

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Tuesday 22 June 1999

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B**Chairman:**

Mr I.H. Venning

Members:

Mr M.J. Atkinson
 Mr M.L.J. Hamilton-Smith
 Mr K. Hanna
 Mr R.J. McEwen
 Mr E.J. Meier
 Ms J.J. Snelling

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Courts Administration Authority, \$6 087 000
 Department of Justice, \$478,588,000

Witness:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin, Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Consumer Affairs.

The Hon. J.J. Doyle, Chief Justice, attended on behalf of the Courts Administration Authority.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr W. Cossey, State Courts Administration.
 Ms K. Lennon, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Justice, Attorney-General's Department.
 Ms J. Baker, Deputy State Courts Administrator, Courts Administration Authority.
 Mr T. Goodes, General Manager, DPP, Attorney-General's Department.
 Mr T. O'Rourke, Manager, Resources, Courts Administration Authority.
 Mr M. Church, Manager, Finance, Courts Administration Authority.
 Mr K. Penniford, Director, Strategic and Financial Services, Attorney-General's Department.

The CHAIRMAN: I welcome those involved with this Committee and point out that, as the proceedings are relatively informal, for the purpose of asking or answering questions there is no need to stand. The Committee will determine the approximate time for consideration of proposed payments, to facilitate the changeover of departmental advisers. I presume that the Minister and the Opposition spokesperson have agreed to the timetable for today's proceedings. Changes to the composition of the Committee will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure that they have provided the Chair with a completed request to be discharged form. If the Minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be in a form suitable for insertion in *Hansard* and two copies are to be submitted no

later than Friday 9 July 1999 to the Clerk of the House of Assembly.

I propose to allow the Minister and the lead speaker for the Opposition to make opening statements, if desired, lasting about 10 minutes but no longer than 15 minutes. There will be a flexible approach in relation to giving the call for asking questions, based on three questions per member, alternating sides. Members will also be allowed to ask a brief supplementary question to conclude a line of questioning, but I point out that supplementary questions will be the exception rather than the rule.

Subject to the convenience of the Committee, members outside the Committee who desire to ask questions on a line of questioning currently being undertaken by the Committee will be permitted to do so once that line of questioning has been exhausted by members of the Committee. An indication to the Chair in advance from the member outside the Committee wishing to ask a question is necessary.

As questions must be based on lines of expenditure as revealed in the Estimates statement, it would be helpful if reference could be made to other relevant budget documents, including the portfolio statements. Questions not asked at the end of the day must be placed on the next sitting day's House of Assembly Notice Paper.

I remind the Minister that there is no formal facility for the tabling of documents before the Committee. However, documents can be supplied to the Chair for distribution to the Committee. The incorporation of material in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the House of Assembly; that is, that it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length. All questions are to be directed to the Minister through the Chair, not to the Minister's advisers. The Minister may refer questions to his advisers for a response if he so desires. I also advise that for the purposes of the Committee some freedom will be permitted for television coverage by allowing a short period of filming from the northern gallery of this Chamber.

I declare open the proposed payments and I invite the Minister to make an opening statement if he wishes.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Mr Chairman, I note your comment about the tabling of documents, but I would like to make a short statement about the outputs operating statement. Following the publication of the 1999-2000 portfolio statements, an error was discovered relating to the various output statements for the justice portfolio. Discussion has taken place with officers of the Department of Treasury and Finance relating to the process required to provide Parliament with the appropriate information.

It has been suggested that the correct information should be provided through the parliamentary Estimates process. I think it may also be the position that when the House of Assembly resumes there will have to be a formal tabling of the correct document. A paper has been prepared by Treasury and Finance in relation to this. Whilst the statements accurately report the quantum of justice net expenses relating to the total services provided, the allocation to individual outputs is incorrect. The outputs that are directly affected are: output 2.1—custodial services; output 2.2—community based offender supervision services; output 2.3—offender programs; output 2.4—offender reparation services; output 2.5—emergency prevention services; and output 2.6—emergency incident management services.

Mr Chairman, notwithstanding that you have indicated that I cannot table papers, can I arrange to have these documents circulated and, if appropriate, to have it recorded

that they have been so circulated? They are corrections which do not go to the substance of the final amounts, but I am sure that with the range of questions that members have to ask they will not need to be worried.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: They are all available. It might be helpful for the new members of the Committee if I indicate the special relationship between the courts and the Government. The Courts Administration Authority is not an administrative unit of government. It is not a statutory authority to which I can give directions except in limited circumstances under the Courts Administration Authority Act—and that is in a public environment. The budget process is developed in consultation with, in particular, the Attorney-General's Department because, ultimately, I, as Attorney-General, have to approve the courts' budget, and then, of course, it must be approved by way of the appropriation process at budget time.

The Courts Administration Authority is independent of government. The Chief Justice attends at my invitation and with the concurrence of the Estimates Committee. The practice that I usually adopt is that questions will be addressed to me. I might make a statement and then invite the Chief Justice to respond, if necessary. It has always been a fairly open process, and I do not think that members have had any difficulties with that process in the past.

Mr ATKINSON: You might get two different answers.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: You never get two different answers from me or the Chief Justice. With your concurrence, Mr Chairman, and that of the Committee, we will operate on a fairly flexible basis. I have always chosen not to make opening statements about policy issues; I have left it to members to raise questions, and we deal with policy issues in that context. I do not intend to make any other statement.

Mr ATKINSON: Regarding the timetable, I would appreciate it if the Attorney-General's Department line could remain open until the Opposition has exhausted its questioning, and that may involve impinging on the time for consumer affairs, liquor licensing and equal opportunity. We have done that in the past, I think.

The CHAIRMAN: If the Committee wishes.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I am happy if the Committee is happy. There is no fuss to me if that occurs. Ultimately, they are all part of the justice portfolio so, to that extent, procedurally all the budget statements in relation to justice, including Attorney-General's, are open, but I do not have a problem, subject to your concurrence and that of the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN: It is agreed. Before we start, I did hear a mobile phone earlier. I hope that all mobile phones are turned off.

Mr ATKINSON: What are the cost implications for the Supreme Court of the High Court's Wakim decision that strikes down State-Federal cross vesting of matters? According to the Outputs Statements for the Supreme Court (page 4.14 of the Portfolio Statements), it is estimated that resolutions in the court will fall from 533 this financial year to 502 next financial year at a time when the failure of cross vesting is likely to bring disputes between *de facto* couples, property disputes in family law and many commercial cases back to the State courts.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will deal with that in two parts. I will make some observations about the cross vesting issue from the broader perspective of Government and then invite the Chief Justice to respond. I indicated within the past few

days (I think it was last week) in relation to the High Court decision that I would be introducing to the Parliament, subject to the normal Cabinet approval processes, a Bill to deal with the validation of decisions taken by the Federal Court particularly and to enable current actions to be transferred to the State Supreme Court. There is a draft Bill which I will make available to the Opposition and other members as soon as it has been finalised by Parliamentary Counsel, because it would be desirable to be able to pass it fairly quickly in the remainder of the session after we come back from the Estimates Committees. Incidentally, that Bill will have the support of all the Attorneys-General around Australia.

The longer term solution is something that we have considered at the standing committee level, but we have not reached any concluded view. I note that the Queensland Attorney-General yesterday was promoting a referendum to amend the Constitution, but it was not clear what sort of issues he was going to put to a referendum and, even if they were put to a referendum, whether the people would understand the complexities of cross vesting. That is certainly one of the issues that was raised, but I have not indicated any sympathy for that. But all the longer term issues are currently being considered by Solicitors-General, officers and Attorneys-General. I invite the Chief Justice to respond concerning the ramifications for the State Supreme Court.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: The short answer is that I do not know. We have had contact with the Federal Court and the Family Court. The Federal Court estimated that in South Australia they would be sending about 30 cases to us in the short term. That may seem a low number, but most of those 30 cases are likely to go to trial, so ultimately it would be a fairly significant workload. The Family Court told us they thought it would be only a handful. The difficulty is that I do not think anyone does know. Before the cross vesting legislation, the Federal and Family Courts could deal with State matters if they were sufficiently intertwined with Federal matters. Over the past 10 years, everyone has stopped thinking of matters in that way, and I do not think anyone really knows to what extent matters will be able to stand on the basis that they are sufficiently intertwined and to what extent they will have to come back to us.

So, our present expectation is that we will notice the difference but that it should be manageable; it could turn out worse than that. The short answer again is that we do not really know. We have set up administrative structures with the Federal and Family Courts for handling the matters. In the Supreme Court we have allocated a master who will initially receive all matters, look at them and decide whether they need to stay in the Supreme Court or whether they can be transferred to the District Court or the Magistrates Court. Our Registrar is liaising with the Registrars of the Federal and Family Courts. It is early days.

Mr ATKINSON: Again with regard to the failure of cross vesting, what has the Attorney-General done to seek financial assistance from the Commonwealth to handle the likely transfer of cases from Federal Courts to State Courts; and has he canvassed the Commonwealth on a referendum to amend the Commonwealth Constitution in such a way as to enable the restoration of cross vesting? Perhaps a referendum could be held on the same day as the republic proposal, bearing in mind that the Attorney-General has not once but twice opposed referendum proposals that would have validated cross vesting. He may recall the 1984 proposal for reference of matters from the States to the Commonwealth, which he opposed.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Maybe there is some good use in the computer the honourable member has, in being able to recall that in 1984 I made some statement about a referendum. A lot of water has passed under the bridge in the past 15 years. As I indicated in my answer to the earlier question, the issue of a referendum has been raised at the Standing Committee of Attorneys-General. No-one has really applied their mind to that at this stage. There is some reluctance to go down that path, partly because whilst it is important it is an obscure issue, and one has to question whether you want to spend \$10 million or \$15 million on a referendum and perhaps not even resolve the issue of cross vesting then. But, it is on the agenda of the Standing Committee of Attorneys, along with a number of other issues. The immediate preferred position of most Attorneys, if not all, is to deal with these issues in the State Supreme Courts. However, I do not want to be quoted as saying that any option is ruled out.

Of course, a lot more work is still to be done now that we have the High Court's decision. It is all very well to work in a vacuum with the former 3-3 decision of Gould and Brown, where you could discern some of the arguments for and against cross vesting, but now that we have a definitive decision of the High Court it is important that all our officers pore over the judgment and try to work their way through some of the finer points of it. I do not think a decision will be taken by the Standing Committee of Attorneys in the short term on the preferred method of dealing with the longer term issues that arise out of cross vesting.

The issue of funding from the Commonwealth was put on the table at the Standing Committee of Attorneys when we met only two months ago in Darwin. I think the Commonwealth was reluctant to acknowledge that as an issue, but it is certainly an issue for the States and Territories, and I suspect that all States and Territories will adopt the same approach to it. But, there has been no more formal approach to the Federal Attorney-General about that. I can assure you that there will be, but it is appropriate for us to wait until we see what the volume of work is before we get to that point. The Standing Committee of Attorneys-General will meet in about a month, and I am sure that this will be one of the hot topics on the agenda.

Mr ATKINSON: Now that the Supreme Court is likely to be faced with an increased workload, can the Attorney-General say whether Mr Justice Millhouse will be replaced when in December, alas, he is compelled to retire?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: There have been some discussions with the Chief Justice on that issue. No final decision has been taken. We deal with each vacancy as it arises. The question of whether or not his vacancy should be filled will always be a matter of consultation with the Chief Justice in relation to workloads. The Chief Justice may be able to add something. The honourable member knows that when there is a vacancy I always seek to consult with him and through him with his colleagues about preferred persons but, if we decide not to appoint, he will certainly get the message at a much earlier stage. It is directly related to both the immediate workload issues and the projections of longer term issues of workload, and a lot of work is going into trying to project more accurately what the longer term workloads of the court might be.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: I do not have a firm view. We have been watching our workload closely. The number of lodgements is going down, as the figures show, but the ratio of cases that go to hearing is rising. The amount of work presenting itself to be heard has not diminished greatly

although, over the past two to three years, we have caught up on backlogs and in a number of areas now we are able to offer parties hearings more or less as soon as they are ready. In fact, it is often more the court waiting for the parties rather than the parties waiting for the court.

We must also bear in mind one of the prices of our statutory independence. It is now our responsibility to manage within our budget, so a factor for us is, if we have a certain amount of money, would we be better off, for instance, dropping one judge in the Supreme Court and increasing the number of judges in the District Court? It is fair to say that I am wavering on it. In the past 12 months, because Justice Cox retired at the start of this year, I have been thinking about it steadily and my mind has wavered. About 12 months ago I thought we were in a position where we could reduce the numbers by one. I have become a little more cautious, particularly now with cross vesting. My present thinking is that we will probably need to replace him, but it is not a situation where I am saying to the Attorney-General, 'We must have a replacement.' All I can say is that we would probably want to replace him in light of the cross vesting decision, but we are still thinking about that.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: There is provision in the budget for continuation of that position. When we see the full impact of cross vesting and we monitor the progress of cases through the Supreme Court, both the Chief Justice and I will be talking closer to the date about whether or not the vacancy should be filled.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: We have two other judges retiring in about the next three years, and then we have a gap of about four to five years. In fact, we have three chances to think about it. It is not as if once we let the chance go it is gone for many years.

Mr MEIER: I refer to page 4.11 of the Portfolio Statements, Volume 1, where, under the heading 'Penalty Management', it states:

The integrity of the justice system is contingent on the effective management of penalties imposed whether fines, custodial sentence or community service order. To this end the Government is . . . introducing a new means of processing the collection of fines—this will maximise the collection of these debts at minimal costs.

Can the Attorney-General advise on the work being done under the new fines enforcement system and the success of the penalty management unit call centre in collecting outstanding warrants?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: In a moment I will ask Mr Cossey, the State Courts Administrator, to add to the comments that I will make, particularly in relation to the pilot call centre, which has had some quite good results in respect of old warrants that are outstanding and relatively recently imposed fines. After consultation with its officers a couple of years ago, the Government did decide that we ought to upgrade the enforcement and collection of fines and expiation fees, because we were conscious that there was a very substantial amount outstanding. I believe that the level of fines recovered was at about 51 per cent; and the level of expiation fees recovered was at about 73 per cent. Looking at the experience in other jurisdictions, such as Western Australia, where there was recovery of something in excess of 92 per cent of outstanding fines and expiation fees imposed—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: That's right. There will be an increase, and I will ask Mr Cossey to comment on that. In

addition to that, there has been a significant concern about the number of fine defaulters, particularly Aboriginal fine defaulters, in the criminal justice system. My recollection—and I do not have the figures at my fingertips—is that there are about 34 Aboriginal fine defaulters in prison at any one time. Quite obviously, not only is there a cost to Government and thus the taxpayers but also it is unacceptable that we have such large numbers of fine defaulters in the prison system. We took the policy decision, which was supported by the Parliament on a bipartisan basis, that we should abolish imprisonment as the final sanction for non payment of fines.

If one took that view, there had also to be better ways by which we would be able to collect outstanding fines, for example earlier contact with those who suffered a fine so that, rather than leaving fines until they got to the warrant stage and then having them languishing in someone's in-tray until they had time to enforce them, maybe for two, three or four years, we believed it was important to take a much more proactive approach to enforcement. So, the courts established the Penalty Management Unit and a pilot call centre. That has had some pretty good success in the period in which it has been operating.

But in addition to that, as a result of the legislation which was passed last year, we are gearing up for full implementation. The full implementation will not be on 1 July as the Government and I had hoped: it is now likely to be early October. However, that does not prevent a number of the segments of the fines enforcement program from being put in place. From early July we expect that some of the components of the new system which are not dependent on the legislation—and that will allow a staged implementation—can be implemented from that period.

I refer to payments at post offices. One of the interesting things that our surveys have indicated is that people want to pay fines at post offices. So, we are negotiating that option. There are payments by voluntary direct debit from bank accounts, credit card payments, expanded call centre operations with increased capacity for telephone credit payments, payment reminder calls, and an improved system of tracing warrant defaulters. There are a number of other initiatives all related to that. Ultimately, the sanction will be through Registration and Licensing at the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.

Members of the public who have defaulted on fines and for whom the licence enforcement order is being made will be able to pay their fines at the Registration and Licensing Section of the Department of Transport but, more particularly, there will be stops put on doing business with that licensing section if fines in relation to motor vehicle offences remain unpaid. I will ask Mr Cossey to comment on anything I might have omitted in relation to the broad policy direction but also to comment on the call centre up to the present time.

Mr Cossey: To respond to Mr Atkinson's question about the 60 per cent, that is based on a part year implementation and it is expected in a full year to be significantly higher. The pilot call centre has been operating at Port Adelaide with a manager and four operators since July last year. It has collected in that time \$2.88 million in outstanding fines, of which almost 60 per cent—\$1.7 million—has been for old warrants and the remainder has been for current fines. We have been encouraging members of the public through fairly low key publicity to contact the call centre if they are having difficulty meeting their fine payment or want to negotiate a payment arrangement, and we are at the point where there are almost twice as many incoming calls from people who wish

to discuss how best to make their payment as there are outgoing calls, that is, our following up people who have been defaulting.

From early July we will increase the size of the pilot call centre by another four operators, and that will increase our capacity to follow up the people for whom fines have been outstanding for a longer time. As part of the implementation we are staging it and gradually increasing the presence of the call centre in the community.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: When we talk about old warrants we are talking about those that originally targeted three to seven years old. It is extraordinary that warrants are outstanding for such a period, but some of the more recently outstanding warrants are now being targeted.

Having referred to Aboriginal fine defaulters, we have appointed three Aboriginal justice officers, based at Port Adelaide, whose special responsibility is to deal with Aboriginal fine defaulters.

Mr MEIER: I refer to the Portfolio Statements, volume 1, commencing at page 410 and referring to access to justice, as follows:

Working collaboratively with the mental health disability and justice systems to ensure an appropriate response to the needs of people with mental impairment who come into contact with the justice system.

I understand earlier this year that the Attorney announced funding for a 12 month pilot diversion program to cater for mentally impaired persons. Will the Attorney outline this project to the committee?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It is an exciting project. It complements some of the work we have done as a result of legislation passed dealing with the criminal law and mental impairment. That was supported by all members of the Parliament to more effectively deal with those in the criminal justice system who are mentally impaired. The program will cost \$159 000. It is a 12 month pilot court diversion project and will cater for mentally impaired persons. It has been developed in conjunction with participating magistrates, court officials, police prosecutors, mental health and other relevant services. The initial phase of setting up the program will include the identification of the offence that is suitable for diversion and the development of protocols and procedures to ensure appropriate management, treatment and support options for offenders within the program.

We have two temporary full-time positions: a principal coordinator, and the second appointment is a senior clinical adviser who will be a psychologist. The adviser will assess the suitability of those coming before the Magistrates Court for the program and recommend treatment and support options. That is a unique approach. Defendants identified as being mentally impaired will be either diverted from the formal court process and into treatment or provided with support to assist them during their passage through the courts. It will enable the courts system to deal more appropriately with people suffering from mental impairment, mental illness, intellectual disability, personality disorder, autism and acquired brain injury, to identify a few. It is a positive project and we will evaluate it at the end of the 12 month period.

Mr MEIER: I refer to the capital investment statement at page 21 where reference is made to the funding of the new Christies Beach Magistrates Court. Will the Attorney advise the Committee on this new capital work?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The Christies Beach Magistrates Court has been established since 1965. Anyone who has been there—some of the Opposition members who are members

of the legal profession may have been down there to represent clients—could describe it as a most unsatisfactory conglomeration of buildings which does not provide an adequate environment for anybody—those working there, litigants and others. A project estimated to cost \$5 million is subject to the Public Works Committee approval process, and that committee is meeting on 28 July.

Mr Hanna interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Maybe that is a sign of encouragement for all the other capital works projects we want to get moving. It is scheduled to start towards the end of this year, in November, and to finish in September 2000. We are seeking to construct a totally new court building on the existing site and provide for future expansion, because that area is expanding rapidly and the volume of work to that court is increasing significantly. We want to improve the efficiency of the court operations. The current problem of the registry being in a separate building from the court is of concern. Better security is required for Magistrates Court staff and the public. There are occupational health and safety problems with the existing buildings for everybody who is working there. We will have a separate and fully operational Youth Court to keep young offenders separate from adult offenders.

Mr ATKINSON: Separation of the accused and the alleged victim.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I was coming to that. There will be improved facilities for victims of crime, Correctional Services and Legal Services staff and duty solicitors. The point Mr Atkinson interjected upon is now a standard consideration and feature of all new court buildings. Mr Cossey may want to add something.

Mr Cossey: The only thing to add is that the development of the plans has been done in consultation with the South Australian Police Department, because as part of its Focus 21 initiative there is considerable development of police presence in that area, so the development of this complex has taken that into account.

Mr ATKINSON: The Attorney may have noticed that the New South Wales Chief Justice, Mr Justice Spigelman, has said:

Public criticism of particular sentences for inconsistency or excessive leniency is sometimes justified.

He has issued sentencing guidelines to New South Wales courts. In the case of Christopher Tom Jurisic, who was convicted of dangerous driving occasioning actual bodily harm, the New South Wales Appeal Court said that for dangerous driving causing death three years gaol was an appropriate starting point and that leniency should be shown only in exceptional circumstances. The appeal court said, 'New South Wales trial judges do not appear to have reflected in their sentences the seriousness with which society regards these offences.' Does the Attorney and the Chief Justice have an opinion on the Supreme Court making public its sentencing guidelines in the way New South Wales has done? What do they make of the New South Wales Liberal Party's proposal for grid sentencing whereby Parliament directs trial judges on the range of penalties they can impose and the weighting they must give to an offender's previous record?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will respond to the last question first. Everyone should know that the practicalities of so-called grid sentencing will wreak considerable injustice. It has never been supported by me and the Government, and we have no intention of supporting it because—

Mr ATKINSON: That's an excellent response. I'll fax it to Jeff.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I do not mind if the honourable member faxes it to the Attorney-General of New South Wales. I suspected that he might want to communicate my response to New South Wales, but that does not mean that I will resile from making a statement which I think is appropriate.

Mr ATKINSON: Be brave.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It is not a matter of being brave: it is a matter of telling the honourable member what I believe ought to be the policy direction in South Australia. What New South Wales does is a matter for that State. I differ with Mr Carr on a number of issues, particularly regarding some of the ridiculous propositions which he puts up from time to time on so-called law and order—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: We have already dealt with that issue here in a satisfactory manner. The honourable member and I have already debated that matter extensively, and I am sure we will continue to do so. In terms of grid sentencing, I do not see how the Parliament can set a standard that would cope with all the variables and the variety of behaviours that occur in a particular offence. So, I am concerned about that concept.

In terms of what Chief Justice Spigelman is doing, I must confess that when I read about what he was doing I thought, 'Well, what's new?' Because in South Australia, periodically, the Court of Criminal Appeal sets down benchmarks in what might be regarded as test cases. It is fairly simple and easy to discern what the court sets as a benchmark or standard in South Australia from looking at the judgments. So, I do not think that Justice Spigelman's approach is particularly novel or something which really excites me. Perhaps I am a bit too laid back about that. I will ask the Chief Justice to respond, because he has the ultimate responsibility with his court in determining some of these issues.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: I do not pretend to know a lot about grid sentencing, but from the little I do know about it I would not support it for the reasons the Attorney has indicated. The other part of Mr Atkinson's question was whether we would make public our guidelines. We already do that in a sense because, in the Court of Criminal Appeal, when we deal with sentence appeals, frequently, in respect of an individual case, the court will say, 'For this sort of an offence, usually the following sentence should be imposed—is there a good reason why it was less or more?'

Also, from time to time the Court of Criminal Appeal does something that is close to what Chief Justice Spigelman does: that is, in the context of a particular case it reviews the sentences for a particular offence. In my own time we have done that in relation to what we call street trading offences in respect of drugs. In those cases, we gave guidance to the courts. Within the four to five years before that, the Court of Criminal Appeal reviewed sentences for armed hold-ups. About 10 years ago, the court laid down guidelines for break and enter and, again, during my time, although we did not formally lay down guidelines, we reviewed sentences for unlawful sexual intercourse.

So, the short answer is that in our ordinary judgments you will find indications of what we think the standards should be. From time to time, we publish a judgment in which we, as it were, formally review sentences in an area. What they do in New South Wales is that, without having a particular case before them, they review the situation much more

broadly. I think you will find that there are divided views around Australia on this. Whilst I personally believe that uniformity is very important, I think it is also important that adequate scope be allowed for the discretion of the judge or magistrate who is dealing with the particular case with the people concerned before him.

One of the concerns is that, if courts overdo the guidelines, judges and magistrates will start to feel hemmed in and stop exercising individual discretion and judgment, which I think in most cases is wisely exercised, and, when it is not, there is a court of appeal there to correct it. So, it would not be right to say that what Justice Spigelman is doing is wrong: it is just a further step in terms of generalising which a number of us think is probably not necessary bearing in mind that at any time the DPP can bring an appeal before the Court of Appeal and say, within the context of that appeal, 'I argue that, generally, sentences in this area are inadequate'. If the DPP does that, the court will generally review sentences in that area. So, as I said, the existing system permits something very close to what they do in New South Wales.

Mr ATKINSON: Does the Attorney-General think that it is necessary or desirable to legislate to give the Supreme Court authority to lay down sentencing guidelines in the abstract, that is, without having a particular case before it, and, if that authority were granted, would the Chief Justice be minded to exercise that authority in the way in which Justice Spigelman has in New South Wales?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I have not given any consideration to the policy issue which the honourable member raises. My initial reaction is that I think it might be unwise. One could expect that, for popular political purposes, one might gain some kudos, but I do not think that, in terms of the interests of either victims or offenders, that would be particularly helpful. It may give victims an expectation which, in the circumstances of a particular case, may be unrealistic. We are supportive of victims and endeavour to ensure that they are provided with support during the criminal justice processes and that they are not deluded into believing that, for example, a particular penalty will be imposed when that would not be a realistic assessment. The best interests of victims are served by being realistic and also by putting in place support services.

All I am prepared to indicate is that that is my initial reaction to the honourable member's hypothetical policy question. I will leave it at that and ask the Chief Justice to respond to the hypothetical circumstances raised by the honourable member if Parliament were to so legislate—although in what form that would be I am not quite clear at this stage.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: If we were given the jurisdiction, obviously we would exercise it. In the context of the broader question, we can all learn from experience. If in two or three years it became apparent that benefits were flowing from the New South Wales approach, I anticipate that we might say to the Attorney-General, 'Why not think about it?' My main point at the moment is that I cannot really see what is gained, bearing in mind that the DPP at any time can bring a test case before us and say in the context of that case that things should be reviewed. You might say, 'Well, if you can do that, why not take the step that has been taken in New South Wales?' As the Attorney said, when you generalise it even further you run the risk of raising expectations that will not be met out in the field, as it were. I think we can all learn from experience. Our court like other courts around Australia is watching the New South Wales experience and waiting to

see what happens. That is one of the benefits of Federation: the States can do things differently and learn from each other.

Mr HANNA: I refer to the court workload statistics on page 414 of volume 1 of the Program Estimates. I make the observation that there does not seem to have been much improvement. The level of cases being dealt with within the targeted timeframes still seems to be falling well short. I might have asked this question last year: is it time to reassess the targets or, alternatively, what more will be done to improve resolution within the targeted timeframes? I note from the judges' report most recently presented to Parliament that since 1995 the number of long and complex cases has doubled. Has the Attorney given any thought to reform which might allow some special category of judges or of listing to deal with those cases specifically?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The honourable member did ask a question about it last year. My recollection is that I answered it on the basis that these standards were set well before my time as Attorney-General but also set, as I recollect it, not with any reference to my predecessor, the Hon. Mr Sumner as Attorney-General, and I am of the view that we do need to look at them. My recollection also is that the Chief Justice responded, and I will ask him to follow up on that now.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: I will give rather a similar answer to the answer I gave to Mr Hanna last year, but I do not expect that I can get away with that in a third year. The achievement rate has not altered much. We have improved marginally in the area of criminal cases. That is probably the only area in which we have improved things. As to your question about whether will we review them, in a sense we are constantly reviewing them. It is a very interesting area. You have to ask yourself what you are doing when, for instance, as to the Supreme Court, you state that 100 per cent of cases which go to trial should start within 52 weeks. I suppose you are stating a target. If you state a target that reflects what you are merely doing, I suppose you are saying that what you are doing is good enough. If you set a target that is something you are not achieving now and hope to achieve, I suppose you are saying that you will aim to make the system produce that result.

One of the dangers of too great a fixation on targets is that you can start driving cases in the court because you are anxious about how the figures will look at the end of the year and you are not focusing on what is required for the justice of those cases, and that is a concern I have. However, these targets were set in my predecessor's time. My view is now—and has been for two or three years—that they are unduly optimistic and we will adjust them down, I think probably during the coming year. All around the common law world people are playing with targets, and I have been giving quite a lot of thought to what is a sensible target. It is not as easy as it looks because, if you look at that table you will see, for instance, that in the Supreme Court what we measure is the time taken for cases that actually go to trial. The target is that 100 per cent of cases that actually go to trial should start within 52 weeks. That is the toughest nut in the whole system because that is talking about cases that start before a judge.

When you compare it with the District Court measure (about four down), which is that 90 per cent of all actions should be disposed of within nine months of service, it is counting settlements and discontinuances. When you start to think about targets, it becomes quite hard to decide what our targets should relate to. Should they relate to every case in the system or should they relate only to those that go to trial?

Then you also have to think about what time periods we will use and so forth. You come back to those final questions: will I set a target that reflects what I know we can do; will I set a target a bit above that to encourage everyone to do a bit better; or will I set a really tough target but then run the risk that unconsciously we will start to drive the system not in accordance with the needs of justice but simply to make our figures look good at the end of the year? That is one of the slight concerns I have about the fixation in this area with timeliness standards—what effect will it have on the way people manage the system? That is this year's answer, and I hope that next year we will have come up with some revised standards.

As to long and complex cases, I pulled out some figures the other day because we were starting to think about our annual report. They showed that to this time in the preceding financial year we had had judges sitting on long and complex cases for a total of 164 sitting days. To the same date (17 June in this financial year), we have had judges sitting on long and complex cases for 282 days and, because one of them is still running, my guess is that by 30 June the figure will be about 300 days compared with 164 days. That is proving to be quite a problem area for us.

In our system you do not really get to understand why patterns of litigation change, and I do not think any of us know why these long and complex cases are happening. When I started practice, I remember, I did a 10 day case and that was thought to be a really big case. At the time it was the longest case the District Court had ever heard. Now 10 days is nothing. As I said, we do not know why it is happening but it is proving to be a problem for us.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: In response to Mr Hanna's question to me about long and complex cases, we have tended to monitor the workloads in the court. We have helped to settle some long and complex cases such as some of the State Bank cases, which has taken not only the cases out of the trial list for the next century but also that interlocutory work which is required and which is quite extensive in long and complex cases. We have not looked at any modification to process. We have tended to let the courts manage the process by changing their own procedures, because, ultimately, they are the only ones who can make the decision about whether, in the circumstances, it is fair to cut someone off at this pass or to let something run on. The Chief Justice and I talk on a regular basis about a variety of issues, including the workload in the court.

All I can say in relation to long and complex cases is that, apart from introducing efficiencies such as the greater use of computers for a variety of material in the court, we have nothing further planned at this stage.

Mr HANNA: I have a supplementary question on that very point. As I understood it, His Honour the Chief Justice was suggesting that it would be through him or the Courts Administration Authority structure that targets for case loads would be set. How much influence will the Attorney have on court workload targets?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I am not sure how much influence I will have. The relationship being as good as it is between the Chief Justice and me, and our having talked about it in the past, I have no doubt that we will be discussing those, because I have identified with the Chief Justice my real concern about unrealistic targets which create false perceptions and the need to review them. I do not think there will be any difficulty in he and I coming to some sort of satisfactory resolution of the issue because, ultimately, I am account-

able through the Estimates Committees and the Parliament for what comes out in the papers, and the courts are equally accountable to the Parliament. I ask the Chief Justice whether he would like to add anything.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: It is an interesting question. I would see it as primarily our responsibility to set timeliness and quality measures. I would certainly talk to the Attorney about them, but I would be rather resistant to the idea of Government's setting them for courts, which means that we have to accept responsibility for them and it is our responsibility. To hearken back to the issue of long and complex cases, I do not think they are the Government's problem, in the sense that the courts, the profession and, to some extent, litigants have to sort this out. I do not think we can say to Government, 'You solve it for us.' The same applies to quantity and quality measures. It is really our job to try to come up with something meaningful.

I personally do not regard the quantity measures as particularly meaningful. We state that in the next year we will hear 502 appeals. We will if the appeals are there to be heard but, if we got a run, and it could be as little as, say, 10 long appeals, that could significantly affect the number of cases we were able to hear. We are very much affected by what comes to us and so, to some extent, all you can do is look at what you have done in the existing year and make a bit of a guess about the coming year. In some areas I think the material provided to Parliament is of very limited value. In other areas, particularly timeliness measures, I think we could make it more informative but, going back to that other issue again for a moment, can you adopt a measure?

It would be good to have the same measure for all three courts, but whether it would make any sense in practice to use a timeliness measure for the Supreme Court and the Magistrates Court, bearing in mind the very different nature of their work, I am not at all sure. In the end you may be driven to selecting different measures, but it is our responsibility. In turn, once we have come to that I would be tending to say to the Chief Magistrate and Chief Judge, 'You review yours and I'll review ours', so it would tend to devolve in that way as well.

Mr HANNA: Will the Attorney act on the recommendations made in the judges' report to Parliament? To refresh the Attorney's memory, one matter related to suppression orders being made on the basis of hardship to children or siblings of victims, and another recommendation related to the discrepancy between damages payable in a case of negligence as opposed to damages paid on breach of contract, whereby there can be a reduction for contributory negligence but not where there is a finding of breach of contract. Thirdly, there was a recommendation that there should be legislation enabling a judge to permit members of a jury to separate after they have retired to consider their verdict. I hasten to reassure the Chairman that these matters have budgetary significance to the matters that we are examining, because the judges then went on to invite the Parliament to consider establishing procedures to ensure that, when there is relevant legislative change, consideration is given to the need for additional resources which that would create. Will the Attorney comment on those specific policy matters and state what he will do about establishing those appropriate procedures?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I am pleased to say that yesterday I issued a press release indicating that suppression orders may be made in relation to children, not necessarily children who might be victims but those who might be affected by being

associated with a particular case. That comes into effect on 27 June.

Mr HANNA: You should have sent me your press release, Mr Attorney.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I thought you had good sources.

Mr HANNA: We rely on your goodwill.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: There is always plenty of that, too. The suppression order issue has already been enacted. It went through the Parliament earlier this year, so we have acted upon that. The other two issues are important policy questions which we have not yet examined, but we will do so. I cannot indicate which direction we will take in respect of those. I will ask the Chief Justice to comment.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: I thank Mr Hanna for referring twice now to the judges' report to Parliament; it is the first time I have ever been asked any questions about it. We put quite a bit of effort into it, and over the past two or three years we have tried hard to improve its statistical content. I take this opportunity to say, particularly to members who sit on this Estimates Committee, that if at any time you want to sit down with us and discuss the figures in more detail I will be very happy to do so. It is an important area and I am always interested in comments on it. I am pleased to find that for the first time someone has read our report and that it has provoked some questions.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I do not need to ask questions in relation to the judges' report: I have to respond to them.

Mr McEWEN: I note that there will be a further increase in Residential Tenancy Tribunal hearings. I would be interested to know about the performance appraisal system that is in place in relation to members. What has been your recent experience in terms of performance?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: If the honourable member is a member of the Committee when we deal with consumer affairs, that might be the appropriate time to raise that matter. Will the honourable member be happy if I take that question on notice with a view to responding then?

Mr McEWEN: Be aware that there is other correspondence between my office and yours in relation to the matter. I am not fussed about how or when it is dealt with.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It would not normally fall within the Courts Administration Authority responsibility. I am happy to take that issue on notice and respond during the consumer affairs part of today's proceedings.

Mr McEWEN: I am interested in your novel approach when you are missing a target to expand the size of the target. That is a novel approach to the questions of the member for Mitchell. Should timeliness be a Government policy setting? The community at large deservedly expects that matters will be dealt with in a timely manner. The 52 weeks, or whatever, might be arbitrary, but is it not a Government policy position to deal with these matters in a timely manner?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It certainly is. There is no disagreement between me and the Chief Justice in relation to this. The primary responsibility is that of the courts. We can amend the law which might facilitate the conduct of actions, and we can amend the law which might result in actions taking longer to go through the system. Whatever as a Government and as Attorney-General I might propose may have some impact upon the speed with which matters are resolved but, ultimately, the day-to-day conduct of the court is a matter for the Chief Justice and the courts. The resourcing required to ensure that matters are dealt with expeditiously is a matter for the Courts Administration Authority—the Chief Justice in particular—me, and ultimately the Govern-

ment and the Parliament. I am certainly sensitive to the issue of delays. My normal response to a complaint that might come from a constituent about the delay in getting to a matter is that I cannot direct the courts to do anything about this but that I will refer it to the chief judicial officer in respect of that jurisdiction and see whether that officer is prepared to respond, and most frequently that occurs. A response comes which helps to explain why a matter has taken so long or why there might be difficulties in a case—going not to the merits of the case but to the process.

In respect of the targets, as the Chief Justice said, what are we measuring? When you look carefully at the criteria set down in the output statements and the measures being developed, it is not easy to see that identifying that you have met a particular target, properly defined, will tell you much about the way in which processes have been dealt with. It is a matter of concern for Government to ensure expedition; that, in dealing expeditiously with matters, justice is delivered; and that, ultimately, whatever targets are set by the courts, they not only meet the requirements of the courts but also in my view are publicly acceptable. I do not think there is a difference of view between me and the Chief Justice. The courts have primary responsibility, but I certainly have an interest.

The Hon. the Chief Justice: I agree that there is no difference of view. I take Mr McEwen's point that it may seem a slack way just to expand the target. Part of the answer is that these figures were set in the early days of doing this, and they have been proven to be unduly optimistic. Also, it is not entirely within our control. Our target for criminal cases is 90 per cent, while at the moment our achievement rate is 20 per cent. I do not say this in a critical sense but, if the Government substantially increased the funding to the Office of the DPP and to Legal Aid, I am sure we could lift that percentage. To some extent these things depend upon other bodies and the practices of the private profession.

I have said from time to time that we are a bit like umpires in a game. We influence the standard of the game but, if the players are not playing well, we can blow the whistle as often as we like but it will still be a low standard game. We cannot kick the ball for them. In fact, we are managing the process and we are affected by things such as the resources available to the teams who are competing on the field.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: If one takes that further (and, of course, we will deal with Legal Aid issues during the Attorney-General's part of the budget), even if one were to expand the amount of funds available to Legal Aid and the DPP, there are still issues about the time within which it is required to put a case together. That comes back to the law enforcement agencies and forensic services, the medical profession and others who are all part of the system. If you push the jelly on one side, it will bubble on the other side. It is not an easy matter to say, 'Let us put up more resources.'

Further, the Directors of Public Prosecution and the Directors of Legal Aid around Australia are meeting, and even in this State a small group—particularly my office, the DPP and the Legal Services Commission—is working towards looking at how we can deal more expeditiously with criminal cases. Is there a way in which more evidence can be agreed that is not evidence of a substantive or critical nature? Are there better ways of dealing with the process to enable matters to be dealt with more effectively without compromising the rights of the accused and the delivery of justice? Things are being researched and worked upon, but they are not easy issues to resolve.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the Courts Administration Authority completed. I remind the Committee that the Department of Justice line is continuing.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Mr S. Tully, State Electoral Commissioner.

Mr D. Gully, Deputy Electoral Commissioner.

The CHAIRMAN: We will now deal with the State Electoral Office.

Mr HANNA: In relation to the ongoing process of ensuring that citizens eligible to vote are, in fact, on the roll, what resources will be available in the coming year to carry out doorknocking procedures to ensure that people are appropriately enrolled?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I am delighted to ask the Electoral Commissioner to respond.

Mr Tully: The way in which enrolment activity is encouraged is undergoing some change throughout Australia. The member for Mitchell mentioned the doorknock, which is a traditional mechanism for visiting habitations to check that people living there are correctly enrolled. Throughout Australia, that exercise has cost around \$16 million every two years, and the electoral administrators have realised that 80 per cent of information obtained as a result of that effort is material which is already known. There is a change of focus from habitation-based assessments to tracking people at an early stage when they are moving or have moved. This process is much more about continuous roll update rather than snapshots in time from things such as habitation reviews. As a result of the movement of South Australia to the national database, we are able to explore habitations that are vacant on that database and to follow that up. We are able to check roll integrity by looking at duplicate families or two or more families for the same address and to use the power of the database as a means of checking on its integrity.

Recently, electoral administrators agreed to pay for information from Australia Post in relation to redirection and change of address. That is used very much as a means of following up where that person is going, advising them of enrolment procedures and supplying them with a card. That is done by mail. We are seeing a reorientation towards people on the move rather than on habitations where 80 per cent of the people may stay. Also, initiatives are being discussed with Centrelink, which has over 10 million clients throughout Australia, in relation to change of address material that becomes known to it. Discussions are continuing as to how that material may be used by electoral administrators.

There is a refocus on people on the move rather than on habitations. It was predominantly a doorknock or a spot-in-time effort, but that will now change to try to cover by mail-out every household at least every two years, but focusing mainly on those on the move. We are hopeful that that will further improve roll accuracy.

Mr HANNA: I have a supplementary question. The Electoral Commissioner refers to doorknocking and the fact that 80 per cent of the information obtained is already known by the Commissioner. That implies that 20 per cent of the information is useful. It seems to me from that answer that the critical question is: will these alternative means be as effective in catching the 20 per cent of people in that category?

Mr Tully: The doorknocks certainly will not be eliminated, but they will be far more targeted. In South Australia, it

may be the 12 per cent of developing areas, for example, or known problem areas where there are high rates, such as Norwood and Adelaide, where populations move in and out. I believe that way of doing business, of it being far more focussed than doorknocks, will deliver a better result. Before this major program was embarked upon, a pilot was done in Queensland which had encouraging results.

Mr HANNA: In relation to page 4.17 of Volume 1 of the Program Estimates, in respect of the quantity of output, there is reference to research papers being produced. First, are those research papers self initiated or in some way requested by an outside source? Secondly, does that refer to the usual statistical report on a State election or is that something else that I may not know about? Is it a secret report?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: There is nothing secret with the Electoral Commissioner. In the spirit of openness, I will ask the Commissioner to respond.

Mr Tully: The research papers that will be published some time later this year relate to a number of matters that were looked at as far as the results are concerned. Certainly, they are in addition to the statistical return that the member for Mitchell mentioned. They relate to further work that the office has done on donkey vote analyses and to some new work that we have completed on elector compliance to how-to-vote cards. That work is being completed. We believe that papers such as those will be available in published form later this calendar year.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: They are not initiated by the Government: they really come from the initiative of the Electoral Commissioner, looking at issues in the context of his experience.

Mr Tully: There was a comprehensive, informal vote analysis that has been completed, the details of which will also be published in a paper.

Mr ATKINSON: At page 4.5 of the Portfolio Statements mention is made of a liaison with the Australian Electoral Commission and interstate electoral offices to develop a program for continuous roll updates that will further improve the integrity of the joint roll. Will the Attorney tell us more about this and whether a useful outcome of this might be that the accumulated monthly roll can show from which State a new constituent has come to enrol in a South Australian Federal division or State district?

Mr Tully: Hopefully, I have already provided the answer to the question in terms of the continuous roll update in that I have described our looking at people on the move through Australia Post redirections, and better roll matching and data-mining services that will be conducted on the RMANS database. That is taking place Australia wide. I believe that I have already explained that effort, unless there is some further information I can provide.

Mr ATKINSON: As a supplementary question and by way of explanation, the accumulated monthly roll contains the name and address of a number of people but you have no idea why they are appearing on the electoral roll for that State district. They could have turned 18; they could have come back onto the roll after their enrolment lapsed; or they could have moved from interstate. It seems to me that, if you are liaising with interstate electoral offices, why could you not on the accumulated monthly roll specify, say, 'Moved in from Kew in Victoria' as you say that someone has moved into my State District from Tynte Street, North Adelaide—as you do?

Mr Tully: The information is clearly available when it is a national database. The histories are well maintained on that database. I will look into the matter that has been raised to see

what practical issues are involved in providing such information.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to page 4.10 of the Portfolio Statements, Volume 1. The last dot point under the heading 'Electoral Matters' states:

- enhancing automated processes and applications for the conduct of non-parliamentary elections.

Will the Attorney-General advise the Committee of progress in this area?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Again, I am happy to defer to the Electoral Commissioner, who runs a pretty good operation and is into all sorts of interesting developments in relation to IT. In fact, the Deputy Electoral Commissioner was appointed for a wide range of skills, including his skills in respect of information technology. So, between the two of them there is a pretty formidable team.

Mr Tully: The office has been fortunate to have a wide exposure to working with a number of non-parliamentary clients over the past few years and has been able to improve its services to such clients with the benefit of that experience. It starts at the front end with the electoral rolls used for those particular elections. The officers developed protocols, programs and arrangements in which those rolls, if necessary, can be amalgamated in formats that can be transferred onto inquiry screens. If an elector has any concerns or issues relating to their entitlement, they can be dealt with very swiftly and expeditiously. It has also led to the development of a bar coding operation for postal ballot material so that material is despatched with a bar code on it and when it returns it can, by the use of a scanner, be clearly accepted back in and its *bona fides* checked. Clearly, in the longer term there will be lots of opportunities to provide information to our clients who conduct elections on where particular pockets of non-voting may be for those non-compulsory elections. It is a very efficient means of despatching and receiving returned electoral material.

At the back end we are developing our capacities, following on from the Upper House count in the last State election, for data entry of proportional representation counts. There is an election in which we are involved at the moment for the Nurses Board where we intend to use data entry and the computer to conduct all the calculations for the count. We hope that in the longer term and the not too longer term we will have some success in again exploring scanning equipment so that ballot papers can be scanned in rather than keyed in and then counted. Clearly, that would avoid the double handling of data on ballot papers. To date, the technology has not been available, but we are investing some resources into scanning technology to see whether a ballot paper could be scanned and counted in more or less the same action. Previously, there were some impediments to that occurring, but we do notice, in the elections that we are conducting, that the quality and the cleanliness of the ballot papers in terms of readable numbers is quite good.

We are also keeping a clear eye on telephone voting, Internet voting and developments occurring overseas in that arena, and there may be some opportunities through our non-parliamentary elections to try some of those activities once we are assured that the integrity and security can be maintained.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to page 4.5 of the Portfolio Statements, Volume 1, and the reference under 'Electoral matters' to the opening of an electoral education

centre in August 1998. Will the Attorney-General advise the Committee of the success of this centre?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It is an innovative approach and the creature of both the Australian Electoral Commission and the State Electoral Commission, and it provides an important focus for electoral education in this State. I will shortly ask the Commissioner to add to what I might say if he wishes to do so. I have been informed that since August 1998 in excess of 7 000 persons have visited in groups of approximately 40 people and participated in sessions covering a range of curriculum related topics, and staffing hours have had to be increased which results in an increase in expenditure.

In response to a request from teachers working in the area of civics and citizenship education to have the opportunity to experience professional development sessions, 11 three-hour programs were conducted for more than 100 teachers during the April school holidays. That is an important development also and it is proposed to offer that professional development opportunity in the next school holidays. It is a particularly important initiative. I invite the Commissioner, if he desires, to add to what I have had to say.

Mr Tully: The centre, as the Attorney has said, has been open since 7 August. Its activities are very much guided by an advisory group that consists of State, Federal and local government, Parliament House and Department of Education and Training personnel. They are vital in supporting the formulation of course outlines, the content and a range of support materials. The real strength of the centre is the good spirit of cooperation that exists between both electoral administrations and the participants on that committee.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Moving back to page 4.10 of Portfolio Statements, Volume 1, under the heading 'Electoral matters' reference is made to maintaining and developing the community outreach education program. Will the Attorney outline the program to the Committee?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will invite the Commissioner to respond.

Mr Tully: The management committee of the education centre is acutely aware that it needs to provide services to the wider community and not just to those who are fortunate enough to be able to visit the premises in the AMP building on North Terrace. It has had as an aim within the first year to work on a program that can deliver services to rural South Australians and South Australians who may not be able easily to get to the centre. As a response to that, a special approach was made to a number of community organisations about either having a special session in the centre or having some program delivered to them. Groups such as the Royal South Australian Deaf Society, the Royal Society for the Blind and certain aged care residents, to give a few examples, were given approaches for electoral education services and some have taken up that offer. We are hopeful that we can expand the program much further in the second year so that those services are widely available in some form in areas where people cannot get to the education centre physically.

Mr SNELLING: I refer to the selection of polling clerks in polling booths at election time. I understand that it is left to the discretion of the returning officer who has been employed in a particular State district. Why is it done this way and why is there not a more open selection criterion? I do not begrudge these people their jobs, but most of the people I have come across who have been fortunate enough to be employed as a polling clerk are employed because they personally know the returning officer and generally they also have other work. It seems strange that in times of high

unemployment these jobs, as a general principle of equity in enabling someone—

Mr McEwen interjecting:

Mr SNELLING: It is better than nothing. As a general principle of equity, why are the selection criteria for polling booth workers not more open and why is there not an advertisement in one of the newspapers allowing people to apply for such a position?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will make a couple of general observations and invite the Electoral Commissioner to respond. The issue was raised the year before last when Mr Andy Becker was the Electoral Commissioner. He indicated that more rigorous processes were being put in place to ensure that patronage and nepotism did not play a part in the selection process and I understand that that has occurred. In relation to why the Electoral Commissioner cannot give unemployed persons or others a job, I believe it underestimates the time and effort required to train people for this job. Some continuity is desirable because of the experience gained.

Also, there is no telling when an election will be ordinarily, so whilst anticipating that an election date might be arising the Commissioner nevertheless has to wait ultimately until the public announcement that the writs have been issued. That in itself requires one to gear up quickly. If you have people with some experience it seems logical to try to keep that experience if at all possible. They are the broad general principles. I will ask the Electoral Commissioner to respond in more detail to the suggestion that there might be some inequity in respect of the way in which it is currently managed.

Mr Tully: At the last general State election the office did implement new procedures that made it more available for people to register their interest in working in a polling booth. To pick up what the Attorney just said, work in a polling booth requires public relations and concentration skills and ability to understand the instructions issued for polling officials to work under. Two candidate preferred counts have been introduced, and the complexity of work can easily be underestimated. For that reason, the State Electoral Office recognises the merits of people who have previously proven themselves in a polling booth environment and gives authority to polling booth managers to employ outright people who worked on the last State or Federal election and demonstrated merit in their work.

In the case of vacancies—normally, there is about a 25 or 30 per cent turnover with people not being available to work on an election because of their own arrangements—we instituted a particular arrangement with a provider whereby people who rang the office or who were aware that work was available could register their credentials on a form, and polling booth managers were able to recruit new staff only if they were sourced through the agency. That led to a significant number of people being given the opportunity to work in polling booths—certainly I suggest more than ever previously. We have evaluated that arrangement and consider it successful, and we will look at doing the same thing at the next election.

Mr ATKINSON: The Attorney-General managed to evade this question last year on the spurious excuse of *sub judice*. I refer to the Supreme Court judgment in *King v Electoral Commissioner* delivered on 5 March 1998. On page 2 of that judgment, Mr Justice Prior stated in reference to material issued for an independent candidate in the State District of Davenport:

The second pamphlet was said to be authorised by B. Nicol, of 67 Heather Road, Stirling. Barbara Eva Evans said she authorised the leaflet. Her maiden name was Nicol. Mrs Evans admits that she served on Mr Ian Evans' campaign committee and said that some 9 000 copies of this leaflet were distributed on or about 8 and 9 October through Australia Post. Mrs Evans does not seek to explain why she did not disclose her married name on the leaflet she admits responsibility for, nor does she claim that this was something she has done on other occasions. The Electoral Commissioner has made some inquiries with respect to the complaint about this material. Perhaps some legislative action is needed to control conduct of this kind in future.

I asked the Attorney whether he proposed to accept Mr Justice Prior's invitation to prevent long disused maiden names from being used to authorise electoral material. I pointed out that the legislation already enabled the Commissioner to stop long disused maiden names from being put on the ballot paper for an ulterior purpose.

The Attorney-General said that my question was offensive to married women and my suggestion discriminatory, and he declined to answer on the grounds that the complainant might have wanted to appeal to the High Court. Good one, Attorney! Will the Attorney now answer the question of what he proposes to do to stop one of his factional and Cabinet colleagues blatantly rotting the electoral system by putting up dummy independents to try to cut the minor Party vote, feeding preferences back to him and having the dummy candidate's election material authorised by his mum using a name which she has not used for donkey years?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: If the sessional orders of the House of Assembly were similar to those of the Legislative Council, the statement about rotting the system would have been ruled out of order as objectionable and unparliamentary.

Mr Hanna interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Well, I am entitled to reflect. I have the advantage that I do not have to be here: I am here by the grace of the Legislative Council. So, it is appropriate for me to make reference to the fact that the statement made by the honourable member is offensive and unacceptable. I think it is an unfair reflection upon another member of his own House and on those who are not members of the House of Assembly or the Legislative Council. The Legislative Council would make some arrangements to allow persons who allege that they have been defamed to have that corrected.

I adopt all the statements that I made last year in relation to this particular case. My recollection is that the question was raised at a time when leave to appeal to the High Court had not expired. Regarding my observations about the honourable member's reference to the use of maiden names, I think they still prevail. If you talk to many women who may be married, they prefer to use their former name—and they are entitled to do that. Some might use both names in some circumstances.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: This issue went to court. It was considered. It is not appropriate for me to canvass all the evidence and the rationale for the decision before this or any other committee of the Parliament.

Mr ATKINSON: I was asking you to do something.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The honourable member has asked whether I will take notice of Mr Justice Prior. I always take notice of the judges. I might not necessarily agree with them, and we might not necessarily ultimately take any action. I do not consider that any further amendments have to be made to the law. If the honourable member wants to

make a representation about what he thinks ought to be done, it is up to him to crystallise it. As with many of these things, it is easy to make a statement without having to define what you actually intend to do. I offer an invitation to the honourable member, if he wishes to do something as a result of Mr Justice Prior's statement, to make representations to me.

Mr ATKINSON: Last year, I put to the Attorney-General that the Electoral Commissioner had already ruled in respect of the State District of Coles that a woman who tried to use a long disused maiden name on the ballot paper was unable to do so because the name was put forward for an ulterior purpose. The woman's married name was Lynch, but she wanted to use her Italian maiden name because Coles has a high proportion of Italo-Australian voters.

The Attorney replied (to the Commissioner's evident astonishment) that my recollection of the facts of the case was wrong. Does the Attorney maintain that my recollection of the facts is incorrect and, since the Attorney told the Committee that my suggestion on long disused maiden names adopted for an ulterior purpose was offensive and discriminatory, does he intend to instruct the Electoral Commissioner not to apply the Act in a way which the Attorney deems to be offensive and discriminatory against married women, or does he propose to change the legislation so that any maiden name may be used for any purpose on the ballot paper?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: That instance involved a candidate. It has nothing to do with the court case. There are rules—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It was not rorting the system. The honourable member knows that. He can put this colourful, political description upon it, if he wants—and I am sure he will—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: When you refer to dummy candidates, if you mean people who put up a fictitious name, the law already adequately deals with that. The Electoral Commissioner made a ruling in relation to the candidate. I do not intend to give the Electoral Commissioner any directions, and the honourable member should know from the law that I cannot do that. If he does not know that, I am now informing him that that is the case. I will ask the Electoral Commissioner to respond.

Mr Tully: Regarding candidates, there are clear provisions about what names they are able to use when they nominate. If they are frivolous or obscene or are being assumed for an ulterior purpose, they can be rejected. Clearly, in the case regarding the District of Coles, which has been referred to, the ruling that prevailed at the time was that the name had been assumed for an ulterior purpose and that it was not a name by which the person was known on a regular basis.

In relation to authorisation of material, the current Act does not prescribe the same sorts of restrictions that apply to candidates. Certainly in receiving complaints I take legal advice on such matters and was advised that, in terms of a natural person or a normal person authorising material, they were allowed to use what name they chose so long as it had not been adopted for fraudulent purposes. I interpret the legislation with the benefit of very good legal advice and I think the issues are as I have stated.

Mr ATKINSON: As a supplementary question, does the Attorney still maintain that my recollection of the Lynch case was wrong?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will go back and check the record.

Attorney-General's Department, \$754 000
Administered Items for Attorney-General's Department,
\$44 807 000

Departmental Advisers:

Ms K. Lennon, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Justice, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr K. Penniford, Director, Strategic and Financial Services.

Mr T. Goodes, General Manager of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

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

Mr ATKINSON: What does the Attorney make of Prime Minister John Howard's endorsement during the last Federal election campaign of a zero tolerance criminal justice system?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: That is a good question. The Prime Minister was talking about zero tolerance in relation to drugs, and I have already made some public statements about—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: No, he was talking about zero tolerance in relation to drugs. I have already made some statements about that. There is actually a very good discussion paper that has been promulgated through the Office of Crime Statistics on zero tolerance, and I would commend that to the honourable member.

Mr ATKINSON: I have already read it.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: You have read it?

Mr ATKINSON: Yes.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Isn't that marvellous! There are a range of—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I must confess, it was one of the things for which I did not get the transcript.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: One of the many. I really do not spend much time listening to the honourable member: in fact, I have better things to do with my time.

An honourable member interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: When you are a member of Parliament and a Minister you get paid a set sum no matter how hard you work. We do it for the pleasure rather than for the financial reward that comes out of it. It is inappropriate for me to make a comment about the Prime Minister and his observations on zero tolerance. I have already made some observation—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I say it is. You do not have to agree with me that it is inappropriate.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I am always courageous. I put out a supporting statement in relation to the Office of Crime Statistics' paper on zero tolerance and I have made a number

of statements about it. The honourable member's Party purports to support the underdog and the disadvantaged. From the experience in New York and in other locations where zero tolerance is practised—and that means arresting or reporting those who commit what might be perceived to be minor offences, street type offences—it targets particularly disadvantaged people and indigenous people without necessarily any commensurate benefit to the wider community or even to that person. You only have to look at what is happening in New York at the moment with the anger and reaction to that hardline policing to acknowledge the consequences of what I have been saying.

In this State, and in other parts of Australia, we do have zero tolerance in relation to drink driving where it is sudden death, not just in those terms but figuratively speaking I should say and, unfortunately, in the practical sense. Therefore, if you drink and drive and are caught, then you are prosecuted and dealt with according to the law. That is not the way in which they deal with things such as loitering or drug offences. There are a variety of approaches in South Australia which require an exercise of discretion. The other interesting point to make about the New York experience is that, although the level of crime was going down even before the current mayor adopted a zero tolerance policing initiative, a number of other initiatives were taken, including radically restructuring the police force, focusing upon community policing and locally focused policing and then having crime—

Mr ATKINSON: What were the numbers of police?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I think it was 13 000 police. It is interesting to note that in other major cities—and I think Chicago was one—there have been similar reductions in the incidence of criminal behaviour. Merely importing the New York experience, which was very largely directed towards the cocaine and crack environment and group warfare, is not really a satisfactory solution to policing or crime and safety issues in this State. We could talk at length about zero tolerance policing. The honourable member says he has read the paper published by the Office of Crime Statistics, and I commend him for that. That sets out all the relevant information that we have available at the present time on the experiences in other jurisdictions.

[Sitting suspended from 12.59 to 2 p.m.]

Membership:

Mr De Laine substituted for Mr Atkinson.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Playford has a series of omnibus questions. He will read them out and if the Minister wishes to respond I will call the Committee to order.

Mr SNELLING: In relation to all departments and agencies for which the Attorney has Cabinet responsibility, including the relevant junior ministries, will the Attorney list all consultancies let during the 1998-99 year, indicating to whom the consultancies were awarded, whether tenders or expressions of interest were called for each consultancy and, if not, why not? What were the terms of reference and costs of each consultancy? Which consultants submitted reports during 1998-99? What was the date on which each report was received by the Government and was the report made public? What was the cost for the financial year 1998-99 for all services provided by EDS, including the cost of processing of data, installation and/or maintenance of equipment, including the cost of any new equipment either purchased or

leased through EDS, and all other payments related to the Government's contract to outsource information technology to EDS? During 1998-99 have there been any disputes with EDS concerning the availability, level or timeliness of services provided under the whole of Government contract with EDS and, if so, what were the details and how were they resolved?

Which of your agencies are buying new desk top computers prior to the year 2000; how many; at what cost; what is the manufacturer of the product; and what are the models that are being purchased? What is the hardware and software that is being replaced or identified for replacement due to achieving Y2K compliance and at what cost? Did or will these replacement purchases go to tender? How much did agencies within the Minister's portfolio spend in contracting the services of Internet providers during 1998-99, and which Internet providers were involved? Detail how many FTEs are employed by agency in 1998-99 for information technology services, and detail the figures for 1995-96, 1996-97 and 1997-98.

What are the names and titles of all executives with salary and benefit packages exceeding an annual value of \$100 000? Which executives have contracts which entitle them to bonus payments and what are the details of all bonuses paid in 1998-99? What are the names and titles of staff who have been issued or have access to Government credit cards? For what purpose was each of these cards issued, and what was the expenditure on each card for 1998-99? What are the names and titles of all officers who have been issued with Government owned mobile phones? What arrangements apply for the payment of mobile telephone accounts and what restrictions apply to the use of Government mobile phones for private purposes? What was the total number and cost of separation packages finalised in 1998-99? What is the target number of staff separations in the 1999-2000 budget? How many TVSPs have been approved by the Commissioner for Public Employment for 1998-99, and what classifications of employee have been approved for TVSPs in 1999-2000?

How many vehicles by classification were hired in 1998-99 and what was the cost of vehicle hire and maintenance in that year? List all employees with use of privately plated cars in 1998-99 and outline what conditions are attached to the use of the car by the employee. Did any of the Minister's agencies rent vacant and unused office space during 1998-99 and, if so, what was the cost of rent or lease of this unused office space to the taxpayer? Are there any Government owned premises within the Minister's portfolio that are currently unoccupied? What is the cost of holding these properties and where are they located? Will the Minister detail all executive and staff development exercises undertaken by the Minister's agencies during 1998-99? Will the Minister list all occasions during 1998-99 on which executive staff of the agencies under his portfolio entertained guests at taxpayer expense, all those present at the occasion, the purpose of the occasion and the cost to the taxpayer?

How many staff originally from within the Minister's portfolios were on the redeployment list in 1998-99, for how long have they been on redeployment and what are their classifications? How many public help lines did the Minister's agencies operate during 1998-99, which were located in South Australia and which were operated from interstate? Will the Minister provide information about the issues that each help line was intended to provide, and what was the cost to the taxpayer of operating each help line? What are the names of the public servants in your portfolio and

which, if any, of your ministerial staff currently serve as Government representatives on boards of management or other bodies? What is the category of the board in question, what is the remuneration paid to these individuals for service on each board, and at what level of classification are these employees?

Detail all interstate and overseas travel undertaken during 1998-99 by members of Government boards, their destination, purpose, cost and all individuals who travelled. Detail all advertising and promotional activities and campaigns undertaken by all agencies within your portfolio for 1998-99; what issues were the concerns of these activities; of what did these activities consist; how much did they cost; and what activities are planned for 1999-2000? Detail all local, interstate and overseas conferences attended during 1999-2000 by the Minister, his staff and public servants within his portfolio, including the cost, location and purpose of the conference. Provide the name of any former member of State or Federal Parliament within the Minister's portfolio currently serving as a board member, member of the Minister's staff or as a public servant; and detail their duties and remuneration.

Have any agencies within your portfolio 're-badged' or otherwise made presentational changes during 1998-99, through changes in letterheads or other stationery, signage etc.? What was the reason for the change and what was its cost? Has there been any refurbishment of your ministerial office or any of your CEOs' during 1998-99? What was the reason for the refurbishment and what was the cost? Since the 1997 State election, have any of your ministerial staff taken up permanent employment in the South Australian public sector? Name the individuals concerned and indicate the vacancy for which they applied. Were these positions advertised and, if so, when and where? Name all your ministerial staff and their classification and remuneration. Name all staff attached to junior Ministers and their classification and remuneration and advise whether the junior Ministers have ministerial cars with drivers, cars without drivers or access to ministerial cars or drivers, and on what basis. During 1998-99 what Government land or other real estate has been disposed of; where were these properties located; did the sale involve a tender process; for how much was each property sold; who purchased the property; and who acted as the agent and/or legal adviser to the sale?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I am busily trying to calculate in my head what the total cost of providing all the information will be. A lot of it is available and we will take the questions on notice, but some obscure information might take a lot of time, effort and cost to put together. We will look at that in the context of the questions asked. The member is entitled to ask, and we will look at it.

Mr MEIER: I refer to the Portfolio Statements, Volume 1, page 4.9. Under the heading 'Crime Prevention', the first dot point refers to the prevention of domestic violence. Can the Attorney-General outline the initiatives in his portfolio to prevent domestic violence—if that great objective is achievable?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The prevention of domestic violence is a key objective of the Government. Certainly, a number of programs across Government deal with support for victims of domestic violence. For those who end up in the criminal justice system, the Victim Support Service, among others, provides invaluable support to victims of domestic violence. Incidentally, last financial year we funded the Victim Support Service to an extent of about \$375 000, I

think, and there will be an ongoing contribution by the State to the Victim Support Service, but its responsibility is not limited to just domestic violence support.

A couple of years ago we established the Ministerial Forum for the Prevention of Domestic Violence, which comprises five Ministers and five members from the non-government sector. The objective was to try to pull together both Government and non-government initiatives in relation to domestic violence, with special emphasis on prevention on the basis that you can deal with the outcome of domestic violence—and it is important that we do. In the longer term, it is of much greater likely significance that we have strategies to prevent domestic violence rather than merely accepting that it will occur. In the Government's view, any acceptance of domestic violence is not an appropriate response.

The ministerial forum has endorsed the development of a strategic approach for the State in relation to the prevention of domestic violence. An important seminar was held in March this year which the ministerial council sponsored. That brought together a range of people from Government and non-government organisations and people who were not necessarily aligned with either of those two groups to discuss ways to prevent domestic violence and also to contribute to the draft of a State strategic approach.

Funding has been provided to a Relationships Violence—No Way program which enables the development of a peer education model in schools in the inner southern metropolitan area. To be fair, it was jointly funded by the Department of Human Services and the Office for the Status of Women. The ministerial forum has responsibility for overseeing the five South Australian projects funded under the Partnerships against Domestic Violence program, which is a Commonwealth initiative. We also have a range of local crime prevention committees, many of them with a focus upon domestic violence prevention in their local communities. We recently announced a Preventing Repeat Victimisation of Domestic Violence project, which will commence in the next financial year and which involves a partnership with South Australia Police. It looks at the levels of intervention with victims and perpetrators and will involve significant training of police who attend domestic violence incidents and training them to identify what the response should be, according to the level of seriousness of the incident. That is based on a project in Leeds in the United Kingdom.

We have amended the Domestic Violence Act and those amendments, which deal with restraining orders, will provide an important addition to the protection for victims of domestic violence; but, of course, that is at the other end of the spectrum and deals with the outcomes of domestic violence. In other areas of Government there are a range of programs directed towards either support for victims or prevention; trying to deal with young males and their attitude towards other people, particularly violent attitudes; and working through sporting organisations where there is a great deal of support for less violent relationships between players, supporters and other spectators. There are many innovative ways in which we are trying to deal with that problem.

Mr MEIER: My next question relates to the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council. On page 4.4 of the Portfolio Statements, under the heading 'Crime Prevention', it states:

Gained national anti-crime strategy agreement to the establishment and joint funding of the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council.

We all have been touched, either directly or indirectly, by motor vehicle theft. I know my colleague sitting next to me had his vehicle stolen recently with \$10 000 plus damage; a gentleman, who is a working on a property for me at present, had his car stolen over the weekend and untold damage was done; a close member of my family has had his car broken into three times in the past year with attempted theft on two occasions; and a constituent of mine had his car stolen recently with a master key—thieves apparently now have master keys so they do not have to use wire any more.

I guess motor vehicle theft is the biggest obstacle facing our society and no-one, even if you have the latest model vehicle, can rest easy when parking their car without the knowledge that the car may be stolen or, at least, broken into. If the thieves do not have a master key, they will at least break the window and have a go that way. Can the Attorney-General outline South Australia's role in establishing the council and the work which it will be undertaking?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: We have had a Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Task Force in this State for several years. That was responsible for a number of programs, all directed towards preventing motor vehicle theft. It languished a little over the past year or so, but it has now been revitalised. We now have a new chairman and a part-time executive officer. That is now likely to be a much more significant influence, as it used to be, in dealing with motor vehicle theft strategies in this State.

The national council was established because all the Premiers and Chief Ministers were concerned that there was no coordination between the States and Territories across the board in relation to strategies to combat motor vehicle theft. Certainly, there was communication between police agencies and vehicle registering authorities, but there was nothing which brought together all the key players. Over a period, we moved towards the development of a National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council which arose out of a study which was undertaken several years ago into what could be done with motor vehicle theft issues.

We reached an agreement with the Insurance Council of Australia that it would put in about \$4.6 million over five years. All the States and Territories are contributing an equivalent amount among them over the next five years. Leon Daphne, Chief Executive of Nissan Australia, is chairing this council, with membership drawn from a variety of organisations including the police, the Insurance Council of Australia, the federated association of automobile agencies (the RAA and NRMA groups) and other organisations. Only yesterday I indicated that there is a benefit to South Australia, because our comprehensive auto research system is unique in Australia—and probably in the world, from all the information we can gather—and is now going national under the auspices of the National Motor Vehicle Theft Reduction Council.

Importantly, for the first time ever it will bring together from right around Australia all the material that presently is inputted into the South Australian database, be it from police, motor vehicle registering authorities, insurers or repairers. It will track some offenders, so you will get an offender profile. For the first time around Australia we will have not only a proper basis for comparison between jurisdictions but also proper research upon which to base some strategies for dealing with motor vehicle theft. In the current financial year South Australia is actually putting in \$46 858; in 1999-2000, \$75 119; and in 2001 and subsequent years, \$97 875. The focus of the national council will be national information

exchange, component identification, vehicle design, legislation and investigation, data research and evaluation.

In relation to the honourable member's point about master keys, this council will among other things look at ways by which modern motor vehicle standards can be improved to enhance prevention against motor vehicle theft. Whilst we do make our vehicles safer, we cannot do anything about human behaviour. Thirty per cent of motor vehicles of which we know the means of access and which have ultimately been stolen have keys in them or unlocked doors. If people took a little bit more care, they might be able to prevent a reasonable number of those motor vehicle thefts. About 25 per cent of motor vehicles are stolen from the driveway or the street outside the home. That sort of information is relevant in determining how we can try to better educate people. It will give insurance companies a basis for building in some incentives for insurance and, hopefully, it will provide some basis for other strategies that will identify those who might be the offenders and where we can take some steps right at the outset to prevent them from becoming involved in motor vehicle theft in the first place. That holds the best outcomes for us in the future.

Mr MEIER: By way of a supplementary comment, I point out that a constituent of mine said that his keys worked in several of his mates' vehicles of the same type—and *vice versa*. I do believe that it is time we overcame that sort of very easy access to motor vehicles. That is in addition to the master key—and I will not mention that make.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: That is one of the issues that this national council, particularly in conjunction with manufacturers, will have to address. The interesting statistics are that the majority of motor vehicles which are stolen are 1970s and 1980s vehicles, and the more recent vehicles feature very low down the scale. Of course, there are professional motor vehicle thieves who target the more modern vehicles and for whom it is a law enforcement initiative on which you have to place emphasis. But with the opportunistic motor vehicle theft, where someone sees a car with keys in it and decides to take it for a joy-ride, it may be that strategies can be developed to deal with that much more effectively in terms of prevention than at the other end of the scale.

Mr MEIER: My third question relates to page 4.4, 'Crime Prevention'. One of the highlights states:

- Began two key national projects 'Reducing Repeat Victimisation in Domestic Break and Enter' . . .

I understand that the project involves active intervention in the Tea Tree Gully and Norwood areas. Will the Attorney outline this initiative and the benefits to the community?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: One of the concerns, among many, that we have about break and enter is the fact that from overseas information those who are victims of a break and enter are more likely to be the victims of another break and enter than others who might be likely to be the victims in the first instance. So, repeat victimisation is a key issue for us in terms of reducing the incidence of break and enter. In conjunction with Commonwealth national crime prevention, there is a project being run in this State as well as in Queensland which is based on current international and national research and which is designed to establish a body of support within the local community for those who might be victims of break and enter offences. That body of support will come from volunteers.

There are about 45 volunteers who have been trained in the Norwood-Kensington and Tea Tree Gully areas. When

police attend a break and enter they will ask the occupier, 'Do you want someone to come and talk to you about both the circumstances in which it occurred and what you can do to prevent it occurring in the future?' So far, about 300 interventions have taken place since this trial project started. Seventy-five per cent of those who were victims said, 'Yes, we would like someone to come.' So, these trained volunteers get there within 48 hours. They will give advice on and do a security audit, take some information to give us a better understanding of break and enter and what can be done to prevent it in the future, and then report at the end of the 12 month period, when the project will be evaluated. There may be some emphasis on property marking, perhaps referral to a victim counsellor, or there might be advice to neighbours to keep a watch out for break-ins and then establish neighbourhood support. They call it 'Cocoon Neighbourhood Watch' where the neighbours are all informed about the break and enter and provide support to the victim. So, there is a good community support basis.

Some of the interesting information so far is that many people have deadlocks but do not use them. They go down the street for 15 minutes but do not bother to use the deadlock; they have a bathroom or toilet window that might slide but more particularly with a small window they think, 'No-one can ever get through there' so they do not bother to lock it; or they have a sliding window which they do not take any precautions to deadlock but which can be lifted up out of the frame. There are a lot of things that people can do to harden their property as a target and a lot of things that can be done to support victims. At the end of the 12 month period, this project will be evaluated.

It is interesting that a number of our other crime prevention areas are picking up this issue now even though it has not been evaluated and are setting up similar residential break and enter projects in their local communities. It will be interesting to see what the evaluation brings out in terms of the extent to which it has reduced the prospect of repeat victimisation and the extent to which it is providing support and encouragement to local communities.

Mr HANNA: Page 4.6 refers to the review of community legal centres. Which community legal centres does the Attorney intend to close or amalgamate in the coming year?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: We have had the review of community legal centres under the responsibility of both the Federal Attorney-General and me. The report was available and an implementation group was then established. The implementation group sought feedback from those with a particular interest in this, including legal centres. There has been further consultation in consequence of which we now have to make some decisions, although community legal centres knowing what is involved in the recommendations are already talking about amalgamating with others. We are still waiting for the Commonwealth Attorney-General to formally respond to all the recommendations. Once they have responded there will be a more intensive period of involvement with local community legal centres.

The whole object of this was to get six outcomes from the process, namely: equitable distribution of resources, which improves access to those most in need; greater consistency in the range and type of services offered; efficiency, effectiveness and quality of services to be improved; strategies to be developed to enhance volunteer support in the community legal centres; enhanced management of community legal centres; and access to community legal services for country people to be improved, recognising that there is very little, if

any, support to country people through the community legal centre network.

It is premature for me to be saying which centres may be amalgamated and which ones might be established or altered in their structure. We have tried to keep an open line of communication to community legal centres on the basis that those six outcomes we wanted are outcomes in the interests of community legal centres. We will be providing some funding to assist any restructuring, but ultimately I want to see that the community legal centre environment is strong and that those who work in it are not underprivileged and cut off from the mainstream of legal/administrative support. I want to see the administrative support for community legal centres significantly enhanced.

The original report identified that there was a duplication of services in some areas but also identified in some areas where there are community legal centres that the need was by no means as great as in other areas. It also identified, as I recollect, that there was inadequate communication between the various legal centres so that standards of services were different. From my viewpoint I am only in the business of improving services and not in the business of depriving people of service. I want to provide a more effective service and ensure that the people who work in those centres—whether lawyers, lay persons, volunteers or paid staff, whether on the board of governance or whatever—are properly trained and have good support, because training and development is another integral part of what we are seeking to do.

I am not prepared to go any further than that. The honourable member can try if he wishes, but the better way of dealing with it so far as the legal centres are concerned is to identify that we have standards we want to set for them and to assist them to achieve.

Mr HANNA: About six months ago I wrote to the Attorney's department regarding the Welfare Rights Centre and on 4 February 1999 I received a reply addressed to Mr or Ms Hanna by the Project Manager, Jan Kitcher, thanking me for my letter expressing concerns regarding recommendations made in the implementation advisory group's report 'A Fabric for the Future' in relation to the Welfare Rights Centre. The letter briefly notes that during the period designated for community feedback all comments would be forwarded to Lou Denley and to the State and Commonwealth Attorneys-General for consideration. What did the Attorney consider in relation to my submission and others' submissions in relation to the future of the Welfare Rights Centre?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I am sorry the honourable member was not responded to directly by me. I have made a practice that in whatever context members write to me they will get a response signed by me. Initially there may be an acknowledgment from someone other than me. However, if the letter was addressed to me, I apologise for the reply not having been signed by me. In terms of the letter, I am unable to give an off the cuff response, but I will take the matter on notice and give a considered reply.

Mr HANNA: I am not so concerned about the form of the letter at all. The issue is what action the Attorney will take in response to the 'A Fabric for the Future' report regarding the Welfare Rights Centre.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: That is funded solely by the Commonwealth. I have not yet received a formal response from the Commonwealth Attorney-General in relation to it, and I would prefer to reserve my position until I have had an

opportunity to consider the submission and, more particularly, until we get a response from the Commonwealth. I know there are recommendations about the way in which the welfare rights responsibilities might be appropriately dealt with, but because it is funded only by the Commonwealth it is not appropriate for me to say that this is what we will do, that is what the Commonwealth will not do, or whatever.

Mr HANNA: It is a slow process.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It is a slow process and I am conscious that community legal centres, having been involved quite extensively in discussions, must be anxious about it. I certainly want to push it on. I will take on notice what the time frame might be: it may be possible to get back to part of the formal response to indicate when something may be happening. The other thing that must be noted is that this review was the first review of community legal centres in 15 years and, whilst it may be unsettling for those involved in community legal centres not to know what their future holds, on the other hand it is important that we try to get it right and do so by sharing responsibility between the Commonwealth and the State. I will take the rest of those issues on notice and, if it is possible to give an enhanced response, I will do so.

Mr HANNA: While I appreciate the support that both the previous Government and the current regime have given to the Victim Support Service in its current form and in its previous incarnation under a different name, the case load has drastically increased lately and with the 12 or so murders recently, when one multiplies the family and friends and so on of the deceased one can imagine that for a considerable period after the discovery of those murders there will be a significant increase in the load placed on the Victim Support Service. Combined with that extra demand, I understand that some of the personnel hours of the Victim Support Service are being funded through additional money provided by the Attorney to enable them to move into their current Halifax Street premises. Obviously, the provision of that money is finite and about to come to an end. Under all those circumstances, what are the prospects of increasing funding over the next 12 months?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: There are reasonable prospects, but it is premature to identify how much. After the Victim Support Service's budget submission was received, I indicated to Mr Dawson, the Chief Executive, that the budget for the coming financial year will be finalised by the end of August. Mr Dawson is aware of that. We have already made available about \$10 500 to fund some short-term needs. I met with the council of the Victim Support Service a few weeks ago, and I am fully aware of the pressures it is working under. Obviously, I want to provide as much support as possible. I am very conscious of the need.

I am not aware of what the consequences of the recent homicides may be. I do not think that that is really the issue in relation to workload because, notwithstanding those homicides, the workload has been increasing. It may be that some additional work will arise—I would be surprised if it did not—but I do not know enough about the circumstances and, in any event, I am not prepared to make any comment about the circumstances of those homicides other than to give an appropriate response about the support that might be needed for the families of the victims.

I give the Committee an assurance that my office and I are in reasonably close contact with Mr Dawson and, when necessary, the council. Mr Dawson sits on my Ministerial Advisory Committee on Victims of Crime, which has recently been established. In any event, there is a review in

relation to victims of crime which, hopefully, will result in a much better provision of support for victims as well as better services.

Mr SNELLING: On page 4.4 of the Portfolio Statements (Vol. 1), assessment of graffiti prevention initiatives is mentioned as a highlight of the financial year in crime prevention. Will the Attorney explain why people who are accused of committing a graffiti offence are being charged with just general property damage rather than a specific graffiti offence which is provided for, thereby obscuring the incidence of graffiti vandalism in South Australia?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will have to take that question on notice in some respects. The specific offence relating to graffiti has much more serious penalties attached to it than the general property damage offence. I do not have at my fingertips the police charging practices in relation to that, but I will obtain some information.

There have been some substantial and significant developments in relation to dealing with graffiti. We have a voluntary code of practice which has generally been regarded as a good code of practice for those who supply spray cans, for example, but it is evident that some retailers either do not know about the code of practice or, if they do, they are not administering it as effectively as they otherwise could. So, we will take steps to ensure that the framework within which materials can be properly stored is much better understood.

The most significant developments are occurring at local government level, in some instances with the support of local government. A number of local government bodies now have their own innovative anti-graffiti programs. They all have a different approach, but they learn from each other. For example, Campbelltown Council proudly states that with good volunteer support and a dedicated council team it has eliminated graffiti in its area. I think Marion Council and Onkaparinga Council have an extensive program, as do other councils around the State, and local crime prevention committees (where funded) are also spending time and effort on graffiti prevention. So, there is not by any means doom and gloom in relation to graffiti: a lot of innovative work is being done. TransAdelaide, with its significant emphasis in schools on proper regard for other people's property, is playing an important part in the reduction of graffiti.

Mr SNELLING: Has the Police Complaints Authority employed an Aboriginal person in accordance with recommendation 226h of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody and, if not, why not?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I probably should know the answer to that question, but I will take it on notice and ensure that a reply is provided.

Mr SNELLING: My final question probably cuts across both the Attorney-General's portfolio and the portfolio of the Minister for Human Services. What steps will the Government take in the light of *Pearce v SA Health Commission and Others* to protect the integrity of section 13 subsections (3)(b)(1) and (4) of the Reproductive Technology Act? I am not sure whether the Attorney is familiar with the *Pearce* case, but the Supreme Court found that sections of the Reproductive Technology Act, which restrict access to reproductive technology to married couples and couples in *de facto* relationships of five years or more, contravene the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will take that question on notice. I am familiar with the broad outline of the case. This is a complex area. If I take the question on notice, I can ensure that a proper answer is given.

Mr HANNA: If the Committee agrees, before we leave this line, I will read in some miscellaneous questions which, obviously, we have not had time to ask. That will take another five minutes.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a decision of the Committee. The Minister intimates that he has no problems.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: If the member does not do it now, he will put them on notice, anyway, will he not?

Mr HANNA: That is true.

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member has permission to read them.

Mr HANNA: Thank you, Mr Chairman. First, has any cost projection been done in relation to the concept of a native title claim being facilitated for the entire State of South Australia and, if so, would that be cost beneficial as opposed to the State's becoming involved in a multiplicity of claims over the different parts of South Australia?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will answer that question now because native title is dear to my heart. A number of claims have been consolidated under the Commonwealth's amendments and that makes life a bit easier for everyone—native title claimants, Government, pastoralists and miners. However, ultimately, our assessment is that, as I think I have said before, if each of these claims goes to court, the cost for the State alone will be at least \$5 million—in each case. To that you have to add the cost of the claimants and anyone else who has an interest. We have always said that the most productive and effective method of dealing with native title claims is to have an agreement, either one which covers the State where you have the potential for a number of sub-agreements or agreements dealing with particular areas of the State.

Through the Crown Solicitor's office, and involving the Solicitor-General also, we have been able to put out a draft agreement. Now that the Commonwealth Act amendments have been enacted, the indigenous land use agreements provision, in our view, is still the most productive way to get an outcome, but that may take some time. What we want to try to do, at least for the interim period, is to get appropriate amendments to our legislation sorted out so that we can have a framework in place for resolving issues relating to the right to negotiate but, in the longer term, look to try to resolve all these claims by agreements in one form or another covering the whole or part of the State, as the case may be. That is the emphasis of this State Government. We think that it is important to get our legislative base right but, in the longer term, provided there is a measure of goodwill—and there seems to be between claimants, miners, pastoralists and Government—then, although it will be difficult, certainly not easy, to get resolution of a variety of issues, at least we will have a good chance of getting somewhere which will be more productive and save everyone a whole heap of money.

Mr HANNA: Secondly, is there any prospect of the State swapping land with the Commonwealth Government in order to facilitate a Federal Court building being built in Adelaide?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: That has been agreed in principle. The Commonwealth budget does contain provisions for the Federal Court building. We have indicated that we are prepared to swap the land on the corner of Wright Street and King William Street back to the State, because it is presently Commonwealth owned, for a property in Victoria Square—the police building site and the Housing Trust site. There is some work to be done with the Commonwealth in negotiating that but the principle has been established. There is about \$7.5 million in the Commonwealth budget for the current

financial year for project development costs. It is intended that the building will be completed, as I understand it, by the end of 2002, early 2003.

Mr HANNA: On page 4.13 there is a budget line for legal services to the State. What proportion of legal services provided to the State is provided by the Crown Solicitor's office or internally across Government departments as opposed to the private sector? What proportion is provided from law firms based in South Australia as opposed to based nationally, or, in the case of firms based across States, lawyers based in Adelaide as opposed to lawyers based in Melbourne or Sydney? What proportion of those services is provided by Australian firms as opposed to legal services from overseas?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I take that question on notice because I do not think it will be readily available. A survey was undertaken about three or four years ago from which we did get a snapshot of what legal services were being provided across Government. We set up some structures which enabled firms with legal managers to go ahead and act within a certain framework to get legal advice and those without legal managers to buy services from groups on a panel. Then, of course, you have all the outsourcing issues. The general principle in relation to those is that, wherever possible, the Government requires that work to be done by local lawyers. Some work has had to be done by firms from interstate because they have different expertise.

I will ensure that a more considered response is provided, but I can tell the member that the Crown Solicitor, as a matter of Cabinet decision, is required to be involved in every outsourcing project, if only to sign off—but that requires necessarily being involved to get an understanding of what has to be signed off—and is doing a substantial amount of work across the whole spectrum of Government.

Mr HANNA: I am concerned that victim support service volunteers are not sufficiently the subject of referral by Courts Administration staff and possibly police officers (if relevant) and I would ask that the Attorney ensure that this valuable resource is being employed as fully as possible.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I take that on notice.

Mr HANNA: Secondly, which issues has the Solicitor-General raised in the past 12 months that might have budgetary implications, and I refer to matters that the Solicitor-General has initiated himself rather than responding to a request of the Attorney or the Government?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: A rather facetious response would be that he has asked for a new computer. I do not want to be facetious about this. I will have to take that on notice.

Mr HANNA: Finally, what performance measures are in place for the response time of the Public Trustee in winding up estates? I am not sure which budget line that comes under, but I presume it comes under the Attorney's budget. What are the outcomes of those performance ratings, whatever they might be?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Technically, Public Trustee is generally not a budget item, but I am happy to take the question on notice.

Mr HANNA: Who can ensure that the Public Trustee is acting in a timely manner in relation to estates?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Business cases are approved by the Treasurer. My recollection is that business case and performance standards are published in the Public Trustee's annual report, which is tabled in the Parliament. My recollection also is that performance against those performance indicators is reported in an annual report in respect of the

preceding year. It is operating essentially as an independent statutory body; even though it is technically accountable, it is not part of the budget funding. If I am able to, I will get some information on the performance measures for the honourable member.

Mr HANNA: Anything that is not in the annual report I would appreciate.

Membership:

Mr Atkinson substituted for Mr De Laine.

Mr ATKINSON: What is the process within a Minister's offices for releasing information under the Freedom of Information Act?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: My recollection is that that is generally managed through the FOI officer for the department; I am not sure. If the honourable member has something specific to which he wishes to draw my attention I invite him to do so. If it is hypothetical it may be a bit difficult; all I can do is refer him to the Act. If he would like me to be more helpful and could give me some illustration, I would be happy to try deal with that.

Mr ATKINSON: In what circumstances would a Minister's office vet releases from departments for which the Minister is responsible under FOI?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will have to take that on notice, because I have no idea what the practice is in other Ministers' offices.

Mr ATKINSON: Let's deal with yours, then.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The Crown Solicitor will invariably deal with issues that might arise under freedom of information where the department believes an issue requires legal advice. In my own area, I would certainly be involved if it concerned an issue upon which I may have some documents. Will the honourable member give us something more concrete to get our teeth into?

Mr ATKINSON: Would it be appropriate for a member of your staff to circulate a memo saying that all FOI applications must come to him or her?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I think I now know where you are leading, and I will not make any observation about the appropriateness or otherwise of that.

Mr HANNA: It just happens?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It happens in my area; the Crown Solicitor will give advice on freedom of information issues.

Mr ATKINSON: Do you insist on them all coming to your office before the applicant is responded to?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I do not, but there is no reason why Ministers should not, as far as I am aware. If that is the issue, let me take the question on notice. Legally, my understanding is that there is nothing to stop that being done; there is nothing improper in it. Let us face it: ultimately Ministers are accountable for everything that happens within the agency. We have moved away from the old system where you fall on your sword when someone way down the line has fouled something up. I think we moved away from that in the days of the Labor Administration.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: No; I have not inaugurated any. It depends on which way you think about applying them. I do not think there is anything unlawful or improper about a Minister's knowing what applications are being made.

Mr ATKINSON: What about someone else's portfolio? Would it be appropriate for freedom of information applica-

tions made in respect of your agencies to be vetted by a staffer in another Minister's office?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: We will take that question on notice.

Mr ATKINSON: When will the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act be amended in line with the Opposition's suggestion of two years ago to bar claims on the fund by people who are injured by fellow criminals while carrying out a criminal enterprise?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: My recollection is that it was my idea and that the Opposition said, 'If you put it up we'll agree with it.' There is currently—

Mr ATKINSON: We've got another one coming up.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Thanks for the warning. A review of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act is currently being undertaken. I did not think it was appropriate to bring to the Parliament any amendments to the Act. I think a number of other amendments ought to be made as well.

Mr ATKINSON: You would support a private member's Bill on the issue?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: No. The honourable member can make his political point if he wants to, but he knows in his heart that, if you do it with proper consultation with all those likely to be affected and in the context of a proper review of the Act, you will end up with a better outcome. I give an assurance that there will be a Bill, which you can try to amend if you do not like it, dealing with criminal injuries compensation. It will not be in the remaining stages of the budget, but hopefully it will not be too long after that. I have noted the issue, but criminal injuries compensation is a sensitive area where we are trying to consult more than adequately with everyone who has an interest.

Mr ATKINSON: On page 4.5 of the Portfolio Statements under 'Highlights for 1998-99' for his department, the Attorney lists the Second-hand Vehicle Dealers (Compensation Fund) Amendment Act 1999. Since when did Ministers list as departmental highlights private members' Bills—in this case, from the member for Gordon—and, at that, a private member's Bill that the Government opposed and even tried to have struck out as unconstitutional? When did the Attorney have a change of heart, and will he now claim my private member's Bill that he opposed almost to the end—the Criminal Law Sentencing (Victim Impact Statements) Amendment Act 1998—as one of his legislative reforms?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I thought this might arise at some stage, but I am surprised that the honourable member should be championing the cause of the member for Gordon; I thought he could manage that himself. Everybody got themselves into some difficulty over this, because there had been a very significant review of the Second-hand Vehicle Dealers Compensation Fund. That was identified after we enacted legislation to deal with the Kearns Brothers Auctions problem, I think towards the end of 1997.

I indicated then that we would be undertaking yet a further review to deal with other issues, such as compensation that backyarders' customers were able to obtain in some circumstances. We undertook a lot of consultation with the Motor Trade Association as the major stakeholder. We put out a discussion paper and it responded. We indicated what we were going to do, including our intention to draft a Bill. The member for Gordon saw the opportunity to take an initiative and sought some advice—not from me—and he was able to get a Bill which in some respects was in identical form, but not in the transitional clauses, to my Bill. He was able to take the initiative on that.

I think I know the reasons why it all happened. I am not prepared to make any public comment other than to say that the Bill which he introduced was in identical form, in so far as it related to those issues of substance, to the Bill we were having drafted. He was able to take the initiative. We amended it. I am still of the strong view that it was a money Bill, that it should have had a Governor's message and that it could not have been introduced—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: No, he is not actually. I am telling you what my opinion is.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It should not have been introduced by a private member. You might remember that I facilitated the Governor's message in relation to the area that the honourable member—

Mr ATKINSON: It probably was not required.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It was required, actually. What members of the House of Assembly do not seem to understand is that it has broadened the rights of the Legislative Council. In the end, I am delighted. I am delighted from the industry's point of view that it has a piece of legislation which, with the amendments I moved in the Legislative Council, is more than adequate to deal with the problems.

Mr ATKINSON: And a highlight.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: There is no reason why it should not be highlighted. It is a plus, is it not? It has happened. I am sure the member for Gordon would be appreciative of the fact that the honourable member has raised the question and given me the opportunity to put my perspective on it. I bear no grudge against either honourable member.

Mr ATKINSON: South Australia has at least seven Government bodies dealing with corruption in Government, including the Police Complaints Authority; the National Crime Authority; the South Australian Government Investigations Unit; four police units, namely, the Internal Investigations Branch, the Professional Conduct Branch, the Anti-Corruption Branch and Special Investigations—the latter being used for the Police Commissioner's investigations, such as whistleblower allegations; and then there is the CIB and the DPP's office. These bodies squabble with one another over jurisdiction, and where the person the subject of the allegations comes out of the system may depend on where he went in. Does the Attorney-General see any merit in consolidating corruption investigations with an independent commission against corruption?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The short answer is 'No'; there is no benefit in an independent commission against corruption. If the honourable member wishes to impose that upon the State well, so be it, he can wear the consequences. I do not accept the honourable member's premise upon which that question seems to have been based, that is, that there are jurisdictional disputes between the various bodies with differing responsibilities for issues relating to corruption. The honourable member mentioned the DPP. The DPP is not a law enforcement body: it is a prosecuting body.

Mr ATKINSON: But it has some function.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: The honourable member said, 'then there is the CIB and the DPP' and then went onto say that they were all squabbling over jurisdiction.

Mr ATKINSON: Not all of them: some of them.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: We will check the *Hansard*, but I am trying to take you literally and practically because that is my recollection of what you said. You said that they are squabbling over jurisdiction. It is not my understanding that

any of them are squabbling over jurisdiction. If there are examples which the honourable member has and which would clearly demonstrate that a jurisdictional war is going on, I want to know about it. I do not think it is acceptable that any of these bodies might be squabbling over issues of jurisdiction. The ultimate goal is to investigate properly issues of corruption.

Returning to the point about the DPP, the DPP is not a law enforcement agency: it is, in fact, a prosecuting authority. All those, except the NCA, would be bodies in respect of which it would give advice. In terms of the NCA, whilst there may have been some difficulties with the NCA several years ago, I am not aware of any current difficulties. I know that the jurisdiction and the procedures of the NCA have been challenged in various pieces of litigation, particularly the validity of some references in Victoria, but ultimately those references were upheld as being valid. But, they were essentially matters of drafting. They were not matters that went to the heart of the NCA's jurisdiction. As far as I am aware, the relationship between the South Australian police and the NCA is cordial and supportive.

Mr ATKINSON: Has the case of *Deep Sea Ark and Others v The State of South Australia*, which the Attorney-General told the Committee last year exposed the State to potential liabilities of at least \$100 million, been settled and, if so, on what basis?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: It has not been settled. It is still going. I do not think that it is appropriate to debate the merits of it here. It is likely to be a lengthy case. We have a team of lawyers involved and it is still likely to cost the State a substantial amount of money for legal costs. We are trying, as much as is possible, to facilitate bringing at least one of the actions on for trial because there are a number of them, all related. Our genuine attempts are not always successful. I have to be a little cautious about what I say because the matter is *sub judice*. We will continue to do the best we can to bring the matter to a resolution. The State's view is that we do not have a liability.

Mr ATKINSON: Does the Secret Commissions Prohibition Act 1920 have any useful purpose? Would the Attorney-General be willing to introduce legislation that amends the Act with the result that some secret commissions are effectively unlawful and those who offer and receive them may possibly be punished?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will have to take that question on notice. I have not looked at the Secret Commissions Act for a long time. If the honourable member wishes to be more specific about the problem he has in mind, either on or off the record, I would be grateful.

Mr ATKINSON: The Act makes no sense.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: There have been successful prosecutions over the years, as I recollect. I will try to dig up that information in response. I have always regarded the Secret Commissions Act, as I call it in shorthand, as being an important deterrent to taking money under the counter and, in fact, disclosing. When I was in practice, even acting as an insurance agent, the firm with which I was involved a long time ago would always disclose to the client that, if they decided to go with a particular insurance company, because we have an association with them, we would be paid a commission. They would be asked, 'Do you consent to that? If you do not consent, you will not get the benefit of it. We will tell the insurance company not to pay us the commission'. I know I was always careful, and our firm was always careful, about the way in which we dealt with those

sorts of commissions to ensure that there was full disclosure. If there are particular difficulties which the honourable member can identify either now or later, I will be happy to have the matter looked at.

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

Membership:

Mr Clarke substituted for Mr Hanna.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr H. Gilmore, Former Commissioner for Consumer Affairs.

Mr W. Spehr, Acting Commissioner for Consumer Affairs.

Ms. M. Cross, Deputy Commissioner, Legal and Policy.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I introduce Mr Hamish Gilmore to the Committee. Until Sunday midnight, Mr Gilmore was the Commissioner for Consumer Affairs. He is here because he helped prepare the information, but he is now the Chief Executive Officer of the Legal Services Commission. Mr Walter Spehr is the Acting Commissioner.

Mr McEWEN: This morning, reference was made to output statements. One of the output statements indicated a further increase to 9 500 residential tenancy tribunal hearings. I refer to members of that tribunal and, in particular, to whether or not there is any performance criteria or appraisal of those members. What has been the outcome of any performance appraisal? If there has been none, is there likely to be any, because over recent days there have been concerns about some of the people operating in that area?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: One of the principles in relation to the Residential Tenancies Tribunal which it is important to recognise is that it is independent of Government and, whether permanent or part-time members of the commission, the Government is not really able to run the ruler over performance on a regular basis. As with a court, the issue of independence is one which is sensitive, so any running of the ruler over members of the judiciary—whilst I know that members of the public sometimes are anxious to do that—is not something that we undertake in a public fashion. In respect of the part-time members of the Residential Tenancies Tribunal, periodically complaints are received, sometimes from people who do not like the decision and sometimes about delay, but I believe that the issue of delay is not so much of concern these days.

As with the courts, as I mentioned this morning in relation to complaints about particular magistrates or judges, I would normally refer a complaint about a member of the Residential Tenancies Tribunal to the Presiding Member, Ms Sue Raymond. She is not required to respond, but invariably she does respond in a way which identifies whether the problem that has been raised is one which has some substance, which has been misunderstood or which just has no substance at all. I generally refer that back either to the appropriate member of Parliament who has raised the issue or to the constituent who has raised the issue. In terms of the merit of the decision, there is very little, if anything, that I as Attorney-General can do in relation to that decision. If it is a matter of performance in terms of delay or some other process issue, I would

normally refer that to the Presiding Member.

Mr Gilmore: The only thing that could be added to that is that obviously from time to time the appointments of tribunal members do expire and there is an opportunity to appoint new people to the tribunal. The Government does that in consultation with the Presiding Member, and that is an opportunity to address any perceived problems that there may be in the longer term with sitting members. That is the major avenue for addressing that issue.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to page 4.6 of the Portfolio Statements, Volume 1, which deals with monitoring and visits to shopping centres. Under the heading 'Business and Consumer Affairs' reference is made to a program of advisory and monitoring visits by fair trading officers to shopping centres throughout the State. Will the Attorney-General outline the program to the Committee?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I can remember that, when I was in opposition, what was then the Office of Fair Trading conducted an exercise in Mount Gambier which raised a great deal of excitement and tension. Officers had actually walked into chemist shops and issued expiation notices for a variety of goods—not just one expiation notice but a number of them—such as sunglasses and octopus straps that did not carry the appropriate warnings and for a variety of other problems. I was certainly very critical of the fact that, although the then Minister had indicated that 'the traders in Mount Gambier had been given some advice the year before because we had done the rounds', there was no evidence that on the second occasion a year subsequently they had been back to the same people and found that the same people had ignored the warnings. There was no system of recording who had been warned and who had not, and who had been provided with advice and who had not.

I was determined when I became Minister that we would not end up in a position such as that, that there would be appropriate education, that there would also be information given to traders in particular and that there would be a fairly balanced approach to compliance issues. We now have a good compliance unit, recognising that consumers do require protection and can best be protected if traders understand their obligations under fair trading and other laws; and, also, traders need to know what the law is. Both the education section in OCBA and the compliance unit have been particularly active in trying to educate. One of the more recent programs involves ongoing inspections at shopping centres in the metropolitan area as well as the major regional centres. That has really focused upon advising traders of their rights and responsibilities under the Fair Trading Act and upon promoting compliance with legislation administered by the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs.

That has a two-fold benefit both for consumers and for traders. We have some standards: a standard inspection sheet, general traders visited to discuss layby sales, refunds and warranties, two price advertising and year 2000 issues about how it will affect their business, to give some information about scams, and there has been some scanning code check at supermarkets. This all started in about December 1998, when about 483 premises were visited. The interesting thing was that in almost all cases there was ready acceptance of the role of OCBA officers. There was little in the way of serious problems that required follow-up in those 483 premises. There are a few difficulties with refund signs. Some supermarkets had 100 per cent accuracy or correctness with their supermarket scanning code. There were checks on weighing

instruments, checks for dangerous toys and other sorts of compliance issues.

All in all, OCBA's program is reasonable, designed to educate and designed to provide information. The last resort is expiation notice or prosecution. I am pleased with the way it is operating and hopefully in the not too distant future a more comprehensive report will be available in relation to that.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to page 4.11 of the Portfolio Statements Volume 1, which deals with reform of occupational licensing. The first dot point under the heading 'Business and consumer affairs' refers to continuing reform in occupational licensing to remove even more constraints which are shown to be unnecessary and to simplify process. Will the Attorney-General outline the work being undertaken to continue the Government's reform of occupational licensing?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I will ask the Commissioner to make a comment on that in a moment. I have been very keen to ensure that we keep the regulatory requirements on business to a minimum. It is not always possible to do so because we have to set standards and ensure that those standards are met at a minimum level. A number of things can be done. In December 1998 OCBA did engage a person to head a project team to plan the implementation of about 45 recommendations that came from a report commissioned from KPMG about licensing and business processes and how we could rationalise them. A couple of projects have been completed and a number of others have been in progress. I will ask Mr Gilmore to make an observation about them.

Mr Gilmore: The business licensing section of OCBA is one of the most complex areas in terms of the sheer range of legislation and issues they have to deal with. We had a very large increase in jurisdiction when we were handed the gas fitters, plumbers and electricians about two or three years ago, and it has taken some time to get to the stage of addressing process. We asked KPMG to provide us with a report on issues we could look at to improve the overall processes of the licensing system. Whilst they came up with 45 different recommendations, it was necessary for us to look at how they could be best implemented. The most significant issues from the licensees' viewpoint came down to relatively straightforward issues such as the photograph on the licence, which we currently require a contractor to provide us with each year.

Under our current technology it was a matter of their submitting a passport photograph, which we then affixed to their renewed licence. Obviously, we would like to do far better than that but it requires technology to do it and a re-examination of the entire way in which we gather the information from those people on a yearly basis. The issue of whether or not we could extend the licence out to a three year period like a motor vehicle licence was given detailed consideration. As KPMG had recommended that, we needed to substantiate that we could proceed with it. We have got to the point where most of the major issues arising from the recommendations in the KPMG report have been given detailed consideration. How they can be implemented has also been given detailed consideration. We are now at the point where we will submit a paper to the Minister shortly to go out to consultation with the major industry groups on those specific issues saying, 'Here are the improvements we would like to make and here is how we will go about them.'

The net consequence, we hope, will be a vastly improved service to the licensees that has required us to go through a lot of detail in each step of the process. What if the people are

not at the address that we last had? How will we keep the address file up to date? If we went to three year licences, our experience is that you suddenly arrive at a situation three years down the track where many people are not at the address, they have not left a forwarding address and you lose touch with them. They find themselves in a position where their licence may be in suspension or, if they have not responded to several letters, it could have even been cancelled. Whilst it was comparatively straightforward for somebody to look at the processes and make a lot of recommendations in terms of how you could quickly move towards improving it, there were a lot of details about the process of administration that needed further consideration.

We are now at the point where, hopefully over the next six months, major steps in improvements can be made. In the meantime, fundamental things like having a policies manual for all the staff have been developed. We have moved to reduce the delay in the time that we have the paperwork in our hands and we have asked applicants to supply us with their police clearance certificate rather than us going to the police and seeking them and thus incurring a three or four week delay while we get it. Those things that can be done quickly and effectively have been done, whereas the major and most significant improvements are about to be initiated over the next six months.

Mr CLARKE: I wrote to the Attorney a couple of years ago in relation to an Act governing the work of security guards and people in the security business. They have to undertake a check of whether they have a criminal record and the like. I had two constituents who in their earlier days had been convicted for having a small amount of marijuana in their possession, one of whom was a country person who had lived in Moonta. He was unemployed at the time and could not afford to pay off his fine. The only way out was to get a conviction recorded against him and then seek a community service order. Unfortunately, that meant he got a criminal record. Several years later, when living in a *de facto* relationship and with a young child, he wanted to get into gainful employment and was able to get work as a security guard. However, when they did the routine check on him, because he had a criminal record he could not get a certificate.

I had a similar example with another person who was a security officer in various other places and overseas but could not get a job in South Australia because a conviction for personal possession of marijuana occurred in his early days. I wrote to the Attorney about that because the Act did not provide any leeway for the Commissioner to take these sorts of mitigating factors into account, and the Attorney wrote back some two years ago saying that he was keeping the matter under review and having the Commissioner examine it with respect to putting forward amendments to the Act. I have not seen any amendments. Will the Attorney do it or will I need to bring in a private member's Bill?

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: If the honourable member looks at the *Gazette* for about the end of April he will find that the regulations have been amended to deal with those simple possession offences. If the honourable member can give us the names we can dig up the dockets and have them reviewed. The regulations were amended about six weeks ago in relation to simple possession offences.

Mr CLARKE: I thought that it was not just the regulation but that the Act itself did not provide sufficient flexibility.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: I think the honourable member will find that it is the regulation. I will take this matter on notice and confirm that. This issue has arisen over a period

of time in respect of different matters. We took a decision to amend the regulations to prescribe offences, and it is the prescription of the offences which is relevant to determining whether or not a person is able to get a security agent's licence. That category of offences, which precluded an applicant from being awarded a licence, was amended.

I signed off the regulations a while ago. I am sure that they were gazetted, probably towards the end of April but, if the honourable member would like to give me the names of the people to whom he refers, I am happy to follow them up. However, I am sure that we have now dealt adequately with the problem. If I have not, I will have to come back to the honourable member.

Mr CLARKE: I wonder what the thinking of the Attorney's department may be with respect to the conflict that arises under our consumer protection laws and other Federal legislation such as corporations legislation. The Attorney may recall that Brash's went into receivership some time ago. A number of people (my daughter included) had received gift vouchers to a certain value for Christmas. The receivers would honour those pre-paid vouchers only if the holder of the voucher doubled up. In other words, if a person had a voucher for \$30, they had to buy something worth \$60.

That is not so bad if the voucher is worth only \$30, but there were people with vouchers for hi-fi equipment worth \$300, and they had to double that to \$600. I regard that as a gross abuse of those consumers. There was nothing that the Attorney's department could do about it at the time because of the Corporations Act. The problem with Brash's heightened awareness amongst some consumers never to buy a gift voucher unless they were certain the company would not go broke in the meantime.

I wonder whether the Attorney's department has given any thought to how those sorts of problems can be mitigated for constituents, particularly when a high priced unit, such as the one I have described, is involved. I am not exaggerating when I say that a number of people had purchased items for \$300, and in order for the holder to recoup the voucher they had to find another \$300.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: A feature of corporations law is that it is State based, but the responsibility for the regulation of corporations has now been ceded to the Australian Securities Investment Commission. Corporations law sets the priorities for settling creditors. The difficulty in the instance cited by the honourable member was that on the advice given to us as well as to the receiver these voucher holders were considered to be unsecured creditors. There is absolutely no way that a State fair trading Act or other legislation could ever affect those priorities unless those priorities were amended through amendments to the corporations law. However, if the priorities were to be amended, there would have to be a clear idea of what was or was not being given priority, because general law relating to priority identifies preferred creditors such as the Federal Tax Commissioner.

Short of changing those priorities, I cannot see how we can deal with the issue raised by the honourable member. I remember that he raised it, and we tried to address it, but there was no solution other than to amend the corporations law. But, even if one moved to amend the corporations law, it would be difficult to know how to do that because there are so many different sorts of schemes. For instance, with loyalty schemes, there is no priority. If the provider of the loyalty package goes broke, you lose your bonus points or whatever they are called, because there is no trust deed to secure them.

The sort of security which the honourable member's daughter and constituents want could be achieved only by some form of trust deed, but even then I think it might be questionable because that would have to be done under corporations law and not State law in terms of the ranking of priorities. So, I cannot hold out much joy for the honourable member in the way in which that problem can more effectively be dealt with.

South Australian Police Department, \$6 404 000
Administered Items for Police Department, \$3 991 000

Additional Witness:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire, Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr M. Hyde, Commissioner of Police.
Mr D. Wall, Acting Director, Corporate Services.
Mr B. Smith, Manager, Administration.
Mr C. Cornish, Chief Inspector.

Membership:

Mr Conlon substituted for Mr Atkinson.
Ms Rankine substituted for Mr Clarke.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination. Minister, would you like to make introductory comments?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Given that we have only two hours, I will not make a prepared statement. I have plenty of opportunities in which to highlight the achievements of all my portfolios: suffice to say that I would like to have on the record my appreciation of the Commissioner, the chief executive officers and all the staff who work within the portfolio areas, including those people who support me in justice, for the dedicated work they do on behalf of the South Australian community.

Mr CONLON: With your indulgence, Mr Chair, I will refer to five lines from today's *Advertiser*. I apologise in advance, but I want to share my horoscope with the Minister today. The relevance of that will become clear in a moment because it says:

If you can't win others over to your plans or ideas with enthusiasm, charm or persuasion, there is another approach that might work. Be disagreeable.

So, if you have any difficulty with me today, Minister, it is not my fault: the *Advertiser* made me do it. It is clearly out of character for me to be disagreeable, as the Minister would well know.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr CONLON: I will not get into theological arguments today, merely ones of a budgetary nature. The Minister would be well aware of criticisms raised about the level of funding and staffing for the police. I note the Minister's announcement recently of an increase in funding to allow a recruit intake of, I think, some 140, which, by the Minister's own statement, will only match attrition. I have a series of questions about police staffing. The Commissioner may be able to assist the Minister with those questions.

It was reported to me that on 21 May, being a Friday, in terms of police staffing levels in two very large local service areas, Port Adelaide and Sturt, some of the staff from the Port Adelaide area were sent to attend the Pelican Point picket line. As a result of that, I am told, at the beginning of day

shift one patrol car was available in the Henley area, one in the Parks area and none in the Port Adelaide peninsula area. Earlier in that day, the Henley patrol had had to deal with a dead body and the Parks patrol had arrested and held a house-breaker for some three hours until Star Force personnel could be recalled from training. Therefore, no patrols were available in the Port Adelaide local service area.

On the same day, the Sturt local service area, which is one of the biggest in the metropolitan area, on day shift had one proper patrol and two solo patrols, therefore giving them no scope to cover that. My questions to the Minister are: was that the situation; and is that a satisfactory level of police presence in those two local service areas?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: In relation to the specifics, in a moment I will hand over to the Commissioner as it is more of an operational question. I would like to talk about the general points that the member has raised. I note with a degree of interest that we have not heard much at all from the honourable member on police numbers until the past month or two. Obviously, as Minister I am interested in resources, development of management and opportunities for police to be able to provide the best possible service for the South Australian community. It is very simplistic in argument as well as in fact to talk about police numbers alone. It is important to look at how you utilise your resources, whether it be police or anything else.

I would think that even the honourable member would agree, having a law background and working in a law practice, that you do not necessarily look at only numbers in your practice or your organisation: you look at how effectively you use those people. That is one of the big things that has changed since we have been in office. You cannot compare apples with apples if you want to go back over a period and compare that with what is happening now, because there is a totally new direction for policing. It is a direction that I will talk more about—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: We have lots of people to lock up the bad guys; in fact, there are more bad guys locked up now than when your crowd was in office in the 1980s and early 1990s. The important fact is how you utilise those resources. There have been enormous changes in how the resources have been utilised. I have never seen the benefit, for example, in having highly qualified and trained police officers carting prisoners around from, say, the Adelaide Remand Centre to Christies Beach Courthouse. Effectively they have lost a patrol for the whole day, given that the patrol had to go at 10.30 a.m. to collect the prisoner and may come back having been held up during lunch time to find they have missed the court and then have to duplicate the effort later. That is not a good utilisation of resources. Whether it is the Christies Beach or South Coast area, or Port Adelaide to which the honourable member referred, the fact is that those police officers no longer cart prisoners around; that has been outsourced to Group 4. There is a range of other initiatives. In fact, without exaggeration, I could probably talk for the whole two hours about all the initiatives that are in place to free up opportunities to get police officers out on the beat.

As the honourable member said, I have also spoken before about recruitment; next year 140 officers will go through the academy, and I will talk more about that later. It is easy for the Police Association, the media and the Opposition to find the odd occasion when perhaps there is an extremely busy period. Whilst members do not necessarily like my saying this, the budget has been far from ideal over the whole decade

of the 1990s, but even if we had an ideal budget there would be times when we had an extremely busy period and there might be the odd example where perhaps we could have had another patrol car available. But when we look at 313 000 taskings and the response times and efforts that have been put in, particularly to priority A, I think our South Australian police are doing exceptionally well compared with what I have seen in other jurisdictions. I would ask the Commissioner to talk specifically, or we will take on notice the matter involving the events of the day in question.

Mr Hyde: I am not able to respond to the facts of this occasion without making inquiries, which I undertake to do, and to provide information to the Committee. I make the point that claims of lack of resources are often very wide of the mark. I use as an example a story which was aired on Channel 9 News last night about the Major Crime Investigation Branch being understaffed, and I will provide some details of the staffing levels there. The normal establishment for major crime, including the Coroner's Office and Missing Persons, is 33, which comprises that branch. There have been a number of secondments out of that branch and a number of secondments in to replace those going out. I will indicate those who have been seconded out and what tasks they are being used on. Two senior sergeants, two sergeants and four senior constables have been seconded to work on Task Force Chart. I find it interesting to hear complaints that they do not have enough staff to investigate murders when in fact Task Force Chart is investigating 11 murders, and that is just the sort of task on which you would expect people from the Major Crime Investigation Branch to be engaged.

One other member has been seconded to the Disciplinary Review Office; another senior constable has been seconded to Operation Mantle, targeting drug trafficking; and another senior constable has been seconded to work on Operation Counteract, which is targeting armed robbery. All of those tasks, apart from the Disciplinary Review Office, are not necessarily inconsistent with the role of the major crime area. There have been a number of secondments in—five, in fact—to help replace the shortfall there. The key to operational effectiveness is flexibility. We are continually looking at ways of resourcing. You cannot predict with any degree of accuracy where those major investigations will come from, so it is quite understandable that major changes in staff will occur from time to time. I return to those claims that have probably been raised by police members with Mr Conlon. I will check out the facts and provide a response but, as I indicated, quite often those claims are not accurate.

Mr CONLON: I am very confident of the example I gave the Minister which he would prefer to see as isolated. I have a few others of which I am very confident, and I look forward to the Commissioner checking them. I hold a slightly different point of view from the idea that we should be sanguine about so many people being seconded to Operation Chart. There will not be a shortage of major crime merely because so many people are seconded to one task involving serial murders. I note that the Minister assiduously avoided answering whether he thought those were satisfactory levels of police attendance on 21 May. The Commissioner may wish to check these other examples concerning the stations at Ardrossan, Maitland and Port Wakefield on Yorke Peninsula. Ardrossan is ordinarily a one person station, and Maitland and Port Wakefield are two person stations, yet one person was attending for all three of those stations on 19 May.

With regard to other issues in the country, Port Pirie should have a patrol strength of 40 but we understand that it

is nine short of that on an ongoing basis and that two sergeants have not been replaced for two years and that constables are acting in that position without having been replaced themselves. At Port Augusta at present, four vacancies have not been filled since January; three are on long-term leave and have not been filled out of the 40, and three police aides are not operational out of, I think, six. They are short at Whyalla and Port Lincoln, and it is pretty much the situation throughout the country. Will the Minister be more succinct this time and say whether that is a satisfactory situation? Why has it occurred and how will he fix it?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Like the member for Elder I have travelled extensively in rural areas since I have been Minister, because I am as interested in rural policing as I am in metropolitan policing.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I have met a few who have not met the member for Elder, too, and that is the way it goes. Nevertheless, during my time as Police Minister I will get to a great number of police stations. I have visited Yorke Peninsula extensively. I have been to Port Pirie, to Port Augusta on two occasions, and I will be dropping in there again in another week; I have also been to Port Lincoln, Ceduna, Poochera, Minnipa, part of the Barossa Valley right through to Williamstown, to Kimba, Wudinna, Mount Gambier and the Riverland—I could go on all day.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I would like to give a detailed answer, because I believe that, in the interests of the honourable member and the South Australian community, the Minister should give a detailed answer where possible. I have looked at the police numbers in rural areas and when it pleases the Opposition it often likes to quote figures for 1993 (or prior to that) and 1998. I can report to the honourable member that police numbers in rural areas overall have increased since we have been in office, even though in many areas there has sadly been a decline right throughout regional and rural areas of Australia. It will help us immensely when we get rid of an archaic and old fashioned Act that has been in place for far too long. I hope that will happen on 1 July, because I believe it is in the interests of the South Australian community and everybody who provides the policing for it. The legislation has had enormous impacts on the ability of police to relocate, because of the appeal processes required. They have been reported to me by police officers, including those in Maitland, where they were waiting over a year to get through the appeal process.

Fortunately, we have changed that through the Parliament and things will be expedited in the future. I have dropped into Ardrossan a couple of times but have not yet seen the officer because she has been out. There is a full-time officer in Ardrossan and there are two excellent police officers at Port Wakefield. I have visited them on three occasions, if not four. I know that because of the appeal process there was a delay in getting an officer at Maitland.

Before asking the Commissioner to speak more generally about the areas in which he operationally locates police officers, I would like to say a couple of other things. When you have many small country towns and they are not necessarily all that far away from each other, for example, Ardrossan to Maitland is not a great distance, I do not think that it is unreasonable to utilise resources so that a police officer from one town backs up another.

I do put on the public record that police officers in those small country stations receive a 28 per cent penalty, that is,

a 28 per cent increase on standard salary in order to back up and attend to additional calls. That is a fact. Different options may be utilised with respect to that 28 per cent resource, but that is the option that is currently in place. When it comes to looking at operational and non-operational police in rural and regional South Australia, generally there has been an increase since we have been in office. I will ask the Commissioner to speak more specifically.

Mr Hyde: I do not have information to respond to all the issues on those stations, but I will undertake to follow up and provide that information. I do have information available in relation to Port Pirie. Two sergeant positions were vacant. We have now selected people and we are currently waiting for the appeal period to expire. One of the two positions has taken two years to fill, as was raised, and the other has taken eight months. I am advised that the reason for this is the process of appeal, which has taken so long. Port Augusta has two senior constable vacancies. Selections have been made and we are currently waiting for the appeal period to expire before the appointments are made. There are four constable vacancies, and it is anticipated that some of those will be filled by graduations in September this year.

Part of the unfilled vacancy situation at the moment is because we have had a lag in recruiting (which is fairly common knowledge), but we have increased recruiting through June. There will be 72 cadets in training at the end of the financial year, and we are hoping to recruit 140 through the next financial year to bring us back to the appropriate level of staffing. That should take care of some of the temporary vacancies.

I now refer to the establishment levels for the country over the past few years and give an indication of the position in terms of overall staff availability: in 1994-95, 589 police officers were in country establishments; 1995-96, 659; 1996-97, 656; and 1997-98, 658. Over the past few years there has been a fair increase in the police staffing establishment for country areas rather than a reduction. Also, there has been an increase of five police aides and 8.5 public servants over that period. Some further adjustments were made with some changes brought about by Focus 21. They do not substantially alter the situation, although I do not yet have available the figures for the end of this current financial year.

So far as small country towns are concerned, on Yorke Peninsula they were operating under a cluster approach. The previous divisional commander introduced a system of having small closely aligned police stations work together in a cooperative way so that they would support each other and allow officers to take time off, and thereby cover each other's town when the need arose. That seems to have worked very well. The additional factor to keep in mind is that we do not have the capacity—and it is probably fairly inefficient—to keep a large reserve which will be able to replace people in one person and two persons stations, and even in larger stations, who are on leave or absent from work for any reason. We cannot provide a relief at this stage.

Mr CONLON: I understand completely that you cannot do it. I would go further and say that you do not have a large reserve: in fact, you do not have any reserve, from information I have gleaned. I must say—and I do not blame you, Commissioner—that it is one of the frauds perpetrated by this Government when it says 'improved establishment figures'. You can have all the notional police you like: if they are not out there, they are not out there. As I say, they are short in Port Pirie, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln, Whyalla and other country towns.

What provisions are made to relieve women police officers in those country areas who go on maternity leave? Despite the cluster approach, I am advised that the problem at Port Wakefield, which is echoed throughout the country area, is that the woman police officer at Ardrossan took 12 months maternity leave and there was no relief for her for that period. She was covered by Port Wakefield and Maitland, which are two persons stations, by people who ran themselves ragged. I know they appreciate the 28 per cent, but it does not mean people can be run ragged for it. What provision is made to cover women police officers in the country who go on maternity leave? Why is there not an ability to fill that position properly while they are off?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will make a couple of general comments on that and the Commissioner may want to say something.

Mr CONLON: If you wanted to answer a question, just one question that I ask you, you could answer just one of them for the novelty of it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: If the honourable member reads the *Hansard* tomorrow he will see that I have answered his questions quite specifically—and I will continue to do so until 10 o'clock. I invite him to send it out, because I certainly appreciate and support all the work that police officers do, and I do everything within my capacity as Police Minister to support them. One of the things that I understand about local service areas is that it does give the chief inspector or the superintendent the opportunity of being able to utilise their police better than they could in the past. If there is a larger station and they see a desire or a need, they can send a police officer from the larger station to back up when there is a time of extended leave in a smaller station. The Commissioner may want to comment further on that.

The other thing is flexible rostering. Flexible rostering is already starting to show benefits when it comes to the utilisation of resources. I know that the Opposition likes to say that you can never change or modernise anything, but we cannot live in the past like the Opposition because we have to utilise our resources as best we can within our budget parameters.

Mr Hyde: The maternity leave situation is a problem we have not solved, and it is compounded at Berri where six or seven members are on maternity leave or about to go on maternity leave. That compounds things. It is not so easy to find replacements in the country. You have housing situations and families to deal with. If I refer back to times 20 years ago, it was a lot easier: wives or partners did not work; houses were provided for all members; and all the partner had to do was find a new skill when they shifted towns. It is a far more complex world in which we work today and we cannot necessarily shift people around in the way we did 20 years ago. I cannot give an answer which says, 'I have solved this problem.' It is one that we have to find in a modern era where there are entitlements for people who are having families. We just have to find a way of working around that. We have not necessarily found the right answer at this particular point of time.

Mr MEIER: My question follows on from the previous member's questions. I thank the Minister very sincerely for the interest he has shown in my electorate, for visiting my electorate on several occasions and for attending a public meeting at Maitland that I organised in association with the traders in terms of tackling the issue head on. Certainly, the people are very appreciative of what the Minister has done

in that respect. Ideally, there should be two or three police officers in every town, but I recognise that that is not possible. Certainly, I will continue to lobby for extra police in my electorate even if we have double the numbers, but I would hope that at least we get another one or two. This question follows on from the Commissioner's answer and relates to trainees for the coming year and/or years. When will SAPOL begin its recruitment drive for 1999-2000? What are the projected figures?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I thank the honourable member for Goyder for his question and know from visiting his electorate that he works closely with and is very supportive of the police officers in his community. From the statistics I have seen—and I congratulate not only the police officers who are doing a great job and who have my full support but also the communities of Yorke Peninsula—those communities are no different from the other communities that are becoming more proactive and supportive of crime prevention, Rural Watch, Neighbourhood Watch, Business Watch and the like. It was very evident when we met in Maitland that it is a proactive community. Fortunately, in Yorke Peninsula the statistics for crime are quite low. I am sure that if the police and the community continue to work together, as they are at the moment, in the future they will keep the crime statistics in that part of rural South Australia generally pretty low.

As a general rule, SAPOL does recruit in advance against its predicted attrition; however, recruitment in any one year is based on not necessarily equal attrition as intakes can be modified to take account of adjustments in staffing levels where new initiatives, some of which I have already highlighted, have been brought forward—civilianisation and so on. By the end of June, 72 cadets will be at the academy. Those 72 cadets will finish their course some time this year. The current course at the academy is for approximately six months. As I announced recently, 140 trainees will be recruited from the beginning of July 1999 to the end of the financial year in 2000. So, the intake for the 1999-2000 period is 140. The estimated recruitment in 2000-1 and 2001-2, which is in line with attrition to ensure that approved police strength is maintained, is 110.

Mr MEIER: Minister, I echo the compliments you have paid to the police generally. In my electorate I am very fortunate that we have excellent officers who often go over and above the normal call of duty. It is interesting that the Minister referred to crime statistics being low. The point is that people on Yorke Peninsula and in the electorate generally do not like to trouble the police if they do not have to. I raised the issue of an intersection at which about a dozen accidents have taken place in the past few years, but when speaking to someone at the Department of Transport because I wanted something done I was told that only one accident had been reported in the past eight years. Obviously, people do not want to trouble the police unnecessarily. Perhaps we need more police officers than the statistics show.

How are plans proceeding in regard to the important Focus 21 reform program? In particular, what is the next phase of this new measure, which will help to improve the quality and efficiency of the police service?

Mr CONLON: You wouldn't be running down the clock here, would you?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Certainly not. One of the most important policing initiatives of which I hope the whole community in time will have knowledge is the new policing direction Focus 21. From my point of view as Police

Minister, as a member of Parliament and as a member of the community who has had an opportunity to look quite extensively at the program, it is very exciting. I suggest to members that no stone large or small will be left unturned in terms of considering all the issues around modern policing. When I have been in other States at Australian Police Ministers conferences, I have had exceptionally good feedback from other Police Ministers who have been able to discuss with me and others within SAPOL Focus 21 and its initiatives. I understand that, when you look at the overall program, you see that it has taken nearly an extra two years to advance a similar program in Western Australia to the stage that SAPOL has reached with Focus 21. Initially, five key projects were being examined under Focus 21: the service areas, the human resources areas, the ethical standards areas, information systems and technology, and leadership.

In my own area, Neighbourhood Watch for the south coast division invited Assistant Commissioner John White to talk to the Neighbourhood Watch people about the basis and background to Focus 21 and where police expect to develop modern policing practices as we enter the next millennium. I was privileged to be at the south coast zone AGM last night. Quite a lot of accolades were attributed not only by the Chairman but others in terms of how they see Focus 21 being a great opportunity for policing. That is what I was talking about earlier.

Whilst I know that the member for Elder has great difficulty in accepting change and change for the better, the fact is that Focus 21 is a change for the better. Part of the key aspect of Focus 21 is the local service areas. Before I ever became Police Minister or even a member of Parliament, police officers would say to me that they would like more ownership in decision making at the local management level. In other words, they would like in a sense to invert the pyramid so that they could have a real say in what was happening and that they could get more proactive in intelligence-based policing rather than having to be as reactive as policing was earlier this decade.

In a number of areas I have seen enormous benefits already as a result of the local service area development as part of Focus 21. For example, where there was a problem at Lonsdale, a special operation was identified through the local service area. They worked very closely with that business community, getting it involved proactively to work with the police in security and other areas related to break-ins, and they did very well in clearing that up. Another issue involved Operation Mantle and the combining of local service areas. Members would recall from the media recently that between Holden Hill and Port Lincoln—an extensive area—there were up to 140 drug related charges. To me, they are great initiatives and examples already of some of the work in relation to Focus 21. When you consider that it was only on 23 or 25 February that the local service areas got going, there is an enormous positive score on the board for those policing initiatives. I will ask the Commissioner to answer the last part of the question about the next stage of development with respect to Focus 21.

Mr Hyde: First, I refer to the commitment of staff within the South Australia Police. The substantial progress we have made with Focus 21 says a lot about the quality and commitment of the staff within the South Australia Police. I have found that people, from constable right through to the Deputy Commissioner, have been very enthusiastic about improving the services to the community. They take great pride in the service that the South Australia Police provides and are

willing to look at new ways of doing things and to make those improvements.

Having said that, I suppose change is not for everybody. Sometimes the process has a little bit of heat and friction with it on the way through. I am sure that at the end of the day we will have commitment from all those who need to take these things forward. The program is targeted to have one more year to go and, whilst there will always be best practice reengineering opportunities and continuous improvement in the future, we are expecting to have all the major projects completed within the next 12 months. There is a great list of projects and I will not go through all of them. Some of the major ones are the operations support service area, which covers mounted cadre, the dogs, prosecutions, traffic and a substantial range of support services, all of which is currently being reviewed. In the corporate service area, our information technology area has been reviewed and will be restructured. The reviews of that will be completed.

The review and restructure of the human resource area will be implemented during the period and we have substantial work to do in introducing better training programs for our members and, as part of that, we will have better qualifications for promotion and frameworks and opportunities for members. Our occupational health, safety and welfare area is currently being reviewed. Again that is an important area for the future. The Neighbourhood Watch program is now over 10 years of age and, like any program of that longevity, it is opportune to see whether it can work better, and that is being done. All of our community based programs are being reviewed. We strongly believe in working with the community in a pro-active way and are looking to maximise the opportunities for working with the community, including an increased use of volunteers which is one of those large untapped areas.

We are commencing a large scale project looking at operational communications. It draws together the CAD project and the GRN project as well as looking at a call centre for South Australia Police, reengineering our current communications centre and looking to the future to see whether or not there is a better model for delivering communications services not only to police but also to other emergency services. There is a range of more minor review opportunities. I am happy to go through them if necessary, but the large scale ones I have indicated.

Mr MEIER: Will the Minister outline the success of the flexible rostering trial and its potential impact on the local service area rostering?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Some time ago members will recall an amalgamation of a number of metropolitan areas into the bigger local service areas. As part of that amalgamation through a separate initiative, an opportunity was provided to trial flexible rostering. I acknowledge the support police generally have given to flexible rostering and it has been an outstanding success. One instance I can recall involves Port Augusta, which had particular issues on certain nights of the week. Through flexible rostering it increased its patrols on those busier nights because traditionally the same number of patrols were out on a Monday and Tuesday night as on a Friday and Saturday night, albeit that there may have been little work in some of those areas on a Monday and Tuesday night. Statistics showed that that had been the case for a long time. Being able to develop these flexible rosters meant they had a major beneficial impact on policing and supporting community safety in the Port Augusta area.

On a further visit recently, I checked on the matter and police reported to me that things were going quite well. The trial initially conducted was at five metropolitan patrol bases—Salisbury, Tea Tree Gully, Norwood, Sturt and Glenelg, extending over a 12 week period from December 1997 to March 1998. There was then an evaluation, from which positive improvements were shown through that flexible rostering. Through enterprise bargaining agreements there was then an opportunity to further proceed with that and 11 recommendations came out of the final evaluation report. SAPOL is establishing a set of founding principles, agreed guidelines and set standards for the development of rosters and flexibility being allowed within those guidelines. SAPOL has indicated that it accepts the responsibility to provide training and education to enable the development of rosters within those guidelines. I am pleased to see the consideration being given to individual staff as the community benefits from flexible rostering.

Mr CONLON: I note that the junior Minister is so frightened of being questioned on these issues that he will run down the clock with pointless long-winded answers. I put that on the record. You can run but you cannot hide, Minister, and you will have to face up to these issues sooner or later.

Mr MEIER: Are you suggesting my questions were not important?

Mr CONLON: I am suggesting your questions got exactly the answers they were designed to get—to run down the clock to protect your nervous junior Minister.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr CONLON: Apparently I am the only one required to keep order in here. I will refer to the Minister's statements about Focus 21 and more intelligent policing. I wonder whether some of the things we have noted in the country fit into that category. I have been told that on Yorke Peninsula three country stations, each more than 30 kilometres from the other, share one RBT A-frame sign, which they drive to collect from the other station whenever they need it. I assume that the sign would be worth some \$30 and the petrol involved may quickly make it an intelligent investment to buy each police station an RBT sign. That has not been the case and many stations have been supplied with cones for RBT work that are too small.

Also in that category, which fits in with the intelligent policing and the Minister's reference to ensuring the police do not waste their time doing unimportant work, is the situation in the Clare police station where the clerical assistant was given a retrenchment package some years ago and the senior sergeant now does clerical and administrative work at twice the salary, including motor registrations from the four major motor distributors in that region. Does that fit with the intelligent policing in a number of the small country stations where we are told that police officers, in addition to covering closed stations, not only paint the police station because of a lack of maintenance and budget but also rely on hand-outs from the local community for some of the equipment they need? I can give details if needed, but is that part of the intelligent new approach under Focus 21 or the result of a penny-pinching Government when it comes to the police?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I am entitled to also get positive factual matters on the record books when it comes to Estimates Committees and, if members on the Government side wish to ask important questions and not necessarily raise just the one-line grab alarmist issues that the member for Elder continues to run in the media day in and day out, I will

use that opportunity to get the facts on the record when the questions are asked. With respect to the specific points raised, I will take them on notice.

Mr CONLON: I note the Minister's early reference to civilianisation and to the police not being free to do work. How many hours per shift are police patrols required to spend on traffic speed detection prior to the civilianisation of the speed cameras?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Is the honourable member referring specifically to civilianisation and the Police Security Services Division?

Mr CONLON: I am asking the Minister how many hours each police officer on patrol was required to spend on each shift on traffic speed detection prior to speed cameras being given to security officers. To be clear, each police officer on patrol would have been required to spend a specific amount of time of their shift on speed detection. How long was that amount of time before speed cameras were given to security officers?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will ask the Commissioner to comment generally on that question, and in due course I may get back to the honourable member with a more specific reply.

Mr Hyde: Police officers, particularly in country areas, are required to spend a certain amount of time on speed detection duties. To my knowledge, this has no connection with civilianisation: it is simply part of a strategy to combat the dangers of driving at an excessive speed on our roads. The civilianisation of the speed camera function is quite separate. I think that a minimum of 86 kerbside hours per day are required to be spent by the PSSD on the manning of speed cameras. In many other areas of the country, staff are required to spend one hour a day on speed detection duties, but to my knowledge that is not connected to civilianisation. I will make inquiries and provide an answer for the honourable member.

Mr CONLON: That is precisely what I am trying to determine. It seems to me that in country areas police are required to spend one hour per shift on speed detection just as they were prior to the civilianisation of speed cameras. So, that has made no difference. The Minister made great noise about civilianisation. I ask him to concede that it has made no difference to the time available for the police to spend on their core duties, which some of us think is locking up the bad guys.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: That is an outrageous comment from the member for Elder, who said, I think, that there has been no difference in the amount of time that police officers are required to spend on speed detection work since the implementation of the civilianisation of speed cameras into the Police Security Services Division, because that division does an enormous amount of hours, as has been said.

With regard to country policing, whilst travelling from Ceduna to Kimba I happened to bump into the police officer from Poochera or Minnipa. One of those officers was out on the road doing some speed detection work. I asked him how it was going and how effective he thought that work was. He said to me that he saw it as an important role of a country police officer to get out on the road and slow down motorists.

Interestingly, there happened to be fatality markers in that area. I was astounded at the number of fatality markers and casualty crash markers on that stretch of road. The fact that police officers now have laser guns and can actively slow down people to prevent deaths and major road traumas is a significant improvement in policing in country areas. As

Police Minister I do not have any problem with a country police officer, particularly in a quiet town, getting out there and doing some traffic work as well as general policing.

Mr CONLON: Is it the Minister's attitude that every officer should do an hour a day regardless of where they are, that Port Pirie officers should do an hour a day the same as Poochera officers when that town has many different requirements and is working nine officers short? I will not pursue that, but we all know that civilianisation is a joke and has not eased the load of the police force at all.

With reference to the city, I am advised of some concerns by a number of police officers who wish to remain anonymous that, regardless of the shortage of patrols, RBT stations will never be closed down to respond to calls. They say that RBT stations in the city will not be closed down to respond to calls. They have 15 officers at an RBT station, but no-one is available to answer a call, and the station will not be closed down.

An example was cited to me by an officer at an RBT station who recognised a driver who was pulled up as a person who had a history of illegal use of motor vehicles. When he approached the car, the driver attempted to conceal the driving column with his body. As the officer lent into the car, the driver drove off. The police officer pursued him on his motor bike. The motorist deserted the car and ran off. When the officer called for back-up he was told that no officer was allowed to leave the RBT station. Is that the situation and, if so, is it acceptable?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: First, I want to say that significant savings have been made in the operation time of police by virtue of police not having to sit behind speed cameras. When the honourable member says that that is not the case, he is not being accurate. Regarding the issue of RBT stations, I would like to make a general point before asking the Commissioner to comment on the specifics of the operations, and that is that random breath testing is an important policing initiative. If you look at what happened when RBT—

Mr CONLON: Are you happy with that?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I said that I will ask the Commissioner whether he wishes to comment on the operations but, as the honourable member has raised the question of random breath testing, I want to make one or two specific points. The statistics on road deaths since RBT was introduced show that it is one of a series of initiatives that have significantly reduced the road toll. Sadly, whilst a huge message is being sent through the media about RBT, in my opinion far too many people are still being picked up for drink driving. Not only are they not considering themselves but they are not considering their passengers or other motorists. RBT is an important initiative of the police.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will ask the Commissioner to say something about the operational question which the member for Elder has asked.

Mr Hyde: The civilianisation of speed camera operations has nothing to do with the performance of operational members in respect of speed detection duties with radar and laser guns. It is all about not having police officers sitting at and manning speed cameras. Rather than having trained police officers manning speed cameras, it is far more effective and efficient to have civilians performing that duty.

As far as RBT stations are concerned, the RBT campaign has special funding. Cabinet approved a total allocation of

funds for a number of years to run the RBT program. For instance, in 1998-99, recurrent funding of \$940 000 was provided, and a similar amount is provided for next year. The majority of officers engaged on those duties are on overtime, and they are paid out of this special allocation. They are not there to provide general policing services; they are working overtime on RBT duties.

Mr CONLON: So, I am correct: they will not be released from RBT duties to lock up the bad guys?

The CHAIRMAN: I will allow that supplementary question.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Will the honourable member repeat the question?

Mr CONLON: Do I understand the Commissioner to say that I am right: police officers will not leave RBT stations to attend to calls?

Mr Hyde: That is certainly not the task they are undertaking at a particular time. Obviously, when matters are urgent, I would expect all police officers to attend to urgent matters, just the same as with off duty police who are prepared to respond to urgent matters. I would expect that it would depend on the circumstances of any particular call.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Since we are on the subject of RBTs and speed cameras—and for the benefit of the member opposite—my question relates to the Portfolio Statements, Volume 1, page 4.9, which refers to the role of the police in road safety and saving lives. Will the Minister explain the criteria that the police use when deploying speed cameras and what has happened to the road death toll since speed cameras were introduced?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: A pamphlet has been sent to all the people who are re-registering their motor vehicles at the moment, as well as those who have an expiation notice for speeding or some other traffic infringement, that clearly shows the benefits of not only speed cameras but other initiatives. I have always given accolades where they are due and I will continue to do that throughout my parliamentary career. Members will note that it was the Labor Government in the early 1990s, from memory, that introduced speed cameras. Obviously, we have carried on with that initiative of the Labor Government because it has been a very sound initiative when it comes to saving lives and reducing trauma.

Of course, speed cameras last for only so long and we have had to replace them recently because they were antiquated. As Minister for Police I often wonder what value could be put on the speed cameras from the point of view of the lives they have saved. Clearly, speeding causes road trauma and fatalities, and speed cameras have been an important initiative. With respect to the specific question, in line with the department's enhanced road safety strategy on which I touched previously, including mobile radar, laser guns, speed cameras, the media campaigns run between SAPOL and the Department of Transport and the billboards displayed around Adelaide with the net on drink driving and other initiatives, all of these have had an enormous impact. I recall that not that many years ago we were losing nearly one person a day on South Australian roads. One person a year is one person too many. For this year it is still too high, but there is certainly a major reduction even on last year. These speed cameras and other initiatives have had a result.

Speed cameras are deployed according to one or more of the following criteria, one being the collision history or the potential for collisions—black spots is often the term used—and that is worked out through the traffic research and intelligence section of SAPOL. It is SAPOL's responsibility

to work out where this speed detection equipment will be put. It is interesting to look at a number of black spots that are around. I know that on the road on which I travel on my way home a number of fatalities have occurred and people are starting to get the message now that speed cameras may well be in use on that road, and I think it is fair to say that generally they are slowing down.

As you know, Mr Chairman, 18 new state-of-the-art speed cameras have just been introduced: 14 will be operating in the metropolitan area, and four will be operating in rural and regional South Australia. I note that the *Advertiser* and other media have been calling for speed cameras to be used in the rural areas and I hope that the implementation of these four speed cameras into rural South Australia, together with a range of other road traffic initiatives, will further reduce the road toll and the incidence of trauma.

The objective of the speed detection program is to reduce the general level of excessive speed across the whole community and to establish a base for long-term change in driver attitude to speeding. This will reduce the number and impact severity of traffic collisions. It has taken several years to get the message across that it is socially unacceptable to drink and drive and, fortunately, today the young people are getting that message at least. Generally speaking, I hope that all people are starting to get the message that it is socially unacceptable to speed.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I also note from Volume 1, page 4.9, that the policing output refers to encouraging greater representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people within the State's police service. Will the Minister outline the success of the Aboriginal police aide scheme, including details of the latest five recruits who, I understand, have now completed their training and have been given placements?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I see Aboriginal police aides as a very important initiative of policing. I recall that when I was a child—and I am not sure whether he was a police aide or whether he was a police supporter—Jimmy James, the famous Aboriginal tracker, did an enormous job in saving lives and finding people not only in remote South Australia but also in the Adelaide Hills and areas such as that. As a result of those sorts of initiatives, the Aboriginal police aide scheme was first established in 1986 when four persons were selected and trained for four weeks at the Echunga Police Training Reserve. Since then, obviously other police aides have been introduced. I look forward to visiting the Pitjantjatjara lands soon and meeting with some of the police aides there. I know that they have been doing some exceptionally good work through Amata, Fregon, Indulkana and the general Pitjantjatjara lands area.

As Minister for Police I was very pleased and proud when a few months ago I was able to launch with the Commissioner a strategy of further recruitment of indigenous people into the South Australian police force. Provision was made in the 1997-98 budget for the employment of five new police aides and they have now been recruited, trained, appointed and placed in a number of locations. There are two police aides in the Riverland, one at Barmera and one at Berri. In the Far North, an additional police aide has been stationed at Port Augusta and two police aides are now stationed at Oodnadatta. I know that, generally speaking, some improvement has already occurred as a result of the employment of further indigenous people through the strategy. There is now a total of 37 Aboriginal police aides spread right across the

rural areas of South Australia, including three at Elizabeth in the metropolitan area.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I note in the budget paper that the Government makes mention of new and innovative ways of policing and new strategies. I am moving to the subject of the Blue Light disco and youth camps campaigns sponsored by the police force. What benefit is the Government's investment in those programs delivering?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I know that since the member for Waite has been in Parliament he has always shown an enormous interest in the issues around youth development with respect to policing. I guess it partly comes from the benefits in terms of development for young people that the member saw when he was doing some of his military work prior to coming into Parliament. Blue Light discos are a great opportunity for supporting young people and for building bridges between our police and young people in South Australia. I would like to put on the record that I have just written to a number of police officers today thanking them for their extraordinary effort. I see it everywhere with police but particularly in this instance with the Blue Light discos. For instance, in one division 22 police officers voluntarily have been giving up their time with their families to support Blue Light discos. They are organised by off duty officers with the assistance of local families, service clubs, St John officers and others who are concerned and who want to help our young people.

They are free of alcohol, drugs and violence, which I think is a fantastic message for police to get over to our young people and break down the barriers and build bridges between police and those young people. They are different from the Blue Light discos I knew about when I was younger, when they were primarily just in the dance hall. They get involved in bowling and a range of different activities, sporting events and so on. There is a lot of interest in them now. In fact, during 1998-99, 124 Blue Light discos were held, with 36 459 young people attending; and they extended from as far north as Marla to the Naracoorte area in the South-East. There are also Blue Light youth camps, involving young people in the care of police officers and other adult people. The camps may include one or more overnight stays and fall into different categories, including high achievers, leadership motivation, general and police school programs, young people at risk, young offenders and some hard core offenders.

With the Star Force, I attended one section of a week long course where young future leaders of South Australia had been chosen, and these young people from right across the State were excelling. I did a bit of abseiling and had a talk with those young people, and the development and support that they were getting from the police through these youth camps and development programs was exceptional. Many people have spoken to me about the Errappa Blue Light Camp at Iron Knob as being an enormous success. There have been 65 camps and 1 700 young people have attended that course. Funding has been provided by the Department of Recreation and Sport, the Drug and Alcohol Services Council, private companies and also service clubs. SAPOL has provided annual funding of \$10 000 towards those operations, and that is a partnership of which South Australia and particularly SAPOL can be proud. I certainly encourage those programs.

Mr CONLON: I note your answer on that. I understand that the Errappa camp is still being run as the responsibility of the second officer at Iron Knob. It would be nice if you liked it so much that you could send the second officer at Iron

Knob back to his job and fund the position properly there, but I know we live in difficult times. My last question relates to country police. I put on record how almost overwhelmingly impressed I was by the work done by country police; I think they do an amazing job. Their motto is to make a bad system work, and they certainly do that, with far too little support from us the Parliament and you the Government. One thing that concerned me greatly was the habit of not providing any relief for medium to long term absences in one person stations, to the extent that we encountered situations where one person stations were being covered by other one person stations.

I was told personally by police officers, who do not wish to be identified, that they have serious concerns about performing their day's duty at their station and then on occasions having to travel twice in an evening out to another one person station some 30 or 40 kilometres away, return to their station and then go out again. They have told me they fear falling asleep at the wheel. I have learnt from those people that they will always do whatever they have to do to get their job done. I find that to be a completely unacceptable situation. I ask the Minister to explain how that is an acceptable situation.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Like the member for Elder and I am sure every member in this Parliament we acknowledge and appreciate the good work that country police officers do. As a country person myself, and having since my youth lived in the same community as officers who have been policing for us, I acknowledge the work that country police officers do and the community work in which they get involved, including sport and service clubs, even the CFS and SES. In fact, a lot of the direction of local service areas and community policing is based on the good old country policing principles. I ask the Commissioner to comment on the concerns the honourable member raised about operational safety.

Mr Hyde: As I mentioned before, we are not able to provide the relief required in these areas, so the arrangement is that in some places coverage is provided by a neighbouring station. I would be concerned if that resulted in the situations described, because clearly that is unacceptable, from a personal health point of view for the member concerned as well as the safety of the community. I would be interested if further information was available to identify the problem there to determine whether or not some action needs to be taken because, clearly, it is not something we would like to see happen in the future. Country members have engaged in a project called 'Country Review', where members from country areas looked at all their own arrangements to identify things that could operate better. I cannot recall whether or not the review team raised anything covered by this area, but I will look at that review and determine whether or not something has been identified as a problem. I repeat that, if there are further facts that we must address urgently, I request that information.

Ms RANKINE: In a couple of places the Portfolio Statement makes reference to Focus 21. What performance measures are being used to assess the success or otherwise of the Focus 21 strategy, given that increasing crime rates, continuing complaints about lengthy response times and significant morale problems within the Police Force would indicate that it has been far from successful in a range of areas?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I thank the honourable member for her question and interest in policing. I have said

earlier today and will say again that I have seen enormous success and improvement around Focus 21. I see police officers continuing to go about their work as being pro-active rather than reactive as they have had to be in the past under the old fashioned policing system. When you talk about response times, given that you are doing hundreds of thousands of taskings a year, you can always highlight some examples of slow response times. As Police Minister I look at this issue closely and, when I consider that there are more than 300 000 taskings a year, I believe that the South Australian Police Department does an exceptionally good job with those taskings. In connection with Priority A or most urgent taskings, you often see that the police are there within three to five minutes, but an Opposition can always draw out a few examples where things may not—

Ms Rankine interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: You will always get 20 or 30 examples in hundreds of thousands. I understand that the average and combined response times here for A and B taskings is about 9 minutes and 14 seconds. My understanding is that that figure is reasonably good, given that it encompasses priority and non-priority taskings. The issue of morale was also raised. Some people will always find change less acceptable than will others. It would be beneficial if the Opposition was prepared to encourage a new policing direction that will benefit police and the community, rather than continually talking down morale and the benefits that this new direction offers South Australian Police.

Ms RANKINE: What measures do you have in place?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: As far as evaluation of performance standards goes, one of the great things about Focus 21 is that there are benchmarks, performance standards and evaluations, and I will ask the Commissioner to explain how he will evaluate the Focus 21 direction.

Mr Hyde: There are not any specific performance indicators for the program as a whole. As part of the contractual arrangements for the Assistant Commissioner in charge of the program, I set a performance agreement with that person which I review twice a year. So, I assess his performance against how he manages the program. But, the ultimate performance indicator for the program is the effectiveness and efficiency of the South Australian police, because that is what the program is focused on: how well we deliver the services that we are required to deliver with the resources that we have.

Ms RANKINE: I have a supplementary question. There must be a measuring standard. We have heard from both the Commissioner and the Minister what a great success it is, but measured against what? Is it the crime rates or apprehension rates, for example?

The CHAIRMAN: The honourable member will direct questions to the Minister, not the Commissioner.

Mr Hyde: Ultimately, the effectiveness of the organisation is determined by how safe the community in South Australia is in terms of road safety, crime, public order, and so on. Since the early 1990s we have seen a good trend to a reduction of crime in the State. Up until just over 18 months ago, we started to see an increase in some of those categories, in particular armed robberies. We put into place measures such as Operation Mantle and Operation Counteract and we have seen a fairly favourable trend in relation to robberies, in particular, resulting from those.

The point about performance indicators is that during the year we were looking at the prospect of something like a 15 per cent overall increase in crime. Since we have intro-

duced the local service area arrangement, we have seen a reduction each month and we are expecting, although it is a little early to say, that the overall increase will be less than 10 per cent. From an indication point of view, the local service area arrangement is having a positive effect on crime. I would put a caveat on that: it is far too early to tell and we would like to see how these things perform over the longer term. If you use crime as a measure, there is an early indication of some success.

Another indicator is response times, and I will explain this in a little detail. Our systems were such that the only reliable measure of response times was the actual dispatch of the patrol. The time is measured from dispatch from the communications centre to the attendance or arrival of the patrol at the task. Over the past three to four years that has been reasonably consistent, but there has been a slight increase in that response time which is not a situation we would like to see. It coincides with the increase in reported crime and the increase in taskings, so we have seen an increase in taskings for patrols and also an increase in response time. I do not think you could attribute that to Focus 21.

There are factors well and truly outside the control of police which drive crime and the taskings rates, and we have to deal with those things. I have spoken often enough about concern with the level of illicit drug availability and use in the community and the degree to which this fuels the crime with which we must deal. There are not specific indicators for the Focus 21 program because it is a whole of organisation review process, so each part of it is judged on its own performance.

Ms RANKINE: I am absolutely astounded that a department, such as the police department, could embark upon such a big change and not have a formal assessment in place.

Mr McEwen interjecting:

Ms RANKINE: Usually Mitch does that, but I must say I am astounded today. We have heard the Commissioner mention today that major projects will be completed within the next year. I have studied the Capital Investment Statement and I cannot find any mention of the construction of the new patrol base at Tea Tree Gully. Can the Minister tell me where it is? This was originally promised in 1997 and was restated by the Minister in February in response to a Question on Notice by the member for Playford. Will the Minister tell the people of Tea Tree Gully when they can expect construction to begin?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I know that the member has an interest in the Tea Tree Gully area. From what I can recall, I think I said in the letter that a review was occurring in relation to where a future police station would be built in the Tea Tree Gully area, but in the meantime policing was going well.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: A lot of interesting information comes across my desk every month in an information management report which is given to me as Police Minister. I can assure the honourable member—and she may like to put this in a newsletter—that in the Tea Tree Gully area in some months there have been significant reductions in the incidence of crime.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: If the honourable member would like to have a close look at what is happening in her own area, she would see that good policing is occurring. In local service areas there has been an increase in police

officers. It is not only about having police cars moving through districts but also about having police stations. When the police tell me what they have finally done with respect to the review in that area, I will further look at the issue with respect to capital works. The fact is that policing is going well in the honourable member's area.

Ms Rankine interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr McEWEN: The member for Wright will have to wait her turn. It was 1897 that we were first promised a new police station, but we are close to fruition. Will the Minister give an update on the new Mount Gambier police station?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Having visited Mount Gambier on a few occasions, I know that the member for Gordon, the Government and me as Police Minister have been keen to see the new Mount Gambier police station. Prior to becoming Police Minister, I was on the Public Works Committee and I went to see what police had been working with in the Mount Gambier police complex. Frankly, it was atrocious, archaic and very tired. It was a main two-storey building and residences next door were used to accommodate the increase in the number of police officers. Police had to use office accommodation that was not part of the overall police complex. The cell block was another area which was certainly past its use-by date.

Things are well and truly on the way now. In fact, the final project cost is \$6.078 million. I have seen the slabs poured on two of the three sites and work is certainly underway. Construction began early this year, and it will be completed in March 2000. The functions to be accommodated in the new complex include a service area, command administration area, general police station, office areas for patrols, new cells, CIB and prosecution services, and general amenities to support police. These new facilities will improve working conditions and functional relationships for all staff, which I am sure will, in turn, provide for a more efficient policing service to the local community. Having talked to both Superintendent Bristow and Senior Sergeant Evans, both very committed police officers, I know that they are certainly going around with smiles on their faces now that they can see the bricks and mortar underway. Some time next year I look forward to opening the new police station and inviting along the member for Gordon.

Mr McEWEN: The member for Wright made a very valid point when asking questions about performance criteria in relation to Focus 21. In one of the responses I note that the Commissioner indicated that there was an increase in the number of armed robberies. What actions are being taken to reduce the incidence of armed robberies? I know that people around the State are becoming quite concerned about the media attention given to armed robberies. Has there been an increase? If so, what attention is being given to it?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: It was interesting at the Police Ministers conference in Sydney recently to discuss the issue of armed robberies. There has been an increase in all jurisdictions around Australia with respect to armed robberies. I commend the Attorney for what he is doing with respect to crime prevention and also the work that a number of us are involved in as Ministers in terms of developing a drug strategy for Australia that ties in with the overall Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy, because it appears to be evident anecdotally from other Ministers to whom I have spoken that the drug addiction problem has had an impact across Australia in relation to armed robberies. As the Attorney said last week, statistically there was some increase

in armed robberies in South Australia last year. It was interesting to look at the ABS figures and at how South Australia generally was still along the bottom: there has been a lower impact than in a State such as New South Wales. If the member for Elder looked at the graph, he would see an enormous growth in New South Wales, for example, in terms of armed robberies.

Earlier, the Commissioner referred to Operation Counteract. I referred to the management information that I as Police Minister receive every month. It is interesting to see that this year there was quite a down trend month by month in armed robberies in South Australia. That is good news for South Australia, and I commend those police officers in Operation Counteract who have been involved in that work. As I said before, there has to be a holistic approach in terms of how we look at reducing crime. That is one of the great areas of improvement that I see with the formation of the justice portfolio where the Attorney-General works on crime prevention and I work directly with him with respect to the enforcement side involving the police.

Operation Counteract commenced on 18 June 1998 in response to an increase in robberies, particularly handbag snatching. Since then, it has had some very good results; in fact, a total of 137 offenders have been arrested and 62 reported by members of Operation Counteract. As I said, a large percentage of those apprehended were known to have a drug addiction. Many offences were committed to support drugs. Therefore, I am very keen to see the further development of the drugs strategy, because that is a problem for all Governments in Australia.

Mr McEWEN: Regarding handbag snatching, I hope that none of the Geelong players will have their handbag snatched when they are over here in a fortnight. In terms of the Sydney 2000 Olympics I understand that extra pressure will be put on SAPOL in relation to security responsibilities as part of the soccer games. What will be the cost and who will pay for it?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: SAPOL does have a role to play during the Sydney 2000 Olympics. I have been briefed on a lot of the preparation work that it has been doing. For security reasons I will not go into much of that work: suffice to say that there has been some good planning. The bottom line is that there will be seven Olympic soccer games in South Australia. Some policing work is required around the ceremony with respect to the torch, and obviously special dignitaries will come to Australia, some of whom will visit South Australia. So, there have been some demands on SAPOL. Salary-related operating costs and some capital costs amount to \$2.8 million to \$3 million, a significant amount of which is in capital costs that I understand will be beneficial to SAPOL on an ongoing basis because it involves communication facilities and the like which will be GRN compatible. That is being paid for out of the budget.

Mr CONLON: I return to one of the Commissioner's earlier comments about misinformation. The Commissioner explained why major crime should not be considered to be short. The same television report also referred to the fact that on the weekend the Holden Hill police had only two patrols instead of seven. I take it, Minister, that because the Commissioner referred only to major crime we can be assured that there were in fact only two patrols at Holden Hill instead of seven, as the television report indicated.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will take that question on notice. I certainly would not believe all that I saw on television.

Mr CONLON: With the greatest respect, the Commissioner may give an answer. Did you watch only a bit of the news and not all of it? What is the problem?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I have taken the question on notice. Unfortunately, as Police Minister I am far too busy most nights to get a chance to watch the news at 6 p.m. You can do those things in Opposition.

Ms RANKINE: I return to the issue raised by the member for Gordon. Under the heading 'Commentary on Major Resource Variation, SA Police Department' mention is made of \$1.6 million for costs expected to be incurred by SAPOL in preparing for the Olympic Games. I saw a recent media report about the police possibly using a different breed of dog to be trained for police work. The report indicated that only one South Australian police dog was trained in bomb detection. Have specific funds been allocated in this year's budget for the training of police dogs in bomb detection? Is it correct that there is only one? Will this be sufficient if South Australia is to host those significant Olympic events, or will we be reliant on other services for the provision of security?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I know that what they call explosive ordnance detection dogs are coming in as a result of the point the honourable member has raised as well as some other initiatives regarding SAPOL and the Olympic Games in South Australia.

Mr Hyde: We do need dogs with different types of skills, if I can put it that way. Some have expertise in detecting drugs or explosives, others are general purpose and I suppose a fourth category is in helping to resolve high risk situations, particularly in relation to people armed with weapons. We have only one dog at present which is trained in explosives detection. We are looking at obtaining another dog for those purposes, I believe from New Zealand (and I will check that). All up, we have 11 operational dogs and 15 staff members. Again, with a small unit such as that you cannot afford to have too many skills in one particular area where the demands are not there for it. Obviously with the Olympics there is a particular need that we have to cover. As I understand it, we will obtain the services of a new dog.

Ms RANKINE: How many currently serving police officers are women and how many have been appointed to the rank of inspector or above? Has there been any significant improvement in the number of women being appointed to senior roles within the Police Department and, if not, what action is being taken to address this issue?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will ask the Commissioner to comment on that question.

Mr Hyde: I will obtain the precise figures shortly. Generally the situation with regard to women police in senior positions is not desirable at all. We are looking for opportunities to redress the situation. We have only two female commissioned officers at this stage out of approximately 100, so it is a very low percentage. One of the difficulties is with retaining women throughout their service. Many leave the South Australian Police at an earlier time than their male colleagues, so we have to try to provide them with better opportunities to seek senior promotion. In the information provided I cannot quite pick up the precise figures overall but it is of the order of 15 per cent.

We recruit fairly well. On average in recent years in the order of 40 per cent of inductees are females, but the real problem is retaining them throughout their service. Some things are being undertaken. We have established an equity and diversity unit and one of the priority areas to address is

gender. We find that whilst there are other areas of diversity, such as ethnic background, which are important, probably the most important issue for us is gender, in particular women in policing. We are putting together an action plan to see what can be done to help women compete on a level playing field. At a national level the Australian Women in Police group is looking at a strategy for giving women across the country better opportunities for personal development.

One of the opportunities we have or could have had (but probably do not have now) with the Police Act is lateral entry. If we cannot develop up women within the South Australian Police there would have been opportunities for applicants from other police agencies in Australia. You cannot take junior officers and turn them into senior officers overnight. It takes time and there could have been an opportunity there for women from interstate police agencies to transfer to the South Australian Police but, unfortunately, we were not able to obtain those arrangements in the Police Act.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Being as fair a Minister as I am, I am happy for the Opposition to ask more questions, given that there is only 15 minutes to go.

Mr CONLON: One of the issues raised over and over again from the country is the inability to access training at anywhere near the level that police should be able to access. Is the Minister satisfied with the availability of training to country police officers and, if not (and I suggest he should not be), what is he going to do about it?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: As Minister I have recently discussed that issue with the Commissioner. I would ask the Commissioner to advise the honourable member on what he is doing with respect to the planning of training issues.

Mr Hyde: Training for country members is a problem, particularly with a State as large as South Australia and with the remote areas you have to deal with. If you have to bring members down to Adelaide or somewhere like Port Augusta there is a lot of expense in travelling time and absence from their normal posting with which we have to deal. Technology offers us an opportunity to deliver training in the field and information technology in particular is something that can go a long way to redress the problems of the past. We are looking to introduce a new position into every country local service area—a position of senior sergeant who is responsible for training within the local service area. That would be an additional position in most places if there is not available a senior sergeant who could be moved into that position (and by and large that is not the case in the local service areas). So, we are looking to increase the number of staff in country areas by introducing a senior sergeant responsible for training. That senior sergeant position we envisage could rotate on a periodic basis with other senior sergeants within a local service area, which is a way of broadening opportunities for all senior sergeants in country areas. It is a problem. We are looking to find solutions. Part of it is more staff in country areas and part of it would be through the use of technology.

Mr CONLON: I am reluctant to keep giving examples of where police are short, but I will refer to another example and the Minister can get back to me on this, especially given the earlier answers about major crime not being a problem. I am advised that on 19 May, when there should have been a complement of eight CIB detectives in the Port Adelaide area, only one was on duty. Would that be the case? Having grown up in Port Adelaide, and noting that it has been gentrified just

a little, I do not think it has improved to such an extent that we could get by—

Mr McEwen interjecting:

Mr CONLON: I thank the member for Gordon for that. I do not think it has improved to the extent where we can get by with one CIB detective. That is the number they have at Ceduna, is it not?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: We will take that question on notice.

Mr CONLON: The Commissioner may wish to discuss the fact that some issues are arising from the local service area situated at Nuriootpa where there are difficulties. There seems to have been a creep of more serious criminal activity out past the northern suburbs into the lower northern areas, particularly Eudunda, Kapunda and Freeling, with crime rates one would not normally associate with country areas, but very little in terms of staffing and resources has been done to take into account that fact. It may be purely anecdotal, but it seems that the lower northern stations experience crimes of frequency and severity not ordinarily associated with country towns, yet are staffed and resourced little beyond country towns.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will ask the Commissioner to speak about that as it is an operational issue.

Mr Hyde: We have seen increases in crime in most country areas, although not to the same degree as that in metropolitan areas, which is part of a statewide trend. I will take on notice the Nuriootpa situation and provide some information.

Mr CONLON: Even if you take no more than a drive out there, you will see that the northern suburbs have crept and those towns are now only a short drive from the outskirts of the city. I wonder how this is being taken into account, because it does not seem to have been taken into account at all.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Again, the actual placement of police numbers to service the community is an issue for the Commissioner, so I will ask him to comment.

Mr Hyde: We recognise that the north and south of Adelaide are the major growth areas. That is one of the reasons why we continually have to adjust our resources to make sure that they match the demand for service. I do not have precise figures available, but a significant number of staff have been moved to the northern suburbs, particularly Gawler. It may well be that future planning will suggest that we ought to look at establishing new police facilities in the northern area, as we have in the south.

More generally, we are looking at a facilities plan which will enable us to identify future capital works on a structured basis to match the demand for service. I suppose the general answer is that we recognise there is growth in those areas and the need for additional resources to deal with problems.

Mr CONLON: The Minister would be aware of the omnibus questions asked of the senior Minister earlier. I take it that the Minister understands that those questions apply to his portfolio also.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: All the omnibus questions which have been put on notice will be answered across the portfolio. Obviously, they refer to the justice portfolio, which is divided into various segments. I regard those omnibus questions as being required to be answered in respect of the whole of the portfolio, and that is the way I intend to approach them.

Mr CONLON: My final question for the Minister for Police is: given that he has allowed the Commissioner to answer so many of these questions on staffing, numbers and

resources, will he allow the Commissioner to tell me whether he is satisfied with the current level of funding and staffing?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I spoke at some length earlier about police staffing (numbers and levels) and the fact that you cannot compare apples with apples (1993 to now), initiatives that have been put in place, recruitment, and the total strength of police numbers that will be attained by June next year with the 140 trainees. So, I believe that an answer has been adequately provided to the honourable member. The question is whether the honourable member is prepared to put out the facts as I have given them to him this afternoon regarding what is happening with policing.

Ms RANKINE: From memory, I think the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody report identified that Aboriginal people were much more likely to be reported for the same offence as a non-Aboriginal person. Will the Minister say what initiatives are being undertaken to redress the overwhelming imbalance of Aboriginal youth being referred directly to the Youth Court rather than receiving either a formal caution or referral to family counselling?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: That question covers a range of areas, and work is being done in a number of areas at the moment regarding this issue. I will not respond immediately because of the work that is being done, but I make a commitment to get back to the honourable member in due course and let her know what we are doing. This issue covers not only my portfolio but the Attorney's and some work that is being done in that area. In time, I will report to the honourable member on this matter.

The Hon. K.T. Griffin: Two new committees have been established—the Juvenile Justice Monitoring Group and the Juvenile Justice Research Group—which are specifically focused upon Aboriginal young people within the justice system. As the Minister has indicated, we will try to bring back an omnibus response in relation to that issue.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions on the police lines, I declare the examination of the votes completed.

[Sitting suspended from 6 to 7.30 p.m.]

Department of Correctional Services, \$3 136 000
Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services—Other Items, \$25 808 000

Departmental Advisers:

Ms K. Lennon, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Justice.

Mr J. Paget, Chief Executive Officer, Department for Correctional Services.

Mr A. Martin, Director, Financial and Physical Resources.

Mr G. Weir, Director, Strategic Services.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed expenditure open for examination. Does the Minister wish to make a statement?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: As I said before, I will not make a statement so that we can get on with the questions.

Mr CONLON: The Minister seems to be having problems recently keeping people locked up. I assume this is not some sophisticated form of deinstitutionalisation but that it has actually occurred against his best intentions. Perhaps the Minister might take this question on notice. Will the Minister provide details of staff levels at Correctional Services' facilities, including details of overtime and call back for staff

on days off, the level of sick leave and details of stress related WorkCover claims? Will the Minister perhaps tell us now whether he expects the blow-out in the staffing level budget as was the case under the 1997-98 budget?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will take all those other questions on notice. Regarding blow-outs, I am not sure what the member means but I certainly expect to work within the budget allocated for this year.

Mr CONLON: Is there any risk of compromise of security arising from a lack of cover once an overtime component of the budget is cut out? I understand that there is an allocated amount for overtime. What occurs after the overtime budget runs out?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will ask my Chief Executive Officer to talk about how he operationally handles his staff. I guess during the evening I will get the chance to highlight in more detail what is happening in respect of security improvements and so on. I would also like to talk about other initiatives that have been put forward with respect to the overall issues around security and management. On that particular issue, I will ask my Chief Executive Officer to comment on that matter.

Mr Paget: The staffing formula we use makes provision for overtime and call back. If I had the requirements, I would reallocate resources around the system. There is no compromising of security. One aspect of security is clearly staffing, another aspect is the physical infrastructure, and the other aspect is the relationship between officers and their staff. In every case where we have had an incident of a breakdown of security, staff levels at the time in the areas concerned have been appropriate.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Spence wishes to be recognised.

Mr Atkinson: Will the Minister tell the committee why prisoner Angela Sinclair and prisoner Gina Agostinelli were allowed leave from prison to attend a church service unaccompanied by Correctional Services Department staff so soon into their in one case 17 year non-parole period and in the other case a non-parole period of 16 years and nine months, and were any relatives of the victims of Angela Sinclair and Gina Agostinelli registered with the department for the purpose of being notified of the prisoners' application for parole and their release and, if not, has the department notified any relatives who might have complained of the prisoners' leave of their entitlement to be registered and, if so, have any acted on that entitlement?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: On the specifics of an operational decision on who is out and who is in with respect to opportunities to go out for a range of issues and how that is assessed, I will let the Chief Executive Officer explain. However, it is a question that I expected the member for Spence to ask, given that I had people contact me after the member for Spence, I understand, agreed on 5AA to ask a series of questions around all these issues. I have been waiting for that. It disappoints me somewhat in that not only have I received telephone calls about what the member for Spence said but I have also received a series of letters in which people have been outraged by the member for Spence's perceived attitude to trying to rehabilitate people through programs within the—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Spence is out of order.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I can understand—

Mr Atkinson: It is a very sore topic.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I can understand now that the member for Spence is getting a little stirred up because the facts are being revealed, but I find it very disappointing for a shadow spokesperson to work against what I would think most reasonable people would want to see happen in Correctional Services, that is, not only punishment where appropriate for significant crimes but also I would suggest the opportunity for some rehabilitation and support to families where required.

Mr Atkinson: I was not going to raise this topic, but I am going to raise it now—falsehoods by your department—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Spence is out of order.

Mr Atkinson: I was not going to raise it.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: You did raise it.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee will come to order.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The only other thing that I would say is that from what I have checked on I understand that the processes and programs that are in place under this Government are extremely similar to the programs and processes that were in place under the previous Government, and I therefore find some of the points raised by the member for Spence quite interesting. Having said that, I would ask my Chief Executive Officer to comment directly on that case.

Mr Paget: The two women concerned were classified appropriately by the Prisoner Assessment Committee. The Prisoner Assessment Committee includes community representatives, Aboriginal representatives, representatives of the victim support group and SAPOL. One aspect of the management of female offenders is that, whereas males can anticipate in the course of their time in the department's custody to move from institution to institution, a woman facing a 10 to 15 year imprisonment—and I pass no judgment on that—has the prospect of looking forward to going nowhere other than the Northfield complex. Accordingly, it is essential that we manage those people in a way that is appropriate.

Mr Atkinson: We are talking about unaccompanied, not accompanied. Answer the question.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Spence is clearly out of order.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Spence is out of order.

Mr Atkinson: We are talking about unaccompanied—

The CHAIRMAN: I warn the member for Spence. I remind the Committee that, if I name a member, the Parliament will be back here tomorrow.

Mr Atkinson: How can you be named for this little job?

The CHAIRMAN: I suggest that the member for Spence cool down. Mr Paget, I apologise for that.

Mr Paget: Both the women offenders concerned had been outside the prison environment and, in all cases, they were escorted by departmental staff, either uniformed or volunteer. The case in question which attracted media attention was attending an Easter service, which is a regular event that the church community invites women from the Northfield complex to attend, and they went escorted by people from that church community and departmental volunteers from our volunteer unit.

The second part of the question related to the victims. The department maintains a victims register. The people who appeared on the television program were not registered victims, so it is not surprising they were not informed. Having said that, the department erred and I accept responsibility. In this case, when the two women went to the church service, the registered victims were not contacted, and that was our fault. The next day we went to the registered victims and spoke to them. I have also spoken and responded to them.

Mr Atkinson: That is the only point the Opposition was making. We were not making the point that these women should not have leave from prison: it was about unaccompanied day leave without informing the victims. That was the whole point of the Opposition's question. I have received letters, and the Minister referred to that gratuitously in his reply to my last question, which did not canvass the matter. He referred to two letters, one from the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement and the other from the Aboriginal Justice Advisory Committee to me, criticising me for making a political football of the day release of a remandee, Anthony Smith, to visit a dying relative in hospital, from which he escaped. They were critical of me allegedly for making this issue a political football. Is the Minister aware that Mr Paget provided transcripts to those two bodies purporting to show that I had made critical public comment about that release, when in fact I have never mentioned Mr Smith in my life, publicly or privately?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I did not indicate any particular letters. I simply said that I had had telephone calls and also some letters from different people who were saying to me as Minister that it was important that, as well as working on the obvious enforcement aspect of people who have committed criminal offences, through the Correctional Services portfolio we also continue to work on the rehabilitation of those people. That has come from a range of people, so as Minister I will continue where appropriate to support rehabilitation programs that will work in the best interests of the community.

Mr Atkinson: Will you set the record straight now that you are aware of the facts? You might ask Mr Paget to answer that.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The member for Spence is out of order. I remind him that he has been warned once.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I am happy for my CEO to answer that point.

Mr Paget: A range of agencies, including Offender Aid and Rehabilitation Service (OARS), the Aboriginal Legal Rights Service and AJAC are important stakeholders of the department. The nature of the public debate and the tenor of what happened on talk-back radio was of concern to me and my stakeholders in this instance. Given that the overall tenor was highly critical of what we were trying to do with both Aboriginal people—

Mr Atkinson: You are not referring to me now: you are referring to someone else.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Spence is out of order.

Mr Paget: As I have done in the past, I spoke to our departmental stakeholders and sought their public support to engender some balance into the public debate as it was emerging. What transpired among those stakeholder groups and you is something between you and those stakeholder groups.

Mr Atkinson: You misled them.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I rise on a point of order, Mr Chairman: it is totally inappropriate for the member for Spence to attack an officer of the Crown. His remarks should be directed through the Chair and so should the response, and I ask you to rule accordingly.

The CHAIRMAN: I uphold the point of order.

Mr MEIER: What actions are under way to boost the number of Correctional Services officers in South Australian prisons?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: This is an important question, because recruitment to the Department of Correctional Services is ongoing. I acknowledge the good work that Correctional Services staff are doing in the prison system and put on the public record my appreciation of their work and efforts. The department has been implementing a streamlined recruitment program that is driven by, and also responsive to, the needs of the local situation in that institution where vacancies exist. The program has been developed in two stages. The first is the normal advertising, receipt of applications, police clearances, literacy and so on. That part of the recruitment process is vital, as it ensures that the department is recruiting people with the correct skills for the provision of correctional officers' needs—

Mr CONLON: You're not reading this too, are you?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire:—given that with case management quite a lot of traditional Correctional Services management—

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Committee will come to order.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Given that these days there have been quite a lot of changes in the way prisons are managed and that there is case management and the like, which are positive matters for both the officers and those people in the prison system, the department has taken the decision that it is better to recruit quality applicants rather than undertake recruitment based on quantity. The second stage of the program includes formal interviews, medical checks, work reference checks, family night prison tours and so on. At the completion of this stage of the program decisions are confirmed and letters forwarded to successful applicants.

From 1 June 1998 to 10 May this year, 62 correctional officers have been recruited through the program: 14 at the Yatala Labour Prison, nine at the Adelaide Remand Centre, 10 at Port Augusta, and eight at Mobilong prison, with some smaller numbers recruited at some of the other prisons. At the present time the department is in Stage 1 of another recruitment program, and this program hopes to recruit 24 correctional officers. There have been 326 applicants, and I am delighted to see such a strong number of applications for this position. Some 67 per cent of them have been male and 33 per cent female, and I am pleased to see that six of them have been of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, which is important in this Correctional Services area. In answer to the question, the message I want to get across is that recruitment for Correctional Services officers is ongoing, and I would encourage people interested in working in that area to apply.

Mr MEIER: What is the Government doing to ensure the ongoing success of the home detention program?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Home detention is an important program in my opinion, and it has already clearly

shown some very good results for the community as a whole. The home detention program in the department fulfils in a number of ways the expectations of offenders, bailees and their families, the courts, the Parole Board, the Prisoner Assessment Committee and the community of South Australia. Clearly, it is an alternative to imprisonment for sentenced offenders and unsentenced bailees. Provided it is managed properly—and I am pleased with the way home detention is being managed in South Australia—it has benefits for the community.

Assisting offenders and bailees to achieve behavioural changes by providing greater options through normalisation and targeted intervention programs is important, as is applying departmental policies of case management and through care to the development of effective case plans that are targeted to the criminogenic needs of offenders and bailees. Providing offenders and bailees with the opportunity to improve family cohesion and function is also a benefit. That is important because, sadly, when you look at the facts around a lot of these cases they have not always had the support of families. Whilst it is great to see the families supported in the mainstream prison system, obviously it is easier to get that family support with home detention.

Currently, three different home detention programs are operating in South Australia: the bailee program, the graduated release of prisoners and the sentenced probationers. I have been advised that the need to consider opportunities to improve the programs' outcomes for both the offenders and staff has been identified and a specific consultancy for the review of the organisational structure and the staffing of the program has now been initiated. The review will examine the approach to the provision of this service in South Australia and, by comparison, those schemes operating in other States in Australia.

The department is looking to ensure that its resources are deployed in the most efficient and effective manner possible whilst at the same time retaining the flexibility to cope with the variations in the number of offenders on the program that will naturally occur from time to time. The review is timely, in my opinion, given that a tender for the supply of electronic equipment to support home detention is also under way, and that may provide opportunities for delivery of this service to the department.

Mr MEIER: The Minister would be aware that there is considerable debate in the community as to whether drugs should be allowed or prohibited in prisons. I know there has been some talk of the possibility of allowing drugs into prisons. That goes completely against my thinking. In that respect, what measures are being carried out in South Australian prisons in relation to reducing the incidence of drugs in prisons?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: A range of very good initiatives has been put into the drugs in prison issue in South Australia. Recently, I had the opportunity of visiting Cadell. Cadell, I hope, will prove to be a model for prisons throughout Australia when it comes to the issues surrounding rehabilitation and drugs in prisons. A drug therapeutic unit is operating in Cadell at the moment, and I am most impressed with what I have seen. It is too early to evaluate the results of that program but, given what I saw when visiting, I am confident the drug therapeutic unit will have enormous benefits in relation to the rehabilitation of prisoners.

Drug-free cottages are also at Cadell. The prisoners enter into a contract with respect to the drug-free cottages. There is often three of them in a cottage. They have to learn to

budget, keep things clean and in order, cook, wash and do a range of other chores. They are learning a range of new skills which, sadly, some of them have lost because of their drug dependency. On the other side of the coin, there are also a number of checks when it comes to prisoners who may be offending and taking drugs in the prison system. Urinalysis is an important one where random and targeted tests are conducted on prisoners. Prisoners detected as users are placed on limited regimes aimed at discouraging them from further drug use. Marijuana is the most common drug detected in that. Prisoners are searched and so are their cells. There have been a few instances where prisoners have been detected with drugs either on themselves or in their cells. Visitors are searched as well, which is important. It annoys and frustrates me that people try to smuggle drugs into the prison system to prisoners. That is a serious offence and it is something which is strongly discouraged.

One of the other important initiatives with respect to drugs in prisons has been the dog squad. The department's drug detection squad conducts random and targeted searches using specially trained dogs to detect the presence of drugs. The squad also uses an electronic narcotic drug itemiser, which is capable of detecting small amounts of drugs that people may bring in in their clothing.

In 1994 there was an independent inquiry, the Grant Inquiry into Drugs in Prisons. It made a number of recommendations, the most significant of which were the establishment of an intelligence unit, controlled prisoner telephone systems, nominated visitor schemes and stricter measures to apprehend visitors who carry drugs. All those measures have been implemented and, as I say, I think the department is doing a good job in handling what is a difficult issue.

Mr CONLON: It must be reassuring, Mr Paget, to know that if you ever have to give prisoners hard labour, you can send them in to listen to the Minister's answers.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr CONLON: Come on, this is pathetic.

Mr Meier interjecting:

Mr CONLON: You pay this bloke as a Minister, and you reckon I am weak.

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr CONLON: Since we have discovered, over the top of the disruptive member for Goyder—and I am getting no protection from the Chair—the Minister's new found commitment to rehabilitation, what assessment for literacy and numeracy is in place for prison entry case management? What resources are allocated for the case management of these prisoners while in prison? What follow up is undertaken upon release?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will ask my CEO to talk a little about this issue in a moment, but I am very pleased that the honourable member has asked this important question. Some of us are privileged enough to be Ministers: others sit there in Opposition wishing and hoping that they were and mainly carry on with drama and theatre. I will give a few facts—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I would rather be a Minister in Government than a frustrated shadow spokesperson any day, believe you me, because we can actually do things. One of those is the issue around education in prisons. I had the opportunity recently of visiting Mobilong, which has a development program tied up with a person who has had a lot of experience in TAFE. It is marvellous to see the work

which is going on in the education unit, which is located in the library. Many prisoners, sadly, have literacy and numeracy skills at about the level of years three or four. They are working very hard on reading and writing programs and good results are being achieved.

At Mount Gambier, I had the opportunity recently of opening the education facility. It is a very good concept, and I would like to put this on the public record. In relation to many public works programs, an architect designs plans, you go through the full tender process and the builder builds the whole facility, but in this instance we had a range of educational training along the way to develop the complex. The department employed an architect to come up with the design plans and then called a tender for a builder only. After the builder was approved, the rest of the work was done by prisoners.

I had an opportunity of talking to these prisoners when I opened this facility. They are hungry for educational opportunities and they realise that this is something that is holding them back in their rehabilitation to get back into mainstream society. They learn a number of real life skills and building skills along the way. As a result of that, there is now a first-class complex for educational training and development at Mount Gambier.

Similarly, there is a program at Port Lincoln that I recently visited. The old educational facility is being so utilised by prisoners who are getting the opportunity to go through education and training that they are now building a new complex. In Port Augusta, there is a particular problem with literacy and numeracy levels, especially amongst Aboriginal prisoners. Both the CEO and I are looking at a range of initiatives to assist them. Given the difficulties in a prison such as Port Augusta when it comes to prison industry management opportunities, we are looking at developing further educational linkages at Port Augusta. At the recent Ministerial Council for Correctional Services, there was further development on education for Aboriginal people in the prison system.

As members know, with 17.4 per cent of the prison population in South Australia being Aboriginal—and the very low skill base of numeracy and literacy—it is an area into which we intend to put more effort. In summary, I am very pleased with what I am seeing in Correctional Services in terms of educational programs. It is important that we continue to work further with those programs throughout each of our prison systems.

Mr Paget: There were three elements to the question: assessment, case management and literacy and numeracy. I confine my comments to mainstream education and to recurrent rather than capital expenditure. Aboriginal education is provided by TAFE; we do not provide that. In relation to the issue of assessment, in the induction process prisoners receive an education screening. The education screening tool has been validated by TAFE as being appropriate, and that defines their needs. In terms of literacy and numeracy, it is a little hard sometimes to isolate that, because these days many programs address numeracy and literacy using a mainstream program. Thus, one might be doing a cookery program but literacy and numeracy is actually embedded in it, in terms of weights and measures, reading the recipes and so on. The same applies to other art courses. Generally, they are not discrete programs. There are some specific programs.

In terms of resources, there was an additional amount of \$283 698 in the last budget. In addition, our educators are very good at obtaining funds elsewhere. We received an extra

\$79 000 on the open training market to augment our departmental funds. To give an idea of what we do provide for that sort of outcome, there is the Certificate of General Education for Adults, which provides three levels of certification; Certificate I in Hospitality, which involves kitchen operations, and that would be a case in point where literacy and numeracy would be embedded; Certificate II in Hospitality, commercial cookery; Certificate in Engineering Production; Certificate IV in Workplace Training; Category 1 Workplace Training; Modules of National Office Skills Program; Certificate III in Hard Furnishings; Certificates I, II and III in Horticulture; Certificate IV in Information Technology; Certificates III and IV in Dairying; and a Diploma in Correctional Practice. As I indicated, we do augment with other funds, and that includes the \$79 000. We received \$25 000 from Employment SA for employment service programs for pre-release prisoners, and there was \$5 000 from Arts SA.

Mr CONLON: I will ask a question to which the Minister can provide an answer and which avoids one of the Minister's now commonplace, rambling collection of generalisations. I would like the Minister to answer this question and not head off down some path about how much he loves everyone in Correctional Services. I am not the shadow Minister for Corrections, so the Minister has an advantage over me: I am asking these questions on behalf of the shadow Minister. What does the Minister believe in ordinary circumstances to be the appropriate time for prisoners to be locked down? What is the appropriate time of day for them to be out of their cells? What is the right mix?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Again, in many ways that is an operational issue, but there are—

Mr CONLON: You don't have a view?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I have a view, and I have spoken to the CEO and staff about what happens. The fact is that I sit comfortably with the current system. The aim is that it is 12 hours a day. I have been to a number of prisons and have seen what is happening with prisoners. I do not see any issue in that respect. But that is the aim, namely, 12 hours a day.

Mr CONLON: And that is your view of things?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr CONLON: That is the question I asked as I want to know whether that is the answer—

The CHAIRMAN: Order! It is presumed that it was as he just said it.

Mr CONLON: How many of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody have been put into place? How many are still under consideration to be implemented?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Some of those relate to police, some to justice and the courts, and some to Correctional Services. At this point I am happy to let the honourable member know about some of the work taking place in the Correctional Services area. As to other parts of the question, I will take them on notice and bring back a reply.

Mr Paget: We responded in the last annual report. Most of those recommendations have been implemented. We are now auditing our compliance independently. There are very few that are in the category of 'not implemented'. Some are partially implemented. A case in point is coronial recommendations for the removal or minimisation of hanging points in Unit 3 in B Division. Our stakeholders in the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement and AJAC, through participation in our Deaths in Custody Forum held on a monthly basis—you

will find that that is reflected in their own annual reports—are satisfied with our progress. Some of the more recent issues, such as the installation of defibrillators in infirmaries, have only recently been actioned. The end result is the fact that the Institute of Criminology report shows that since 1996 we are the only jurisdiction where deaths in custody have been declining. We have not had a death in custody since July last year. Tauto Sansbury, the Chairman of AJAC, said that it cannot all be good luck.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to page 4.12 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, which deals with the upgrading of prison security systems. By how much have prison escapes dropped as a percentage of the total prison population since 1993? What measures are being implemented to upgrade security at the various prisons we operate?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: It is a relevant question, given that I admit in recent times there have been some escapes which we would not have preferred. But I want to get that into perspective, because I have been delighted that since 1992 until within the last month we saw a significant improvement in terms of preventing people from escaping in our prison system. First, that is a result of improved management and, secondly, some efforts currently being undertaken throughout a number of our prisons to upgrade security systems. That comes at a time when there has been an increase over that period in the number of people imprisoned in this State. I congratulate the staff on the work that they are doing. Since 1993 the escape rate per 100 prisoners per annum decreased from 2.29 to .97, as at 30 June 1998. At present, our escape rate is 1.2 per 100 prisoners, and this compares very favourably with the national average of 1.45 in June 1998.

As far as system upgrades are concerned, some of the systems in the prison are quite old. Ten to 15 years ago a lot of the existing electronic systems were put into place, and they were based on equipment designed for use by the USA military. Significant upgrading is going on at the moment, with approximately \$3 million being spent currently on security system upgrades as part of the total replacement value of the department's electronic security systems, which is estimated to be in the vicinity of \$10 million. Whilst I do not want to highlight for obvious reasons the type of security being put in, suffice to say that I went to Mobilong recently to see what has been finished there and was advised that it is as good as you will get anywhere—in other words, a state-of-the-art security system. A lot of work is being done at Yatala and at the Remand Centre.

In Port Augusta there has been the refurbishment of the control room, which will meet the ACA standards and the occupational health and safety requirements. I met with the officers in the control centre and they are pleased to see that that is now occurring in Port Augusta.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: To pursue that further, will the Minister outline the works under way for Stage 2 of the redevelopment at Cadell Training Centre?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I have been to Cadell on two occasions now. Not only is a lot of redevelopment work going on at Cadell with the drug therapeutic units, and so on, but also with the training and development of the horticulture and dairying areas. There have been enormous upgrades in those areas to ensure that we can get best practice in the viticultural, horticultural and dairying areas. Recently we had an Australian classification on the dairy and that is now producing homogenised and pasteurised milk for every prison throughout South Australia other than Port Lincoln. There is

\$2.4 million provided by Cabinet for capital investment for the redevelopment/upgrade work and to cater for new prisoner program initiatives that I have just spoken about.

In September 1996 my predecessor approved works for Stage 1 of \$1.189 million. That work is completed and I have looked at it. We are now into Stage 2 redevelopment, involving the administrative area upgrades, upgrading the prisoner admissions and visits area, expanding the stores area, redeveloping the canteen, which is currently located in a dormitory, and upgrading the prisoner educational facilities, which is one area I did not give an example of before that covers nearly every prison as far as an educational facility upgrade goes. The total cost of Stage 2 is \$1.3 million. I am pleased with what I see happening in the upgrading of Cadell. Staff, who have had difficult conditions to work under, will appreciate this, and it will also allow for more efficiencies. The people who live in the Cadell-Morgan area greatly appreciate the opportunity of having a prison in their area. It value adds jobs and other opportunities and clearly shows that our Government is committed to the Cadell Training Centre.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to page 4.12 of Budget Paper 4, volume 1, where reference is made under dot point 3 to funds being allocated to review assessment instruments and processes for identification of at-risk prisoners' stress screening in order to ensure that instruments are culturally appropriate for indigenous prisoners. This raises the issue of deaths in custody. Will the Minister explain how South Australia compares with other States in respect of deaths in custody?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: That question has largely been answered, but I appreciate again the concern and interest of the member for Waite in this matter. I am pleased to get on the public record very clearly that there have been significant improvements in reducing the number of deaths in custody of Aboriginals and all prisoners in South Australia. The issue is not necessarily being addressed to the same extent in some other jurisdictions. According to the Institute of Criminology Report for March 1998 we are the only jurisdiction recording declining deaths in custody since 1996. In 1997 there were 35 deaths in custody in New South Wales, eight in Victoria, 12 in Queensland, 11 in Western Australia, four in South Australia, two in Tasmania and three in the Northern Territory.

As my CEO has already said, a range of projects is going through the prison systems to further improve the safety and security aspects, because the last thing we as a Government or I as Minister want is a death in custody. and we will do everything in our capacity to further reduce those numbers.

Mr CONLON: Will the Minister give details of the number of prisoners with psychiatric illnesses or mental disabilities? Is the Minister satisfied, given the prevalence of deinstitutionalisation in recent years, that prisoners coming into the system with mental illnesses or disabilities are identified prior to entering the system, and are any difficulties being created with a shortage of resources for dealing with what would be special needs of prisoners within the system?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: This goes across a few portfolio areas. I am happy to bring back a detailed response because it involves the Attorney-General in his area involving the courts. He recently announced an initiative there that I hope will be beneficial to those people and to the community of South Australia generally. The Minister for Human Services also has an interest. A range of issues is being looked at and I will bring back a detailed response because I do not deny that a number of people enter the prison system

with a mental health problem, and as a Government we are looking at that matter holistically, which is exciting.

Mr CONLON: The Minister referred to issues concerning drug use in prison. Given what I understand to be an unacceptably high level of use, abuse and interception of drugs in the Mount Gambier prison, will the Minister give an undertaking to make public the review of prison management services at Mount Gambier prison? Last year we could not get the contract. Will we get the review?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will take that question on notice. As I indicated, I have visited the Mount Gambier prison, the management of which is outsourced to Group 4. I have put on the public record my appreciation of the work of the Public Service—

Mr CONLON: You appreciate everyone.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I do, because I am not a knocker but someone who works proactively with people who want to get on and build this State. I will thank people who are proactive rather than the negative knockers. Group 4 is doing a very good job down there and there is a range of procedures in place as in all the other prison systems when it comes to drugs in prison. I will get a more detailed reply back to the honourable member.

Mr CONLON: I will ask a question about sex offenders, in particular child sex offenders, and the resources allocated to case management assessment of those prisoners, in particular whether programs should exist or be mandatory for those prisoners upon release.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The Minister for Human Services is responsible for that area and has carriage of that matter. I will refer the point raised by the honourable member to the Minister and obtain a response.

Mr CONLON: Is there some sort of case management and assessment for these types of offenders within the system?

Mr Paget: There are different ways of approaching the treatment of sex offenders. In South Australia, the approach has been to have a community based program. In accordance with the SOTAP program, which as the Minister said comes under the province of the human services organisation, assessments are done prior to release and treatment is carried out as a community based program.

Mr CONLON: There is no program within the prison system for these types of offenders?

Mr Paget: No.

Mr CONLON: Are you happy with that?

Mr Paget: A decision had to be made whether or not to have a community based program or a gaol based program. There are arguments either way.

Mr CONLON: Why can you not have both?

Mr Paget: You could have both, but the decision has been taken to have a community based program.

Mr McEWEN: It was good to hear the Minister make reference a couple of times to Group 4 at Mount Gambier Gaol. He alluded to the magnificent project that is being conducted there in relation to the building skills centre. It is important to put on record that that is a TAFE initiative for which a lady called Anne Pick was responsible. I understand that Group 4 has accepted some outsourcing of the transportation of prisoners. I need some reassurance that that will not lead to a diminution of standards. I understand that some prisoners are being transported unsecured and that there have been a couple of incidents where prisoners have not had restraints and in one case that has caused a minor injury.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will ask the CEO to comment on those operational issues, but right around the world Group 4 has been involved in this business, and I would have to say that, from what I have seen generally—and I include the police where Group 4 transports prisoners—it does it extremely professionally. I will ask the CEO to respond on the actual design issues that have been raised by the honourable member.

Mr Paget: The honourable member is correct: some issues have been raised under freedom of information regarding exemptions granted by the Department of Transport. As a result, we are currently conducting a review. Transport SA is reviewing the issue of exemptions and standards for vehicles used to transport prisoners. We are not aware of any risk to people.

Mr McEWEN: Why have exemptions been granted? It seems an extraordinary situation where prisoners are not treated like everyone else when they are being transported on the road, particularly in terms of seat belts and other restraints.

Mr Paget: One person's seat belt is another person's hanging point.

Mr McEWEN: I turn now to the methadone program. I compliment the member for Waite on the work for which he has been responsible in the parliamentary select committee. I am interested in what Corrections is doing to cater for people who have a drug habit and find themselves incarcerated. How are those people being managed?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: This question is obviously quite topical at the moment. In 1995, following the investigation into drugs in prisons, the Grant report, to which I referred earlier, recommended the provision of a methadone program to prisoners at an appropriate time prior to their release where they had been identified as being likely to return to opioid dependence. For several years, the department has provided a reducing methadone regime for those prisoners who enter the system whilst already on the methadone program in the community. Pregnant women and HIV positive individuals who enter the system whilst on the methadone program have been managed and maintained on methadone, if necessary, according to their specific needs.

As members of the Social Development Committee would recall, the tenth report into HIV Aids and hepatitis B recommended that the Minister for Correctional Services implement a range of initiatives including an expanded methadone maintenance program for prisoners. Ministerial approval for that was given in 1998, and the Department of Human Services agreed to fund the bulk of the program in the latter part of 1998. An implementation committee, which consists of staff from my department, the Forensic Health Service and the Drug and Alcohol Services Council, has been meeting since the latter half of 1998 to explore and resolve a range of complex implementation issues.

As I have said, the focus for the implementation of prison based programs is on the maintenance of prisoners entering prisons, the identification of prisoners during the pre-release phase who are at risk of returning to opioids, and the identification of prisoners who have maintained or developed an addiction. Total funding for the program is currently \$314 000 per annum, and it is estimated that this will cater for up to 150 prisoners at any time.

Mr MEIER: What is the value in dollar terms and to the community of work carried out by prisoners under the MOWCAMP program?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: In my opinion, this is a fantastic program. I have spoken with a number of my colleagues who have seen some of the work that goes on in MOWCAMPs at Port Lincoln. The member for Flinders has told me how pleased she is with the program. That is partly because of the rehabilitation facets of it but, most importantly, from the community's point of view there is the opportunity to be able to reinvest the labour of people who have offended in programs that are actually upgrading and putting positive opportunities forward for South Australians, particularly in national parks.

These MOWCAMP programs do not take away from the private sector, because these jobs are done within government. They include: getting rid of weeds, fence building, household painting and maintenance, pest/plant control, repair and installation of park signs, road repairs, and walking trail maintenance. At the bottom end of the honourable member's electorate I have seen some of the fantastic work that is being done in Innes Park. That is generating jobs for the people of Yorke Peninsula by virtue of tourism which is growing at a rapid rate, and that has occurred partly through these programs. They have also been involved in the removal and salvage of old fencing material, breaking up concrete paving and the like.

In 1998, my department entered into a three year memorandum of understanding with the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs. I have mentioned some of them, but I will mention some of the other programs in which they have been undertaking work. I refer, first, to the Coorong National Park. My predecessor visited that park, saw what was going on and reported to me (before I became Minister) that he was pleased. There is a lot of work going on in the Danggalli National Park (up past the Bookmark Biosphere) and in the Gammon Ranges National Park.

As I have said, this work would not be possible if it were not for this agreement. It should be noted that the public sector performance audit, which was conducted in 1993, acknowledged that the benefit of these programs to the community offsets immensely the cost of having a prisoner in the prison system. I would like to say that no prisoner has escaped since the inception of the program, and it is the aim of the Government to increase the number of prisoners undertaking this work.

Mr MEIER: The Minister made the comment that no prisoners have escaped and it is good to hear. I know some of my constituents expressed real reservations in its inception phase. What has the reaction been from prisoners generally? Have they taken a positive attitude towards it? Does the Minister believe it has been of real assistance in rehabilitating them or has there been a reluctance by prisoners to be involved?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will let my Chief Executive Officer say a couple of words. The prisoners to whom I have spoken have really taken it as an opportunity to correct their ways and contribute to the South Australian community. In a similar operation, Operation Challenge, they went to Troubridge Island off Yorke Peninsula and did an enormous amount of work on the old lighthouse keepers' cottages and so on. This is another area where they have been beneficial. I will ask my Chief Executive Officer to comment on that as well.

Mr Paget: I think the popularity is evidenced in the fact that there are models of these in Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales. They are very important to complement the work opportunities available in industries in

the institutions. The answer is that they are popular and are particularly suitable for Aboriginal people in giving them the opportunity to get outside the walls.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions on the Department of Correctional Services lines, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Mr S. Ellis, Chief Executive Officer, Country Fire Service.

Mr J. Derbyshire, Metropolitan Fire Service.

Mr B. Lancaster, Director, State Emergency Services.

Mr N. Cooke, Deputy Director, State Emergency Services.

Mr B. Apsey, Emergency Services Administration Unit.

Mr I. Pickering, Chief Executive Officer, SA Ambulance Service.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I suggest that we do this in the following order: the CFS, the MFS, Ambulance Service and SES, then emergency services levy and ESAU, given that there is only a limited period and to keep some structure.

Mr CONLON: I note that the new administrative unit for emergency services is a proposition which, as I understand it, was to save money but which will require an additional \$1 million in funding above the existing funding. When will we save money from this new admin unit rather than spending more, and how will that be achieved?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The Emergency Services Administration Unit has been put in place for two reasons: first, to be able to save some money, in time, through efficiencies, purchasing power and the like; and, secondly, to be able to further support all the emergency services, in particular the CFS, the MFS and SES and, to an extent, where possible, some of the other emergency services volunteer organisations. I suggest to the member that the figure about which he is talking is \$1 million and that it has been budgeted for as in the budget papers. I believe that, in time, we will see a significant benefit to all the South Australian community and those people who provide the services as a result of the unit, but we cannot expect to set up a new unit and get every score on the board in the first few months.

Mr CONLON: Supplementary to the first question because it was not answered, I do understand it is costing \$1 million. That is the part I do know and that is the only part the Minister has told me. After we spend this \$1 million, how will it save money? Who is going to get the bullet?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The comment was: 'Who is going to get the bullet?' That is not the intent of the Emergency Services Administration Unit at all. In fact, there has been one net job increase, no job losses. The amount of money to which I have referred includes the salary of the new Chief Executive Officer, Mr Barry Apsey, and also accommodation costs and the like. The fact is that until now we have had a situation where many areas of non-operational responsibility have been duplicated within the emergency services and, by virtue of non-operational people coming into the Emergency Services Administration Unit, we will be able to free up some of the duplication of non-operational staff so that they will be able to further support paid and volunteer officers within the department. When it comes to the buying of plant and equipment, we have not been able to capitalise on the economies of scale, purchasing and tendering which we will be able to achieve through the absolute autonomy of the Emergency Services Administration Unit. I would expect there to be significant benefits within the next few years.

Certainly, I would suggest that there will be benefits to volunteers and paid staff immediately once the unit is running from July.

Mr CONLON: In that case, will the Minister tell us, for example, whether those in the MFS at present who are employed in administrative tasks will still be the people who perform those tasks in the new admin unit? Will those people such as superintendents and above who perform duties in the MFS still be responsible for those duties in the new admin unit or will some of those positions be civilianised?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The intent is that instead of some of those non-operational administrative personnel perhaps doing payroll for that department and then another agency doing the same—

Mr CONLON: I am asking about those people such as superintendents in the MFS: will they still be performing those roles in the new administration unit, not payroll clerks?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Is the member talking about operational people?

Mr CONLON: Operational people involved in administrative tasks. That is what they are. Will they still do it or will the Minister civilianise them?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Operational people who are operational in the MFS will continue to do their operational work.

Mr CONLON: Even though it has been administrative.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Operational people will continue to do operational work.

Mr CONLON: Instead of saying that, maybe the Minister could tell me whether all those people will still do the same job?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The operational people will be doing the same work. Some of the people who were involved in non-operational positions will be doing different work because, at the moment, they are duplicated across the agencies. We will be able to free up some people to further support other important issues for all services such as risk management, incident stress management, volunteer support programs, occupational health and safety, and a range of other issues that need further support and development. That is the intent of the unit and that is what will happen with the unit.

Mr CONLON: I will have to read *Hansard* to see whether I got any information out of that. As we understand it, the emergency services tax will now fund these emergency services. We have done away with the old fire insurance levy. I note that \$750 000 will be spent on ambulance services. What services are they that the money is being spent on? What are those ambulance services on which we are spending \$700 000 of the EST?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: First, I do not know why you talk about an 'EST'; I know of an emergency services levy. The Opposition loves to use the word 'tax'. The Opposition was very taxing when it was in Government, to the point where it nearly destroyed South Australia. We are not about taxing to the point of nearly destroying South Australia: we are about improving this State. We have a levy which frankly is not a new levy: it replaces an old levy which did not have the equity and fairness of the new levy, because this raises money from people who were not contributing before. According to the Act, which is a tight Act, only that amount involving rescue can be charged, and that \$700 000 is for immediate rescue and when ambulance services attend fires.

Mr CONLON: As a supplementary question: with the greatest possible respect, you are the Minister for Emergency Services. It is your tax; surely you can give us a vague notion of what those services are.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I have answered the question about the levy. The \$700 000 component is for fire and rescue ambulance services. An advisory committee has been set up to look at this matter, and the honourable member should be aware of all this, given that he was the shadow spokesperson when the Bill was debated.

Mr McEWEN: I will ask questions about the levy later but, if the levy replaces an old levy, the lady from Mil Lel whose levy has gone from \$115 to \$906 does not see it quite like that. My specific questions are in relation to table 4.82. I cannot really ask specifically about the CFS, because this is a combined emergency services budgeted operational statement. In the budgeted operational statement, rental expenses have gone from \$4 million to \$9.9 million, up more than 100 per cent; other supplies and services have gone from \$3 million to \$7.2 million, more than 100 per cent; and other expenses have gone up from \$5 million to \$19.08 million, up nearly 400 per cent. It is a bit hard to see why there have been such enormous increases in those three lines.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: You are referring to rental expenses at \$9.9 million, other supplies and services, etc. I will take that question on notice and get the full details for the honourable member as soon as possible.

Mr McEWEN: Most of my questions will relate more generally to the emergency services tax—my apologies: the emergency services levy; a tax by another name. I am interested in what SAAS will receive from the CTP fund in the next 12 months, because it begs the earlier question of the \$700 000 the SAAS will receive. Most of its funding increase came out of the enormous increases in CTP. Now it seems that on top of that they will get another chunk out of the levy. Will somebody tell me what is happening with that budget? There seems to be conflicting advice. I understand that the matter was raised yesterday in the parliamentary committee, which is not open, so we have a problem with two committees running parallel.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I have explained the \$700 000 of the emergency services levy that is being apportioned to the ambulance service. With respect to the CTP, I assume the member for Gordon talks about the compulsory third party.

Mr McEWEN: That is 300 per cent. I am wondering what is going on here with regard to the extra stamp duty. I understood that was to go to the SAAS.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The matter involving third party and stamp duty, etc., is not one I can answer for, because the Minister for Transport and/or the Treasurer have the carriage of that. I will have to take that on notice and get back to the honourable member.

Mr McEWEN: I will deal with that on Thursday with the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning.

THE CHAIRMAN: The member for Gordon has referred to the two committees running concurrently. I bring to the attention of the Committee Standing Order 259, which states that proceedings in Committee be not debated until reported and further provides that no debate may take place on any proceedings of a Committee of the whole House or a select committee until the proceedings have been reported. I remind the Committee that the select committee is examining the amount of funds to be raised by the proposed community services levy, the method by which they will be raised and the

purposes to which those funds will be applied. We must take Standing Orders into consideration in relation to the concurrently running select committee.

Mr CONLON: We are not going to debate that, but it will be necessary to ask questions on the same subject.

The CHAIRMAN: When you ask your questions you should bear that in mind.

Mr MEIER: How much of the CFS debt, which most members here would recall was a significant amount left to us from the previous Labor Government, has now been repaid?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I am pleased to advise the member for Goyder that the total the CFS debt, which was raised from Ash Wednesday in 1983 and which was until recently \$13.162 million, was repaid in February this year. That means that, for the first time in 13 years—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: It would be good if the member for Elder actually listened to this, because when his Party was in Government it loaded up the CFS with a \$13 million debt and then left it to the CFS to try to fix. If it had not been for the Government's initiatives that debt would still be there. It means that for the first time in 13 years the CFS is debt free and in a far stronger financial position than was previously the case. It will be able to face the next century in a sound financial position. About \$620 000 of additional money will therefore be able to go into the CFS which, as in the case of the State Bank debt, was otherwise going to the wall.

The CHAIRMAN: After supper we will examine the emergency services levy, and I will rule any reference to evidence before the select committee out of order.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Mr K. Pennifold, Director, Strategic and Financial Services, Department of Justice.

Ms J. Brown, Emergency Services Review Team.

Mr CONLON: I am grateful that we had the 15 minute break so that I could recover from the Minister's withering attack on the previous Labor Government. I now have my composure back, and I am ready to ask the Minister a question. Twice last year the Minister identified the perils that the MFS communications centre in Adelaide faced from earthquakes and terrorists. I note that we have not moved the centre after you astutely identified the terrible peril it was in. Perhaps Mr Derbyshire could tell us what measures he has taken to protect the communications centre from the earthquakes and terrorists. If he has not taken any measures, I can move onto another question.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will answer the question because I am the Minister. I can appreciate that there is a degree of nervousness and frustration around the member for Elder whose life in this place somewhat depends on his support from certain people of whom we are well aware. I can understand his nervousness on this issue and his frustration on the basis that I am the Minister and he is the Clayton's spokesperson.

Mr CONLON: Will the Minister come to the point?

The CHAIRMAN: It is his question: he can answer the question any way he wishes.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: One of the things you must consider when you are Minister is all the issues around a set of circumstances. Whilst the honourable member might joke about some of these, expert advice has been given to me that

suggested we had to further explore and, at least, consider issues. Therefore, I have said publicly—and I will again put it on the record tonight—that there is further development work of a business case around the future of the communications centre. I have said to the UFU as one stakeholder that I will consult with it through that process. The business case is now being examined by me and in due course further development of that business case will occur.

Mr CONLON: This is the last question on these matters before we deal with the important issue of the emergency services levy. I understand that on 30 April this year the Metropolitan Fire Service and its Chief Officer, in whom I am sure the Minister has good faith, made an offer in settlement of a wages dispute with the relevant union. On 3 May that offer was withdrawn after intervention by someone higher up. Assuming that you are the person higher up, why did that occur? Why did you take it out of the hands of your Chief Officer?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The first part of your understanding is correct: I do have confidence in my CEO who does a very good job as CEO and Chief Officer of the MFS. Your understanding there is correct, but your understanding on the other point is incorrect.

Mr CONLON: You did not intervene to have the offer withdrawn.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I know that you get uptight about some of these things—

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I have said that your understanding of the second point is incorrect.

Mr CONLON: Did you intervene: yes or no?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Your understanding is incorrect.

Mr CONLON: I do not want an answer like that.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: You have an answer.

Mr CONLON: Did you intervene?

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister has answered the question.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I have said that the honourable member is incorrect in his understanding, and that is as simple as ABC.

The CHAIRMAN: The Minister has answered the question.

Mr CONLON: We are hoping that you know something about the emergency services tax. You wrote to me and said that you were going to introduce a Bill to amend it. The main force of that amendment, of which you have subsequently become frightened, was to deem that people who held land on lease from the Crown were the owners for the purposes of the emergency services tax. I saw a copy of this Bill probably two months ago. I have no doubt that you understand the Bill and the full ramifications of it. You sort of blinked and have not had the courage to proceed with the Bill because you are frightened about what will happen to the tax. How many people hold land on leases, such as 99 year leases or perpetual leases from the Crown, who have title as good as freehold but who are not going to pay the tax? How many people and what is the value of it? How many people will not pay the tax because you do not have the courage to bring your amendments before the Parliament?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I know that the honourable member is a very slow learner, but it is not a tax. I know Labor was very taxing as a Government when it was in, and you are extremely taxing as the member for Elder.

Mr CONLON: How many people are failing to pay the levy? What is the value of it as a result of your failure to bring the Bill to Parliament and to amend it appropriately? What is it worth? How many extra people are paying because you cannot get the Bill right?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I am not at all nervous or wading back or frightened or whatever the member for Elder might say about bringing the Bill through, and I look forward to debating the Bill with the member in due course. As I said publicly, other amendments are coming through, not the least of which is to stop the Labor Party, should it ever get back into Government, from doing what the member for Ross Smith said, that is, have a go at this as a wealth tax. That was never the intent of the levy. Therefore, there have been other amendments.

With respect to the modelling that was done through the advisory committee, I understand it included the costings on the people who already own Crown land and it was simply a minor amendment to correct a drafting situation in the initial Bill.

Mr CONLON: I have a supplementary question. I do not know whether the Minister understands the question. The people who hold long-term leases from the Crown at the moment, similar to freehold, do not pay any levy. Do you understand that? You have an amendment to make them pay a levy by deeming them to be the owner. It is your Bill. How much are we losing out on by not having passed those amendments?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: If the amendments were not passed I would have to take that point on notice, but I am saying that the intention was always that people with Crown land would contribute to the levy just like people with freehold land.

Mr CONLON: That is my question. You must know. It is your Bill.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister has answered the question the best way he thinks fit.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will take the question on notice about the dollars in the event of that amendment's not going through the Parliament.

Mr CONLON: How much are you missing out on now?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will take it on notice.

The CHAIRMAN: Has the member for Elder a third question?

Mr CONLON: Yes, and I apologise to the public of South Australia for not giving good enough scrutiny to the Bill to protect them from the Minister's avariciousness. I note that the transitional provisions in the Bill provide that where people have already contributed a fire insurance levy premium for a period after 1 July this year when the new levy will be in force—and I call it a 'levy' with regard to the Minister's sensitivities—in effect they will be making double contributions for that period and they will get a refund. Those for whom the refund is less than \$10 will not get it. The Government is not so generous as to leave it with the insurers: it will take it into the fund. How much money will you get through that double dipping?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I am delighted at last to hear the honourable member admit that he was fully involved in the development and support of the emergency services funding—

Mr CONLON: Can the Minister stop playing silly buggers and answer a question?

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

Mr CONLON: How much are you double dipping? How much more have you grabbed off the long suffering public? How much more does it need reform?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Is it not interesting that the honourable member now carries on like this, because the transitional provisions, clause 4, subclauses (1) and (2), clearly, openly and up-front, in black and white in the Bill provide—and, so I get it right, I will quote—as follows:

Reimbursement by insurers—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will quote, because I want to get the facts on the record. It provides:

Reimbursement by insurers to policy holders.

4.(1) Subject to subclause (2), any amount that any insurer receives or recovers from a policy holder in respect of the insurer's purported liability under Part 3 of the Country Fires Act 1989 or part 6 of the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service Act 1936 for a period occurring after 30 June 1999 must be reimbursed by the insurer to the policy holder.

(2) Subclause (1) does not apply to an amount that is less than ten dollars.

Mr CONLON: So how much is it?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: It is not expected that it will be very much at all, but I cannot give an exact figure. Suffice to say, any money under the \$10 will go into the quarantined emergency services fund—not into general Government revenue or Treasury, as has been suggested by some people. The fact is that the amount of money that may come back is expected to be so small that it is not even factored into the overall emergency services fund.

Mr McEWEN: I refer to Budget Paper 2, page 6.2. My question is in two parts: first, what are the premium class codes that the Motor Accident Commission applies in setting compulsory third party premiums?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: They are set by the Motor Accident Commission, and all the decisions around them are worked through the Motor Accident Commission and, obviously, the Minister responsible for that, the Minister for Transport. They have been adopted through the development of the emergency services funding levy as the class codes for the different amounts of the mobile property levy.

Mr McEWEN: The second part of my question is—

The CHAIRMAN: Have you finished your question?

Mr McEWEN: Yes, because we have just heard the Minister say that they have been adopted but they have not. In Budget Paper 2, at page 6.2, it is stated that the levy on mobile property is based on the premium class codes that the Motor Accident Commission applies in setting compulsory third party premiums. The fact is that somehow between the budget papers and the levy that was completely thrown out the window and now we have a flat rate. So, taxis and trucks, which have a much higher risk and therefore a much higher rate under the Motor Accident Commission, now come back to the same levy as private vehicles. Who nobbled the Minister between the budget paper and the setting of the levy, because there are obviously enormous benefits for the taxi and trucking industries?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The way I understand it, that misrepresents the position. The Emergency Services Advisory Committee—and I cannot technically finalise its advice to me, that is, take its advice formally until 30 June, I understand—recommended what the member for Gordon has just discussed, namely, \$32 for those vehicles in that class. That was advice given to me as Minister.

Mr McEWEN: The Government has indicated that about \$16 million for the emergency services levy will be used to pay for the police helicopter, yet the budget shows \$2.7 million in expenditure. Why is there \$16 million in and \$2.7 million out?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The \$16.8 million figure is the total figure, and broken up from that are a range of other figures that are relevant to the conditions of the Act, such as the helicopter service and some of the other services that have been highlighted. The total allocation for SAPOL is \$16.81 million. That allocation for emergency services provided by SAPOL is based on advice from it and represents approximately 5 per cent of SAPOL's overall budget. The cost estimate of \$16.819 million by SAPOL allows for \$11.5 million for disaster and emergency planning and management and \$5.3 million for search and rescue. The cost estimates include approximately \$1.126 million for relevant capital works. The SAPOL estimate also includes activities related to us and investigations and support to the CFS, SES and SAMFS at vehicle accidents.

Mr MEIER: The Minister would be well aware that towns such as Kadina, Wallaroo and Moonta in my electorate are serviced by the Metropolitan Fire Service, yet the rest of my electorate, which includes the whole of Yorke Peninsula and across to Balaklava and Hamley Bridge, is serviced by the Country Fire Service. I have been approached by constituents from time to time, particularly in some of the expanding towns such as Moonta, about who is responsible in the case of a fire occurring on their property. I am also aware that in other parts of the State, particularly nearer the metropolitan area, there are issues as to who is responsible. It is very much of concern to anyone who has a property to make sure that there is no argument between the two groups as to who will attend, because perhaps in the end no-one will attend. What are the terms of the agreement reached between the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service and the Country Fire Service concerning boundaries?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I appreciate that the honourable member has raised this issue. I know that at times the honourable member does face those issues in relation to Kadina and around his electorate because I have had correspondence from him on that. There have also been issues in the peri-urban area. The South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service has responsibilities under its Act and, obviously, the CFS does as well. In 1990 an enhanced mutual aid agreement was signed. That was some time ago, and it was clear to me when I became Minister that it was time to upgrade that agreement. One matter I advised both my CEOs of soon after becoming Minister was that I wanted that revisited. I am pleased to advise that that was revisited in April this year. The enhanced mutual aid agreement has been signed off by both CEOs. It will be reviewed in future each August. Further to that, I have requested that both CEOs send me a report on a monthly basis if there are any circumstances that raise concerns or issues in terms of that agreement.

The bottom line is that the closest appliance attends the incident, whether it is the MFS going into a CFS area or the CFS going into an MFS area. We need to get the closest appliance to attend the incident. Once other appliances come along to back up, it is the commander in charge of the CFS or the MFS at that particular incident: in other words, if it is in an MFS area and the CFS is there, the MFS would take over control and the CFS would back up, and *vice versa*. To me, it is a clear and sensible way around the EMA. Publicly, I must say that, whilst a few issues have been raised, when

you look at the hundreds of incidents that they attend there have been very few incidents where there has been an issue.

The CHAIRMAN: I recognise the member for MacKillop, who wishes to ask a question.

Mr Williams: I refer to the levy. Several constituents have approached me, some farmers and some business people from the local town, who are worried that they will be forced to pay the flat fee on pieces of land that are not contiguous. How can I rationalise to them how one farm can have three different assessments on parcels of land that are contiguous giving a total land area of, say, 1 000 hectares, yet the neighbour can have three parcels of land of 1 000 hectares which are not contiguous and on which a flat fee will be paid, plus a levy based on the capital valuation? The same thing happens in the town of Millicent where one businessman has premises from which he operates in the CBD of the town and has other premises on the outskirts of town where he has a warehouse that he attends only occasionally as the need arises, yet he will pay the flat fee on both those properties, which are not contiguous, and then pays the rest of the levy on the capital value.

Another businessman in a similar enterprise with a larger property with the same total capital value pays only the flat fee once because it involves one assessment or contiguous assessments. How can I rationalise to my constituents that, because they have various properties or assessments that are not contiguous, they will be paying considerably more, involving different levels, for the same service, ostensibly from the emergency services, the CFS, and so on?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The Act specifies that there will be a fixed component and then a weighted area, depending on which area one is in. Obviously, in the South-East it will be a reduced weighting compared to the greater Adelaide area and then the land use codes come in. The consideration of 'contiguous' is the same as that under section 194A of the Local Government Act of 1934 where the definitions explain 'contiguous' and 'non-contiguous' land. They must be in the same names: if you have three companies and use them for your own purposes, obviously they are not contiguous in the same names, and I understand that that is often done for taxation purposes. The bottom line is that for those people whose properties are not contiguous the Act stipulates that there has to be a \$50 flat fee. That is the way the levy works, so if they are not contiguous the people concerned will have to pay a \$50 flat fee on each of their parcels.

Mr CONLON: I need to understand what the Minister has told us about the MFS and the pay negotiations with its employees. If, as the Minister has led us to believe, he did not intervene with Mr Derbyshire in his negotiations and his offer to the union, why did Mr Derbyshire change the offer he made to the union on the enterprise bargain?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: As Minister I certainly keep well away from the negotiations of an enterprise bargaining agreement. I am not aware that Mr Derbyshire changed anything. I understand that when negotiations are going on certain things are discussed that may be checked out to see whether something in question is a possibility and that when negotiating teams are doing business that happens.

Mr CONLON: Checked out with whom?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The negotiating team has discussions and assesses the situation from there. A formal offer was never put forward on this matter and the bottom line is that the enterprise agreement has been agreed to and it is a good, fair and reasonable agreement.

Mr CONLON: Are you saying they checked with you the offer they made?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: No, I said that no formal offer was put. You can play this game all night if you wish: the fact is that I was certainly not involved in the negotiations, but I understand that no formal offer was put.

Mr CONLON: Checking on a previous answer, if I understand the Minister correctly, he said that the amendments he will seek to the emergency services levy to ensure that those who hold Crown land on lease pay their share were used in the modelling, which provides us with the budget figure of \$141.5 million to be raised. Do I understand from that that, unless you get those amendments, there will be a shortfall in the budgeted figure? I fail to see how it can work any other way.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The modelling included all of the Crown land for obvious reasons. If a farmer has a fee simple freehold title and next door there is a perpetual lease, it was always the intent that they would all be contributing to the levy. If they were insured they were contributing before. The modelling took that into account. As to the figure involved and the amendment not being approved through the Parliament, I would have to take the question on notice and obtain the exact figure for the honourable member.

Mr CONLON: It will obviously be a matter of some significance if it is a large sum of money. Finally, assuming the Minister is able to have his amendments in Parliament, do I take it that those people who lease ETSA from the Government will be paying the levy on real property leased from the Government under the arrangements to lease our electricity assets?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I would prefer to take up the overall issue with the Treasurer and report back in due course. Certainly, a fixed levy will be paid for mobile property, but I will take that question on board and obtain a reply for the honourable member.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I return to the issue of the Government radio network for emergency services. I imagine that because of the number of services involved, the range of radio appliances and their capability and the complex nature of the communication requirement that there will be a fairly complex bill to meet. Will the Minister explain the importance of this contract and give us an idea of why it is so complex and expensive?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Again, some of the points raised by the honourable member regarding the GRN come under another Minister's portfolio, but where I can speak about the GRN as the Minister for Emergency Services I am happy to do so. For a great period of time, in whichever of the services for which I am responsible (the CFS, the SES, or the MFS) there has been a requirement to fix up what I can only describe, without being overly alarmist to the community of South Australia, as a radio network across this State which is running at best on bandaids. I include the South Australian police department in that.

I have travelled extensively around South Australia, and this matter is of enormous concern to me. If someone asks me what is the No. 1 thing that keeps me awake at night as Minister with a duty of care to the people working under my portfolio and all South Australian citizens, I have to say that it is the bandaid situation that we currently have with the radio network.

I will cite some examples of the sort of situations that we are facing at the moment. Recently, whilst visiting Bute I spoke to the CFS and SES officers who were dealing with a

major trauma which covered a significant stretch of the road. Because of the inadequacies of the radio network, one of the SES officers had to drive a vehicle from one end of the incident scene to the other to inform officers of what was happening. That is absolutely inappropriate in this day and age.

I know for a fact from talking to police in the member for Gordon's electorate that they are very concerned about the number of black spots in that area. Between Keith and Bordertown there are a number of areas where the radio network is virtually ineffective at the moment. Mobile phones do not work in many of those areas either. All these services desperately need an efficient and cost effective communications network.

The Chief Inspector involved with the GRN said to me tonight that it is most disappointing that people have not been able to understand the full picture of how good this new Government radio network will be for emergency services. He said that one of the most exciting things that he sees as a police officer responsible for the radio network is the benefits that it will bring to SAPOL. I have checked with the MFS and found that it is experiencing a range of current black spots in the radio network. One example involves the silo fires which occurred at Port Adelaide a few years ago where they could not keep communications going even between those fighting the fire and the appliances in the wharf area.

Recently, during a visit to Maitland I spoke to police who told me that they had black spots that prevented one police officer from talking to another at the other end of Maitland. This is old-fashioned stuff. It is easy for Oppositions to beat up the cost, but if you look at the situation, amortise it over seven years, see what it can do in respect of transparency and the integration of all emergency services, and include the fact that it will allow the computer aided dispatch to roll out, members will see that this is a good system for emergency services. I cannot wait for the day when this system is in place and all emergency service providers under my portfolio have a network that will work properly, including pagers, radios, trunk and Simplex systems and the like that will be included under this system.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to pages 4.21 and 4.22 of Budget Paper 4 (Volume 1) which deal with emergency prevention services and emergency incident management services. Quite a bit of money is involved in the provision of these services. Will the Minister inform the Committee of how that money will be spent on planned capital works or purchases to be made by the Country Fire Service in the coming financial year? Will the Minister outline what developments are planned?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: A range of capital works are planned for the CFS. I will ask the Director to come forward as he might be able to supply specific numbers of appliances and stations, etc. I can say that new stations are planned for Port Elliot and Goolwa, and stations are being looked at for Coober Pedy and, I think, Port Germein and a number of other areas. There is also a significant replacement program in respect of vehicles, and some of the capital works funding will allow for the upgrading of some stations. It is important that we continue to improve our capital works program for emergency services, and as Minister I will give some advice as to how I hope to be able to develop capital works in the future.

I believe that, wherever possible, it is important that we look at collocation. I have seen huge benefits when I have been to places such as Ceduna and other areas where

collocation has occurred. One of the most expensive areas in building any capital works project is the wet area. The fact that they can train together has to be of benefit to them as well. We are looking at a range of appliances and capital works, but I will ask my CFS Chief Executive Officer, Mr Ellis, to go into a little more detail.

Mr Ellis: In total, with the buildings we are looking at up to 10 fire stations to be built over this coming financial year to a total value of \$2.5 million spread across the State. In relation to appliances, we have identified up to 25 appliances, including pumpers and quick attack vehicles, which will be replaced across the State. The actual total program is reviewed during the year, and the CFS board has not finalised every station and every appliance at this time which will be replaced.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I move on to the emergency services administration unit. I am really seeking advice from the Minister on the purpose of this unit, and specifically whether we are heading towards further collocation and further synergy between the three emergency services or the range of emergency services. Will this unit ultimately sit above and command those services? Perhaps the Minister can elaborate on its purpose.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The fact is that operationally every one of the services stands alone and, from an operational point of view, there is no intention to change any of that. To give the member one example, the current CFS board stays in place, and also the obvious situation relating to the legal requirement that the board reports to me stays in place. With respect to the MFS, operationally it stands alone. The SES is slightly different because, to a reasonably large extent, it has been an administration unit, anyway, so it is coming in directly as part of the Emergency Services Administration Unit. However, again operationally the SES stands alone and Mr Brian Lancaster remains the Director.

It is very important to highlight to the community that the benefits come from streamlining the administration. I have already spoken about some of this tonight, and in particular the duplication. Even if a State has a surplus budget, no core debt, I do not believe that in this day and age it can afford to have that duplication simply to keep it agency by agency. So, it will enable the emergency services to increase its focus on its core business, that is, preventative fire management, and it will also allow it to get on with concentrating on operational issues. It will take away that duplication about which I have already spoken and, importantly, for those people coming across it will provide a career path growth. That is important because, in the past, a lot of the non-operational administrative people in those services have not had a career path growth. That will occur through the streamlining and the freeing up of some positions.

It will allow a joint approach to critical services and management of key projects across all the services. I have already talked about risk management incidents, and stress management, IT, CAD and GRN are all areas that could be managed across those portfolios. Very importantly, we have up to 30 000 volunteers for whom I want to see much more support in the future. This unit will have a dedicated volunteer support services line which will help those people.

It will also provide a general pool of expertise from which all emergency services will be able to draw as they jointly need it. In answer to the last part of the question involving the Emergency Services Administration Unit, whilst each agency will make its budget bids and so on up through the Emergency Services Team within the Justice portfolio, operationally

they stand alone. The CEO and Director of each of the operational agencies meet on a board of management with Mr Apsey, the CEO of ESAU, to examine all the administration issues involved in the agencies. So, they are working closely as a team. I see it as an exciting opportunity and there will be enormous benefits in time for those providing and those receiving the services.

Mr CONLON: I wish to return briefly to the enterprise bargaining negotiations, which the Minister left entirely to Mr Derbyshire. My understanding is that Mr Derbyshire was initially prepared to allow an enterprise bargain which retained five full-time firefighters in Port Pirie, and that that position was altered, apparently through no influence of the Government, so that those five full-time positions will now be sacrificed in Port Pirie and instead they will have only retained firefighters. That is the outcome, is it not?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The enterprise bargaining agreement is not quite finalised yet. It has been agreed to, but the United Firefighters Union now needs to do some work to ratify that with its members. The situation is that there is a mixture at Port Pirie of both paid and retained firefighters. That is a good model; it will provide an excellent service for Port Pirie, and there are no job losses with the enterprise agreement.

Mr CONLON: Do I understand the Minister to be denying that five full-time positions will go at Port Pirie?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: No; I said there will be no job losses as a result of the enterprise agreement. Over a four year period, five positions in Port Pirie which at the moment are being filled from Adelaide will be replaced by trained retained firefighters. That will give a mixture of paid and retained firefighters in Port Pirie. Those five firefighters will come back to Adelaide after that four year period when they have trained and recruited the five retained firefighters. I understand that that is in the enterprise agreement and has been agreed to by both parties.

Mr CONLON: I do not understand how you can lose five positions without losing five jobs. I refer to the new joint communications centre, for which you obviously still have some ambitions in the new location. Can you guarantee that, in the case of the Metropolitan Fire Service, communications will continue to be carried out by communications officers of the fire service as they are at present, or will they be civilianised?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I do not make comment on business cases that have not been examined until they are worked through. I have said that I will consult, and I will not enter into any debate on that matter.

Mr CONLON: You like talking, but you do not like saying much, do you? With regard to your emergency services levy, would you concede that, while you have soldered such an enormous advance for emergency services and the people of South Australia, a very large number of volunteers out there in both the CFS and SES are angry about the new levy and are particularly angry that there are few real gains for emergency services while those volunteers are paying a larger new levy? You would have to concede that is the case out there, would you not?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: There have been five reports in the past 24 years on the benefits of developing a quarantined—

Mr CONLON: Do you understand the question?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I would like the chance to answer the question.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The Minister can answer the question in any way he feels fit.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will answer it with a bit of detail because it is an important question and the member for Elder recognises that fact.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: If the member will give me a chance to talk about it, I am happy to put on the public record the benefits for volunteers under the new funding system. I want to go back to the beginning. About 24 years ago, the first of five reports indicated that we should be doing something different with respect to funding mechanisms for the emergency services levy. It has taken until now to come up with the new quarantined and guaranteed funding for emergency services. That will be enormously beneficial to all volunteers in the future. The CEOs of the departments will be able to work on strategic plans and business plans that look at guaranteed sustainability and continuity of the budget opportunities and management of their services. The volunteer based services such as the CFS and the SES will no longer have to spend valuable resources fundraising for essential equipment. Up until now, they have had to fundraise for essential equipment. This frees them up from that area when it comes to essential equipment. When it comes to the preparation of funding submissions to councils, that will now be done through the groups to the regional commander and up to the CFS CEO and the board. Six additional volunteer support officers will be put into each of the CFS regions to assist them and the SES. These are the sorts of benefits that we are putting forward.

I have said that more must be done for volunteers, and more will be done as a result of the levy. There are genuine increases in the budgets of the CFS and the SES. Part of the allocation of those budgets includes the provision of the GRN and the CAD, which I have highlighted to the Parliament tonight are essential for the well-being of those people. As we work through the transition and the volunteers start to see those benefits, in my opinion they will appreciate that they have an opportunity to further develop volunteering and their services.

Mr MEIER: Over the weekend I was speaking with one of my SES group captains (I assume would be the title) and he was a little concerned as to whether the SES would be getting additional funds. He and his volunteers have done an enormous amount of work over many years now. They are lucky to be in a council area which has supported them well. Could the Minister outline the process for the allocation of funds from the levy and indicate how the SES fits into that? Whilst the Minister has touched on it, I do not know that he gave full detail of the benefits to be gained by the SES as a result of implementation of the computer-aided dispatch (CAD) and also the Government radio network, specifically in relation to the SES.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: Certainly, I am well aware of the fantastic work that the SES does. A total of 5 200 SES volunteers are highly trained in road accident rescue and vertical rescue, and they do an enormous amount of work. You only have to look at what has happened recently in relation to the floods they attended and also the 59 volunteers who went to Sydney to help with the hailstone damage to see how effective and efficient they are—and I thank each and every one of them for that.

I believe that the SES will benefit significantly from the new funding levy. There has been an increase in the budget already. Part of that increase will be to pay for the SES GRN and CAD. The SES has had particular problems with its radio network to the point where a few months ago the Director advised me that there were critical issues and risks for the SES around the existing VHF network. To make sure that no-one was put at risk, special funding of \$200 000 was approved for a project to address that issue. By the way, that is GRN compatible, so the money is advanced in that area.

Further, CAD will be able to give enormous detail to the SES, particularly at road accident rescue and the like. There is an increase over and above the GRN in CAD, both with recurrent and capital expenditure. But on top of that—and very importantly for the SES—there is the fact that they now have the support of ESAU (Emergency Services Administration Unit) and will be moving with it into the WorkCover building in Waymouth Street. That will give the SES a real boost in terms of support for its volunteer programs and assistance of the controllers and the like involved in the CFS in rural and regional South Australia, because until now the SES has certainly been the poor cousin.

For example, under the old system the CFS in Mount Barker received funding and was well supported by the Mount Barker Council (and I congratulate the council for that): the SES did not receive that same support. The SES is

currently operating a very old truck out of an implement shed at Nairne and has had to battle just to get the basic gear. It is the intention over a period of time with this new levy to be able to support all those SES units. All up, there are 61 of them. I will be doing whatever I can as their Minister to get the scores on the board as quickly as possible. As I said, there are already quite a few scores on the board in terms of the new budget.

Mr McEWEN: I refer to page 4.39, point 2.6, 'Emergency Incident Management Services'. Why have administration expenses increased from \$2.7 million to \$16.6 million?

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: I will take the question on notice and provide a written response so that it can be explained in detail. It relates to administered items, not administered expense.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the votes completed. I thank the Ministers, members, advisers and parliamentary staff for their cooperation today. I feel that the day has been worthwhile, with 111 questions and 15 supplementary questions being asked.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10 p.m. the Committee adjourned until Wednesday 23 June at 11 a.m.