else. It was a temporary situation and I suspect that part of it was concerned with Dr Willmot's state of health at the time. I would have thought that a little compassion and understanding might be the order of the day, but I do not believe that will be the order of the day, given what we have already seen today. If the Opposition wish to drag Dr Willmot and other people through this Parliament, that will be on their heads.

Dr McPhail: I understand that the arrangement in relation to one of the staff was made prior to my arrival. That person went with Dr Willmot on a fully-funded basis, but that is terminating. The second person went with my agreement on a temporarily-funded arrangement, but that person has now taken up a fully-funded position within the Department for the Arts and Cultural Heritage.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The answer is that one of those people is off and the other is coming off the Education Department's budget.

Mr BRINDAL: As a supplementary, the question was solely about who was paying and the department's budget. Has the Minister any reason to believe that the conditions of Dr McPhail's appointment were somehow not fulfilled correctly and that Dr Willmot legally continued to hold the position of Director-General of Education after he had been appointed as head of the Department for the Arts and Cultural Heritage?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am not aware of any such situation and neither is Dr McPhail.

Mr HAMILTON: Before I ask my first question, I should like to set the record straight in relation to the comments made by the member for Hayward. We have become used to his rhetoric and diatribe in recent weeks leading up to the next State election. As I have indicated previously, I have been a member of Parliament for 14 years and I have seen it used on both sides, so let us not kid ourselves about what has taken place.

In relation to the Estimates Committees, I refer to pages 682 and 683 of *Hansard* of 27 August 1980. The then Premier and Treasurer (Hon. David Tonkin), moved:

That for the remainder of the session, in relation to the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) and the Public Purposes Loan Bill—
Suspension of Standing Orders...

He then goes on to talk about the Estimates Committees. He said:

With regard to providing more time in which this House can consider the Budget, the Government believes that the establishment of Estimates Committees, in the terms proposed, will provide greater opportunity than ever before for all members to inform themselves of the details of public financial management.

His ilk, his lot, introduced this Bill. Do not blame those of us on this side for what they introduced.

I refer now to page 685 of *Hansard* for 27 August 1980 and the comments made by you, Mr Chairman, in relation to this matter. You said:

However, I sound a note of caution, in that we are embarking on an experimental path, and until we have gone through the first set of Estimates and the first Budget considerations we will not really be able to assess whether or not the procedure proposed is adequate or has improved our consideration of the Budget.

I have never been a great supporter of this procedure. One of the reasons why Labor members supported the Bill was that between 1979 and 1982 they were constantly being frustrated by the efforts of the then Government and, indeed, when they were in Opposition. Therefore, let us lay that to rest.

In terms of commitment to education, between 1979 and 1982 I have bitter memories of the diatribe and lack of consideration given to the electors of Albert Park, particularly when I raised the question during the Estimates Committees of the then Hon. Dean Brown, now Leader of the Opposition, about a high school that was to be built on Delfin Island. After intensive questioning by me, the response was, 'We may plant trees there and you will have a plantation to harvest,' or words to that effect. That was the commitment that they gave. It was this Government that made a commitment to education. With a lot of prompting by me and the support of successive Ministers, my electorate was able to get refurbishing and upgrading of schools and a general commitment not only to primary education but also to secondary education in that area.

The Public Accounts Committee, of which I was Chairman, even took on the Education Department, and was critical. I make no apology for the fact that I have been able, through pushing hard and with great support from the present Minister and others, to obtain decent facilities in Albert Park. I thank the Minister and, indeed, the staff of the Education Department for the assistance that they have provided to me in the years that I have been the member for that area. I have no cause for complaint. In recent times, the Opposition has said that it was looking for value for our dollar in education, and they have been only too quick to ridicule me as the local member over the closure of the Seaton North Primary School. However, we hear nothing of that now with the upgrading of the Hendon Primary School, or the proposed upgrading of the Seaton High School, to which my next question relates. What is to happen there? What did we get from the Opposition? We got zilch between 1979 and 1982, so let us get back to the issue. You have had your go and I have had mine, so just belt up.

The CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the honourable member will come to the question.

Mr HAMILTON: I will, Mr Chairman. It is all right for them to dish out their diatribe. They are like Paddy's dog: they dish it out and cannot take it. They are a bunch of wimps

and not game enough to come to the electorate and face the people.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: My first question, if you, Paddy's dog, contain yourself, is—

An honourable member interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: No, look, let it pass.

Mr HAMILTON: Will the Minister say what progress has been made in relation to the upgrading and redevelopment of the Seaton High School?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: In case anyone thinks this is a Dorothy dixer, let me quickly dispel that notion. In fact, I have to tell the honourable member that the Seaton High School update is not included in the 1993-94 capital works program. However, a master plan for the future redevelopment is currently being prepared, so we are working with the school community in looking at the preparation of the master plan.

The potential sale of surplus property is being investigated as a means of bringing forward sections of the redevelopment. Land value of approximately \$1 million is what we are looking at. The aim of the planning is to address the standard requirements of the school and to consolidate and upgrade the existing facilities. Included is the proposition to remove as many of the transportable buildings from the site as can be achieved. We are looking at removing the transportable buildings which are most in need of being removed.

Resolution of the playground equipment from the former Seaton North Primary School is nearing finalisation. I am sure that is a good message for the honourable member. The commitment is to provide a section of land and reinstall some of the former playground equipment on the site, plus additional funding to assist with the development. An approximate commitment of \$50 000 to \$75 000 land value, \$5 000 equipment and \$5 000 cash contribution is what we are looking at.

So, things are happening on the Seaton High School campus site. They are probably not happening at quite the pace that the honourable member would like, but, knowing of his patience and tolerance in the past, he will understand that we are moving forward and making sure that we have a successful resolution. I thank the honourable member for his representations on behalf of his constituents and school community on this matter.

Mr HAMILTON: The Minister would be well aware of the expectation from the sale of that land. I am yet to be provided with a copy of the supplementary development plan in relation to exactly what area will be disposed of. I know that officers of the Minister's department will shortly provide me with a copy.

I would also like to place on record my thanks to the Minister in relation to the compassionate way in which she has addressed the problems of playground equipment for local people in that area. I think a lesser Minister may have said, 'Well, that is not our responsibility' in relation to the allocation of land or the equipment. I am pleased and I thank my constituents for pursuing this matter and they are, I can assure the Minister, watching with a great deal of interest. A lady in my street is particularly determined to see that that comes to fruition.

My supplementary question relates to the school canteen, and I ask the Minister to take this on notice rather than respond now. I want to place on the record that there are some problems in relation to the school canteen, and correspondence was addressed to the Minister on 13 September

about this matter and the standards that apply. I understand the health standards fall well short of what is required in that area. The school council is insisting that that matter be addressed, and I would ask the Minister to address that particular problem.

My second question relates to back-to-schools grants, and I refer to the Estimates of Payments and Receipts, page 114. Can the Minister inform the Committee if the provision of funds for minor works under capital payments includes an amount for the continuation of the back-to-school grants program and, if so, how will school grants be calculated?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: With respect to the previous matter, I understand the letter has been received regarding the Seaton High School canteen. I am told the matter is in hand and will be attended to. I think that the service from the officers of the department, as I have said before in this Parliament, is second to none and again I would like to compliment them. I guess the facilities branch has to yet have another accolade.

Mr HAMILTON: Par excellence.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Indeed, par excellence. I think that one of the most important areas that school communities have found in the past has been the back-to-school grants program. I have been asked by some of my parliamentary colleagues how this will operate this year. I thank the honourable member for again raising it because it is important to get on the public record how we will be allocating these grants and this may save a little bit of heartache on the Opposition benches. I am sure they will be interested to know what the information contains.

The program has allowed schools to set their own priorities for the expenditure of funds and to direct those funds to the areas of greatest need within their school communities. I am pleased to say that \$12 million has been allocated for the continuation of this program in this year's budget. Again, the back-to-school grants will be determined, and I stress this, given that there was some suggestion by the Opposition spokesperson on education about the way in which the grants were allocated last time. I think that was certainly a deliberate slur on some of the people who were involved in the allocation process. I want to reject that. There is an independent committee including officers from the department and representatives from the South Australian Association of State School Organisations and the Association of School Parents.

The criteria used last year for calculating grants included reference to the number of children receiving school card benefits and minor works program requests and priorities. This year the criteria will be expanded and grants will be made taking into account issues of equity, social justice and special needs. I would think even the Opposition may find it difficult to argue with those grounds for allocation.

The equity component will be allocated \$6 million of the \$12 million, and all schools, excluding those which have been constructed or refurbished within the past three years, will receive a grant based on \$30 for every enrolled student. Where, of course, there are schools with fewer than 100 students these will receive a minimum grant of \$3 000. Under this provision almost all schools in South Australia will receive a grant. I am sure that members will welcome this initiative.

In addition, the equity component will ensure that schools receive additional funding under a social justice provision and, as was the case last year, these grants will be based on the percentage of school card recipients attending a school;

\$3 million will be allocated in this way. Finally, a further \$3 million will be allocated by the committee to schools identified by the department as having special needs and priority projects. I believe these guidelines will ensure the equitable distribution of these funds and at the same time recognise the special circumstances and needs of some schools.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the school communities who received the grants from last year's allocation. The feed-back is that they have made those grants go 100 miles in terms of getting things done. They have embarked, with their school communities, on painting, on upgrading and on working with the staff to look at putting in place facilities to match an educational philosophy, whether it was removing walls or putting in partitions.

I have had the privilege of seeing a number of these schools, including some in the South-East. I have to say that we owe a great deal of thanks to my predecessor, the Hon. Greg Crafter, who initiated these grants. They have recognised the responsibilities that are now being accepted by school councils in terms of decision making and setting their own priorities. I am delighted therefore to inform the Committee that I think the grants this year will certainly go a little further than they did last year but still pick up those very important areas of social justice and equity.

Mr HAMILTON: I preface my next question by making the following statement: as Chairman of the previous Public Accounts Committee, I referred to the investigation into the Education Department. I strongly believe in value for money in terms of education, and that was also the view of the committee.

A committee was formed to review the West Lakes High School and as a result of that review the school was subsequently closed. Obviously some people were concerned about that and not happy with it. There was a similar review of the Seaton North Primary School, which my three children attended. When that proposal came forward I looked at the issue very carefully and pondered over it a long time. I must say that it gave me a considerable amount of heartburn. However, the declining enrolments revealed to me that we could not sustain keeping that school open.

I want to place on record the disgusting tactics and the libellous and defamatory material that was put out against me as a local member. I will not mention names because I have been legally advised that I could have taken action against certain people. Now that the school has closed, I want to put it on the record that I harbour no ill-feeling towards those people at all. What I do want to place on record is my disgust for this over-inflated and bloated slob who was responsible for activating those people into distributing this material. People in the know would realise exactly what I am talking about. I condemn that person. It may well be that some person in the gallery laughs about that, but I will leave that to another time. He well knows what has taken place in that regard.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

Mr HAMILTON: It has never stopped you in the past. I ask my question, having expressed my disgust at that puerile contribution by the writer of that article. As I said, I harbour no ill-feelings towards those people who signed that particular statement. What is the current situation in primary and secondary schools with regard to enrolments; what is the general trend?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The primary enrolment full-time equivalents have been increasing. In fact, the primary

enrolments have been increasing since 1989 after declining for the previous decade and reaching a minimum of 108 752 in February of 1988. They are expected to steady at their current level of 117 800 before resuming a gradual decrease towards the turn of the century. It should be noted that due to the continuous admission policy, primary enrolments increased during the course of the school year. For example, in 1992 the increase was 5.9 per cent between the first term census and the mid-year census, giving a total of 124 276 primary enrolments. With respect to secondary enrolments these were still increasing in the early 1980s, reaching 83 000 in February 1984. The decline in numbers which followed continued until February 1990, when the total was 69 225.

This total increased only slightly in 1991 and 1992 before dropping to 66 207 in February this year. A small decrease is anticipated in 1994. If the trend for students to return to school after completing a year of study at year 12 continues (in February this year at least 20 per cent of the year 12 cohort had already spent one year at year 12) and there is a continuation of adult (re-entry) students entering the system, then a steady increase in secondary numbers is expected towards the turn of the century. census was 5.3 per cent, giving a total of 65 733 secondary enrolments in July. This was the largest percentage decrease in secondary enrolments from February to July in over a decade. I have a table with these enrolment figures, which I would seek to have incorporated in *Hansard*.

*First Term Enrolments at S.A. Government Schools 1982-1994 (est.)
+ (expressed in full-time equivalents)

	R-7	8-12	Total
1982	128680.5	78768.0	207448.5
1983	122738.3	81458.5	204196.8
1984	117835.3	83008.1	200843.4
1985	113627.8	82401.3	196029.1
1986	111739.3	79656.4	191395.7
1987	109103.2	77358.2	186461.4
1988	108751.6	75220.0	183971.6
1989	109958.7	72128.2	182086.9
1990	112068.0	69224.3	181292.3
1991	114929.1	69325.8	184254.9
1992	117354.2	69435.6	186789.6
1993	117849.2	66207.4	184056.6
1994 est	117800	65600	183400

* First Term Census (end of week 4, Term 1)

+ Full-time plus full-time equivalent of part-time students

Unlike the increase that occurs in primary enrolments during the school year, secondary enrolments decrease. I guess young people leave school and get employment or move into some other form of training, for example, in the TAFE training programs, or they move into labour market programs etc.

Mr SUCH: Is the Minister aware of the intention of school students to support the teachers' award campaign by attending the teachers' rally this Thursday? What is the department's policy on the involvement of school children in such a campaign, and does the attendance of students at that rally have her support and approval? A local paper report, which came to me this afternoon, indicates that students from a southern high school will be attending the rally this Thursday, which is to be held in support of the teachers' award campaign.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I find it rather amazing that this

morning, when we were dealing with one of the most important sectors in human life, that is, children in the 0-8 age group and their development and education, the Opposition did not want to discuss any issues relating to that—except the member for Coles—and wanted to rush into education, but then the most important question from the member who was making the fuss is: what is happening with regard to some rally that is being organised during the week? If this is the Opposition's statement about its commitment to education and outcomes and its in-depth probing of budgeting matters, then God help the children of this State should the Opposition ever become Government.

Let me say that I do not personally know whether some students are going to attend the rally. The rally is at 4.30. I am not running some kind of Hitler youth camp. I am not dictating to students what they do when school is finished at 4.30. We have students in our schools who are in fact adults, who are past the age of 18, and certainly many students are past the age of 16. I do not think that my highly skilled and

highly trained officers, who have come to this Parliament today ready to answer freely and openly any question relating to their areas of expertise, should be sent around the State like some kind of sniffer dogs to find out whether students are going to be attending a rally somewhere in the city after school hours.

Is the honourable member seriously suggesting that the State Minister of Education, Employment and Training, responsible for almost a third of the State's public sector budget, should be sending the staff around the State to find out things like this? Surely, it would be more important for the Opposition to be asking about educational outcomes for students, which is what we are about and what the officers sitting at this table are about, and not some kind of ridiculous, beat up political gimmick about whether some students are going to attend a rally after school hours. The answer is: I do not know. I do not think it is my business to know. It is the business of the families of those students, surely. I do not accept that I have to have the responsibility for students every waking minute of their lives and I question an Opposition which thinks that is the proper and correct role of an educational department.

Mr SUCH: I reject totally the inference regarding the CSO. We were limited by time and unable to ask all the questions we wished. I quote from an article, which was in a Messenger paper, from one of the students. She said:

... class sizes also were a concern with some students missing out on teachers' attention due to large classes. We've got huge classes already. My biggest class is drama which is 31 students... too high.

We have a situation where students are concerned about what is happening in the schools to the extent that they are prepared to rally and to organise buses and to take their parents along to protest, together with the teachers. It is a very important issue when the parents and the children in the schools are prepared to take to the streets themselves. I totally reject what the Minister is suggesting. It is a very important question and one that she should address.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: That was a statement. Is there a question? To what line in the budget, if I may ask, Mr Chairman, is this related?

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister does not need to add anything.

Mr SUCH: It applies to every line in the budget.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Perhaps, Mr Chairman, we could go through every line in the budget, which would be much more appropriate than some grandstanding about whether some students from some particular school might be attending a rally and about what is my role and function in that. I ask the Committee: how relevant is that?

Members interjecting:

Mr SUCH: They are very touchy, Mr Chairman. I hope you have some sedative available at afternoon tea. My next question relates to the school card. I refer to the Auditor-General's Report and to page 299 of the Program Estimates. At page 63 of his report, the Auditor-General notes that the direct cost of the school card scheme jumped \$2.1 million in 1992-93 to a total of \$12.2 million. This cost, of course, does not include the additional cost of free STA travel for all students with school cards who live more than one kilometre from school. Figures released earlier this year indicate that 33 per cent of all students now qualify for school card, and there has been a 63 per cent increase in school card recipients since 1989. Principals are very angry at what they describe as rorting the system. For example, they state that, in relation

to a person who was studying as of 1 November last year and receiving a health care card and who then returned to full-time work last year, his or her children automatically received the school card, irrespective of the income level earned.

Will the Minister confirm that if someone is earning over \$100 000 and claims to be Aboriginal, then his or her children automatically receive the school card and, if so, why? Furthermore, has the school card scheme been reviewed and, if so, by whom, and will any changes be implemented for 1994? I received a letter in January this year which pointed out that the school card would be issued in the circumstances where someone had to replace their hot water service or a refrigerator. Can the Minister confirm that those criteria still apply, and that a breakdown of hot water service or refrigerator entitles someone to receive a school card?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am very disturbed that, once again, we have to see some racist, Aborigine bashing. Aborigines are selected—

Mr SUCH: I am not being racist: I have asked whether someone claiming to be Aboriginal, earning over \$100 000, should get automatic entitlement to school card. That is a fair question. It is nothing to do with racism at all. It is nonsense.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I believe that it is. I believe that it is a deliberate political attempt—

Mr SUCH: It is not: it is a question of means testing of someone.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: As members are very well aware, a review of the criteria of the school card is being undertaken, and I will ask the person conducting that review, David Meldrum, to answer the specific details. Quite obviously, it is important to make sure that the criteria are appropriate and should be applied. That is the reason why the review was instigated. If the review had not been instigated the Opposition would be criticising the Government for not having a review of the criteria. If we were to rush out and in an arbitrary way just change the criteria and then later discover that a whole group of students was being severely disadvantaged, again we would be criticised.

I make no apology for the fact that we are having a review. It is my intention that those families and students most in need will receive the benefits of the school card. It has been a very welcome initiative to many thousands of families in this State, in terms of helping them to ensure that their children have access to the highest quality of education without putting a further financial burden on families, particularly sole parent families, families who for one reason or another are out of work at a particular time, or families with some other very severe financial problem.

Mr Meldrum: We are a little caught out here, because it is about a month away from completion. We want to come as close as possible to the only criterion for a school card grant being the possession of a health care card of some description. At the moment we have a mixed bag of what you might call historical accidents and various welfare and other reasons why people would be eligible for a school card grant. There were always good reasons at the time, but we are trying now to move to a much simpler system.

Our reasons for that are that we currently employ a number of people full time just to sort out the various means tests and hardship criteria that the Education Department uses as to whether a person is eligible for a school card. At the school site itself, the front office staff spends an inordinate amount of time trying to explain to people whether they may or may not be eligible for school card. We hope that by producing a health care card you will automatically get relief

from school fees, and we will minimise that sort of situation. We will also stop having to inquire in detail about people's means.

We have had frequent complaints from people trying to explain at the front office how much rent they pay, whether they receive maintenance moneys and so on, trying to establish whether they are eligible for the school card. I hope that shortly there will be circulating in all the schools in the State a draft position about how to move to the simplest possible system. We cannot be sure whether it will cost a little more or a little less, since quite a few people choose not to claim the health care card because they are at the margin of its being beneficial to them. When they realise that it becomes a passport to a school card, it may tip them into that.

Undoubtedly, some people, through the current means tests that the Education Department uses, will find themselves ineligible. Some of those are the occasional cases that cause a great deal of anguish in schools, such as the proverbial pulling up in a Mercedes to get the school card. There are some funny quirks of our means tests that can produce situations like that.

Mr SUCH: As a supplementary question, will the Minister confirm that Aboriginality in itself is an automatic reason for getting the school card?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I understand that it has been historically but that this is under review.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Why are we having to point fingers as though this is some kind of horrific situation?

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Let me just say—

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Fisher has the call.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: No, I am answering the question. I was asked and I am going to answer, if the Chairman is of a mind to allow me.

The CHAIRMAN: It would help if you did not ask yourself questions, though, Minister. Mr Such, was there a question you were completing or were you making yet another statement?

Mr SUCH: I just want to make a point. I reject totally any suggestion of racism. Lois O'Donoghue and Faith Coulthard, the first nurses to train at the Royal Adelaide, were part of our family and lived and dined with us long before they were accepted in the rest of the community. I went to school with people like Graham McKenzie, who is an Aborigine, and I have no animosity whatsoever. But this is an important point. In fact, it is a racist application. What the Minister is saying is that, simply because someone has a certain colour of skin yet earns over \$100 000, he should get the school card. That is totally racist.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the Minister should be allowed to explain herself.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Let me just say two things: no-one is suggesting that somebody who earns over \$100 000 and is Aboriginal should automatically get the school card.

Mr SUCH: That is what is happening.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It is very interesting that the member for Hayward, who is not even asking the question, is becoming totally agitated about this: methinks he doth protest too much. But we are having a review: we have already heard from the person undertaking the review. It is but four weeks before we have the actual criteria to be circulated to schools for feedback on the review. I wonder how many Aboriginal people do earn more than \$100 000,

who have school age children and who are getting the school card. Why are we dealing in the realms of possibility rather than in the realms of reality?

If there are one or two people out of the whole 93 000 people getting the school card, why is this the example that has been raised in this Chamber? It strikes me as a most unfortunate way of raising the matter. I can assure members that I will be looking very closely at the results of the review, and I will be implementing those results as quickly as possible.

Mr SUCH: I have had a long interest in trying to reduce the extent of arson vandalism in our schools which, in the past 10 years, is close to \$50 million in total losses. I note that the Government has indicated that it finally will introduce such things as hidden video cameras. Will the Minister outline some of the detail—obviously not revealing anything that might negate the effectiveness of those cameras—as to how this new approach will work, whether it is modelled on the Victorian system or whether it is a totally new operation in respect of trying to reduce these enormous costs to the taxpayer, and the damage and trauma they cause to teachers and the children at school.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am just sad that the member could not be gracious enough to acknowledge that what we are doing is in fact taking a big move forward. My colleague the Minister for Transport Development has recently announced that we have moved through a trialing process to implement cameras on buses on certain routes, and have done so with great success with respect to catching people who are graffiti vandals and who are committing other anti-social acts within the public transport sector. My colleague has also announced that we are moving to extend this method of surveillance.

This is all part of the Government's move to look sensibly at prevention of crime in a number of public places, whether it be on public transport or within our school grounds and facilities. It was recently announced that there is to be a trial of some cameras at the Aberfoyle Park High School to see whether we can detect the sorts of people who are perpetrating acts of arson, graffiti or other forms of vandalism and destruction.

It is my intention at policy level to ensure that school communities are involved in terms of the decisions about having these cameras. It is not appropriate for us to march onto school campuses and not tell the responsible school council that this is happening. Again, it is part of the Government's policy and philosophy to involve the school communities and councils in a mature and sensible way with decision making about their own schools.

This is not going to be a gross infringement on people's civil liberties. It is a necessary and appropriate way of early detection of any kind of criminal behaviour on school premises and grounds. I ask Mr Phillips to talk about whether it is modelled on the Victorian system and other points raised in the question.

Mr Phillips: This exercise is a trial and must be placed at that level. We are aware of the Victorian activities and we are working with SACON Security and its own security people on a trial at Aberfoyle Park High School, as the Minister said. It is an infancy exercise, because we need to ensure that we get it right, because there is balance in a risk management exercise of weighing up the outlay to do such things compared with the losses that occur through a whole range of activities.

For example, fire loss in 1992-93 in 40 incidents involved only six over \$100 000, with a total estimated loss of \$1.953 million. The average loss has come down significantly over the past three years because of some of the strategies we undertake in school security measures. The camera is a good idea and is a method that we are keen to trial. It is something that can be transported to other school sites, and the honourable member has also alluded to another area of concern in his electorate. It is difficult to declare publicly what we are going to do because of the nature of school security.

It is a complement to the activities of a security nature that we are already undertaking in our schools. SchoolWatch is certainly something that we are encouraging and building up with much effort to 140 schools from about 100 in the middle of last year. At this time detail is sketchy because it is a trial activity, but we want to ensure that we get it right as a cost effective strategic approach to security in schools.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I find it difficult to comprehend some of the gall of members opposite.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: When Caesar divided Gaul into three parts, two parts went to the member for Fisher and to the member for Hayward. I excuse the member for Coles because she is behaving more professionally than her two colleagues. I can remember the period from 1979 to 1982, when we last had a Liberal Education administration and the then Education Minister managed to provoke the first strike of teachers in the history of this State. I remember a 4 per cent across the board slashing of educational resources and the then Education Minister at a public meeting at the Thebarton Town Hall showing his contempt for people interested in education by saying to one member of the public—

Mr SUCH: Are we having a speech before the question is asked?

The CHAIRMAN: It is not a practice that is encouraged, but I will allow a few brief remarks.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I am simply responding to what has been done by the Opposition so far. It was not Government members who decided to try to make a political circus out of what should be a question and answer session whereby members of the Committee ask serious, genuine questions of the Minister in order to produce information about particular budget lines. I refer to the line relating to expenditure on focus schools. Ascot Park Primary School was one of the first focus schools in South Australia. It set up an establishment that made it possible for future gold medallists in Olympic gymnastics be trained, while at the same time being integrated in the normal activities of the school.

Ascot Park has been an immense success. I am sad that the redistribution has taken that school away from me so that I will not be representing it after the next election, because I am proud of my relationship with that school. It served as an excellent model of what focus schools can be. What other avenues has the department pursued in recent years with a system of focus schools convening areas of excellence such as that at Ascot Park?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank the honourable member for his well-known commitment to the support of excellence and our focus school program. In 1993-94 the outcomes of the program are as follows. The relevant areas are that, in 1993, focus school programs included 10 priority school projects in the literacy R to 10 area; in science and technology there were 10 schools in the R to 7 areas; there were 10 schools in the mathematics R to 7 area; there were a

further six schools of students with high intellectual potential; there were a further three schools in the physics 8 to 12 focus area; and in the junior secondary mathematics area we had a further six schools. All these programs have been operational during 1993 and all programs have established extensive State-wide networks of schools to support school-based curriculum improvement. The junior secondary mathematics program completes three years of operation at the end of this year, and plans to maintain the program in a modified form have already been developed.

The outcomes of an extensive evaluation of the project will be available in December this year. It is planned to maintain all other programs now operating and expand support in the areas of information technology across the curriculum from R to 7 and the Asia education foundation target schools program in 1994. It is important to acknowledge that there has been a focus on these areas and I must say that I believe the success is showing through, particularly in some of the areas like the science and technology area and R to 7.

I had something to do with the presentation of the Oliphant awards last year and it was absolutely heartening to see the number of students who received awards and prizes who had come from the public education sector and who had been part of the focus school projects. There is a whole range of them and one could talk about each one of the areas. Particularly important are the literacy schools, where it is fundamental that we put our resources into ensuring that improvement in literacy outcomes happens quickly.

Mr QUIRKE: How does the estimate of \$1.107 million covering the arrangement and operation of the Minister's office compare with the previous costs when the responsibilities for education, children's services and employment, technical and further education were managed by two Ministers?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank the honourable member for his question. It is interesting that the Opposition is prepared to make glib throwaway statements both in Parliament and now in the Estimates Committees but its members really do not want to know the facts. However, they are going to know the facts because I am going to put them on the table. The Government decision—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I hope the honourable member will actually listen to the information, because he might just learn something. The Government's decision to combine two ministries, that is, the former ministry of education and children's services, held by my colleague the Hon. Greg Crafter, and the ministry of the Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education, held by my colleague the Hon. Mike Rann, were combined as part of the public sector reform process.

This has led to significant savings in the operation of ministerial offices. On 8 September the member for Hayward claimed that the budget of the Minister of Education, Employment and Training was \$813 000, against an actual expenditure of \$1.363 million. What the member for Hayward forgot or deliberately chose to ignore was that the combined ministry of Education, Employment and Training was not created until October 1992. To make a comparison it is necessary to include the estimates of expenditure and outcomes for the then Minister of Technical and Further Education, and these are on page 314 of the Program Estimates and show a budget figure of \$665 000 and expenditure of \$310 000.

The expenditure for the ministries during 1992-93 covering the period during which amalgamation took place was \$1.673 million. The two ministries having been combined into one Ministerial portfolio, the estimate for this year is \$1.07 million. One does not have to be a mathematical genius to work out that that is a saving of \$566 000. I point out for the public record that this saving has been generated mainly by efficiencies in staffing, following the amalgamation of responsibilities. The member for Hayward may also be interested to know that prior to the amalgamation the two Ministerial offices had a total of 29 positions.

The combined ministry now operates with 16 positions, so we have gone from 29 to 16, which is a saving of 13 positions. Those 16 positions are made up of 10 administrative staff and six Ministerial staff and, for the four-hundredth time since I have become the Minister: I have one media adviser. Obviously, the honourable member does not want to hear that. I have one media adviser, who does a remarkable job, given that she is responsible for handling a whole range of questions and issues raised by members of the Opposition as well as the media, and it is very interesting that the Opposition still wants to have the quality of service it has had in the past.

Mr QUIRKE: On a point of order, Mr Chairman: I wonder if the member for Hayward would stop flapping and showing things around the room during this questioning procedure. I know he cannot help himself.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It may well be that since these figures were collated we have reduced even further, but even at 19 that is a saving from 26; we are now down to 16, and I would have thought that, rather than rushing off with this ridiculous assertion about two media advisers, the honourable member would actually bother to check the number of people involved. The other thing I find amazing is that in the honourable member's introductory statement he was trying to draw some parallel with what goes on in schools. Is the honourable member seriously suggesting that a Ministerial office responsible for a budget of \$1.411 billion—almost a third of the State's budget—with about 28 000 employees, in a highly critical area such as education, employment and training, should not have a Ministerial office that can actually respond to the issues, develop policy and maintain the close working relationship and liaison with this very large department that is absolutely appropriate?

What company in this State or this country would run such a huge organisation and be able to do so with the level of staffing that is currently in existence in my Ministerial office? In fact, Opposition members should be looking at the opposite; they should be looking at saying, 'How can they possibly be delivering the quality of service they do with these numbers?' Should they be brave enough to ask, I would answer that the reason is that we have extremely competent staff who are dedicated and hard working and who work very long hours, on weekends, etc. That is how we can do it and, rather than criticise, I would have thought that the honourable member might be able to acknowledge that there are people working within Government, not just in the public sector but also in Ministerial offices, who are incredibly dedicated, competent and efficient.

Mr QUIRKE: I refer to some of the schools in my electorate and in particular some of the Ingle Farm schools. I think it is appropriate that it is that sort of detail that members should be examining in this budget instead of making silly statements which at the end of the day are of no benefit except to the TV cameras at 6 p.m. The Ingle North

Primary School has been redeveloped, and the facilities branch has done an excellent job in that project. It has done excellent work in a whole range of different projects in the past 12-15 months, and the Ingle North Primary School is a clear cut example of a school that was properly refurbished after a fire that occurred almost two years ago.

Before the fire, the school population was 243 students. The fire put such enormous stresses on the local community and, with the relocation of that entire school for a whole term to another school site, many parents choose to take their kids to other Ingle Farm schools. As I understand it, as a consequence, the numbers dropped to 140 and they are now up to about 170. People in my community there are asking me, 'Will that school survive?' because they are well aware of what the mates of the member for Hayward and the member for Fisher have done in Victoria for schools of fewer than 200, and the school community is making it clear.

Mr Such interjecting:

Mr QUIRKE: The member for Fisher said they got rid of 50 schools. That is a very interesting interjection. What future will this school (and many other schools that have had a run of hard luck in the past few years in terms of numbers) have under this Government?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I want to put a policy issue on the record to start with. Any schools that have been closed in South Australia have been closed after a long and extensive period of consultation. Members do not need to take that as just my word: the member for Albert Park gave us examples of the consultation process that he had gone through as the local member and a parent. The difference between this Government's policies and philosophies and those of a conservative Government is that we do not have a hit list; we do not have some arbitrary number of schools that we will close with not one word of consultation to anybody, let alone the school community and the families involved in these kinds of decisions—and that is the fundamental difference. Nobody is suggesting that you should keep every school open in this State once they have been opened, whether there are five or 5 000 students in them. Nobody is suggesting that, but it is the way it is done and whether it is done on sound educational and economic grounds that is important. I do not think anybody can argue that what has gone on in the past in South Australia has been done on other than sound educational and economic grounds.

I give the honourable member an assurance that his school certainly will not be closed down. I note the increase from 140 to 170 pupils, and obviously that is a trend within the population of his community. We are not looking at walking around this State with some sort of hit list, arbitrarily closing schools just to see a bottom line in a budget. Let me remind members that the budget we are examining at the moment certainly holds the line in terms of our educational commitment to resources for education in this State. The honourable member can convey to his constituents from me that we are not following the Victorian and some of the New South Wales experience; we will work with our communities. And his school: there is no proposal to even look at those schools, because they are operating as very viable educational units, providing a facility within their community. I know some of the families from that school. They are very much involved in working with the staff at the school.

Mr QUIRKE: As a supplementary, my understanding is that, when schools have been closed after community consultation, the proceeds of the sale of the buildings and a number of other savings that are generated with it have gone

into the local community. Refurbishment of schools in my electorate has run to about \$7 million over the past three years or so. I understand that this contrasts with the Victorian episode where the money went into general revenue. The member for Fisher has always got his hand out for a few quid for his electorate, but he is just a bit slower than some of the others.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The policy adopted by my predecessor was not on some general policy level to hypothecate all funds immediately back to the individual schools. However, on a case by case basis, where there has been the closing down of a site and amalgamation with another school, the resources have gone back into the redevelopment of the new campus. I have visited a number of campuses where that has happened and I am delighted with what I have seen. The quality of the facilities, the excitement of the staff and students and the fact that the whole school community has been involved in everything, from how the planting of the new shrubs and trees and the landscaping should take place to the designing in some instances of years 11 and 12 facilities, have all been embraced in a very enthusiastic way. I think this is the difference. We are not about ripping money out of the education system and putting it into the Consolidated Account. This community ought to think long and hard about that before embracing the philosophies and policies of the Opposition. I am sure, from some of the information I have received that that would be their intention.

I could give examples of various schools, but in the interests of brevity I will not do so. If members want to see some successful outcomes of closures and amalgamations and they ask my office, we will give them examples that they can visit. Seaview High School is probably one of the most appropriate examples, and it is in the vicinity of both honourable members' districts. I am sure they would have visited that area and had a look. What is happening at Seaview is superb, and the school community is delighted.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: If you want to ask me a question about Brighton, I shall be delighted. I look forward to it with great interest.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I refer to page 195 of the Program Estimates relating to languages other than English. When in 1985-86 the Government announced that by 1995 every child in primary school would have the opportunity to study a language other than English, it said that this could be achieved with the addition of 20 full-time equivalent salaries each year. For several years the Government has claimed to be on target in meeting this goal. However, the Liberal Party has been informed that 130 new programs and about 60 to 70 salaries are needed this year with similar increases in 1995 to meet this promise. What estimated additional salaries and programs are needed to ensure that by 1995 this promise can be kept; and what number of extra salaries and programs will be introduced in 1994 as a result of this budget, especially as the budget lines for both primary and multicultural education are reduced this year?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I shall ask one of my officers to pick up any of the points with which I am not directly familiar at the moment. As the honourable member said, we are moving to have the primary languages other than English policy in place by 1995. Indeed, we have been looking at a number of things. As well as providing teachers, we are looking at providing some of our programs through distance education for country and rural schools. I could go through

the various programs, but as the honourable member has not asked me about that I will ask Kevin Boaden to provide some of the specific information.

I understand that by 1995, when junior primary and primary schools will have introduced the LOTE policy, about 320 salaries will have been made available to LOTE teaching at these levels.

Mr Boaden: LOTE programs are built into a school's starting formula. That means that schools currently have allocations of staff prior to taking programs on board. The schools will have the opportunity to determine the most appropriate time to introduce the LOTE programs. That may depend on programs currently operating which the school may wish to phase out or on the staffing structure of the school at that particular time.

Over a period of years we have had a gradual increase in the number of schools which have used those salaries to pick up a language other than English program. With the program that we have put in place, the majority of schools—I am talking possibly of 15 to 20 schools—may not have implemented their programs in the years four to seven area for LOTE by the end of 1995.

We are still having some difficulties with respect to specific languages. We have given priority to graduate students who apply for employment each year. We have also put in place an early offer process which means that we will offer those teachers a permanent position prior to knowing where the vacancies might exist, particularly in some of the Asian languages so that we do not lose those people to other systems or to the private system.

The program is still on target and hopefully we will achieve the desired outcome of having a majority of schools with languages other than English by the end of 1995.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: As a supplementary in response to Mr Boaden's reference to priority being given to graduate students, I take it that means graduate students in the specific languages other than English that are being taught. How many teachers, given the fact that the staffing is built into school staffing formulas, teaching languages other than English have not been specifically trained or graduated in those languages?

Mr Boaden: I do not have that information in front of me, but I will take it on notice and provide it later.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Page 302 refers to the occupational health, safety and welfare strategic plans being developed by the department. At a recent works safety conference principals were advised that for the safety of children it was important that schools listed an earth leakage circuit breaker. However, some principals have been concerned to discover that the cost of installation for an average primary school is about \$1 500 and that schools must find the money themselves. Are schools required to install earth leakage circuit breakers; if not, what alternative security measures are recommended by the department; and does the department have any scheme which might assist a school, like one in my electorate, which is unable to afford the cost of installation?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I shall ask one of my officers to answer this question, but I understand that when new schools are built they are automatically included in the building.

Mr Phillips: As the Minister said, such applications are an integral part of new facilities that we build, and they are placed in upgraded facilities, as in the refurbishment of the school's restructuring program.

The question, as raised by the honourable member, was initiated at the occupational health and safety conference. If the honourable member does not mind I will have to take that on notice. As to refurbishment and new facilities for existing schools we certainly have that in hand. We believe we have the situation covered and that it is non-retrospective. When new facilities or upgrading occurs we have a facility for addressing that through the minor works program and schools can make requests of us as a normal part of the annual provisions.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I do not envisage any new primary schools being built in my electorate for quite some time and I know that the schools that are there would find it hard to raise \$1 500 unless there was a special provision.

I ask the Minister to turn to page 70 of the Auditor-General's Report, which lists the average full-time employment within the Education Department for 1993-94 and estimates it at 17 217.5. Will the Minister provide an equivalent breakdown of teaching staff, ancillary staff and public servants for 1993-94, similar to that which is provided in the Auditor-General's Report for 1992-93.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It would have to be a projected number for 1993-94 because obviously the school year starts at the beginning of 1994. There will always be some movement in terms of allocating teachers—some on a temporary basis, some on contract—to ensure that we cover the whole of the State and the whole syllabus that is offered throughout the State. I do not believe you could be definitive in predicting the accurate numbers. Mr Treloar will be able to answer that.

Mr Treloar: In relation to page 285 of the Program Estimates document, there is a predicted employment figure for 1993-94. For example, the total average full-time equivalents for 1992-93 was 17 398. For 1993-94 the proposed is 17 217.5. That is broken down into 13 700.2 teaching; 2 752.6 ancillary; and 764.7 GME Act. That is the major break down in terms of AFTEs for 1993-94.

Mr HAMILTON: On 9 September, Professor John Horowitz, head of the Cardiology Unit at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, attended the Semaphore Park Primary School and addressed 250 students in relation to what the school is doing in terms of a pro-active campaign on health. A component of that program is for the children to ask questions about healthy lifestyle, exercise, etc.

The Minister would also be aware of my interest in that field and the incidence of heart disease. I am advised by the principal and a member of the school council that the response from not only the students but also the principal, parents and teachers who attended that forum was quite overwhelming.

Professor Horowitz advised them about heart disease in the western suburbs and the questions directed to him were rather enlightening and also very probing. Students asked questions about how these life-saving machines work. I will not go through all the questions; suffice to say that one of the major concerns of those children was the impact it would have on their loved ones, namely, their grandpa, grandma and then mother and father, brothers and sisters. The bottom line was how their lives would be impacted upon if their parents died from heart disease, and I found that very sobering.

Would the Minister consult with the Minister of Health—and I have raised this with him on the other committee—in relation to this program because I understand that the person on the school council has been talking to other schools in my

electorate with a view to perhaps using that as a pilot program to educate students, particularly in the primary school area, about healthy lifestyle and to use it as a pro-active approach to better health in our schools.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank the honourable member for sharing that with us. It is always very useful for the departmental people who are here today and who work with other members of the department in developing curriculum to look at methodology about how can we continue to ensure that what we are doing in schools relates to the needs of students.

This morning you might recall that I talked about looking at our youth strategy and the need continually to revise that. That statement is as applicable to the schooling sector of the portfolio as it is to the general youth affairs area.

What we do have in primary schools at the moment is a health education syllabus that teachers and schools implement in terms of being able to look at the way in which they implement them at a school based level. We do not have some magical way in which every student will be taught health education. The importance of what the honourable member has raised is that this is one way of using the community's resources, in this case the resource of an eminent professor of cardiology, to come into the school and openly talk to students about the implications of not having a healthy lifestyle and their need to pursue a healthy lifestyle. I think that this is very valuable and I also think that it needs to be seen within the context of a whole range of teaching methodologies. I actually ran a health education and social education program when I was a teacher, and I certainly used people from the community with appropriate expertise to speak to a particular age group. That is something that we are encouraging in the Education Department, to ensure that staff realise the huge resource out there in their own communities.

If, for example, we are talking about a school running a health education program for upper primary students in one of our country centres, it might be more appropriate to get in a community nurse who has good communication skills and who can be what I will call a teaching aide for that particular class and that teacher. I think what you are asking is whether there is a role for looking at sharing that successful learning experience with other schools within the area and, indeed, with other schools across the State and the answer to that would be, yes, I think that is quite appropriate and I would be very pleased to speak with Martyn Evans and to look at the way in which it can happen.

However, I think its success comes probably more from a local point of view, with the school approaching the local hospital or the community health centre or the Health Commission; whatever it happens to be. While we are now talking about heart disease, we could just as well be talking about some other diseases, such as diabetes or the management and control of asthma. I recently launched an asthma project which brings together a whole range of health providers to work with teachers and parents and our schools within the southern community and to look at how we can better manage asthma in young children particularly, but in all age children, in our school system, and have some pilot schemes in that area.

In terms of totally supporting the principle, I think it is excellent, but I think it will probably be more successful if it is done at a local level because we then set up a rapport between that school, the personnel and, for example in the south, the Noarlunga Health Village or Noarlunga Hospital, and, in the north it could be one of the northern health units

or hospitals, or it could be in the honourable member's own area. I know of his close association and involvement with the Queen Elizabeth Hospital. So I would say 'Yes' to the principle. I will mention it to Martyn Evans, but I think from my own practical experience and perhaps that of officers in the department, we could probably say that those programs would be more successful if they were done on a one to one basis within the local community.

Mr HAMILTON: I wanted to know what the Minister thought about that particular issue. I think there is a lot of room for thought later on as to how we can better utilise those local resources, as the Minister quite properly pointed out. If we use these proactive campaigns, hopefully it will save the community a lot of money in the future but, better still, those children as they become adults, and their children, will have a healthier lifestyle. My second question is in relation to the redevelopment of the Hendon Primary School. The Minister would be aware of my strong views on that school. It is an absolute delight to see the development that has taken place there, but I am looking at the timetabling for the opening of this school and at whether funds will be made available for, say, the curtains and other facilities there. For example, will there be new furniture for those new classrooms? What is the timetabling for the opening of that school? As the Minister indicated previously, there is a great feeling amongst the principal, the students and the teachers at that particular school and the redevelopment has been long overdue. I would again like to commend the Minister and her staff who have assisted in the redevelopment of that school. I think it is an indication of what can occur when there is a closure of a school and the usage of resources that are surplus because of that.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The member knows that the actual projected costs were \$2.079 million and that included an activity hall which was costed at about \$212 000. The project commenced on 14 September 1992 and is projected for completion soon. I will be asking our Facilities Manager to tell me if we are still on target, but it will be completed on 12 November this year. It is important to acknowledge that, when we do these sorts of upgrades that do entail the sale of surplus land, this money goes back into the school community. That has been one of the successes in the South Australia. In fact, I have been contacted from Canberra and asked how we have managed to look at the upgradings we have done in our schools and how we have managed to rationalise some of the schools that were not required while ensuring that we provided the same level in quality of education. I think that the two things have been: extensive consultation with the communities involved and a commitment that has been followed through to the letter, and that was, to put the money back into those particular schools from the realisation of a sale or from the closing down and the selling off of another site. So, that is good news. With respect to specific things such as furniture, I will ask Mr Phillips to answer.

Mr Phillips: Curtains would be in the province of the school community to fund: they are certainly not part of our normal guideline provisions. Allocation of furniture will be considered part of the project and an allocation that I cannot give right now. It will be committed in that \$2.097 million for the project funding. That will be negotiated with the school community. In other words, it will develop a shopping list of the furniture required to complement the refurbished facilities.

The school restructure program has enabled some outstanding work to be done in a number of our schools in improving the backlog maintenance issues, addressing occupational health, safety and welfare concerns, and generally making our schools more welcoming, more attractive and more appropriate learning environments. The official opening, which I know the honourable member is very interested in, will be as near to completion date (12 November) as possible, and we are pretty well on target. That will be as close as the school community negotiates with the Minister's office for the opening to occur.

Mr HAMILTON: I look forward to the opening of that school and will be in contact with the school to see its furnishing requirements, and will probably come back to the Minister or Mr Phillips accordingly. Will the Minister provide information on the establishment of the Connections program planned to focus on early intervention in junior and primary schools? I do not think I need to explain a great deal about that: it is self-explanatory. As the Minister indicated in a previous response, it is of critical importance in the education arena.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: In July of this year South Australia received \$200 000 for a new Commonwealth funded project that focuses on the early years of schooling and on early intervention. The objectives of the project are, first, to identify by both group and gender students whose attendance and participation is significantly less than others in the class, in other words, students who start to show up as not attending. We need to look at why they are not attending. Secondly, we must develop strategies both within the classroom and at a school organisation and management level that will maximise the attendance of those students. As well as the attendance, we have to look at maximising their participation and, most importantly, their learning outcomes, particularly with respect to literacy. That is the way in which the project is moving. Finally, the objective of the project is to provide a report for other schools, outlining the strategies developed. In other words, these are not stand-alone projects. We want to learn from this identification of what I am calling students at risk, but the risk is defined initially as those students whose attendance record is showing that there is obviously some problem and further investigating that, coming up with a range of strategies that can be implemented at the school level and involving the family.

I was delighted to be able to visit one of the schools involved in this project, the Hinks Avenue Primary School at Whyalla. That school has had amazing success in term of working with the parent community. The staff and the principal are highly motivated. You walk into that school and immediately pick up this wonderful sense of excitement that learning is happening, it is interesting and exciting. They are taking on the problems and issues and resolving them, not putting them in the too hard basket and just saying 'We need more resources.' They are actually developing their own strategies. This is one of the six metropolitan and country junior primary and primary schools receiving funding from this Commonwealth funded project.

Mr BRINDAL: My question concerns Estimates of Payments and Receipts, page 112, 'Personnel services'. The Education Department keeps a large number of files. On every individual employee within the department there is a personal file to which that employee, under the Freedom of Information Act, has a perfect right of access. Where the employee writes to the department on a departmental matter it is customary to file that matter under the subject matter of

the correspondence. If I wrote about facilities it would be filed under 'Facilities'. However, I am informed by good sources that there exists a third classification of file, which is called a restricted access file. In certain cases, such as where there may be an allegation of child abuse or something else against the teacher, that is not put on the personal file but put on a restricted access file under, I presume, very strict conditions as to who can have access, where it is kept and who knows about it. Will the Minister confirm the existence in the Education Department of restricted access files on some of its employees? Are all employees informed when a restricted access file is started on them, informed of the contents of that file and what rights they have under the Freedom of Information Act to check that all information in that file is accurate? What are the conditions of access to that file? By whom may it be accessed and when?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: As the honourable member would know, this is not something that I as a Minister have been personally involved with. I am aware that people can access their files under freedom of information and realise that the honourable member is raising a personal matter in a general sense with respect to information on files. I have made it a policy since I was appointed Minister of not getting involved in that side of things, because I believed that any Ministers who did that would leave themselves open to an accusation, whether correct or incorrect, regarding some kind of political interference or manipulation in the keeping of files. I have never sought to see anyone's file or inquired about anyone's file. I do not believe that is my role and function.

I am about setting policy, about working with the department, and I want to make very clear that, in asking a departmental person to answer this question, it is because I have adopted a very strict policy and code of behaviour and practice for myself. I do not think that is my role and function. That, in fact, is something that is quite appropriately carried out under the auspices of the Director-General. Under the GME Act and in other areas we do have safeguards for the right of privacy. At the same time, we have the other side of the coin: we have a responsibility, and a colleague on the Committee has raised the importance of ensuring that we do not have people teaching in educational institutions who have some history of being child abusers or some other form of deviant behaviour.

We have this dual responsibility to the community. I do not believe that it is for the Minister of the day to be foraging into people's files. I certainly have not done it and do not believe any Minister in this Government would be involved in that, so I will ask Mr Edwards to answer the specific points of the honourable member's question.

Mr Edwards: We have a category of files termed 'restricted access files'. They physically are no different from other files in the system, other than that they are marked in such a way that people can identify them as such. What goes into those files is usually information to which, literally, we wish others within the system to have restricted access. It might well be the reporting of the outcome of a selection panel, or information such that we would not want that file moving through the system in the normal fashion.

It could also include investigations on individuals or other investigations that we would want to be restricted in terms of the access contained in that file as it moves through the system. If an individual seeks information through freedom of information about the contents of such a file, it would be included in the normal access to such information. It is not

a file system separate from the personal files of individuals. Largely, the intention is to restrict access within the system itself and to keep information contained in those files confidential where such confidentiality is needed.

Mr BRINDAL: I understand Mr Edwards' answer perfectly. Therefore, if any teacher wishes to know the information that the department holds on that teacher, from Mr Edwards' answer I understand it is necessary to submit a freedom of information request and ask in that request for all files pertaining to that person. I want to be specific, because the general belief among teachers is that, if they go to the department and ask to see their personal file, they are shown what the department has on them and what they are entitled to see under freedom of information. They are two different things based on Mr Edwards' answer today and I want to clarify that matter.

Mr Edwards: If a teacher asked for access to their personal file, it would be what was shown to them but it would be possible for an investigation on a teacher not to be contained in the personal file which might otherwise move freely within the system. That is not to say that information would not be available under freedom of information to a teacher if they sought it.

Mr BRINDAL: I do not want to labour the point, but it is important to know for the sake of teachers. Mr Edwards was my boss at one stage, and he will know. If something happens in a career at some stage that you think is clarified and you are not aware of what has happened over it, how do you know unless your supervisor at the time tells you that a file has been created? How will you ever know what is created, what is written down and what you should be seeking to amend? If you are not told it is there, how do you know you should look at it and amend it?

Mr Edwards: The simple answer is that not all information about a teacher would be contained on their personal file. It could be on other files relating to instances, transfers or selection. It would be other files. It would be an issue whether it is a restricted file. Teachers or employees seeking information should not assume that it will necessarily be contained on their personal file. Should they ask for access to their personal file, that is what we will give them. It is not that we are concealing the other information: it is the nature of the request. We would want to clarify what issues or instances they wanted information on.

Mr BRINDAL: We have to learn to be very specific with our requests. I draw the Minister's attention to page 300 of the Estimates of Payments and the attainment levels folder, of which the Minister will be aware. How many copies of the attainment levels folders were provided and distributed to teachers? What was the total cost? The Minister can take on notice the question of the total estimated cost for the development of the attainment levels folder, as opposed to the production costs.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will ask Ms Wallace to answer the question.

Ms Wallace: The folders were distributed to all primary teachers. As I do not have the cost figures, I shall be happy to provide them.

Mr BRINDAL: How much did it cost to develop the information that went into the attainment levels folders?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: We will provide that information.

Mr BRINDAL: I refer to the national curriculum profiles and statements (page 300). In recent months there has been a rising torrent of criticism from educators about the standard

involved in the national curriculum statements and profiles approved by Ministers in July. For example, the internationally renowned physicist, Professor Paul Davies, of the University of Adelaide, and 15 other teaching academics from Adelaide and Flinders Universities have written and expressed concern—and these are their words, Minister—about the Minister's 'intransigent attitude'. They state:

Ms Lenehan has vowed to press ahead with implementation of these ill conceived, ideologically driven proposals. There is no question in our minds that if she does so, she will do irreparable harm to the education of South Australia's children and, as a consequence, will undermine the national and international competitiveness of this State.

Another leading educationist, who is poles apart politically from Professor Davies, Dame Leonie Kramer, has also stated:

Both the national statement on English and the profile are fundamentally flawed to the extent that if adopted in their present form they will exacerbate and not solve the problems of illiteracy which increasingly cause anxiety to parents, teachers and employees.

There have also been many other equally trenchant statements of criticism of these and other profiles and statements. Does the Minister now accept that these national profiles and statements should not be used in South Australian schools until they have been amended, or does she believe that Professor Davies and Dame Leonie Kramer do not know what they are talking about? If the profiles and statements are to be amended, what will be the process of managing the review of the document and when will schools be provided with a copy of the amended documents?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I respect people's right in a democracy to have their views. While the honourable member can quote from two people and their views, I certainly would be happy to provide him with the countervailing points of view that come from maths and science teachers, people who are actually involved in the field of hands on teaching, learning and education. They are certainly not ill conceived and it is interesting to note, as I understand it, that Tasmania, Western Australia and Victoria are quickly moving to implement the statements and profiles.

Certainly, it is my intention to move forward in this direction and I am supported not only through the department but through the South Australian Catholic Education sector, which is planning to start implementing the statements and profiles in its schools next year. I will ask departmental representatives to address some of the points in the question. It is easy for people to come out and knock anything that moves away from a traditional approach. If the traditional approach is not working, some people seem to bury their head and say, 'We have always done it this way. This has to be the best way.'

What we are looking at in the development of statements and profiles has been not without controversy and I am not suggesting that that is not the case. There has been a need to amend and adapt some of the profiles and statements as they have been put out for community consultation and feedback, but to just throw the lot out under the guise that they are ill conceived and are going to set everything backwards is wrong. It is like throwing out the baby, the bath water and the whole bath as well, which is ridiculous. We could debate this for some time but, in the interests of members on both sides wishing to ask questions, I ask Ms Wallace to pick up the points and how they relate to the implementation of the scheme in South Australia.

Ms Wallace: It is certainly true that some academics have expressed views and concern about the quality of statements

and profiles as they have been developed over the past three or four years. Much of that has derived from the view that the statements and profiles encompass post compulsory years of schooling. They do not. In fact, they describe curriculum statements and profiles for the compulsory years of schooling in South Australia and other States and Territories. In detailed conversations with academics, course writers and curriculum statement writers many of those difficulties have been ironed out. It is important to note that a move to an outcome based description of education is something different in Australia but it is consistent with moves happening in other parts of the world and, as the Minister has said, it is certainly not uncontroversial.

The implementation plans for next year are still under consideration but have been the subject of extensive consultation. Not only all schools but also all the key stake holders have been involved in this consultation process, and a series of recommendations has been developed for the take-up of statements and profiles from the year 1994 and into the next four or five years. I think it is important to note that the statements and profiles were developed through a consultation process as well. The CURASS Committee of the AEC represented all the major stake holders in each State and Territory in each sector, all the parent organisations as well as teacher union authorities.

I think it is important to note the significant achievement in terms of the agreements around the eight areas of the curriculum and the eight profiles that have been developed to this point, and I would also like to underscore what the Minister has already stated, and that is that across Australia in one way or another all States and Territories are moving forward to implement the statements and profiles in forthcoming years.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank Margaret Wallace for her analysis of the situation. The other thing that might be of use to the honourable member is that the five year management plan for monitoring student achievement is currently being developed through this wide ranging consultation process, as we have heard. This plan will outline the time line for the take-up of the profiles, many implementation strategies and the schools. The ethical use of achievement data is a high priority being discussed within the schools and the system. I want to highlight this, because the honourable member has asked me the question; it is not something that we are rushing into.

In fact, there have been criticisms, those criticisms have been taken on board, there have been amendments and further consultation, and there will be a five year management plan for monitoring student achievement. But surely it is important to recognise that we have to look at assessment on outcomes. We cannot just proceed as we have done in the past. If we are going to move to a best practice nation, and to be world competitors, we must look at improving and making sure that young people do reach the levels of achievement and that the outcomes we believe are happening are in fact happening. It seems to me that some of the criticisms have not come from hands-on teachers but from people who are, as Margaret Wallace has said, academics. That is fine; they are more than entitled to their views. But as Education Ministers around the country we will not listen only to those views when there are a huge number of countervailing points of view being put to us and we are being urged to move forwards rather than backwards.

Mr BRINDAL: As a supplementary question: I was listening carefully but I do not think some others in the

Chamber were. The Minister has said that she is prepared to amend them if and as they need amending?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: No, I have said that we have already had quite a degree of discussion and consultation and in the actual development of the statements and profiles amendments took place along the way. Some of the criticisms were justified and, as I understand it, those criticisms were taken into account and suitable amendments were put in place. Perhaps Margaret Wallace might like to pick up that point.

Ms Wallace: There have been amendments, as the Minister has discussed. During the course of development, the consultation was intensive, with quite a large number of practising teachers as well as stake holders involved. So, there were significant changes during that development process. It is everybody's intention to continue to monitor the statements and profiles as they are implemented. In the normal course of events as they are implemented and as the need for changes arises, that would be built in as part of the ongoing and appropriate monitoring and review process that is used by any organisation as it goes about its business.

Mr SUCH: My question relates to the subject of the Education Review Unit, Program Estimates page 306. A number of principals have expressed concern about the procedures being adopted by members of the unit. Some principals, whilst acknowledging the need for external review, are very angry with some of the established procedures, which they believe are placing some good principals under great stress. I have been advised that a small number of principals have been so outraged with comments made in draft review unit reports that they have threatened the department with legal action because of alleged defamation. Is the Minister aware of any examples or instances of principals threatening legal action for defamation; are there any examples before the courts at the moment; and what is the estimated total annual cost of the Education Review Unit?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: As I understand it, the honourable member is talking about principals instigating legal proceedings?

Mr SUCH: As a result of comments made in draft review unit reports that the principals threatened legal action against the department because of alleged defamation. Is the Minister aware of any such examples and are any being dealt with in the courts?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Before I ask the manager of the review unit, I think we need to look at this question in a broad policy framework. If we are, as the Opposition has consistently done, certainly in my time as Minister of Education, to demand accountability (and I have absolutely no problem with that), and on both sides of the Parliament we have talked about having the highest quality of teaching and learning that we can afford to purchase in this State—and I think we have certainly achieved that—and we set up a review unit which honestly looks at giving feedback to schools about how well or otherwise they are performing in terms of their responsibility to children who are by and large fairly powerless within the community, to then suggest that somehow you can only do it if the feedback is going to be totally positive, is something we should think about.

I will not defend the ERU, because I do not know any specific cases, but I do say that we need to be a little careful here. Are we to have an ERU which works without fear or favour and which tells it as it is? The Minister and Director-General of the day can then put in place remedial action that can ensure that we improve practices in individual class-

rooms, the management of a particular school, and the way in which a school council and staff interrelate and operate. Or do we not want that? Do we just want to hear the good news? Do we really not want to know where the problems and issues are? We would then somehow impede the work and the fierce integrity and independence of the ERU and simply have a tame cat; we would not get on with any change that might ensure we have the very best of outcomes for our children.

I want to put that in general context. I personally have no information about whether people will take legal action against the department or individuals within the department. It may well be that Rosemary Gracanin knows about such situations and she may wish to provide some information to the Committee about this. I want to put this in that context. You cannot have your cake and eat it too. Either we have accountability and set up review units, and say to them, 'We want to see the picture as it really is; we have nothing to hide; we want to get on with making changes for the better,' or we have some other kind of lesser process which does not tread on anybody's toes and maybe we will not have the outcomes we seek.

Dr McPhail: The Education Review Unit has been set up as a very deliberate approach to quality assurance to education in South Australia. It parallels to a certain extent the statements and profiles about which we were talking previously. Although there may be some argument about whether the statements and profiles are the best structure, I think what we will be getting from those profiles will be some outcomes which can give us some sense of the health of the learning outcomes of students in South Australia.

That is an important step forward: that we measure the health of the learning outcomes. The ERU provides us with some measure of the activities of schools. The ERU is not a group of inspectors under the old regime. It goes into schools using an approach that involves the principal and teachers and interviews with students, parents and school councils, so that the whole community has an opportunity collaboratively to work through the way in which the school is operating and review the way in which it presents itself and provides learning opportunities for young people.

The ERU is now coming to the end of its first cycle. By the end of this year, it will have completed a review of every school in the State. When it has completed that, it will spend some time reviewing the way in which it carries out its activities. As the Director-General, to whom the ERU reports, I shall be particularly interested to ensure that while we are insisting upon a thorough assessment of a school's presentation at the same time it is seen to be fair and reasonable to all those involved in the process. Its intention is always to complement the schooling system by reviewing and providing assistance with the way in which a school operates, not writing a score card that puts individuals at some disadvantage or risk at the end of the day.

Additional Departmental Adviser:

Ms R. Gracanin, Director, Education Review Unit.

Ms Gracanin: I have been Director of the ERU for the past 15 months only, but my recollection is that no formal legal case has been brought against the Education Review Unit for defamation. There has been an expression of concern on at least one occasion that I can recall that some action may have taken place, but this never eventuated and it did not occur.

Mr SUCH: As a supplementary on the ERU, in the context of concern expressed by a parent, when the ERU conducts a review in a junior primary school, does it make

much sense for members of the ERU to ask a five-year-old what he or she understands by the term 'sexual harassment'?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It seems to me that we are getting down to the most minute detail within the operation of the education spectrum. We could sit here with such questions all day. I should have thought that the vast majority of this community would welcome the work of the Education Review Unit. Whether a particular officer within that unit asked a five-year-old that question or not should be taken up with the unit, and I will pass that question over.

We have to be careful that, in raising these small issues, we do not put at risk the ability of a department to set up a unit that reports on its performance attainment in an objective way and gives some feedback for us to move forward in terms of policy and implementation strategies. I wonder whether the honourable member is trying to make a case for the abolition of the ERU. Does he not want this kind of ability to assess what we say we are doing? It may be appropriate to ask a child of that age whether they understand that term. Even though I am trained and have an educational background and post-graduate qualifications in this area, I am not going to presume that I know every last thing about education policy and practice and tell every professional teacher, researcher or reviewer how to conduct their business.

Ms Gracani: I do not know whether such a specific question would have been asked of a five-year-old during a review process. A range of topics is addressed through the review, including an audit of policies developed within the system to ensure that they are being implemented in schools. The questions and the answers are confidential and not for public information. Therefore, I cannot at this point say whether such a specific question was asked. If it were asked within the framework of the audit for the policy of sexual harassment, it may have been couched in some terms, but I could not answer that specifically.

Mr SUCH: My next question relates to suspensions, Program Estimates, page 301. Earlier this year the Liberal Party was contacted by a number of principals who expressed concern about the Minister's unwillingness to concede that there was a major problem with violence in schools and great concern generally amongst teachers about lack of support in tackling discipline policy in schools. One of those principals indicated that he believed there were more than 5 000 suspensions of students in South Australian schools last year.

As a result of that information, the Liberal Party in February asked the Minister to indicate how many students had been expelled or suspended in each of the past three years. In one of the more amazing answers in recent years, the Minister indicated that only one student had been expelled from a Government school in those three years and that the department did not collect statistics on suspensions for the years 1990 to 1992.

When that answer was provided in Parliament, the Liberal Party was contacted by a senior officer in the Education Department who had in another life been a senior officer in the southern area of the Education Department. That officer stated that the Minister had not told the truth in that answer and was desperate not to release any figures on the total number of suspensions. That person indicated that for many years the southern area had required all schools to notify one designated officer in the southern area about school suspensions. In fact, that officer had to give approval for all out-of-school suspensions as distinct from in-school suspensions. The officer said that there was a similar recording procedure in all other areas of the Education Department.

Does the Minister still claim that between 1990 and 1992 the Education Department did not collect statistics on suspensions, and will she now provide for 1990, 1991 and 1992 the number of suspensions of all categories for South Australian Education Department schools?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Again, that is the kind of behaviour that we have seen in this Committee. To use a football analogy it is playing the man—in this case the woman—not the ball. I find it offensive that the honourable member should accuse me of telling lies. For heaven's sake, why would I want to tell lies and why would I not want to provide the information if it is available within the department? To assert that somehow I am desperate not to provide that information runs counter to the kind of arguments that the Opposition has been putting forward. It is quite bizarre and an insult to the intelligence of everybody sitting at this table and the officers who work within the department. It is a load of rubbish.

On the one hand, I am being criticised because I am not saying that all violence in this community emanates from schools and that schools are totally responsible for violence in our society, because any reasonable person would know that that is nonsense. When we introduce a behaviour management policy which does not go back to beating and flogging children, which is exactly what the Liberal Party wanted to do, and I suspect that should the people of South Australia—

Mr Quirke interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Exactly! In his maiden speech he wanted to beat and flog children.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: If the honourable member cannot remember, we will have to find it. It amazes me because I understand that if the community are unfortunate enough to have the Opposition inflicted upon them in Government they will return to this policy of corporal punishment. I find it amazing, when they are raising the issues of violence, then to talk about this kind of issue.

Mr Such interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will be very happy to give the answer in my own time, thank you. With respect to our behaviour management policy, I have had information that in fact our policy is far and away ahead of that in any other State in this country. I get an opportunity to visit a range of schools, including primary and junior primary, and see the way in which children are accepting responsibility for their own actions and behaviour. The way in which they relate to other children, teachers and adults is extremely heartening for any Minister of Education

I am not going to suggest that a policy that was implemented at the beginning of this year will right the whole situation with respect to behaviour problems in schools overnight. But because we have introduced it right throughout the school system we will see the benefits of that policy flowing through as those children move through the system.

I certainly want to put on public record that I reject this notion, getting back to the introductory and inflammatory statement of the member for Hayward, because there is violence in the community and because there are great issues and problems which I put on the public record about the use of violence in the media, that somehow the education system and teachers are responsible for turning that whole community and societal issue around.

Mr Such interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: That is what the Opposition has been suggesting. Maybe the honourable member has not but the shadow Minister has certainly been suggesting that, and I think that is an indictment upon his intellect but I will cope with that on another day.

I would like to find the answer to this because I believe that the information which I provided to the Parliament was the correct information that had been provided to me by the department. I remind the honourable member that I was not the Minister in 1990 or 1991; it was not until October 1992 that I was the Minister, so how I could be lying to the Parliament when I was not even the Minister for that period is quite amazing.

Mr Hamilton interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: They are just puppets in our House and stooges for this. I would like to ask the departmental officers whether the allegations that have been made against other officers in the department are correct. Is it correct that there are figures because if there are figures I would be delighted to provide them? The Opposition cannot have it both ways: they are criticising us because principals are not rushing out all over the place and expelling people. One would ask where do these students go when we have a legal responsibility for them in the compulsory years of education to provide an education. Do we cast them on to the streets, because that is what the Opposition wants to see us do. They are saying, 'Why are you not following the Victorian example and letting principals expel people?' My answer to that is, 'What happens to those young people? Who cares about them? Who is prepared to provide the kind of support services that we have provided: the behavioural management centres, the kind of training, the counselling facilities, working across the sectors, working with families'. This Government is providing all that. We are not going to cast off these young people like something that we do not want to see in our schools. That is what the Opposition is suggesting we do. I can assure the honourable member, through the Chair, that, in fact if we are taking strong action in terms of suspending students and we are doing so in a proper and responsible way and we are involving the families and some intervention programs, I am quite pleased that a number of students are having that intervention.

However, there is absolutely no substance to the allegation that I am desperate not to provide those statistics. I find that demeaning of the honourable member and I am amazed that he would allow his intellect to be so subverted that he cannot even ask a decent and honest question in this Estimates Committee.

Mr Meldrum: There are three levels of removal from school, if you like: there is suspension, which is for up to five days, during which period there is no requirement for there to be a learning program. There is exclusion, which under our new guidelines can be up to 10 weeks, and there is a requirement for an alternative learning program to be provided during that time, and then there is expulsion, which is removal from the entire State system.

With regard to records, because expulsion requires approval at the Associate Director-General level, of course we would have a record of that. When it comes to exclusions which have only been available since the middle of first time this year, they are recorded and we can produce those statistics quite quickly. We are about to do a State-wide stocktake of those because they are required to be reported to the local teacher and student support centre.

In regard to suspensions, it has never been the policy to collect them on a State-wide basis; they are entirely a principal's prerogative and he does not need to tell anybody else he is doing it, unless there is a parent complaint that needs to be taken up, in which case it goes up to a higher level.

So, the records, as I understand it, were available in a couple of the old areas. The department used to be organised in areas, where they chose to do a bit of a census at one time or another. However, on a State-wide basis there has been no such collection. We are doing the first comprehensive review starting in a few weeks time in term four, of suspension, exclusion and expulsion. We have just today or tomorrow, sent out, or are sending out, the forms to all schools in the State to do a State-wide survey of the entire use of suspension, for what purposes, what sorts of students were involved that we have ever done, so we will be in a position to give a proper answer to that question very soon.

Mr SUCH: The Auditor-General's Report at pages 158 and 168 highlights a \$4 million jump in the cost of workers compensation in the one year, virtually a 100 per cent increase since 1989. Will the Minister provide a breakdown in regard to the number of claims and their causes, such as stress, over-exertion, falls, those caused by machines or other objects, vehicles, etc? Can the Minister indicate what strategies are being adopted to reduce payments in respect of workers compensation.

Finally, as a supplementary question, in respect of page 68 of the Auditor-General's report, can the Minister explain the context of the figures in regard to workers compensation payments exceeding two years? Can she explain them in the context of the total \$18.3 million cost to the department for workers compensation which is actually listed in the report on a different page in the Department of Labour statistics?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I believe that the honourable member wanted the numbers of claims by type of injury for 1992-93, and I am happy to provide that. Under the stress type of injury the number of claims was 337, or 56 per cent. For over-exertion there were 458; which was 24 per cent. The statistics to which I am actually referring, in terms of the percentages, refer to the total percentage of claims with respect to the total number of claims across the whole public sector.

The honourable member was not asking for the percentage with respect to other departments, I take it, so I will give the raw figures: there were 337 for stress; over-exertion, 458; falls, 352; machine or object, 364; vehicle, 124; and other, 153; making a total of 1 788, which is 28 per cent of the claims right across the whole of the public sector. The schooling sector of the new department in fact had 28 per cent of the total number of claims that were made right across Government.

Mr SUCH: On a point of clarification, does that give a breakdown for the various components within the schooling sector?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Yes, that is the schooling sector.

Mr SUCH: And the strategies to reduce the claims?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Yes, there are certainly a number of strategies. I will ask the Director-General to outline those.

Dr McPhail: It is important to note that, although stress claims are an important and very concerning part of workers compensation claims, they have dropped off slightly in the second six months due to the change of legislation in

December 1992, whereby any claims lodged following the counselling of students in performance related issues were no longer seen as appropriate for making a claim for workers compensation. However, the increase in the amounts also flow from changes to legislation, particularly through the removal of the lump sum entitlement option. It means that teachers will remain at relatively high salary levels compared with the remainder of the public sector on workers compensation until such time as they have been rehabilitated and are able to return to work. There are special factors in the education sector related to both salaries and the removal of the lump sum option, but there has been a slight drop in claims. Nevertheless, we are looking at a wide range of strategies to try to counter what is a significant and extremely concerning element of our costs.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I would like to add to that because there was a point I made with respect to the Auditor-General's Report and the \$18.3 million. We have to put that into context because that \$18.3 million, which is the actual cost of workers compensation for 1992-93, represents 2.19 per cent of salaries and their related payments in the Education Department. This compares favourably with other Government departments, where some are over 11 per cent. So, 2.19 per cent is high, but we have to remember that we have a large number of employees and we have a very high salary bill.

The other point that is worth making in terms of what are we doing to prevent the stress related claims in particular areas is that we have appointed six rehabilitation coordinators, and this will free up counsellors to undertake the early intervention in stress cases. Again, as we are seeing right across the whole spectrum, if we can have early intervention programs we are therefore likely to reduce the incidence of stress related cases. There are a number of programs to look at the way in which we can do that. Another one of course is the inter-agency working party to manage the redeployment of teachers who are unable to return to teaching following injury. It would be fair to say that we are doing everything possible to reduce the drain on our resources through workers compensation, and to ensure that workers can be rehabilitated with dignity and either return into the education part of the department or be redeployed into some other suitable area.

Mr SUCH: At the bottom of page 68 of the Auditor-General's Report under the heading '7. Net change in Suspense Account', reference is made to those workers compensation payments of \$2 million plus. Are they included in the \$18.3 million that the Auditor-General lists elsewhere?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Yes, they are.

Mr QUIRKE: In relation to Ingle Farm East Primary School, in my electorate, I wrote to the Minister some time ago and, through the Minister, to the Facilities Branch to have a look at what can be done in that particular school about addressing some of the very important maintenance issues and some of the cosmetic issues, if you like, in that school. Indeed, three primary schools in my electorate have closed and have amalgamated with other schools. Ingle Farm East Primary has received a number of students that originally went to Ingle Heights Primary School, which has now gone. Much of the outside painting of those buildings is such that it looks as though it has never been done in the past 22 or 23 years. I have raised this with the Minister by letter and we have discussed it as well. How is that particular process coming along and what can I tell the Ingle Farm East school community about progress on these particular issues?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am aware of the issue that the honourable member raises. I think he needs to ask the school community to be a little patient because it may well be that, under the back to school grants funds, that project will be picked up. I am not in a position to be definitive about that, but the whole aim of the back to school money was to pick up those kinds of projects, particularly where there is a willingness of the school community to get involved and to participate. I am aware that that school community is one that is very involved in the education of their children. Perhaps the honourable member can be patient for a little longer until that allocation has been determined by the independent committee.

Mr QUIRKE: My next question refers to the St John Ambulance Service. Earlier this year a great deal of concern was expressed by schools and in the media about the increasing of charges for St John Ambulance services for school children, from 45¢ to \$2.30 per student for all students in the subscribing school. Will the Minister elaborate on how she has resolved this situation?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It certainly was an issue that schools felt very strongly about because it was a quite substantial increase. What I have done, in consultation with the Education Department officers, is to negotiate with St John. I have given an undertaking to the Education Department that we will pay the ambulance service charges for students whose parents were not covered by privately arranged insurance. We had to set some limits. It was not a matter of a child falling over at home and the Education Department picking up the responsibility. The criteria that have gone out to all schools includes the following: that it would be children involved in normal curriculum activities, or they could be on authorised school related activities, that is, school sporting arrangements approved by the principal and the school council in accordance with the junior sports policy.

If a student is hurt playing sport and they are doing so within the framework of an approval by the principal and the school council, and in accordance with the junior sports policy, they would be covered. The schools subscription scheme was cancelled in Government schools from 27 April and all schools were circularised about that. All Government school students are now covered, whereas before the cover applied only to students in those schools who subscribed to the previous scheme. One can imagine the horror of parents who had not been involved, perhaps on the school council, and the child was injured and taken by ambulance to hospital and then they received a fairly hefty account. This does not happen now and where the student is not covered by private subscription of that family, then that child will be covered. This will not be an enormous cost to the department because children are not being rushed to hospital by ambulance every single day of the week. I felt it was appropriate to give parents the assurance that if their child was injured they would not be up for huge costs on the one hand or that the school councils were trying to find money that they did not have in their own funds.

Mr QUIRKE: Can the Minister provide details of plans announced in the budget for the construction of a new primary school at Goolwa? Is the claim by the Leader of the Opposition that that school will comprise two thirds old buildings correct?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I can provide information on that. I have answered some questions in the past on the matter and I am happy to provide further information to the Commit-

tee. I can say that the claims by the Leader of the Opposition are totally incorrect. Stage 1 of the new primary school to be built at Ferguson Road, Goolwa is being designed to cater for an initial enrolment of 380 students at a cost of \$3 million. Preliminary designs include 14 home bases, that is, science, art, cooking, drama, music and computing areas.

There will be an activity hall, a library resource centre, an administration centre and student amenities. The final design will be completed after consultation with the community, particularly the education community, and on the area that will be a dual purpose area. The program is for construction to commence in March of next year and to be completed in April 1995. It is very interesting that the Leader of the Opposition—who condemned the existing school as sub-standard, presented petitions to this Parliament and made all kinds of breast beating noises around the community about it, requesting that planning should commence—has now condemned the plans for the new school: plans that have not even been finalised. He has condemned the plans and he has not even seen them!

One would need to question the integrity of a member of this Parliament, or think that he was just wanting to make a lot of political noise, that he really did not want the school to proceed, so that he could have an issue on which to rush round his electorate. He has also criticised the construction timetable and the timber classrooms, which I will get to in a moment. The day after the budget the Leader of the Opposition issued a press statement criticising the plans for a new school in his own electorate. I recall asking members of the Parliament whether they would like to have the money allocated to their area for the redevelopment of a school, and some of the Opposition members indicated to me that they would.

It really shows that the Opposition Leader is totally out of touch with the real world and with his own Party. It is also interesting that the Leader does not approve of relocatable timber classrooms, which are fully refurbished and air-conditioned, yet the school principal welcomed the announcement and said that in many cases teachers prefer to teach in the refurbished relocatable classrooms. I find it quite amazing and want to put on record yet again that I would be delighted if the Leader of the Opposition indicated to me that he does not want the school to proceed, because that money can be redeployed very quickly. The member for Albert Park has already put up his hand today, and I can assure the Committee that there are a number of other members on both sides of the Parliament who would want that money spent in their electorate.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: This is not a debating forum, but before proceeding to my question I would like to defend the Leader of the Opposition as a thoroughly diligent local member who has no reason to take up local issues. Anyone with a vote at the level of the Leader's would not need to pursue issues without good reason.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member's loyalty is known.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I refer to the Program Estimates, page 288, on the subject of guidance officers. I understand that the Director-General has recently received a copy of a report into the operation of the guidance system within the department, and I have also been informed that the review concludes that guidance officers are undertaking an increasingly important role in schools. Every local member would be well aware of that. The review rejects the

notion that guidance officers should work solely with students covered by the Students with Disability policy. Will the Minister make available a copy of this report? What action does the Government intend to take as a result of the report and what are the financial implications of its recommendations?

Dr McPhail: The report is a very careful and thorough examination of the role of the guidance officer and contains a number of recommendations relating to their use and deployment. The report contains matters relating to resources and resource allocation, and we are examining those at the moment within the department before making recommendations to the Minister. After we have made those recommendations, of course, the final decisions will be in the hands of the Minister.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Page 302 relates to the Managing Poor Performance scheme. How many teachers and principals have been placed under the Managing Poor Performance scheme since its inception and how many of these teachers and principals have been eventually identified as non-performers and removed from schools?

Mr Boaden: I will take the question on notice and provide the information later, because the number of people who have been involved is not public information. I will be quite happy to provide information about the numbers, and about the number who have actually been removed from the service as a result of the scheme.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: In terms of a policy issue, many of the teachers who were previously poorly performing teachers are now operating at a satisfactory level, and that is something we should look at. In terms of how successful the Managing Poor Performance program is, we need to look at what has happened to teachers after being involved in this program and how their performance has reached a satisfactory level. This is not about a punitive approach but about working with teachers to give them the kinds of skills they require to be involved in the classroom, and we come at this program from a very positive and not a punitive perspective.

Mr Boaden: I would also add that no-one has actually been sacked as a result of that program. As the Minister has indicated, we see this as a very positive program to improve the teaching force. Most of the programs are developmental in that line and, as a result, have been very successful in raising teachers' skills and abilities.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: When that question is answered on notice, perhaps the Minister could also provide information as to the progress the department has made with implementing performance appraisal processes for all teachers. My third question refers to page 288 of the Program Estimates, the subject being school closures. The Minister earlier referred to the process that the department has adopted in terms of proceeding towards amalgamations and closures. Will the Minister provide to the Committee a list of all schools, kindergartens and TAFE college closures since 1985? I realise that this will need to be taken on notice.

What are the estimated aggregate costs of closures (because there are costs associated with closure and amalgamation) and the estimated savings as a result of these closures and amalgamations? I do not know whether it is possible in each case, but I presume the department has an estimate, otherwise it would not have proceeded along this path.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: In fairness to the department I will not ask it to go right back to 1986 and 1987, considering the amount of work that would be required in trying to sift through files to estimate costs. I will not give an under-

taking to provide that, because I am not in the business of setting the department a task that will divert it from its main business of providing a quality education to children in the schools. What I can provide for the Committee is the number of schools that have opened and closed in the past seven years, and I am happy to do that. I will need to provide the others, the TAFE facilities and kindergartens, subsequently.

In 1986-87 nine schools opened and three closed; in 1987-88 six opened and eight closed; in 1988-89 three opened and 10 closed; in 1989-90 five opened and eight closed; in 1990-91 four opened and 13 closed; in 1991-92 five opened and 19 closed; and in 1992-93 two opened and seven closed. I would like to put this into the context of quality education. We have come to a point in our development in education where we must look at providing quality education, and the more I see of schools and of the sophisticated level of resources in the resource centres, through the computer rooms they have, and the range of facilities that the community is now most appropriately demanding of our schools, the more I believe that we must be very careful that we do not talk about just keeping schools open for the sake of it, in the sense that we are keeping very small schools open.

In fact, it is interesting that a number of country communities have come to the department and asked whether they could have amalgamation of their schools so that the resources could go back into the provision of better quality facilities to ensure a higher standard of education. It is simple for Oppositions to try to make a point about how many schools are closed. They never want to talk about how many schools are opened or what happens to the resources that are ploughed back into education from amalgamation of school sites. They do not want to talk about the improvement in facilities and the quality of outcome, but I can assure the Committee that we will move forward in providing for this quality.

We need to put the opening and closing in the context that, for example, in February 1993 there were 678 schools operating in South Australia, so we are talking about a system operating 678 schools and within that number are 171 schools with fewer than 100 students. That does not mean that we will be closing any of those schools—we will not—but we are listening to communities and, if they come to the department and say, 'We think we should amalgamate with a school that is nearby,' we will certainly listen to those communities about providing the best available facilities and resources. I stress that we are not going down the Victorian path of having some sort of hit list and arbitrarily closing schools with no community consultation and no consultation with the Institute of Teachers and the relevant parents and students.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to truancy. Some years ago I visited Gosnells, Western Australia, and the Minister has heard me talk in the Party room and in Parliament about the programs implemented in Gosnells, which is about the size of the City of Hindmarsh and Woodville. From the Education Department, local government and police they found through a crime-mapping program that when students were at school a considerable number of crime outbreaks occurred in that area.

That raised the question whether students from schools in that municipality were involved in outbreaks of crime, and it was suggested that that was the case. As a consequence of the commitment by the Police Force in Western Australia to that program they were able to reduce the incidence of daytime break and entry in that city by more than 50 per cent,

which I found rather staggering. This led me to raise the matter in South Australia with the previous Minister and I hasten to add that there were some heated discussions that occurred in a number of forums about truancy.

What have the Government and the department done about truancy? How successful has the Government been in addressing this problem? Has there been a reduction in the incidence of truancy, and what measures, particularly in schools, have been undertaken whereby students are checked off as they progress from class to class to ensure that they are not playing truant? On some occasions in my area I have seen students not at school during school hours. Who is checking or not checking school attendance? The question is important and has been raised by a number of elderly people living around a school that I will not name now for obvious reasons.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: This issue was raised by the juvenile justice committee and its recommendations have been implemented or are in the process of being implemented by this Government. The committee suggested that there was a link between non-attendance at school and juvenile crime. In picking up the recommendations it is relevant to note that the responsibility lies not only with schools but with families and the community generally. To that extent the new amendments to the Education Act give the police authority to take truants into custody and return them to school or home.

If those young people are out on the streets when they are not supposed to be, we are not just asking education officers to be running around the streets looking for truants, because it is a community responsibility and the police now have the authority to do that. As to what happens in terms of how schools can be more vigilant, I can inform the honourable member that schools are now much more vigilant about assuring attendance through the use of roll books and the monitoring of non-attendance.

It is a matter of following up a student who is not present and why they are not present. The roll book has been revised to support closer supervision of why students are absent and to enable schools to monitor unacceptable and unexplained absences. It is like what I was talking about earlier with the early intervention program. I used Hincks Avenue as an example. This is across the whole school spectrum where we are much more conscious of the need, through a roll book system, to monitor where students are, and this is particularly so for the secondary areas.

It is important to note that attendance at school is a social justice issue. We find that students who do not come too often are poor performers and we need to be identifying the kinds of programs that schools need in order to be interesting and provide for success. Who wants to go to school if you are a failure? Who wants to go every day if you are not succeeding and having your failure reinforced? The challenge for education and schools now and in the future is making school an interesting, rewarding and fulfilling experience for every student. That is a huge challenge, but it is one that teachers in class-rooms and administrators are meeting.

As I go around to schools I am hearing about really exciting programs designed for students. It is not, 'Here is a curriculum and every student will fit into it.' I am told, 'Here are a range of ways that we are providing for the needs of students.' Whether it is at Port Lincoln, in terms of special needs there, or in a metropolitan school, a whole range of programs is happening. We are finding when we pick up truancy issues that some of those students will be referred to FACS, as a care and protection issue. It is not about bleeding

hearts but about identification of what are the best solutions for particular students.

If they are hard core truants, we will call in and work with FACS, because at that point it is a protection and care issue. As to Aboriginal students, where there is a high level of truancy, six additional Aboriginal student attendance counsellors will be appointed with money made available from the Black Deaths in Custody money to improve attendance by Aboriginal students. Particularly in places like Port Augusta the school community is working with families to identify why students, particularly at secondary level, are not attending, to make sure the family is supportive of the school community and both are working together.

A whole range of issues is now being addressed. The Education Department has made attendance, retention, participation and attainment the key goals of its social justice action plan. This revolves around those students who are truanting for a whole range of reasons, some because they are victims of violence or are victims of both physical and sexual violence or emotional and psychological violence and they are not attaining the levels they should be attaining, and we are addressing that.

I am not saying that we have solved the problem, because I doubt that with all the resources in the world we will ever totally solve it. Probably everybody, including every member of this Committee and every officer sitting here with me, at some point either thought about it or did not attend a class or a day at school or whatever. In literature, numerous books have been written about students taking a day off and going fishing, but we are not talking about that; we are talking about where truancy is a signal flashing to us as educators that a student is in crisis and needs help and support. We are looking at that broad area.

Mr HAMILTON: I detected, and I think the member for Henley Beach was in agreement with me, that some years ago there was a defensive approach to this matter within education, and I know that some very heated exchanges took place. The Minister would know that I am rather persistent in my beliefs about that matter. In the Gosnells experiment in relation to truancy, the police had the power to take these truants back to the school and the parents were seemingly not particularly interested. On a number of occasions the Police Force took that student around to the place of employment, particularly where the father was involved, which caused considerable embarrassment. It certainly brought the message home to the parent that in this case he in particular had a responsibility to ensure that his charge was well looked after. I am not advocating that, but I think it is one of the ways in which some people can be brought down to earth.

My second question is probably more positive. I refer to recognition of those parents who participate on school councils, and perhaps teachers and principals to a lesser extent, because they get paid. Has the Government considered an act of participation or encouragement award for those parents who participate in many school activities? I can think for example of Seaton High School, where the initiative taken by that school council has raised tens of thousands of dollars for the school by the very simple process of using the school grounds for the parking of vehicles for overflow from the Crows or other matches at Football Park. That amount of money can be utilised to the betterment of those students and the school.

I can think of many other examples, such as the West Lakes Shore Primary School, with its participation booklet which I was privileged to launch here just recently. I know

that those parents who have participated are not looking for recognition, but I believe that it is something that the Minister and the Education Department may care to address. I know they are not seeking awards or anything of that nature, but it is something that perhaps we should be looking at in the future, because it does give further encouragement, I suspect not only to the parent but also to the students at those schools where their parents are recognised. I think it may make them throw out their chest a bit further.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: With reference to the comment that the honourable member made at the beginning of his question about some defensiveness he experienced with respect to the issues raised by the juvenile justice committee in terms of truancy, in my time as Minister I have not detected any defensiveness within the department. In fact, I have detected an openness that the department and the various agencies and schools within the department really want to work to overcome this problem. The healthy exchanges in which the honourable member participated may well have cleared the air for people, because I must say I have nothing but praise for the schooling sector in terms of the way in which it enthusiastically wants to find solutions to this very historic problem. I want to put that on the record.

As to the second part of the question, yes, I think it is an excellent idea. It is certainly something we can look at doing because the support and the dedication of parents who work tirelessly for their school communities is something that I think deserves great praise. I would be happy to look at some form of acknowledgment and recognition of that voluntary work, because without the volunteers in our school system we just could not provide the range of services and the quality of education that we do. I am not just talking about people working in canteens, and so on; I am talking about the parents who come in and work one-to-one with children in reading programs, just listening to children read, talking with them and helping those children for whom English is a second language or, in some cases, even a third language. Those people are really the unsung heroes and heroines of our system, and I would be delighted to acknowledge that in some form. I am sure the departmental officers are already thinking of some productive and positive ways in which we can do that.

Mr HAMILTON: I thank the Minister for her positive response in that matter, because I am a great believer in encouraging parents and I believe that flows over into the students. In relation to the problems that I have experienced and I suspect other members of Parliament have experienced, where a school in a particular location is much preferred to that of others in a similar location, a recent incident was an unpleasant aside to that. What is the departmental approach where a school has accommodation for 500 and yet there are about 650 students who want to go to that school? Obviously, some students will miss out and parents will be disappointed. For the record, what is the procedure, because there is a need clearly in some cases for zoning of those schools? I know one school in the western suburbs which is very much sought after but which cannot fulfil the need of a lot of parents whose children live within my electorate.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: In fact, we do have policies of zoning where this situation occurs, but I will ask the Director-General to answer the question specifically.

Dr McPhail: I can do little more than elaborate briefly on what the Minister has said. Where schools become attractive to such an extent that local residents are unable to gain access to the school (and that is our first obligation—to provide the

school for the neighbourhood), then we are prepared to create a zone around that school which then gives preference to the local parents.

Mr HAMILTON: In terms of zoning, where a parent wants to enrol his or her child at a particular school, what is the responsibility of that school or the principal to tell the parent whether or not his or her child can be accommodated at that school in terms of the curriculum, whether it is their first or second option, or whether they had a brother or sister at that school? I would like to have this on the record for future reference for other parents who come into my electorate, because it has been the subject of some controversy recently amongst my constituents.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: In a broad sense, there is a list of criteria such as where one of the siblings has already attended the school, for example, if the school has a music focus and the child is particularly gifted, and so on. I have certainly dealt with this issue as a back bench member within my own electorate. It seems to go in waves; where a school becomes very popular, everyone wants to go to it, and then you see that popularity moving to another school within the region. I suspect that might have something to do with the principal and the way the school is marketed within the community.

This is a healthy thing and I think it throws out a challenge to principals who have responsibility for marketing the educational product that they are working to develop with their staff and school community. There is a list of criteria which make it fair and equitable. As Dr McPhail said, the principal one is the geographic location, but there are other factors. As a back-bench member I have had people coming to my electorate office and crying because they could not get their child into a particular school. It is a difficult issue. I will ask Mr Edwards to elaborate on this because it might make things easier for the honourable member to transmit to his constituents.

Mr Edwards: I should like to emphasise that the zone of right is a zone of right rather than a zone of exclusion. As Dr McPhail said, it is to ensure that people living near their neighbourhood school can be guaranteed enrolment at that school if they wish. Nonetheless, the honourable member is correct in saying that a parent wishing to enrol a child into a school has a whole range of questions and information to which they should have access in making a decision starting from zones of right to the curriculum. I reinforce what the Minister said about our expecting principals normally to convey that information to parents. We have a range of brochures to assist principals in doing that. If parents feel that they are not getting the information that they need, they can go to the District Superintendent, who will ensure that they obtain that information.

Mr BRINDAL: I presume that the Minister may want to take these questions on notice. The first question relates to audit reviews. The Auditor-General in his report states:

I am concerned that some aspects associated with each review have yet to be satisfactorily resolved and have required annual monitoring by audit since the initial review of TRTs in 1987-88. I believe that certain resource management issues may have been accorded a higher priority.

Does the Minister accept that the Government's tardiness in responding to audit criticisms has led to the continued waste of millions of dollars; has a comprehensive list of committees, working parties and task groups, which I believe the Minister promised, now been completed; will the Minister make that list available to the Committee; and has the

Minister kept the Government's promise of reducing from 142 to 35 the number of committees within the Education Department in line with the Premier's recent statement?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I reject the first premise upon which the honourable member is asking his question about money being wasted. I do not believe that is a—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The honourable member did not say that in so many words, but it is interesting to put words into the mouth of the Auditor-General. I am sure that he would have something to say about that.

The relevant point concerns the number of committees, and so on. A comprehensive list was in the process of being compiled and completed, but that has been overtaken by the consultation that has gone on relating to the merger process for the creation of the new Department of Employment, Education and Training. For this purpose, 18 corporate service working parties have been established. It is important that we get on with the process of implementation into the one department. The structure of committees will be considered as part of the structure of the new organisation. We will look at the structure to make sure that we pare those committees down to the bone, but it is not a simple task to say that people are no longer required on particular committees. The department is looking at that and I will ask Dr McPhail to comment on the general policy direction.

Dr McPhail: Those 18 working parties that were established as part of the organisational change process for the new Department of Employment, Education and Training had only a short life. They have now completed their work and been replaced by a smaller number of task groups which are now looking at structural consequences. They have a short life only and will have completed their work by the end of the month. We are talking about ephemeral groups as part of the process of establishing the new department. However, it is based on the highest level of consultation possible with the staff as to the best arrangements for the new organisation. We believe that the consultation has been of great value, and we have released an extraordinary range of creative approaches and ideas. In terms of the request, which I think flowed from the Auditor-General, we will go ahead and finalise that list so that we can meet the requirement that had been established.

Mr BRINDAL: The Opposition is grateful that Dr McPhail is prepared to get rid of the ephemerals in Flinders Street. My last question relates to the Auditor-General's Report, Program Estimates, page 286. The Auditor-General's Report, for the first time in many years, does not provide information on the extent of over-payments in salaries and the level of vacancy rental costs for teachers' houses paid for by the Education Department. That has been a standard inclusion for as long as anyone can remember. What was the level of salary over-payments last year and the level of vacancy rental costs paid by the Education Department? We are prepared to take that on notice as we do not think the Minister will have the information here.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: We do have the information. I point out that the education sector has no control over what the Auditor-General chooses to put or not put in his report. If the Auditor-General chooses not to put this in his report, it may be that he does not think it is a significant or relevant matter. So, I am not sure what the honourable member's point was. In the interests of brevity, I seek leave to table the information.

Leave granted.

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

Minister of Education, Employment and Training—Other Payments, \$186 820 000

Departmental Advisers:

Dr G. Willmott, Director, Senior Secondary Assessment Board of South Australia.

Dr Ian McPhail, Director-General of Education.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will not make an opening statement because I do not think there is time.

Mr SUCH: This is something that overlaps with SATAC. In respect of year 13 enrolments this year, I understand that there has been a significant change or variation from previous years. Has SSABSA undertaken an analysis or has an explanation as to why there has been this significant decline in students doing so-called year 13?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Perhaps I could speak generally about year 13 because this is something that I have wanted to address nationally. I have to say that some of my interstate colleagues were not prepared to do that. I felt very disappointed that we could not address the issue of year 13 at a national level because I feel we need to. I certainly have been attempting to do that in this State, because a number of students have repeated year 13 in the hope that they might be able to improve their score so that they could obtain a university place.

I think that what we need to be saying to students is that there are a number of options for young people leaving our secondary education system and that these options are different but they are equal. To choose an option that is not university but a vocational education option may well be, in the long run, a much better option for those students.

As a society we have funnelled everybody towards higher education rather than say to students, 'There are a number of options. They are equal; they are different but you should take the blinkers off and look at these options.' What has happened with year 13 has been most unfortunate in terms of families making huge sacrifices for their children to repeat a year and then discovering that their children have not improved their point score very significantly; they have then been disappointed a second year in a row.

What we are working with on a national level with the Federal Government is the promotion of opportunities within the TAFE sector and within our institutes of vocational education. That is where much of the training and the very creative and new jobs will lie and where the rewards for students are later in terms of their adult lives. From the philosophical and policy position I would like to see a reduction in the number of year 13 students and for them to undertake training which is appropriate and relevant to work which actually meets the needs of the society and not see this funnelling, where everybody is trying to get into university. Even if the money was there to allow every student who wanted to go to university, we would have the highest level of unemployed graduates anywhere in the world. This is not something that is peculiar to South Australia. It in fact goes right across State boundaries. I know my interstate colleagues are grappling with the same issues.

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Yes, it is the Japanese type syndrome. I ask Dr Willmott to respond.

Dr Willmott: In fact, there has been a decline this year in the number of students undertaking a repeat year 13. Last year the statistic peaked at 3 800 year 12 repeat students. That has gone down to an estimated 2 700 students this year, so there has been a significant decline. One of the reasons is that last year the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Training put some pressure on the three universities in this State to take more direct entrance in their intake to first year university courses. To some extent that cleared away some of the students who were repeating year 13 to attempt to improve their score.

I would make the other point, however, that I think the growth in credit transfer arrangements between year 12 and TAFE courses has increased students' awareness of the opportunities available in moving into training programs. I believe that in the long run that will cause this syndrome of repeating year 12 students to decline further.

Mr SUCH: This is a big issue and a few minutes does not do it justice but, in respect of the SACE certificate which we know has not been in operation for that long, can the Minister or her officers indicate any issues that have arisen in terms of the operation of that certificate since it has been going and how are they being addressed? Have any concerns been raised by teachers, parents and students that SSABSA is aware of?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Collectively the three of us are very aware of a number of issues. This is only the second year of its operation and, when you implement something that is as radically different within a huge system such as the education system (and this covers the three sectors: public, the catholic sector and the non-government sector—the independent sector), you will obviously have some issues.

The issues include students coming to terms with the different way of being assessed; different requirements in terms of their responsibilities; having to meet time lines and time frames; and a continual assessment process. Many of us who remember year 11 will remember that you had a lot of fun, you did some learning but basically you then rolled up your sleeves and got into it in year 12.

What we are now seeing is that students are having to work from day one in year 11. Those students who are managing to do that are giving us very positive feed-back but quite appropriately the maturation levels of students at year 11 are very different. Some students are very mature: they can pick up a system like this and move forward quickly; other students find it very difficult. There have also been problems with teachers who have had to change their whole methodology and approach.

I think it is a great credit to teachers, students and to their families that the adjustment has taken place as quickly as it has. Maybe I am putting too positive a glow on it. I might ask Dr Willmott if he would like to respond as well.

Dr Willmott: I think the Minister has referred to two issues that have arisen in the past 18 months. Last year concerns were raised about student workload and teacher workload. Indeed, I think this estimates hearing last year raised questions at that time.

We believe we have significantly addressed those with further advice to schools, particularly in relation to the question of student workload, and we have advised schools of the various ways in which there is flexibility within the SACE in terms of such things as deadlines, assignments and flexible patterns of students being able to complete the SACE

using the range of choices available in terms of subjects of study, and so on.

There have been a range of other issues, which I believe have all been identified as part of the implementation process and systematically addressed and, I believe, resolved. An example which I might just mention is a concern last year in relation to the tight time line between the production of year 12 results and the issuing of SATAC offers to students to enter universities. We realised that this year it was likely that the SACE results would probably take an extra week to produce. That raised a series of negotiations with the universities and SATAC to ensure that we could increase the speed of the processing of those SATAC applications and to ensure that students had their offers well before schools went back in 1994. That is an issue which has been addressed.

I will give you another example, if I may. We are concerned that right at the final stages of the first run through of SACE no students are disadvantaged or caught in some kind of counselling error or some other misadventure which leaves them without a SACE completion when every other indication would be that they would do extremely well or sufficiently well to complete the SACE. In fact, this week, on my advice, the board set up a special monitoring committee, which will take advice from schools of any students in this situation so that we can systematically address those concerns. Indeed, two letters this week placed something of that kind before me.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will add one final point. It is the students—that group that we have identified—who are at risk. They are the ones most likely to have problems, particularly with stage 1. I am not wanting to gloss over some of the problems. They are being addressed, but in any implementation of a new system you will have problems that need addressing. No system will be perfect. However, the feed-back generally has been very positive. We are aware of the issues and problems and, as Dr Willmott says, we are working to redress any of those.

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

[Sitting suspended from 6.3 to 7.30 p.m.]

Employment and Technical and Further Education,
\$158 974 000

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Dr I. McPhail, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Employment, Education and Training.

Mr C. Connelly, Director, Employment and Training Division.

Mr D. Carter, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, DETAFE.

Mr T. Beeching, Assistant Director, Administration and Finance, DETAFE.

Ms M. Woolley, Director, Onkaparinga Institute.

Ms K. Versteegh, Assistant Director, Youth Programs.

Mr R. Osborne, Senior Policy Officer, Policy Support and Higher Education Secretariat.

Mr SUCH: It is critically important that as a State and as a nation we get training right. I believe the new institute model offers a real opportunity to assist in that process and

I believe, as does the Opposition, that the institutes must be seen as a real alternative to the universities and, without being critical of the universities, our whole approach to training and post-secondary education has been somewhat lopsided. I agree with comments the Minister made earlier that the notion that everyone should aim to get into university is a false one and quite unrealistic and inappropriate. The institutes must be seen as equal to, but different from the universities. They must deliver training programs which are excellent and they must be known for the excellent programs they offer. They must be allowed to exist in a way whereby they get credit for what they do and be seen as largely autonomous institutions offering the best in terms of training and the development of skills.

We are in the process of what I would call a training revolution and it is not only confined to the institutes, but it also involves the various industry sectors and I believe, once again, we have the potential to make a great contribution in terms of getting our country back into the number one position throughout the world in terms of what it produces, and how it produces goods and services. For too long our community has denigrated tradespeople and technicians, and part of the changing focus, which I think is essential, is that the community acknowledge the importance of tradespeople, technicians and technical people and that we get away from the silly notion that tradespeople are somehow inferior to other people.

We must follow more closely the recognition that is accorded in countries such as Germany where they have great respect for people who work in the skills area and applied knowledge areas. It is critical that as a community we get this right, and the Opposition is supportive of the initiatives in relation to establishing the institutes. Whilst it is early days, I believe that, given the opportunity, they will deliver the goods. This current imbalance which sees an unhealthy focus upon universities needs to change. I think the potential is there and it is a matter of ensuring that the institutes and the industry training group bodies appreciate that industry can have a meaningful contribution and that they own and drive the training. I think if all of those things come to pass then we can be a genuinely competitive country and get back into the number one position in terms of economic development and growth.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank the honourable member for his statement because it is in accord with the direction that this Government has already taken and I welcome his support. I would like to make a short statement to the Committee about the employment and technical and further education sector of the department. Through its network of some 70 campuses across the State the employment and technical further education sector of DEET(SA) provides a broad range of vocational and community adult education programs. In addition to technical and further education activities, the sector is responsible for the Employment and Training Division, the Aboriginal Employment Development Branch and the State youth strategy. Each of these units is actively involved in policy strategies and programs to expand employment opportunities for the South Australian work force and, in particular, for youth and groups who are disadvantaged within the workplace.

The programs and services provided are critically important in the current economic circumstances facing the State. The planned expenditure of \$278.8 million is focused on maintaining and improving the quality of educational courses, student services and other programs, while ensuring

that priorities reflect industry views and labour market projections. The growing importance of the courses being offered by this sector is reflected by the decision to increase by 1 000 the number of student places during 1994.

Consistent with these objectives is the recent establishment of 10 institutes of vocational education. This creation consolidates the management of the 19 TAFE colleges and will enable the public system of vocational education to extend beyond delivery of TAFE courses to the provision of a range of training, employment and youth related services. South Australia is party to the national funding arrangement with the Australian National Training Authority.

A key element is the establishment of the Vocational Education, Employment and Training Board. An extensive consultation process has shown widespread industry and community support for this initiative. It will be the designated State training authority required under the ANTA agreement and legislation and will enable all parties, especially industry, to have a highly influential voice in vocational education policy, including the TAFE system. The administrative framework involves the development of a State training profile each year and work on the 1994 profile has been finalised.

Mr SUCH: These questions relate to the Program Estimates at page 316, and the first is a fairly general question. How will some of these training changes and approaches to vocational skills formation impact upon enterprise bargaining?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Will the honourable member clarify that? Did the honourable member mean the changes within the community generally or within the department?

Mr SUCH: No, in relation to greater emphasis, for example, on competency based training, recognition of prior learning, the restructuring that is going on in terms of vocational skills, off campus training and all those sorts of things. What is the likely consequence for the process of enterprise bargaining which, as we know, is already under way and accelerating?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: That is a very general question. The honourable member is asking us to prophesy what might happen. We can only give him the information at hand at the moment. It is probably not a wise thing to speculate about what might happen with respect to enterprise bargaining because, if we do, we could be showing our hand in an area in which we are not perhaps ready to do that. I will ask Mr Connelly if he would like to make a general comment on the honourable member's question.

Mr Connelly: The Minister is very accurate in saying that, to a degree, we are guessing. Something like 57 enterprise agreements have been concluded in South Australia thus far, and it is very difficult for people like us to say what the effect is, because the Industrial Commission in its wisdom made those agreements available only to the parties to the actual agreement. So, interested parties such as us, who would wish to know in generality what is happening, do not have access to the agreements that have been concluded. But there is no doubt that what we will see in terms of enterprise agreements is a desire on the part of industry, both trade unions and employers, to relate clearly the positions in which they put their employees, the skills that those employees have, and to put in place means by which those skills can be enhanced.

What is happening in the generality, both in terms of the national agenda that is going forward and the way we are implementing that in South Australia, is to provide a very

clear mechanism by which that can be done. It involves setting by industry a competence that is required occupation by occupation, and deliverers, be they public deliverers like TAFE or private deliverers, are in a much clearer situation to know that they are in fact servicing the needs of industry in providing those sorts of skills and training courses for them.

So, as enterprise agreements become more and more widespread, one will see a fairly clear relationship between what is put in those, the classification systems that are set up in particular enterprises relating back to those industry skills standards, and the training that is provided by the public providers.

Mr SUCH: I feel that within sections of industry there is a fear that some groups may want to use the new approaches to training and the changing nature of that training as a lever to raise their wages, and I guess that is fairly understandable. Is that of concern to the Minister?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: There are two ways of looking at this: the way that employers have indicated to me and my officers is that they are crying out for the work force to become more highly skilled, more flexible and more adaptable to change. I know I have said this about three times during the day, but it is most appropriate in this sector of the department: if we are to adopt world's best practice, to become internationally competitive, we must give the work force the skills and flexibility to be able to do that. On the one hand, employers are saying 'We want a work force that is well educated, highly trained, flexible, adaptable and able to respond to change quickly and effectively' but, on the other hand, the honourable member is suggesting that there is a concern that, when the work force develops this range of skills and we build upon things such as prior learning, and we look at assessing people in terms of competency levels and skill levels they have attained, that might lead to a move for higher wages.

The answer to that is really that what we should be looking at as a total community is increased productivity. As I understand it, that is the underpinning philosophy for enterprise bargaining; that the increased productivity that comes from this new approach to training and the recognition of the value of training will fund any increases in better working conditions or salary levels. That is how I would see the pieces of the jigsaw coming together to form a very interesting, stimulating and creative picture. Perhaps Mr Connelly would like to add something to that?

Mr Connelly: No, I think that, definitely, productivity is the key, and the key to productivity is better skills, and that is what we are trying to provide.

Mr SUCH: On page 316 of the Program Estimates reference is made to apprentice downturn. What categories of apprenticeships have declined and which have increased? Will the Minister give that in the context of recent years, although obviously not going back too far?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It is interesting to note that there is a slight recovery following two years of decline, and I believe that this increase is most welcome and is an indicator of the economic recovery. It is important to talk about the recent decline of yearly commencements, which is now being reversed, with a 7 per cent increase in numbers of trainees commencing training in 1992-93 when compared with 1991-92. There were 4 262 trainees who completed their contract of training during 1992-93, an increase of something like 2 per cent over the previous year.

While I am the first to acknowledge that it is a modest increase, nevertheless it is in the right direction, and I am sure

that the honourable member would welcome that. It also reflects the higher levels of commencements prior to 1990. Vocational groups that showed significant increases in commencement include building, which had a 63 per cent increase; clerical and clerks, which had a 64 per cent increase; and engineering, which had an 11 per cent increase. Women form, I am sad to say, only 20 per cent of the total number in training for 1992-93 as compared to 18 per cent in 1991-92. Again, at least it is going in the right direction.

That last statistic does throw down a challenge, not just for us as Government but also for the whole community, particularly for employers, because when you meet employers who have taken on women in these areas they have in my experience nothing but praise for the quality of work, the dedication to the job and the ability to be flexible and to work in a variety of situations. It is a tragedy for this State that only 20 per cent of the total number in training are women. It behoves all members of the community to work together to try to improve that percentage.

Mr Carter: The figures that the Minister provided then were the total numbers for the State. Not all of those are in the public training system through TAFE. As the Minister indicated, there has been an increase in the intake this year, but the total numbers still show a downturn because of the flowthrough of the three year apprentice system. So, some funds were saved in the department through the apprentice downturn in total numbers, and those funds have been primarily directed to the vehicle industry certificate and the engineering production certificate as well as to some other priority areas in response to economic development priorities.

Mr SUCH: As a supplementary, what has been the impact of that downturn for what are now called the institutes in terms of staffing? Has there been a significant flowthrough in terms of reduction in staffing?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will ask Mr Carter to answer that.

Mr Carter: Most, if not all, the staff involved in the teaching of apprentices are permanent staff who have easily transferred into other areas of training that I identified previously. We have had no reduction of staff as a result of the downturn.

Mr SUCH: Are apprenticeships still seen as the desirable approach to training? How are they likely to develop in the next few years *vis a vis* traineeships? Is the apprenticeship here to stay, is it on the way out or is there any indication of what is likely to happen?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will ask Mr Connelly to answer that in some detail. I can answer in a general context. As to whether or not the numbers reflect a movement away from apprenticeships towards traineeships, it is important that we get accurate information about that.

Mr Connelly: This is one of the most profound questions running through the training debate currently. The answer lies in the Australian Vocational Certificate Training System (AVCTS), which seeks to bring clear understanding of the necessity for formal training to what is called entry level. We are familiar with that in terms of apprenticeships and we have been historically familiar with it. In recent years we have begun to become more familiar with that in relation to the Australian traineeship system. The report of the Employment and Skills Formation Council said that the principles of that needed to be carried across a whole range of occupations, encompassing banking, finance, community care and the like. The same principles about formally accredited training ought to be taken across that, which is what the whole nation in

every State is working towards: how and why the AVCTS can be put in place.

Part of that discussion relates to the fact that we have been used to work-based apprenticeship training, that is, one had to have a job before one could get the training. That principle applied also to traineeships. That is less tenable and is certainly not the only pathway that might be available. For instance, we have always had the situation where someone can go to TAFE full time and acquire an advanced certificate in electronics without being work based and, on the basis of that, go and win themselves a job. There is more than one way of doing that. What we will see in the AVCTS is a continuation of a work-based approach to acquiring the entry level skills in a range of occupations which we have been used to—basically the trades—and which will be still like an apprenticeship. We are likely to free up the way that operates. In the future it might not be a four-year term and we might do much more off the job institute based training early on in a young person's career and put them into work a bit later. The AVCTS opens up a whole range of different ways of achieving the same result. Apprentices will probably continue for the foreseeable future, but the nature of the way someone will acquire the trade recognition is likely to change dramatically to the advantage of both employers and the individual.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It could be said that it is a much more flexible approach to ensure that we get the quality of training we need to meet the needs of individuals, industry and the training sector.

Mr HAMILTON: Does the Minister believe that in the lifetime of many young people, particularly in South Australia, they will have to be trained or re-trained not once or twice, but up to six or seven times? How is the Government addressing this problem about the multiplicity of approaches needed to address retraining whereby a person might not have one or two occupations for the rest of their life but will have to be constantly retrained for various jobs?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: That is an all-embracing question relating not only to people involved in specific work based training but also to people involved in the professions as well. That prediction is coming from people who have the time to look at what might be required in the future in a modern technological society that has to become internationally competitive if we are going to expand and develop in the ways we want to develop, rather than just having development for its own sake, but in terms of looking at quality of life and providing an interesting and stimulating work experience for the vast majority of the community.

A range of ways exist in which we are addressing this. It encompasses all the broad areas of this sector and other areas of Government. In the school sector, there is the whole area of re-entry programs where adults who have not received a fundamental basic education to year 12 are encouraged to re-enter the education stream to acquire those skills and that level of attainment. We have areas where child care facilities are provided for adults with family responsibilities so that they can access that level of education.

As to the traditional TAFE sector, one of the philosophies underpinning the formation of institutes has been to provide a flexible and responsive system to enable people to train and re-train a number of times within their lifetime and to make that easy for them. The member for Fisher raised the question of recognition of prior learning. When we talk about people taking four or five different courses—I mean courses in terms of different pathways in their working and general lives—I am not necessarily talking about everyone having to go back

to square one and start again. If we recognise that we have prior learning, which is why I am so enthusiastic about the Mayer key competencies, and if we have developed a well educated community with a range of competency levels, people will be much more flexible and able to retrain but if we have someone who has started at 14 and has worked only in one area and has not developed that range of competencies and flexibility, that is a much greater challenge.

As well as that, we have specific programs. As to the other part of the portfolio, which is about teachers and education, we are now working with the university sector and the Commonwealth Government to access funds to provide packages so that we can make sure we have teachers who have a range of subjects that they can teach and a range of methodologies that they can apply to that teaching. The same applies to lecturers within the TAFE system. There is no point in having students and encouraging them to be flexible and responsive when we have lecturers and teachers who are locked into methods from 20 years ago, saying, 'This is how I have done it and I am not changing.' There is a huge challenge for this portfolio from all aspects, from the training of child care workers through to the way in which universities can be flexible and offer the sort of packages required.

Let me give one quick example. Instead of the universities just training teachers—I am sure the member for Coles will agree with me—and pumping them out regardless of whether or not we need that number of teachers, with no reference to the labour market for teachers, if they look at what are the needs in education then part of the training programs can be designed for teachers to have retraining and upskilling programs, so then we have a much more highly skilled and highly trained professional teacher work force.

I am sure you could look at every professional area, whether it is dentistry, medicine or any of the other areas, and the same kind of principles will apply: as the world has access to much more knowledge and as we are starting to use technology more, it is completely correct for the honourable member to say that probably our children will have to train and retrain four or five times. What we are setting in place in South Australia is a system which will be ahead of that demand and which will be working with industry and the community to provide that flexibility and those courses.

Mr HAMILTON: As a supplementary question: how does the Minister relate this to the Education Department? What cooperation is there between the Education Department and Department of Employment and Technical and Further Education in relation to these retraining issues as students go through their schooling? Is that reinforced through primary, secondary and on to further education?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I understand it certainly is at this stage. I do not believe it has always been the case, but I remember back to my own teaching days, which were not yesterday but certainly not long ago, when we were starting to talk to students in secondary school about that and about the different the roles they would have. For example, where historically young women would look forward to leaving school, maybe having a job for a while, then getting married and bringing up a family, now we are looking at the way in which women have a variety of roles at different times in their lives and will also need to train and retrain. You cannot leave the work force if you choose to have a family and come back to the exact job you did, because it is quite likely that that job will have disappeared totally.

In my experience and the experience now being felt in schools, within the whole range of preparing young people

for their move from the school sector into the training and higher education sector, they are being given that expectation that they will need to be flexible; they will need to have a range of skills; they may not get their first choice when they leave school; and that that does not really matter. I pick up the point made by the member for Fisher: we are now saying to them that there are equal but different choices; university is but one of those; the institute sector, which is about vocational education, is another; there is a range of others such as apprenticeships and other labour market programs. Students may wish to take a year to go into the work force and do some form of work before they make choices. Those options are being spelt out clearly.

We have moved even further than that. In the Riverland, we have some pilot programs where we are working with students who are at school doing some SACE subjects; they are involved in an AVCTS pilot in the hospitality and tourism area, so they are doing some practical, hands-on experience in industry; and they are also picking up some training through the institute sector. So, the flexibility is there. The other thing that we are doing within education is looking at things like the Viv Ayers report and being able to say, 'Maybe we need to look at how we organise the delivery of our education in terms of the way we group ages. Is it more appropriate at times (and it depends on the local community), maybe in some areas to move to senior secondary colleges that may well be collocated with an institute campus so they can access that level of highly sophisticated facilities?'

There is a range of quite exciting initiatives happening across this new department, and I think that one of the great strengths of the new department is that we are now starting to see what I call a cross-fertilisation of ideas and people being prepared to try new things. In my own location, the Director of the institute is currently having discussions with one of the secondary schools about some of these initiatives. The relationship between the schooling sector and the vocational training sector is certainly starting to merge, and that is exactly how it should be, in my view. So, there are some exciting proposals.

Mr HAMILTON: Has DEET been successful in fulfilling its contract to provide training for 500 young people in the landcare and environmental accident program and, further, what will be DEET's involvement in LEAP during 1993-94?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The youth programs unit of DEET (SA) has been highly successful in recruiting 500 trainees aged between 15 and 20 to the SA Youth Conservation Corps, which is generally known as LEAP. In the first six months of this year we successfully managed to get 500 young people involved. Courses are 24 weeks in duration, combining formal training at an institute of vocational education, with practical experience through a sponsored community project. Approximately half the 32 projects being conducted are in country areas throughout South Australia. I want to highlight that; it is important to recognise the disadvantages which many young people have in our rural areas because they just do not have the breadth of choice and there is not the diversity of industry and of opportunity. These programs have proved very successful within some of our smaller and far-flung rural communities. DEET (SA) has offered the training program in conjunction with the Local Government Association and the Local Government Group Training Scheme. This unique partnership has ensured a cooperative approach to the provision of training under LEAP.

Sponsors have been drawn from local government in areas as diverse as Whyalla and Port Pirie through to Adelaide and Mitcham. The Department of Environment and Land Management and the Department of Primary Industries have also acted as sponsors, as have a number of community groups, including the Mannum Dock Museum board and the Port Adelaide Historical Society. By giving a few examples I make clear to the Committee that this is not being driven from just one perspective. It has broad general appeal and a number of small societies and organisations have been prepared to sponsor these programs.

Only a small number of projects at this stage have been completed. However, the early data indicate that there has been a further improvement in outcomes, including the employment of some participants through the group training scheme. The Federal Department of Employment, Education and Training is currently calling for tenders for LEAP. DEET (SA) is very keen to continue its involvement, and we will certainly be submitting our tender, which we hope will enable us to take on a further 500 young people. I have had discussions with the Hon. Kym Beazley about this, and I have said, 'If other people manage to get the tenders for the 500 we would be very interested in your increasing the number for South Australia, because as a Government we would like to take on 500, and we would be very pleased if some of the other successful agencies involved in this want to continue.' He has given me an assurance that he will look very positively at this, because it is a very successful program, and I would like to congratulate all the officers and participants, as well as the sponsors who have been involved in this program.

Mr HAMILTON: What benefits flow from the vocational education, employment and training sectors involved with overseas projects, and do they offer opportunities for staff development?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I thank the honourable member for this question, because it is one of the exciting initiatives which this sector of the department has undertaken with great success. In answer to the first part of the question, involvement with overseas projects actually improves the quality of programs. That is fairly self-explanatory, because it exposes lecturers to international practices and methodologies and it enhances locally delivered programs. Further, the income that is generated is used to improve student amenities and services and the provision of increased numbers of places for South Australian students. In other words, the money does not just go into consolidated revenue; it comes back to the system in terms of an improvement in facilities and amenities and an increase in places.

Involvement in overseas projects also meets one of the objectives set by the Arthur D. Little report to generate foreign exchange by commercialising intellectual property. I have had the privilege and honour of visiting some of our staff in some of the projects, for example, in Indonesia in a reasonably thriving area of Bandung. I have met the staff and seen at first hand the important work they do, not just in terms of building their own skills, but also in sharing this training with our Indonesian neighbours.

I will not go into the details, but we have a large range of projects. In Indonesia and Thailand we have had some very successful joint venture projects and we are looking at some other countries, particularly Malaysia. It seems to me to be an important area in which we can move forward. We are marketing our services effectively and at the same time meeting some of the commitments that we have within our own region. In this way everyone is a beneficiary.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: My question follows logically from that of the member for Albert Park. I refer to page 312 with respect to the export education program. That is a new program for which \$1.651 million has been allocated and which has 8.2 staff members. Before I put my questions to the Minister, I should like her to define what she means by 'export education'. Are we training small businesses how to export in accordance with Federal and State Government policies, or does that title identify our own plans to export our education services? If the Minister can explain what that means, my questions will follow from the answer.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The short answer is that it is the latter explanation in terms of marketing our education programs overseas. When we say 'marketing', we also mean being able to access some of the Federal funding and funding which has been made available through the United Nations for developing countries for the training and skill development programs that they need to ensure that they provide the appropriate standards of training. It is the latter, not the former.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: That being so, what are the qualifications and experience of the eight or so people who have been given this task; is their role and function restricted solely to marketing; and to what extent do the funds allocated cover salaries and the cost of sending them overseas to market our services? Can the Minister give a breakdown of the \$1.651 million and indicate the role, function and qualifications of the staff?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: That is certainly an in-depth question and I will ask the Acting Director of the TAFE sector to answer it. I just want to set the record straight. We are not sending people off willy-nilly with a bag of goodies under their arm to carry out a marketing exercise. Many of the opportunities are already established, so when we talk about marketing we are talking about providing programs in areas that, for example, the Federal Government may have identified, and we are looking at accessing Federal funds.

However, there is some entrepreneurial marketing. I was recently involved with the head of that section, Mr Peter Flemming, when I was in South-East Asia. We were able to sign a joint venture on 18 May with respect to the Rajamangala Institute of Technology in Thailand, and that will see some very important returns to South Australia. I think they were quite delighted with the way in which we moved forward. We are not going on a type of Marco Polo exercise into South-East Asia with a bag of educational goodies under our arm. In fact, much of this has already been established and we are building on solid foundations in a number of areas.

Mr Carter: The sum of \$426 000 relates to salaries and wages and the balance of \$1 225 000 relates to non-salary items associated with travel and joint investments that we pick up in contracts through our partnership with SAGRIC International, which is our major partnership. Through that partnership South Australia is leading Australia in the international scene. We have a very good reputation in South-East Asian countries and good performance in terms of the contracts that we are winning.

As the Minister indicated, staff are involved in the marketing arm of the international activity as well as the general marketing of the department. In addition, the people who work on those projects are normally experts from the institutes in the various endeavours involved in Pacific contracts that we negotiate. In the TAFE system we have

1 800 expert staff involved in an incredible range of professions and skills. Those people are selected for the negotiated contracts that we are dealing with, and they spend time overseas on site. Sometimes the overseas people will come to our institutes. There is a great exchange of cultural experiences as well as expertise in relation to the nature of the project. It is a large effort involving those core staff and a whole range of expert staff in the field.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: From my memory of Estimates Committees, when I had the shadow portfolio, I remember the Hon. Mike Rann referring to this subject so I knew it was not a new program. This really is in the nature of a supplementary question. Given that it is not a new program, why does it have the appearance of being a new program because there is no previously allocated recurrent expenditure for it? What was it identified under before?

Mr Carter: Looking at page 312, referring to export education, there is a program immediately above that called 'Enterprise management'. You may recall the time when this department got involved in a range of business enterprises. For legal reasons, a number of our TAFE colleges established formal business enterprises. We had Crotech, which was involved in Shrike, and things like that at that stage. I should add that we are not in that business any more. The international export work was included in that program, as was some fee for service work, which is now undertaken in the vocational education program. That is the change.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: This expenditure that we are discussing has already involved and will in future involve enormous cost benefits for South Australia. It was identified in the Arthur D. Little report as being important and it could be one of the critical areas that hauls us out of a very deep hole. I ask the Minister two questions coming from a different perspective.

First, is there any place, possibly in the annual reports of the department, where the inputs and the outcomes in terms of export earnings are identified? If not, I should like to place on notice a question asking for the expenditure and the identified returns for the past three years. I would expect that to be taken on notice, because it will require quite a bit of research.

Secondly, there has been public criticism—my recollection is that it was in a feature article in the *Bulletin* some time last year—of Australia's failure to provide adequate accommodation and what could broadly be called pastoral care for tertiary students whom we seek to come to our institutions. If we continue to fail to do that, we will lose the market that we are trying so hard to gain.

The parents of these young people will simply not let them come to a country unless they are absolutely assured that their physical, emotional and social well-being is taken care of. I have met some of these students at TAFE colleges and would like to know what initiatives the Government is taking to secure the well-being of the students when they are in Australia and to reassure their families who, for cultural reasons, have an extreme concern about these matters that these young people are not only being well educated but are also being well looked after?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: It is interesting that the honourable member asks me this question because as recently as yesterday I was at the Regency institute and I was speaking to the Deputy Chair of the Institute Council, Judith Blake. She told me that the Regency institute has gone to some pains to secure accommodation for overseas students within the university colleges. A couple of agreements have been

reached, and some students who are now currently living within these colleges have found the arrangement to be extremely successful.

I understand that in the beginning there was a little tentativeness on behalf of the colleges about having TAFE students but that has now been overcome and the arrangements for a couple of students who are currently participating and working with the Regency institute have proved to be very successful.

I am aware, as the honourable member is, of the importance of making sure that when overseas students come to Adelaide they have provided for them proper accommodation and something a little more than just a roof over their head and their being well fed. They really do need what the honourable member calls a little bit of 'pastoral care'. I say that in the broadest meaning of that term.

Our institutes are very aware of the important need to ensure that we provide for students from overseas. I am also aware that we are currently working and negotiating to provide for proper boarding facilities and accommodation. I am sure that one of my very competent officers has more up-to-date information than I have. I know this is something we have been looking at and working with, particularly with respect to some of the students from the Swiss Hotel Association programs which are run through Regency. I know that they have been working very hard to get some appropriate accommodation in terms of hostel facilities. Please do not hold me to the correct title for this.

I am aware that not only do we know about the problem but also we are moving very quickly to ensure a reputation, particularly for South-East Asia but for other countries, where people feel that their students are safe, well cared for, that they are welcomed and that they are provided with the appropriate support mechanisms.

Mr Carter: In answer to the honourable member's first question, we will take the bulk of that on notice. The bulk of the \$1.6 million in the estimates is already returned through direct income, so, it is basically self-supporting. Of course, the cost benefit analysis with which we will supply you will also describe the very important secondary benefits to the State through those activities.

I wish to make some further comments on the overseas students. We currently have about 450 overseas students through our institutes. One of the reasons we do not have 1 000 is that we take particular care to ensure that pastoral care is applied, and it is a very significant job to make sure we get it right. Torrens Valley institute, previously Tea Tree Gully college, also has an active international student program. It has an arrangement, as you know, with the Modbury Hospital for the provision of accommodation. I have spoken to the students from time to time and they are pleased and very happy with the way of life, accommodation and the treatment they are getting from the college.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: Just to pursue that in one further direction, can the Minister identify how and in what geographical area and types of service the Government intends to pursue and win international fee for service contracts in addition to what we are already doing? Will it be an intensification of the existing areas, and, if not, in what new areas are we seeking to gain contracts?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: As a State we have to get our marketing house in order. We have to work with a range of sectors. We have the university sector, marketing and services overseas, the TAFE sector, SSABSA, sections of the

Education Department and, indeed, the Children's Services Office.

I have recently raised this matter with the Premier because I think it is important that if we are to compete for these very important international markets we must have our collective act together. We have to market ourselves as a State and market our educational services as a package. We have to ensure that every dollar spent is an effective use of taxpayers' money. I think this is something we need to move forward.

I have certainly put this on the agenda of the three universities, TAFE, SSABSA and indeed, as Dr McPhail will attest, the whole education sector. For me that is one of the critical directions. I am not going to take the time of the Committee talking about specific programs or thrusts. I think there are an enormous number of things, such as picking up the issues with the MFP and a range of areas whereby we can look at marketing our State's intellectual property. We must get the structure right to ensure, because we are small, that we make every dollar a winner.

Dr McPhail: One of the activities of the new department is to link the international activities of the three sectors. As the Minister said, we have great opportunities and we already have a number of very clear successes. We would like to build on those successes, not only in the identification of the projects that will return significant benefit to South Australia but also in the identification of those countries which are likely to be the most effective markets for our activity.

It is very important that we do not have a shotgun approach to South-East Asia: that we move into those countries only where success is indicated. The new departmental executive has placed as one of its first priorities the development of an international marketing approach that will draw on the strengths of the entire organisation.

It is quite interesting that we have had strong inquiries relating to the sort of child-care organisation that we have in South Australia and the way in which that form of organisation can be gained in other countries.

This is a very exciting area. Done properly we have a chance of not only making an economic gain for South Australia but also improving the standing of South Australia in the very significant cultural area in those countries. Adding to our strong skills, we have just appointed a Director of Coordination to the new department—a person who has had extensive foreign affairs experience in South-East Asia—so I believe we are adding additional skills to the organisation.

I was recently in Cambodia, which I hasten to say is not an early market for our product simply because it is a devastated nation, and we could only ride in there on the back of International Aid—although I think there are some opportunities there. It is worthwhile noting that SAGRIC has a very high standing in South-East Asia. I believe the remainder of the new department could also use those skills to ensure that we have quality marketing because the cowboys who have entered South-East Asia have created very negative impressions. We literally cannot fail. It is not possible for us to fail. We must be successful in all ventures that we enter into.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: Around this time last year I had the privilege of co-hosting a group of Chinese businessmen at the School of Catering at Regency Park, and I was highly impressed. Obviously, the courses there are getting a pretty good name. However, I heard a story that there were some space problems there with squeezing the courses into the premises. Have these been addressed and, if so, have they been overcome?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I call on Mr Carter, Acting Chief Executive Officer, to answer that question.

Mr Carter: In relation to the space difficulties, we are pretty full at all our colleges and one of the challenges is to ensure that there is no disadvantage to any Australian student or prospective student as a result of our international activities or overseas students. The creation of the international college hotel management course at Regency, which is certainly a first in the southern hemisphere, if not the world, in terms of the *cordon bleu* qualification that is now provided, caused some initial problems with space. That led to some rather creative room management systems being introduced. As a result of that space was found, not only to compensate for the international college, but to allow other Australian students access to the institute.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: You indirectly created a virtue out of necessity?

Mr Carter: Indeed.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I understand that several TAFE colleges have been consolidated into institutes of vocational education. Has this been well received or has there been grassroots resistance to the amalgamation of 19 TAFE colleges into institutes of vocational education?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I would say that there were no serious issues. I think it has gone remarkably smoothly and I think that is due to the very extensive consultative process that went on in amalgamating 19 down to 10. Credit must be given not only to the various directors of colleges at the time but also to Mr J. Kelton, who seemed to be a roving ambassador at large, going to all of the councils, meeting with them and talking with staff. Credit must also go to the college councils. I know that initially in Whyalla they were not happy to be part of a Spencer Gulf three-campus college, but when I went up to Whyalla recently they said, 'Now that it has happened, we are fine, we want to get on with it, we want to be part of this.' So I think there was a great maturity and acceptance, where there may well have been a bit of reticence and perhaps a feeling of 'Well, I wonder how this is going to work.'

Certainly, for other campuses, they have come together in a very effective way. In relation to devising the names, I was asked to approve the names and I have approved every one of the names that have been brought forward. There is, for example in the southern area, the Onkaparinga Institute, which picks up the feature of the river which joins the three regions: Kingston, Mount Barker and Noarlunga. When the councils could not agree to a new name we said that we would leave the names until they could come up with something. I understand that one of the last ones, which was the Marlestone/Panorama College, which then became the Marlestone/Panorama Institute, has now agreed—and I have approved—on Douglas Mawson Institute as its title. The secret of this success has been the professionalism of the department, the openness of the consultation and the valuing of the input from staff and from the college councils themselves. Everyone involved in this deserves a very big thank you and deserves a credit because it is going to be, as we have said earlier, the way forward in terms of delivering the flexible and appropriate services that this community requires.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: My third question relates to the job skills program and the way in which it is operated. This is a program whereby we have major Commonwealth wage subsidies for the long term unemployed, aged 21 and over. I realise it is a Commonwealth scheme, but how

successful has it been operating in the private and in the public sector? I refer particularly to the public sector because I have in mind whether or not the Government has taken the opportunity to provide assistance through this program by using the public sector.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: We certainly have. As the honourable member has said, one of the major Commonwealth wage subsidy programs is job skills and it provides the full wage subsidy for long term unemployed people aged 21 and over. I have to say that in 1992-93 the Commonwealth allocated 910 job skills funded positions in South Australia. All of these positions were fully utilised with 910 employment based training placements being achieved. In fact, every one of the places has been taken up. The Government certainly led the way in making use of job skills. The program is available to the community based organisations, the local government sector and the State Government sector, but it was the State public sector, under the direction, I must say, of myself and this Government, which recruited the first 250 job skills participants in South Australia.

Through this initiative, 250 unemployed South Australians between 21 and 24 received six months paid employment with structured, formal training being provided. This training is fully accredited and can be used to pursue further studies and gain relevant competencies and qualifications. Subsequently, because of the success of this initiative, other eligible organisations responded to the program and ensured that the other 660 job skills funded positions were filled. It is important to note that the Government, under the public sector youth training and employment strategy, will provide 1 000 additional employment and training positions in the State public sector. I am delighted to inform the Committee that 500 of those positions will be fully funded under job skills. It should be stressed that these initiatives have been achieved with no net addition to the public sector staff levels. However, what we have found is that applicants who have undertaken this job skills training program have not only been paid a wage and obtained work experience and development skills, but they have developed a work history. The preliminary findings have been that they have won jobs in the public sector on their own ability and merits and have won jobs within the private sector. That shows that the program is working very effectively.

The Hon. J.P. TRAINER: I have been advised that the private sector has been providing additional assistance through the job skills program to some electorate offices. Is the Minister aware of that or is this only applying to the private sector providing additional assistance using the job skills program to Liberal Party members' electorate offices?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I do not have any information of any electorate offices being provided with extra staff under the job skills program. I can find that information for the honourable member, but I wonder if any of my officers are aware of that.

Mr Connelly: Job skills is not available to the private sector. It is only available to State Government, local government and community organisations—which is not to say that somebody out there in the community might not have been very creative. I have no knowledge of that, but we will run a check.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I guess the short answer is that if there are any extra staff in the electorate offices, they are being funded possibly privately or by way of donation or through electorate allowance or something.

Mr SUCH: Could the Minister explain the way in which costs are recovered from overseas students? Is there a profit margin built in? I imagine there is. Can the Minister explain how that process works and, in particular, in relation to the hotel management course at Regency Park, what is the charge and what constitutes a profit margin if there is such a margin?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: When we have overseas students coming to South Australia we believe that it is important to have a cost recovery policy; the community would expect nothing less. The community does not want to see students within South Australia being disadvantaged. I believe that most families understand the value to this State and to the student community of having students from other parts of the world, which enriches our whole cultural experience and the experience of students involved in courses with students from overseas. We have a policy of charging students, and I think that is in line with national philosophy and policy. All States have this policy. I cannot give the details off the top of my head. If one of my advisers does not have them, we will provide them to the honourable member.

Mr Carter: I do not have the precise details with me, but we will provide those. Just to confirm what the Minister said, the policy is that full cost recovery is applied to the fees. The fees that I have seen on various courses, which vary depending on the nature and length of the course, etc., are in the vicinity of \$6 000 to \$8 000 for a full year course, and there would be a small profit margin. The two things we must look at are, first, to make sure we recover all the costs (because, as the Minister said, we are not to disadvantage one South Australian student as a result of those endeavours) and, secondly, what is the competition charging in other States?

We have to get that balance between recovering our costs, if possible achieving a small profit margin to put back for the advantage of the State and the students, while remaining competitive with the rest of Australia. As I said, we will provide the figures but they range from \$6 000 to \$8 000 for a full year.

Mr SUCH: The Minister indicated earlier this evening that the State training profile is complete. Would it be possible for a copy of the beastie to be made available?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: In fact, I was intending to send it to the honourable member tomorrow. So, the service from this sector cannot be matched anywhere.

Mr SUCH: This is not meant as any criticism of the department or of DETAFE, but has the Minister any idea of percentages of students seeking training or being accepted for training at institutes who require remedial help in the areas of literacy and numeracy? Is there any statistical profile on that aspect?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am not personally aware of such a profile. I think the collection of those kinds of statistics would be an incredibly in-depth research project, given the diversity and number of our campuses and the diversity and range of courses. We are not just talking about courses offered to young people exiting school; we are talking about people who come into our system sometimes at a very advanced age. We are talking about migrants who come to this country and about people who come to develop literacy skills, and that is part of the strength of this sector, that we provide for such a diverse and wide ranging group of clients. However, within the depth of the department there just might be someone with some kind of feeling about the statistics the honourable member is seeking.

Mr SUCH: You can take it on notice.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I would be a little concerned about taking it on notice, because I do not want to divert the department to that kind of collection of statistics when at the moment they are full steam ahead about delivering programs through the new institutes and getting ready for next year. If those statistics could be readily made available that is fine, but I will not be asking the various institutes to be spending hours and hours of their time sifting through back records or undertaking some kind of assessment procedures that may be not in place at the moment.

Mr Carter: It is a complex situation, because a range of measures are taken in the department to address literacy and numeracy issues. They range from the specific provision of literacy and numeracy courses to students in need, both in terms of students who come to institutions and our going out to the work place in terms of the work place literacy programs we offer. Those programs are funded from specific Commonwealth provisions as well as State provisions. Those figures are readily available and can be provided to the honourable member.

In addition to that, of course, a range of preparatory assistance is provided through our institutes, depending on the testing of students that occurs in some of the programs. Some of that testing is required under Commonwealth guidelines for labour market programs, and when the tests demonstrate a certain level there must be a specific adult literacy and numeracy provision before the student continues with the labour market program. In addition, as a normal part of our student support at institutes, our lecturing staff and counselling staff are there every day to provide that extra assistance to help students get through courses. It is a mixed bag, but there is some discrete information with respect to that, and we can provide it on notice.

Mr SUCH: Following the literacy theme but taking it to the neighbourhood centres and other community centres providing language and literacy programs, is the Minister concerned at the changes the Federal Government has now introduced in relation to groups having to tender to provide those programs? In respect of the State Government's financial commitment, what will that be next year? It is a matter that has been raised with me by many community based groups who are concerned about, first, the change in the Federal guidelines and funding arrangements, and also whether the State Government has a dollar commitment towards those programs, particularly for next year.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Whilst I support the importance of people's tendering for programs as a general philosophical position, it is important that we make sure that programs remain relevant; that they are cost effective; and that there is accountability to the taxpayers of this country. I have raised some serious concerns with the Federal Government about the way in which at every round we have to re-tender, and the amount of resources that needs to go into this tendering process seems to me inappropriate. If we could look at a tendering process up front that perhaps went through for a number of courses, so that it does not just go on for ever, that you win the tender the first time and can just ease off and not worry about maintaining the quality of service, and we do not have quality control, there is a commonsense solution to this in terms of having a tendering process but having it at such intervals that you maintain the quality but reduce the costs for the individual service providers in preparing these tenders.

I have expressed my concern, and I know that that is shared by Ministers from other States and of different political persuasions, because we have talked about this at

ministerial council meetings and informally. I will ask Mr Carter to answer the second part of your question.

Mr Carter: As the Minister said, there is concern both with adult literacy and ESL with respect to the tendering along the lines the Minister has indicated. Subsequent negotiations and discussions will be going on at ministerial level expressing those concerns. With respect to the future position, the State would expect, regardless of the outcome, to win a reasonable share of funds through the labour market programs to maintain a level of provision through the public system. The State Government is putting a substantial amount of money into adult literacy programs, and there will be an increase of funds through ESL in the State budget in 1993-94.

Mr HAMILTON: What are the trends and figures for apprenticeships and traineeships in South Australia?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I have further information which highlights that there has been a reversal in the decline in new enrolments and we hope it is significant. I can give a little more information to add to the matter asked about earlier by the member for Fisher. As to where we have seen strong increases within our vocation groups, building has been the most significant and is up 71 per cent, clerical up 68 per cent; electrical up 80 per cent, metals up 70 per cent; furniture up 43 per cent; and engineering up 12 per cent. We are on the right path in terms of the direction and it is now a matter of being able to sustain that.

Mr HAMILTON: Will the formation of the Institute of Vocational Education improve client services and, if so, how?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I answered that question earlier in a general sense about improving client services, and I will ask Ms Woolley, who is a director of an institute, to comment. I thought it was relevant to have such a director here tonight because the institutes are so new and it is important that a director of an institute such as the Onkaparinga Institute, which covers a large outer-metropolitan area encompassing a large geographic area for a city/rural institute, can talk about what this means for the client group that was historically served by the three colleges.

Ms Woolley: The range of services has the potential to increase significantly. Students are already able to do this by enrolling in a course and achieving the benefits of transferring from one campus to another without encountering artificial barriers that previously may have been perceived to be a problem before the amalgamation of the colleges into one institute. Other significant services that students will gain from include language and literacy, which was raised earlier as a problem. We have a broader range of client services through lecturers who are not necessarily in large numbers in some places. The Onkaparinga Institute has some very small campuses which can now access lecturers in larger campuses. It can access facilities in other campuses without duplicating human and physical resources that exist across a much larger organisation. We can transfer students from one campus to another and provide open learning methodologies without the complications of questioning to whom these students belong in terms of this college or that college. The students gain tremendously.

We are talking of students who are already based within campuses of an institute. As to students who are external to the colleges, students who are located in industry, then the services to those students or clients within industry are also extended significantly to the extent that we can provide a wider range of services when a particular industry might approach a campus and I can now say, 'Yes, we do have the human resources and expertise to a much greater extent than

previously.' I can point to people who may be required in Murray Bridge and provide them with services from staff located in Noarlunga, for example. Before the amalgamation that was a much more difficult exercise. We have a great deal more flexibility with our staff and hence our students, both internal and external, are able to access much broader services.

Mr HAMILTON: I refer to page 321 of the Program Estimates, Specific Targets/Objectives, as follows:

Advance planning for projects on the Urrbrae and Mount Gambier campuses.

What is intended with those projects?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: These are the new capital works projects and I will ask Mr Carter to provide that information.

Mr Carter: The two projects concerned are in the planning phase. The program for 1993-94 provides for the construction of the Adelaide Institute that the Minister announced recently and also the extensions at Onkaparinga Institute. They are the projects that will commence construction in 1993-94. The Urrbrae campus of the Torrens Valley Institute is an exciting project, which will be the upgrading and redevelopment of facilities for our horticultural school, which is currently located at Brookway Park. It is a very attractive and exciting site, but it is very restricted as well, and we cohabit with the Fire Department and this has some logistical problems. There is an exciting chance at Urrbrae to work with the secondary agriculture school in the near vicinity, and the project is estimated to cost at this stage about \$9.5 million at that location. It is still subject to some planning approvals but there is a possibility that it could start in 1995. The South-East project, which is also a \$9.5 million project, is to overcome the critical accommodation problems that exist in the split campuses there by consolidating the facilities at the Wireless Road site, and we would expect significant gains in both student outcomes and for the community as a whole in terms of the new facility that will be provided there, and also with linkages with the upper secondary programs in that region.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I would like to establish whether page 311, provision of student services and public information, student and information services, does in fact cover libraries and resource centres.

Mr Carter: The major components in there relate to student services such as the counselling services and the child-care services we provide; I do not think the library information is in there.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: In that case, I am not referring to the right line. What I am trying to find is a line which identifies the amount spent on the resource centres for each of the institutes, and I place on notice questions aimed at identifying the improvement, if any, in the *per capita* provision of books, periodicals, ephemera, tapes and all the other resource material that students require since the release of the report I believe in 1989 which identified the paucity of resources for students in the then TAFE colleges by comparison with resources for students in universities and the former Colleges of Advanced Education. This is critically important for the State's whole tertiary education system in DETAFE and without labouring the matter here and now, unless the Minister is able to identify the line and point to an increase in expenditure, I place on notice that range of questions designed to determine whether an improvement has been made and is planned.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am not able to point to the exact line, but I would like to highlight a couple of things. First, it is not a simple matter to be able to just come up with a figure for every one of the institutes and say, 'That is what we are putting into the resource centre.' For example, in the Onkaparinga Institute the library resource centre is jointly funded by the Noarlunga council; in other words, local government has worked with the formation of what was the Noarlunga College of TAFE. So, it is not always as simple as being able to say, 'Let's separate out usage of students and facilities.' One of the underpinning concepts in the formation of institutes, as Ms Woolley has said, has been to provide a better range of services and facilities and to ensure that campus sites have had an adequate resourcing within their libraries of tapes, books and so on.

One of the things that we need to factor into such a question is the whole concept of distance education. Many resources are now able to be beamed—I do not pretend to be an expert on this—by way of technology to students in remote and country areas as well as within the city. It is not a simple matter of saying what resources are accessible at any one site when students, through modern technological means, can access a whole range of proper and adequate resources for their courses.

I should be happy to provide the honourable member with a broad answer, because I do not want the department to have to come up with some kind of comparison which at the end of the day is meaningless in terms of quality outcome. However, we would be happy to provide the sorts of resources which are currently within the vocational institute sector.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: From memory, the terms in which I asked the question related to per capita student access to learning resources rather than individual college-based resources. I do not want time spent on comparisons with the other institutions; I want to know what, if any, improvement has occurred because there was a great deal of room for improvement.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: We will do that.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: My next question refers to page 317 of the Program Estimates. Under '1993-94 Specific Targets/Objectives' there is a reference to establishing a State funding base for English as a second language program for people of non-English-speaking backgrounds. How much has been spent annually over the past three years on the provision of ESL programs for people of non-English-speaking backgrounds; what is the estimated unmet need as measured by demand at the moment; and what are the languages that are in demand? I assume that English is in demand, but what is the majority background? I suppose that Indo-Chinese is an important background. I note, particularly in the areas through which I drive to come to Parliament House, large numbers of women of Arabic origin taking their children to school and I see young women attending university. Have those mothers any provision made for them in becoming acquainted with Australia through the English language rather than being isolated in their homes?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: As the first part of the question relates specifically to amounts that have been spent in the past three years, I will ask Mr Carter to provide that information for the honourable member.

Mr Carter: I do not have the information for the past three years, but I will be able to provide it later. In 1993-94, from the growth component of the budget additional funds of \$250 000 have been provided to this area. It is an area of

some concern to the department because of the changing approach by the Commonwealth Government with respect to directing a significant proportion of ESL money through the labour market program rather than in direct assistance to overseas people. There is a gap there. The Commonwealth money is directed to new arrivals and labour market programs, and that leaves a gap of people who do not fall within those classifications. That is the area about which we are concerned within the State. Those growth funds will be directed to those areas.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: As a supplementary, is it correct that the establishment of a State funding base literally means that this Government for the first time will be dedicating funds for this purpose?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Yes. The reason for that is that while I have made representation to the Federal Government with respect to the criteria we have not been successful. We made it jointly with all other States and none of us have been successful in terms of freeing up some of those criteria.

As Mr Carter has said there are a group of people, and they happen to be, as the honourable member so rightly points out, generally women who cannot access the Federal programs in the time frame that the Federal Government has laid down because they have family and domestic commitments, with different cultural mores, and that is not seen as a priority. So, when they are ready to do it the Federal Government money is not available. I have made the strongest representations, along with all my colleagues from interstate, and we are not prepared to allow those people to fall through the net, so we are putting the funds in ourselves.

The Hon. JENNIFER CASHMORE: I am very pleased to hear that because I suspect that if the funds are made available it will be an investment not only in education but also in mental health, and if they are not we will be paying down the line a much heavier price than that which we would choose to pay now.

At page 316 of the Program Estimates, under 'Targets/objectives' for the vocational education program, the goal is to more closely align public provision of vocational education with the priorities of the economic development strategy, for example, in areas such as wine, automotive components and information technology.

What additional sums are being spent on each of those three industry areas this year, and what kind of consultation has occurred with the respective industries to ensure that the money is being directed to the areas which are regarded as priority areas by the industries?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I would like to answer that generally and then ask Mr Carter to give the specific amounts. Let me say that it is not just a matter of spending extra funds. If we are going to align more closely the needs of industry with the way in which we provide training services, then the first thing is to find out from industry—and we have talked about the areas of wine, automotive and information technology—what those needs are and to ensure that the resources that we currently have within the system are targeted most appropriately, so that we are not training people like they have always been trained irrespective of the needs of industry or indeed the economic development strategies identification of new directions and directions for fulfilling the best kind of economic outcomes for South Australia.

I stress that it is not just a matter of throwing more resources at this; it is a matter of looking at what we are doing, and targeting those resources in consultation and joint

decision making with those industries, and that is what has been taking place.

I can ask Mr Carter to see if he has at hand those figures or if we can provide them. I think we have to make sure that we get the framework, structure and policy right as we move forward working with industry.

Mr Carter: As the Minister has indicated, we have now made considerable progress in our involvement of industry at a range of levels in the preparation of the State training plan for 1993-94. That consultation has occurred at the Industry Training Advisory Board level, so that where each industry has an ITAB that body has been involved in the process, as well as an industry reference group that was established specifically for the preparation of the State training profile. So, there has been heavy industry consultation.

As a result of that advice that has flown through into the department, the department's Executive Program Committee, which provides advice to the Minister and me with respect to the relative priorities, has used that advice to change the allocations of funds into the various programs, so that the emphasis can be on the growth industries as indicated in the Arthur D. Little report as indicated through the Economic Development Authority and as advised to us by the various industry advisers.

In addition to the ones that you mentioned that are listed here, additional funds have also gone into many of the service industries, which is seen as a growth factor for South Australia, and into a number of other programs. I do not have the precise dollar information on each of those, but I can provide it for you.

Mr SUCH: My question relates to community adult education. I note that a discussion paper is being prepared. I assume it is not complete yet. In the Program Estimates at page 318 there is reference to the likely incorporation of an adult and community council under the umbrella of VEETA. Bearing in mind that discussion paper, does the Minister at this stage see a role for community adult education within the institute sector? Can the Minister respond to a constituent of mine who wrote this month to the Leader stating:

Funding is being stopped at the end of the year and these leisure classes, mature age art at O'Halloran Hill, will be withdrawn from the system.

Given that the discussion paper is still being prepared, I ask whether that constituent has been given correct information or incorrect information?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will ask Ms Woolley to answer that part of the question, but I think the first part deals with a philosophical question about what is the Government's commitment to community adult education and about where it best sits within the new structure. I have made it very clear, in launching last night the mission statement and the policy of the community adult education for the Community and Neighbourhood Houses Association at their annual general meeting, my deep and long held commitment to the provision of community and adult education programs. I would go even further and say that I think that those programs, some of which are being provided through the WEA, should be provided where the community needs them, that is, within the community. In other words, I think we should be providing them not only through Community and Neighbourhood Houses but also through our school facilities, so that people can access community and adult education programs without having to travel outside their communities.

I see these programs as critical in any civilised society for two reasons: one is to offer people a bridge and a link into the society and the community in which they are, and, secondly, it can provide a stepping stone for people to move through to TAFE programs and then to university. I am sure every member of Parliament has examples of people within their own electorate who have done this very successfully. I think two things need to be stressed: one is that these courses and programs can be an end in themselves or they can be a link in the bridge and a stepping stone to more vocationally oriented programs. I am very committed to ensuring that the community and adult education has its rightful place in the whole scheme of life education, which is a continuum. It is not something that just takes place spasmodically; it is part of the whole life experience. I said as much to the association in terms of my launching their policy last night.

I thank the honourable member for his question because it is very timely. I think it is appropriate, and I know it is a discussion paper, but I am prepared to put my own position quite publicly and say that ensuring the proper role of community and adult education in future lies in having a council which reports via the VEETA board to the Minister so that it is a legitimate part of a whole education, training and life experience structure. Having said that, I cannot give the honourable member the actual specific answer about this particular program or course, but I am sure we will be able to provide that. In the establishment of institutes we had to make some hard decisions about whether we would try to be everything to everyone in the community, or whether we would look at TAFE and actually focus on the vocational, education and training aspects, which we think are vitally important.

That does not mean that we are downplaying some of the community courses, which are, as the honourable member says, called leisure and pleasure courses. It might mean that those courses may be more appropriately provided through this sector of community and adult education at the delivery point of community centres, neighbourhood houses, the local primary school or the local secondary school. With respect to that specific matter, I will ask Ms Woolley to provide that information.

Ms Woolley: The answer must be addressed within the context of the Minister's comments. The ongoing discussions about the role of the CAE program within institutes will of course influence the ongoing nature of what we provide over the next few years. In terms of the very specific question the honourable member asked, there is no plan to reduce that program next year. Of course, the programs that are offered will be on the basis of demand and the size of the classes. They would always be, regardless of which particular CAE program we offer in any location.

Mr SUCH: Will the Minister indicate the likely timetable in respect of introducing the legislation to establish VEETA and when we are likely to see legislation that might be required to cover the establishment and operation of the institutes themselves?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Those of us who have been in this Parliament for a long time would be aware that the wishes of the Minister cannot always be carried out because of the workload of Parliamentary Counsel in terms of drafting the legislation. It is my intention that the legislation to establish VEETA and the institutes would be introduced into the autumn session of the Parliament. We are working towards that, but I guess it will depend on the workload of Parliamentary Counsel in terms of being able to get the

legislation prepared for the autumn session at the beginning of next year.

Mr SUCH: Supplementary to that, does that in any way compromise any Federal funding?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Certainly not.

Mr SUCH: I note reference to the transfer of prisoner education programs back to the Department of Correctional Services, and personally feel that that is an undesirable approach. Was that something that the Minister's department was keen to change in terms of input? What were the factors that gave rise to that change from DEET's being responsible for those programs to Correctional Services either resuming them or taking them over?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: As I understand it, the recommendations of a joint working party included that proposal, but Mr Carter will answer that more fully.

Mr Carter: A joint working party looked at that. It is fair to say that it was initiated through Correctional Services, who basically wanted control over the resources applied to prisoner education rather than its being linked into permanent staff who were employed through DETAFE. When the resources were transferred across, DETAFE was recruited to provide a substantial proportion of that program. But it did and does give Correctional Services flexibility to use other providers.

The transfer has been effected. There is one exception to that, and that is the Aboriginal programs. So, prisoner education of the Aboriginal program remains within the Aboriginal education program of the department. That is very important because of the specific nature of the client we are dealing with in that case.

Mr SUCH: As to the transfer by students between institutes and universities, has consideration been given to the possibility of a HECS equivalent fee being charged for that part of the degree undertaken at an institute?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I am advised that the answer is, 'No.' It is important that we look at furthering the articulation between the two sectors. There has not been any proposal to look at the HECS fee at this time.

Mr SUCH: I am not advocating it.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I could make political mileage on that, but I will not do so.

Mr SUCH: It has been suggested that some people could get a degree at a lower cost than others by using that pathway. There has been some success in terms of diplomas and associate diplomas in regard to enrolments handled by SATAC, but is it intended to expand the institute's offerings via the SATAC system?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: A review is going on now to look at whether it can be expanded and in what areas. I would not wish to pre-empt the review's outcome, but I would be happy to share any decisions with the honourable member as soon as it is appropriate that we make those decisions. I will communicate that to him.

Mr SUCH: Are logos being developed for the institutes? Is it a common logo? If it is a common logo what is the rationale behind it, given that the institutes need to develop their own identity?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: A common logo is being developed and that gets back to the way in which we see the whole sector positioning itself within the broad framework of the provision of vocational education and training. While it is important that the institutes have some individual identity, it is very important that they perceive themselves as part of an important sector. I refer the honourable member to

his opening remarks when he talked about vocational education being seen as a legitimate, vital and important alternative to university. I said that it is different but equal. To be able to promote a vocational education sector will be much easier if we can promote it as a total entity but allow the institutes to pick up some of their own individuality and promote that within the overall framework. As I understand it, some institutes have their own individuality showing up on their letterhead, but it will be under a common logo for the whole sector of the department.

Mr Carter: There will be some discretion as to the Minister's last comment about letterheads so that local identity can be preserved but not in terms of an alternative logo. There was discussion and debate amongst the institutes about individual logos versus a systemwide logo but, at the end of the day, institutes were unanimous in agreeing to the advantages of a systemwide approach. The major advantage is to students who, when they receive their parchment, will have the systemwide backing, which will be important for them.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I think it is appropriate also to point out that there will be a badging coming under DEET (SA) so that again they are part of this whole broader education area, which I think will be a great advantage.

Mr SUCH: I acknowledge that symbols and symbolism are very important. Is the Minister suggesting that individual institutes can add their own variation to the logo?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: No, I am not suggesting that. There will be a logo and an overall concept which, as I think Mr Carter so rightly put it, is a great advantage to students, and it also sends very clear messages that this is a highly professional, valid and equal option and alternative to university qualification and that it is part of the bigger department of DEET (SA). What I am saying is that, with respect to some things on letterheads and bits and pieces, we believe that it is appropriate that some of the institutes may wish to retain some of their identity, but they will not be able to vary the logo, as I understand it.

Mr Carter: The details on that are still being worked through. There will be a launching of the logo and the associated letterheads at some time in the near future and at that stage we will thoroughly resolve this question of local identity as part of the total system-wide approach.

Mr SUCH: I refer now to page 321 of the Program Estimates. Is a complete asset register now fully operational and, if not, why not?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: The complete asset register of the whole department or just this section?

Mr SUCH: Just this section.

Mr Carter: We have two asset registers working in the department; one is called BLAMS which has been developed through SACON and which is a register that controls the major properties in terms of buildings and land. Then we have another register that relates to the major equipment within the department. Those asset registers are fully operational. I might say that we see significant advantages in the DEET (SA) merger in looking at a system-wide or departmental-wide approach to asset management, and we believe that there will be significant advantages for all sectors in looking at best practice and taking advantage of rationalisation opportunities through practices and systems by looking at that right across the wider department.

Mr SUCH: Also with respect to page 321 of the Program Estimates, what rationalisation of property holdings is envisaged, and can the Minister provide some details?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I can inform the honourable member that the Department of Environment and Land Management is in the process of selling the old Tea Tree Gully College of TAFE site on Montague Road on behalf of the DETAFE sector of the department. When the Port Adelaide campus of the Regency Institute of Vocational Education is completed it is proposed to sell the Grange site to the City of Henley and Grange for a community centre, and it is also proposed to sell the Ethelton campus in the near future.

Mr SUCH: In 1990 the then Minister of Further Education (Hon. Mike Rann) was quoted in a paper on Yorke Peninsula as saying that work on permanent facilities for the Yorke Peninsula TAFE was likely to begin in 1993-94. Under the new institute arrangement, is there any plan to construct a permanent campus facility at Kadina?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: My officers inform me that it is not on the program at the moment. We have announced a very comprehensive building program involving stage 5 of Adelaide TAFE. The further stages are at the Onkaparinga institute and the Noarlunga campus. As to the other two parts of the question with respect to the major redevelopment and consolidation on one site in the South-East at Mount Gambier and other areas, at the moment that is not on the planning program for this coming year.

Mr SUCH: Some questions arise from the Auditor-General's Report on page 74 in relation to compliance within the institutes in regard to the industrial agreement and the management of lecturing resources. Is there now compliance with that agreement as identified and highlighted by the Auditor-General and similarly in respect of compliance within the institutes in relation to the financial management of fee for service activities?

Mr Carter: The compliance with the agreement relates to the contact hours undertaken by lecturing staff which in the agreement was a range from 18 to 24. There was an audit which indicated that there were some difficulties in terms of the recording systems that were used at the various colleges at the time. A group comprising institute directors has formed a group to look at the various recording systems which are in existence and they are working with our information systems people to come up with the most appropriate system to provide that information as a guidance to the institute directors so that compliance can be assured. That is proceeding now and we will be receiving a report on that through our departmental executive committee at the next meeting or the one after.

The department introduced accounting arrangements to account fully for the costs and incomes of fee for service projects. From some of my discussions with interstate colleagues, I can say that we are much further advanced in our detailed costing and accounting for fee for service projects than the other States and Territories. That system is fully implemented and has been in operation for more than 12 months. We are now undertaking a post-implementation review.

Mr SUCH: I refer now to page 321 of the Program Estimates. What will be involved in the devolution of personnel in industrial relations functions to the institutes and how will that differ from the existing arrangements or those which have existed in recent times?

Mr Carter: The relative autonomy of institutes is seen as an important part of the training system that is emerging in South Australia. Where it can be demonstrated that support services which were previously provided by the centre can be

provided better and more efficiently at local level, then that is the approach that has been and will be adopted.

With respect to personnel services, some of those central services will be devolved to colleges. Some industrial relations matters will be handled at the local level in relation to local issues, whilst at the other end there will be centralisation of industrial relations matters through the office of the Chief Executive through DEET(SA).

Mr SUCH: The Auditor-General's Report at page 76 indicates that there is to be a reduction in the Kickstart allocation from \$1.5 million in 1992 to \$1.3 million in 1993. Can the Minister explain why that is indicated as a reduction? Is that a change of emphasis?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: I will ask Mr Connelly to answer that.

Mr Connelly: The actuality is that there is no reduction. This is really a matter of carry over and carry forward from one year to another. That apparent minor variation of some \$100 000 is really a function of that rather than a change in the actual funding level.

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: There is certainly no diminution in terms of the commitment of the Government and the department to the Kickstart programs. They are incredibly successful and operating successfully within some of our regional areas.

Mr SUCH: Similarly, why is there a reduction in the allocation for local employment assistance of \$1.6 million in 1992 down to \$372 000 in 1993?

Mr Connelly: That relates to one program called the Home Assist Program, which previously appeared in the Department of Employment and TAFE but which was transferred as a whole into FACS. So as far as the overall Government is concerned there has been a diminution.

Mr SUCH: What is being done to encourage employees to take long service leave entitlements, noting that the Auditor-General highlights that the long service leave liability continues to increase, and gives the figures of \$24.9 million in 1992 increasing to \$27.4 million in 1993?

Mr Carter: The figures are reflected in the Auditor-General's Report, as the honourable member indicates. The department has policies on long service leave that encourage staff to apply for long service leave in advance. There are two reasons for that: one is that we are trying to reduce that liability, if possible. The other is the maintenance of the educational program. Therefore, we need a reasonable lead time so that we can provide replacement staff through either temporary lecturers or part-time instructors.

Funds are provided to ensure that the educational program is always serviced and there is a general policy of therefore encouraging long service leave to be taken on the one hand. On the other we are all terribly busy and the luxury does not come up that often.

Mr SUCH: At page 78 of the Auditor-General's Report it is noted that there has been a decline in enrolments in the area of community adult education from 556 000 hours in 1990 to 389 000 in 1992, and a corresponding decline in enrolments from 22 000 in 1990 to 15 000 in 1992. Those figures are quite significant in terms of a decline. Obviously we do not have the time tonight to go into a detailed analysis of that, but is there a simple explanation for that, or have those people gone elsewhere? What is the explanation for that dramatic decline in community adult education?

The Hon. S.M. Lenehan: Some of those have gone into the fee for service area, so that is actually shown in other parts. The WEA is now providing a significant amount of community and adult education, and some private sector providers are providing some of those programs. It is important to recognise that they have not gone completely: they have just gone into other areas for service delivery.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 22 September at 11 a.m.