

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**Thursday 15 June 2000****ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B****Chairman:**

The Hon. G.M. Gunn

Members:

Mr M.J. Atkinson
 Mr T. Koutsantonis
 Mr R.J. McEwen
 Mrs E.M. Penfold
 Ms J.M. Rankine
 Mr I.H. Venning

The Committee met at 11 a.m.

Department of Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts,
 \$318 000 000
 TransAdelaide, \$8 300 000
 Minister for Transport and Urban Planning,
 Minister for Arts and
 Minister for the Status of Women—
 Other Items, \$4 180 000
 Administered Items for Department of Transport,
 Urban Planning and the Arts, \$992 000.

Witness:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw, Minister for Transport and Urban Planning, Minister for the Arts, Minister for the Status of Women.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr R. Payze, Chief Executive Officer, Department of Transport and Urban Planning.
 Mr T. Argent, Executive Director, Transport SA.
 Mr R. Frisby, Manager, Registration and Licensing.
 Mr F. Steele, Director, Investment and Planning.
 Ms J. Holmes, Senior Accountant, Finance.
 Mr A. Francis, Finance Officer, Department of Transport and Urban Planning.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the proposed payments open for examination. Does the minister have any opening comments?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, I do, Mr Chairman. Before beginning my statement I indicate that there is a short time for questioning on each area this year. It is much shorter than in the past because of the new portfolio arrangements that I have with local government and Aboriginal affairs—

Mr ATKINSON: Nothing to do with scrutiny.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, I have always been open to scrutiny and welcome interest in my portfolio areas. The accrual budget for Transport SA for 2000-01 amounts to \$489 million, consisting of cash items of \$375 million and accrued items, such as depreciation of assets, superannuation and long service leave liabilities of \$114 million. As part of the government's commitment to regional development,

\$83.4 million will be invested in strategic road infrastructure in regional areas in the coming year. The budget also incorporates \$46 million of federal funds for road construction and maintenance of the national highway system, including works on Portrush Road, overtaking lanes between Adelaide and Port Augusta and the widening of the Eyre Highway.

Other projects include: a new regional roads fund; the continuation of the 10 year commitment to seal all rural arterial roads by 2004; upgrading of the Port Wakefield to Kulpara Road on Yorke Peninsula and widening of the Lincoln Highway on Eyre Peninsula; upgrading of tourist roads in the Flinders Ranges and on Kangaroo Island; widening of the Mid North freight route; and construction of overtaking lanes on the Princess and Riddoch highways and Fleurieu Peninsula.

The investments in the metropolitan area next financial year are dominated by \$44 million for stage 2 of the Southern Expressway from Reynella to Old Noarlunga. A further \$5.4 million is provided for the upgrading of Robe Terrace as part of the Adelaide Better Roads program; and \$1.4 million will be provided for the major upgrading of Commercial Road at Port Noarlunga.

The government has provided \$3.78 million on pre-construction activities for the third river crossing of the Port River at Port Adelaide and Gillman Highway. I look forward to Mr Atkinson supporting the bill before the parliament to amend the Highways Act and facilitate this matter. The safety of school children crossing arterial roads is a priority for the government, and the budget for next financial year provides for the completion of the program to upgrade school zones on arterial roads. By July next year, 67 crossings will have been upgraded since this program began in early 1999.

The budget also provides for the following: bus priority lanes to Football Park; the completion of road safety audits across the state; grants to community road safety groups; updating of the cycling strategy; completion of the four year recreational jetties upgrade program and three new patrol boats for state waters; and \$1.48 million to replace the current driver licensing and vehicle registration computer system. Cycling funds of \$1.2 million will be allocated to councils to upgrade cycling facilities. Major cycling routes will be expanded through the Willunga to Marino recreational trail and the Coastal Way along the metropolitan foreshore; and 34 bike education programs will be provided next financial year, with 10 in regional South Australia.

Meanwhile, expressions of interest have been called from private operators to reopen all or part of the South-East rail network as a commercial operation following the recent surrender of the rail lines by ASR to the state government.

The CHAIRMAN: Does Mr Atkinson wish to make an opening statement?

Mr ATKINSON: No, sir. The portfolio statements at page 7.4 say that you expect to spend \$12 347 000 on coordination and advice this year, and page 7.5 sets out your targets for the year. Will the minister advise the committee in detail how the expenditure of this \$12 million is to be divided between the different target areas nominated on page 7.5; and will the minister provide—on notice, of course—a fully itemised list of all expenditure undertaken from this \$12 million with a value exceeding \$10 000?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The consultancies?

Mr ATKINSON: No, the coordination and advice—I have not come to consultancies.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will obtain the details for the honourable member.

Mr ATKINSON: In time for the resumption of parliament? Normally these questions are answered in two weeks.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I understand, Mr Chairman, that any questions for which I undertake to provide a reply I must do so within a time frame.

The CHAIRMAN: If it is at all possible.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: My office is efficient and we will do so within the two week time frame.

Mr ATKINSON: I am very pleased to hear that commitment because the Attorney-General tends to provide his answers around Christmas eve. Will the minister list all consultancies let during 1999-2000, indicating to whom the consultancy was awarded; whether tenders or expressions of interest were called for each consultancy and, if not, why not; the reasons for each consultancy; and the cost of each? We would also be interested to know which consultants submitted reports during 1999-2000, the date on which the report was received by the government and whether the report was made public.

The CHAIRMAN: It is an extensive question.

Mr ATKINSON: Not really, Sir. It is quite modest.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I have all the information and I will take probably an hour to get through it. I could provide the pages today and read it through, but I do respect the fact that the time constraints for questioning are short—

The CHAIRMAN: Do you seek to have them incorporated?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, I could have them incorporated. I will incorporate them for Transport SA at this stage. Does the honourable member plan to ask this question in respect of every portfolio?

Mr ATKINSON: No, I would hope that this would cover your entire portfolio.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I can either provide it under Transport SA for every portfolio or only Transport SA for this line and then do the others as we come to them.

Mr ATKINSON: For the transport portfolio, please.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, I can do that. I incorporate the relevant tables in *Hansard*.

Consultancy Expenditure Proforma
Consultancies less than \$10 000 at time of engagement

Portfolio: Transport and Urban Planning

Department: Department for Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts

Agency/Board/Trust: Transport SA

All Goods and Services were purchased in line with Treasurer's Instruction No. 8

Consultant	Purpose/Terms of reference	Total estimate at time of engagement
Native Flora Works	Pt Augusta-Pt Wakefield, Lochiel Corner, Veg Survey	1 020
Terry Magryn & Associates	Engineering Design for Beachport Boatyard	1 200
Native Flora Works	Upper Sturt Road: Lindsay Tce Belair, Veg Survey	1 220
Hassell Pty Ltd	Vegetation Survey Hahndorf Echunga	6 510
Kinhill Pty Ltd	Vegetation Survey Dukes Highway	4 706
Native Flora Works	Yankalilla-Victor Harbor, MM27—MM27.2, Veg Survey	1 880
Phil Wild	Gray Street/Gawler Street, Pt Noarlunga, Veg Survey	1 895
Casuarina Land Mangement	Innaminka-QLD Border, Veg Survey	3 750
Hassell Pty Ltd	Vegetation survey Blackwood Goolwa	2 394
Terry Magryn & Associates	Engineering Design for Robe Boatyard	2 630
Kinhill Pty Ltd	Snowtown-Pt Wakefield, Passing Lanes, Remnant Veg Survey	2 874
Nigel Turner	MNRd, Grand Junction Rd to South Tce, Montague Rd-Warrendi Rd	3 040
Tree Net	SA Veg data verification and research plant data	2 500
Kinhill Pty Ltd	Vegetation survey Noarlunga Victor Harbor	2 947
Hassell Pty Ltd	Burra-Robertstown MM0.0-Mm25.8 Veg Survey	4 290
Hassell Pty Ltd	Willunga-Myponga, Vegetation Safety Survey	4 960
Hassell Pty Ltd	Meadows-Willunga, MM0.0 to MM5.0, Veg Safety Survey	5 580
Tree Advisory Services	SA Veg data verification and research plant data	3 500
Hassell Pty Ltd	Vegetation Survey McLaren Vale Kangarilla	4 136
Terry Magryn & Associates	Pt MacDonnell Boatyard, Concept and Design	8 500
Hassell Pty Ltd	Meadows-Willunga, Vegetation Safety Survey	4 960
SA Weed Control Pty Ltd	South Eastern Highway Swanport Pennisetum Cladestinun control	5 400
Hassell Pty Ltd	Hahndorf to Echunga (entire length)	6 510
Hassell Pty Ltd	Booloroo Centre to Jamestown Vegetation Survey	7 010
Hassell Pty Ltd	Vegetation Survey Mt Barker Flaxed road	5 825
Perkins Board Pty Ltd	Geographer and planner	8 600
Casuarina Land Management	Vegetation Survey West End Kangaroo Island	8 843
PPI Services P/L	Pollution Control Systems for Robe and Beachport Boatyards Stage 1	9 780
Hassell Pty Ltd	Eyre Hwy, Cungenya-Karcultaby Veg Survey	9 995
Ryan Norman & Associates	Road Network Strategy	2 000

Kinhill Pty Ltd	Dukes Hway Passing Lanes, MM133.4 to MM136.5	4 706
Maunsell McIntyre	Design & Documentation of the provision of Traffic Signals The Grove Way Junction Bridge Rd	8 875
TOTAL		152 035

Consultancies between \$10 001 and \$50 000 at time of engagement

Consultant	Purpose/Terms of reference	Total estimate at time of engagement
Kinhill Engineers	Review of Fishing Industry Charges	12 516
Hassell Pty Ltd	Phytophthora Surveys, Fleurieu Peninsula Rds	15 470
Kinhill Engineers	Develop Models for Fishing Industry levy project	16 920
Phillips Management Consultants	Operational, industrial, policy and Strategy	20 000
Casuarina Land Mangement	Drive By Veg Survey, N&W Region, Eyre Peninsula	17 365
Patrick O'Connor	Drive By Veg Survey, Various Rd's Upper SE/Marlee/Lower SE	24 100
Resource Monitoring & Planning	Drive By Veg Survey, Various Rd's Yorke Peninsula	18 290
Hassell Pty Ltd	Jet Ski Legislation Review	20 720
QED Pty Ltd	Upgrading of Traffic Signal Controllers	41 000
Kinhill Engineers	Commercial Non Fishing Vessel Levy	20 000
InterBiz	GST-Masterpiece System Modification	25 000
Pricewaterhouse Cooper	GST-Tax Advice	25 000
HDS Australia Pty Ltd	Design & Documentation of 3 overtaking lanes Pt Augusta Pt Wakefield Rd	24 632
Kinhill Pty Ltd	Design & Documentation of overtaking lanes Dukes Highway	18 478
Kinhill Pty Ltd	Barossa Valley Way, Old Kapunda Rd Intersection	13 652
Dane Sutton Clarke	Design & Documentation of 2 overtaking lanes Pt Augusta Pt Wakefield	11 680
Kinhill Pty Ltd	Design & Documentation of 2 overtaking lanes Dukes Highway	13 866
Kinhill Pty Ltd	Dukes Highway Overtaking Lanes	12 889
HDS Australia	Pt Augusta-Pt Wakefield Overtaking Lanes	18 474
Egis Consulting	Design & Documentation of 2 overtaking lanes Riddoch highway	22 220
Egis Consulting	Design & Documentation of 2 overtaking lanes Princes Highway	22 220
BC Tonkin & Associates	Design & Documentation of 3 overtaking lanes Pt Augusta Pt Wakefield	24 760
PPK Environment & Infrastructure	Design & Documentation of 3 overtaking lanes Dukes Highway	25 460
Green Environmental Consultants	Southern Expressway-Independent Landscape Advice	34 000
Lauren Davis-Native Flora Works	Adelaide to Crafers extension-removal & potting of native grasses	16 560
TOTAL		515 272

Consultancies above \$50 001 at time of engagement

Consultant	Purpose/Terms of reference	Total estimate at time of engagement
Simson Bowles & Associates	Strategy for the Replacement of Drivers System	100 000
QED Pty Ltd	Port Lincoln Freight Access Study	75 420
QED Pty Ltd	Barossa Access Study	65 960
National Economics	Greenhouse Gas Abatement	60 000
RoadUser International	On-road dynamic performance testing of Medium Articulated heavy vehicles with dog/pig trailer	65 000
Connell Wagner	Britannia Roundabout Concept Planning & Development	231 000
Steer Davis & Gleave	Living Neighbourhood program	450 000
Coffey Partners	Southern Expressway-Geotechnical Services Phase 2	159 665
Vipac Engineers	Southern Expressway (Stage 2)-Acoustic Assessment & Design	91 000
EGIS	Southern Expressway-Environmental Services	170 000
Hassell Pty Ltd	Southern Expressway—Landscape Design	247 000
Connell Wagner	Hindmarsh Island Bridge-Project Management	344 000
Connell Wagner	Southern Expressway-Bridge Design	205 500
BC Tonkin	Southern Expressway-Hydraulics & Hydrology	265 000
Maunsell McIntyre	Adelaide-Crafers, Construction Issues	321 000
Connell Wagner	Southern Expressway-Road & Civil Works Design	750 000
TOTAL		3 600 545

Mr ATKINSON: Will the minister provide details of all advertising and promotional activities and campaigns undertaken by all agencies within her portfolio for 1999-2000, and the purpose and cost of each?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not have that information at hand but I will provide that information within the two week period.

Mrs PENFOLD: I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.10, 'Regional roads funding'. In response to the state budget for the next financial year, I understand that the South Australian Farmers Federation has claimed that spending on regional roads has been cut by \$3 million. Given the importance of these roads to the economy of the state and to our electorates, will the minister comment on this claim and provide examples of the government's commitment to roads in rural and regional South Australia?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I was surprised to hear the claim by the South Australian Farmers Federation and I am pleased to have this opportunity to clarify the situation. It is important, in terms of regional and rural road funding, to understand that these figures should be addressed over a two financial year period (this financial year and the next) and the sum of money to be invested is \$175.3 million. That amount has not been changed as a result of the budget delivered for the next financial year, and there has been no cut of \$3 million (or any dollars) over the two financial years.

However, we have adjusted programs between the two financial years. Originally, it was proposed that \$86.7 million would be spent on regional and rural roads in this financial year but, as the year progressed, it was obvious that there would be some underspending on metropolitan roads, mainly arising from the Southern Expressway. Therefore, rather than not spend the funds that had been voted for, we adjusted the program and an amount of \$5.2 million in un-spent metropolitan funds was diverted to regional and rural roads this financial year. In fact, funds spent on regional and rural roads this financial year has increased from the original proposal of \$86.7 million to \$91.9 million. That has meant an adjustment to next year's budget because of those projects being brought forward from next year and \$83.4 million will be spent next financial year. The outcome in terms of the number of projects and dollars over the two financial years is the same.

There will be a number of new projects starting in rural areas next financial year: the Port Wakefield to Kulpara Road, \$1.485 million; the east-west freight route through Peterborough, Jamestown and Warnertown, \$695 000; new overtaking lanes on the Princes and Riddoch Highway in the South-East, \$1.485 million; the ongoing projects for the widening of the Lincoln Highway to Arno Bay, \$380 000 and the widening of the Eyre Highway, Karcultaby to Cungena, Puntabie and Wirrulla, \$3.4 million.

Mrs PENFOLD: I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.10 regarding the upgrading of local rural roads. When the Premier opened the Kimba-Cleve road on 17 December last year he foreshadowed the commencement of a new regional roads program. I understand that this program is designed to seal and upgrade local rural roads which play an important role in economic development and/or tourism. Will the minister provide an update of the status of this new program?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am pleased to advise the committee of the status of this new program. This is the first time for decades that any state government has dedicated

funding for local rural roads from state funding sources. For many years, local government has been solely responsible for roads under its ownership. Initially, these roads were used for local traffic, but following the economic development in regional areas in recent times, the change in the way in which SACBH is operating in terms of receiving of grain and also for tourism purposes, many of these local roads are attracting heavy traffic well beyond the capacity of local councils to maintain them safely and in a serviceable condition.

So, the government has decided to dedicate the money that will be gained in the next financial year from the increase in national registration charges on heavy vehicles. This increase will take effect from 1 July this year, and the state will gain \$2.2 million from that source. We will dedicate those funds in the next financial year and forever a day to local roads that are of regional significance in terms of development.

I am pleased to advise that the six successful projects under this new program are: Bratten Way on the lower Eyre Peninsula, which is in the honourable member's electorate, \$456 000; and the Burra heavy vehicle by-pass in the Mid North, \$350 000. The chairman has lobbied long and hard for this initiative, and I am pleased that we have now been able to provide this benefit. Gomersal Road in the Barossa Valley will gain another \$550 000. In the South-East, \$400 000 will be designated for roads. We have not determined which road will receive that \$400 000 because we are awaiting the outcome of the South-East transport study to the year 2020. When we receive that, we will assign that \$400 000. Bowhill Road in the Murray-Mallee will get \$244 000, and the Overland Corner Road in the Riverland will receive \$200 000.

I would like to add that we are able to invest that sum of money (\$2.2 million) next year. This complements the special local roads fund; it does not replace it. So, there are federal and local funds, and this amount is in addition. It also complements investment in the sealing of rural arterial roads over a 10 year period to 2004.

It is the government's intention that, when all these projects have been completed by the end of the year 2004, this money (about \$4.4 million this year but sometimes up to \$4.75 million) will be diverted into this regional roads development program. So, this will be a handsome sum of money for investment in local roads of regional importance in the future. I insert in *Hansard* a list of rural arterial roads and the program for the sealing of those roads to the year 2004.

Unsealed rural arterial road in incorporated areas
Current program status

Road name	Length (km)	Length remaining
		unsealed as at June 2000 (km)
Spalding-Burra	6.80	Completed
Burra-Morgan	61.40	Completed
Port Wakefield-Auburn	4.30	Completed
Morgan-Blanchetown (nth 10 km)	10.00	Completed
Hawker-Orroroo	60.00	30.00
Brinkworth-Blyth	8.30	Completed
Mannum-Bowhill	4.90	Completed
Bowhill-Walker Flat	22.00	22.00
Snowtown-Magpie Corner	14.70	Completed
Kimba-Cleve		
(revised December 1996)	55.00	Completed
Lucindale-Mount Burr (nth 5 km)	5.00	Completed
Booloroo Centre-Jamestown	32.60	22.60
Burra-Eudunda	28.90	23.10
Lucindale-Mount Burr (sth 24 km)	24.00	24.00
Morgan-Blanchetown (sth 26 km)	26.00	26.00

Road name	Unsealed rural arterial road in incorporated areas Current program status	
	Length (km)	Length remaining unsealed as at June 2000 (km)
Elliston-Lock (revised December 1996)	72.00	42.20
Highways fund expenditure	435.90	189.90

Mrs PENFOLD: I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.42 regarding the Port Lincoln heavy vehicle study. What is the status of this study; has it been completed; and when will it be released?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: This study has been completed. I understand that, with the honourable member's cooperation, Transport SA will arrange a public meeting for the release of this document and discussion on it in the next month at the latest. This study has been undertaken by Transport SA with consultants and the support of the City of Port Lincoln and SACBH because of heavy vehicle movements through the streets of the City of Port Lincoln.

The main concern relates to Porter Street, London Street and Tasman Terrace. The briefing that I have had on this study to date suggests that the main issue is the viability and maintenance of the narrow gauge rail corridor for the carting of grain. Clearly, the challenge in terms of heavy vehicles in Port Lincoln is that we, together with the operator, ASR, attract as much grain as possible to rail in the longer term. If we are able to do that, we should be able to contain the number of heavy vehicles to about 130 to 150 per day, which is the average during a grain season. When the grain season is not active, heavy vehicles using Liverpool Street in Port Lincoln number about 90 to 100.

If we are not successful in gaining more business for rail for the cartage of grain, a by-pass will be required at a cost of \$12 million, which is the preferred option. That is not my preferred option overall. That money would come from the transport budget. So, there is keen interest in Transport SA's making sure that rail is effective in terms of the cartage of grain. I highlight that point, because I think this is an exciting and challenging new perspective for Transport SA, which formerly has been known as the Highways Department and the Department of Road Transport. Its focus now as Transport SA requires it to look beyond just road issues; it must look at freight and take into account freight movements not just by road, and we are trading—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: It is not for the honourable member to question the minister on when or how she answers questions.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I'm glad that you are, because this is an important new focus for Transport SA and the way in which it makes investments not just in road today but in terms of road and rail issues to do with freight overall. If the opposition wishes to take exception to the way in which I have answered questions, I do not mind reading onto the record every consultancy for which I have the information here and withdrawing my earlier offer to insert this information in *Hansard*.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes. We can progress this with some goodwill.

The CHAIRMAN: I sincerely hope that the whole committee is progressed with goodwill. The chair will not put

up with any nonsense. Last night, I showed the committee how I intend to deal with people who do not adhere to the rulings of the chair. I will apply the same heavy-handed method, if required, to any member.

Mr ATKINSON: Like the member for Hammond.

The CHAIRMAN: The member for Hammond or any other member will get the same treatment. We will progress this in a congenial way.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Thank you for your wise judgment, sir.

The CHAIRMAN: You do not have any alternative.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: That is right, and thank goodness we don't, sir, because it wouldn't be the same.

The CHAIRMAN: You won't be here to—

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: You're not threatening me are you, sir?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: You have leave to ask your question, so get on with it.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: If the minister wants to be protected by her backbenchers, that is fine. In the Legislative Council on 3 May 2000 the minister indicated that the government was proposing to install 12 additional red light cameras. Will she confirm that these red light cameras are also capable of detecting speeding offences?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Red light cameras have a different purpose to speed cameras.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I understand that. I wonder whether they can detect speeding offences as well.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: They are not proposed for that purpose. The bill before the parliament only provides for red light cameras and demerit points and not for demerit points with speed cameras.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I realise that. I am asking whether these devices have the ability to detect speeding offences as well.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not have that technical knowledge.

Mr Argent: I do not believe that that would be the case.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: We can find out for you. I will make inquiries. If they can work in that way, they would not be authorised to do so.

Mr ATKINSON: During estimates last year you announced funding of \$150 000 for community road safety, and that included the appointment of a full-time community road safety officer and \$50 000 to fund grants for each community road safety group to develop and implement local initiatives. Over the past 12 months the number of community road safety groups in South Australia has increased significantly to 13, yet this budget earmarks just \$50 000 to support community road safety initiatives. Will the minister provide an account for last year's \$150 000 allocation, and how does she intend to support the increased demand that will be generated by the significant growth in the total number of community road safety groups?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will have to get the honourable member the allocation of funds for the last financial year. I understand that the funding was limited to a maximum amount of \$5 000 per project and there was no indication that funds in addition to that would be required this financial year. The coordinator of the program engaged by Transport SA is Mercedes Haralam and I know that her work is appreciated by road safety groups to the extent that some alarm was expressed over the Easter period when the national sponsor for the driver revival initiative pulled out. Through Transport SA we were able to make sure that every one of those driver

revival stations received funding. Ms Haralam organised that at very short notice. I will get further information and answer the question in full.

Mr ATKINSON: The budget commits \$495 000 for urgent remedial treatment of the state's arterial roads following the identification of deficiencies through road safety audits. In addition, the minister's own media release of 25 May this year, entitled 'Rural Roads a Priority', stated that a more detailed funding strategy would be developed in the coming financial year to address further remedial treatments. What proportion of the total cost of remedying the deficiencies identified does \$495 000 represent?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I cannot answer that question because all of the road audits have not been completed. They are to be completed by the end of this calendar year and then we will have a full picture. We do not have a full picture at the moment. The government invested \$880 000 over two financial years to undertake these audits, and our commitment was always to complete that project by the end of this calendar year. Because some of the audits have identified some things that could be done promptly without a lot of design, consultancy and survey work, we have decided that rather than wait for the completion of all the road audits we should start some of that urgent work now.

Mr ATKINSON: I will rephrase the question. Of the audits that have been done, what proportion of the required work is funded in this year's budget?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not know that we would have assessed all of the audits that have been received to date in terms of a cumulative total. We have said that urgent works have been identified and we will provide nearly \$500 000 to do that work.

Mr ATKINSON: Would you agree that that will not go very far?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am not conceding that at all. I do not think you should speculate because I do not know the outcome of the audits. Some of the issues you could probably deal with by lowering speed limits. We may not necessarily do that. It may be that we do not have to do some of those works. If you have a higher speed limit you need a higher standard of road. There are trade offs, I suspect.

Mr ATKINSON: So instead of improving the road you lower the speed limit?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I did not say that. There are trade offs that could be made and, until we see the full range of the audits, I do not think it is worth speculating. I suggest that the honourable member would be unwise to speculate.

Mr ATKINSON: The minister indicated when launching the Adelaide Better Roads Program in August 1998 that the upgrading of the Britannia roundabout was a key element of this program and that it would be fixed in three to five years. The minister is subsequently reported to have said that the plans to upgrade this black spot were only conceptual, that the government had no concrete plans to proceed with the upgrading and the government had not committed to a time frame but that the project would be considered as part of the 2000-01 budgetary process. Will the minister confirm that this budget contains no allocation for work of any kind at the Britannia roundabout? Does the project remain part of the Adelaide Better Roads Program and, if so, when will the promised work commence? If the Britannia roundabout is not part of the Adelaide Better Roads Program, why is it not?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It certainly is part of the Adelaide Better Roads Program and a lot of work has been undertaken with stakeholders, local residents, users and

councils to develop a range of concepts to address the worst black spot in the metropolitan area, other than Gepps Cross where the federal government is investing funds at that site. The work was done and then the state government was able to secure the Le Mans race and there were various requirements in terms of motor racing. That site required us to look again at some of the outcomes of the conceptual study, so that work was not completed by the time we had to finalise the budgets for this financial year. So, we are doing some work with I think the Adelaide Better Roads team, tourism and the Motor Sports Corporation, and that should be finalised shortly, but that work was not finalised by the time we had to establish our budget commitments for the coming financial year.

Mr ATKINSON: If we are to keep Le Mans and accommodate it, there are certain things we cannot do at the Britannia roundabout; there are certain solutions we cannot try.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am not sure I completely understand what you are trying to say. The favoured proposal was an underpass and we would have to look at how that would work in conjunction with the long straight that Le Mans and Clipsal would need. We are just going through their requirements in the plans, because those issues have arisen since the first concepts were developed.

Mr ATKINSON: So, those car races effectively rule out certain potential solutions to the Britannia roundabout?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No; it can all be accommodated, and that is our goal. The problem is just accommodating it at the moment, which we could not finalise. As the honourable member would know, there are sensitivities about the use of the parklands and a whole range of things that we must take into account. We are not after a quick fix solution.

Mr ATKINSON: At the very least, the motor races are holding up progress, at least temporarily?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No; it is an expensive project, and we want to make sure we have it right before I go in and seek the final funds to advance the project. Secondly, there are parklands issues and those sorts of sensitivities with council, and we have bills before parliament in terms of bringing them back, parklands management and all the rest. We want to make sure we are accommodating a whole range of issues. I suspect the honourable member would wish us to do this diligently—and we will.

Mr McEWEN: Minister, I congratulate you on now calling for expressions of interest for the operation of South-East Rail. I note that part of the proposal agreement talks about an arrangement involving the lease of land for about 50 years, plus a transfer of appropriate assets to the lessee. Will you indicate where standardisation fits into that proposal?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The standardisation may well be an option and may be required as part of any reopening of the lines, but what we have put out in the expressions of interest is an open opportunity for any proponent to submit a concept of how they would see the lines operating on a commercial basis in the future. They may well be prepared to support and invest in standardisation of the line. So, at this stage I am not prepared to say that the state government would undertake that project as a whole or in part, because I would not want to limit the private sector's investing in that project. I do not want to leave it all to the taxpayers to do if that is the only option to reopen some of those lines. We must make sure that it operates on a commercial basis.

I take up the earlier point made in the question from the member for Flinders: Transport SA will be looking broadly

at the issue of what our forward plans are and must be for road investments if all that is produced in the South-East—the blue gums, produce from the wine industry and everything else—is carried on our roads, and what the demands will be on those roads. Perhaps we can reduce that demand, not only in terms of road wear, road dollars and road safety but also by trying to attract more business to a viable rail service. So, it is a complex equation. Transport SA will be looking at trade-offs in road expenditure and rail, as well as the options from the private sector for a commercial operation.

Mr McEWEN: So, what you are saying is that you are looking at an integrated freight plan, and I endorse that as the obvious way to go. As part of that, we have significant lands within the city of Mount Gambier as part of the rail corridor. Earlier in the year Transport SA asked the city of Mount Gambier to produce a vision document on that. To date it has not been circulated, and the reason given is that it is your wish that it not be circulated. Will the minister please clarify that position?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I asked that the council consider not circulating it so that we did not confuse the issues for the local community, because at that stage we had a choice of not doing anything on South-East Rail when Australia Southern Railroad determined that it would surrender the rail lines. It had a two year lease on those lines, and by November last year it was working out whether or not it would surrender the lines to the state government; it has now done so. We had a choice to do nothing—and that is what the situation is now: nothing operates on them other than the limestone tourist service—or we could call for expressions of interest. The government took the more positive option. But in our doing so I did not want the community to believe it could do other things with that rail yard land at Mount Gambier or that any future operator would believe that the options were limited because of community demand for return of those lands for community purposes.

Mr McEWEN: Given that on page 7.10 you say you will continue to divest former AR rail land to councils for community use, if as part of this expression of interest process these lands are identified as being surplus to any potential operator, are you prepared to continue with that position?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: One of the ways in which a future operator may be able to operate a viable commercial service is utilising those lands themselves. I do not want to prejudice the rail operation and the possibility of reopening those lines by saying that those lands are all going to community purposes when they could be part of a commercial undertaking.

Mr McEWEN: I come now to school crossings. There was some disappointment that Allendale East school crossing was not in last year's plan. There was some understanding that it was. Has it simply been rolled over and is it now in this year's plan?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: They would not let me roll it over even if I wanted to.

Mr McEWEN: You have, and will you now roll it back?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No. I think there was a misunderstanding earlier, but can I give the honourable member an assurance that the Allendale school crossing will be upgraded by the end of this calendar year, even though the whole program of upgrades totalling \$2.57 million will not be completed until the end of next financial year. Your school crossing will be upgraded by the end of this calendar year.

Mr McEWEN: The good news continues with our Minister for Transport and Urban Planning. I will come to a third good news story—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

Mr McEWEN: The second one on rail was supplementary.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

Mr McEWEN: Thank you, Tom. It will be challenging anyway; the numbers could get too big. The third good news story is about overtaking lanes. What community consultation process was undertaken in finally deciding where those lanes will be?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Transport SA has been developing a long-term overtaking lane strategy, because there is no doubt that the federal government's investment in the overtaking lanes between Port Augusta and Port Wakefield and also the state government's investment in the overtaking lanes going to Victor Harbor have led to enormous demand across the state for more and more overtaking lanes on roads.

So, we have developed this strategy. The first ones to be identified as a priority on a statewide basis are the Princes Highway and Riddoch Highway. I am advised that the physical location of each lane has been determined by taking at least the following major criteria into consideration: first, the existing road alignment, including safe distances for safe entry into and exit from the overtaking lanes, and the location of the existing junctions and local property access; secondly, the issue of significant existing accident history; and, thirdly, existing terrain environment to ensure minimum disturbance to significant or remnant vegetation, and minimising the potential for any disturbance to Aboriginal heritage sites.

It is not an issue of putting it down anywhere without taking into account all those sensitivities. Mr Argent may wish to comment about the discussions with the local councils of Grant and Wattle Range in Mount Gambier.

Mr Argent: As I understand it, both councils are happy with the location of these first two areas that have been nominated.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In fact, there will be three in all, including the Princes Highway with two lanes, one in each direction, located approximately 15 kilometres from Mount Gambier. The Mount Gambier-bound lane is proposed to be 1.4 kilometres long, and the Millicent-bound lane 1.8 kilometres long, with a clear distance between the two lanes of 1.2 kilometres. The preferred option for the Riddoch Highway is to develop a short duplication of the road for two kilometres using the old road alignment by creating passing opportunities in both directions, approximately 15 kilometres from Mount Gambier.

Mr ATKINSON: This may not be a transport question because the minister's 1998-99 annual report is undifferentiated in this respect. Why is Donald McDonald paid \$17 500 for 'ongoing policy advice'? The purpose of the consultancy is unclear from the annual report. It may be an arts consultancy.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is an arts consultancy.

Mr ATKINSON: Is it the same Donald McDonald who chairs the ABC board? Will the minister explain the purpose of the consultancy? Does he undertake other work on behalf of the South Australian government and, if so, what? Was this mission for 'ongoing policy advice' put out to public tender?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am bemused that the opposition has such little interest in transport that it is now

asking a consultancy question relating to the arts portfolio. The consultancy involving Mr McDonald was publicly announced at the time: there was nothing untoward about it. We were very fortunate to gain his support to chair the Ring Corporation as part of the staging of the very successful Wagner's *Ring* cycle which generated over \$10 million for this state. I would have thought that a consultancy costing \$17 000 would be one of the best value consultancies that any government at any time had undertaken.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.9, states:

Output: 2.4—Other regulatory services expenditure including rail has decreased as the Rail Safety Unit is awaiting finalisation of its funding structure.

What is the minister's intention in relation to the Rail Safety Unit?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That is my doing, because it was always envisaged that the Rail Safety Unit would be fully funded by accreditation charges from rail operators from industry. My view was that these charges would not be levied until it was understood that every state would not lever these rail charges in respect of each accredited operator. Fundamentally, I find it unsatisfactory that rail should be so prejudiced in this way in terms of its accreditation.

The approach that has been developed for accreditation and safety performance of rail is so complex compared to any regime for the heavy vehicle industry and road use. Those companies are registered and pay the charges in the one state, yet for some reason for rail we are seeking to reform it and improve the safety, but we are asking every company in every state to support an accreditation and safety regime. I find that fundamentally wrong when we are trying to reform and upgrade rail and not prejudice it in terms of its competition with the heavy vehicle industry.

So far I have not been successful nationally in my campaign. It may be that this year we will have to charge every rail company for the cost of operating our Rail Safety Unit in Transport SA. I think we have gone about rail reform and accreditation safety in the wrong way, because we still have a different system in every state. We never seem to learn when it comes to efficiency in rail. We had the gauge problem for years, and now we have different authorities in every state for rail safety.

Membership:

Ms Bedford substituted for Ms Rankine.

Ms BEDFORD: Budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.10 states:

Output class 3: Maintenance and operation of the transport system.

How much funding did Transport SA allocate to road safety initiatives and programs for the year 1999-2000, and what is the estimate for 2000-01? Are there any other sources of road safety funding the minister can detail for us?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: We have the benefit of the federal government's black spot road funds. We have an additional sum in this financial year's budget of \$495 000, which the member for Spence asked questions about earlier, in terms of implementing the most urgent work under the road audits project.

We are completing those road audits. We have a whole range of community road safety projects, and we would argue that roadworks overall have a safety benefit and could easily be included in that figure. But in terms of the specific

projects, and that includes the public relations and advertising campaigns, whether it was the implementation of the national road rules or the Share the Roads cycling campaign, I will get further details for the honourable member.

Ms BEDFORD: I now refer to portfolio statements page 7.7, Output Class 2: Regulatory Services. I understand that the minister was reported as stating that legislation would be introduced by October 2000 to enable the introduction of alcohol interlocks. I would like to know whether that is correct and what the cost of the Riverland trial was, and what was the cost associated with this entire initiative? The National Road Safety Strategy designates South Australia as the responsible state for undertaking a national trial on the driver interlocks. It was successful. I have some advice here, but not the cost of the project. I will provide that information to the honourable member. I can advise that, subject to cabinet endorsement and joint party endorsement, it would be our intention to bring in the legislation in October.

Mr VENNING: I have an obvious question on Gomersal Road, and I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.48. Minister, I note that this year the state government provided \$4.8 million to seal Gomersal Road in the Barossa Valley, a local road that links the Sturt Highway with Tanunda—that is the centre of the Barossa. The minister has now advised that further funding for this project will be provided next financial year as part of the new regional roads program. Minister, what work has been undertaken this year to advance the sealing of Gomersal Road? What will be the total cost to seal this road, and when will the work be completed?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In terms of funding for this project, when it was first advanced to the state government for state investment in a local road the proposal was that Gomersal Road be linked from Tanunda, possibly Roland Flat to Sheoak Log, using Dunkley Road. When the planning consultancy concluded its work, with a lot of input from stakeholders and local councils, it was determined that the preferred option would be not Dunkley Road to Sheoak Log but joining the Sturt Highway at Roseworthy, and, in terms of Transport SA's arguments to me, that this would also link in with the work that Transport SA is now doing on a bypass for heavy vehicles around the Adelaide Hills so that they do not all have to come across Portrush Road, for instance, if they want to travel to the Barossa region.

We do not cater for that heavy vehicle movement very well at present; there is a lot of unnecessary heavy vehicle traffic in Adelaide streets because we do not have a better heavy vehicle route to the northeast, through the Adelaide Hills. So, the plans with an exit and entry from Roseworthy are now on public display. I understand in more recent times some of the local farmers have expressed some misgivings about the movement of farm machinery, because of their adjoining properties, if the Roseworthy option is advanced, and we have undertaken to have one-on-one discussions with them, and with the councils, to see how we can ease those concerns. We will be undertaking those discussions with them in the next couple of weeks. It is intended that a final planning scheme will be put on public display at the council offices of Barossa and Kapunda Light later this month or early July. We would aim for that work to commence later this year and be completed late 2001.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Ms H. Webster, Executive Director, Passenger Transport Board.

Ms H. Haselgrove, Contracts Manager.

Mr S. Fawcett, Finance Officer.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I have a short statement, Mr Chairman. Through the Passenger Transport Board, \$237.1 million has been budgeted next financial year. The operating expenditure is \$231.9 million, of which \$73.9 million represents payments to TransAdelaide for rail and tram operations and infrastructure management, as well as funding of safety and security initiatives. As of 23 April this year new operators now provide Adelaide's metropolitan bus services and so on top of maintaining existing services they are delivering significant service improvements to customers, plus savings of at least \$7 million to taxpayers each year, for each of the next 10 years.

Over the next financial year safety and security improvements will be the focus of the government's public transport agenda as part of our continued drive to improve patronage. Some \$1.8 million will be spent to implement major safety upgrades at seven of the busiest metropolitan railway stations. I should say that as part of this statement I will include references to TransAdelaide and not deliver a separate statement. Also, a further 44 passenger service attendants and 18 security officers will be engaged by TransAdelaide to improve safety for passengers and employees across the rail network. By these measures and others the government is determined to stamp out fare evasion and vandalism and uncouth behaviour on our public transport services.

Public transport fares will increase by 2 per cent from 1 July as a result of the GST, well below the general inflation rate and CPI. The 10 per cent GST has been offset by positive impacts of savings in the fuel excise rates and abolition of the wholesale sales tax. Together with the freeze on fares over this financial year this modest increase guarantees that South Australia's fare structure remains best value overall in the nation, recognising that the fares in most other states are expected to rise between 6 and 12 per cent.

In terms of patronage, figures for the year to date identify a 1.6 per cent decrease, which is much smaller than in previous years. However, I am also pleased to report that the figures for May increased by 1.6 per cent and they also increased in April, which is a positive breakthrough. To maintain South Australia's position as a leading provider of accessible and environmentally friendly passenger transport, the government will take delivery of 47 new low floor fully accessible compressed natural gas powered buses next financial year at a cost of \$16.9 million. Further investments include the installation of new signage and information along major bus routes; extra seating and shelter at bus stops; six new community passenger networks in regional areas, bringing the total to 13; \$150 000 to help regional bus operators with marketing and timetable information; and a further \$500 000 to meet the demand for concession travel for full-time students.

In the meantime, the PTB will be monitoring the performance of taxis, including access cabs, to ensure continued improvements in customer service. There are issues for the taxi industry in relation to national competition policy and the GST.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: A number of my colleagues and I have received numerous complaints since the privatisation of TransAdelaide bus operations, for example, buses are continually late, some never appear and others take the wrong routes completely. I understand that there is an average number of 30 missed trips per day since the system has been privatised. Will the minister confirm the number of missed trips per day since 23 April 2000?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The Passenger Transport Board is monitoring and assessing services and my advice is that since 23 April the operators have been performing better by some 20 per cent than was the case prior to the new contractors taking over responsibility for bus service delivery. In some instances in contract areas the improvement is greater than that.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: If the system is doing as well as the minister says, will she tell us the total number of complaints or commendations the PTB has received since 23 April 2000 and their nature? The minister can take that on notice if she wishes.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will have to take that on notice. The total number of calls received is 88 214, but as yet we have not broken that down between just general calls for information, new service arrangements and timetabling, but I will get that information for the honourable member.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Will the minister list each performance criteria as they apply to the recent round of contracting? As with all performance criteria, are there associated penalties and bonuses and will she detail the dollar amounts of the bonuses and penalties?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The assessment of contractor performance will occur in the following areas: the delivery of the passenger services, and that includes on time running; customer and public safety service review and improvement; quality assurance; handling of passenger inquiries and reporting; management of infrastructure, including buses and depots; fare compliance; fraud prevention; timetable production and distribution; and employee management. I will have to get the other information for the honourable member.

Mr VENNING: I have raised the issue of country bus services with the minister many times. Therefore, in relation to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.10, in respect of country bus services, what assistance is the government providing to support the private operators, including the range and costs of concession fares?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: This coming financial year they will receive \$150 000 of new funding for marketing and timetable information. There is a major effort between PTB, the operators and Tourism SA, as I understand, to provide more information to backpackers and other groups for travel into the country areas. Additional bus information units will be provided across the bus sector. Already one-third of country bus stops in the past two years have been provided with information units. They have been so popular that the demand is that we invest in more. A further edition of the *State Guide*, the comprehensive guide for services, will be republished this coming year.

Mr VENNING: As a supplementary question in relation to these fares, I note that metropolitan public transport fares will rise an average of 2 per cent next financial year. However, I am not aware whether any announcement has been made about the increase in fares for country bus services. Will the minister provide information on that matter?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, I have been advised that the PTB has received several applications for fare increases for country bus services based on the expected impact of the GST. It is anticipated that this will range from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. The GST increase for Premier Roadlines is 5.94 per cent and others will be considered by the PTB next week. In the meantime, I am also interested in this issue because of the concession policy provided by the government. For instance, full-time tertiary students receive a 50 per cent concession. Every time the fares rise, we must pay out

more in terms of concessions, so I am equally interested in the outcome of the GST on country bus fares.

Mr VENNING: My second question relates to the level of government subsidy, budget paper 2, volume 2, page 7.40. What is the government subsidy projected to be next financial year for the operation of public transport services in metropolitan Adelaide and how does this compare with this financial year?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Treasury has estimated that the government subsidy for operating public transport in the metropolitan area for the next financial year will be \$157.2 million. The subsidy provided for this financial year is \$164.9 million. The honourable member will see from those figures that there is a reduction in the taxpayer operating subsidy of some \$7.7 million that has been built into the budget allocation.

Mr VENNING: It is a move in the right direction.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is, and that has come about only because of the competitive tendering of bus services. That saving has also enabled the government to invest in some improvements in safety and security across the rail system, bus stops, shelters and extra facilities for customers as part of our push to increase patronage. A multitude of benefits have arisen from competitive tendering to date but certainly the major one is a decrease in the taxpayer funded operating subsidy.

Mr VENNING: In relation to the capital investment program, on page 7.10 of volume 2, how is the Public Transport Board's capital investment program of \$4.1 million to be allocated next financial year?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I issued—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, it is not. I issued it in full because the Passenger Transport Board will invest in 14 railway station upgrades for lighting and safer pedestrian access, and to meet the disability standards, which is an important obligation for the government. There is provision for bus shelters and seats at 580 high use stops; further timetable information at 2 000 of the highest use stops across the metropolitan system; 30 large information units to be installed at major interchanges; and security cameras at the Klemzig interchange. The total cost for these initiatives is \$1.5 million. There will be improved accessibility at 50 bus stops along Go Zone frequent bus service routes (\$400 000); commuter car parking at Panalatinga Road, Reynella and Golden Grove (which will please the member for Wright—she speaks to me often about that matter) and an additional bike lock-up at Seaclyff (\$700 000); seven 'safer' stations (\$1.8 million); and the new bus terminal at Football Park.

I incorporate in *Hansard* a table listing investments through the PTB amounting to \$5.050 million.

Passenger Facilities Upgrade Program Year 1 2000-01

Location	Category	Line/Area	Total \$	Item	Cost \$	Funding
Safer Stations \$1,800,00						
Blackwood Station	Safer Station	Belair	246,318	Prescribed Area	9,468	PTB
				Lighting	125,000	PTB
				Cameras & Help Phone	111,850	PTB
Brighton Station	Safer Station	Noarlunga	258,950	Prescribed Area	115,000	PTB
				Cameras & Help Phone	141,850	PTB
				Lighting	2,100	PTB
Noarlunga Station	Safer Station	Noarlunga	123,916	Prescribed Area	10,916	PTB
				Lighting	45,000	PTB
				Cameras & Help Phone	68,000	PTB
Salisbury Station	Safer Station	Gawler	156,022	Prescribed Area	5,022	PTB
				Lighting	65,000	PTB
				Camera & Help Phone	86,000	PTB
Elizabeth Station	Safer Station	Gawler	13,260	Prescribed Area	2,260	PTB
				Camera & Help Phone	11,000	PTB
Gawler Station	Safer Station	Gawler	297,989	Prescribed Area	4,989	PTB
				Lighting	180,000	PTB
				Camera & Help Phone	63,000	PTB
				Re-roof Building	50,000	TA
				Mazeway	100,000	TA
Glanville Station	Safer Station	Outer H	280,874	Icon Shelter	80,000	TA
				Prescribed Area	3,024	PTB
				Lighting	100,000	PTB
				Cameras & Help Phone	97,850	PTB
Adelaide \$577,800						
Adelaide Railway St	Adelaide		577,800	Barriers	320,300	PTB
				New ticket office	127,500	PTB
				New Supervisors office &	92,000	TA
				lost property	38,000	PTB
Key Stops & Interchanges \$3,502,000						

Passenger Facilities Upgrade Program Year 1 2000-01

Location	Category	Line/Area	Total \$	Item	Cost \$	Funding
Go Zone Stops	Key Stops	Various	200,000	Shelters	200,000	PTB
Transit Link Stops	Key Stops	Various	300,000	Shelters	200,000	PTB
				Info Units	100,000	PTB
High Use Stops	Key Stops	Various	200,000	Shelters	200,000	PTB
Tram Stops	Key Stops	Glenelg	230,000	Shelters	230,000	TA
1,500 Stops (30%)	Key Stops	Various	310,000	Info Units	310,000	PTB
Key Interchanges	Interchange	Various	362,000	Big Info Units	362,000	PTB
Icon Stops	Key Stops	Various	490,000	Shelter	50,000	PTB
				Accessibility	440,000	PTB
Football Park	Interchange		750,000	Terminal	750,000	PTB
Klemzig Interchange	Interchange	O-Bahn	100,000	Security Cameras	100,000	PTB
Panatalinga Road	Key Stops	South	200,000	Car Park	200,000	PTB
Golden Grove Interchange	Interchange	North East	360,000	Car Park	360,000	PTB

Station Upgrades \$1,509,000

Belair	Station Upg	Belair	100,000	Ramp & Mazeway	100,000	TA
Unley Park Station	Station Upg	Belair	150,000	Raise platform, shelters, lighting, mazeway	150,000	TA
Glenalta	Station Upg	Belair	70,000	Mazeway main Road	70,000	TA
Hove	Station Upg	Noarlunga	120,000	Relocate maze & ramp	120,000	TA
Hallett Cove Beach	Station Upg	Noarlunga	50,000	Lighting upgrade	50,000	TA
Marion	Station Upg	Noarlunga	10,000	Platform Surface	10,000	TA
Seacliff Station	Station Upg	Noarlunga	80,000	Car park upgrade	80,000	TA
Broadmeadows St	Station Upg	Gawler	70,000	Replace subway w maze	70,000	TA
Elizabeth South St	Station Upg	Gawler	70,000	Replace subway w maze Shelter	70,000	TA
Greenfields	Station Upg	Gawler	150,000	Remove Subway Ramps	150,000	TA
Tambelin	Station Upg	Gawler		Extend & raise platform	390,000	TA
Gawler Oval	Station Upg	Gawler		Replace wall & raise plat- form	44,000	TA
Womma Station	Station Upg	Gawler	100,000	Replace subway w maze	100,000	TA
Kilkenny Station	Station Upg	Outer H	60,000	Pathway & lighting	60,000	TA
Key Stations	Station Upg		45,000	Bike Lockers	45,000	PTB
Total			7,066,129			
		PTB	5,050,129			
		TA	2,016,000			

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Added to that amount is the capital investment through TransAdelaide of \$2.016 million for a total of \$7.066 million, which is over double the investment for this financial year. It is the first stage of our 10-year program for investment in public transport and, in part, has been made possible through savings from competitive tendering.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to the portfolio statements, volume 2, page 7.40, output class 3. When announcing the privatisation of the state's public bus operations, the minister said:

While the service improvements will be gained at a reduced contract cost at \$7 million per year, \$70 million-plus over 10 years will be cut from the taxpayer-funded operating subsidy after taking into account the whole of government costs.

The question I am about to ask the minister was put to her some two months ago by the shadow transport minister but,

thus far, remains unanswered. In what areas will the \$7 million annually saved be made and will the minister provide a breakdown of those savings?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I apologise, through the honourable member, for not providing the answer to the shadow minister. I am awaiting advice in whatever form Treasury provides that advice because it was responsible for looking at the whole of government impact and, therefore, the savings arising from the PTB's first—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Well, I am answering the question. I am sorry that this was not mentioned to the honourable member, but I have already advised the shadow minister that the savings come from a variety of factors including the fact that fewer people are required to be engaged by the companies. Middle management was much heavier in TransAdelaide than companies in the private sector

require for the operation of services. So, that is an issue. Also, TransAdelaide had done some benchmarking of award standards applying in other bus operations—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Award standards: certified awards and agreements. If the honourable member is taking exception to those certified awards and agreements, he should take that matter up with the respective unions because, as he would know, any agreement can be registered only if the union agrees. That is a matter which the honourable member might want to advance within his own Labor Party ranks. In addition, there was multiskilling of the work force by the new operators.

Ms BEDFORD: I do not understand why that money does not come back directly to public transport and the buses if we have saved it there.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I have already said that the money that is being spent in major part on all the capital works that I have just announced comes from these savings.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Regarding the number of complaints which the opposition has received about the privatised TransAdelaide bus operations, the minister did not give me an answer on the number of missed trips per day. As there are over 30 public servants in the room, the most that any minister appearing before the estimates committees—

An honourable member interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: The minister is entitled to seek advice from whomever she wishes. That is not the concern of the honourable member. I will rule him out of order if he goes on with that nonsense.

Mr ATKINSON: On what basis?

The CHAIRMAN: On the basis that it is not relevant to the matter before the minister.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: How many trips have been missed per day?

Mr ATKINSON: There must be someone here who knows.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: We have a number of new government trainees who are now working with the Passenger Transport Board. As they have not visited parliament before, management thought that they might like to attend the estimates committees. They have not come to advise. However, from the way in which the honourable member has been performing, I suspect that they will be put off the parliamentary process forever. They are here to be inspired about our democratic system and to understand the way in which we operate in terms of questions. I have already advised the honourable member that I will supply an answer. I said that when the question was asked initially and I will do so.

Mr ATKINSON: But you can't tell us now. Obviously, this was a question we were going to ask.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Why would it be obvious? I thought you might have talked about all the positives of the tendering system, but you are behaving true to form. I should have anticipated the negatives, but I did not.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to page 7.40 of the portfolio statements (output class 3.4). The PTB's 1998-99 annual report states that a survey was undertaken of train customers to examine their perception of personal safety. There have been a number of highly publicised security breaches on public transport over the past few months. How many safety breaches or incidents were recorded on each mode of public transport (including trains) for the year 1999-2000; what were

the figures for 1998-99; and will the minister table the results of the survey?

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Ms H. Webster, Executive Director, Passenger Transport Board.

Ms H. Haselgrove, Director, Contracts.

Mr S. Fawcett, Financial Analyst.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will ask Ms Webster to respond to the question.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: It may be fortunate that the chair did not hear that comment. If any personal reflection is made towards any officer, that will be the end of the committee.

Mr ATKINSON: It might be a basis of questioning, sir.

The CHAIRMAN: There will be no personal attacks or reflections on any officer who is accompanying the minister. They are not in the same position to respond as a member or the minister. One would think that common courtesy would dictate that people be treated with respect when they come here.

Mr ATKINSON: Especially my constituents.

The CHAIRMAN: I will apply the process rigorously, because I do not intend to see anyone attempt to humiliate anyone who comes before this committee. If the honourable member thinks that it is in the interests of good public policy to do so, I do not believe the public of South Australia would share his view.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will ask Ms Webster to comment on the survey and the results, which I understand have already been made public.

Ms Webster: The rail safety survey was conducted to assist the perception of customers about the safety of the rail system. The results of that survey were used to formulate the rail safety and security program, to which the minister alluded previously. Under that program, the number of PSAs were doubled, lighting and safety and security upgrades were conducted on all stations, and the regulations were modified to make non-compliance with regulations more costly for troublemakers on the system and to enable us to introduce on-the-spot fines. So, we have responded to the areas of concern in the survey in a comprehensive way. The report has been made public, especially by the passenger transport user committee and by people inquiring about the results.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Regarding the question about trouble on the various modes of transport, that information is maintained by the transit police. I will ask for that. If they are prepared to provide that information, I will give it to the honourable member.

Ms BEDFORD: What is the cost of the probity process which was undertaken during the competitive tendering process, and will the minister explain how that process worked?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I was not involved in calling for or evaluating the tenders. Under an act of parliament, that is the role of the PTB. I will ask Ms Webster, who reports to the board on this matter, to respond to the question.

Ms Webster: The probity process, which is conducted by the Auditor-General, is not costed to us, but our independent advice is that it cost somewhat less than \$40 000. An independent probity adviser was selected through a competitive process. We called for expressions of interest and received several responses. The successful contractor was appointed. That contractor attended all the meetings that were

conducted with potential bidders, oversaw each of the meetings that were conducted in the contract evaluation process, provided a report to the board and was available for independent questioning and assessment by the board.

Ms BEDFORD: Who was that?

Ms Webster: Ernst & Young.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I understand that the probity adviser signed off on the integrity of the whole tendering system and that the Auditor-General also raised no questions.

Mrs PENFOLD: My question to the minister relates to community passenger networks. Will the minister advise what funding is to be provided in the year 2000-01 for the operation of the community passenger networks in country areas and what benefits are the community passenger networks delivering to people living outside the metropolitan area?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: A sum of \$645 000 will be provided in the coming financial year—an increase of some \$300 000 on the current allocation. There are seven existing community passenger networks, plus a further two that are being trialled presently, one in the Adelaide Hills and the other in the upper Mid North. In addition to the existing seven are the two being trialled, and our initial investigations would suggest that over the coming financial year there are strong possibilities of establishing community transport networks at Andamooka, on the Yorke Peninsula and on Kangaroo Island (although that may require a different sort of model), and there has been an expression of interest from the central mid-Murray through the Local Government Association, particularly around Blanchetown, Mannum and the Swan Reach regions. If all of them prove possible and we wish to see that they are realised, that will make 13 in all.

These community passenger networks, as the honourable member would know with the Red Cross operating one across Eyre Peninsula, do provide an invaluable transport service to people who may not drive their own vehicle now—or perhaps their husband would normally drive them. One of the areas in which we can do better is in terms of the marketing and public profile of these community transport networks, and over the coming financial year trainees will be engaged to support the networks and to further their goals and their profile in each area in which they operate.

Mrs PENFOLD: My next question relates to the southern O-Bahn. I was interested to read a letter to the Editor of the *Advertiser* yesterday in which it was suggested that the government is obsessed with the O-Bahn. Will the minister advise what advantages, if any, the O-Bahn offers over other modes of public transport and why is the government conducting an engineering feasibility study for the possible construction of an O-Bahn to the southern suburbs?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I was bemused to see the reference to the government's being obsessed with the O-Bahn. That is the traditional response from enthusiasts of light rail, but the facts are clear in terms of the success of the O-Bahn, and not only its operating features of filtering in and fanning out bus services entering and leaving the fixed corridor. That arrangement is ideal for a very dispersed city such as Adelaide with its low and spread population.

With the O-Bahn, the average cost of carrying passengers is .36¢ per passenger kilometre, which is considerably lower than that for train services in Adelaide at .53¢ per passenger kilometre. The taxpayer subsidy per passenger is \$2.90 per person on the O-Bahn compared with \$8.80 on the train, which is on top of the fare that people pay, when they do pay (which is most of the time but not as often as I would wish),

on the train. The actual operating costs and the fare revenue and operating issues are very compelling reasons in terms of favouring an O-Bahn type system.

In addition, there is the capital cost of the infrastructure in the first place. The buses are certainly more reasonably priced than the rail cars, which means they can be updated and replaced more regularly.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That is an interesting interjection from the member for Spence, because I would agree with him about the display of numbers on the back of buses. Some buses are older and not all are digitally able to display the number. The other issue is that with the through running of services we have not encouraged bus drivers to leave their seats, money boxes and the operation of the buses when there are passengers on to change the number at the back. However, it is a matter about which I am sufficiently concerned and which I will have it reassessed.

In terms of the O-Bahn and the engineering study, I advise that I recently approved the consultancy from Maunsel McIntyre Pty Ltd, Connell Wagner and other local parties to undertake a four part study of the southern O-Bahn option and I anticipate getting those results by November, which will enable the government to evaluate whether or not we proceed with this option in terms of the cost of the whole project and the engineering complexity.

Mrs PENFOLD: I refer to the Football Park terminal, budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.10. Will the minister advise the status of the project announced earlier this year to build a new terminal at Football Park?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The cost is some \$900 000 for the terminal plus more for the bus priority lanes at the intersection of West Lakes Boulevard and Tapleys Hill Road. I understand that PPK has been preparing concept designs. We have a stakeholder group that includes representatives of the bus union to look at all the issues, and it is proposed that the work be started in October and be finished by the end of March for the first game of the next AFL season.

Mr ATKINSON: I refer the minister to the patronage figures in the 1998-99 PTB annual report at page 9—boardings down, journeys down, bus and tram patronage down, and train patronage down. It is the same story throughout the minister's tenure of this portfolio. Why did patronage continue to decrease, despite the freeze on fares, what is the financial implication of the freeze and will the minister outline the patronage results for 1999-2000?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I think the honourable member has not used his legal intelligence in framing the question, because the annual report referred to 1998-99 and I have explained to this Parliament and publicly and acknowledged that the government had a contribution to that fall because of the increase in fares, which is why we froze fares for this current financial year. I indicated in my opening statement that I was most heartened that for the first time in a long time, in April—

Mr ATKINSON: They're the monthly figures; let's have the annual figures.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I gave that; it was a 1.6 per cent decrease. The biggest trouble we had—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Is this the fourth or fifth question, via interjections? The biggest problem during the year that impacted as a fall in patronage which we had not sought was during the industrial trouble with TransAdelaide following the announcement of the tenders. In February we

lost 7.2 per cent, which was by far the most devastating month for patronage that we have had over the full year to date. Given that the honourable member made quite a provocative statement at the start of his questions, I think it is worth highlighting that, since this government has been responsible for the conduct of public transport and the introduction of contracts, patronage has declined, including the poor year, by 2.04 per cent on average. But that is a stunning result if one sees it in terms of success in stalling patronage, because during Labor days the fall got up to 7 per cent in some years from a higher base. So, I think the Labor Party should not seek to make capital from this but, rather, it should hold its head in shame, because in fact we have spent a lot of time rebuilding public transport confidence. It is heartening to see that with the latest round of tenders we are attracting people back to public transport, and I would have thought that the member for Spence, a user of public transport (and I thank him for that), would support that objective.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am sure that you pay for every trip you make, to support our revenue base.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I refer the minister to the National Competition Council's press release dated Monday 29 May 2000.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It's never controversial, is it?

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: No, it is never controversial! It has released a glossy pamphlet titled 'Improving our taxis,' which I thought was quite funny. It recommends the general deregulation of all taxi licences throughout Australia, concentrating on what is happening in New South Wales and almost ignoring the costs of taxis in South Australia, apart from a brief reference. Will the minister give me the government's assurance that there will be no move to accept the National Competition Council's recommendations that there be a general deregulation of taxi licences in South Australia?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I have never supported general deregulation of taxi licences in South Australia, and I do not intend to do so as Minister for Transport and Urban Planning. I would highlight that, under national competition policy, the PTB has engaged a consultant to look at any restrictions in the Passenger Transport Act in terms of competition policy. That report is being assessed by the Office of Premier and Cabinet at the present time. It has not been released, and in fact it had to go back to the consultant for upgrading in light of the earlier report by the National Competition and Productivity Commission to make sure that the consultant had addressed all the issues that the commission had raised.

I agree with the honourable member's assessment that the commission has erred in the way in which it has approached this. I am assuming the honourable member is suggesting it has erred in its approach to this issue by concentrating on the New South Wales market. I think that is wrong, because the issues in Sydney do not apply across the board. I also highlight that the consultant reviewing the Passenger Transport Act has come to the conclusion (and this is what is being assessed by the Office of the Premier and Cabinet at the moment) that there are no restrictions on the taxi industry in the act. The act simply provides a basis for working but does not restrict licences; it is government policy that does that.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: In respect of government policy, the report suggests introducing the smaller change of licensing a larger number of taxi plates. Is the government

considering that? Is it government policy to adopt any part of the NCC's recommendations?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The government has not considered that report in detail. I am waiting for advice from Premier and Cabinet in assessing the consultant's report on the national competition issues in the Passenger Transport Act. When we have that advice I will consider the matters raised by the NCC as a whole picture. I have rarely agreed with many of its outcomes, and what the outcome would be I am not sure, but certainly my intention would be to put to cabinet that I would be in favour of little—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am saying that that is my view, but cabinet has not had an opportunity to consider the detail, because I have not yet taken it to cabinet but, as I have said, I am not in favour of the bulk of the national competition policy recommendations at most times.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Will the minister make public the report that is before Premier and Cabinet after it has been brought back to her?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will certainly be making the government's response public, yes.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am not sure what form the report will be in, so I cannot comment on it. It may be just the recommendations. I do not know; I have not prepared it. Of course, the outcome will be made public.

The CHAIRMAN: We are running out of time, so I will give the next call to Mr McEwen.

Mr McEWEN: The honourable member will be happy that I am continuing with questions about taxis. I wonder about current eligibility for taxi subsidies and how much it is costing. Are legally blind people captured within that subsidy arrangement?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The total membership of the taxi subsidy scheme is 50 668. The scheme was introduced by the Labor Party and has worked exceedingly well. We have sought to advance it. It applies only to people with mobility difficulties and was advanced on the basis (and I think for good reason) that people could not use public transport or their own vehicle, so a taxi subsidy at either 75 per cent or 50 per cent of the fare up to a maximum of \$30 was seen as an excellent scheme.

The PTB and the office of the Minister for Disability Services are now working together to evaluate the scheme. A number of issues require looking at. One of the first is that total membership is 50 668, but the active membership, that is, people using the scheme within the past six months, is 31 280. Yet, we issue 60 vouchers per half year to everybody. I think that that issue has to be addressed to see whether we are spending the allocation and distributing the benefit to the people in most need for this form of government support in terms of mobility, cost and subsidy.

As part of that evaluation, I have asked the Passenger Transport Board to look at the issue of eligibility for people with a sight impairment. There are other issues I want the PTB and the office of disability to look at, and that is that in other states there is stronger support for the community sector, such as Red Cross and others, to do a lot of this work, and whether that would be a better option not only financially but in terms of the individual interest than the way we are doing it now. So, a range of matters are being looked at by those two agencies. I am advised that the evaluation should be completed by about October-November and, as part of the evaluation, they are looking at interstate experiences. It is of

enormous interest to me that the number of members in South Australia is much higher on a numbers and per capita basis than anywhere else in Australia.

Mr McEWEN: Many blind people feel that they have a mobility impairment as a consequence of their impairment, and they feel that they are falling outside the loop or being discriminated against.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I understand what the honourable member is saying. I appreciate that there has been very strong support for a petition seeking change. I give the undertaking that we are evaluating all these issues. I am told that, on the current way in which the scheme is operating, it would cost up to \$14 million to extend the current scheme to every person who has a sight impairment in South Australia.

As I have indicated before, there is some question, when you look at the total numbers and the active membership, as to whether we are operating the scheme in the right way at the present time. Therefore, we will look at this as a complete picture, not just as an one-off extension.

Mr McEWEN: The member for Peake intended to ask about taxi fare increases, but he has vacated the chamber, so I should do that for him. Will the minister tell us what is happening with taxi fare increases?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The PTB has put out a statement on that issue. There is a 7.25 per cent increase to take account of the goods and services tax and the removal of the wholesale sales tax, and a further 4.2 per cent to cover the increase in a taxi cost index, and that includes an 18.97 per cent increase in LPG prices during 1994. This is a relatively big increase that we can expect from 1 July—an increase overall of 11.45 per cent. In terms of the taxi industry, that plus the GST and the issues about retaining drivers—and there has been some media speculation about that—plus the competition policy issues, are a challenge overall for the industry Australia-wide.

Mr McEWEN: Will the GST be on top of that 11.45 per cent?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, that includes the GST. The 11.45 per cent includes 7.25 per cent for the GST and the removal of the wholesale sales tax, and 4.2 per cent for the taxi cost index. I am advised that not all the taxi fare increases have been announced across Australia by all states, but those that have indicate that the increase will be up to 15 per cent, which is higher again than that which must be accommodated in South Australia.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.40, 'output class 3.4'. How many expiation notices were issued by the PTB for fare evasion on trams, trains and buses during the year 1999-2000? How many of these were successfully prosecuted?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I understand that we have some of the information, if not all. Whilst Ms Webster is looking for the specific answers to the questions, I highlight that the capital investment program that I announced earlier today provides for compulsory ticket checks, sunrise to sunset, at the Adelaide Railway Station from 1 July, and roving teams to do the same thing across the system. We envisage that, with regard to fare compliance, prosecution and the like, the profile will change dramatically from next year. In fact, it is taking us a bit longer than I anticipated to get this information and time is running we can put it on notice.

Ms BEDFORD: During the industrial action that ensued following the announcement that buses would be privatised, the Minister was on camera handing out Cabcharges to the public. How many Cabcharges did the minister hand out that

day and what was the total cost to the taxpayer, presuming they were not the minister's personal Cabcharges? Is this an appropriate and approved use of taxpayers' funds that perhaps may be a regular practice whereby the minister will undertake to subvert industrial action and gain a bit of publicity?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: What a pathetic beat-up! I handed out one and I paid for it myself. I handed one person one Cabcharge, and I did not ask the media to attend. A passenger alerted the media that I was at the bus stops trying to get—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not know who the passenger was. It is so cheap. What you do not like is that your media beat-up about irregular and shoddy practices and misuse of government funds has back-fired on you.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: If you had seen the 84 year old woman who was stranded at the bus stop, I wonder what Mr Koutsantonis would have left them—probably spat at her, the way he is acting here.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: On a point of order, Mr Chairman, I ask that the minister withdraw that.

The CHAIRMAN: I think the minister would be better off if she chose another set of words. I think the minister should withdraw those comments and use other comments.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I suspect that he would have left her there quite distressed, as I had found her, because she found that she could not get home. That is, in fact, why I provided the taxi voucher. I hope that any member of parliament would have done the same in the same circumstances.

Ms BEDFORD: Under 'Output class 3: Maintenance and Operation of the Transport System', budget paper 4, page 7.10, the Government states that one of the highlights for 1999-2000 is the establishment of a GO-ZONE frequent bus service network along major routes. How much money will be expended on introducing the nine go-zones, specifically for the costs of signage, promotion and changes to PTB literature? What were the frequencies immediately prior to the commencement of the new service contracts? Why were the nine go-zones chosen and who made that decision?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is not the short question I had anticipated but four questions. We will have to obtain details of the separate funding for the establishment of the go-zones and the bus signs and the like. Ms Webster may wish to comment on how the nine were selected.

Ms Webster: They are simply our nine most popular and well-used services that carry the greatest percentage of our patronage. So, they were selected simply on the basis of popularity and use.

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

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Ms S. Filby, General Manager, TransAdelaide

Mr S. Warren, Manager Corporate Services.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the minister wish to make any comments prior to the commencement of questions on the TransAdelaide vote?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I said in an earlier statement that I would incorporate comments about TransAdelaide and its budget for the coming year, and I did so.

Mr ATKINSON: The opposition is informed that, given the termination of bus operations, TransAdelaide is getting rid of thousands of dollars worth of spare parts, and in some cases they are being sold at scrap metal prices. We understand that about 60 items, being the small wheels that attach to the front of a bus enabling it to travel on the O-Bahn have been thrown in a bin, and they have a value of \$800 each. Can the minister confirm reports of a fire sale of bus spare parts, including starter motors, under way at Mile End depot?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I have no information of that kind at all. I will ask the General Manager of TransAdelaide, Ms Sue Filby, whether she cares to comment.

Ms Filby: As to bus spare parts, as well as a number of other spare assets, first of all we offered those assets within TransAdelaide to existing businesses, then they were evaluated by an external valuer and a price was put on them. We then offered them to the new providers and there was quite a bit of purchase of those parts—whether they were the wheels or not I cannot say. We have now sent off a number of items to the auction houses through Evans & Clarke, and those sales are proceeding. There are some items in bins at Mile End and they are currently being boxed up for sale through Evans & Clarke, or perhaps through direct trade sale, depending on what is the best outcome.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: But they are not just being scrapped.

Ms Filby: No; I am not aware of anything that has been scrapped yet.

Mr ATKINSON: Minister, of those eligible, how many TransAdelaide bus drivers gained employment with the new private operators? How many applied for work with the new operators but were unsuccessful? Can the minister confirm reports suggesting that the new operators are taking on some former TransAdelaide drivers with many years experience and employing them as trainees?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will try to recall all the questions, Mr Chairman. I am told that 96 per cent of the new full-time bus operators engaged by the new companies were TransAdelaide employees and that, overall, 93 per cent of all new full-time staff with the new companies were TransAdelaide employees. In terms of the number that applied, I am not sure. I am aware, however, that there were some 74 who applied for and were then offered jobs but then refused to take up those jobs.

Mr ATKINSON: Yes, but how many were refused?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not have the number who applied and did not get the jobs. What I am saying to you is that 96 per cent of new full-time bus operators were TA employees, which says that only 4 per cent of other positions were available. So many more may have applied but the positions were not there to fill. I am not sure of the outcome. Ms Filby may know in terms of the profile of the work force.

Ms Filby: We have lost a considerable number of people who have gone to the new providers, but I am not aware of the numbers that they are engaging.

Mr ATKINSON: I think the most important part of the question was, though, whether the new firms are taking on TransAdelaide drivers and deeming them to be trainees.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Whether they are deemed to be trainees, I can assure the member that all new employees as part of the contract with the PTB are asked to take on some training, and that is in the contract.

Mr ATKINSON: Yes, but that is not the point of my question. They are being characterised as trainees, probably falsely, for the purposes of obtaining a subsidy, aren't they?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: You have made that statement, and it is not even an allegation; it is a statement, I note, Mr Chairman. I do not have the facts and figures, nor the sources of information at hand to confirm or deny that.

Mr ATKINSON: But you are saying that if they were characterised as trainees that would be correct because they were doing some training.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, I did not say that. I said that as part of the contract with the PTB all the companies have an obligation to undertake with every employee some training. It does not mean that they are defined as trainees.

Mr ATKINSON: Therefore, do you have an opinion on the matter?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I was not asked for an opinion on the matter.

Mr ATKINSON: Well, I am asking you for one.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: If you are now asking me, I would wish everybody in the public and private sectors to undertake some training at some stage, whether it is in the bus business, or even members of parliament of some years standing, I would have thought.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Minister, a few months ago you announced the creation of 46 new rail jobs, passenger service attendants.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Forty-four.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Forty-four was it—okay, I will get it right. Can the minister describe the purpose of these positions and the cost? Is it feasible that redeployees could fill these positions, given their experience and knowledge of the corporation?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The jobs were created to improve service and fare compliance across the rail system. The new 44 positions are absolutely central to the government's safety and security initiatives, and I can advise the honourable member that, in terms of the government's commitment to have ticket checks at the Adelaide Railway Station from sunrise to sunset each day, this will be part of the role of the new passenger transport attendants, and there are also the roving squads which will work across the train system during the day. Those positions will also be filled by the new passenger service attendants, in addition to the 44 passenger service attendants who are already engaged by TransAdelaide. Further, it is the government's commitment that after 7 p.m. or at sunset each evening we will have, in addition to the driver, passenger service attendants and a security guard on all services. So that will be the role of the passenger service attendants.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In terms of the interjection from the member for Spence, it is interesting that when I was talking today to the media about fare evasion and safety generally they asked me whether it was an error of the former Labor government to get rid of the guards and have driver only presence on trains, and I said categorically that I thought it was a mistake, with hindsight. The government had acted when we came to government some six years ago immediately to provide some presence in terms of passenger service attendants. I remember that the member for Spence—and he has been consistent in this—congratulated the government at that time for providing the 44 passenger service attendants, and I am pleased that he supports this further employment and presence on our train system, and, hopefully, we will find

that it is integral to increasing patronage and a sense of safety and security on the rail system, which is a major concern to me and I think a worry overall. In terms of the new positions, I advise the member for Peake that it was always the government's plan that they would be filled by people redeployed from the bus business—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It has happened. Currently 36 redeployees are now in training for the 44 positions. Initially, the take up was slow, but we now have 36. I should indicate that 41 redeployees have been offered the opportunity of training as a passenger service assistant: five refused; seven redeployees then refused an interview; and four redeployees were unable to meet medical requirements. Of the 52 who initially applied, as I say, 41 have been offered the position, five refused and we now have 36 in training. We confidently anticipate that TransAdelaide will be able to recruit and train the necessary number of passenger service attendants by the July commencement date.

Mr ATKINSON: From redeployees?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: From redeployees, yes. Having talked with TransAdelaide, the union and so on—and from the nods I am getting, from the Labor Party—I think we are all of a single mind; that is, it would be our collective wish to provide as many full-time and rewarding jobs for people who are currently redeployed. As I say, more people have been offered jobs than have wanted to take them up, and that is a bit of a worry, too.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to the estimates statements, page 53. Given the loss of the significant bus operations from TransAdelaide and the resulting loss of blue collar workers, has there been a commensurate reduction in the numbers of administrative and corporate employees at TransAdelaide; if so, by how many; and could the minister outline other organisational changes that have occurred resulting from the loss of this core business?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Ms Filby will respond.

Ms Filby: The estimate of the number of people who would be displaced ranged across the bus business affecting not only people directly involved in an operational role but also people involved in a support and corporate role. We have restructured the corporate area of TransAdelaide. That is in transition at the moment because a number of residual functions such as wrapping up the accounts, TVSPs and those sorts of things are still happening. We have largely moved out of Mile End now. Only one or two people are left at Mile End. They are now located in the railway station and the control centre. The focus of the people who have stayed is on the new business and it is happening. A number of people progressively are taking TVSPs or seeking alternative placement in the public sector out of that area, and we are almost at the end of restructuring the financial structure of TransAdelaide to support the new rail business.

Ms BEDFORD: As a supplementary, how many people have gone so far?

Ms Filby: In the corporate area, so far eight have gone and 28 were eligible for either a TVSP or to seek redeployment.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer again to the estimates statements, page 53. A condition of the redundancy packages offered by the government to TransAdelaide bus drivers was the retirement of superannuation. What was the total savings budgeted by the government by requiring workers to retire their super, or by how much were workers going to lose in superannuation entitlements?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will have to obtain that information from the Treasurer.

Ms BEDFORD: Again I refer to page 53. Will the minister confirm that currently there are no security personnel on trams? This question arises as a result of an incident that we believe occurred on a tram service about three weeks ago.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, there was and it is an issue that Ms Filby has raised with me in terms of the deployment of the transit police. Now that we are able to have a passenger service attendant and a security officer in addition to the driver on every rail car from sunset (or 7 p.m.), the PTB and the transit police have agreed to meet to look at the deployment of the transit police because they will not now be required to focus solely, or in an operational sense, on rail—and that is certainly their chief focus today. They will be released to work more strongly across the tram and bus system.

Mrs PENFOLD: My question relates to the rail contract reference, budget paper 4, volume 2. Will the minister advise why the government has announced that for the next five years the metro rail services will be provided by TransAdelaide as part of a negotiated contract with the Passenger Transport Board?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Certainly the government had the option, and the Passenger Transport Act provides the option, for competitive tendering not only for the bus system but for the train system. I have to acknowledge that I did consider the option but, after TransAdelaide lost in its own right the bus business, we really did have to consider the future of TransAdelaide, whether it was wound up altogether or whether it have an opportunity to competitively tender for work. On my recommendation, government determined that, with the expertise in TransAdelaide, its being the smaller entity and with an opportunity to focus solely on its rail business, we had an opportunity to make considerable reforms in respect of frequency of service and safety and a whole range of things and the ability to do it promptly if the business was still in government hands rather than distracting the business by going through a competitive tendering process which is complex and time consuming. We really wanted to get onto doing things we knew we had to do in rail and do it promptly, and that is what we are doing.

Mrs PENFOLD: My next question relates to rail car maintenance. Will the minister advise why TransAdelaide rail car maintenance has been contracted to Goninan and Co. Limited, and how is TransAdelaide monitoring the performance of the company?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: TransAdelaide is a public corporation owned by the government. It determined that it would seek expressions of interest in terms of the rail car maintenance services, and it also provided an opportunity for the current work force to prepare a bid. TransAdelaide, with strict probity reasons, gained tender bids, as I understand—and perhaps Ms Filby might want to elaborate on my answer. Goninan was successful both in terms of corporate culture and price. TransAdelaide has now engaged three people to address this contract in terms of assessing the performance. It has a major review before the end of the financial year. Ms Filby will elaborate.

Ms Filby: Goninan took over the contract at the Easter weekend. The end of the financial year is considered to be a suitable time period to undertake an assessment because the transition period will have bedded down. We will be doing

our first review after the end of the financial year. The TransAdelaide board has asked for quarterly performance reports regarding the contract.

Mrs PENFOLD: What work has been undertaken this

financial year to upgrade the metropolitan railway station, and what work is proposed for the next financial year?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I insert into *Hansard* a list of the station upgrading works for 1999-2000.

1999-2000 Station upgrading works

Station	Scope of works	Start	Finish	Estimated cost 1999-2000
Mitcham	Lighting upgrade		Completed	\$78 000
Dudley Park	New fence to rear of platform		Completed	\$20 000
Evanston	New pathway lighting		Completed	\$28 000
Tramline	Landscape upgrade at tram stops		Completed	\$35 000
Elizabeth	New ticket office, raise platform		Completed	\$566 000
Alberton	Upgrade pedestrian bridge		Completed	\$60 000
Woodville Park	Resurface platform		Completed	\$20 000
Gawler Central	Upgrade station building		Completed	\$65 000
Blackwood	Walkway lighting	In progress	May	\$13 000
Hallett Cove Beach	Lighting upgrade down platform	In progress	June	\$50 000
Woodlands Park	Lighting upgrade	June	June	\$50 000
Tambelin	Extend and raise platform	In progress	July	\$250 000—Total \$390 000
Hove	Relocate mazeway and ramp	May	July	\$20 000—Total \$120 000
Ascot Park	Lighting upgrade	In progress	August	\$30 000—Total \$65 000
Keswick	Lighting upgrade	In progress	August	\$40 000—Total \$90 000
Gawler	New mazeway—northern end	Deferred to	2000-01	\$100 000
Mile End	Lighting upgrade	Deferred to	2000-01	\$30 000
Glanville	Icon shelter	Deferred to	2000-01	\$80 000
Gawler Oval	New platform wall/raise platform	Deferred to	2000-01	\$44 000
Unley Park	Raise platform/new mazeway/lighting	Deferred to	2000-01	\$350 000
Womma	Remove subway; new mazeway	Deferred to	2000-01	\$200 000

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The list of station upgrading works proposed for the next financial year was inserted into *Hansard* earlier today under the PTB line.

The CHAIRMAN: In view of the fact that the minister has inserted into *Hansard* considerable information concerning the railway station, are there any plans to allow interstate trains into the Adelaide Railway Station rather than the dreadful facility at Mile End?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Not on the basis of its being a dreadful facility but because I believe it would be excellent if the trains returned to the Adelaide railway centre and the heart of the city. On behalf of the government, I undertook a study of this matter last financial year but I do not have all the information on this. In fact, I remember writing to the member for Spence about this matter in the past week—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: What I suggest is that, if the opposition was planning such an initiative, it should take very seriously the results of the work that has been undertaken to date. I believe it would involve \$20 million just in capital cost to relocate the Indian Pacific, the Ghan and the Overland, and that would include the standardisation of the track. Overall operating costs would increase by \$800 000 and that is a subsidy that the taxpayers would have to pay because the operator would not be interested in picking that up when it did not have to—it involves being based at Keswick and having to incur it at the present time.

I am told that, because of the long length of the trains, there would be severe disruption to metropolitan services and that would be particularly awkward when we are trying to

attract more passengers back to public transport. We have enough trouble now with access to platforms with work being undertaken on the Convention Centre. The Convention Centre is taking two platforms out of the system permanently. In terms of another one or two (and I am told it will be two) to accommodate interstate trains, we might as well forget suburban rail services in Adelaide in the future, and I do not want to entertain that.

Mr Chairman, you are quite right. I do not believe anyone has been satisfied since 1982 when the decision was made to transfer the passenger terminal to Keswick as part of a standardisation of interstate rail. In an operational sense, Great Southern Rail would not want any change to the current practice, not only because it would cost more but in terms of operations. It is highly efficient to be able to work the whole platform from the centre of the platform rather than as at the Adelaide Railway Station, which is a dead-end station and where you work from only the one end. That creates some operational difficulties as well as operational costs. So, I have reluctantly had to come to the conclusion that it will not be advanced.

If the daylight service on the Overland proves to be successful, as we all hope, perhaps the issue can be reconsidered, but it would be up to \$8 million just for the Overland service which is a huge cost for one interstate service operated on a daily basis for about 100 passengers when one looks at other demands such as roads in country areas or hospitals. It would be difficult to justify. First, we will have to determine whether the Overland is viable in the long term as a commercial operation. That is what the daylight trial is about.

Mr ATKINSON: I refer the minister to her various public statements regarding the future of TransAdelaide bus drivers. When questioned in the parliament on 3 May this year, the minister reported that the government was 'on track in terms of the number of redeployees as at 30 June which was taken into account in terms of calculating the whole of government costs.'

According to the minister, as at 20 April there were 303 TransAdelaide redeployees plus a further eight who had arranged to take on new jobs but declined at the last minute. What was the total number of redeployees as at 15 June 2000, and how many redeployees did the government budget for when calculating the whole of government costs?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am already on record in the parliament advising that the whole of government cost consideration was 226 full-time equivalents—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That figure provided for whole of government savings on a per annum basis of \$7 million for each of 10 years. If we had many less—and I would like to have none for the sake of the individuals concerned—the savings from the competitive tendering process would be considerably greater.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That figure of 226 full-time equivalents was at 30 June. Perhaps you might like to read my answers to the shadow minister, but I have gone through this several times here—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Well, I have—just look back. At 30 June, the enhanced TVSPs cease. The date of 23 April was not the end point for making the calculation for whole of government costs and savings arising from the new bus operators. The whole of government savings are calculated at \$7 million per year for each of 10 years, and that is on the basis that on 30 June there would be 226 full-time equivalent redeployees from the bus business. I would like to see many less than that. I understand that, at this stage, we are on track for having 229 full-time equivalents as at 30 June.

Mr ATKINSON: So, you are three over.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: But we must do better than that on an ongoing basis. Part of the negotiations between the union movement and the government and TransAdelaide provided for an averaging of salary, which was an issue for the part-time workers who are now redeployees. That averaging finishes on 23 October, six months after the new contracts. We anticipate that there will be a large number of retirements from TransAdelaide as at 23 October, again markedly reducing the number of redeployees.

It was always known that that would be an issue beyond 30 June. So, I suspect that it is more attractive for the part-time TransAdelaide employees who had an opportunity to average their salary until 23 October to do that than to take an enhanced TVSP on a part-time salary basis. In a sense, there are three trigger points: the new contracts starting on 23 April, the completion of the enhanced TVSP offer on 30 June, and 23 October when the averaging of salary will cease.

Mr ATKINSON: How much have the redeployees cost the government so far; what is the anticipated cost of the redeployees for 2000-01; and how many redeployees have commenced new employment within the public sector?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will have to obtain answers for the first two points. I am advised by TransAdelaide that 91 bus business redeployees have temporary placements with

agencies such as the courts, primary industries, Arts SA, and the Botanic Gardens. TransAdelaide advises that up to 10 of these placements will be confirmed as ongoing permanent employment prior to 30 June. Meanwhile, TransAdelaide is filling 59 vacancies in its rail business, and the redeployees have been given preference. That includes 44 of the passenger service attendants.

Mr ATKINSON: What about transit police?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In what sense?

Mr ATKINSON: Have any redeployees been eligible?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: There are 27 Public Service positions recommended in the Premier's police task force report, and the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services has advised that amongst the TransAdelaide redeployees are people who are suitable to fill those 27 positions. There are a further 55 full-time and part-time positions which Transport SA is proposing to make available at registration and licensing, the call centre and other places. Again, TransAdelaide redeployees will be given first opportunity.

Mr ATKINSON: In the budget, the government says that it will increase the number of police by 113. Are the 27 transit police to whom you have referred part of that 113?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I did not say that they were transit police; I said that they were 27 Public Service positions which could be filled by our redeployees.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Transit police are fully graduated officers. Our redeployees are not qualified for that. Ms Filby would like to add to that.

Ms Filby: Police representatives have conducted presentations for redeployees at our centres because there has been some interest in securing work in those sort of areas. I am not aware of a placement that has happened yet, but certainly some people have expressed an interest.

Mr VENNING: What is the status of the government's commitment to invest \$5 million to refurbish five old trams? Is it proposed to ever purchase new tram cars, which is my desire?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: An amount of \$5 million was first allocated for this purpose by the government last financial year, but it has not been possible until this time to spend that money to undertake the work. It has proven to be much more difficult to find a company with the expertise to refurbish our trams because they are antiques and so many of the parts have to be hand made, and you need the skills to do that work within the price we have offered. We believe the work is important to undertake because the heritage trams are such a symbol in the tourism industry as well as being much loved, even by the people who find them frustrating to use on a daily basis. Our feedback is that they do not want to see the old trams go for good. Therefore there will be an upgrade. I understand that TransAdelaide is now finally poised to sign a contract, and the work could be undertaken and possibly completed by the end of next calendar year.

Ms Filby: If we can get a start date for the end of July this year we hope to complete the full body of work by December 2001.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In terms of the new tram cars, I have not wished to take to Cabinet any proposal for any extra investment in tram cars until we can resolve the issue of whether or not we are able to refurbish the cars. Now that the contract is imminent, I will give more consideration to the future of the line and the tram cars.

Mr VENNING: By way of supplementary question, is any more work to be done or resources allocated towards looking at the feasibility of extending the tram line from Victoria Square down to Adelaide Oval or even further? It has been discussed.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Recent work has not been undertaken on that, but it is mentioned in the Liberal transport policy as part of a cost benefit study. I really wanted to know what would happen with the future of the trams in terms of the heritage trams and what type of system we would have. Although this has not advanced far, some private sector proposals have come forth in recent months, looking at opportunities to invest in the tram system. I am quite interested to talk about some of those opportunities in conjunction with both the Unley council, which is really looking at some major change around the railway station and line in the Goodwood area, and also the Holdfast Bay council, which is also looking at a major upgrade. TransAdelaide has been working closely with them in terms of the frequency of trams generally.

Ms Filby: It is associated with redevelopments proposed around Moseley Square and relocation of the tram potential.

Mr ATKINSON: To Anzac Highway?

Ms Filby: My understanding of the proposal is that two options are under consideration: first, to move the tram terminus elsewhere in the square to allow for more open restaurant areas; and, secondly, there is talk of potentially stopping the tram at Brighton Road, but there is no development on that yet. I think they are going through a consultation phase.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is terrific down Jetty Road, and that is where TransAdelaide would like to see the service operating in the longer term also. It is certainly the government's intention that it go to Moseley Square, but I hope the public feedback that is being encouraged by this consultation by Holdfast Bay council will reinforce the Moseley Square option.

Mr ATKINSON: I thought there might be some consideration to turning the tram around at Jetty Road and sending it down Colley Terrace to Holdfast Shores.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I know that the Hon. Jamie Irwin has been pushing for that option. Are you in league with him?

Mr ATKINSON: No, I don't know anything about it.

Mr VENNING: I refer to the Convention Centre upgrade. I am concerned to see what is happening to our platforms. What, if any, impact have the Convention Centre extensions had on the operation of our rail services?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Quite considerable in terms of TransAdelaide's lack of access on a permanent basis to two of the platforms. On a weekend and on an interpeak basis there are further restrictions when up to five platforms are not available for use for the suburban rail system. This has had considerable impact on TransAdelaide's capacity to run on time in terms of rail services over recent months. That is frustrating for passengers, but it is equally frustrating for the professionals within TransAdelaide and the drivers in particular as sometimes they cop some hostile comment from passengers, so I feel for them.

Ms Filby: One of the platforms has been shortened as well, which means we sometimes have a bank up of trains waiting to come in to find a platform. Sometimes they have to wait in Adelaide yard for a platform to be freed up.

Mr VENNING: My third question—

Members interjecting:

Mr VENNING: My question relates to Transit Plus. What is TransAdelaide's involvement in the joint venture called Transit Plus?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: This is a new legal entity for TransAdelaide and it enables TransAdelaide to remain in the bus business but to a much smaller extent than any of us would have wished as part of the tendering process. Ms Filby may want to comment further.

Ms Filby: Transit Plus is a joint venture between TransAdelaide and Australian Transit Enterprises, and it is the form in which we secured the contract for the Mount Barker and the hills contract areas under the recent tenders. The decision was made to move down that path because it allowed for a better commercial arrangement with the sharing of the risks involved whereas, under the previous subsidiary arrangement of Hills Transit (a different organisation), the risks were borne solely by the government.

Mr VENNING: How did you select your partner? Was that by a tender process?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I was not party to the bids that TransAdelaide submitted, so Ms Filby must answer that.

Ms Filby: No, it was not tendered out. The reason was that we were operating in a competitive tendering process at the time, and the board decided that we had a satisfactory arrangement with ATE but that to declare our hand by putting bids in paper would run contrary to TransAdelaide's best position through the tendering process.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: If I may add to an earlier answer to a supplementary question from the member for Schubert, I seem to recall that the latest cost estimate for extending the tram from Victoria Square to the University of South Australia is some \$40 million, when you take into account the new tram cars that would have to be purchased to keep to the frequency that we are now able to provide. The track alone would cost some \$17.3 million, with a cost benefit of simply 0.3. It would be very hard to justify that investment on that basis. Having offered those figures, I had better clarify them if I can before this session finishes. I will get that information immediately.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I am glad the government has finally found out something about its own budget papers. I appreciate that the member for Schubert takes the trouble to read his own budget papers and cannot speak to the minister privately rather than wasting the committee's time. Will the minister confirm that currently about 26 former bus drivers suffering from work related injuries are housed at 238 Melbourne Street, North Adelaide as workers' compensation rehabilitees; and will the minister confirm that these workers have been segregated from other TransAdelaide redeployees and are in addition to other redeployees?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, I am unable to confirm that, but Ms Filby may have some advice.

Ms Filby: I am not sure whether the number is 25 or 26; a number of people who were previously bus employees are on workers' compensation and have restrictions on their fields of work. Those people are being managed through a rehabilitation process with an expert rehabilitation provider company.

Mr ATKINSON: That would be included in the figure of 229?

Ms Filby: No, I think that was excluded, but most of those people had injury restrictions prior to the bus contract outcomes coming into place.

Mr ATKINSON: That 229 is the total figure; there are no groups of redeployees elsewhere who are not included in that figure, apart from the one you have just mentioned?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The 229 full-time equivalents is the figure that as of yesterday—

Mr ATKINSON: It is full-time equivalents? So, there are more people than that?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, but it has always been in full-time equivalents, because it was with the whole of government costing. That has always been on the record.

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: You may think you are being smart, but that has been on the record for months. It has always been 226 full-time equivalents.

Mr ATKINSON: How many people are there, then?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not have that figure; there may be 226.

Mr ATKINSON: Some of them will have been part-time drivers. Will you get that figure for us, please?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will get that figure for you. We will know on 30 June and I will report fully then.

Ms BEDFORD: It has been suggested to me that redeployees will be transferred from TransAdelaide to the Department for Administrative and Information Services. Is there any truth to that rumour? Have any proposals of this nature ever been under consideration and, if so, what are the differences between TransAdelaide redeployment conditions and those of the Department for Administrative and Information Services?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, the honourable member has received incorrect information. DAIS is simply helping TransAdelaide to manage this; there is no intention of transferring the employment of TransAdelaide personnel to DAIS.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Ivan the lion-hearted—always standing up for the Barossa from West Beach. I refer the minister to the government's offer of redundancy packages to TransAdelaide bus drivers. How many drivers were eligible and how many accepted the redundancy packages as of 15 June 2000? What is the anticipated number for 30 June this year, and what is the total cost of the packages offered?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Every bus operator and every person in the bus business was eligible for the enhanced package. As of 2 June, 764 bus business employees had taken a TVSP, and a further 55 bus business employees have signed up to take a TVSP before 30 June, which is the cut-off point for the enhanced package.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Do you have the total cost figures?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not, at the moment.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Will you take that on notice?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: As a supplementary question: how many packages do you anticipate will be taken by employees? Is it all accounted for in this budget? Have more or fewer people been involved than was anticipated?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is anticipated that a further 55 employees will take up a TVSP by 30 June, and we would be hoping that many more would get jobs within the public sector and would not need to take their leave from the public sector.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: What is the maximum number you have budgeted for?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: This is not a payment that TransAdelaide must meet: as with other TVSPs, it is a whole of government payment made through the Treasury line. This is not a line that I am responsible for, so I will have to inquire.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Will you inquire and take that question on notice?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will inquire.

Mr McEWEN: I have only one question, related to the minister's commitment to check all tickets coming through the Adelaide railway station. What are the plans to be more robust about fare dodgers?

Members interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The IRA seems to be suitable for estimates questions on TransAdelaide. The ticket checks are to be undertaken from sunrise to sunset. As part of that, there has been a trial run by the PSAs with the transit police to see how that will operate on a daily basis, taking into account peak hours and all those pressures. I understand that it worked particularly well from our officers' perspective as well as being well received by our customers. TransAdelaide is now in the process of calling for tenders for ticket barrier booths to be built for the personnel who will be stationed there to do the checks every day.

In addition, we will have these roving teams working across the metropolitan rail system. We experience the biggest incidence of fare evasion between suburban stations, and we hope to catch quite a lot of people just by checking their tickets at the railway station. Although we have the biggest number of people at these railway stations, it does not mean that they make up the largest number of fare evaders. These roving teams will work as part of dedicated teams on various lines and will get to know the people who are using the train service. We believe that that will be much more effective.

The Passenger Transport Board will be investing in new equipment, and that will be much more effective in immediately determining whether or not a person has evaded buying or validating a ticket and before an expiation notice is issued. One of the biggest areas for fraud and evasion involves those people who do have a ticket but do not validate it unless they see somebody checking tickets, and we think we will get a lot more validations as a result of this change. Also, other people purchase concession tickets when they are not entitled to concession travel. So, although they buy a ticket and may validate it, they are not paying the full value of the fare. We believe that we will also be able to address that issue with these new ticket barrier checks and roving squads.

Mr VENNING: The rail corridor between Nuriootpa and Angaston is currently held by ASR and is not being used. Can the minister see it reverting back to TransAdelaide? Negotiations have been going on for a couple of years now because of federal money to upgrade the track for the wine train, but we do not seem to be getting anywhere. Do you have any information for the committee in relation to that?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am as frustrated as the honourable member. I chaired the rail transition group when this project won funding from the federal government which arose from the sale of AN. It was an excellent project, which resulted in a line upgrade to Angaston. I understand that there are issues about ownership of the line, costs in terms of access to the line, and some legal liability issues. Maybe we need to get an arbitrator in to pull all the parties together, bang some heads and get the federal money spent. It is hard enough to get federal money for any project but, having won

that funding, it is silly to not utilise it. Perhaps I can work with the honourable member and see how we can advance this issue. It would be important for tourism for the local area and also in respect of job creation.

Mr VENNING: The Angaston railway station has been upgraded as well.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I know. It was done by a local group; and Tanunda also. They are heritage assets. It would be wonderful to see them used more often with train services to those stations.

Mr VENNING: The Nuriootpa railway station building is operated by the youth group, Track 4, but the area around it is generally unsightly. I understand that the grass is kept cut and that ASR does a reasonable job. However, as the entrance way to the Barossa, it is not the greatest. Can anything be done to allow ASR to upgrade the whole area, particularly the goods shed which is in good physical repair but has a very poor appearance?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: ASR has a period of time in which it can determine what assets and buildings—and it leases the government-owned land—it wants to continue to own and whether it wants to continue with that lease. Transport SA officers are working with the Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) as regards the interstate line. We are having a lot of trouble in this area and there are many frustrations because the land has rarely been titled, and if it has been nobody can find it as it has gone from South Australian Railways across to the commonwealth and back again with AN. It is quite a time consuming process. I will ask our rail officers in Transport SA to inquire about ASR's intentions in terms of the land at Nuriootpa.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Given persistent community security concerns, what is the cost of employing two passenger service assistants to be present on every evening train service?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will get the answer to that question.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I refer the minister to TransAdelaide's 1998-99 annual report, particularly to the fall in patronage on the three modes of transport. It appears that rail, which now comprises the core business of TransAdelaide, has suffered the greatest loss with a 7.8 per cent reduction in patronage. What is the patronage result for 1999-2000, and what is the forecast for 2000-01? Can the minister provide a patronage breakdown for rail, tram and bus modes?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, I can, and I can report immediately that train and rail is the worst performer in this field. However, that is not always its fault because of track maintenance issues and the disruption to services due to the building of the Convention Centre, as I mentioned; but, on the face of it, it is the worst performer.

Mr ATKINSON: When do you think the disruptions to the railway station will be over?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I understand that the Convention Centre is scheduled to be completed at the end of next year. Our problem is that they are now working with the foundations, but a lot of the work to finish the Convention Centre will be well above the tracks. Hopefully, our problems will not extend into much of next year.

Mr ATKINSON: Two platforms are being lost permanently. Did I hear you correctly on that?

Ms Filby: I believe so.

Mr ATKINSON: Which platforms are they—the ones on the northern side, I presume?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will clarify that.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: As we are all aware, TransAdelaide once operated a number of free shuttle bus services to and from community events including Carols by Candlelight, the Big Day Out, the sand sculpture competition and so on. Will the new private operators continue to provide these services free to the community? How will these services be funded, and what is the total cost for 2000-01? What arrangements have been made, if any, to accommodate the increased pressure on public transport during the Olympic soccer games to be held in September?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The PTB is currently involved with these sponsorships and community profile issues for public transport and the buses. Regarding the Jubilee 2000—the big Catholic gathering of kids—the Passenger Transport Board was responsible for coordinating all that activity. I do not think that Carols by Candlelight should be troubled.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: TransAdelaide's 1998-99 annual report indicates that there has been a tripling in the number of employees deemed medically unfit and terminated as a result. Although we are not dealing with a large number—that is, two in 1997-98 and six in 1998-99—it represents a large increase. At the same time the number of health and safety committees has decreased from 14 to 11 and the number of hours of training in occupational health and safety has also decreased. Why has there been an increase in the termination of TransAdelaide workers on the basis of their medical fitness? How does TransAdelaide determine such medical fitness? Are workers offered counselling or opportunities to appeal their ruling?

Ms Filby: I can comment briefly on that. I would have to go behind to see in what areas of our business those particular instances arose. But TransAdelaide has in the past 18 months to maybe two years established new medical standards within TransAdelaide, as part of our rail safety accreditation process. I think it is about 18 months, so there certainly has been a higher focus on what degrees of fitness are required for work. I am aware that in some instances—and I do not know about all six of those—there has been a period during which an individual is working with their medical practitioner to attain the fitness that is required.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: So you are not randomly blood testing or doing any other sort of medical examination?

Ms Filby: Employees in TransAdelaide have a medical examination every two years, from the top to the bottom—that's the profile of the organisation.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Throughout all levels of the organisation.

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

Membership:

Ms Key substituted for Mr Atkinson.

Ms Thompson substituted for Mr Koutsantonis.

Additional Departmental Adviser:

Ms C. O'Loughlin, Director, Office for the Status of Women.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the minister wish to make any comments before we commence questions on the Minister for the Status of Women vote?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Thank you, Mr Chairman. The budget for the Office of the Status of Women for year 2000-01 is \$1.631 million. It includes accrual expenditure of

\$100 000 to recognise long service leave. Specific activities to be undertaken next financial year include: a young women's financial independence project; expansion of information services to women in rural, remote and regional South Australia through the Women's Information Service; a major research project, focusing on changing patterns of employment for women in South Australia; South Australian Business Women's Summit; identifying women from South Australia's diverse cultural groups for appointment to government boards and committees; production of the next series of financial check lists; and recognition of the contribution made by volunteers to the Women's Information Service as part of the celebration of the International Year of Volunteers.

Ms KEY: I do not have an opening statement for the opposition, but the minister did ask me to put on record an adage that comes to mind in this portfolio, which is that women who aim to be as good as men lack ambition. I think that probably is a good statement to begin with. My first question relates to portfolio statements page 7.74. Contained in the Women's Statement are some statistics of women's employment in the public sector. The opposition understands that, as at June 1999, 60.2 per cent of those employed in the public sector were women; 46.7 of women who were employed were on a part-time basis; and 14.4 per cent of men were also employed on a part-time basis. According to the Women's Statement this figure reflected the general work force trend towards increasing part-time work for women.

There are obviously many reasons for this, possibly the main one being the increasing costs of child care caused by, in our view, the federal government policy. My questions to the minister in regard to this part of the portfolio are: first, what initiatives has the government introduced to encourage an improvement in this figure so that more women are employed on a full-time basis in the public sector, and, secondly, has the government encouraged the private sector to adopt any initiatives of a similar sort and, if so, what are they?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: We have certainly worked with the private sector: the Bankers Trust immediately comes to mind, and Westpac in terms of child care on the premises where there are a lot of employees and it is part of a new enterprise. We are undertaking a pay equity project, as I understand, and that is being conducted between the Office for the Status of Women and the University of Adelaide. Ms O'Loughlin might wish to elaborate on that, because that may help us identify more of the issues that are relevant in terms of the profile that the member for Hanson mentioned.

Ms O'Loughlin: We are doing some research with Dr Barbara Pocock on women's changing work patterns. We have done some initial work that shows that many women who work part-time want to work part-time, a surprisingly high number. That was a bit surprising in that area. We will know a lot more at the end of this year as to women's changing work patterns and men's changing work patterns, too, and the difference between rural and metropolitan areas.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I should also add that I will refer the honourable member's question to the Commissioner for Public Employment, because I understand that that is the proper field in which it should be dealt.

Ms KEY: My second question is with regard to the Women's Studies Resource Centre, and again I refer to portfolio statements page 7.74. The minister would be aware of the ongoing funding problems with the Women's Studies Resource Centre, and last year this was one of the issues that

we raised with her. What measures are being taken by the minister or the Office for the Status of Women to make sure that there is ongoing funding and support for the Women's Studies Resource Centre?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: This matter is being handled by the Minister for Education and Children's Services. Currently, the Department of Education, Training and Employment does support the Women's Studies Resource Centre by providing an operating grant paying the salary of the librarian/technician and paying the rent for the premises that they occupy. In return, the centre provides specialist resources and services to students and teachers.

In recognition of the value of these services to schools, I am advised that the TAFE institute and university students and staff, together with the department, are considering continued support for the centre as part of a strategy that will involve all users. I understand that the department's deputy Chief Executive, Ms Helga Kolbe, has requested a meeting with representatives of the centre's collective. The advice was provided on 6 June. As of that date, Ms Kolbe had requested a meeting with representatives of the centre's collective with the aim of placing the centre's support on a more secure financial operational footing.

Ms KEY: My third question is in regard to women on boards, and again I refer to the portfolio statements, page 7.74. The inquiry into boards of statutory authorities, remuneration levels, selection processes, gender and ethnic composition, which was the 21st report of the Statutory Authorities Review Committee, highlights the issue of women on boards. It shows that some agencies did better than others. However, some ministers are not as assiduous as is the minister in ensuring that women are appointed to boards in equal numbers. Will the Minister outline what progress has been made with these figures since they were collated to indicate whether there has been any improvement in these areas, where there is less than 25 per cent representation of women on boards, including some of the boards in the minister's own portfolio? I refer to the *South Australian Gazette* of 25 May—and the minister may have some better information on this—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: You are not going to talk about the state crewing committee, are you?

Ms KEY: No, not the state crewing committee, although I did note that. I am referring to the announcement on 25 May in the *Gazette*, page 2628, which talks about the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and His Excellency the Governor being pleased to announce the Equal Opportunity Tribunal. From my counting, some 16 people have been appointed to that tribunal. I am not sure whether that is the total number. The minister may have some further information. I note that not only are the names very Anglo-Saxon in orientation but that 15 of the 16 are men and one is a woman. I hope that this is just one announcement and that it is not the total number of people on the tribunal. I thought I would raise that as an example.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am aware of the example because the honourable member echoes the questions I raised when this matter was first brought to cabinet's attention—and I cannot talk about what happens in cabinet beyond that. All I will say is that I do not get my way all the time, despite what people may say. I have been accused of worse things. What I will add to the honourable member's question and concern generally is that, at 1 May 2000, women represented 32.37 per cent of all government board and committee members. That is an increase on this time last year of

31.53 per cent, and I can assure the honourable member that it is every part of a per cent and every per cent is a struggle in this field. I am particularly pleased to see that we are continuing to advance in terms of women's representation on government boards and committees and that we continue to lead all Australian states and territories, apart from the ACT. I am also pleased to say that 40 per cent of all new appointments to government boards and committees over the past year have been women—and that is a very positive step.

Regarding the honourable member's question regarding equal opportunity, recommendations are made by the Attorney-General and I would like to commend the Attorney-General. As at June 1998, the percentage of women on boards and committees in his areas of portfolio responsibility was 27.48 per cent. As at 1 June 2000, this figure is now 35.2 per cent. So he has had the greatest increase over the past year in the representation of women, apart from me.

Ms KEY: What about Aboriginal affairs?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will give the honourable member—and I do not have it here—the breakdown for every minister's portfolio area.

Ms KEY: I have that here, unless there is more recent information than the Statutory Authorities Review Committee's report.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will be able to give it up to 1 May, but I will not ask for further work that does not need to be done.

Ms KEY: That would be helpful.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am very pleased that this year the Office for the Status of Women has been working very closely with SAMEAC (South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission) and together both agencies are doing a project to identify women from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds for appointments to government boards and committees as part of an executive search.

Mrs PENFOLD: My question to the minister relates to services for rural women. Will the minister explain how information services are being delivered to women in rural communities?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is by various means. It has been quite thrilling to see that the Office for the Status of Women has joined with Transport SA in terms of the touring caravan that has gone out to country areas over the past year demonstrating new technologies and how people in the bush and regional towns can gain access to services much more efficiently and accurately than in the past. The Office for the Status of Women has been participating in that initiative. It has been exceedingly well received—and I will get Ms O'Loughlin to comment in a moment. They have also even been to field days and shows. I think it has been really appreciated by rural women, who take some five or eight years longer than other women to gain their confidence in some of these areas. Today they are openly looking for advice about women's services and are quite happy to be seen in the country areas doing so.

It has not been easy for the Office for the Status of Women to break into that sort of thing, if there was a field other than the Country Women's Association or the women's agricultural boards, but now this is clearly looking for a differentiation of service delivery and the Office for the Status of Women has been there just at the right time when this change is being sought. Also through the internet, the Women's Information Service has been very strong at Berri, Ceduna, Millicent and Lamerook. Also, the Office for the Status of Women has gained a great deal more interest in its

services and referrals following the adoption of the 1800 phone number. Ms O'Loughlin might like to respond further.

Ms O'Loughlin: I would like to add that we are sending the same person back to the same area, so that people build up an understanding and it is not just a different face every time: it is the same person going back. The next step, of course, is to skill up the people in those areas to find that information themselves and feel good about it. We will target key women in those areas, so that we up-skill them and they establish close links with the Women's Information Service so that there will be those links between the city and country and those referral points which we think are vital. We have internet sites in partnership with rural women in Berri, Ceduna, Millicent and Lamerook and we will continue with that. We visited Kimba, Wudinna, Loch, Cowell, Woomera, Roxby Downs, Leigh Creek, Hawker, Cooper Pedy, Marla, Glendambo, Elliston, Streaky Bay, Port Lincoln, Ceduna and Penong, and we hope to expand.

Mrs PENFOLD: A number of rural councillors are women, such as Monica Dodd. Are they being used?

Ms O'Loughlin: Monica Dodd has been appointed as a member of the Women's Advisory Council. We have rural councillors constantly as members of the Women's Advisory Council. We try to continue with that so that the views of rural women are expressed to council and, through that, provide advice to the minister.

Mrs PENFOLD: How many country-based women serve on the Women's Advisory Council, and what projects will the Women's Advisory Council be undertaking during the next financial year?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Mrs Meredith Paterson, who lives in Bute, was recently appointed as Chair for a two-year term. Ms O'Loughlin mentioned Monica Dodd from Eyre Peninsula. She has accepted the position but has not yet received official notification. Ms Jeannette Long from Ardrossan is also an upcoming appointment. Ms Louise Stock from Keith is also a member of council. So, four of the 13 are country members. In addition, I am particularly pleased that Miss Patricia Waria-Read (Chair of the Aboriginal Women's Statewide Advisory Council) is a member of the Women's Advisory Council. She adds a very broad perspective—country and city—to the council. Miss Paterson has advised that, over the coming year, there will be more rural visits by the Women's Advisory Council, either as a full council or by individual members of the council.

Mrs PENFOLD: In view of the Premier's commitment to support and promote volunteering in South Australia, what contribution is made by the volunteers to the work of the Women's Information Service?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The work of the Women's Information Service will not be—

Ms THOMPSON: We will wait for the party.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I love parties, too. We could not undertake the work of the Women's Information Service without volunteers, and that has been the case since the service was first established as the Women's Information Switchboard some 22 years ago. At the latest count, the advice from the Office of the Status of Women is that over the past 12 months volunteers contributed 2 000 hours in terms of adding value to the Women's Information Service. It has a dedicated group of 15 women regularly rostered for four hour shifts providing women with information and referrals. Some of these women are choosing to take on more than one shift per week, and this is in addition to attending regular training sessions to ensure that they are kept up to date with a whole range of issues. These training sessions are

absolutely critical because if someone is phoning in for the first time—or on a regular basis—the information must be accurate and helpful.

The advisory service also provides free legal service in conjunction with the Women's Legal Service. Again, this is staffed by volunteer female lawyers outside their working hours. I am very pleased to place on the record my appreciation for the work of volunteers in helping women throughout the state through the Women's Information Service.

Ms BEDFORD: In this year's Queen's Birthday honours, only eight women received an award compared with 40 men. There has been criticism of this gender imbalance and encouragement for more women's names to be put forward, especially in the area of business. In the Australia Day awards earlier this year, 16 women and 35 men received awards—a much better average.

The shadow minister for the status of women recently wrote to the Prime Minister asking whether more women could be appointed to the Council for the Order of Australia, the organisation which recommends these awards. This council is predominantly male, and it is only in the category of members appointed by the Governor-General that there is a healthy component of female members. Of the members nominated by state and territory governments, only one is a woman.

I note also that the South Australian government appointment is Mr Ian Kowalick, who recently announced his retirement from the Premier's Department. Will the minister ensure that the vacancy, which presumably will be created by Mr Kowalick's departure, will be filled by a woman, and will she also lobby her interstate counterparts to ensure that the Council for the Order of Australia has far better female representation?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I understand that Mr Kowalick delegates his representation on the council to Ms Cuijeta Ahwan. So, I think South Australia is represented by a woman at that level. I have supported the shadow minister's representation to the Prime Minister about the appointment of more women to the Council for the Order of Australia. It is not just a matter of having more women on the council but more women being nominated overall. Very few women realise that the work they do is something for which men are acknowledged through the awards system. Women just do it and do not think it is anything special or that they should receive an award, nor do their friends or members of the organisations in which they work.

I get this feedback repeatedly when I go to the country or anywhere else. I am told that a certain woman has given stunning service to the community all her life on 50 different organisations, why has she not received an Australia Day honour? The woman herself will say that she does not do the work for that purpose. When I ask her why she should not be recognised for her work, she will say, 'I would be embarrassed.' I think it is time for us to tell women across the community doing volunteer work to nominate more women or encourage others to do so. The proportion of women who are nominated is too small.

Unless we lift that base, the proportion will fluctuate, as it has over the past year, but we will never see long-term change. For the first time in South Australia, the Women's Advisory Council has prepared a simple way of identifying how to deal with the seemingly daunting process of nomination. I was advised last year that that form, or a variation of it, has been adopted at the national level to promote the

nomination of more women so that hopefully they will be recognised.

Ms BEDFORD: The Women's Statement is a snapshot of the role of women within the public sector, but no budget details are contained in it. It is made available a long time after the budget comes down. Therefore, it is difficult to assess how much the government commits financially to women in South Australia. What was the cost of production of the Women's Statement and why is no detail available in the budget papers referring to budget amounts?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I hope to rectify that next year, and I thank the honourable member for prompting me. The Women's Statement cost \$20 615 this financial year. The honourable member suggests that more dollar figures should be shown against the initiatives in the Women's Statement. I will see whether that can be addressed.

Ms BEDFORD: What was the cost of production of the *Business Planning Kit for Rural Women*; where was the kit distributed and who were the 17 sponsors (other than Westpac) who assisted with the production of the kit?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will take that question on notice.

The CHAIRMAN: I have been listening to the questions about the appointment of women to various organisations. I do not have any difficulty with that, but surely there is a principle involved where the appointment to any position should be based purely on the merit of the individual.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I agree entirely, but I have often argued: how is merit defined?

The CHAIRMAN: I have no difficulty with that, but I was interested in the comments that were being made as though there was something wrong with the system.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to page 7.73 of the portfolio statements. I note that there is no mention of any grant funding. Does the Office for the Status of Women receive any grant funding?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It receives funding to distribute to other organisations. The National Council of Women and others are supported. I will obtain those figures.

Ms O'Loughlin: We do not receive any funding.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Does the honourable member want to know whether we have our hand out? The answer is 'No'. We are able to undertake some research projects with partners. I suppose that is money coming in, but it is not a grant in that sense.

Ms THOMPSON: There is no grant like the grants that everyone else gets. That is my point.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the examination of the vote completed.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Mr T. O'Loughlin, Executive Director, Arts SA.

Ms C. Treloar, Director, Arts Industry Development.

Mr G. Kling, Manager, Budget and Financial Planning.

Mr J. Andary, Director, Lead Agencies.

Mr A. Francis, Portfolio Finance Officer.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I table a copy of the arts' and the government's investment strategy for the arts and artists for the next five years, which I released publicly on Tuesday this week. The arts budget for the next financial year provides for the first phase of this strategy to be realised and includes initiatives such as a new festival of music comedy and cabaret at the Adelaide Festival Centre in mid 2001, expansion of the youth arts festival, Come Out, with funding for new commis-

sions, creation of fellowships for mid-career artists, and a returning artists and residencies scheme. Funding for the arts in 2000-01 will be \$84 million compared with \$88.2 million in 1999-2000. These figures include capital items, which vary from year to year. After removing the capital items—which amounted to \$28 million in 1999-2000 and \$20.8 million this coming financial year—the increase in the underlying operating subsidies for the arts is 3.6 per cent, or 1.1 per cent in real terms.

Since the government was elected in December 1993, more than \$68 million, or an average of \$11.4 million per annum, has been spent on capital works, and a further \$53.3 million is committed to capital works between now and 2003. An additional \$3.6 million in state government investment in film over the next five years is expected to leverage \$21 million in spending for new film production in South Australia and to create 200 jobs. The budget places a strong focus on regional arts and cultural activity, including \$80 000 to fund an extension of the Country Arts SA subscription season to include the redeveloped Port Lincoln Civic Centre; an increase of \$65 000 to assist the Barossa Music Festival; and an extra \$60 000 for the Museum's accreditation and community history programs conducted through the History Trust. It is the first time that either of these programs has received increased funding.

The community history projects were established, as I recall, by a Liberal government in 1981 and have not had an increase in funding since that time, so this will be well received. The commonwealth government's significant funding contribution in the federal budget to the major performing arts sector nationally will begin to have a positive impact next year on the four major South Australian companies. Under these arrangements, the commonwealth is providing \$5.5 million over the next four years to the state government's \$1.2 million and, therefore, we are gaining the highest ratio of federal funds of any state, which is more good news.

This outstanding result is a credit to the creativity of our artists and the overall strength of our arts sector at the present time. For the interest of the committee, I point out that the latest available ABS figures show that 92 300 people are in paid involvement in some form in the arts in South Australia. So, the arts is a big employer of labour in this state.

Ms KEY: My first question relates to public libraries and I refer to the Portfolio Statements, page 7.3. I am aware that the minister advised the parliament on 30 March 2000 that she believed an agreement between herself and the Local Government Association on the total amount of state funding for public libraries would be reached on 31 March this year. I also note that there are 38 655 signatures on petitions tabled in the House of Assembly, to which constituents from the electorate of Hanson that I represent contributed significantly. Will the minister advise whether such an arrangement as she reported to the parliament has been reached or is this the first time in a decade that no such agreement exists between the Local Government Association and the state government regarding funding for public libraries?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: There are a series of questions. It was agreed between the Local Government Association and me that there would be a one year arrangement for the next financial year prior to the next five year agreement for funding public libraries in this state, which is a joint state government-local government activity. That one year special arrangement for next year arises from a number of factors including uncertainty about the GST and also a report

commissioned by the Local Government Association on on-line services and provision through public libraries. That report is now being looked at by a task force across government and will be used to feed in information for the manner in which libraries will be funded for a further five year period from the end of next financial year.

I was speaking to the Chairman of the Local Government Association yesterday, because he and I are keen to get on with the negotiations for the next five year agreement. One month ago I wrote to him putting forward the names of three South Australians from the government perspective who will be negotiating the agreement. I sought names from the LGA but had not yet received them, so I spoke with the Chairman of the LGA yesterday to determine how we can get on with this, because it is in everybody's interests that the new agreement for the forthcoming five years be negotiated promptly.

In terms of the petitions, I acknowledge that there has been a campaign of misinformation in the electorate. I am upset in the sense that so many people have been deliberately misinformed. Those in the public library sector know that, of the 136 public libraries in this state, 133 have received increased funding over and above the CPI in this coming year and have received for the first time ever funds for free access to the internet: \$800 000 has been provided specifically for that purpose and they have subsequently received advice that there is, arising from the EDS contract negotiations, a windfall of \$300 000, which will go to the public libraries this coming financial year. In many senses the public libraries have never been better funded than at this time.

However, they have taken issue with the fact that at the end of the five year agreement for 30 June this year there were unspent funds—state government funds which this Parliament voted for public library purposes but which have not been spent. An amount of \$2 million of that \$3 million is for books and materials. Every local member should be asking why the libraries over the past five years have not spent the money that has been voted by this parliament for public library purchases for books and materials. Instead the Local Government Association and librarians have got into a huff and a puff and got over-excited, because attention has finally been drawn to the fact that they have not spent \$2 million in funds.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, and the departments do not get the money the following year. Government departments know that and that is why they spend the money voted for them. It is a traditional practice and sometimes a criticism of the public sector.

No library will miss out in its operations or its materials funding, but those unspent funds voted for public library purposes for materials will be spent this coming financial year as part of the allocation, including the CPI and the internet free access funds from the state government through the Libraries Board vote funds for distribution across the public libraries sector next financial year. Reflecting on the public campaign, I think the public libraries have made their point; perhaps it would be more relevant if the government had actually cut the funds, not increased them. Nevertheless, I accept that in a democracy they are able to put their point; I am just sorry that, in the presentation of the petitions and the like, so much misinformation was given through the public library system as part of its campaign. The public library system should be providing accurate information to the public library community, and I do not believe it has done so.

Ms KEY: As a supplementary question: the agreement at the moment is for one year, with a view to negotiating a five year agreement. I understood from what the minister said that, of the unspent \$3 million, \$2 million of that is made up of libraries under-spending or not spending in areas of operations and materials.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: About \$3 million of accumulated or reserve funds are unspent at the end of the five year agreement. Some \$2 million of that was for materials and books and the like, and it will be used for the purposes for which it was voted over the past five years: it will be distributed in the next year.

Ms KEY: Will the minister provide a break-down of the unspent funds of \$3 million?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes; \$1 million of that will remain in the reserves for a variety of reasons, which I can identify. I should highlight to the honourable member that the Local Government Association has welcomed my statement regarding starting the negotiations for the five year agreement 2001 to 2006. I have indicated that the level of funding that has been applied over the previous five year agreement from 1 July 1995 to 30 June 2000, which was \$13.018 million for the past financial year adjusted for inflation, will be the starting point for negotiations. That sum, adjusted for inflation, will be the starting point for those negotiations.

There has always been, and still is, goodwill toward the public library sector on the part of the state government in this state. It has received an increase in funding, and inflation has been addressed in the basis for starting the next five year agreement. The state government has traditionally been and still is the highest funder of public libraries across the nation.

Mr McEWEN: You said it was unspent; was it also uncommitted? I understand the point of difference between you and local government was that it said that, while it might have been unspent, that was only because of the spending cycle; it certainly was not uncommitted; and, by carrying it forward, you were trying to spend it twice.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It was committed by the state government for the purchase of books and materials and was not used for that purpose. Arts SA has indicated that any books and materials that are ordered but received after the 31st we will cover that, so if they have ordered books and materials—

Mr McEWEN: You are not carrying forward cash to complement the carried forward expenditure. In other words, are you making it look as if the money were available again? It seemed to me that in the public debate the argument was about unspent and uncommitted funds.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It was not committed; I can assure the honourable member that this accumulated over some years. It is not something that has just arisen in the past year. That argument by the LGA was somewhat superficial, because it can hardly say that these were committed funds when they have been accumulating for some years, not just one year.

Ms KEY: If you give us the breakdown of that amount then the different electorates can look at what their local councils have been doing and make an assessment about your claims with regard to the campaign.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The best thing that can be said about the campaign is that it has exposed the public libraries' under expenditure of state funds which we all wanted to be spent in our libraries. I have said this in the Legislative Council but perhaps the message was not received by House of Assembly members. Interestingly, when the agreement

finished, the government had a choice to take those reserve funds which had been voted but not used back into government sources. We have not done that; we have kept those funds in the public library sector for spending in that sector. At least in my presence, the LGA has acknowledged the reality of that. It may not wish to acknowledge it publicly—it is not necessarily in its interests to do so as part of its campaign—but it has acknowledged that privately.

The major thing now is to move forward, and that is what I was speaking about yesterday with the President of the LGA. We are seriously both interested in doing so, not looking backwards, and knowing that public libraries are well funded this coming financial year, taking account of inflation and a whole range of other benefits as part of the package.

Ms KEY: My second question concerns the State Library redevelopment, and I refer the minister to page 78.3 of the portfolio statements. As the minister previously stated, there is an increase that has been reflected through the GST. However, I understand that the state will claim input credits to offset the GST. I am interested in the point the minister made about the GST. Can the minister detail the capital works expenditure on the State Library and why it has increased by \$4 million? I understand it was originally \$36 million and it is now \$40 million. I also note that \$21.3 million was allocated in the 1999-2000 expenditure for this item; what is the expenditure result for 1999-2000? The last point is one of personal interest, my having the benefit of some interior design experience. Will the minister confirm that there will be marble on the floor of the new State Library at a time when I understand that the regional libraries are facing cuts? If there is to be marble in the new State Library foyer, will it be South Australian marble?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I infer from the question that the honourable member does not want any marble, let alone South Australian marble.

Ms KEY: Rather than imported marble, South Australian marble would be a good touch.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I have no idea whether there will be marble on the floor. I cannot stand marble, because I always slip on it. I will find out whether or not there is marble. I refer to my earlier answer and repeat that regional libraries have not had their funds cut so, irrespective of whether or not there will be marble, they are not being penalised for the foyer of the new State Library. I am advised that \$2.6 million has been spent on this project to the end of this financial year, and \$3 million is projected to be spent in the next financial year as we prepare the designs, do the fire work on the Jervois building and essentially empty the building, except for some limited, skeleton services.

This redevelopment will be undertaken very seriously and full on from about April, but fire work and other tasks will be done in the meantime. I will get Mr O'Loughlin to elaborate, but my recollection of taking this matter to cabinet is that three issues led to the increased costs: the GST, last minute advice about earthquake work and also some IT investments. Mr O'Loughlin might have more to say about this.

Mr O'Loughlin: Conceptually, it started out as a \$36 million project, but \$19 million to \$20 million of it was for structural basic building works. So, in terms of enhancements and improved services, the \$16 million balance was available for that. The fact that it has been increased by \$4 million has made it possible to add substantially to the service provision of the library and, in particular, as the

minister said, the IT, which occupied a substantial portion of that \$4 million increment.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In saying that the budget has increased from \$36 million to \$40 million, it is interesting to note that when Ms Awcock was State Librarian and the first proposal for the redevelopment of the library was presented to me, four years ago it was \$76 million. We have scaled back dramatically but I think got more in services rather than necessarily in grand structure.

Ms KEY: So it will not be completely marble?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It will not be completely marble. In fact, if I had my way there would be no marble. I will find out.

Ms KEY: With regard to the defunding of arts organisations, I refer to the Portfolio Statements, page 7.23, although it would not be absolutely obvious from that reference. I understand that at least two performing arts organisations have been defunded, namely, Junction Theatre and the Ports Community Arts Centre. I should say for the estimates committee's reference that I am a board member of the Junction Theatre, which resides in the electorate of Hanson. I want to make clear and upfront that I have a board member interest in that theatre group. However, I also have concerns for the Ports Community Arts Centre, which, I understand, has also had its funding reduced and also has a very good track record.

In the case of Junction, its funding has been reduced to six months from 12 months, effectively forcing the theatre company to close. On what basis were these two organisations defunded? Can the minister list other arts organisations that were defunded in 1999-2000? Will the minister undertake to review these decisions?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The honourable member would appreciate that all funding decisions in terms of grants are not assessed by me: a peer assessment group of arts practitioners does this. These grants were assessed under the Industry Development Committee which is chaired by Professor Tom Shapcott. I suspect that it did not take its decision lightly in recommending to me that Junction be funded only until December this year. I point out that Junction is to receive \$87 500 to December this year. When you say that we have effectively cut the company from operating, if we had wanted to do that we would have given it no funding as at 30 June, but that was not the recommendation. Also, \$20 000 will be provided to the Ports Community Arts Centre until December this year.

I understand that Ms Treloar, who, as I indicated earlier, is arts Industry Development Director within Arts SA, has written—and in fact so have I, but you may recall better than I when and what was said—alerting the companies to the concerns of the Industry Development Committee and asking them to address those concerns. Those warnings have been given for some 18 months now.

The honourable member may not like the decision. If she were minister, I suspect that she would not have changed the recommendations that were provided. I do not recall Ms Levy, as minister, changing recommendations from the peer assessment system, and I have not. I have been scrupulous in that regard. Any suggestion that there is political motivation behind this issue is completely unfounded: it is a peer assessment recommendation to me after some 18 months of alerting these organisations to the concerns and asking them to lift their performance rate and audience numbers. Audience numbers have been falling dramatically and we

have been asking them about audience development programs. Ms Treloar may wish to comment further.

Ms Treloar: With \$87 500 allocated to Junction, it will be able to do the two major projects for which it had received Australia Council funding for the year. I also point out that Junction and Ports Community Arts Centre are eligible to apply back to Arts SA for project funding in September 2000, and to apply again to us for annual funding for the following 2001-02 financial year. I reinforce the minister's point that the panel did find it a difficult decision, but I point out that the government has supported Junction for some three full years since it lost its annual funding from the Australia Council, and that it had for many years received the highest funding of the smaller theatre companies.

I also point out that the minister wrote in, I think, October 1998 and I wrote last year to the company pointing out the concerns of the panel. We now have established protocols in place to notify organisations of artistic and, in Ports' case, financial concerns. We hope that both organisations can turn around their performances, but that remains to be seen.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The two companies that have lost funding have been highlighted, but others have received increases in funding. Vitalstatistix received an increase of \$43 150 to \$168 550; and Craft South, an increase of \$11 950 to \$89 950. The South Australian Writers Centre, Co-Opera, the Folk Federation, Friendly Street Poets, Leigh Warren and Dancers, the Barossa Music Festival and more also received increases, some because they are working well and others because they may be going through a bad patch.

Ms KEY: So no others have been defunded? You said that other organisations had received an increase in funding?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That is right. It was the recommendation of the peer assessment Industry Development Committee that only those two be defunded.

Ms KEY: I note what Ms Treloar said about the opportunity to reapply in September 2000. I think that is something that can be taken back to both organisations.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I have also agreed to meet Junction. It has asked to do so and I have agreed to meet with Chris White (the chair) and others.

The CHAIRMAN: Minister, I noted a press release you made on 2 June headed 'Smaller arts organisations win funding increases', and I note in the column where the figures are given that the South Australian Council of Country Music received \$20 500. It was put to me that it received considerably less than some other more prominent organisations but these other organisations actually had less members and perhaps appealed to a far smaller audience. The member for Hammond was expressing his concern earlier today in relation to that matter, so that is why I raise it here today.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Certainly, I would be pleased if, as part of its application for funding next year, South Australian Country Music made those points that you have made so well today. I would highlight that the organisation applied for and gained funding for the first time last year. The committee was pleased, and I was pleased to receive the committee's comments that that money had been spent well. It recommended to me that the funding be maintained. I am not sure whether the committee also sought extra funding. I should also alert you to the fact that the Country Music Council would have received advice by letter from me probably yesterday that it has gained a further \$10 000 through government funding Arts SA for the healthy initiatives.

The CHAIRMAN: In actual fact they got \$30 000. That is pleasing.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes. I have been pleased, as part of the government's focus on contemporary music and new music, that the Country Music Council has performed so well. I go each year, Mr Chairman, and perhaps you will come with me next year to the showcase of country music.

The CHAIRMAN: I would be delighted.

Mrs PENFOLD: My question relates to Arts+. Can the minister advise why government has prepared Arts+ an investment strategy for the arts to 2005, and are the initiatives outlined fully funded?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Treasury has signed off in terms of the funding. Cabinet has signed off in terms of the initiatives. They build on the strength in the arts in this state overall, but particularly the enormous amount of work that has been undertaken in the past six years. It would seem that so much was happening in companies and by artists across the state that it was worthwhile pulling all of that together. Then, in looking at what had been achieved in recent times and looking at what we were seeking to develop, it arose, quite naturally really, that this document should be developed, explaining in a coherent way all that is happening and all that it is possible to achieve, in a realistic timeframe, but in a quite ambitious way. Arts+ has been deliberately called that because we see arts as a plus in everybody's lives. It is arts plus country, it is arts plus corrections, and health and public transport and local government. It is also, as I say, a plus in building on past achievements by artists and companies in this state.

In terms of the whole-of-government arts strategy, it is really exciting that, when we started to dig across government, so many portfolios are actually doing things in the arts but were not acknowledging it. We know that in corrections. We know that for young people and kids who are homeless they often do not communicate particularly well verbally but they do through music, and we can use music much more effectively in their lives, but it is still engaging our artists for those programs. In transport, there is more and more a role for artists, whether it be the Adelaide-Crafers road, the gateway entrances, and we want to expand that. Beachport recently engaged artists, and the member for Gordon may be aware of the Beachport art program as the entrance to that town. We see more and more opportunities of engaging artists and working with communities to explain, through forms, the identity of that community and the history and its future.

That is why it is called Arts+, and we want to work more closely across government and in partnership with local government as well. The arts are actually one industry which helps to make Adelaide quite distinctive from a lot of other places in Australia. We actually do the arts particularly well. We have a high profile and it is a good business decision at any time to build on what you do particularly well, and this is what Arts+ is about.

Mrs PENFOLD: Could the minister enlarge on the partnership with local government?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Some councils will be more of a challenge, and some mayors in particular, and I am thinking of your own. But I also do know that your council has been excellent, though much credit to you as the member for Flinders, and to the community, in getting council to be involved in the redevelopment of the Civic Hall, and now, again through your urging, ensuring that we make the most of that investment—and there is \$500 000 of state funds in that project—by extending the Country Arts SA subscription

series. There are a number of country councils with which we have excellent relationships. Port Pirie is one. Port Augusta, in the chairman's electorate, has recently part-funded an arts officer with us, in locating that arts officer in the community.

We have been speaking with Aboriginal people in the Port Augusta area. There are some real troubles in some of those families, but if through the arts in some way we can help them gather an interest and express themselves differently we may help them work through some of those issues as a family, and as a community, and the council is working with us on that and in the wider community. So, there is a real push I think across country councils understanding the value of the arts, in terms of community expression and identity—and actually celebration.

The CHAIRMAN: I think, minister, in relation to what you did at Ceduna a few years ago, which was an excellent concept, if you could repeat that at Port Lincoln it would be something that everyone could be proud of.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: You and I are going to be so busy at the arts this year, Mr Chairman!

Mrs PENFOLD: Could the minister advise us just what we can expect from the \$80 000 that I am going to receive in Port Lincoln for the touring program, which is coming for the first time in many years, and I am extremely grateful. I think I was a child when the last orchestra was there, at the high school.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The Adelaide Symphony Orchestra is touring for the first time in some years the country areas of South Australia later this year, and that is under the country arts touring program. But also under the country arts subscription series this year there will be: *Mum's the Word*, which is produced by Picture This Productions and Glenn Street Theatre, *Scared Weird Little Guys*, which is a fantastic show, the Australian Dance Theatre, *How I Learned to Drive*, which is in conjunction with the State Theatre Company, *Coppélia*, which is with the Western Australian Ballet, *Secret Mermaids' Business*, which is a Playbox Theatre production from Melbourne, and then the finale in November will be the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. That is the range and quality of the programs that Port Lincoln can consider in the future.

Mrs PENFOLD: So we are getting the symphony?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am saying that they are the range of things you can consider, but Country Arts SA and the local community must look at how to spend that \$80 000. I would have thought that most of that, if not all, is possible.

Mrs PENFOLD: What other initiatives can we expect this year in rural and regional South Australia?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Arts+ states strongly that, as part of the performance agreements with Arts SA, all of our leading companies must develop a regional focus as well. That will be undertaken this year, and that includes the North Terrace institutions in terms of touring work. I understand that even the Art Gallery will be part of this with at least the director visiting country communities to talk about all the wonderful work and to give presentations about the treasures of the Art Gallery.

Arts+ also proposes, over a 10 year period, the development of a network of art galleries across country South Australia. The South Australian Youth Arts Board, particularly with City Sites, is having a program on Eyre Peninsula later this year over the summer period. That is the first time it has extended the successful City Sites program for younger artists in terms of commissioning public work. That program has been running for about four years in Adelaide now and

will go to country areas, too. So, there is a whole range of activity, which is terrific.

Mrs PENFOLD: Does that include Carclew, and I refer to a very good visit from Carclew in Port Lincoln?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, it does.

Ms KEY: I refer to the Arts+ plan, portfolio statement page 7.3, which was released earlier in the week. I note that no costing is attached to the initiatives. What is the total cost associated with the production and preparation of the Arts+ plan in 1999-2000 and also 2000-01? What is the total financial commitment required to meet each of the strategies as outlined in the Arts+ plan?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I can advise that for the coming financial year the provision for the new initiatives is \$813 000. I do not have the rest here, but I can assure the honourable member that the initiatives are funded, and that has been signed off by Treasury.

Ms KEY: What are the production and preparation costs in both years?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Arts+ 2000-05 has been prepared and printed this financial year, but it starts from next financial year. Some of the initiatives will begin this coming financial year and they amount to some \$813 000. The cost of it as an expense this financial year is of the order of \$10 000.

Ms KEY: Is it possible for other members of the committee to have copies of Arts+ 2000-05? We have one between us, which makes it difficult.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes.

Ms KEY: We would appreciate that. Were the costs for 1999-2000 of a similar order?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That is the production of this document. No initiative contained in this document has started this financial year, so it was not a matter of funding it this year.

Ms KEY: What is the total financial commitment required to meet each of the strategies?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I thought we had extra copies of Arts+ 2000-05 with us. We did at morning tea time, but I said that we would not need them. They have gone back to Arts SA already. They will be with you tomorrow.

Ms KEY: What is the total financial commitment required to meet each of the strategies as outlined in the plan? Will the minister provide that information?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will get the information for the honourable member.

Ms KEY: Following on from that, I refer to the strategy promoting arts leadership. What is the total cost associated with the initiatives as outlined by the minister; what is the total cost of the new festival of music cabaret and comedy; what is the expenditure expected during 2000-01; and what is the annual budget allocation to enable commissioning of 'major works' through Arts SA and when will it commence?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will get some of that information for the honourable member. I can advise that, in terms of the new cabaret comedy festival, to be held in June or July next year and to be called 'Up front and personal@cabaret.com(edy)', it is \$500 000. That has been provided as part of the \$813 000 that the initiatives will cost next financial year.

Ms KEY: Again in relation to Arts+, I refer to the commitment made by the minister in her arts statement when she said:

Assist smaller subsidised arts companies through business consultancies to build new audiences for the arts.

What is the total cost of these initiatives, and when does the minister expect the initiatives to begin?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The sum of \$150 000 will be provided for the consultancies and a further \$100 000 for an incentive program. The incentive is for good financial and business performances so that they can have business consultancies and, if they excel, they will have access to this further fund of \$100 000. I will provide a list of which groups have received those funds to date amongst the smaller organisations, including Nexus and Arts in Action.

Mr McEWEN: I am interested in Wagner's *Ring* Cycle coming back and what the government will put into that. What does the minister believe to be the multiplier effects and how good is that for the economy? I understand that this time the minister has conned the commonwealth into giving her a hand.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not think the commonwealth was easily conned. We had to work very hard to convince it; in particular, I would say to the honourable member, to convince the federal bureaucrats to take Adelaide seriously as a place for opera and that it was not just a function that could be undertaken on the eastern seaboard. This was even after the success of the State Opera and the ASO performing the first Wagner *Ring* Cycle, a production that we staged. The federal government has agreed to be the major funder in terms of the government funding support required to underwrite this Australian production. All the staging will be undertaken by the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust. The workshop is at Dry Creek and it is a fantastic compliment to the skills of our designers and technicians.

The Adelaide Symphony Orchestra will be boosted in size again to do the score. It is so complex that they will be rehearsing for some five months for the exercise, such is the demand. It is the olympics of the arts. Just as our sportsmen and sportswomen have been preparing for years for the Sydney Olympics, so will our musicians and singers be preparing for many months to perform this one production. The total subsidy required is approximately \$4.1 million, of which the state government needs to find \$1 million. So the federal government is funding \$3.1 million, which is not a con; it is a very wise investment. In terms of the economic impact, I believe that in 1999 it was a minimum of \$10 million, together with \$2 million in capital costs. I ask Mr O'Loughlin to provide the committee with further information on this matter.

Mr O'Loughlin: The economic impact study from the 1998 *Ring* production estimated a minimum impact of \$10 million. All that is required to achieve the \$10 million in 2004 is to get the same attendance as in 1998. In addition, there is the economic impact of the federal government's investment into the cost of building the sets in the Adelaide Festival Centre workshops—the capital cost is at least \$2 million. We think we have a better idea of how to market the event and, therefore, we believe that \$10 million will turn out to be a minimum in 2004.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: What is so amazing is that these people travel the world loving Wagner. They have more money than they know what to do with and they actually spend it. They are captured here for at least 10 days—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, they are captured here. They actually like to travel and see new things—and they do. They spend big to go out and see the countryside. The wine that was sold was bewildering. Wineries that live pretty flashy lifestyles could not believe the orders that were being

taken to airfreight to the United States—they could afford to fly it back. The restaurants, the butchers and the hotels could not believe the spending pattern.

Even better, the international press raved about the quality of the production, and the people who attended have been spreading the word. So, we have gained a great deal from the last production. The message reached even the federal government and it is now to be a major investor.

Mr McEWEN: Referring to this budding new relationship with the federal government, what is the \$500 000 investment by the federal government in Music House being provided for?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That funding is being provided for contemporary music and new Australian music—

Mr McEwen interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Well, just as the Chairman is coming to me with lots of country arts performances, you might come to me with contemporary music. Would you be good at that?

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I don't know. The old Lions Arts Centre will be transformed into Music House. Members might have seen articles this past week in the *Advertiser* describing how hard it is for hotels to operate, particularly with live music, because customers, neighbours and older people are complaining about the noise. I believe the person who lives closest to the Lion Arts Centre is the Governor and he has told me his sleep is undisturbed, regardless of the music. So, I think there will be not so young but young at heart South Australians performing strongly at Music House. Better still, many organisations will share resources, ideas and enthusiasm. Most have been working on a volunteer basis single handedly keeping the music forms alive and providing support. Now they will be able to come together.

I am thrilled that contemporary music and Australian music is coming to North Terrace. We have the large cultural institutions—the Art Gallery, the Museum, the Library, the Festival Centre and contemporary music. It sounds good to me.

Mr McEwen interjecting:

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Mount Gambier has some excellent bands and musicians. I see them at the Country Showcase and other venues around Adelaide.

Mr McEWEN: The South Australian Film Corporation seems to have slipped off the radar screen a bit. There is an extra \$1.2 million in the budget. Is that to reinvigorate the SA Film Corporation a little?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The SA Film Corporation has been performing well in terms of the amount of work and jobs generated and production attracted here, but I think the comment has been made Australia-wide in film production that because of the cost not enough work has been going into script development and the rigour in terms of the initial creative process has not been strong. This has been recognised by the government in a study which was undertaken last year on how to develop an industry policy for the film sector. For the next financial year and thereafter, \$200 000 will go into script development (creative development) to put more rigour into the basic material, and there will be a further \$1 million for investment in production.

The big American money that is going to American production on the east coast might be great for the technicians, but that does not help our writers and creative people. There is a real call in Australia for a base for independent

film making and the presentation and celebration of our Australian culture. We believe that we can provide that base.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to the Arts SA move to Hindley Street and the cost involved. Last year the estimates committee was advised that the rent for the new premises would be about \$280 000, about \$50 000 more than for the Pulteney Street premises. There would also be capital costs to Arts SA for the fit-out, which the executive director said would be about \$500 000. Mr O'Loughlin also advised that the capital costs would be financed from a small pool of uncommitted capital funds.

What are the total capital costs for 1999-2000 associated with the fit-out of West Coffee Palace; what is the capital cost for the year 2000-01; how much rent will Arts SA pay for the accommodation; how small is the pool of uncommitted capital funds; and what is the amount of any uncommitted funds for the year 2000-01?

Mr O'Loughlin: The capital costs have increased. The cost to Arts SA will be about \$780 000. The operating costs are pretty much in line with the \$50 000 increment of which I advised the committee last year.

Ms BEDFORD: Is the rent the same?

Mr O'Loughlin: That is right.

Ms BEDFORD: How small is the pool of uncommitted capital funds for 2000-01?

Mr O'Loughlin: The capital funds for 2000-01 will be less than they were at this time last year because of funds committed to not only this project but also the refurbishment of Tandanya.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: We had originally proposed to spend \$700 000 on the airconditioning at Tandanya, but the audit report highlighted all this fire work which had to be done, which was a nightmare. Either we found the money or said that we would not be able to aircondition Tandanya. I was not prepared to do that, so we have had to finance this extra work for Tandanya from this pool of funds.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to the recent move by the government to finance organisations on a financial year basis as opposed to a calendar year basis. This has caused a great deal of chaos, particularly for the performing arts sector which organises its work according to the calendar year. Why did the government change the funding arrangements, and was there a financial benefit for the government as a result?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I remember that it was related to Living Health and having one application process rather than two. This has meant that the cost for the companies has come down and it has removed the uncertainty about where the funds are coming from and at what time of the year. Living Health has received advice of its industry development funds this week and the South Australian Youth Arts Board is also changing to a financial year basis. I have the letters on my desk to sign. I could not do that today because of the estimates committee, but I will sign them tonight.

Mr O'Loughlin: I want to make two small points. First, many people in the performing arts sector have approached us because they think financial year funding serves them better. The companies to which we referred earlier that were not successful in getting funding under the recent organisation's assessment panel review now have the benefit of six months of funding because they are on financial year funding and can arrange their affairs to deal with the new environment. If the funding rounds were in the same period it would be more difficult to provide that length of notice.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am sure that we made nothing from it.

Ms BEDFORD: As long as there was a bonus for the arts community, I am sure that is fine.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes. I think the focus is always on giving a bonus to the arts community, not to the government.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to the minister's Arts+ plan. Will the minister confirm that Arts+ shares its name with an arts marketing business located in the Forestville-Goodwood area, and has the operator of that marketing business contacted the minister or her department to express concern about potential copyright issues?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: There is an organisation called Arts Plus. Our plan is entitled Arts with a numerical + sign. It has been called Arts+ 2000-05. Ms Treloar has met with the person to whom the honourable member refers and this issue has been discussed.

Ms Treloar: The issue has been discussed and a very cooperative result has been achieved.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I acknowledge the initial concern of Ms Joanne Petitedmange who conducts a consultancy business called Arts Plus. When Ms Treloar heard about these concerns, she promptly worked them out to everyone's satisfaction.

Ms KEY: I refer to page 7.21 of the portfolio statements and the appointment of the new director and management of the South Australian Museum. Will the minister outline the selection and appointment procedures undertaken to fill these positions; were these positions advertised; and what was the cost of this process?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The position of director was advertised as well as head-hunted. There has been a coup for South Australia in that Dr Tim Flannery has won that position. Since then there have been some management changes, and I will ask Mr O'Loughlin to speak about that as they are Public Service matters.

Mr O'Loughlin: The principal appointment has been that of the General Manager, Mr Stephen Riley. That vacancy was advertised within the public sector and outside it and a formal interview process was followed. From memory, we interviewed six people. I was on the panel as was Dr Flannery and a representative from the Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment, and the panel unanimously favoured Mr Riley's selection. In the case of the appointment of the Director, that position was also advertised. The interviews were conducted by a formal panel comprised of the Chairman of the Museum, Mr Robert de Crespigny, and two luminaries in the museum world, Dr Bob Edwards and Mr Bill Jonas. Dr Flannery was not involved in the interview process because he was not an initial applicant. The interview process did not result in a firm decision to proceed with one of the applicants so we had discussions with Dr Flannery. As a result of that process, Dr Flannery was chosen as the preferred candidate.

Ms KEY: My question was to do with the cost of the process.

Mr O'Loughlin: The cost of the process in both cases was very little. From memory, we did not engage a recruitment consultant for the Director's position, and the Chairman and I conducted all the negotiations with Dr Flannery, so no fees were paid to intermediaries.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: What you are saying is that you come cheap.

Mr O'Loughlin: It is all part of the service. The same was the case with Mr Riley—no executive search firm was used, so the cost was limited to phone calls and general office costs.

Ms KEY: I refer to 'Government assets' at page 10 of the estimates statement and the non-current assets line, in particular the item 'Works of art and cultural collections'. I note the estimated result for this item for last year and this year was \$12 million. However, for the 1999-2000 budget I understand it is \$421 million. I am hoping there is a good explanation or that there is a mistake.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Mr O'Loughlin will explain that there is no mistake.

Mr O'Loughlin: Over the past two years there has been progressive implementation of the Auditor-General's interpretation of the correct location for accounting for not only collections but also for buildings on North Terrace, the employees and all the other expenses. Those assets are now on the balance sheets of the North Terrace cultural institutions, so it is just a book-keeping transfer.

Ms KEY: Jeff Kennett has not come over and taken any of our art work.

Mr O'Loughlin: No. And we have not revalued downwards or anything.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, and we have not just lost it.

Ms CICCARELLO: I refer to page 7.23 of the portfolio statements and output class 7. Will the minister confirm the cost of the recent Chihuly exhibition? Last year's estimates committee revealed that the Jam Factory was in financial trouble and was requiring a significant bail-out by the state government. Will the minister provide a report on the current financial status of the Jam Factory and state whether she is satisfied with its performance? Will the minister also indicate whether the present director will have his contract renewed, who are the present members of the board and will their membership be renewed?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I understand that the board renewed the contract recently for the General Manager and I was advised after the event. The Chihuly exhibition closed last night, and representatives of Dale Chihuly's workplace are here working over five days to dismantle the work at the Jam Factory. I am advised that 20 060 people attended the exhibition and that over \$100 000 was generated in ticket sales. The government provided \$117 000 to underwrite the exhibition, and we have generated \$100 000 in sales. There is also significant sponsorship from the corporate sector provided by Santos, AAPT, Sealand and Channel 9.

I spoke to representatives of AAPT last night and they told me that they thought that it was the best sponsorship they had ever supported in the arts. Their clients and members of the staff just gained so much from the presence and have talked about the work. They found that it was a very constructive exercise for them. What I think was thrilling, and other members who are familiar with the Jam Factory, as I am, may have found it exciting, was to see people who did not even know the Jam Factory was there, did not know what it did and had never seen the works. Those people visited the Jam Factory for the first time and will do so again. One of the big bonuses—no matter the costs involved and the excitement of one of the world's masters in glass and seeing his work—is that there will be a long-term bonus in terms of attendances at Jam Factory exhibitions and, hopefully, increased sales, which will assist the Jam Factory to undertake new ventures in future.

Ms CICCARELLO: What is the current financial status of the Jam Factory? Is the minister satisfied with its performance?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am pleased to report a small surplus for this financial year, which is a positive turnaround from last financial year, and that is one of the reasons why the board determined to renew the contract of the General Manager in terms of its pleasure in the operation of the Jam Factory.

Ms CICCARELLO: Will the terms of other board members be renewed?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will have to check when they are due. I will get back to the honourable member on that and answer within the two week period.

Mrs PENFOLD: I refer to Living Health. In terms of the former Living Health sponsorship for the arts, will the minister advise what benefits, if any, have been gained by transferring the administration of this program to Arts SA and what are the funding allocations for the next financial year?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I wrote to each of these organisations earlier this week, and I would like to incorporate in *Hansard* without my reading it a list of recipients of health promotion through the arts for 2000-01.

Health Promotion Through the Arts 2000-01	
Adelaide Baroque	\$6 000
Adelaide Central School of Art	\$8 000
Adelaide Critics' Circle	\$8 000
Adelaide Festival	\$200 000
Adelaide Festival Centre Trust	\$100 000
Adelaide Fringe	\$170 000
Adelaide Gay & Lesbian Cultural Festival (FEAST)	\$20 000
Adelaide Symphony Orchestra	\$45 000
Art Gallery of SA	\$20 000
Artlink Australia	\$8 000
Arts in Action Inc	\$10 000
Australian Chamber Orchestra (SA)	\$10 000
Australian Dance Council of SA Inc (Ausdance)	\$20 000
Australian Dance Theatre	\$35 000
Australian Festival for Young People	\$120 000
Australian String Quartet	\$10 000
Backstage Inc	\$3 000
Bakehouse Theatre	\$5 000
Barossa Music Festival	\$50 000
Botanic Gardens of Adelaide	\$20 000
Broughton Arts Society Inc	\$4 000
Carclew Youth Arts Centre	\$188 000
Carols by Candlelight	\$10 000
Ceduna Oyster Festival	\$4 960
Centre for the Performing Arts	\$8 000
Chinese Welfare Services of SA	\$2 000
Cirkidz Inc	\$15 000
Co*Opera Inc	\$20 000
Community Arts Network	\$10 000
Contemporary Arts Centre of SA	\$15 000
Country Arts SA	\$100 000
Craftsouth	\$4 300
D Faces of Youth Arts	\$10 000
Dale Street Women's Health Centre	\$5 000
Dozynki Inc	\$2 000
Experimental Art Foundation	\$7 000
Festival of Ideas	\$10 000
Flinders University Art Museum	\$8 000
Folk Federation of SA	\$20 000
Fountain Gallery (Pt Augusta City Council)	\$3 000
Gawler Country Music Club Inc	\$5 000
Helpmann Academy	\$10 000
History Trust of SA	\$10 000
Independent Theatre Inc	\$8 000
Jam Factory Craft & Design Centre	\$18 000
Jazz Coordination SA	\$3 000
Jumbuck Theatre Inc	\$5 000
Junction Theatre	\$10 000
Keith Community Health Centre	\$1 500
Leigh Warren & Dancers	\$25 000
Mainstreet Theatre	\$10 000
Media Resource Centre	\$7 000
Migration Museum	\$6 000

Mission Australia—SA Region	\$15 000
Musica Viva Australia	\$12 500
National Motor Museum (Birdwood)	\$12 000
National Trust of SA	\$25 000
New Land Gallery	\$4 000
Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre Inc	\$11 000
Noarlunga Health Services	\$3 450
Patch Theatre Company	\$20 000
Penola Festival Inc	\$3 000
Port Youth Theatre Workshop	\$20 550
Quorn Youth Centre Inc	\$1 500
Radio 5UV	\$10 000
Restless Dance Company	\$15 000
Ridloch Art Gallery Inc	\$5 000
Riverland Country Music Club Inc	\$5 000
Riverland Youth Theatre	\$8 000
Riverland/Mallee Country Arts Board	\$5 000
Rock Eisteddfod Challenge Pty Ltd	\$30 000
SA Maritime Museum	\$20 000
SA Museum	\$20 000
SA Writers' Centre Inc	\$18 000
SA Young Filmmakers' Festival	\$8 000
SALA Week Committee	\$10 000
South Australian Council for Country Music Inc	\$10 000
Southern Youth Theatre Ensemble	\$5 000
State Library of SA	\$45 000
State Opera of SA	\$40 000
State Theatre Company	\$120 000
Tandanya—National Aboriginal Cultural Institute	\$40 000
Tauondi	\$1 135
Theatre 62	\$5 000
Theatre Association of SA Inc	\$1 650
University of Adelaide Theatre Guild	\$2 500
Urban Myth Theatre of Youth Inc	\$8 000
Vitalstatistix Theatre Company	\$30 000
Total	\$2 023 045

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I highlight that the former Living Health sponsorship program is now managed by Arts SA. The cost to Arts SA since the abolition of Living Health has been approximately \$150 000 over two financial years, averaging \$75 000 a year, which is less than half the cost when it was administered by Living Health. Those savings have gone back into the arts community, which is good, rather than into the old administration of Living Health.

I highlight that \$2.023 million of the allocations has been distributed, and a total of 95 applications were successful for next financial year compared with 88 for the current financial year, when \$1.994 was allocated. The small difference relates to funds carried over between the two years. As occurred in 1999-2000, \$200 000 is to be kept in reserve for worthwhile projects that arise during the course of the year. Many new organisations have won funding this year and others have gained increased funding, but I do not have all that information with me at the moment. A number of country organisations were funded for the first time, including Port Broughton and elsewhere.

Mrs PENFOLD: My question relates to individual artists. Will the minister advise what measures the government has adopted to reward and encourage individual creative artists in all disciplines?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Certainly, the funding for individual artists has been a particularly strong focus for this government. In 1998 the total pool of Arts SA arts projects grants was increased from \$600 000 to \$1 million. This pool comprised three new programs: professional development for emerging and established artists; cultural tourism and export, festivals and events; and new commissions. As part of the emerging artists program, a series of mentorships and a new award, the Premier's award for emerging artist of the year, were established. The mentorships are valued at \$15 000 and the Premier's award is up to \$50 000. The government has

also established a series of scholarships with the South Australian Youth Arts Board at the Carclew site on Montefiore Hill.

A new scholarship for a visual artist has already been established. With respect to the Youth Arts Boards, funding has been provided for the Ruby Litchfield, Ruth Tuck and Colin Thiele funds and an Independent Arts Foundation scholarship for literature—\$6 000. There is also a new scholarship for an artist to attend the New York Studio School of Drawing, Painting and Sculpture and, most recently, arising from the relationship Adelaide has established with Seattle since August last year, we have a once off opportunity offered nowhere else in the world, which is reserved space for one of our glass artist trainees from the Jam Factory to attend the Pilchuk glass studio summer school. That was established by Dale Chihuly and a number of other colleagues about 25 years ago and is easily regarded as the best such school. Nick Mount is a South Australian who is one of four on the international board of Pilchuk and is there at the present time. Janice Vitkovsky is the first recipient of this reserved space at Pilchuk.

For emerging artists we have the Premier's award for the emerging artist of the year, three mentorships, seven scholarships including South Australian Youth Arts Board scholarships and project grants. For mid career artists arising from Arts Plus we have four new fellowships each year, plus project grants and, for leadership or eminent artists, Arts Plus for 2005 provides a new major commissions program and project grants. It is critical that we provide support, reward and opportunity for our individual artists throughout their career as well as the opportunities provided through companies for performing opportunities.

Ms Treloar also advises me that through the South Australian Film Cooperation the Film Maker of the Future prize of \$50 000 is awarded for the best narrative short film made in the past six months. This is the richest cash prize for short film in Australia. Also, the Filmmaker of the Future encouragement prizes of \$15 000 are awarded annually and are open to South Australian resident film makers.

Mrs PENFOLD: What is the status of the Nugent inquiry final report and when will the four major performing arts companies in South Australia—the State Opera, the State Theatre, the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra and the Australian Dance Theatre—know what extra funding they will achieve and what will be expected of them in terms of negotiating performance agreements?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is a fair question. The federal budget provided new funding for the arts across Australia for some 31 major performing arts companies, of which South Australia has four: the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, the State Theatre, the State Opera and the Australian Dance Theatre. I mentioned earlier that South Australia gained 12.1 per cent of the new funding provided by the federal government, which is quite remarkable, considering our per head of population base per capita is 8 per cent. We got 12.1 per cent of the new funds. In addition, we did well with the federal funds of \$5.5 million over four years; we put in just over \$1 million to get those funds, so we are getting a five to one return, which I highlighted earlier was the most attractive ratio that any state has generated. It is interesting to see that some other states were not able to negotiate nearly as well as we did in this matter, nor score as well with a coup such as Wagner's *Ring* as a national event of excellence in South Australia.

Having given those umbrella figures I am unable to break down the funds for the individual companies at this stage, at the request of the federal government. Negotiations are happening among the companies across Australia, and the federal government does not want funding divulged to one company and not another before performance agreements have been realised. I understand that Mr O'Loughlin has written to the Chair of the Australia Council regarding these performance agreements, urging that the Australia Council get on with it quickly, deal with our companies first and let us sign off, rather than waiting for all companies to reach an agreed position with the federal government. Some companies do not like the position with which they have been presented by the federal government, and we should not be held up as a result of other states being a bit cheated off with the federal government. I am not sure whether he has heard back. I will get comment from Mr O'Loughlin. It seems such a good idea that I suspect it has not been acted on.

Mr O'Loughlin: I received a reply late yesterday from the Chair that they and Canberra understood the point from our perspective and would be getting in touch in due course. In the case of the two organisations participating in the *Ring*, we had clear, specific arrangements, so as far as we are concerned those negotiations have now been conducted. Canberra was involved in them, so it should be possible to progress very quickly.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is important that we know because we must engage the conductor and artistic director for the *Ring Cycle*. We have options on one individual who is getting a bit impatient because that option has been there for around nine months. He (or she) is in demand around the world, and we must be able to firm up our position promptly.

Ms CICCARELLO: I refer to Portfolio Statements, page 7.23. What is the cost associated with the establishment of Music House, and what does the project involve?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is \$500 000 and it is all federal funds, part of a \$1.1 million contemporary music funding package that South Australia received during the last federal election campaign. Interestingly, only South Australia and Tasmania received a funding package for contemporary music. I think Tasmania received it in exchange for Mr Harradine's vote; but we got it on merit because we do so well in contemporary music.

Ms CICCARELLO: I refer to the minister to her arts statement, in particular, 'Strategy 1: Arts for Young People'. What is the estimated cost of the establishment of a theatre company by 2002 which is specifically designed to appeal to young people? Is a financial commitment made to this item in this year's budget? What is the cost of expanding the 'Come Out' program as promised in the statement?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The commitment in the coming year's budget is to support Ms Judy Potter, who on a part-time basis from her role as Director of Carclew is coming to work with the government and Arts SA to implement the youth arts strategy, which includes the Youth Theatre Company. We aim to have that company up and running by the year 2002, and for that purpose we have budgeted \$1 million on an annual basis.

Ms CICCARELLO: What about with regard to 'Come Out'?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That is being discussed at the moment. Rather than give the amount of money that we have in mind, we want it to tell us what it wants to do with any money increase in terms of new commissions. Negotiations

are under way at present. We should be able to advise of that shortly when a position has been agreed.

Ms BEDFORD: In relation to the Noarlunga TAFE theatre, I understand that it is currently leased to Mr Bob Lott and that the lease is due at the end of June this year. I also understand that it is unlikely to be renewed, with Mr Lott being given until December to complete his current contractual arrangements. Obviously, this is a very important venue for the community in the south and for arts groups. However, the many users of the theatre are very concerned about the future of the venue. Can the minister detail the leasing arrangements, including the possible termination of the lease? Will the minister assure the many community groups who are concerned about it that they will be able to use this venue?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will refer the questions to Minister Buckley. I understand that it is a TAFE lease to Mr Lott, and Arts SA has had no part in the lease or the negotiations, and also access arrangements for the community groups. I will promptly get a reply for the honourable member. I recognise the importance of the theatre to the local community.

Ms BEDFORD: When the minister closed the Constitution Museum she promised to reinstate Speaker's Corner. What is the cost of reinstating Speaker's Corner? When will the government deliver on this promise?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That is a very fair question to ask, and I have not yet delivered. The discussions are with the State Library and the History Trust; they have been for some time and are not resolved.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to 'Strategy 2: Emerging and Mid-Career Artists' in the minister's arts statement. What is the total cost associated with the initiatives outlined in strategy 2, and why is there no timetable for delivery? What is the cost of implementing the returning artists and residency scheme? How will the fellowships and mid-career artists be funded? What is the total cost, and when will they commence?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I think those questions were asked earlier and I undertook to get a reply. I repeat that undertaking.

Ms KEY: I refer to the establishment of the public libraries task force (portfolio statements, page 7.18). What are the terms of reference for the task force? When is it due to report? Who are the members of the task force? Are there any estimated costs at this stage and, if so, what are they?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: This is the group I referred to earlier which the government established to go through the report commissioned by the LGA on online service provisions, and how government services online could be provided through library services. We have gathered, under the leadership of Mr O'Loughlin, a number of government agencies, and they are to report by the end of June on this matter. I will get Mr O'Loughlin to comment further.

Mr O'Loughlin: The task force is chaired by the director of PLAIN Central Services, Ms Robin Collins. I am the minister's direct representative on it. A number of departments are represented on it, including the Office of Regional Development, Treasury, Education, the Office of the Information Economy and the Department of Administrative and Information Services. A lot of work has been done on the nature of the existing services and the opportunities they present, because there is the strong desire to avoid duplication.

Notwithstanding that a lot is being done at the moment, the first conclusion is that libraries do have real potential to

fulfil this role, at least for a limited period. Some studies have been done about how they might make use of trainee schemes at commonwealth and state level. The first draft has been completed, and I expect that it will be with the minister by the end of June. The exercise, because it involves public servants, has not incurred any cash costs.

Ms KEY: With regard to the Nugent recommendations, the honourable member has already asked the minister a question about that program. From the report she gave us, I think some congratulations are in order.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: And that was an accurate report.

Ms KEY: I am sure that it was; I have no reason to doubt it. You mentioned sensitive material and costings. When they are available, will you provide them to the parliament and the opposition?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Absolutely, and if parliament is not sitting I will inform you at the time that I am advised. I suspect that the federal government cannot reach an agreement with our four major companies without our knowledge and involvement, because those agreements cannot be realised without our funding as well. I should be kept in the loop and we can inform you.

Ms KEY: Can you provide information to the shadow minister so that we will have the details when they are available?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, and it need not depend upon parliament sitting.

The CHAIRMAN: There being no further questions, I declare that section completed.

Membership:

Mr Atkinson substituted for Ms Key.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Mr M. Hennesy-Smith, Executive Director, Planning SA.

Mr B. Teague, Director, Development Advice.

Mr P. Smith, Director, Development Assessment.

Mr S. Moseley, Director, Development Planning.

The CHAIRMAN: Minister, do you wish to make a statement in relation to the Planning SA section?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Thank you, Mr Chairman. I wish to advise that the budget for Planning SA for 2000-01 is \$21.6 million and that this includes an appropriation of \$12.402 million (the same as for this year), plus fees and other income sources. Of the total budget, the operating expenditure is \$20.5 million, and this includes employee costs, policy investigation costs and grants. The budget also includes a capital investment of \$1.1 million for the implementation of the electronic lodgement and transfer of development application system.

The budget provides for the first full year of operation of a new multi-agency urban regeneration unit. Mr Jeff Walsh, the former Director, Operational Services, Transport SA, has been appointed to head the unit. The unit is responsible for establishing strategies to stem urban sprawl and re-energise inner and middle ring suburbs that have experienced declining population over recent decades. Another government priority is to streamline the processes for the preparation of development plans and for assessing development applications.

We want to improve the efficiency of the planning and development system in South Australia—and the consistency of outcomes. These matters are the focus of the System

Improvement Bill now before parliament, and they are being complemented by a coordinated ongoing information program conducted by Planning SA in conjunction with the LGA.

Other goals for Planning SA in 2000-01 include:

- Encouraging the preparation by councils of clear and current development policies, as well as efficient procedures for regional areas, and that is embraced by the regional development and country planning strategy.
- Amending the planning strategy to reflect industrial land priorities, the regional development priorities and the urban regeneration agenda.
- Finalising the strategies for the 'Parklands 21' open space network and the metropolitan 'Coastal linear park', which includes a shared use pathway.
- Developing an on-line 'Atlas of South Australia' which will provide access to a wide range of government spatial information products and data, in a customer friendly form for use by the public and industry.

Ms BEDFORD: My question relates to significant trees.

How many trees have been registered under the ministerial PAR thus far, and how many trees have been identified and remain to be registered?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Perhaps I will explain that, with the passage of the legislation to amend the Development Act in terms of significant trees, every tree above 2.5 metres in circumference is protected. It does not need to be separately registered. The parliament has put out the challenge to councils that, if they want to go around and protect trees 1.5 to 2.49 metres, they must apply to the minister for an interim order and then, while they have that breathing space of one year, they would go around and identify the trees that they want protected. But if they apply they can have blanket cover for those trees for that one year period, for trees between 1.5 and 2.49 metres. So, in terms of registering individual trees I am at a loss at the moment in responding to that, because councils will do that through the PAR process and this one year interim period allows them the time to do that.

I can inform the honourable member and the committee that four councils have applied so far. I have approved two at this time, Mitcham and Burnside. Norwood Payneham and St Peters have also applied for a temporary control, and the Adelaide Hills Council has expressed some interest. Adelaide Hills Council and parts of Mitcham already have protection for native trees but the protection would be for exotics. I am informed further that the Alexandra council is the first country council to request significant tree control. So, that is for their exotics, because native trees would already be protected.

Mr ATKINSON: So if a council does not request authority under the significant trees provision there will be no controls in this area.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: What the parliament has done relates to protection for trees 2.5 metres and above—exotic and native. This applies to native trees in the urban areas where the Native Vegetation Act did not apply. Now the parliament has also approved that in relation to trees 1.5 to 2.49 metres a council must apply for protection there. The parliament has not given the blanket protection with certain qualifications for removal by development application. If a council wishes to apply, I am prepared to agree to an interim order, but it is not a longstanding interim order in that it lasts only for one year because everyone must know what is going on in that council area. We want to push the

councils to do their PAR promptly and identify their trees, and then it would not be all trees 1.5 to 2.49 metres, but the council can also apply for interim protection of all native South Australian species.

Mr ATKINSON: On what grounds would you refuse permission?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I do not envisage any grounds, unless I did not respect the integrity of the council and its genuineness in preparing its PAR—and I would not put any council in that category—but they must apply. The parliament has given them the challenge that, if they think this is an issue for their council area, they can apply. In the meantime, of course, property owners can always apply their own land management agreements for any trees on their property. If they are concerned that their council has not applied for the interim controls 1.5 to 2.49 metres, or they want to protect trees that have a smaller circumference than that, that is smaller than 1.5 metres, they can apply for land management agreements and have it registered on their titles. Individuals can act in that manner if they wish.

Mr ATKINSON: Which would have no effect on a successor in title.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, they would not be able to wilfully remove or lop a branch. The land management agreement is registered on the title with the council so, if they wanted to lop it or fell it, they would have to speak to the council.

Mr ATKINSON: If I could round this out—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am saying that people have had that right: this is not something the government has introduced—

Mr ATKINSON: I understand that, yes.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The land management agreements have applied since 1982.

Mr ATKINSON: So, if I own land which is under registered title, I can enter on the title a requirement that certain trees not be cut down and, if I then went to sell that land, I could bind the person who bought it.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: You may find that no-one wanted to buy it because it has that provision on it. Mr Hennesey-Smith has some more to add.

Mr Hennesey-Smith: Land management agreements need to be a contract, an agreement, normally between the council and the landowner. A landowner cannot individually alter his or her title to bind subsequent owners. It is not a unilateral action: it is a contract that requires the agreement of council and council then, as one of the contractors, would require approval. Subsequent landowners would require council approval if there was a land management agreement.

Mr ATKINSON: So the owner of land is binding only himself or herself: he is not binding the successor in title?

Mr Hennesey-Smith: Yes, he is binding the successor in title.

Mr Teague: Unless both parties agree to it.

Mr ATKINSON: But the purchaser would know what he or she was buying?

Mr Teague: Yes.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Mr Chairman, I think who is speaking is becoming confusing for *Hansard*: you either go through the chair or you go through me.

The CHAIRMAN: I thought it was a most congenial arrangement and I thought I would let it go.

Ms BEDFORD: What research, if any, was conducted by Planning SA to determine what size of tree ought to be protected and the cost of protecting such trees? Will the

minister explain the cost difference in budgetary outlays for protecting trees of 2.5 metres diameter as opposed to trees of 1.5 metres and larger?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: The honourable member may recall when the bill was before parliament that the government set up a reference group just before Christmas which met for the first time just after Christmas. It was chaired by Dr Bob Such and comprised representatives of the Local Government Association, the Conservation Council, the Housing Industry Association, the Urban Development Industry Association and the Royal Australian Planning Institute. That committee was given to the end of March, as I recall, to come up with an agreed framework for addressing this issue, because governments of both persuasions have tried to address this issue over some 10 years and more. There has never been an agreed community position. The development sector and the conservation sector divided the community and parliament and it was not progressed.

I said: 'You have to come up with an agreed workable position', and therefore there was compromise by all parties. It may not be perfect legislation but, when this issue was raised in the public arena to such an extent by some bad practices and the government said that it would look at the issue again, we had to move quickly to ensure that the threat of protection did not mean that a lot of people went fanatical and chopped down trees all over the place. I think the parliament acted with sufficient integrity and haste but, having done our research, we have a package that is working. I have given an undertaking that, in two years' time, we will review the whole measure in good faith: because we passed it in good faith, let us look at it in good faith to see whether it may need refining, whether we could do better or in fact whether we have done particularly well as it is. I do not have information on all those cost issues but I can seek advice.

Ms BEDFORD: That would be good. My third question relates to developments that involve poker machines. Will the minister give the number and details of development applications which have been challenged and/or appealed under the act and which have included provision for the installation of gaming machines, regardless of whether the gaming licence was subsequently granted? What research, if any, has Planning SA conducted about the relationship of development applications, objections and gaming machine licence applications?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I would have to refer that question to the Attorney-General who is responsible for gaming licences and the special commissioner.

Mr ATKINSON: The Attorney-General or the Treasurer?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I think it is the Attorney-General. I think the Treasurer is just the recipient of funds, not the issuer of the licences.

Ms BEDFORD: The minister does not know how many development applications have been lodged with gaming as a core component.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, this would be in terms of licensing premises.

Ms BEDFORD: It is of particular interest to me, because a project in our own area was approved without licences of any kind, which has subsequently been—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Where are the poker machines?

Ms BEDFORD: It does not matter in this particular case because—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: No, but where in your electorate? What venue?

Ms BEDFORD: In the north-eastern suburbs.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In what venue, if it was not licensed?

Ms BEDFORD: It was called the McKenzie development.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I understand that was refused.

Ms BEDFORD: Yes, but how many others have gone ahead in that fashion?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I will try to find out.

Mr VENNING: Minister, as you know the ERD Committee is part of the planning PAR processes in South Australia, and I am the chair of that committee. I have to say that I am very appreciative of the minister's personal cooperation and that of your officers, especially those here today. You have eliminated much of the confusion and frustration that has been part of the planning processes in South Australia. You have clarified and sped up processes in most, but not all, areas of your department. You and your team in Planning SA need to be commended. I also note the Halliday report that you launched—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I did not write this, Mr Chairman.

Mr VENNING: These are my own words, Mr Chairman. My question relates to the Halliday report, which the minister commissioned. It is referred to in budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.15. I understand that the Halliday report commissioned by the minister last year specifically to seek feedback from customers for users of the planning and development system in South Australia confirmed that we had possibly the best system in Australia. However, it was recommended that the administration of the system should be improved and that more work was required to promote a greater understanding generally about policies and procedures relating to planning and development matters. What progress has the government made on implementing the recommendations of the Halliday report?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Considerable progress has been made, and it is a matter that is of great interest to the government, and to me personally. It is very important that we advance development in this state, but we need to consider environmental sensitivities. We need a system that accommodates the best development but takes into account community sensitivities, and we cannot be bogged down in bureaucracy.

We have to pressure the system to ensure that applications are processed. We must also ensure that councils—and this has become a campaign of mine—upgrade their PARs so that they are timely and relevant when a developer, either as an individual or with a larger project, wants to advance a project. It is infuriating, for instance, that many of the problems that Burnside is endeavouring to cope with as a community arise from the fact that the council's PAR has not been updated since 1993. The world has moved on quite a bit in the past six years. There is a lot of interest in buying and developing property in Burnside, but there is no modern platform on which to advance that development that does not lead to a divided community. They just have not thought through the issues.

I understand that Unley has not updated its PAR since 1989, and there are some country councils that are almost as bad. We are trying to encourage regional development in this state. Recently there has been trouble with the Mallala council in relation to the Two Wells industrial development. Even if council wanted to approve it, it could not do so

because the development cannot be accommodated in its PAR.

We want jobs in country areas and we want to encourage development. However, if councils do not make it a priority to upgrade their PARs to be modern and streamlined, we, as local members, will be frustrated in our effort to advance jobs, development and wealth generation in this state. It is a tricky issue between wanting to provide councils with the powers that they believe they require as a level of government and whipping the stick and telling them that they have to lift their game. They hate being told that. They want all the powers but not always all the responsibility. That is something that will have to be worked out with local councils in terms of the planning system.

Finally, legislation is before parliament to amend the Development Act. I plead with Labor Party members in relation to this matter, and this is a good time to plead with them. Possibly, there are only two more weeks of parliament before the recess. The bill has been before parliament since 30 March and, if it is not passed within the next two weeks, we will have to wait until October to effect these important changes to the system. I encourage the Labor Party to advance the bill during the next two weeks so that we can improve the planning and development system.

[Sitting suspended from 6.02 to 7.30 p.m.]

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I would like to take this opportunity to correct a statement that I made earlier today about Transport SA's budget lines. When questioned on the regional roads program, I stated that, after 2004 when the rural road sealing program is completed, the remaining funds would be transferred to the regional roads program. Forward estimates have not yet confirmed whether that funding will go to the regional roads program or the overtaking lanes program, or both, but I can confirm that those funds will be retained for regional and rural road programs.

Mr VENNING: I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.7. Given the government's commitment to improving the efficiency of the planning assessment process, what progress is being made on the development of an electronically based system for the lodgment and assessment of development applications?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: This is an important project for planning across the state. It is one of the partnership programs that Planning SA is undertaking with the Local Government Association, the Spatial Information Industry within the Department for Administrative and Information Services (DAIS) and Business SA, the former Employers Chamber of Commerce and Industry. We are seeking to enable planning processes and development applications to be lodged electronically. This will speed up the processes immensely and enable more consultation to take place across agencies and between councils and agencies much more easily than under the manual process which we employ at present.

An amount of \$850 000 will be allocated to this project during the next financial year as part of an overall commitment by the state government of \$1.1 million. Cabinet has agreed that the project be commenced as a pilot effort. We must prove that the project meets all the expectations of local government and Planning SA, but we are absolutely confident that this is a wise investment which will help us to improve the processing of planning and development applications across the state.

Mr VENNING: The issue of urban regeneration is currently before the ERD Committee. This issue is very topical, particularly in the eastern suburbs. I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.15. Why has the government established a new Urban Regeneration Unit in the Department of Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts funded through Planning SA?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I appreciate that the Environment, Resources and Development Committee has a keen interest in this matter and has requested the assistance of Planning SA to tour the suburbs to look at examples of urban regeneration. I have seen the program put forward by Planning SA to the committee, and I must say that you have a range of good and bad projects in mind. Urban regeneration is absolutely critical for Adelaide. I could use all the time at my disposal to discuss this subject because I feel passionately about it, but I will limit my remarks.

We have taken for granted and been too relaxed in our appreciation of quality of life issues in South Australia. We have allowed urban sprawl to take place and tolerated people on lower incomes being situated in the outer streams of the metropolitan area without providing sufficient services and employment to support them, and we have then complained about crime and violence in the domestic situations that they endure.

Over the years, we have not thought through well the relationship between economic policy planning and social development. In the meantime, in inner and middle suburbs of Adelaide the population is declining. That is where all the resources are and where taxpayer investment has been focused in terms of schools, community services and roadworks, etc. As this spread has taken place, there has been the demand for more government funds for infrastructure in outer suburbs and we have allowed the investments that taxpayers have made over the years in inner and middle suburbs to decline. We are not reinvesting well in roads or our gas, power and water distribution systems.

We must face these issues—they are not necessarily popular—of how to allocate taxpayer dollars across government departments and agencies. We hope that this Urban Regeneration Unit will address this. Agencies have looked after their own little fiefdom and not looked more broadly at the implications of their policy and planning decisions or investment decisions of government. A multitude of problems and challenges have developed as a result of agencies looking internally and protecting their plot. Poorer people, including families, have moved to the outer suburbs, and we have not addressed the issue of affordable housing other than providing welfare housing through the trust.

The Urban Regeneration Unit, which is funded by Planning SA but which works within the Department of Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts, is seeking to bring the focus across government to these really challenging issues. They will challenge the question of how and where we provide housing and whether it is affordable, where we invest the taxpayer dollars across government, where we provide employment opportunities in relation to where people live, and why we are not accommodating changing housing needs within the inner and middle suburbs.

Certainly, there is increased housing demand in the city area, but you need money to do that and we have to be very careful that we do not create in Adelaide with \$1.5 million circles and enclaves of the rich and poor, with those who can afford housing in the inner city being there while those who cannot residing in the outer suburbs without the services and

complaining bitterly that we need more police as we have troubles across the system. That is what this urban regeneration unit seeks to do.

It is part of the smart city movement that we see arising in the United States and European cities. We are late in coming to these issues, but we can learn from the examples of other cities where they now have a dead heart and have troubles in their outskirts. One of the reasons I love living in Adelaide—and one of the reasons we all prize the quality of life in Adelaide—is that we have worked together as a community and have supported each other generally. Today if we are not careful we will create through our planning processes and investment decisions the haves and the have-nots, and that is what this unit seeks to address.

Ms BEDFORD: My questions relate to the hills face zone. A recent decision of the Environment, Resources and Development Court has held that horticulture is a complying development within the zone. I understand that concerns regarding this matter have been previously raised with the minister on this matter by a number of councils in the hills face zone. Have any studies or discussion documents been prepared in relation to this matter and has Planning SA taken any action at any stage in relation to this issue?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I appreciate the honourable member's question, and certainly it is topical. The issue has been raised not only with me: through Planning SA we have raised the issues with local councils, which are responsible under the planning and development processes in South Australia for the preparation of the initial development plans for their council areas and the subsequent planning amendment reports. Planning SA has been conscious for some time and has alerted councils that the definitions in terms of agriculture and horticulture were probably too broad and councils should address the issues in finer detail in terms of their plan amendment reports—what they would tolerate in terms of development and what they could not.

Some councils have responded to Planning SA's advice and I draw particular attention to Playford council. Other councils have thought that they could address the issue differently and would address it on an application basis, and Mitcham council was one of those. Mitcham council, however, lost it in the ERD Court and we are now faced with a broader issue that applies across the metropolitan area. I assure the honourable member that the government will now assist councils to address an issue that I had hoped, by alerting councils, they would address themselves, and perhaps at this moment I will leave it at that. I assure the honourable member that I take the advice and ruling of the ERD Court most seriously.

We are thinking through the issues and are poised to respond, but my response relates very much to an expression I gave in answer to a question earlier from the Hon. Ivan Venning about the councils and PAR systems. It is a real dilemma in planning. I appreciate more on a daily basis the longer I am in this job the balance between respecting the councils' role to make local decisions in their local area and councils actually doing so, because the drag in time and the accountability for updating PARs and responding to advice from the state perspective when issues arise is very slack, random and ad hoc. I am wondering in my own mind in policy terms how long we as a state government tolerate being blamed by local governments for not doing what local governments should have done. We have this system of setting policy agendas at the state level but relying on councils to implement them, and councils are not regularly

or consistently doing so. That is the problem that the ERD Court highlighted in terms of the recent hills face zone issues and one we will have to deal with at a government level regarding the consistency and timeliness of decision making.

The issues which we are dealing with at the moment and which Cabinet will address shortly are matters that I hope will put councils on notice in that they may have powers provided in the Planning and Development Act and rights but they have to be responsible in implementing those rights and responsibilities, and they are not doing so consistently at present.

Ms BEDFORD: Would the minister consider preparing a plan amendment report to deal with the issue in the wake of the court decision and, if so, at what cost?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: 'Yes' is my answer to the first question. A ministerial plan amendment report is being considered. I do not know the cost in dollar terms. The cost in not doing so is considerable not only in terms of the future development in the hills face zone but also in terms of councils, government and their relationship in planning.

Ms BEDFORD: What sort of time line would you look at if you were looking at councils coming to the decisions themselves, and what other actions are available?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In looking for councils to come to decisions themselves, I would have little confidence that it would be done promptly. In terms of government moving on this, decisions will be made shortly.

Mr McEWEN: I refer to communication towers. With the GRN and mobile phones, communication towers are a sore point with local government. I understand that earlier the state government had exempted them under the Planning Act. What is the latest position and what do you do in local government in relation to communication towers?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Essentially, it is a matter for commonwealth law, and most forms of telecommunications are controlled in terms of the state's Development Act 1993, which provides that telecommunications require development consent from relevant authorities, usually councils, unless the tower is less than 10 metres high or there is no change of land use involved. If it is less than 10 metres or there is no change of land use, no development consent is required.

Mr McEWEN: What if it is less?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That applies if it is less than 10 metres and there is no change in land use. That situation is confused further, however, by commonwealth law, which is pre-eminent in this matter. The state can control development of telecommunications only where they are exempt from control by virtue of the commonwealth communications act. One of the difficulties of that commonwealth law is that it has been difficult to gain an interpretation from the commonwealth government of how and where it wishes to apply that law.

Mr McEWEN: Is there not a sunset clause, particularly in relation to the Optus roll-out? I understood there was a sunset clause, although not so much for towers—

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: For cables it is a different issue. That did have a sunset clause, but not for towers. We just have a general exemption, but it has not been defined.

Mr McEWEN: It sounds like an unsatisfactory situation; are you attempting to do something about it?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: We have alerted the federal government to this issue and have sought a definition. It is convenient for it not to define it, and in some senses I can understand why because, from afar in Canberra, so many different situations arise that the federal government would

not wish to preclude opportunities for your community or North Adelaide, where I live, to have access to the latest in telecommunications. This is a real dilemma for local communities, because I think all of us are impatient for instant access, whether it be for mobile phones or the internet, yet there is protest about the means by which we will gain that access, whether by cables or towers. It is something the community will have to deal with at the local level. I think that is why the federal government is loath to define more clearly how it would apply the exemption and would wish it to be addressed at the local level.

So, while I acknowledge that it is frustrating to not have a definition from the federal government, I can understand why it would not provide it, because it is a local challenge. Do you want those communications and will you accept the means to receive those communications, or do you want to protest and then have interrupted access or no access? In relation to the towers, there has been a lot of debate at community level about health issues—

Mr McEWEN: Concerning electromagnetic radiation.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: That is right. I confirm that the South Australian Health Commission has advised that there is no scientific advice to demonstrate that electromagnetic radiation from telecommunications towers constitutes a health risk and, in this context, planning policies for towers need address only the visual and amenity impacts. Again, I accept what the federal government has essentially challenged us with: if we are concerned with visual and amenity impacts, they should be dealt with at the local level, where there is local knowledge.

Mrs PENFOLD: My question relates to waste. Will the minister advise what initiatives the government has undertaken to rationalise waste landfill developments and provide sites for green waste processing?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: A lot of constructive work has been done by Planning SA and across government. It has been one of the rewarding aspects of my job as minister to see Planning SA work across government on an issue that has puzzled government for years, and we are now doing so successfully. Parliament addressed the Wingfield landfill (I was going to call it a 'dump', but I am told I am not allowed to) operation, and that will be phased down, for good reason, which has meant that we have to look for other landfill sites, particularly for green waste. An enormous amount of green waste could be recycled and dealt with profitably if we could locate the sites to do so. I ask Mr Hennesey-Smith, to whom I have given this challenge: are you doing well?

Mr Hennesey-Smith: As with any land use which is contentious in the community, finding suitable sites is not that easy. However, the Development Assessment Commission did consider at its last meeting last Thursday the Jeffreys Soils site at the Adelaide City Council Wingfield landfill and approved a two year continuation of the green waste processing facility at Wingfield. That essentially gives us breathing space for the next couple of years, but we are currently looking at a number of sites. Consultants have been engaged and will report in the next couple of weeks on the feasibility of those sites.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Those sites are in the north and south of the metropolitan area?

Mr Hennesey-Smith: There are two sites in the north and one site in the south, so we hope to come back to the minister in due course with the options on how best to proceed on those sites.

The CHAIRMAN: Will that mean that those dreadful signs and other paraphernalia on the road to Port Wakefield will be removed?

Mr Hennesey-Smith: I am advised that those signs are not necessarily there with the full consent of the council. I understand that that is a matter for local government; it is out of our hands. There are options to deal with them, but at this stage no action has been taken.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am told that, because the works have been established on private property, the options are quite limited. So, I have chosen to look at them as public art or to close my eyes. Mr Phil Smith, who is responsible for development assessment matters in Planning SA, may wish to provide more comment.

Mr Smith: The Development Assessment Commission has a role in enforcing breaches of planning legislation. The commission has written to the Mallala council asking for its advice on its position on those signs. The council has agreed to look at the issue and, when the council responds to the commission, the commission will decide whether it wants to take action or leave it to the council.

The CHAIRMAN: They have been there for a considerable amount of time.

Mr Smith: Yes; the commission has been patient for quite a while.

The CHAIRMAN: Some time ago officers from the Department of Planning went to the Far North of the state, particularly Marree, and greatly upset my constituents with what they described as some bureaucratic conditions they were going to impose on some of those far-flung people who may want to alter their houses. Threats were made that they would photograph their houses and take draconian action against them. I wonder whether at the end of the day some commonsense has prevailed and the Sir Humphreys who went there have now thought better of their actions. I point out that I was unfortunate enough to go there and be addressed by some fairly aggressive people, who reflected on my ability as a member.

An honourable member interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: I am shy and retiring.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Mr Smith has some information he can provide. I understand the visit to Marree related to building fire safety issues, which we have an obligation to enforce. Perhaps the manner in which the matters were raised with the local community could have been more accommodating, but it is an issue of which people in Marree as well as across South Australia should be conscious in respect of their own safety and protection. Perhaps it was the manner in which it was addressed, Mr Chairman; but I will ask Mr Smith to comment further. I have family on the land—cousins, sisters and the rest—and they are enterprising people. They do not take kindly to being given the literal reading of the law.

If you approach people about what may be in their own interests, it is often a matter of the approach. So often I receive feedback that the approach is bad and that the bureaucrats rush up to country areas, do their job, think that they are enforcing what they must do under the law, but in fact are getting a bad reaction not the positive one that they should be seeking to achieve.

I do not know whether that is the case here, but I know that that is often the response I receive from my family in country areas about the way in which the law is presented and their obligations are conveyed. Perhaps Mr Smith would like to explain further.

Mr Smith: The Development Assessment Commission is particularly conscious of the need to work with communities and has been working primarily through progress associations. Quite a good deal of effort has gone into meeting with progress associations in all the outback communities, explaining the way the Development Act works and advising of the requirements. This has been done particularly in relation to building fire safety and where buildings are used to accommodate members of the public, such as the very good growth we have seen in backpacker facilities, motel units and these sorts of facilities where transient people come in who do not know the building. If there were to be a fire at night, knowledge of the exits would be required. That is particularly difficult. That has been the area where most attention has been pursued.

Mr ATKINSON: The number of applications considered by the DAC was estimated to be 4 300 for 1999-2000, whereas the target for 2000-01 is only 3 400. It is a big drop. I assume this was due to a pre GST boom. Does the forecast drop in approvals mean that the government expects a sharp decline in building activity? Could it be worse than 3 400?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: What the government has sought and DAC is asking is that councils accept their responsibility in terms of the planning process rather than thinking that they will shove it onto the government and DAC either because they do not have their plans up to date and are receiving non-conforming applications or because they are not giving the priority to planning generally and are presenting to DAC relatively simple matters which the commission has accommodated in the past but will not accommodate any longer. As I have said repeatedly throughout the estimates committee today, if councils expect to have rights in this area of planning, they will have to exercise those responsibilities. The state will not tolerate all the flack or the workload because they do not want to accommodate it. Mr Teague may be able to add to that.

Mr Teague: The emphasis of the Development Act is for the state government to focus on the strategic issues and for councils to concentrate on detailed development policies and deal with most of the development assessment. As councils' policies improve, more of the development applications can be handled by councils rather than the commission. So, those figures indicate not a drop in the economy over the next 12 months but an anticipation that the number of applications will be dealt with by the councils rather than the commission.

Mr ATKINSON: I have written to the minister about this before, but I thought I would take the opportunity of the estimates committees to clarify it. You mentioned earlier the government's policy of urban consolidation.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Urban regeneration.

Mr ATKINSON: Urban regeneration, I am sorry. By what means does the government persuade local councils to comply with its policy of urban regeneration when councils are making planning decisions? As the minister would know, there is a great deal of opposition from some residents to urban consolidation and even urban regeneration.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I accept the honourable member's assessment. One early lesson in planning was that everybody wants all the flexibility that they can gain for their own property but they do not want anybody next door to have any flexibility at all. It is a very difficult process to try to manage. People want to do whatever they wish on their own property but do not want a neighbour to do anything on their property. We will have to embrace the community in terms of these urban regeneration issues.

Having attended the Save the Suburbs meeting organised in the Burnside and eastern suburbs some months ago, I am under no illusion as to how difficult it is to get a community perspective to a local issue. I know that cities around the world have been addressing these matters for some decades now, and we can learn from that experience. The community has embraced urban regeneration issues. We aim to work with councils in terms of good residential design.

One of the difficulties that I encountered when I went to the Save the Suburbs meeting at Burnside was that the state government had offered Burnside support for doing a streetscape study and setbacks from streets. We put out the guidelines for good residential design. We had been urging the council to upgrade its PAR. None of those overtures from the government had been taken up by the Burnside Council and there I was copping the flack for what the Burnside Council had not undertaken.

I think these good residential design principles, which we are asking councils to adopt as their PAR, are something we will have to address—I have raised this with planning personnel already—because they are out there for the community and local government, but as a state government we are vulnerable as regards whether or not councils adopt them.

Mr ATKINSON: I admire your missionary zeal in this matter.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: It is not missionary zeal: it is practical planning.

Mr ATKINSON: I am asking you the means by which you do it.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: I am saying that good residential design is one major way.

Mr ATKINSON: For instance, if the Charles Sturt Council were to say that in future it would reject all applications for units or houses to be built at the back of other houses on full size blocks, that is, if the councillors of that council were to surrender to some elements of public opinion, what is there in our law to stop them blocking all urban regeneration?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: There are two matters here. Those applications have to be assessed against the development plan and policies. My anxiety is that the councils are not updating their development plan and policies, and that is the issue that I have been raising throughout the estimates tonight. What leverage does the government have there? The honourable member is raising exactly the same issues. There is an obligation under the Development Act for the state to produce a planning strategy. The deficiency in this system is that there are no real opportunities for the state to move in when the councils are not meeting their obligations or their responsibilities.

Mr ATKINSON: So a council could theoretically reject urban regeneration entirely?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Yes, it could, but why would it entirely? It actually has to accommodate the people who live in the areas. The urban regeneration issues are important in the inner and middle suburbs of Adelaide where there is an ageing population. Your constituents and the people who I know in inner and middle Adelaide do not want to move away from the suburbs, the friends, the shops and the services that they are familiar with, and yet their houses may be just too big and expensive for them to live in, in the longer term. Councils must provide for those older people to still live in the suburbs that they love and know. That is where I think the pressure must come from. It is not always the government

with the heavy hand saying that the planning strategy must be implemented. It has to come from the local level as well.

But I am concerned that with the ageing profile demographics of Adelaide some councils are not exercising those responsibilities in terms of their local population sufficiently well. Some older people, and in fact some younger people, do not always want the garden, the swimming pool and the tennis court. They want the freedom to move more readily, and some councils are not accommodating that. I am reminded that, in terms of the PARs, they must initiate the process through a statement of intent that I must approve. The trouble is that I do not initiate the statement of intent. It has to come up from local government. My real frustration with the process is that it has to be initiated from the local level and some councils are not moving fast enough and their plans are outdated.

Mr ATKINSON: So if the council were to say that in future this suburb will be exclusively quarter acre blocks you would not approve such an amendment?

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: Essentially, I do not think there is any suburb in Adelaide that is like that. Even the heart of Walkerville has character.

The CHAIRMAN: I thank the minister very much for her answers and the support of her officers today. This will conclude the minister's attendance before the committee. Obviously when the minister comes next year Mr Payze will be enjoying himself in another location and not be having a late night. We wish him well in whatever he chooses to do.

The Hon. Diana Laidlaw: In concluding, I thank you, Mr Chairman, for your good humour and the manner in which you have chaired this meeting, and your officers, and I also want to thank the members generally, on both the government side and the opposition side, for the probing questions and interest in the subjects that I seek to oversee. Finally, I would like to also put on the public record my appreciation for Mr Payze in terms of managing the portfolio, and I wish him well in his imminent retirement. I know you are not going just yet, but this may be the last parliamentary occasion to acknowledge you. I also thank the officers in helping me prepare for this estimates hearing.

Minister for Local Government—Other Items,
\$46 911 000.

Witness:

The Hon. D.C. Kotz, Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Ms C. Procter, Executive Director, Office of Local Government.

Mr J. Wright, Executive Consultant, Finance, Office of Local Government.

Ms I. Brown, Director, Strategy and Policy, Office of Local Government.

Ms A. Stimson, Executive Consultant, Projects, Office of Local Government.

The CHAIRMAN: I declare the line open for examination. Would the minister like to make a brief statement?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: The government's second phase of the local government reform program was largely completed

during 1999-2000. The significant highlight was the passage through parliament of the new local government legislation, which comprehensively revises the constitution on the operational framework for the local government system in South Australia. I pay due credit to the previous Minister for Local Government (Hon. Mark Brindal) for carrying the passage of this legislation, which was a major reform, through the parliament. Further programmed legislative works include the competition policy review of the cemeteries provisions of the Local Government Act 1934, review of remnant and preserved provisions and local government by-law making powers, and a review of legislation related to local government statutory authorities and schemes, in particular the local government superannuation scheme.

I am advised that concluding the changes to councils by-law making powers will require about two stages to allow for competition policy reviews of other relevant legislation, such as the Passenger Transport Act, by other agencies. Plans were also further advanced during the year for the third phase of the reform program for local government, and that is a functional and related financial reform. The aim is to clarify the roles and responsibilities between state and local governments to secure for the South Australian community the full benefits of the structural and legislative reforms of recent years.

Following completion earlier this year of a preliminary review within the state government of state-local government operational relationships, I have written to the President of the Local Government Association proposing a state-local government partnerships program. This proposal is now under discussion with the Local Government Association. I certainly look forward to progressing these matters throughout the coming year.

Mr ATKINSON: The local government rewrite was quite an achievement, and I congratulate the government on getting it through, but it is not finished, is it? Many provisions of the Local Government Act 1934 remain, and the government put through only one transitional bill but not the other. Why was it necessary to split the transitional legislation? Why has the government not put the other transitional bill through, and when will the reform be completed—or must that await a Labor government?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I think the honourable member must be referring to the Statutes Amendment (Local Government) Bill 1999, which was introduced into parliament on 29 September. The bill has not been debated at this stage. The bill, as the honourable member is probably well aware, provides for the repeal of section 359 and other provisions of the Local Government Act 1934 dealing with the closure of roads to traffic or the restriction of traffic now covered by the Road Traffic Act 1961, and I think that would properly pick up the reason why the member for Spence is so anxious to see some of these measures being taken.

This bill certainly seeks to clarify the respective roles of the state and local governments to look at eliminating fragmentation, gaps and overlaps and certainly to provide scope for simplification and consistency with any national standards. It will also assist councils, as I am sure the member also knows, to identify regulatory activities for the purpose of separating them from other activities in the arrangement of their affairs, as required under the Local Government Act 1999. It does not include amendments proposed in a previous lapsed bill, which provided that the existing closure of certain prescribed roads to traffic under section 359 will cease to have effect six months after the repeal of that section.

I am quite sure that, if the member had been more direct in asking his question, he would have mentioned Barton Road, but, as he has not, I can advise the committee that on 26 April 2000 (and gazetted on 28 April 2000) the City of Adelaide resolved to vary a previous resolution that was pursuant to section 359 in relation to Barton Road and Mildred Road North Adelaide so that the buses contracted by the Passenger Transport Board to operate metro ticket routes could use Barton Road and Mildred Road. So, if that is the question the member for Spence is asking, I am afraid that it will be a little while yet before that matter is addressed, despite the serialised fashion of the member for Spence's support for this issue over a very long period.

Ms BEDFORD: Budget paper 2, page 6.11 mentions that there is a sound case for the distribution of local government grants using fiscal equalisation. What steps has the minister taken with the commonwealth to attempt to achieve fiscal equalisation? I understand that currently grants are issued on a per capita basis.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: The member is quite right. It is fair to say that, for some years, the Premier and previous ministers for local government, along with the Local Government Association, have certainly been pressing for a review of the interstate distribution of financial assistance grants, and in fact a review is under way at the present time. The state government has made submissions to that review, and I am quite sure that local governments which certainly also have an interest in the financial assistance grants area will also make submissions on that review. The review will be undertaken by the federal government.

Ms BEDFORD: Budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.33 lists a highlight in the local government framework as having developed legislation proposed to provide for future protection and preservation of the Adelaide parklands. Does this refer to the notorious land bank proposal, and will the government seek to reintroduce the land bank proposal?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: The member may have forgotten that in February this year, after some considerable consultation—a period of some three years—a draft consultation paper for options on the preservation of the Adelaide parklands was launched publicly. Once again that paper kept the previous Minister for Local Government very busy over a considerable period. Certain options were developed during the consultation period, which, as I say, was extremely extensive, and that paper was launched in February. At no stage in any of the options prepared am I aware that a land bank theory was introduced. It is a very solid paper which is now progressing to the point of becoming a draft bill, resulting in a legislative outcome. All the options that eventuated in that paper were supported by the key stakeholders, such as the Adelaide City Council and many of the organisations that support the preservation of the Adelaide parklands, and I can assure the member that land bank was not part of that procedure.

Ms BEDFORD: In order to save on costs, the government has harboured a desire to leave permanent structures related to the two major car races in the parklands. Does the government intend using some sort of land bank to secure permanent structures in the parklands?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Any decisions to be taken in terms of permanency of structures for any major events that might be held in the city would be determined either through Premier and Cabinet or, if it was a legislative process, through this parliament. At this stage, I am not aware of either of those options.

Ms BEDFORD: Supplementary to that, does the government intend to support and provide funds for the redevelopment of the Victoria Park Racecourse in order to achieve permanent structures in the parklands for the purpose of the two car races?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Once again, it is not a matter that has been raised in terms of the Adelaide parklands draft consultation paper, or anything of which I am aware. In fact, if that were to be an option, it certainly would not come within the responsibilities of the Minister for Local Government.

Mr VENNING: I refer to the recent announcement by the commonwealth government concerning the level of general purpose financial assistance grants to be made available for local government for the 2000-01 financial year. Will the minister comment on the amount of funding available for councils in South Australia?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: The 2000-01 federal budget for general purpose financial assistance for local government provides an estimated national allocation of some \$1.3 billion. South Australia expects to receive \$94.2 million from that national allocation. Of this amount, some \$71.8 million will be in the form of general purpose grants and some \$22.3 million will constitute identified road grants. Although both pools are untied when paid to local government, they are subject to different methods of distribution by the South Australian Government Grants Commission. Allocations to South Australia in the 2000-01 year represent an increase in funds that will be available to local government in this state of some \$3.1 million, which is about 3.4 per cent, and that is compared with the 1999-2000 financial year.

Notwithstanding the increase in funding for South Australia in 2000-01, it is of great concern to me that our state's share of the funding, compared to that of other states, is continuing to reduce. This is clearly evidenced by certain instances which I would like to place on record. In 1995-96, this state received some 7.37 per cent of the national assistance grant. This year's allocation is reduced to 7.16 per cent, and the allocation for 2000-01 will see South Australia receiving only 7.12 per cent of the national pool of funds.

When broken down into the two components of the financial assistance grant, the state receives only 7.84 per cent of the general purpose grants and 5.5 per cent of the identified road grants from what is the national pool. I am sure that the member would recognise that this is clearly inequitable. The general purpose grants allocation is made between the states and territories on an equal per capita basis. Per capita funding cannot take account of the relatively higher needs of South Australia, particularly when compared with states such as New South Wales and Victoria.

This inequity is compounded in the case of identified road grants. The federal government cannot explain how these grants are shared between states and territories. Its only explanation is that the distribution is historical. I suggest to this committee that this explanation fails to provide any logic or justification for South Australia receiving the lowest identified road grant whether it be adjudged on a dollar per kilometre or a dollar per capita basis.

The Local Government Association is in full agreement with the South Australian government's view that this distribution is inequitable. The Local Government Association convened a meeting of South Australian senators for the express purpose of driving home the message of inequity. Although this meeting was convened by the Local Government Association, the presentation was a joint endeavour with

the state, and members of the South Australian Grants Commission were the lead presenters on this topic.

Mr VENNING: I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.10. I understand that a review is under way of the commonwealth Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995. Will the minister comment on the terms of reference of the review and its implications for local government in South Australia?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: We have always seen the review of the commonwealth Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act as an opportunity to address this issue of interstate distribution. The draft terms of reference of the review were circulated in April. To say the least, I was extremely disappointed that not only was this issue not addressed but it was specifically excluded from the review. I immediately advised the Premier and the Local Government Association of my concerns that the review did not consider what we felt was a most serious matter. With their backing I have written to the federal Minister for Transport and Regional Services, the territories and local government protesting the deficiency that we perceive in this review and proposing changes to its terms of reference to ensure, first, that identified road grants are specifically addressed and, secondly, that an alternative approach to the interstate distribution of financial assistance grants be examined to provide a solid basis for future discussion.

I believe that these proposed changes would provide a clear way forward whilst not requiring the Commonwealth Grants Commission to recommend changes to funding distribution at this stage. Members should be aware that the state government's approach to the review, particularly its terms of reference, is supported by the Local Government Association. The Local Government Association has been an active participant in reviewing the terms of reference and supporting the state government's contention that a more widespread review is required. It has been gratifying to receive such solid support from the Local Government Association. However, it is with dismay that I inform the honourable member that, to date, I have received no response from the federal minister.

Mr VENNING: As a result of severe flooding in the early part of this year, a number of rural communities in South Australia, particularly in my electorate of Schubert (Eudunda and to a lesser degree Kapunda) suffered significant damage, particularly to roads. Eudunda had to repair roads at great cost and three weeks later they were washed out again. The tremendous damage can still be seen. Is the minister proposing to provide any financial assistance to these councils and their communities?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I recognise that this is a personal matter for the honourable member because it affects his constituency, but it is of serious concern to all people in the state. The honourable member's electorate of Schubert has been hit particularly hard by floods which occurred in October and December and again in February. I understand that significant claims have been made on the Local Government Disaster Fund.

This fund was established in 1990 as a joint initiative of the government and the Local Government Association. It is used to provide money to council areas that have suffered non-insurable damage to properties from natural disasters and that it would be beyond the capacity of the councils to fund. The initial purpose of the fund was to fulfil the government's responsibilities. I am sure members will recall the Stirling council Ash Wednesday bushfire settlement.

This fund is sourced from the financial institutions duty of .005 per cent on all banking transactions in South Australia. Following the floods in February this year, the Local Government Disaster Fund committee has before it submissions from three councils totalling in excess of \$1 million. Councils in rural areas which made claims as a result of the February floods include Goyder, Kapunda, Light and Mount Remarkable. Each of these areas sustained substantial damage as a result of these floods. The damage sustained by Kapunda and Light was the most extensive, followed by areas of Goyder.

The total damage claim for the Goyder council from three floods in October, December and February is \$868 000. A total payment of \$585 000 from the Local Government Disaster Fund has been approved. The more widespread damage in Kapunda resulted in a claim of \$1.2 million following the December and April floods, and a total payment of \$792 000 has been approved. The total claim for Mount Remarkable was \$132 500, and a payment of \$101 000 has been approved.

The honourable member would be aware that the majority of damage occurred to roads, but I am sure that members will agree that the levy and the fund have provided essential support for councils and their communities. It is pleasing to know that that fund is available to support this type of damage, which was most unfortunate in these areas.

Ms BEDFORD: Has the minister received a report from the Electoral Commission regarding the conduct of postal ballots at the local government elections and were any problems identified?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I have received preliminary information from the Electoral Commissioner. Shortly after the election, I reported to parliament some of the information that we had obtained. In the first instance, it was realised by the participants in these elections as well as local government and the Electoral Commission that they were a resounding success. Participation by candidates and electors has been strong.

The number of mayoral elections contested and the multiple candidates who stood (five in Adelaide and the Adelaide hills, four in Charles Sturt and Murray Bridge and three candidates for mayor in eight other councils) indicate a healthy interest in councils by their communities. Final statistics have not yet been collated by the Electoral Commissioner, but the Local Government Association recently predicted that the voter participation rate could be close to 40 per cent, which is an extremely good result.

A number of complaints have been received by the State Electoral Commissioner, and I am told that many of those complaints relate to issues surrounding the authorisation and display of campaign posters and similar material, including allegations that such material was misleading.

Ms BEDFORD: There was nothing in respect of the mechanical posting of ballot papers or the receipt of information?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Not at this stage. There is certainly a further report that obviously will be collated. It is important to note that the whole process of the new legislative reform that the Local Government Act introduced, which came into power on 1 January 2000, also allows for a review process to be undertaken immediately after the first election held under the auspices of the new legislation. We are in the process of having discussions through the Office of Local Government with the Local Government Association and with the state Electoral Commissioner to put terms of references together

and to develop a process to undertake that review. We are moving through that process at the moment.

Once the review is opened up, it will look at operational matters rather than technical aspects of the legislation. We will certainly have more of an indication once public discussion on all matters relating to the operational aspects of the conduct of the elections come out as a result of that review.

Ms BEDFORD: Supplementary to the minister's figure of 40 per cent participation, will she give consideration to a campaign of some sort to improve that figure at the next election?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I am very pleased about that figure. It is part of the new legislation, but it seeks to direct councils to inform their constituencies or ratepayers of all aspects of the election process. It was pleasing to see that the majority (I use that term without having yet seen the figures) of councils took the opportunity in many different ways to inform their ratepayers and their broad constituency of not only the reasons why they believed it was necessary for input from local people to constitute local government but also the means by which they informed many people of the technical aspects of the operation of the new local government move, particularly in respect of postal balloting.

The Local Government Association, in conjunction with local government right across the board, really put a tremendous effort into all aspects of encouraging people within the various communities to participate. That is probably one of the reasons why at this point we have a 40 per cent participation rate. I am sure the councils themselves will be feeling reasonably pleased with that result. I am quite sure that the LGA the next time around will look at new means and methods of increasing that rate.

Ms BEDFORD: At page 7.65 of budget paper 4, volume 2, details appear of the state local government reform funding, indicating that the budget reduced by \$5 million from \$51.8 million to \$46.8 million, or almost 10 per cent. Why are there no explanatory notes as with other items for what seems a major change? Why has the funding been cut and what is to be funded from the moneys allocated in the budget?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: That decrease covers an appropriation which was subsequently transferred to the Department of Treasury and Finance for crediting to the state local government reform fund. Treasury and Finance administers the fund and uses available balances to make payments to state agencies and the Local Government Association for spending on local government type programs. The reduction of \$5 million in appropriation for the fund in 2000-01 reflects a couple of aspects. The decrease of \$1.9 million in the amount previously paid to the former Department of Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs is now paid to the new Department of Water Resources for stormwater management. The reduction in stormwater management funding from \$3.9 million in 1999-2000 to \$2 million in 2001 reflects the reallocation of funds within the Department of Water Resources to higher areas of priority.

Making up the amounts we are talking about, there is a reduction included in that figure of \$1.03 million in the funding required by the Department of Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts for maintenance of recreational jetties. This expenditure was incurred in 1999-2000 and reflected abnormally high payments to councils to enable repairs to certain recreational jetties to bring those jetties up to a standard suitable for transfer to local councils. This program

is expected to be largely completed in 2000-01 and to incur substantially lesser costs for maintenance and repair of the remaining recreational jetties. The remaining decrease of some \$2.07 million reflects a decision by the Treasurer to finance some expenditure from the fund in 2000-01 from the run down of cash balances held in the fund.

Payments from the state local government reform fund are shown under 'administered items' for the Department of Treasury and Finance. On page 326 of the portfolio statements, budget paper 4, volume 1, members will find that an amount of \$49.029 million is expected to be paid from the fund in 2000-01, compared with the revised estimate of \$50.444 million paid from the fund in 1999-2000.

Ms BEDFORD: The government originally sought to claw back from local government the savings local government made out of the introduction of the emergency services levy, which I am told amounts to some \$9 million. I understand that the government was disappointed when this failed. Is the government trying to pursue back door claw back through cuts to the reform fund?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: The simple answer would be that there is no relativity in terms of the reform fund and cutbacks related to local government in any of the entities. The member is quite right in saying that savings were made by local councils through the new provisions of the emergency services levy being legislated, and therefore it operated in quite a different way to the past, but I assure the honourable member that there are no means of removing local government type programs that may have access to the local government fund. They will still continue in the manner in which they have in previous years. It is fair to say that the government recognises that it is a matter for individual councils to decide how the benefits to their budgets in 1999-2000 and in future years will be allocated. I know that the LGA continues to urge councils to be very transparent with their communities about the disposition of the savings. The government certainly applauds the leadership that is shown by the LGA in this area.

Of course, the savings through changes to the emergency services levy through the operations of the new legislative reforms will be ongoing, and the government certainly looks forward to the LGA continuing to encourage councils to be transparent. The LGA itself has suggested that the previous opportunity for state and local government to use some of the savings in a more strategic way was lost because of time constraints for negotiations through 1999-2000. However, the government again looks forward to exploring any initiatives with the LGA. It may wish to pursue future ongoing financial benefits to councils derived from the institution of the emergency services levy.

Mr McEWEN: I would like to follow up the reform fund. As members are aware, it has been a source of some tension between the state government and local government for some time. I want to ask a question about expenditure, but first I wish to follow up an answer the minister gave to the member for Florey about revenue. I accept that page 7.65 shows a state appropriation of \$46.911 million, but the original revenue is shown on page 3.26 as operating activity receipts within Treasury and Finance. What is the source of that \$46.8 million? Is it the total amount of money raised from that source?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: The larger amount that we talked about in 1999-2000, being \$51 million, as the member for Gordon would be aware, came through the commonwealth surcharge on petrol. The amount showing for the 2001 budget

is an appropriation by the state government, because that source of funding is no longer available.

Mr McEWEN: That was all from the fuel?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: That is right.

Mr McEWEN: Where it is coming from? It is shown under the administrative items for the Department of Treasury and Finance 'other accounts'. In other words, it is not being shown from consolidated revenue, so is there a round robin between the state and federal governments?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: This case has nothing to do with the federal government; as we have just stated, the previous source of funding into this fund is now no longer available to this state. Therefore, the taxpayers of this state are picking up the source of revenue through appropriation from Treasury and Finance for this amount to be supplied at this point in this budget. So, what you are looking at is a diminution in the fund from the previous amount of \$51 million but, then again, the source was quite different. So, you are now looking at a sourced amount from this state alone, without a contribution from the commonwealth government through the petrol tax.

Mr McEWEN: It is difficult to track this through the budget papers, so I appreciate your answer. My main issue is more to do with expenditure rather than the source of the revenue. Will the minister give some indication of what that \$46.8 million will be spent on? Are matters such as the South-East drainage board included in that?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I do have information, because I too have been interested in the run-down of dollars. Over a period of years, the reform fund has perhaps produced some misconceptions in the minds of many people as to where the money came from, who owned it and how much money was actually in it; and it seemed to be a very good looking cash cow, which everyone claimed as their own. However, at this point, because it is an important question and I have been interested in it as well, if the honourable member would indulge me I would like to give some background on the information I have found.

Going back to the 1992-93 state budget, the then Labor Party government introduced as a budget measure an increase in the rates of duty on petroleum products, with the revenue being made available for state government expenditure on those local government type programs that we previously spoke about. These programs were to be the subject of negotiation with local government and, in 1993-94, the state local government reform fund was established to directly receive receipts from the levy on petroleum products as well as to provide a focus for functional reform. The negotiations between the state government and local government were conducted over some two years. I am told that a number of agreements were signed as a result of these negotiations. Some of the examples given to me are the forests, roads and rating agreement; the public libraries agreement; and the septic tank effluent drainage agreement.

It was envisaged by the state government at that time that programs effectively devolved would have future spending allocations prioritised by local government itself. Therefore, if local government decided to spend more money on a program in one year and less in another, that would be its own decision. While an in-depth dialogue with local government on priority setting was not achieved, the Local Government Association of the time made clear that it was not prepared to become involved in reallocating priorities. The Department of Treasury and Finance has administered the fund since its inception and, as I said earlier, I have been advised that some state agencies and councils have had

difficulty accepting that one of the main purposes of establishing the fund was to support constructive changes in the roles and responsibilities of local government. In addition, there were certain suggestions in some quarters that vast sums of money were sitting idle in the fund.

The future of the state local government reform fund in a technical sense was affected dramatically by the decision of the High Court of Australia that the petroleum levy imposed at state level was unconstitutional. In the short term, replacement revenues were secured by surcharges on commonwealth petrol taxes, albeit with timing and other revenue losses in the transition. Additional state government appropriations were made to cater for those losses. A subsequent review of the future of the fund was then delayed as a result of the higher priority work on local government boundaries and legislative reform and advice that the commonwealth's planned taxation proposals would mean that the review would need to be subsumed under wider consideration of federal, state and local government financial arrangements.

Essentially, that has meant that over time the fund has actually been a bookkeeping mechanism to provide a focus for functional reform. Given the past misunderstandings about its operation, its continued existence is perhaps now seen as an impediment to getting on with the job of reform. The government would certainly not wish future negotiations about functional reform to be constrained by the history or the current size of the fund, nor by the specific programs that are financed from the fund. Given that the dedicated source of revenue we spoke about earlier will cease on 1 July 2000, the simplest approach would appear to be to revert to the traditional arrangements of providing funding for local government type programs. That would mean looking at direct appropriations from the Consolidated Account to the respective portfolios. This is one approach that at least would remove the ambiguity of the fund and certainly have the potential advantage of providing more of an incentive to individual state agencies to work collaboratively with local government on possible reforms.

In terms of the fund itself and what it has wielded in expenditure, I will give you the figures for 1999-2000, which provided the \$51.3 million. Water concessions for the City of Adelaide and Port Adelaide Enfield amounted to \$1 million; public libraries received \$13 million; coast protection, \$400 000; septic tank effluent drains, \$3.1 million; the South-East Water Conservation Drainage Board, \$1.5 million; stormwater management, \$3.9 million; the Local Government Grants Commission, \$200 000; pensioner council rates concessions, \$24.2 million; recreational jetties, \$1.8 million; tourist roads, \$500 000; and country town bus services, \$1.7 million.

In the coming year, the 2000-01 budget estimates include \$1.1 million for water concessions for the City of Adelaide and Port Adelaide Enfield; \$13.3 million for public libraries; \$400 000 for coast protection; \$3.1 million for the STED scheme; \$1.5 million for the South-East Conservation Drainage Board; \$2 million for stormwater management; \$200 000 for local government grants; pensioner council rate concessions of \$27.4 million; recreational jetties, \$800 000; tourist roads, \$500 000; and country town bus services, \$1.4 million. Those amounts are contained in the overall amount of some \$49 million.

Mr McEWEN: I know you have talked about functional reform and that you want to move on, and I heard your opening remarks about a state and local government partnership program. Can we look forward with a bit of vision and

explore what you have in mind? Can you indicate whether or not you are genuine about embracing functional reform, perhaps even going as far as looking at some competency powers for local government with a view, in the longer term, to embracing a new relationship between the two spheres of government?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I know of the member for Gordon's very strong interest in local government matters and his background, and I am aware that he has a very strong interest in looking to the programs of the future and the means by which the state government is looking to progress those reforms. I think the member would be aware that the principal aim of the state-local government partnership is to achieve better coordination of what state and local governments do in order to improve the services that we provide from both levels of government to our constituencies in South Australia.

The partnership program will be directed at joint action by state and local governments, obviously to create and take up opportunities for changes in activities carried out by either or both spheres of government. Where such changes have the potential to provide financial savings, increase employment opportunities and improve service provision to the South Australian community, I think we will have achieved some of the goals that we are looking for.

This is the third major phase of the state government's local government reform program. I am sure the member will acknowledge that it was with a great deal of success that the boundary reform part of that program was completed in the comprehensive revision of the Local Government Act. The government has consistently stated that it would move on to the reform of functional and financial roles and relationships between state and local government as this third phase of the overall reform program.

We propose that this phase be focused primarily on partnerships between state and local governments, and that is why we now use the descriptive title of 'state-local government partnership'. We began by using the words 'functional reform', but there is a degree of ambiguity about that phraseology. This third phase is a very determined effort to look at true partnerships, because the state government and I believe that unless we have cooperation on the ground that we are sharing in this whole process, and that we do not look at ownership but at outcomes, we will not achieve anything. It must be done in partnership that is totally supported by both spheres of government.

I have already initiated discussions, as I am sure the member is aware, with the Local Government Association in respect of the scope of this program and the management framework for its conduct. The Local Government Association has responded with a great deal of enthusiasm to the proposals that we are now both looking at. I expect joint work in this area to begin very soon. It is proposed that the program be initiated with what will be a joint state-local government scoping study, which will be designed to develop a shared understanding of the partnerships program and to identify, in the first instance, practical opportunities and priorities for advancing the reform agenda.

Part of the work of the scoping study will be to gather information from state agencies and local councils about initiatives already occurring between state and local governments. The state government has already undertaken some preliminary work across state agencies, and this information will be available for the scoping study. I am also aware that the Local Government Association is in the process of drawing together relevant information and ideas from

councils. Obviously, this will provide a very useful basis for the next stage of the joint work that we are moving to.

I believe that the partnerships program will represent a very challenging opportunity to really improve services for our communities. I guess one of the important phases of reform will be to explore ways to link forward planning of state and local governments wherever possible to ensure that local government, or local communities and the state as a whole, gain maximum advantage from the efforts of both levels of government. There is already a set of broad aims for the program, and I can identify them to you now if you wish. There are about eight different areas, if you wish me to identify them for the record.

Mr McEWEN: I think that is going beyond the question. I think you have more than adequately covered it. I would be happy to explore that with you in more detail.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: It is certainly an area that is opening up a wide range of ideas. I know from the councils that I have visited so far, particularly from discussions with the LGA, that we have only met with enthusiasm and a great regard for the challenge that we know is there, but we certainly know those opportunities will be picked up in a harmonious way, and that has been very pleasing at this stage.

Mr McEWEN: With your joint portfolios of local government and Aboriginal affairs, it seems to me that you have a unique opportunity to explore the convergence of those two portfolios in relation to how local Aboriginal communities can participate in and be rewarded by the opportunities in local government. Can you explore that a little further for me?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: The honourable member is quite right. The local government portfolio and the Aboriginal affairs portfolio certainly have many areas that can benefit and be complementary to each other. The Office of Local Government, the division of State Aboriginal Affairs and the Local Government Association have developed an approach to improve local government services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. This encompasses in the first instance a review and update of the 1994 South Australian strategic framework which the honourable member may be aware of and which was entitled 'Local Councils Belong to Aboriginal People, Too.'

The other aspect is the production and dissemination of a document profiling South Australian council achievements and illustrating best practice examples for use as a resource for councils and communities. This collaborative effort has resulted in South Australia receiving some \$50 000 in commonwealth government funding for the review and the reformulation of the strategy. The Office of Local Government has contributed some \$20 000 in funding towards the development of this best practice document. The Local Government Association is overseeing the project and it has already established a steering group that comprises representatives of DOSSA, ATSIC, Aboriginal policy officers at councils, and the Office of Local Government. So it is certainly particularly encouraging that the three spheres of government are involved in this review process which provides for extensive consultation with Aboriginal community representatives and councils.

It is worth stating perhaps that the 1994 strategy document in itself represented a huge leap forward in focusing attention on Aboriginal issues in local government, and from that time there were certainly a number of initiatives from the LGA that emerged, including an emphasis placed on Aboriginal participation in the 1995 and 1997 local government general

elections. The Local Government Association 1995 Annual General Meeting saw the Council for Reconciliation's vision adopted and Anangu Pitjantjatjara became a member of the association.

It is also very pleasing to know that several of our metropolitan councils have employed Aboriginal policy officers, and they include the City of Adelaide, Salisbury, Port Adelaide Enfield, Onkaparinga and the City of Playford. I recently invited each of these policy liaison officers to meet with me, and this was only about 10 days or so ago. It is extremely pleasing to see the number of projects already developing at local government level, through the assistance and the support of Aboriginal liaison officers. Obviously it is something that I would like to continue to encourage as I move around talking to other councils.

Having the benefit of insight after talking to the group of people who are employed in that area, it means that in visiting other local government areas we will be able to discuss the cross-projects that are now used on-ground in metropolitan areas and hope that there will be other areas across the country where local government and Aboriginal communities can move forward with projects. I guess since we have all recently gone through Reconciliation Week this is another means of moving towards the type of absolutely practical on-ground support that is really one of the bases for moving towards true reconciliation.

Mr ATKINSON: My question is about libraries and STEDS. I am interested in how the minister believes she can work on partnership programs with local government when the government seems to have abandoned two strategic partnership agreements, library funding and STEDS funding. I am advised that, in the past, in fact based on agreements originally established by Labor governments, five-year funding agreements have been applied to both library funding and STEDS and, given that these two programs involve some \$16 million a year, or what is probably close to half the total direct assistance from state to local government, what is local government to make of the government's attitude to partnership?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I am sure the member would surely agree that through many different governments in this state over the years not everything runs smoothly between all levels of government, and I would imagine that that will be the case ad infinitum. However, in terms of the partnerships programs that we are talking about I have no doubt that they will be successful, and, in relation to the other aspects that the member has brought into the partnership discussion, I have no doubt that many steps can be taken. In terms of the areas that he has identified I am sure that the honourable member is also aware that the STEDS program is not a matter that comes under the responsibility of the local government minister and that it sits with the responsibilities of the Minister for Government Enterprises, also responsible for infrastructure.

I am certainly happy to give further information to the member, as he seems to be interested in the STEDS funding assistance program, which I am sure he is aware was established way back in 1972. The program since 1994 has been solely administered by the LGA pursuant to a five-year agreement between the state and the LGA, and that commenced on 1 January 1995. Under that agreement the state, through the Treasurer, makes an annual advance of dollars to the LGA for the purposes of the STEDS program.

The LGA then reports annually to the Minister for Government Enterprises as the responsible minister on the

status of the projects in progress. It is a five-year forward works program and it submits an audited statement of accounts for the preceding financial year. The LGA determines the extent to which funds are made available for an individual scheme and the priority for which grant allocations are made. I am told that currently 76 communities are seeking financial assistance from the establishment of STEDS services and, of these, four more applications have been made, covering the 34 townships, of which 10 have been identified as having the most urgent need and therefore a priority for financial assistance.

The member would also be aware that councils are required to contribute to the capital costs for individual STEDS schemes, and these costs are usually recovered from landowners, either through the general rate, a separate rate, a service rate or a charge. However, as I stated earlier in the piece, the Minister for Local Government has no actual responsibility in those terms. I have no doubt, however, that in progressing our partnerships program it will be a very successful program.

Mr ATKINSON: Libraries?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: As to libraries, I am sure the honourable member is also aware that I have a great desire to be able to give him all the information he desires on this aspect. I can certainly give him some but, once again, the Minister for Local Government does not administer the libraries area, therefore has no responsibility. In fact, the Minister for the Arts in this instance has the responsibility for those negotiations. However, I can tell the honourable member that discussions are currently taking place between the state government and local government to draw up a new agreement for the funding of public libraries. As the member would know, the current five-year funding agreement, which ran from 1994-95 to 1999-2000, expires in June 2000. However, late in 1999 the Minister for the Arts did put a proposal to the President of the Local Government Association for a one year interim agreement for 2000-01, which would then lead to the further five year agreement, which is under consideration at the moment.

Following further detailed consideration by both parties of a number of issues concerning the future role of public libraries, the LGA sought an extension to 31 March 2000 deadline and the Minister for the Arts agreed to this. I am told that no formal agreement has yet been reached between Minister Laidlaw and the LGA regarding a funding agreement for 2000-01. However, it is understood that discussions are continuing and favourably.

Mr ATKINSON: Favourably.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Yes. The Minister for the Arts wrote to all councils on 9 April 2000 advising the distribution of state government subsidy funds to individual public libraries for the financial year 2001. In that letter the minister confirmed that the starting point for negotiating a new five year agreement will be the funding level provided throughout the 1995-2000 agreement and will not be based on the transitional arrangement for 2000-01. In overall terms, the approved budget for 2000-01 provides for total spending of some \$14.3 million. This sum represents an increase of over \$230 000 over the current year, maintenance in real terms of subsidies for operating costs and purchases of material and, for the first time, free public access to the internet in every public library in this state for one full year and increased subsidies for 133 of the state's 136 libraries. Subsidy for three was reduced due to the population decline in the area that the library served.

The state government wants to use the next 12 months, that is the term of the one year interim agreement, to work with the LGA to consider a range of issues in relation to the future role of public libraries, including, importantly, the expansion of on-line services and access for the community. These discussions would form the basis for negotiation of a new five year financial agreement to commence in July 2001.

Mr ATKINSON: For the minister who is not responsible that was quite a comprehensive answer.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: As the Minister for Local Government, I am very interested.

Mr ATKINSON: Let us try something else, minister, for which perhaps you are not strictly responsible but which affects local government, that is, the catchment management subsidy scheme. This scheme enables subsidies to be provided to councils and other responsible agencies to assist in the provision of drainage infrastructure and flood mitigation works. The budget for the scheme this coming financial year is only \$1 950 000 down from \$3 850 000, which had applied from 1995-96 through to 1999-2000, a decrease of almost 50 per cent. How can local government take this government seriously when it cuts a scheme such as this by 50 per cent in the budget?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Thank you very much for that question: I often also wonder why local government would take certain members of the opposition seriously when they have been in this place for such a long time and still cannot recognise the difference in responsibilities between different portfolio areas of the ministry of a government. It should be quite clear to the member for Spence that, in a role I previously held in a different ministry, I could have given him a detailed answer and with all the information that he would require. However, the catchment management subsidy scheme is certainly not an area that lies within—

Mr ATKINSON: It goes to local government.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: —the responsibilities of the Minister for Local Government. I do have due respect for the alleged intellect that I have seen in the member over a period—

Ms Bedford interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I shouldn't, no. The member for Florey says I shouldn't. I am sure that the member understands that, if I had the information from another portfolio area, I would certainly be most obliged to provide him with an answer. However, in this instance I must decline, because it is a matter that now lies with another agency and I really cannot assist him in an answer at this time. I am really disappointed that I cannot give him that information.

Mr ATKINSON: I bet you are. And if I asked you about the withholding of state government funds from the powerline environment committee, which also affects local government, you would pad up to that one, too.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I did not realise just how much responsibility I had under different areas of my portfolio previously. If the honourable member had asked me all these questions in another area at another time, I would have been so pleased to be able to supply him with those answers.

Mr ATKINSON: We look forward to your restoration.

The CHAIRMAN: At this stage of the proceedings, I would suggest that we have used the time allocated and we will now deal with the state Office of Aboriginal Affairs.

Additional Departmental Advisers:

Mr D. Rathan, CEO, Division of State Aboriginal Affairs.
Mr R. Starke, Executive Officer.

Mr M. Smith, Financial Coordinator.

Mr P. Campaign, Executive Project Officer.

Ms G. Fusco, Project Officer.

The CHAIRMAN: Does the minister wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: Yes, Mr Chairman. I am very pleased to be able to place on public record my pleasure to have, for the third year, the ministerial responsibility for Aboriginal Affairs in South Australia. The opportunity to retain the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio is extremely rewarding and I feel very privileged to be able to continue to work closely with the Aboriginal community and to cooperatively strive to achieve real outcomes for Aboriginal people. As members would no doubt understand, Aboriginal Affairs is certainly a challenging portfolio which requires an awareness of an expansive and diverse range of community issues that impact on the day to day lives of Aboriginal people.

Although not directly under the responsibility of the Aboriginal Affairs portfolio, there is extreme interest in key functional areas such as education, training, housing, health and justice. The Division of State Aboriginal Affairs has again in 1999-2000 been very productive in delivering an extremely broad range of services to the Aboriginal community on behalf of the government. I believe these achievements are particularly impressive for the size of the organisation.

The highlights for 1999-2000 are well documented on pages 7.5, 7.27 and 7.31 of the portfolio statements, volume 2, and include many areas that need to be continually highlighted on the public record for the benefit of all South Australians.

The Aboriginal community was provided assistance in creating employment opportunities through sustainable economic development enterprises and supporting business skills programs. Economic development enterprises which have been assisted include the new Winmante Arts Centre, the Kalparrin Farm new cottages, the Coorong Wilderness Lodge, the Marra Dreaming Arts and Crafts Centre at Salisbury, and the Indigenous Business Incubator concept. We have maintained water, power and sewerage infrastructure in 18 South Australian Aboriginal communities.

The ATSI infrastructure agreement project managed the Umeevarra (Davenport) essential services upgrade, the Nepabunna roads upgrade (stage 3), the Point Pearce wastewater reuse system installation, the Yalata effluent lagoon upgrade, and the statewide street lighting upgrade in communities. We will continue to foster cooperative working relationships between the state's three statutory landholding authorities: the Angangu Pitjantjatjara, the Maralinga Tjarutja and the Aboriginal Lands Trust. It has been pleasing to see the work of the South Australian Aboriginal Education Training and Advisory Committee which has worked with education providers and other stakeholders to identify and resolve operational difficulties at the Tji Tji Wiltja Children's Centre and at the Winkie Primary School in the Riverland.

We have seen the establishment of the Council of Aboriginal Elders of South Australia (which consists of 21 members, all 60 years old or more, elected from regional fora across the state) which ensures that support and input is given at the local level. We prepared the document entitled *Vision 21 Aboriginal Policy Perspective: Aboriginal Community Justice* and supported an Aboriginal Court Day at the Port Adelaide Magistrates Court which provided the opportunity for Aboriginal people to elect to have their

matters heard on the day when government and community Aboriginal justice workers were present to assist Aboriginal defendants.

The key advisory group, which considered the *Bringing Them Home* report and prepared the South Australian Government response to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, has continued to monitor the implementation of the report's recommendations. The Aboriginal Women's Statewide Advisory Council continued to meet to discuss issues impacting on women and families and provided an advisory role to government.

Proposals were developed to amend the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act to provide the trust with more autonomy from government decision making. A database has been developed for the Central Archives of Aboriginal Sites and Objects which provides an automated and timely response to heritage inquiries. A verification process has been implemented to provide certainty on the location of Aboriginal sites contained within the register. Over 500 sites have been revisited for verification purposes for entry on the new database.

Significant across agency liaison and input was made to the Indigenous Land Use Agreement negotiations, proposals to amend the Aboriginal Heritage Act, and the government's response to the Mineral Resource Plan. An important highlight for the division is also the continued commitment to drive the reconciliation process across government agencies aimed at responding to strategy documents produced by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

I was particularly pleased, as were, I am sure, most members in this chamber, that over 50 000 people participated in the reconciliation walk on Monday 12 June 2000 from the Adelaide Oval over the King William Street bridge to the event on Elder Park. The Walk for Reconciliation was a significant event in the state's history. It shows that many South Australians (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) wish to join together in a commitment to move forward in the spirit of reconciliation. It was truly a very special event in which I feel very proud to have participated.

The 2000-01 outcome for Aboriginal affairs is 'equality for Aboriginal people'. The outputs to work towards this outcome include: the promotion of greater Aboriginal economic and partnership developments to create long-term and secure employment which will increase prosperity for Aboriginal people; the provision of sustainable essential services which will contribute to safer and healthier living environments for Aboriginal communities; the promotion of greater cooperation and stronger working relationships between the state's three landholding authorities; monitoring and evaluating Aboriginal education and training policy, programs and services; the provision of administration and advisory services relating to the Aboriginal Heritage Act; and the assessment and conservation of Aboriginal sites and objects.

In respect of the government's introduction of output based budgeting, the Division of State Aboriginal Affairs has adapted smoothly to the new output management framework and has been especially transparent in enabling its performance to be measured by providing a full breadth of indicators. Key issues for 2000-01 are to create employment opportunities for Aboriginal people through enterprise development, continue to maintain an excellent level of essential services in communities, support the administration of the three landholding authorities, make practical amendments to the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act and the Aboriginal Heritage Act,

and provide a continued commitment to reconciliation strategies across government.

In conclusion, I emphasise that 2000-01 will again be a very important year in Aboriginal affairs. I am confident that there is a commitment to reconciliation within the community, which can only build on the solid platform established by government to support the needs of Aboriginal people in South Australia.

Ms BEDFORD: I am hoping our half hour of questioning starts from now because we have a lot of questions on this line.

The CHAIRMAN: That is wishful thinking.

Ms BEDFORD: It is very unfortunate with such an important portfolio area that we have only 19 minutes to ask questions.

The CHAIRMAN: That is your problem—you went over on other lines.

Ms BEDFORD: No, we started right on time, sir. In any case, without going any further—

Mr McEwen interjecting:

Ms BEDFORD: Well, we need to put it on record.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Let us make it very clear: the program was agreed to by the opposition.

Mr ATKINSON: Yes, but not one-third of the time being occupied by the minister's making a statement.

The CHAIRMAN: That is a nonsense. The member may ask a question. I make clear that you will have less time if you carry on like that.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to the 'Bringing Them Home' report. One of the key targets for 2000-01 in output class 1, coordination and advice, budget paper 4, volume 2, page 7.5, is, through the senior advisory group, to monitor and report on the implementation of the recommendations of the 'Bringing Them Home' report. What does the minister mean by 'monitor'? Will the results of this monitoring be publicly available? If so, how often and, if not, why not? What criteria will the senior advisory group use to assess the standard of implementation of the report?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I thank the honourable member for her question. I agree with her in her previous comments that this is an extremely important portfolio; therefore, it elicits my surprise that 30 minutes has been allocated in what I believe is an offence to the area of Aboriginal affairs. However, it appears that that has been the negotiated time and I make no excuses or apologies for the length of my opening statement because, having a very short 30 minutes, it was my intention to put on record many of the things that need to be stated and thereby show in the record of the state that the state government, through the Department of State Aboriginal Affairs, has certainly moved forward on many achievements in the past year.

In terms of the 'Bringing Them Home' report, the member would be aware that the Department of State Aboriginal Affairs convenes the key advisory group that comprises senior representatives from Human Services, State Records, Justice, Transport, Urban Planning, Arts, and Premier and Cabinet. This group met on 9 June last. ATSIC also funded three positions currently held at Nunkin Warrin Yunti for a coordinator of the South Australian link up program and two case workers. The new staff commenced on 31 January 2000. We are talking of the implementation of the report.

The Department of Human Services Aboriginal Services Division also transferred a link up of officer to Nunkin Warrin Yunti. The South Australian link up program provides family tracing and reunion services to members of the stolen

generations. It provides for individuals to trace and to be reunited with their families by offering assistance and support with the journey home. The services include client contact and assessment client support, research of client files, initial family contact and ongoing support for clients following reunion and referral to specialist counselling and other appropriate agencies.

To date, some 24 clients have made contact with Link Up assistance. The births, deaths and marriages registration office has commenced negotiations with the South Australian Link Up program, and a memorandum of understanding will be further developed which will cover the provision for authorised and trained Link Up staff to have access to registers for searches associated with the agreed brief at no charge. It will include provision for them to obtain plain paper copies of certificates at no charge; and it will provide for the registration office to facilitate cooperation with interstate registry offices and other record holding agencies which have experienced search or reference staff and/or extensive databases.

Other initiatives coming out of the report and therefore its implementation process include the Families project in Port Augusta, which I am sure the honourable member knows is a service for clients that progresses with problems at a pace the families can cope with. It is about dealing with problems differently from how they have been dealt with in the past. The Families project receives referrals to work with families with particularly difficult circumstances. Once accepted, families are given the opportunity to identify the goals they would like to achieve throughout the process. The Families project staff work on the principles of partnership and collaboration to ensure that the process is in line with the family's wishes.

So, there are numerous areas in which successes have been achieved in the implementation of this. At present some eight families are participating in the project, with approximately 19 children, and out of the 19 only two have been brought into the care of FAYS. This occurred in a family that was initially unable to be engaged in the program. If one uses the vision of the project as the benchmark, then this is a service which we can say right from this moment is achieving its goals. Families are certainly managing for longer periods of time and require less assistance in coping with problems as they progress. I am told that workers have identified families encouraging each other to participate in the program and then offering support to one another.

The key advisory group will meet with representatives from the Aboriginal communities to discuss progress on matters including the National Library oral history project in South Australia. These initiatives and the work of the key advisory group further demonstrate the government's commitment to reconciliation and the remedying of past wrongs and injustices inflicted on Aboriginal people in South Australia. As I am sure the honourable member recognises, we remain committed to breaking down barriers to reconciliation for all Australians. The department of State Aboriginal Affairs also participates in the MCATSIA national working group on 'Bringing Them Home' which met in Adelaide on 17 April 2000. Jurisdictional reports will be prepared on progress to date, and they are due for completion in July 2000. I am told that the reports will be based on a thematic approach.

I am sure that the member fully understands that a great number of implementation processes are already coming out of the 'Bringing Them Home' report. I know from the look

on the honourable member's face that she is not enthralled with the length of the answer. However, I should remind her that, when it comes to some of these very complex areas, there is no simple or quick answer; many areas are covered by the one very simple question.

Ms BEDFORD: Because the minister has agreed about the importance of this portfolio area, perhaps I should read these questions and leave them all on notice, bearing in mind that we have only 10 minutes left. Would that be acceptable?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: We can deal with the questions as the honourable member asks them. If we ask our members not to participate, we will see how many questions we can get through. We have 10 minutes; how long will your questions take?

Ms BEDFORD: There are three pages.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I am willing to take questions as I am asked. I said in the first instance that 30 minutes was almost an offence to this portfolio to discuss the aspects of this very complex area. However, we are both left with the situation where we had 30 minutes; we now have 10 minutes left. I am happy to try to shorten any answers that I may give, but it is very difficult to give a complete picture by shortening answers.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: They can be both and they usually are.

An honourable member: I was referring to the answer.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: So was I.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to budget paper 4, volume 2, output 9.1, page 7.28. Will the minister provide details of the type and location of Aboriginal controlled enterprises assisted by DOSAA? Were they successful? What was the cost of each venture? Can the minister give us details of feedback from the communities on the success or otherwise of these ventures and the difficulties that they encountered?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: If I am to do the question justice, the answer covers a fair range. Perhaps I could make a quick reference to some of the economic development projects that we are currently undertaking. DOSAA hosted a one-day meeting of the South Australian Aboriginal Aquaculture and Sea Management Forum in February 2000, and we will continue to work with the development of this organisation. There was also an Aboriginal Sea Management Conference held in April, and funding was secured from a partnership with ATSIC.

ATSIC has agreed to pay approximately two-thirds of the cost and DOSAA contributes one-third. As the honourable member would be aware, aquaculture is a developing industry in South Australia and it would be one where the skills of Aboriginal people could be utilised in an economic development area.

In youth enterprise development, over the past two years we have sponsored business skills programs for high school Aboriginal children. These programs run for 26 weeks. They are aimed at providing young Aboriginal people with an introduction into starting and running their own business. We have had great successes through that program.

In intergovernment initiatives, the economic development team of State Aboriginal Affairs has developed very close ties with the ATSIC Business Development Unit, and this is of great benefit to both these parties. The new link between federal and state agencies allows for a more structured and planned approach to projects. It has also resulted in significant cost savings as information from visits to sites are now shared. There are a number of cooperative projects which

include the development of a training package for community leaders, involvement in the previous aquaculture area that I talked about through a reference group, and the steering committee for the business incubator.

We continue to provide leadership on inter-agency initiatives, acting as coordinator and the main contact point. Two multi-agency programs at present include the Coorong Wilderness Lodge and the Business Incubator Steering Group. Traineeships continue to be a very useful way of employing Aboriginal youth. Communities have sought assistance from DOSAA to create traineeships in their own enterprises.

The Gerard community has asked DOSAA to assist with management of its almond orchard as well as other assets. DOSAA has provided funds for weed control around the almond trees and is assisting with the cost of bringing a crop to market. We provided grants for economic development initiatives amounting to \$37 500 in the 1999-2000 year to a project out of Coober Pedy—Iwara Kutju. This program is jointly managed by DOSAA and Employment SA and funds a training supervisor for construction projects. The funding was originally provided by Employment SA to DOSAA and subsequently granted by DOSAA through CDEP. The Winmante Arts Centre has received \$21 000 over a 10 month period, and that assisted with essential operating costs.

The Marra Dreaming Arts and Crafts Centre has received \$15 000. Some \$10 000 was provided through the Department of Environment and Heritage. That funding has been provided to employ two Parks and Wildlife Aboriginal trainees. I could continue with details of a host of other areas, unless the member wants to ask another question

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Output Class 1: Coordination and Advice, at page 7.5. I refer the minister to deaths in custody, and note that there appears to be an ongoing strategy in the matters of justice and reconciliation. Will the minister provide details of the level of funding set aside for reconciliation and, if there is none, where will organisations obtain funding to progress the reconciliation process in remote regional and metropolitan areas? Further, will the minister provide details of the impact of strategies, considering that

the incarceration rates among Aboriginal people are higher than ever?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: I thank the member for her question; it certainly is an extremely important one. I do not have the figures on deaths in custody with me. However, I would be very surprised to find that there had been an increase in the rate, because to my knowledge South Australia in particular has certainly improved conditions and support services within the Correctional Services institutions, and we are certainly leading the nation in terms of protective

measures, which have therefore reduced the numbers of deaths in custody, which horrified all of us when those reports were brought to our attention. There are obviously many areas in which we look to different strategies and projects that aim to assist processes, where Aboriginal people are supported within the institutions.

One of the areas of process that was extremely important came out of coronial issues and recommendations that followed an inquest into an Aboriginal death in custody, and that goes back to July 1998, when a protocol was signed with the state Coroner for the provision of policy advice for inquests into Aboriginal deaths in custody. The division initiated the establishment of a coronial issues working group as a sub-group of the Aboriginal and Justice Interdepartmental Committee. That working group comprised representatives from the departments of Correctional Services, Human Services, Police, Attorney-General, as well as the Aboriginal Legal Rights Movement and the Aboriginal and Justice Advocacy Committee, and is chaired by the division, by DOSAA. The main purpose is to establish agency ownership of coronial recommendations and then to identify processes for responding to recommendations from an inquest, and to encourage greater implementation of these recommendations.

The justice portfolio leadership group has endorsed the work of the coronial issues working group and has suggested that this group report to them in order that chief executives are kept informed of matters requiring action by their respective agencies. DOSAA has already convened a number of meetings of the coronial issues working group since late 1998, undertaken an initiative to engage an Aboriginal and support worker to provide assistance to families throughout the process of an inquest. The matter of follow-up has been raised, and discussions continue there.

To date, DOSAA has provided three reports and three detailed supplementary reports to the Coroner. The Coroner has expressed his appreciation for the details enclosed in DOSAA's reports, which would otherwise not be evidence presented for his consideration. In a recent case the Coroner's report quoted details from the report prepared by the division. Ongoing discussion is continuing on a range of matters, including procedures for implementation.

I am sure the member understands that this government is certainly pleased to acknowledge what is an initial success, obviously arising from the initiative of the coronial protocol almost two years ago. I am told that South Australia's Department of Correctional Services' institutions is one of two jurisdictions in Australia which have recorded declining deaths in custody since 1995.

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

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.02 p.m. the committee adjourned until Tuesday 20 June at 11 a.m.