

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**Monday 29 June 2009****ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B****Acting Chair:**

Ms L.R. Breuer

Members:

Hon. G.M. Gunn

Mr T.R. Kenyon

Hon. S.W. Key

Mrs I.M. Redmond

Hon. L. Stevens

Mr I.H. Venning

*The committee met at 13:30***DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT, \$18,002,000****ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT,
\$2,215,000****Witness:**

Hon. G.E. Gago, Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Energy

Departmental Advisers:

Mr I. Nightingale, Chief Executive, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Mr J. Hanlon, Deputy Chief Executive, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Mr A. McKeegan, Acting Manager, Finance, Department of Planning and Local Government.

Mr M. Petrovski, Director, Office for State/Local Government Relations.

Ms P. Archer, Principal Policy Officer, Office for State/Local Government Relations.

Ms H. Shepherd, Chief of Staff, Office of the Minister.

Ms R. Burner, Adviser, Office of the Minister.

The ACTING CHAIR: The estimates committees are relatively informal procedures and, as such, there is no need to stand to ask or answer questions. The committee will determine an approximate time for consideration of proposed payments to facilitate the changeover of departmental advisers. I ask the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to indicate whether they have agreed on a timetable for today's proceedings and, if so, to provide the chair with a copy.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: My understanding is that it is as we advised, that is, for two hours.

The ACTING CHAIR: Member for Heysen?

Mrs REDMOND: Yes.

The ACTING CHAIR: Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure that the chair is provided with a completed request to be discharged form. If the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the committee secretary no later than Friday 17 July 2009.

This year the *Hansard* supplement, which contains all estimate committee responses, will be published on 2 October 2009. I propose to allow both the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make an opening statement of about 10 minutes each. There will be a flexible

approach to giving the call for asking questions, based on about three questions per member (remember that, member for Schubert) alternating each side. Supplementary questions will be the exception rather than the rule. A member who is not part of the committee may, at the discretion of the chair, ask a question. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identifiable or referenced. Members unable to complete their questions during the proceedings may then submit them as questions on notice for inclusion in the House of Assembly *Notice Paper*.

There is no formal facility for the tabling of documents before the committee; however, documents can be supplied to the chair for distribution to the committee. The incorporation of material into *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the house; that is, it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length. All questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisers, and the minister may refer questions to advisers for a response.

I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to the Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, Part 4. Minister, would you like to make an opening statement?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Office for State/Local Government Relations in the Department of Planning and Local Government is a small unit responsible for providing policy and other advice to the Minister for State/Local Government Relations on the constructive relationship between the state government and councils and other associated representative groups, whole of government policy and legislative frameworks as they affect local government, and the constitution and operation of the local government system, including the statutory authorities for which the Minister for State/Local Government Relations is responsible. These statutory authorities are the Local Government Grants Commission, the Outback Areas Community Development Trust and the Boundary Adjustment Facilitation Panel.

At the beginning of the 2008-09 financial year, the government announced its major planning reforms package, and an important element of that was the establishment of the Department of Planning and Local Government. The department aims to be the pre-eminent state government strategic land use agency committed to the sustainable development of South Australia. The department is leading the implementation of a new and progressive planning and development system. The department also leads the state government's relationships with local government and recognises the very important role councils play in delivering local services and infrastructure and in planning for our communities. The formation of this new agency is a significant initiative, which has given us a broader and better coordinated base for working with local government on a whole range of strategies for advancing our state.

I will briefly outline several key priorities that have been progressed in 2008-09, which will be a focus for further action in the coming financial year. In relation to accountability reforms, I will first outline how we have responded to concerns raised in recent times about aspects of councils' administration and financial management.

Clearly, it is important to overcome problems, both real and perceived, that are damaging public confidence in local government. In South Australia, state governments and ministers do not have a general power to overturn lawful and proper decisions that are within councils' discretion to make. However, parliament has delegated to councils (by legislation) power over people's lives and property that are only excisable by governments, such as, powers to tax to make enforced laws, orders and so on.

Councils form part of the system of responsible government and must exercise their power in the manner expected and required of governments. That means councils must meet the high standards of accountability appropriate for public sector administration and management of public funds. The council members and officers must meet the high standards that apply to holders of public office. In my experience if a council fails to meet the appropriate standards, it is much more likely to be the result of lack of knowledge or capacity than deliberate non-compliance.

Legislative improvements made in recent years by this government relating to financial management of councils have already made improvements for the quality and transparency of council decisions, and I am pleased to report that legislation is currently being drafted to amend the Local Government Act to make further improvements to the accountability framework for local government in South Australia.

In relation to elections review, the second area of priority during 2008-09 has been the finalisation of proposals to reform the processes for local government elections. The reforms proposed are designed to increase voter turn out, improve local government representation and improve the election process.

On 28 May I released a draft bill for comment. The bill has been derived from the government's response to the Independent Review of Local Government Elections, which reported in 2008, and extensive consultation with councils, the Local Government Association and other interested parties. I intend to ensure that the framework for local government representation and the election process is as effective as possible and will encourage increased voter participation.

Another significant initiative is the development of a new governance framework for the Outback areas of the state. On 8 April I introduced the Outback Communities (Administration and Management) Bill 2009. This bill revises the existing arrangements for the governance of the Outback under the Outback Areas Community Development Trust. The Outback Areas Community Development Trust has served the Outback extremely well for many years.

The legislation to set up the trust was of course a visionary initiative of the Dunstan government in 1978. However, there are great changes and challenges being faced by Outback communities in the 21st century. Following a thoroughly consultative review of current arrangements in late 2007, our reforms were developed to better support Outback communities and to facilitate a more strategic approach to planning, financial and asset management and service provision.

Two other legislative proposals are also nearing completion. A draft bill for the miscellaneous amendments to the Local Government Act has been subject to consultation with local councils and the Local Government Association and is being finalised following consideration of comments received. The bill proposes a number of changes to amend and tidy up provisions on various matters which have come to our attention and been raised by local government in recent times. I am also finalising a legislative proposal to amend the system for setting local government council elected member allowances, designed to improve public confidence in the process of determining allowances paid to councillors.

In relation to collaboration between the state and local government, they are working closely together to implement key statewide strategies. These deserve a mention as good current examples of our commitment to a cooperative working relationship. The development of the 30-year plan for Greater Adelaide has involved close consultation with councils at several stages in each of the seven regions that the plan will cover. Councils have had the opportunity to have input at a strategic level to shape this very significant plan for the future of Greater Adelaide.

The government is also working closely with local government in the implementation of the Nation Building—Economic Stimulus package. A state/local government working group is facilitating the coordination of local government projects with state sponsored projects and identifying clusters of projects to enable cost benefits for tendering of work in regional South Australia.

Our close relationship and collaborative approach has enabled this state to respond swiftly to make the most of the economic stimulus package from the federal government. As a result many new projects and infrastructure upgrades are in train and will be of great benefit to local communities across the state. I commend these initiatives to the committee as a central part of the very progressive reform now taking place in planning and local government across South Australia.

Mrs REDMOND: I refer, as I do every year, to the stupidity of our system of estimates. I make no complaint that a government that is duly elected has the right to determine its priorities and set its budget, but, equally, it needs to be accountable. I certainly cannot complain that this committee is not making itself accountable, because we have it listed for two hours. The minister's opening sentence was that 'this is a small unit responsible for providing policy and other advice', yet the entire Attorney-General's budget examination is listed for 45 minutes.

I think that there is a problem with the way in which we approach estimates in this state. Indeed, I was speaking in the context of other jurisdictions recently, and this state is widely known around the commonwealth of Australia as being the most useless estimates process. I do not blame any of the advisers who are here, but I say again—as I have said every year—that it is an extraordinary waste of the whole-of-government's money for the amount of time that CEOs, and everyone else, have to put into preparation for budget estimates.

I make no argument that a government is not entitled to set its priorities, but I think we are entitled to an explanation of those priorities and the right to assess them. I shake my head in wonderment every year that we go through this charade to the point, Madam Acting Chair, of your having to notify various people being signed in and out of this committee. Surely, that is an antiquated hangover from days gone by because *Hansard* is recording, in any event, whoever asks the question, and you have the freedom to allow a question. If we on this side are not organised

enough to make sure the right people are asking our questions, well, more fool us. As a general comment I find it extraordinary that we go through this process in this way.

I assume that, since this is the opening of this line, we have not had the omnibus questions, so I will read those into the record first up before I ask the minister a specific question.

1. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of the baseline data that was provided to the Shared Services Reform Office by each department or agency reporting to the minister: including the current total cost of the provision of payroll, finance, human resources, procurement, records management and information technology services in each department or agency reporting to the minister, as well as the full-time equivalent staffing numbers involved?

2. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors in 2008-09 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing the name of the consultant, contractor or service supplier, cost, work undertaken and method of appointment? Normally, we have been asking for only those consultants for which over \$10,000 was paid for the consult, and I expect that that is the intention of the question. I do not want to put the departmental people to the bother of responding on that question on every consultation, but certainly those over \$10,000.

3. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many surplus employees will there be as at 30 June 2009, and for each surplus employee what is the title or classification of the employee and the total employment cost (TEC) of the employee?

4. In the financial year 2008-09 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister what underspending on projects and programs was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2009-10; and how much, indeed, was approved by cabinet?

5. (i) What was the total number of employees with a total employment cost of \$100,000 or more per employee, and also as a sub-category the total number of employees with a total employment cost of \$200,000 or more per employee, for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister as at 30 June 2009; and
- (ii) Between 30 June 2008 and 30 June 2009, will the minister list job title and total employment cost of each position (with a total estimated cost of \$100,000 or more):
- (a) which has been abolished; and
 - (b) which has been created?

6. For the year 2008-09, will the minister provide a breakdown of expenditure on all grants administered by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, listing the name of the grant recipient, the amount of the grant and the purpose of the grant, and whether the grant was subject to a grant agreement as required by Treasurer's Instruction No. 15?

7. For all capital works projects listed in Budget Paper 5 that are the responsibility of the minister, will the minister list the total amounts spent to date on each project?

My first three questions relate to Budget Paper 3, page 4.16, table 4.8: Specific purpose payments from state to local government. Footnote (c) applies to the bottom figure in the right-hand column. In the first column we have the estimated result of those specific purpose payments, which in 2008-09 was basically about \$94.25 million, and at the bottom of the budget column for 2009-10 there is a dash. The explanation in footnote (c) states that 'when allocations for all programs are finalised, funding of around \$95 million can be expected in 2009-10'. That is the anticipation of that budget.

Given that Treasury estimates are 1.75 per cent CPI over the next year, the figure of \$95 million (to which footnote (c) refers) on that basis is about \$900,000 less than required to keep pace with CPI increases. The local government price index—that is the real cost of goods and services that councils buy—is running at 4.2 per cent, so in order to maintain funding at the 2008-09 level the figure would need to go up from \$94.2 million to \$98.2 million. The question is: why is the state government short changing local government as against the 2008-09 budget?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: In relation to the member for Heysen's opening remarks and her criticism of this process, she suggested that estimates are a waste of time and two hours could be too long for state and local government relations. I did offer members an opportunity to shorten this session to one hour. I think we dealt with the opposition's deputy leader's office, and we were told

that that was not approved of by the opposition. So, I find it quite remarkable that we had to listen to that criticism when, in fact, through the opposition's deputy leader's office we were told they did not want to halve the time. Nevertheless, local government is a very interesting area and there is lots to say about it.

In relation to the specific question, my advice is that, for the 2009-10 estimated funding, around \$95 million is expected to be made available to local government when allocations for all programs are finalised. Allocations that will be made to councils for some programs in 2009-10 have obviously not been shown on the table because the level of funding has not yet been determined or is dependent on the success of applications under a competitive grants process.

I have been advised that this budgetary process uses the state government's CPI index supplied by Treasury. It is the same process as, I understand, the commonwealth uses. We do not use local government's CPI calculation.

Mrs REDMOND: I will respond to the first comment by the minister. I do not suggest this should be shorter; I am suggesting the other estimates should be longer. I am quite happy to ask questions on local government for two hours. I just think it is a disproportionate amount of time, given the amount of time I am not given to ask about some of the major portfolio areas.

I thank the minister for her explanation, but it still seems to me that, if the local government price index (which is the real cost of the goods and services that they are buying) is running at 4.2 per cent, in real terms, on any reading of it, this is a cut to local government funding. My second question, therefore, is: will this lead to a reduction in jobs and work for contractors and jobs and work undertaken by local government?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that that is not expected to be the outcome in relation to job losses, that local government is expected to supplement its funds through commonwealth and state funding and, in addition to that, can apply for grants, when it needs to, for specific projects.

Mrs REDMOND: I would be interested if the minister could explain a bit more about where they are going to get more funds from state government funding. Can the minister give any guarantee that it will not be necessary for councils to increase their rates to make up the shortfall?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that councils, for this financial year, have already set their rates. They do that based on the work that they set as priorities for the forthcoming year, and on the understanding of both the state funds and commonwealth funds that are available to them.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: My question relates to Portfolio Statement, Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.14, which refers to the Office for State/Local Government Relations providing advice to government on the operations of the local government system. What action is the minister currently taking regarding community concerns about the operation of the City of Burnside?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am aware that the CEO, Neil Jacobs, recently tendered his resignation to take effect from late August and that the resignation was recently withdrawn. Media reports have suggested that Mr Jacobs resigned over a harassment case, saying that his 'ability to provide a safe workplace free from harassment and bullying had been compromised', and I am quoting from his resignation letter. I am also aware that there is a defamation action currently being taken by several members of the council's development assessment panel against a member of the council.

As the minister responsible for local government, I am obviously concerned about these matters, particularly as issues such as these tend to reduce public confidence. In my view, there appears to be a continued deterioration in the relationship between various council parties which is unlikely to be conducive or helpful to good decision making. I recently wrote to the mayor and directed officers from my office to meet with her and other relevant officers and to subsequently provide me with advice as to whether there are any grounds for a formal investigation under the Local Government Act. As a result of this direction, officers have advised me that they met with many elected members individually and several senior council employees last week and will now prepare advice for me as to what the appropriate next stage might be.

Currently, under the Local Government Act 1999, I have the power to appoint an investigator where I have reason to believe that a council has contravened or failed to comply with a provision or failed to discharge responsibility under the Local Government Act or another act or where an irregularity has occurred in the conduct of the affairs of the council.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer the committee to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.1: the Outback Areas Community Development Trust. In recent times, the Andamooka community has experienced significant growth. What action is the trust and the government taking to support this community?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her question. The Andamooka community is experiencing significant development pressure due to population increases associated with Outback tourism and mining-related activities. As in other Outback communities, the provision of town services in Andamooka is managed by a group of volunteers, the Andamooka Progress and Opal Miners Association (APOMA). The pace of change is putting pressure on the provision of these town services. Support is provided to APOMA by the Outback Areas Community Trust, which is continuing to work with APOMA to determine how best to meet their ongoing needs.

The state government, working through the trust, has provided funding to employ an administrative support worker (increased hours for an ongoing position), and a town maintenance worker (a new position) in 2008. Further, the trust agreed to scope out a position to appoint a community manager to be located at Andamooka. It is anticipated that the community manager will play an important part in contributing to APOMA's local direction and advice aiding in the good governance of the region.

It is anticipated that the community manager will be appointed in the near future. The position will become an ongoing Public Service position, reporting to the manager of the trust in Port Augusta. All associated costs of this position are included in the trust's budget, and I am pleased to report that the Outback Areas Community Development Trust is providing grant funding of \$41,000 to assist APOMA to continue to provide a free-to-air television service to households in Andamooka. The project is being funded on a 50-50 basis by the trust and APOMA.

The ACTING CHAIR: I know it is out of order, but I have a supplementary question regarding the community manager that you mentioned there. I am interested in that position, and it seems to be taking some time in happening. Is that likely to happen in the very near future?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that the temporary position is currently filled and the position will be formally put out for advertisement and filled within the next four weeks, so it is well underway.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer the committee to Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, page 4.6. What action is the government taking to improve the governance arrangements across Outback communities?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her question, and I thank the Acting Chair for her interest in the issues surrounding the Andamooka and other Outback areas. The Outback is facing many changes and challenges and opportunities, in part due to the mining industry and the boom in tourism. It is vital that we ensure that resident communities in the Outback have sufficient governance structures in place to manage themselves while upholding a strong sense of community spirit.

A review initiated in mid-2007 looked at how the Outback Areas Community Development Trust currently operates and how services are provided to communities in places such as Andamooka, Yunta, Copley, Marla and Leigh Creek. It is clear that each group working with the trust is tackling a diverse range of management issues with regard to both dwindling and surging population numbers and the sustainability of community services.

The Outback Areas Community Development Trust is now in its 31st year as a statutory authority constituted under the Outback Areas Community Development Trust Act 1978 responsible for community assistance and limited local government functions in the out-of-councils area of the state. There is now increased interest in the operations of the Outback from a whole range of interests and stakeholders. This is fed by a growth in economic opportunities and a new emphasis on financial and legal accountability in particular. This interest across environmental, economic and social sectors has raised questions about volunteer capacity within the communities.

Input into the review was sought from all residents, and significant consultation took place. The results have been incorporated and, with those sorts of things in mind, the government has sought to introduce a bill to replace the existing act. In recognition of the geographical distances involved, the Department of Planning and Local Government also made information available on the trust's website, and it is proposed that the new Outback Communities Authority will develop increased regulatory powers to be able to assist communities to deal with issues such as collecting rubbish and dealing with litter.

There are also considerations of some new levy structures, and that includes the asset sustainability levy and a community contribution. The asset sustainability levy will be similar to local government rates, although it will be a fixed charge across the Outback areas rather than varying across communities. It is proposed to use that to maintain public services and facilities. The amount of the levy will be determined once the quantum of the asset maintenance is known. The community contribution would be much more community-specific. It would involve a fixed charge used for the provision of services for infrastructure to the specific community where it was raised, but it would be created only at the request of individual communities.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: This is a supplementary question to the one I asked before the member for Little Para. The minister has given us a lengthy answer in relation to the Outback Areas Community Development Trust—an organisation which I am particularly interested in, and I have had a great deal of association with it over a long time. In part of the minister's answer, she gave some brief information about the charges that are going to be imposed upon these long-suffering people in this isolated part of South Australia. It is fairly important that we know how much they are going to pay, who is going to pay and how it is going to be assessed. I will give the minister some examples so that she will be under no misapprehension.

The people of Leigh Creek do not own their houses; they are owned by the government of South Australia and leased to Babcock & Brown. But just up the road at Copley, I take it they are going to get walloped because they do happen to own their properties. We need to know who is going to pay. What about the pastoral industry? They already pay a pastoral rent to the government of South Australia in its wisdom; they have to pay NRM levies and they pay the emergency services levy.

We want to know whether they are going to get, Madam Acting Chair—and this is in your electorate, too—a double whammy. There is concern because it is terribly important that, during these budget committees, this information is put on the public record so that people can have an informed debate about it. I have read the legislation and the proposals, but there is no clear definition of how they are going to be affected by these proposed new charges.

I say to the minister that, if she wants to have some consensus about this, it had better be very precise and clear because those long-suffering people are paying pastoral rents and, in many cases, they are providing the emergency services in these isolated areas. They are paying for that and they do not want to get slugged again for a service they may or may not require. I can understand Andamooka very clearly.

The ACTING CHAIR: Member for Stuart, do you have any questions, because this is more of a statement?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: No; it is a question. We have listened, Madam Acting Chair, at great length to the minister, and I do not want her to be under any misapprehension about the information.

The ACTING CHAIR: I appreciate your interest in my electorate, member for Stuart.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: It is up to you. I am looking at mine.

The ACTING CHAIR: Have you finished your question?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: This is the first one. I have another one after that.

The ACTING CHAIR: That is very good. I am sure you ask questions I would like to.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, I will at length. Don't worry.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am pleased to have the opportunity to talk further about these new very important proposed initiatives. Let me outline what the levies are about. The asset sustainability levy, as I said, would be similar to a local government rate, although it would be a fixed charge across the Outback areas rather than being across communities. It is proposed that this be used to maintain public services and facilities that impact across Outback communities such as air strips, infrastructure, the UHF repeater network and for things like toilets.

The amount of the levy is yet to be determined, but it will be determined once the quantum of the asset maintenance requirement is known. I understand that work has commenced. This amount will be known following the completion of the asset management plans of both the current trust's assets and those relevant community assets. This figure will be met, in part, by evenly applying a levy across all properties.

In relation to the diversity around the types of properties that are involved, we are aware of that and we are very much committed to working in an ongoing way with these local communities to sort through that level of detail. The community contribution would be much more community specific unlike the asset sustainability levy. The community contribution will be a fixed charge used for the provision of services or infrastructure to the specific community where it is raised, and it will be created—and I emphasise this—only at the request of individual communities.

As part of the consultation process prior to its introduction, explanatory information about the proposed bill was sent to 36 progress associations, the 15 councils sharing the boundaries with the Outback regions, the two councils located within the area (Coober Pedy and Roxby Downs) and the Local Government Association and other key stakeholders.

In recognition of the geographical distances involved, the Department of Planning and Local Government also made the information available on the Outback Areas Community Trust website and the Office for State/Local Government Relations website together with the draft bill. Prior to the release of the draft bill, the chairman and members of the Outback Areas Community Trust were consulted on its key elements. The trust has subsequently passed a resolution to support the bill. The Andamooka Progress Association was also consulted, and it has indicated its in principle support for the new arrangements. The LGA is also in support of this.

So, when the member talks about consensus, we have gone a long way to ensure that we have met with and engaged these Outback communities and the variety of different stakeholders within that community in an ongoing way throughout the development of these proposals, and we are committed to continuing that because there is a level of detail that has not as yet been resolved, but we will continue to work with those communities to resolve all those outstanding matters over the next 12 months.

The ACTING CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I will point out to the member for Stuart that I did a trip through the Outback, including parts of his electorate, and found very little criticism of this act. They were very happy with it. Maybe you talk to different people than I. I certainly found none, including in part of your electorate which was Leigh Creek.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: The ones at Leigh Creek will not be paying, because they do not own it. I do not need to be counselled on how to represent my constituents. What my job is—

The ACTING CHAIR: I am not counselling, member for Stuart. Do you have a question?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: My job, Madam Acting Chair, is to get answers for the people. We have been here now for 15 or 20 minutes and we do not have an answer. I say to the minister: very simply, will the pastoralists have to pay on top of what they already pay, and will people at Nepabunna also have to pay because their land is owned by the Aboriginal Lands Trust? You have not answered the questions about whether someone at Leigh Creek will have to pay. You are asking this parliament to vote in the future, and we do not know who will pay how much or how it will be assessed.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for his question. As I stated, there is a great deal of detail that is yet to be resolved. We are working with local communities to do that. In relation to pastoralists, it is likely that they will be included in the rate scheme, but, as yet, nothing definitive has been resolved. As I said, we are working through that detail.

Mrs REDMOND: Surely, minister, you have not come this far down the scheme without knowing to whom you are planning to charge levies. My question follows on from the member for Stuart's question. My understanding is that—and correct me if I am wrong—the asset sustainability levy, unlike the local one, where there will be local control of the amount to some degree, is going to be imposed by the minister; it will not be via any elected persons. I do not know whether the minister has heard of the concept of no taxation without representation, but some people held a tea party over that a few years ago, and they had a war over the issue of taxation without representation. Is not the asset sustainability levy taxation without representation?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her question. The sustainability levy will involve fixed rates. The new authority will be required to complete a business plan. Within that plan it will be required to have completed its infrastructure assets plan and also its general overall business plan for the area, which will include the proposed rates that it would be considering. It would then be required to consult with residents throughout the trust areas before being able to adopt that business plan. There are checks and balances in place to ensure that local communities have input into signing off on that business plan, which incorporates proposed new levies.

Mrs REDMOND: At the end of the day, minister, is it not the case that you will set that levy regardless of whether a community has signed off on it and the business plan?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Only after I have been given a recommendation by the outback authority and only after I am assured that due process has been followed, which includes consultation with their local community.

Mrs REDMOND: Given that the Outback Areas Authority is not elected either, what we have is an unelected authority making recommendations to a minister, who will then set the levy. Is that not the case?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: That is my understanding, yes.

Mrs REDMOND: And you do not see a problem with that in terms of taxation without representation?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Within the legislation there is also a requirement for the business plan to be outlined and for community consultation to occur.

Mrs REDMOND: Yes, well, I could make my usual comment about what this government means by that term consultation; it bears little resemblance to anything anyone else understands.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.6, which refers to setting the allowances of local government elected members. What action is the government taking to have councillors' allowances set by an independent mechanism?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Earlier this year I released for consultation a draft bill under which the Remuneration Tribunal would have jurisdiction to determine local government elected member allowances. I sought comment on the draft bill, and the comments received were carefully considered. The bill includes some provisions to guide the Remuneration Tribunal in making its determinations and to ensure that the costs of its deliberations are recovered from local government, rather than the state government.

One of the matters that came up during the consultation period on this draft bill was the proposed time frame for setting council member allowances. The draft bill would have required the Remuneration Tribunal to make its determination on allowances early in each four-year local government election cycle, after which allowances would be adjusted for inflation in each of the following three years.

It is clear from the consultation process that most respondents prefer allowances to be set prior to, rather than after, local government elections. This earlier time frame would permit persons who were considering the possibility of nominating as a candidate to determine the extent to which an available allowance might affect their capacity to serve as a councillor or a mayor. I intend to have that bill considered by parliament in the near future.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer to Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, page 4.15. Given the broad areas and responsibilities of local government, what is the minister doing to improve information and the provision of practical advice to councils?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Governance Unit within the Office for State/Local Government Relations provides assistance and guidance to councils on their legislative requirements under the Local Government Act and associated regulations and on good governance practice. This unit works with councils' governance practitioners and the Local Government Association to promote better governance processes and practices across local government.

Two guidance papers on specific governance topics have been circulated in the last six months to all council mayors, chairs, CEOs and governance managers. These papers are intended to ensure that councils are aware of the legislative requirements and also the better practices associated with specific provisions of the Local Government Act 1999.

The first guidance paper covered the significant topic of appointing a CEO. Selecting and appointing a CEO is one of the most important tasks that elected members may undertake during their term of office, and choosing the right person is obviously critical to the success of the council. It is essential that correct processes are followed so that the council can choose the person most suited to the position.

The second guidance paper dealt with the council's powers and, importantly, the responsibilities that go with these powers when an authorised council officer is considering taking action regarding an abandoned vehicle that may lead to its removal and possibly its disposal. Obviously, this is a matter that can have consequences for an individual vehicle owner. It is vital

that councils and its authorised officers, in exercising these powers, act lawfully and in a fair, consistent and transparent fashion.

The paper was informed by the findings and recommendations made in a recent report by the Ombudsman. As a result, the local government (accountability framework) bill, which I intend to introduce into parliament later this year, contains an amendment to address that issue. I have also issued two local government matters newsletters, and these publications provide all councils with information and practical advice.

Mrs REDMOND: Can the minister advise what is the estimated cost of establishing the Outback Communities Authority?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am informed that the costs are not anticipated to be any more than the current costs of the trust and that the planned new governance structure should deliver internal efficiency savings, which, in turn, will be returned to the trust to be incorporated into the trust's operations.

Mrs REDMOND: Following on from that, I note that the new authority has increased enforcement and planning responsibilities. If it is not going to cost any more than the current costs, how are those extra activities going to be undertaken?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: As I have already partially explained, I have been advised that those responsibilities will be able to be achieved through the redistribution of savings, which would be able to assist with a number of things, including the inspectorate services. Also, the new department, incorporating local government with planning, has allowed us to have much better access to a wide range of administrative support services, which can also be utilised to provide assistance. Obviously it is something I will monitor carefully and continue to assess in terms of the trust's ability to do its job, do it well, and meet community needs.

Mrs REDMOND: I have one other question at the moment on the issue that was raised earlier; in fact, Madam Acting Chair, you mentioned this appointment of the Andamooka community manager. I think the minister said that that person was about to be appointed, and that this is an ongoing Public Service position. My first question is: is it a new staff position or is it a transfer of the existing employee of the Andamooka Progress and Opal Miners' Association (as it is known)?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that the position is attached to the Outback Areas Trust and that it is an ongoing position. At this point I would also like to put on the record that this Rann Labor government actually doubled the budget to the Outback Areas Trust some four years ago, in terms of showing its commitment to these communities.

The ACTING CHAIR: Thank you, minister. That was a very much needed and exceptional position.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.16, relating to reforms to improve the accountability framework for local government. What is the progress to date?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the honourable member for her question. Amendments to improve the local government accountability framework are currently being drafted. A total of 44 individuals or groups provided submissions or feedback on the local government accountability proposals paper, including the Economic and Finance Committee and other members of parliament, the Local Government Association, the former acting ombudsman (Mr Ken MacPherson), local government auditors, the Australian Services Union, and resident and ratepayer groups.

Those submissions have, as far as possible, been taken into account in the development of the reforms that will be presented to parliament in the future. In particular, I intend to recognise the challenges faced by rural and regional councils by providing them with a longer time frame to implement new audit requirements, and practical support to introduce the internal controls and be assessed under those new requirements.

Another theme that emerged from consultation, which was raised by both local government and resident and ratepayer groups, was the desire to avoid overregulation. While improving accountability necessarily means some additional or changed requirements, there was concern about adding to councils' administrative load in ways that do not produce better results in practice. Obviously, we need to get the balance right. Key reforms will expand the scope of the financial audit of councils, provide the minister with clearer capacity to act and remedy councils'

noncompliance, and ensure that the minister can direct a council if that council fails to respond appropriately.

The amendments will also reinforce administrative principles appropriate to key areas, such as councils' prudential management, procurement and internal complaint handling and review. The proactive work now being done by the Office of State/Local Government Relations, the LGA and other local government sector providers will support the understanding of and compliance with the reforms to be introduced.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer to Portfolio Statement 1, page 4.15. Women remain under-represented in local government, both as elected members and in executive positions. What action is the government taking to address this under-representation, particularly women's participation in local government executive positions, as identified in Target 6.23 of South Australia's Strategic Plan?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her most important question. The state government has supported a number of actions to improve women's representation and participation in local government during 2008-09. These include a range of initiatives such as participating in a joint state/local government Women in Local Government working group, chaired by the Local Government Association. This group was established to examine issues and identify strategies and projects at the local level to improve women's representation and participation in local government.

As the Minister for State/Local Government Relations and the Minister for the Status of Women, I launched a guide, entitled *Step this Way*, as a leading practice guide for women and for councils, to enable them to become employers of choice for women, at the Local Government Association president's dinner in September 2008. *Step this Way* was presented as part of South Australia's overall response to the national framework for women in local government 'The Way Forward', and as a showcase of leading practice examples and efforts of South Australian councils.

Through the Local Government Managers' Association, the state government sponsored an award for excellence in advancing the status of women in local government first in April 2008 and again in 2009. This year the award went to the City of Playford, which has embarked on a significant program of management and leadership development of its women employees.

We have also supported the South Australian branch of the Australian Local Government Women's Association in its biennial national conference on women in local government, held in Adelaide in April this year, by becoming a platinum sponsor, shared equally between the Office of the State/Local Government Relations and the Office for Women. This conference provided a networking opportunity for women in local government across Australia, and a focus for addressing issues such as efforts to inspire positive change within local government to attract and retain women elected to or working in local government.

The under-representation of women in local government, both as elected members and in executive positions, is mirrored nationally. The state government has agreed to pursue a cooperative approach with other state and territory governments in order to achieve a better national outcome.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer to Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, page 4.6. What action is the government taking to improve the promotion of local government elections as required by target 5.5 in South Australia's Strategic Plan?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Independent Review of Local Government Elections was established in April 2007, following the completion of the 2006 election process. The former minister acted in cooperation with the then president of the LGA to commission an independent review and made 27 recommendations intended to improve voter participation and representation of local government and the election process.

The government accepted 23 of the review's 27 recommendations. The two major reforms the government accepted were about refocusing local government's expenditure on elections. The review made a series of recommendations to divert resources away unnecessarily from administrative tasks in relation to compiling separate voter rolls and towards activities that heighten the awareness of local government and elected members. Those changes were made and a series of other changes proposed.

Mrs REDMOND: By way of positive feedback, I was a member of local government as a young mum and wish to comment on two matters. The minister made a comment about the payment of allowances. I was in local government before any allowances were introduced. My

council voted unanimously against their introduction, but when forced on us we then took the minimum allowance. I have now come to a different view on that issue, as it is too difficult for many people to participate in local government. I was putting in 35 to 40 hours a week as a volunteer. Because of that problem, my husband said, 'You can have a career in local government or a family and a marriage, but you cannot have both'. This was way back and I had one child when I went on to local council and had two more babies while on council.

To its credit, my council did not bat an eyelid at my babies being brought to council meetings, breastfed and changed and all that sort of thing. The only hiccup occurred one night after I had fed and changed my baby, and another young mother on the council sent me over a note asking me to check out the right side of my shirt as I had baby poo all down the side of it. It is possible with the right supports in place. I wanted to give that positive feedback on the issue of women in local government.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I refer to the new concept of the Outback areas trust. How many local people will be on the trust and how does the minister intend to select these people, because I hold the view that local people should be making decisions about local organisations and have to live by the decisions they make? I understand the minister proposes in her new ideas to have three outsiders, which is absolutely unacceptable and she will never get it through this parliament.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the proposed bill states that there will be seven people on the trust, three of whom will be residents of Outback communities and four of whom will be independent. Obviously, those people would be required to have a good understanding of the Outback areas. It was considered that, given the importance of and increasing emphasis on good governance and ever increasing public standards and accountability, ensuring that the three positions held specific skills—some skill sets we thought might be particularly useful include financial and perhaps legal expertise—was deemed necessary. We would be looking to select as many people as possible who were or had been residents in Outback areas, but one cannot always secure a particular skill set, so this bill offers us the ability to select people with the skills and experience required for local community residents.

The process we envisage in the selection of the trust would be through sending out an expression of interest in a broad public way, and a selection process would result from responses to that expression of interest. I would then make recommendations that would go to cabinet. I believe that it must also be approved by the Governor.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Why is the minister requiring people to have more qualifications than a member of parliament? I thought you would employ people with expertise to work in the office, but to impose three outside people on that vast area of South Australia, when for the first time you are going to inflict upon them extra charges—and they will now not have the ability to vote for the people who represent them—and to have bureaucrats and others involved, is conducive to not getting community support for this measure.

Minister, I do not know whether you understand. The Outback areas trust has had bipartisan and community support across the north. If you go down this track, obviously you want a partisan political view and a stoush that you cannot win. That is what will happen because you can't stick three outsiders on the thing and then get carried away with four people scattered across a huge area. It is absolutely unfair and unreasonable.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Indeed, as the honourable member notes, this is not an elected body but, rather, an appointed body, which has the responsibility of managing public funds. I would think that any organisation that has that responsibility requires a certain set of skills in order to do that. I would think that any reasonable person would be supporting a structure of a body that is required to manage public funds and be accountable for it, and to ensure that it has an appropriate skills set to do that. To suggest that it is a higher standard than that of government and parliament is outrageous. We have a whole department that is an audit department. We have a whole department or agency that is the Crown Solicitor's Office. It is outrageous to suggest that there is a higher standard.

As I said, this body is not an elected body but, rather, an appointed board required to be responsible for managing public funds. The honourable member said that we would 'stick three outsiders on' and that is misleading. Already, I have given a commitment that, wherever possible, we would be selecting all seven members from the Outback areas. It would be only where we were not able to gain those skill sets from local residents or recent residents that we would be looking elsewhere. It is simply misleading.

The ACTING CHAIR: Member for Stuart, do you have another question?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: Well, I do. Let us go to another subject. It has taken me the whole weekend to work myself up to ask these questions. In relation to the planning framework, which is part of this debate, the objectives of this Portfolio Statement are quite interesting. Is the minister concerned that the new planning controls, which have been put on coastal developments and which have been described in certain circles as Mugabe-like, are taking away people's basic right to reasonably develop particular land and greatly disadvantage people who have an expectation to develop it in the future?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I know that it is in the Department of Planning and Local Government, but I am not the minister responsible for planning. The matters the honourable member has raised come under the purview of the Minister for Urban Development and Planning.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: It is a bit misleading because there is a fair bit of information on it.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is confusing, but you can get your chance with minister Holloway.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I look forward to it.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am sure he does, too.

Mr VENNING: I refer to page 4.5, Objective, and page 4.6, Targets: 'Convert Development Plans to the Better Development Planning format by June 2011.' In relation to planning, we did amend the planning act last year—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Wrong minister. I am the Minister for State/Local Government Relations. We happen to be in the Department of Planning and Local Government. The matters on which you intend to ask questions, rather than waste more of your time, I am the wrong minister.

Mr VENNING: I thought because it was to do with local government it would be there.

Mrs REDMOND: My question follows on from the minister's previous answer on this new Outback areas authority. The minister, as I understand it, said obviously she would put in local people unless there were not people with suitable qualifications. However, is it not the case, minister, that if all the people who were local and presumably had suitable qualifications were male, you would not appoint them? If there were no females, you would have to appoint someone from outside, would you not?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I believe the answer is yes, given that I understand there is a minimum requirement of one woman. We already have four women on the trust, and I just cannot believe the member would suggest that there is a lack of women residents in the Outback areas who do not have appropriate skill and expertise. I cannot imagine for one minute that she is suggesting that.

Mrs REDMOND: I am not suggesting that.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Of course not. So, it is unlikely to be a situation that would ever eventuate. It is clutching at straws.

Mrs REDMOND: I am simply pointing out that, the way the bill is drawn, even if you had seven eminently qualified local people who were the most suitable appointees, the act is drawn in such a way that they cannot all be appointed to the authority because you must appoint a female, and you have confirmed that is the case.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have answered that question. As I said, we already have four women on the trust, and it is something that would be highly unlikely to occur, given the incredible level of female talent in the Outback areas. As I said, we are very pleased to currently have four women on the trust and they all make very valuable contributions. I do not think I would expect that we would ever have a problem attracting women onto the trust.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer the committee to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.15. What is the significance for local government of the establishment of the planning and local government department?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: In October last year the government announced new administrative arrangements at the state level relating to planning and local government—the formation of the Department of Planning and Local Government. This was a very significant initiative and, as the relatively new Minister for State/Local Government Relations at that time, I was very pleased to be part of the new arrangements, working with my colleague the Minister for Urban Development and Planning.

The new department integrated several agencies working closely with local government in South Australia into a single department. The agencies and authorities incorporated into the department include: former Planning SA, the Office for State/Local Government Relations, SA Local Government Grants Commission, the Outback Areas Community Development Trust, the Office for the Southern Suburbs, and the Office for the Northern Suburbs.

The formation of the new department was an important part of the major planning reform package of the state government. The Department of Planning and Local Government aims to be the pre-eminent state government strategic land use agency, committed to the sustainable development of South Australia. The department is leading the implementation of a new and progressive planning and development system. The department also leads the state government's relationship with local government and recognises the very important role councils play in delivering local services and infrastructure.

I understand that the implementation of the government's planning reforms has involved extensive collaboration and engagement with local government. The Department of Planning and Local Government has worked closely with the Local Government Association and councils to roll out these reforms.

Councils also have had a key role in developing the 30-year Plan for Greater Adelaide. This major project is being led by the Department of Planning and Local Government. The office advises on the constitution and operations of the local government system and seeks to ensure the most effective and accountable framework. The amalgamation of the Office of State/Local Government Relations into the new department is a very positive move.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.15. In the roll-out of the government's planning reforms over the past year, how has the local government sector been involved in this process?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Following the government's announcement in June of its package of planning reforms, there has been extensive collaboration and engagement with local government in the implementation of these very significant initiatives. The Department of Planning and Local Government has worked closely with the Local Government Association in seeking feedback from councils on draft legislation on a wide range of implementation issues; and in developing information packages, training and support for council members and staff.

The state government has also provided \$500,000 to the LGA to facilitate consultation, implementation and training. The LGA coordinated a very valuable process of road testing a draft residential development code across 10 councils, and a number of significant changes to the proposed draft regulations were subsequently made. The LGA had the opportunity to view and comment on draft legislation provisions for the residential code.

Another key element of the planning reforms is the development of the 30-year Plan for Greater Adelaide. This is being prepared at a regional level, and there has been close consultation with local government in each of the Greater Adelaide regions. A series of forums with regional groupings of councils is being held to seek input and feedback as the preparation of the plan progresses. Councils have had the opportunity to input into a strategic level and to shape this very significant plan for the future of Greater Adelaide.

The formation of the Department of Planning and Local Government in 2008 recognises the key role of local government in planning for our communities. The department is supporting the implementation of a new and progressive planning system, and working with local government. The government will continue to work closely with local government on the ongoing roll-out of these reforms.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer to Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, page 4.14, which refers to the relationship between the state government and councils. Can the minister provide more information about the schedule of priorities for 2008 and 2009?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her question. The State-Local Government Relations Agreement was signed by the Premier, the President of the Local Government Association (LGA) and the then minister for local government in 2004. The agreement articulates the aspirations of the two spheres of government with the aim of delivering greater benefits for the South Australian community through more strategic collaboration. It is in two parts: the agreement itself, which sets out the principles of engagement between state and local government, and the schedule, which outlines annual priorities for joint action.

The agreement includes a commitment to undertake a joint review annually to update the priority topics listed in the appended schedule. All state agencies were invited to contribute to the review of the 2007-08 schedule. The revised schedule of priorities for 2008-09 was endorsed in December 2008. All state government chief executives were asked to review the 2007-08 schedule in order to draft the 2008-09 schedule.

The new topics included in the schedule are Shared Services and Workforce Development. Significant changes were made to some existing topics such as Planning and Development, which was rewritten extensively to reflect the substantial work being progressed by the state and local government efforts to implement the planning and development reform program. Under the existing Waste Management topic, a specific action was added to develop a strategy to minimise litter in council-controlled public places.

As in previous years, the LGA managed consultation on the review with the local government sector. This included endorsement of the draft schedule by the LGA state executive prior to its final consideration by the government. The annual joint review of the 2008-09 schedule of priorities will soon commence to create a revised schedule of priorities. The 2009-10 consultation with state agencies will occur over a two month period.

Consistent with the agreement, the LGA manages consultation with local government. The 2009 review will involve revising the text of the topics listed and considering all new topics. Particular attention will be given to creating a revised schedule that is manageable and achievable. The schedule does not list all interaction between state and local government: it is an agreed listing of a prioritised set of topics that require joint action in 2009-10.

Mrs REDMOND: I want to go back to an issue that I did not manage to finish before because the questions swapped over and then we had some others intervening. I return to the topic of this person who is to be an employee of the new authority. I am not very clear on it, but my understanding is that there is a person who has currently been an employee of the Andamooka Progress and Opal Miners Association.

I want to know whether that person or some other person will be an employee of the Outback areas authority. I want to get at who actually directs the person to grade a particular road or do whatever is going to be done in a local area because I have difficulty conceptualising how, if someone is an employee of an authority that only meets intermittently, their work will be directed and governed. How will that structure work?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her question. I am advised that, in the past, APOMA had employed a person temporarily, and I have been advised that that was for a period of about 12 weeks. APOMA has since been working with the Outback areas trust and, I have been advised, has come to an agreement with the trust that, under new funding arrangements, the Outback areas trust will now fund this person and pay their wage, and that person will be under the direction of the Outback areas trust. This has been agreed to by APOMA, and obviously the Outback areas trust will continue to consult with APOMA in understanding what the local needs around Andamooka in particular are, so that they can be addressed by that employee but they are under the direction of the Outback areas trust.

Mrs REDMOND: So, minister, if there is work on a day-to-day basis that needs to be done, even if that were an emergency job because of a flood, for instance—just to take an unlikely example—who directs that person?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: As I have said, it is the manager of the Outback areas trust. Clearly, the job description and responsibilities associated with that position will be flexible enough, given the tyranny of distance, for them to be able to make reasonable assessments about day-to-day management and to be flexible around that to meet the needs of the local community. That is just common sense.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I refer to Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, page 4.6 which, as you know, refers to the framework for local government financial management. Minister, can you comment on what ongoing improvements are being made in local government financial management frameworks?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: An important part of the leadership role of the Office for State/Local Government Relations is to assist councils to improve the quality of their financial management and reporting. Significant improvements have been progressed as a result of the introduction of the legislative requirement for councils to adopt long-term financial plans and infrastructure asset management plans.

At this stage, South Australia is the only state to have the legislative requirement to adopt a 10 year long-term financial plan and infrastructure asset management plans. The purpose of the council's long-term financial plan is to express in financial terms the activities that it proposes to undertake over the medium to longer term to achieve its stated objectives. Together with the council's infrastructure and asset management plan, the long-term financial planning enables councils to address the sustainability of its financial performance and position; the maintenance, replacement and development needs for infrastructure within its area; and proposals with respect to debt levels.

Councils in South Australia are the custodians of \$14 billion worth of infrastructure and assets on behalf of their communities. They have an obligation to ensure that current assets are managed efficiently and effectively and that decisions regarding the acquisition of new assets, the sale of current assets and the maintenance of current assets are undertaken in an open and transparent fashion. The requirement to have infrastructure asset management plans has helped to focus the sector to develop the appropriate tools, policies and procedures to meet this challenge.

The other key catalyst for improvement has been the implementation of the annual update of the model financial statements. The model financial statements are consistent with the Australian accounting standards and incorporate the best practice of state and other local government jurisdictions in Australia. There is no doubt that they have materially improved the reliability, comparability and consistency of data on council finances made publicly available.

They have also led to significant improvements in the level of disclosure in notes to councils' financial statements. The annual financial statements of councils must be prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the model statements. The model financial statements document also guides the preparation of core financial information included in council long-term financial plans and annual budgets. A feature of the model statements is the accounting policy guidance and practical examples included in the explanatory material throughout the document.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I refer to Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, page 4.15, which mentions the community wastewater management systems. I must say this is particularly of interest to the electorate of Ashford. We are always interested to know about these areas. I should say that we have also enjoyed the purple or lavender pipes (depending on your point of view) going through the electorate. Can the minister provide information on these systems and what processes are in place to maintain and replace them in the future? Part of the interest is that it is actually happening, but also constituents are asking: who will look after the systems and what does the future hold? I would be interested to hear your comments.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her question. The community wastewater management systems (CWMS) are common effluent management systems installed by 45 councils in regional and outer metropolitan areas of South Australia not serviced by SA Water sewerage systems. The CWMS provide approximately 10 per cent of all public waste water management services in South Australia. They are installed mostly in rural and regional areas and are an extremely important form of infrastructure for regional communities. The installation of these systems can assist economic growth and supports greater population levels within the regions.

Where this infrastructure exists, regional communities are better able to protect their existing water and land resources from pollution and reduce their drawdown from existing water supplies, including those from the River Murray. The state government has provided a subsidy for the installation of CWMS since 1972 in order to encourage equity between users of the systems and those who use and pay for SA Water country sewerage schemes.

The Local Government Association manages the distribution of this subsidy as well as the overall coordination of the schemes through the CWMS program. On 1 July 2008, the then minister for state/local government relations (Hon. Jennifer Rankine) and the then president of the Local Government Association (Mayor Joy Baluch) signed a nine year funding agreement for CWMS. The agreement commenced on 1 July 2008 and continues until 30 June 2017.

Funding of \$3.368 million was provided for 2008-09, with subsequent years indexed to CPI. This totals approximately \$35 million over the nine year period and will be a significant injection into the sector. Funding will be used to install a target of 39 new CWMS schemes over the life of the agreement, as identified by the CWMS Management Committee.

This funding complements the \$20 million in commonwealth funding announced in June 2007 for community wastewater management systems in South Australia. Commonwealth funding will bring approximately 56 already existing CWMS schemes in 29 councils up to re-use capacity, thereby improving the environmental and health standards for their communities.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I refer to Portfolio Statement 4, Volume 1, page 4.15: community land revocations. What is being done to improve revocation processes to ensure that the community is aware of what councils do with public land? In noting the member for Heysen's view on consultations, which is similar to my own, I am particularly interested to hear about this.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The role of the Minister for State/Local Government Relations in the community land revocation process is to review councils' proposals and the processes followed. Ministerial approval gives the council the authority to revoke the classification. I am keen to continue the work of my predecessor, the Hon. Jennifer Rankine, in ensuring that councils take a more inclusive and considered approach to community land revocation processes.

In June 2008 a resource document entitled, 'Revoking Community Land Classification: A Resource for South Australian Councils' was sent to councils. The resource document contains an overview of the legislative framework governing the classification of community land and provides guidance on how to compile an application under the Local Government Act 1999. Importantly, the guide assists councils to effectively engage the community when formulating and pursuing a proposal.

The act provides that councils must consult the community as part of the community land revocation process. To their credit, many councils undertake very thorough consultation on proposals to revoke community land; however, I feel that there is always room for improvement in this area, and I am keen to ensure that councils not only abide by the requirements of the act when undertaking this process but also make a real effort to engage the community in the decision.

To that end, I wrote to all councils in May this year requesting them to review and amend where appropriate their public consultation policies to include the use of signs as part of the community land revocation process. Often, when many are referred, it is very difficult for local community members to recognise where that piece of land is. I have requested that they now place signs on the land proposed for a revocation process in simple English.

The sign, which identifies the land and states the nature of any proposal being considered, should be erected on the subject land, except in circumstances where community land revocation is of a purely technical nature and does not change the existing use of the land, for example, road use.

The ACTING CHAIR: Member for Heysen, do you have some more questions?

Mrs REDMOND: I certainly do; I have lots more questions.

Mr VENNING: You've only got 20 minutes to ask them.

Mrs REDMOND: I've got only 15 minutes. As I said, because of Dorothy Dixers, most of the time gets taken up. Going back to the previous question from the member for Ashford about community waste water management in Volume 1, page 4.15 (I think there is also a reference in Volume 3, page 4.16), in terms of community waste water management systems (called STEDS in my day), funding will be used to install 39 new CWMS schemes over the life of the agreement, which I understand to be over nine years. Is there a baseline of need across the state? Has the community waste management committee indicated how many CWMS schemes in the 45 councils involved are needed to fully service this state? I want to get an idea of whether the proposed number of 39, over the life of the agreement, meets the need across the state.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I cannot help but respond to the criticism about the length of time that government questions have taken up in this forum. I remind the honourable member that government members also have the right, if not responsibility, to ask questions. I remind the member that we did attempt to negotiate offsetting government questions to reduce the time of this session by one hour so that it would have been devoted wholly to the opposition's questions, but that offer was not taken up; so, I think it is unfair to be criticising the government for undertaking its rights and responsibilities.

In relation to the question whether the 39 projects identified by the CWMS management committee meet current demands, I am advised that the process undertaken identifies the priorities for its council areas and then puts them forward as projects; 39 have been identified as a priority and been put forward.

Mrs REDMOND: Well, if they are the priority, my fundamental question is: how many, overall, need to be established?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The advice I have received is that as the population continues to grow so will the number of new systems required; it is an ever-moving feast. I also bring to your

attention that a further 56 schemes will be upgraded. As I have already stated, the commonwealth funding will bring approximately 56 of those schemes up to re-use capacity. So, it is an ongoing and evolving matter for which the management committee continues to take oversight management responsibility, as well as identifying needs as they arise.

Mrs REDMOND: Can the minister explain what level of funding is provided under the agreement for 2009-10 and for each of the forward estimate years?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I do not have that level of detail with me today, but I am happy to take that question on notice and bring back a response.

Mrs REDMOND: Is the minister able to advise how many new CWMS will be provided in 2009-10?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the government will provide \$3.453 million for the 2009-10 financial year, ongoing for nine years and indexed to CPI. In relation to the number of new CWMS projects to be installed in 2009-10, I am happy to take that question on notice and bring back a response.

Mrs REDMOND: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.3. Of the 197.9 full-time equivalents in the Department of Planning and Local Government, how many were deployed to state/local government relations as at June 2009, and how does that compare with the figures for 2008 and the estimate for 2010?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that 22.3 FTEs are employed by the Office for State/Local Government Relations, and I am advised that this is the same figure as for the previous financial year.

Mrs REDMOND: And anticipated to be the same for the next year?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes. I am advised it is 22.3 FTEs for the 2009-10 financial year.

Mrs REDMOND: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.14. Before we were sidetracked and went on a detour to Andamooka, my very first question concerned the fact that the increase in grants to local government is expected to fall in real terms because the increase of 0.79 per cent is less than half of CPI. However, on page 4.14 of Volume 1, it would appear that the government's own state/local government relations bureaucracy is not suffering that level of cutback. Can you explain how the bureaucracy that runs it all is getting a 3 per cent increase when the actual funding going through to local government is less than half of CPI?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I will ask Mr John Hanlon to address that issue.

Mr HANLON: The arrangements with local government for the funding of \$95 million is a figure that has been derived from an ongoing, long-term formula arrangement we have for each of those programs, plus the CPI that is set by Treasury. It is not meant to be anything other than a subsidy arrangement of funding, based on a grant funding process. Local government is required to use commonwealth funding and its own funding arrangements through rate-raising efforts. The state government then provides a grant program, with its own Treasury CPI added to that. The arrangement for the office itself is simply the actual costs, plus the CPI arrangements and, like all other government agencies, we need to make savings within our budget to meet our targets.

The ACTING CHAIR: Minister, do you wish to add anything further?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No; I think that covers it.

Mrs REDMOND: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.14. On the issue of supplies and services, the budget for 2008-09 was \$1.022 million, yet only \$628,000 was the estimated result. So, there was a 39 per cent underspend of \$394,000 as against budget. Can the minister please explain why that underspend occurred and why the budget for supplies and services remains at that low level, slightly increased for the next year?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that this is, in fact, not an underspend. This amount relates to the Office for State/Local Government Relations' supplies and services, including accommodation, telecommunications, and staff training and development. This amount differs from the 2009-10 budget amount of \$1.022 million. This difference is mainly due to the \$432,000 budget allocated to minister Rankine's office remaining with PIRSA when the Office for State/Local Government Relations transferred to the Department of Planning and Local Government. So, it was due to agency transfer.

Mrs REDMOND: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 4.24. Again, this is a question about an apparent underspend, on the basis of the figures. The Local Government Grants Commission appears to have underspent its employee payments budget last year. Could the minister explain the reason for that and for the increase in the budget for the 2009-10 year?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that this is not an underspend. The difference between the 2008-09 and 2009-10 budgets is due to the 2008-09 budget including only part of the financial year's transactions and the 2009-10 budget containing a full 12 months. This is because the Department of Planning and Local Government was established part way through the 2008-09 financial year—16 October 2008—and therefore does not contain a full 12 months of transactions.

The ACTING CHAIR: The timetable for this session having now expired, there will be no more questions for the Minister for State/Local Government Relations. I declare the consideration of the proposed payments adjourned to Estimates Committee A.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$138,279,000

ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$70,020,000

Witness:

Hon. G.E. Gago, Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Energy

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Maguire, Chief Executive, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms A. Gale, Acting Commissioner for Consumer Affairs, Office of Consumer and Business Affairs.

Mr W. Lewis, Acting Liquor and Gambling Commissioner, Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner.

Ms D. Contala, Executive Director, Business and Financial Services, Attorney-General's Department.

Mr A. Swanson, Director, Business and Financial Services, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms A. Barclay, Adviser, Minister's Office.

The CHAIR: I declare the proposed payments open for examination, and refer members to Portfolio Statement, Volume 2, Part 7. Minister, do you wish to make a statement?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am very pleased today to welcome parliamentary examination of the budget papers for my portfolio areas of consumer affairs and liquor licensing. As Minister for Consumer Affairs I am certainly excited about the development towards a single national consumer law that will improve protections for consumers and deliver savings to businesses.

National reforms will form a substantial part of OCBA's activity in the coming financial year. The national trade licensing system will allow licence-holders to work anywhere in Australia without additional paperwork or cost. There will also be nationally consistent product safety legislation, and the responsibility for both credit and trade measurement regulation will be referred to the commonwealth.

One of OCBA's key functions is to provide a free and readily accessible conciliation service to consumers who are in dispute with traders. In order to further improve the efficiency and effectiveness of this service it is proposed that traders involved in a dispute with a consumer can be required to attend a conciliation conference. An agreement reached through this process could be enforced by the courts. These proposed amendments to the Fair Trading Act 1987 are currently before parliament. Also before parliament are laws to improve protections for car buyers by introducing a two day cooling off period on the sale of second-hand vehicles.

OCBA has an important role to play in safeguarding the rights of consumers and ensuring that businesses trade fairly. There is regular and targeted monitoring of the workplace and OCBA

continues to be vigilant with its monitoring of products offered for sale. Potentially dangerous items have been recalled or withdrawn from sale during the past year, and I am pleased that a new standard has been introduced to ban the sale of unsafe curtain and blind cords. A new standard is also being developed for installing installation to prevent fire hazards in homes.

OCBA will continue to deliver education and information programs for the community during 2008-09. New smart shopping resources were released for vulnerable consumer groups, and a new project is being developed to deliver key consumer messages to indigenous people from the APY lands in local languages. A significant education campaign was also launched in 2008-09 to inform home buyers and sellers about their rights under the new real estate laws. The laws make significant changes to the way homes can be bought or sold in South Australia. Importantly, OCBA is undergoing a significant change process to ensure that it is well positioned to enforce the laws it administers, to deliver high quality service, and to keep pace with the rapidly changing marketplace.

The other area of my responsibility under this portfolio covers the regulation of liquor licensing. The South Australian government, along with other states and territories and the federal government is committed to creating a more responsible attitude to harmful levels of alcohol consumption within our community. Over the past 12 months the government has undertaken a number of initiatives to contribute to its goal of improving public safety and promoting a responsible approach to the consumption of alcohol.

Funding of \$300,000 over four years has been provided for managed taxi ranks in the West End, East End, Glenelg and Port Augusta. Managed taxi ranks are well lit and staffed with a security guard and concierge and are designed to safeguard patrons, particularly young people and women, as they leave entertainment venues and precincts. The introduction of legislative power authorises police to bar problem patrons from licensed premises and gives the police and licensees greater powers to protect the staff, patrons and the premises from violence and other offensive behaviour, whilst also protecting vulnerable members of the community.

Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner strategies include One More Drink, a social marketing campaign, provision of information to minors and sponsorship of Encounter Youth to provide information to schoolies. I also highlight the commencement of a 12 month interim trial of conditions on a number of Far North SA licensed premises to the sale and supply of carry-off liquor to people who are suspected of grog running on the APY lands.

In closing, I acknowledge the achievements and commitment of both the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs and the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner to serving the South Australian public. I welcome parliamentary examination of the budget papers in these areas.

Mrs REDMOND: I start with an issue the minister just alluded to, namely, the issue of the particular taxi ranks. It surprised me a little to find that the cab ranks are established under the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner. Will the minister advise how many such ranks there are in Adelaide? I am only aware of the one in Morphett Street. I would have some concerns if my 23-year old daughter was walking down Hindley Street to get to that managed cab rank, even though I welcome the idea of having a cab rank where someone is on duty. How many do we have, where are they located and what plans, if any, are there to expand the use of managed cab ranks, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: These are very important safety measures to assist with the safe dispersal of patrons from entertainment venues at particularly busy times of the week. They are a relatively recent initiative designed to assist with the dispersal of people and are about providing safeguards to patrons, particularly young people and particularly young women. A managed taxi rank has operated in the west end of Adelaide since February 2007 and continues to enjoy success, with 50,000 users since its inception. It is serving a valuable need.

A managed taxi rank commenced operation in December 2008 in Port Augusta for a trial period as an initiative of the Port Augusta Alcohol Management Group, and recently two further ranks commenced operating in the East End of Adelaide and Glenelg. As part of the ongoing commitment to make South Australian streets safe, the government has committed over \$300,000 over four years towards the operation of the taxi rank at Port Augusta and the staffing costs of the two Adelaide ranks and the rank at Glenelg. Typically they feature a concierge, a security guard, signage, lighting and camera surveillance. There is a total of four ranks.

Mrs REDMOND: I just threw that one in because I was curious.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is a great scheme.

Mrs REDMOND: I inquire about the functions undertaken by OCBA. The minister mentioned in her introduction that some harmonisation is going on, but in addition I understand there are functions that will be taken by the commonwealth, such as trade measurement in July, product safety and trade licensing. What savings, if any, does the government expect to achieve from each of the areas that will be managed by the commonwealth and will the states and territories be funding the commonwealth to run activities that are transferring?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: COAG has endorsed a reform agenda aimed at reducing the costs of regulation and enhancing productivity and workforce mobility in areas of shared commonwealth, state and territory responsibility. The two areas of COAG reforms impacted by the 2009-10 budget are consumer credit and trade measurement. The COAG reforms are to be implemented by the Business Regulation and Competition Working Group. The government has allocated savings targets to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs. Revenue budgets for consumer credit 2009-10 onwards and trade measurement 2010-11 onwards have also been removed to reflect that the federal government will be taking over this responsibility.

Two budget impacts have been made. One is revenue forgone and the second is savings relating to functions moving to the commonwealth. I am not sure whether these figures are in the budget documents, but I will put them on the record: the revenue forgone, in ascending budget years over the forward estimates, is \$128,000, \$698,000, \$720,000 and \$743,000; and the savings targets, starting at 2009-10, are \$102,000, \$983,000, \$1.002 million and \$1.023 million. I understand those figures are in the budget papers.

Mrs REDMOND: Do I take it from the figures that the amount of revenue forgone is less than the savings and, therefore, the office will come out significantly ahead on an increasing basis over the next four years in terms of its financial net costs?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: That is right; it is losing more expenditure than revenue. Obviously, it is a matter that is being managed by Treasury.

Mrs REDMOND: In relation to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs—and I am referring to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, pages 7.17 and 7.18—who is currently leading OCBA? I understand Mal Hemmerling was appointed nearly two years ago to the position of commissioner. I understood his term was due to expire in August or September this year and that he was going to take up a full-time position at the northern connections office.

On 17 May there was a report in the *Sunday Mail* that his position as commissioner had been replaced, and an article in today's paper, as a result of comments from Anne Gale (who is present here), states that she is the commissioner. What is the status of the commissioner's position? Is it held by Mr Hemmerling or Ms Gale, or is Mr Hemmerling still juggling both on a part-time basis?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: In terms of who is in charge, the chief executive is Mr Jerome Maguire. We currently have an excellent chief executive, I might add, as are both acting commissioners. We have an acting commissioner for consumer and business affairs, Anne Gale, and an acting liquor and gambling commissioner, Mr Warren Lewis.

Dr Mal Hemmerling's contract as commissioner for consumer affairs was specific to a review and reorganisation of OCBA, and that is due to be completed in late August this year. Dr Hemmerling was appointed to OCBA to review and introduce a new management approach and to develop the organisation to meet the future needs for consumers and business, while at the same time meeting the new initiatives generated through COAG, including necessary organisational change to accommodate the introduction of a new national consumer law, the development and implementation of a national approach to business names, trade licensing, product safety, transfer of trade measurement, and consumer credit to the commonwealth.

Dr Hemmerling has appointed a new management team. Ms Anne Gale is acting in the role of Commissioner for Consumer and Business Affairs and will continue in the role until the position is filled. Dr Hemmerling has taken up the role of principal consultant to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs until August. As has been previously announced, Dr Hemmerling will also head up the Office for the North from that date.

Mrs REDMOND: Can I get clarification of that? It sounds as though Dr Hemmerling is both the commissioner and the principal consultant on things.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: No. When Dr Hemmerling stood down as commissioner, when he took up his part-time role in the Office for the North, Ms Anne Gale was appointed to the position of acting commissioner. At that time Dr Hemmerling became the principal consultant in a part-time capacity, I understand.

Mrs REDMOND: The current situation is that Dr Hemmerling is a consultant on a part-time basis and Ms Gale is the acting commissioner. Has the commissioner's job been advertised? Was it advertised broadly?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes, it was. I am advised that it was advertised nationally about four or five weeks ago. A consultant has been appointed to assist us in the management of that process and the recruitment. That process is well underway in terms of putting the commissioner's position in place.

Mrs REDMOND: While we are on OCBA, and still at the same page, I was puzzled recently when I made an application to OCBA for the financials from a prescribed association. An incorporated association, incorporated under the Associations Incorporations Act, has income above the limit and, therefore, being prescribed, it must file some financial information.

The FOI response actually came from Mr Lewis's office. I am puzzled as to how that relationship works. The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs is the relevant office for prescribed organisations to submit their financial statements, yet when I did a freedom of information application about a particular organisation it came from the Office of the Liquor and Gambling Commissioner. Is there any explanation for that?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I do not have that background information available today. I am happy to take that on notice and bring back a response.

Mrs REDMOND: Since we have highly paid public servants here, specifically, could you take a minute to ask them whether there is an explanation? It seemed odd to me that when I made an application—

The Hon. S.W. KEY: That is out of order.

Mrs REDMOND: It is not out of order. The whole point of having these people here is so that they—

The Hon. S.W. KEY: What is the reference?

Mrs REDMOND: Pages 7.17 and 7.18.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: We are just speculating. Without the detail, I am advised that if it is a charity it may well be referred.

Mrs REDMOND: So that might be the explanation, that it is considered a charity.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I do not know. As I have said, I do not have that level of detail here. Officers here do not have the level of detail they need to be able to provide accurate and concise information to the committee. I have given a commitment to take it on notice and bring back a response.

Mrs REDMOND: Minister, I am not looking for a fight. I am just looking for some clarity as to how that might come about.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Well, I have clarified it.

The ACTING CHAIR: You have had nine questions, member for Heysen. Member for Ashford, do you have a question?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Yes, I have quite a few. First, I would like to ask the minister about the COAG reforms. In particular, I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.17, which refers to the COAG reforms that will form a substantial part of the activities of the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs in 2009-10. Minister, I know you have outlined some of those reforms, but could you tell this committee about the additional funding that has been allocated and what those other reforms are that you have not mentioned?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs is responsible for six main reforms on the COAG agenda. One of the reforms is credit, and this involves a referral of power to the commonwealth for regulating consumer credit. This reform has progressed to the point where the commonwealth has consulted on the national consumer credit legislation, which is subject to referral of powers by the states. This reform will result in national credit legislation

commencing on 1 November 2009. The national legislation will introduce a licensing scheme for credit providers and will commence further responsible lending amendments expected to be operational from 1 July 2010.

Another area of reform relates to business names. This obviously needs to be checked off by the Attorney-General's office because there is overlap. This reform involves a referral of powers by the states to the commonwealth for the establishment of a national business names registration system, which will be administered by ASIC and which is planned to commence by 31 March 2011. The establishment of a national business names register will provide greater consumer protection and reduce red tape for business.

The trade measurements reform will result in the commonwealth being solely responsible for trade measurements. No referral is necessary, as the commonwealth already has constitutional power. This reform will mean that the National Measurement Institute will take over the operation of each state's and territory's trade measurement operations, including staffing, where staff agree to transfer to the NMI.

Australian consumer law and product safety will be reformed. The new national consumer policy framework consists of three key elements and will be based on the existing consumer provisions of the Trade Practices Act, including: provisions regulating unfair contract terms; new enforcement and redress powers; and new provisions based on best practice in state and territory consumer protection laws. There will also be a new national product safety regulatory and enforcement regime and improved enforcement co-operation and information-sharing arrangements between commonwealth, state and territory agencies.

Also, OCBA is responsible for licensing trades such as airconditioning and refrigeration mechanics and building-related occupations (electrical, plumbing, etc.) In the 2009-10 state budget, OCBA has received funding to create an additional four policy positions over the next three years to assist in the implementation of these reforms. The total funding over the next three years is more than \$1.4 million.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: My next question relates to an area that I think a lot of people in this chamber would be interested in, which is the wine industry, looking at wine labelling, in particular. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.18. It mentions that there will be a reduction in red tape. It is a pity the member for Schubert is not here because I think he would probably be interested in this question, also. As I said, most of us seem to have an interest in this industry, even if it is slightly obscure. Can the minister inform the committee of the nature and extent of these savings?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: For many years, South Australia's winemakers needed to develop multiple wine labels to either export their products around the world or sell locally, as both markets had different requirements. As a result of changes to the Trade Measurement (Pre-packed Articles) Regulations, the industry adopted the World Wine Trade Group wine labelling agreement. It is now possible for wine producers to have common labelling standards for export and domestic markets. This reform was led by South Australia and the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs in consultation with the wine industry in other jurisdictions through the Ministerial Council on Consumer Affairs.

As a result of these reforms, it was estimated by the Winemakers' Federation of Australia that savings to the industry in the region of \$25 million per year will be achieved. These figures were confirmed by Bear Economics, and it is estimated that South Australia's share of the savings equates to \$12.5 million. This is an example of one of the many ways that this government has reduced red tape for business.

The new system effectively means that wine producers are now able to place the measurement statement anywhere on a wine container except for the base or the cap as long as it can be viewed together with the country of origin, alcohol content and the product's description. Of course, South Australian wine producers will continue to have the choice of changing to the new wine labelling regime or they can still use the existing rules for the domestic market.

On the subject of savings, OCBA also expects savings of over \$2.5 million in 2008-09 with a further \$1.6 million related to the A-G's portfolio. This relates to faster processing of trade licences through an assisted application process for people with interstate and overseas qualifications. Further savings have been identified in 2009-10 including options for providing services online and COAG reforms through uniformity in product safety laws and abolishing testing fees in the area of trade measurement. OCBA continues to pursue opportunities for improving service delivery including online services in tenancy-related business and occupational licensing.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: The other question that I wanted to ask has, to a certain extent, been asked by the member for Heysen but it concerns the harmonisation of trade standards. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, Portfolio Statement, page 7.18. On that page there is a reference to the amendments to the Trade Standards Variation Regulations which have been introduced to mirror all existing commonwealth safety standards set out in the Trade Practices Act. Minister, in answering the other question, I don't know if you actually went into the legislation itself and I am just wondering whether you could do that now.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: South Australia is party to national consumer safety standards determined under the Commonwealth Trade Practices Act 1974 and is assisted in determining or adopting relevant safety standards in consultation with the Consumer Products Advisory Committee.

The commonwealth is the jurisdiction that first declares standards through consumer protection notices and in the trade practices regulations. Other jurisdictions then adopt these standards. The purpose of mandatory standards is consistency in the establishment and enforcement of consumer protection for specified goods and services for all states and territories and the commonwealth.

Schedule 1 of the regulations under the Trade Standards Act 1979 was created to specifically provide for the introduction of safety standards in South Australia. Schedule 2 and 4 of the regulations under the South Australian Trade Standards Act 1979 were created to specifically provide for the adoption of commonwealth consumer product safety standards. The process of adopting a standard or safety information by South Australia only requires naming the specified product with the consumer protection notice or the trade practices regulation in schedule 2 or 4 of the South Australian regulations.

OCBA has undertaken an audit of the standards adopted in schedule 2 and 4 of the regulations and noted that amendment was required to capture all the current commonwealth consumer product safety standards for goods and services in the Trade Practices (Consumer Product Safety Standards) Regulation 1979. OCBA discovered that some of the standards had fallen behind because the commonwealth had declared new and updated agreed standards for goods and services.

In 2008, the government approved the drafting of regulations to provide for the safety matters discussed above and the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs conducted consultation on the draft regulations. The draft regulations were approved and this immediately brought South Australia back in line with the commonwealth and other state jurisdictions and provided for nationally consistent consumer protection safety standards and safety information.

Mrs REDMOND: Minister, if I could refer you to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.48. In program 12, referring to OCBA basically, there has been an increase in employment benefits and costs in the current budget year of 15.5 per cent from what it was in 2007-08. Can you provide some explanation as to why that has gone up?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her question. The increase in employee benefits and costs from the 2008-09 budget of \$13.635 million to the 2009-10 budget of \$14.727 million is mainly due to an increase of \$816,000 to implement the second-hand dealers and pawnbrokers reforms; an increase of \$254,000 for the COAG national partnership agreement; an increase for annual indexation and enterprise bargaining supplementation offset by a decrease of \$194,004 for real estate reforms; and a decrease of \$79,000 for the provision of regional services through Services SA approved in the 2006-07 budget.

The increase in employee benefits and costs from the 2007-08 actual of \$12.41 million to the 2008-09 budget of \$13.635 million is mainly due to increases in 2008-09 for annual indexation and enterprise bargaining supplementation; an increase of \$277,000 in 2008 for real estate reforms savings made in 2007-08, including OCBA sections of the residential tenancies and legal enforcement and policy.

Mrs REDMOND: On page 7.20 of Volume 2, an item is listed under Small Projects with the figure of \$200,000 to be spent on the second-hand dealers and pawnbrokers initiative. Can the minister explain what that is?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The second-hand dealers and pawnbrokers initiative was approved in 2007-08. This is minister Wright's legislation. OCBA is simply administering the licensing system. The purpose of this initiative is the prevention of property related crime through improved regulation of the second-hand dealer and pawnbroker industries. This will be achieved by

the establishment of a new licensing and regulatory regime together with the enhanced record-keeping requirements and electronic transfer of transaction information to police. The \$200,000 is to assist with the licensing.

Mrs REDMOND: So, there is \$200,000 specifically for licensing.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is for a system. It is a capital amount.

Mrs REDMOND: Is it a computer system?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, yes, it is a computer system.

Mrs REDMOND: On page 7.42, OCBA's registration division expects to increase fees, fines and penalties by 9.5 per cent or \$1.27 million in this budget compared to 2008-09. What is the reason for that increase?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that this is the Attorney's area of responsibility.

Mrs REDMOND: I refer to page 7.48. I am puzzled as to how the fees, fines and penalties of OCBA can be under other than OCBA; but nothing surprises me about where things are hidden in this budget.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The legislation is assigned to the Attorney.

Mrs REDMOND: The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs is what we are examining at the moment and the question is specifically on the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs and this budget.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that business names are the responsibility of the Attorney.

Mrs REDMOND: My question was about the increase in fees, fines and penalties.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I think there has been a misunderstanding. The member referred to program 9, which I have been advised is the responsibility of the Attorney. However, in terms of fees, fines and penalties for Consumer and Business Affairs, it is program 12 and, in relation to that program, I am happy to advise that the increase in fees, fines and penalties from the 2008-09 estimated result of \$12.168 million to the 2009-10 budget of \$13.988 million is mainly due to an increase in 2009-10 of \$1.529 million for new fees associated with the second-hand dealers and pawnbrokers transaction monitoring system.

The increase in fees, fines and penalties from the 2008-09 budget of \$12.401 million to the 2009-10 budget of \$13.988 million is mainly due to an increase in 2009-10 of \$1.529 million for new fees associated with the second-hand dealers and pawnbrokers. The increase in fees, fines and penalties on the 2007-08 actual of \$11.372 million to the 2008-09 budget of \$12.401 million is mainly due to an increase in 2008-09 of \$727,000 for new fees associated, again, with the second-hand dealers and pawnbrokers transaction monitoring system.

Mrs REDMOND: I seek some clarification. I am quite honestly puzzled as to what the minister's responsibility is. I can see that on both program 12 and program 9 they are both under the agency of the Attorney-General's Department. I can see that quite easily. Program 12 is certainly headed 'Consumer and Business Affairs' but, if the minister looks at program 9, she will see that the description/objective starts out by saying:

The Office of Consumer and Business Affairs (OCBA) is a statutory office within the Attorney-General's Department that administers fair trading legislation, regulates defined business activities and maintains business and civil records for South Australia.

Is the minister saying that, as the Minister for Consumer Affairs with the responsibility for that office, she is not the person who is responsible for that program?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Perhaps if I can clarify, I refer to page 7.1 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 2. Under the Attorney-General's Department, if you look at program 9—

Mrs REDMOND: It makes no sense.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Page 7.1, Budget Paper 4, Volume 2. The top of the page is headed 'Portfolio: Justice, Ministerial Responsibilities'.

The ACTING CHAIR: Perhaps you could discuss this—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: This is an important point, Madam Acting Chair, because we are being accused of not knowing what the responsibilities of our department are, and the papers are quite clear and address the confusion that the member has.

Mrs REDMOND: I am not accusing you of not knowing what your responsibilities are; I am suggesting that it is nonsensical to have a minister for—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is very clearly outlined in the papers. It is page 7.1 and, under the Attorney-General's Department, it lists the Attorney-General's programs. It starts off with Program 1: Legal services, Program 2: Multicultural Services, etc. and, if you go down the page to program 9, it lists under that heading: registration services; births, deaths and marriages; and business registration unit. Then, if you turn to page 7.3—

Mrs REDMOND: Yes, I can see it.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: —which outlines under Program 12: Consumer and Business Affairs, and I am the minister responsible. It then lists the sub-programs 12.1 to 12.5 and those for which I am responsible.

The ACTING CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I think you have answered that adequately. According to our timetable, it is now time to adjourn. Before we go into the next session, can I say how pleased I am to be sitting here chairing this committee. One of your leading advisers, minister, is also from Whyalla. I just think it is important to note that they said Whyalla was a man's town. We have come a long way. I declare the proposed payments adjourned until Tuesday 30 June.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr G. Baynes, Executive Director, Building Communities, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms A. Burgess, Director, Office for Women, Attorney-General's Department.

Membership:

Ms Chapman substituted for Mrs Redmond.

Mrs Penfold substituted for Mr Venning.

The ACTING CHAIR: Minister, do you have an opening statement?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes, Madam Acting Chair. The Rann Labor government is committed to ensuring that the State Strategic Plan derives policy from across government to provide a more equitable community for South Australians. The government is proud that South Australia is one of the leading states nationwide, and, in fact, globally, in setting and achieving targets as one of its core strategies. These targets are being deliberately set at a higher level to provide an example of what can be aspired to and achieved.

Within the women's portfolio, the Rann government has set a number of targets to ensure that women are provided with a safer, more inclusive community in which they are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. We have worked hard to ensure that women and children in South Australia can have confidence in our rape and sexual assault laws and that court processes do not further traumatise and victimise them. We want to be at the forefront of encouraging women's leadership, and we want to ensure that this applies for all South Australia women, no matter their location, ethnicity or background. These principles are at the core of this portfolio.

I am pleased to present the progress which has been made in the last year. A proactive appointment of women to boards and committees is required to achieve the Women in Leadership targets of 5.1 and 5.2. As at 1 June 2009, women held 44.48 per cent of positions on government boards and committees and 33.17 per cent of chair positions on government boards and committees.

As Minister for the Status of Women, I would like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the excellent work undertaken in this portfolio over the past year. The Women's Information Service continues to provide high-quality information, support and referral services to women across South Australia. Services have been expanded through the establishment of a number of hubs in metropolitan and regional South Australia.

The Office for Women convenes the State Aboriginal Women's Gathering annually, and recommendations from the gathering are further progressed across government through the Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement. The Women's Safety Strategy is led by an across government reference group that I chair. The whole-of-government reference group brings a strategic perspective to the way in which government is delivering women's safety services in South Australia.

The family safety framework is part of this strategy and seeks to ensure that services to women and children most at risk of serious injury or death from domestic violence are dealt with in a more structured and systematic way through agencies sharing information about high risk families and taking responsibility for supporting these families to navigate services.

Lastly, I am very pleased to announce that, after the success of the 2008 South Australian Women's Honour Roll, we have received over 250 nominations for the 2009 roll. A reception will be held at Government House in October to acknowledge all women nominated, and also 10 outstanding women will be highlighted for their extraordinary contribution. I welcome examination of the budget papers.

The ACTING CHAIR: Member for Bragg, do you want to make an opening statement?

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes; I do. On the last occasion that we met for consideration of this portfolio the Hon. Jennifer Rankine was the minister. I asked three questions, which she took on notice, but according to our records they have not been responded to. I will refer to them briefly in this opening statement because, if your department has located this information, I would appreciate a response.

The first question related to how many people had been prosecuted for drink spiking since the introduction of the legislation until the end of the 2008 financial year. If there are any statistics, I look forward to receiving them, and perhaps they can be added to the statistics for this financial year.

The second matter taken on notice dealt with topics on which the Premier's Council for Women had advised the Premier during the previous year (up to 30 June). The former minister indicated that a number of reports had been given to him, but there has been no indication of the topics. If that information is available, I would appreciate it, and also for 30 June 2009.

The third outstanding matter, which was published in 2007 but which was not available and taken on notice by your predecessor, was a breakdown of the portfolio percentages of the representation of women on government boards and committees. Referring to the *Hansard* at the time, the Hon. Kevin Foley had 28.7 per cent in his area, and the Hon. Patrick Conlon had 24.44 per cent. These are both in the preceding year. What percentage did they achieve by 30 June 2008 and to 30 June 2009? All of that previous information has been published. I am not sure that the Hon. Kevin Foley and the Hon. Patrick Conlon were the worst offenders, but they were close to it.

I look forward to that information being provided, especially as the budget papers this year claim that one of the government's achievements is to 'achieve a strong increase in the number of women chairing and being members of South Australian government boards and committees'. I look forward to receiving that information, and I note the minister's indication of the overall percentages in her opening remarks. Those breakdowns would be greatly appreciated. I have no further opening statement.

The ACTING CHAIR: Do you have a question, member for Bragg?

Ms CHAPMAN: I certainly do. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.54: Premier's Council for Women. The Premier's Council for Women wrote to all MPs in March this year urging us all to support amendments to the equal opportunity bill, which, of course, is legislation pending in this parliament. This was on the basis of supporting working women and women from disadvantaged backgrounds, which, of course, is also one of the priorities of the Office for Women.

In previous estimates, in response to a question asked by me, your predecessor advised that the Premier's Council for Women had not made any representations on the issue of the enforcement of domestic violence restraining orders. You yourself have answered questions in the council and from the media, declining to accept that certain issues are within your portfolio, and, I can only assume, therefore not the responsibility of the status of women portfolio or the Premier's Council for Women.

Those questions have included topics such as the government's failure to rebuild the women's prison; the issue of topless waitressing at the Colac Hotel; and the appropriateness of Coca-Cola advertisements, which were the subject of numerous complaints to the Advertising Standards Bureau. Who or what determines what subjects the Premier's Council for Women is invited to investigate and/or advise the Premier on?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Premier's Council for Women was established in 2003 by the Rann government. The Premier's Council for Women (PCW) provides leadership and advice to ensure that the interests of women are at the forefront of government policies and strategies. The Premier's Council for Women has 16 members, including two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and three women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

In 2008, the Premier's Council for Women reassessed its work plan to specifically focus on two key areas, which that council itself identified, that is, women's economic status, including work/life balance and women's employment strategy; and women's health, safety and wellbeing.

As one of the government's key advisory bodies, the council has been actively involved in the review of South Australia's Strategic Plan and has management representation on the South Australian Strategic Plan Audit Committee and the Community Engagement Board. On 27 November 2008, in conjunction with the Work/Life Balance Strategy, the PCW hosted a focus group, with key senior government and academic stakeholders from South Australia and interstate, to develop strategies to address women's economic status and employment opportunities in South Australia.

The Premier's Council for Women has commissioned Professor Barbara Pocock of the Centre for Work and Life at the University of South Australia to conduct a research project on women's economic status in South Australia. The council continues to support and promote gender equity in health and policy implementation, through participation on the Women's Health Action Plan Steering Committee and contributing to discussions in relation to Women's Health Action Plan priorities.

The Premier's Council for Women meets with minister Hill on an ongoing basis to address emerging women's health issues. As the Minister for the Status of Women, I meet regularly with representatives from PCW to ensure that their views are conveyed to me directly. I have personally attended two of the Premier's Council for Women's meetings during the past year, and I also meet monthly with the co-chairs and report back to the Premier on their activities. The Premier has been regularly kept up to date with their activities over the past year. The Chair, Pat Mickan, and the Deputy Chair, Anne Edwards, met with the Premier in September, and the Premier also attended the December meeting. One of the Premier's advisers regularly attends the council's meetings.

The Premier's Council for Women provided two written reports to the Premier during 2008-09. As I have said, the Premier's Council for Women will continue to focus on women's economic status and women's health, safety and wellbeing, through its participation on the Women's Employment Participation Initiative Steering Committee and the Health Action Participation Steering Committee. In terms of who sets the council's priority plans, the Premier's Council for Women does that as a committee, and then the council informs the Premier accordingly.

Ms CHAPMAN: Is it the situation, then, that the council, having determined its own agenda as to what it investigates, sent a letter, of its own volition, to all MPs in relation to equal opportunity legislation, or was it at the request of one of the members of government?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that the council did it of its own volition.

Ms CHAPMAN: Who decides, then, what legislation is sent to the council for its consideration for the purpose of its providing advice?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: As I have outlined, they establish, through a planning process, priorities for the work of the council and use that to guide the work it does.

Ms CHAPMAN: How did it come to pass that the committee knew what legislation was being considered? Coming into this place, I found that it took the Premier over a year to establish this council. However, in the seven years I have been here, it is the first piece of legislation about which I have ever received a letter from the Premier's Council for Women—and that includes legislation in relation to sexual assault against women. Is there some kind of group or support base that does the research and regularly checks up on all legislation, or is this just a one-off?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that there are a number of areas in which the council has initiated submissions and responses, including a submission to the federal pay equity

inquiry and a submission to the federal paid parental leave inquiry, and it has written letters to MPs in relation to sexual assault legislation.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can I just be clear about—

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: If I can finish answering the question I have been asked. So, it is not atypical for the council to initiate these things. As I have said, they are 16 very intelligent women, who come from a very wide range of different areas. The council has regular meetings with me, and I keep the council members informed about the activities involving the Office for Women. These women are well networked and well placed to be aware of the contemporary activities relevant to their policy environment.

Ms CHAPMAN: Are you satisfied that no member of your cabinet referred this issue to the Premier's Council for Women and asked the council to write to MPs in relation to equal opportunity legislation? Is that your understanding?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: In relation to equal opportunity? Absolutely.

Ms CHAPMAN: You mentioned that correspondence relating to sexual assault legislation was sent to MPs: when was that?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I do not have a date for that, but I can take it on notice and bring back a response.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: The subject of my question is women's leadership. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.53, which refers to South Australia's Strategic Plan target on women's participation on South Australian boards and committees. What work is being done in relation to increasing the number of women on state government boards and committees?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the honourable member for her question. The Rann Labor government is committed to equal representation of women in leadership positions, and the Office for Women is the lead agency in meeting strategic plan targets 5.1 and 5.2. In terms of 5.1: Boards and Committees, it is to increase the number of women on all state government boards and committees to 50 per cent on average by 2008, and maintain it thereafter by ensuring that 50 per cent of women are appointed—

Ms CHAPMAN: Is that for 2008 or 2018?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is 50 per cent on average by 2008, and maintained thereafter by ensuring that 50 per cent of women are appointed on average each quarter. In terms of chairs of boards and committees, it is to increase the number of women chairing state government boards and committees by 50 per cent by 2010.

Although we clearly have not met target 5.1, there has nevertheless been a strong increase in the number of women on South Australian government boards and committees and in the number of women chairing these boards and committees. As at 1 May 2009, women held 45.11 per cent of positions on government boards and committees, a significant increase from 33 per cent as at 1 April 2004, following the release of the plan. As at 1 May 2009, women held about 34 per cent of chair positions on government boards and committees, and this is also a strong increase from 24 per cent.

The Premier's Women's Directory is a key tool that has assisted the state government to improve the percentage of female membership of boards and committees. The directory is managed by the Office for Women as an online resource, and it is continually improved and updated. As at 1 June 2009, the Premier's Women's Directory had over 660 CVs of highly qualified, board-ready women.

A number of other initiatives have assisted in working towards South Australia's Strategic Plan target. These include:

- awarding approximately 33 scholarships to women in the community to undertake governance training—and over 200 women in South Australia have participated in this training;
- holding tailored training for women as board members and chairs;
- providing women with practical strategies to position themselves for executive and board roles, including targeted training for women in rural areas and women in non-traditional roles such as the technology industry;

- providing board training for culturally and linguistically diverse women through TAFE SA—14 women graduated from this training in December 2008—enabling participants to gain a Certificate III in business, a frontline management qualification; and
- Multicultural SA and the Office for Women provided funding for the Advanced Leadership Skills Retreat in November 2008.

The Office for Women will continue to target areas where women are under-represented on boards and committees. The Office for Women is also a member of the Women in Leadership SA working group, which is looking at further ways to increase the number of women in leadership.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: My next question relates to anti-violence awareness campaigns. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.53, and the reference to the Office for Women leading the Women's Safety Strategy. Can the minister advise what the work being undertaken to raise awareness relating to violence in our community is about? I am particularly interested to hear more about the anti-violence awareness campaign.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I thank the member for her question. The South Australian government is pursuing diverse avenues to help combat violence as part of the \$868,000 anti-violence campaign. The anti-violence community awareness campaign focuses on educating 18 to 25 year olds, men and women, to changes in rape and sexual assault laws and teaching them about building respectful relationships. Findings and advice received from government focus groups of young people and community groups have also informed the campaign. Work is also taking place to reform South Australia's domestic violence legislation, and this information will be incorporated into the campaign.

The campaign is complemented by the community education grants program, which the government established in 2008-09. Applications for the first round have been received and successful projects selected. I recently announced the five projects that will equally share \$50,000 in grants, and these include:

- the Changing Face of Consent, a YWCA initiative involving young people;
- Expect Respect, a Legal Services Commission initiative involving training peer educators to deliver services and co-deliver drama-based community legal education to help develop legal knowledge, attitudes and behaviours to promote respectful relationships;
- It's All About Respect, which was awarded to Multicultural Youth SA;
- the Vietnamese Anti-violence Community Education Project, which is important in communicating the message to young Vietnamese people and their families; and
- Raising Awareness of Changes in Legislation, which was awarded to the Central Northern Adelaide Health Service to help create art media that expresses an understanding of the new laws and respectful relationships.

The community education grants play a really important role by focusing on young people's attitudes to violence and engaging youth, who may not normally be reached through mainstream avenues. The second round of grants will be opened soon and I will make an announcement after that.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.18: domestic violence legislative reform. Can you advise what work you have been involved with in relation to the reform of current domestic violence legislation?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Announced by the Premier in 2006, the proposed new domestic violence laws are intended to improve the system of restraint and intervention for domestic violence and to give police more power to intervene at the time of an incident. The laws will make it easier for victims to remain in the family home as the focus will be on removing the perpetrator. They will also ensure that police can impose restraint conditions quickly without having to wait for a court listing.

Reform of domestic violence legislation will bring the state in line with recent law reform in other jurisdictions. These changes follow an independent review of the current laws by highly respected lawyer, Maurine Pyke QC. The bill is currently being drafted to overhaul South Australia's domestic and family violence legislation. The bill will stop alleged perpetrators from personally cross-examining their victims in court and will cover a wide range of relationships, including the relationship between a carer and a disabled or ill person, and it will increase penalties and broaden the definition of 'family violence' so that it covers other areas.

The proposed reforms will complement the goals of one of the key initiatives of the women's safety strategy, that is, the family safety framework, by increasing victim safety and enhancing perpetrator accountability. The bill is a high priority for the South Australian government and we are working with the National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and Their Children and the Australian state and territory governments to enforce domestic and family violence orders across state borders through national registration and to improve the uptake of domestic violence coronial recommendations.

Ms CHAPMAN: What was the percentage of women on South Australian government boards and committees as at November 2008 in the portfolios for which you are responsible?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: We do not have that detail today, but I will take it on notice and bring back a response.

Ms CHAPMAN: As I indicated in my opening statement, the government on 1 November each year used to do a census of the percentage of women on boards and committees per minister and for each of the portfolios. This was the information which I asked for at last year's estimates for November 2007 and which I indicated in opening that I would be seeking from you. I appreciate that you have taken that on notice.

Back in 2006 only five ministers—and you will be pleased to know that one of them was you—had over 50 per cent women on the boards for which they were responsible, and the remainder, the overwhelming majority, had failed miserably. What is the current position? Do you know how many of your ministerial colleagues are achieving this within their departments?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Given that level of detail, I will take it on notice and bring back a response. I point out that many of these targets are aspirational. In particular, as I have pointed out, we have not been able to meet the deadline for that target. Nevertheless, we remain strongly committed to eventually achieving that. It is generally recognised that South Australia is one of the best performing jurisdictions in Australia regarding women on boards. Although we have failed to meet our target, we are doing better than most other jurisdictions and far better than the former Liberal government, whose track record was quite dismal and embarrassing. We have achieved a great deal in a short period of time. We have still not met our aspirational target, but we remain committed to ensuring that we meet that target.

Ms CHAPMAN: Nobody has made any comment to suggest in any negative manner that there is any criticism of an aspirational target, albeit that it has not been reached. As you have reported in this year's budget a 'strong'—to use your word—increase in the number of women either on or chairing South Australian government boards and committees, and as each year I have asked for a detailed breakdown, it is rather puzzling that none of that information appears to be available today. Have you been briefed on this at all?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I cannot be held responsible for the information you requested of other ministers.

Ms CHAPMAN: This is your information I am talking about.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have not finished answering the question: I would prefer not to be interrupted; I do not interrupt you. In relation to the detail of the question you have asked of me, I am happy to bring it back on notice.

Ms CHAPMAN: Have you had any briefing on this?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: We regularly report on our Strategic Plan targets, and I have given you the latest figures that we have in relation to both our Strategic Plan targets 5.1 and 5.2. I have given you that information already.

Ms CHAPMAN: Apart from telling us what the current total percentage is—and, obviously, you have been informed of that and it is welcome advice to the committee—my question is: have you inquired as to what has been achieved in each of the departments in the preceding 12 months or as at the November date?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Information is requested. I do not have that information with me.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can you remember when you last asked for the information?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I believe the information is provided quarterly. I am not absolutely sure, but we do regularly ask our agencies to report to that target.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am sure they do, but I am asking you when you last asked for this information.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I cannot give you the exact date.

Ms CHAPMAN: Was it this year?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: So some time this year you received a report at your request as to what the update is and you cannot remember what it is.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I do not have a list. There are a number of agencies. It is outrageous that you would suggest I would carry a set of figures around in my head. I have already indicated that I do not have that level of detail with me. I do receive that information regularly from time to time. I am happy to make that information available. I have said that I will take the question on notice and bring back a response.

The ACTING CHAIR: Minister, I think you have answered adequately. As minister you cannot be accused of ignoring your department or advisers.

Ms CHAPMAN: They are all sitting here and, apparently, none of them has one bit of information about this key target for the government.

The ACTING CHAIR: To which line are you referring?

Ms CHAPMAN: I am referring to page 7.18. The minister has given a ministerial statement and answered a question already from her own side of the committee.

The ACTING CHAIR: I think the minister has answered it adequately.

Ms CHAPMAN: To make it absolutely clear, there are eight of them sitting there and not one of them has a bit of information on this issue.

The ACTING CHAIR: We will move to the next question. You have asked five questions.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: My question is on the Women's Safety Strategy. Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.18, talks about the Family Safety Framework. Will the minister provide information about this framework?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Rann government is strongly committed to ensuring all women, children and, indeed, the whole community have the right to live safely, free of all forms of violence. The Rann government's law reform efforts in the area of women's safety are being further supported by a strategic and proactive new way of addressing family violence in South Australia.

As Minister for the Status of Women, I chair the whole of government reference group that drives the women's safety strategy. The whole of government reference group brings a strategic perspective to the way in which the government is delivering women's safety services in South Australia. The reference group includes a culturally and linguistically diverse working group and an Aboriginal family violence working group to ensure the development of culturally appropriate service delivery models.

The Family Safety Framework seeks to ensure that services to the families most at risk of violence are dealt with in a more structured and systematic way through agencies sharing information about high risk families and taking a responsibility for supporting these families to navigate the services system.

Trials of the Family Safety Framework have been implemented in three regions across South Australia—Holden Hill, Noarlunga and Port Augusta—and I am investigating the further potential rollout of this very successful service.

An evaluation of the Family Safety Framework, conducted by the Office of Crime Statistics and Research within the Attorney-General's Department, found that the majority of victims were assessed as safer as a result of the Family Safety meeting intervention. Specifically, 62 per cent of victims went from high to low risk and 75 per cent of referrals that remained in South Australia had no SAPOL record of revictimisation for at least three months after the referral. The success of the Family Safety Framework ensures that women and children at risk of serious injury or death are provided with the support they need.

The Women's Safety Strategy will continue to engage with and complement the work of the National Council for the Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children, which has

coordinated a national strategy: Time for Action to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: My next question relates to the Women's Information Service: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 7.54. The reference is about the Women's Information Service providing a free information, referral and support service for all women. Will the minister provide more information about these services?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am also pleased to place on the record that I can answer part of the question asked by Ms Chapman in relation to my portfolio. I have been advised that on 1 November 2008 the areas for which I now have responsibility had 38.04 per cent women on boards. At 1 June 2009 it was 44.74 per cent women on boards. It is an excellent outcome, and it comes from the incredibly low base we inherited from the former Liberal government—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The ACTING CHAIR: Let the minister answer the question.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Women's Information Service (WIS) is a free information, referral and support service for all women in South Australia. Assistance is provided in person, over the phone, through email and via the internet. A toll-free number is also available for women residing in rural and remote areas. The Women's Information Service receives approximately 20,000 inquiries each year. In addition to maintaining the Women's Information Service shopfront and telephone service, a number of other programs are made available to women. These include: women's internet access program; internet training for women; basic Microsoft Word training; after hours telephone legal advice (in partnership with the Women's Legal Service); tax help assistance; computer training for women staying in Catherine House; conversational English classes; and the list goes on.

In addition, many more women have contact with the service through the WIS Outreach program. The Women's Information Service has a presence in nine of the state government centres for early childhood development and parenting. Regular contact with women in settings that are familiar to them provides opportunities to establish rapport and discuss issues of concern, as well as make referrals to relevant services and support agencies. WIS also provides general outreach services to women in rural areas by participating in field days and other community events in regional South Australia.

WIS is also fortunate to have a very loyal group of volunteers, many of whom have been involved for over 10 years working with community officers. There are currently 25 volunteers, with new volunteers recruited annually, and we run two volunteer training programs.

The Family Court support program has also been found to be a very successful program and provides support to women at an extremely stressful time in their lives.

Ms CHAPMAN: Was the Premier's Council for Women consulted on this year's budget decision to cancel the women's prison? If so, what was its recommendation?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised: no, not that we are aware of.

Ms CHAPMAN: Was the Premier's Council for Women consulted on the government's continuing proposal for the redevelopment of the Glenside Hospital, including the development of a film hub on it; and, if so, what was its recommendation?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am not too sure which budget paper the honourable member is referring to.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am talking about the subject of the Premier's Council for Women at page 7.54.

The Hon. S.W. Key interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: The minister has indicated what it does and given extensive answers about what subjects it has canvassed in the past 12 months, so I am asking whether, in fact, this topic had been referred to it—

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Haven't you got any other questions?

Ms CHAPMAN: I have got plenty more questions—and, if so, what its recommendations were.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have already outlined the process by which the Premier's women's council determines the way it prioritises its focus and agenda, and I cannot recall Glenside or prisons in that listing.

Ms CHAPMAN: Minister, you were previously responsible as the minister for mental health. Can you recall at any time referring that issue for recommendation to the Premier's Council for Women, because it is one of the charter responsibilities of this committee to advise the Premier and government on important issues for women. Can you recall ever referring that issue yourself?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: It is a question that is outside the purview of my responsibilities, and I have already outlined the way in which the Premier's council determines its agenda and the matters that it prioritises in terms of its activities. I am not aware of the Glenside proposal going to the Office for Women, but I would not be able to say, as I was not responsible for women's affairs at that time.

Ms CHAPMAN: There is also another target which is important according to the State Strategic Plan, which I think you briefly referred to in your opening, and that was to aim to have 50 per cent of the public sector executives being women by 2014. You may or may not have referred to it in your opening, but I think you did. It is target 6.23 and it is, of course, referred to under the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. My question is: why is the Office for Women not involved in the women in the public sector target, because I would have expected that it would be inextricably linked in developing skills that would be required for a board or committee position? We are referring to page 7.53 if other members of the committee are not following this.

You will see there, minister, that the commentary for the Women's Policy Office does not mention this target at all, so I just wonder how it is being implemented.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that, in relation to Strategic Plan target 6.23, the minister responsible is the Hon. Jay Weatherill, who has responsibility for government reform.

In relation to the sorts of contributions that the Office for Women would make towards achieving that target, I have already mentioned one activity, which is the Women in Leadership forum, which is a senior executive committee that promotes public servants into senior leadership positions. That is one example of the way that the office would contribute towards that target.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, minister, as I understand it then, the Office for Women does not actually have the responsibility to supervise that target—that is under minister Weatherill's purview—but does the Office for Women have any input into that at all or do you get reports on it? Do you ask for reports on it to find out how many women in the departments are achieving this target; or does it go to the Premier's Council for Women, or anyone?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the Strategic Plan targets are reported on publicly annually and, as I have already outlined, the lead minister for that particular target in question is the Hon. Jay Weatherill who is responsible for public sector reform. I have also outlined that the Office for Women is part of the WILSA committee. I have already put on record that that actually is part of developing strategies to increase the recruitment and retention of women in senior public sector positions. So, we contribute to the target in that way.

Ms CHAPMAN: The minister responsible for the Department for Families and Communities, on our observation of the budget, is actually the only agency that reports on the target for women's representation. I may not be finding it in all the other portfolio statements and I appreciate that he may have a lead role, but it seems that his department is the only one. In fact, it is his former department, because of course it is now the Hon. Jennifer Rankine's.

Do you support the reporting of targets for each of the departments so that you can actually keep an eye on ensuring, as the Minister for the Status of Women, that we actually achieve this target or do you at least call each year for the publication of that material, which you say is available annually?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the reports come under the lead agency in terms of the budget documents, but I have also been advised that there is an audit committee which is a cross-government committee, and it monitors the sets of KPIs that are set to each of the individual targets. It is the audit committee which then, in turn, obtains information at an agency level across government, across all agencies, in relation to the monitoring and evaluation of how we are progressing towards achieving our Strategic Plan targets.

Ms CHAPMAN: My question then is, minister, how are we tracking on that target? Do you have any idea?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Hon. Jay Weatherill is the lead minister and is responsible for that.

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, have you asked him? This is a 50 per cent target of women in the public sector by 2014. Do you have any idea whether we are on track, failing it, advanced or no hope? Any idea?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I'm not the minister responsible; this matter should be referred to minister Weatherill.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to page 7.54. One of the objectives of the Women's Information Service is an outreach program for regular visits to children's centres and early childhood development and parenting in metropolitan and outer metropolitan areas. Can you provide us with an update of what has happened in the preceding 12 months?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: The Women's Information Service has a presence in nine of the state government children's centres for early childhood development and parenting. Regular contact with women in those familiar settings is providing opportunities to establish a rapport and make relevant referrals, which is important.

The ACTING CHAIR: I declare the examination of the proposed payments adjourned to 30 June.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can I seek clarification, Madam Chair, as to the date upon which the answers taken on notice are expected to be provided?

The ACTING CHAIR: This year the *Hansard* supplement, which contains all the estimates committee responses, will be published on 2 October 2009.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. Is there a reference there as to the date by which the questions taken on notice are to be provided?

The CHAIR: No later than Friday 17 July.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you; 17 July—I look forward to receiving them.

**DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, ENERGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE, \$800,605,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT, ENERGY AND
INFRASTRUCTURE, \$12,696,000**

Membership:

Dr McFetridge substituted for Ms Chapman.

Hon. I.F. Evans substituted for Mrs Penfold.

Witness:

Hon. G.E. Gago, Minister for State/Local Government Relations, Minister for the Status of Women, Minister for Consumer Affairs, Minister for Government Enterprises, Minister Assisting the Minister for Transport, Infrastructure and Energy

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Hallion, Chief Executive, Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure.

Mr P. Welling, Director, Service SA.

Mr M. Grillo, Executive Director, Service SA.

Mr M. Palm, Manager, Budget and Investment, Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure.

Ms J. Tepohe, Chief Finance Officer, Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure.

Mr I. Clayfield, General Manager, Financial and Corporate Services, SA Lotteries.

Ms J. Roache, Chief Executive, SA Lotteries.

The ACTING CHAIR: I declare the proposed payments reopened for examination and refer members to the Portfolio Statement, Volume 1, Part 6. Minister, do you wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Yes; I have a statement to make which deals with both Service SA and SA Lotteries. I will briefly combine those two areas. Service SA provides the South Australian community with a one-stop contact point for government information and services. Service SA manages the collection of approximately \$1.3 billion per annum in revenues and delivers a range of information services to citizens and businesses on behalf of the state and local government organisations through an integrated network of shop, call centre and online delivery channels.

Throughout 2008-09 Service SA has continued to strengthen its integrated network and improve access to government services and information for customers—citizens and business. We have increased the number of Australia Post outlets at which photo licence renewals can be done, from 40 regional and two CBD sites to 49 regional, 2 CBD and 21 metropolitan Adelaide outlets. This has greatly expanded citizen and business access to photo licence renewals. Of the 21 metropolitan sites, eight are also open on Saturday mornings.

The government has continued to pursue increased access to services through Service SA's networking, including its agents such as Australia Post. The 13 per cent growth recorded this year in business conducted through Australia Post outlets is a direct result of these initiatives to improve access to services.

Service SA's key targets for 2009-10 include the common internet site for government, which will be the access point for government services and information. Service SA is working with agencies and the Office of the Chief Information Officer to rationalise websites and redirect access through the new common internet site for government as part of the process of streamlining access to services and improving the efficiency of government. As part of this process, Service SA is consolidating two websites—SA Central and Service SA—for which it has responsibility is migrating them into a new common internet site for government: www.sa.gov.au.

Service SA's customer service network has grown from 11 Service SA customer service centres to 20. A number of improvements have been made such as a new queue management system that matches resources to workload. This new system has been accompanied by seating for customers and the introduction of customer reception officers, who provide direct assistance at the front door of the busy metropolitan centres.

These activities have sped up service delivery for customers. There has been an increase in the Bizgate transaction and payment gateway in concert with the new common internet site for government. Service SA has continued to oversee a growth rate of in excess of 20 per cent in online transactions between 2007-08, which will significantly increase the proportion of business in terms of online services.

The ACTING CHAIR: Member for Morphet, do you have an opening statement?

Dr McFETRIDGE: No, Madam Acting Chair. We have limited time, and I think people want to go home. It has been a long day, from the minister's voice. I refer to Budget Paper 3, page 3.13: Revenue from Gambling Taxes. The annual report of Lotteries SA states that its advertising budget was \$6.4 million in 2008-09. What is the estimated advertising budget for 2009-10?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that for 2009-10 it is around \$6.127 million.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Same budget reference: Budget Paper 3, page 3.13: Revenue from Gambling Taxes. The targets in the annual report for problem gambling do not seem to have ever been achieved. Can you give us some reason why we are not able to do that? It certainly affects revenue. In relation to the targets and actuals, my information is that for, say, the last year there was a target of 12 contacts, but only three were achieved.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: That is right, and that is a very good outcome. It means that we had fewer problem gambling reports than we had anticipated.

Dr McFETRIDGE: I hope so, because, if we are missing them, it is a tragedy. In paragraph 1, the SA Lotteries' responsible gambling code of practice states:

SA Lotteries' business will be conducted in a responsible manner so as to minimise the harm caused by gambling.

So, we are actually acknowledging that harm is caused by gambling. One could ask the question: how much harm is tolerable? What is being done? Can you tell us a bit more about some of the things you are doing to handle problem gamblers?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: SA Lotteries is certainly committed to responsible play practices in all aspects of its operations and the effective maintenance of harm minimising measures across its statewide agency network. Since November 2003, SA Lotteries has proactively applied a 'Gamble Responsibly' message to all its games advertising. In April 2004, in accordance with the State Lotteries Act 1966, SA Lotteries adopted an Independent Gambling Authority-approved state lotteries advertising code of practice and the state lotteries responsible gambling code of practice. Both codes of practice are updated by the IGA, effective from 1 December 2008.

The major impact to SA Lotteries from these revisions was the introduction of expanded warning messages in a framework for the application. Agreements with SA Lotteries agents incorporate the requirements of the codes. SA Lotteries has established an internal problem gambling report group, which is convened when reported incidences are received, allowing further action to be considered.

All SA Lotteries agents display responsible gambling material, including brochures, posters and Gambling Help Line cards and stickers, in accordance with the codes. SA Lotteries agents are trained to provide information on gambling help services to suspected problem gamblers or to players requesting this information, and such instances are required to be reported to SA Lotteries. At least one person from all SA Lotteries agencies has undertaken accredited responsible gambling training, and all agency staff have received on-site training. As a proactive harm minimisation measure, SA Lotteries provides specific training for agency staff aged under 18 years to equip their staff with the skills to address responsible gambling issues related to this age group.

SA Lotteries is required, under the state lotteries responsible gambling code of practice, to provide responsible gambling refresher training to agency staff every two years, and a log is maintained by SA Lotteries to track the completion of refresher training.

SA Lotteries operates a stringent audit compliance program to ensure the ongoing compliance of its agents with all requirements of the codes, and agents are audited for compliance at least once a year. An annual independent audit of SA Lotteries compliance with the IGA codes has been conducted by KPMG. KPMG reports the outcome of the annual audit to the IGA, and the May 2009 audit identified full compliance.

Dr McFETRIDGE: With reference to that same budget line and the same issues. In relation to Gambling Code of Practice No. 8—Checks, it states:

The gambling provider will not cash cheques in the gambling area unless the authority has given an exemption from this prohibition to the gambling provider.

How often do people ask to cash cheques and why?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that the agents are instructed not to cash cheques, even if they are South Australian dividend cheques. In fact, that would constitute a breach of their agreement.

Dr McFETRIDGE: They are not cashing private cheques, people's cheques, to get money; they are not taking cheques instead of cash for buying lottery tickets and things like that?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised no.

Dr McFETRIDGE: That's good. I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 49, relating to the online lottery system. The previous budget stated that the total project would cost \$27.5 million and would be completed by September 2009. This budget states an expected completion of December 2010 with an estimated cost of close to \$17 million—so the price has gone down but the timeline has gone out. Has the original scope of the project been cut?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that there has not been a cut or reduction in the scope of the project. I am informed that the drop in capital expenditure occurred because the previous budget was an estimate only. That is the result of a competitive bidding process, which has now been completed.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Well done—a saving of \$10 million. In that same area of online systems, I refer to the disability discrimination action plan by SA Lotteries, I was puzzled to see some of the focal areas for service, including 'mail orders' under 'No. 2'; I did not know you could mail order lottery tickets and things like that. Can you explain what that is about. It says here, under

'Barriers', that some disabled customers are housebound and cannot access the products and games. Will that be more online, or is it mail order?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that it does involve postage by mail, not online, as suggested. It is an extremely low pick-up rate; apparently it amounts to less than \$150 a week. It is not something that is particularly common.

Dr McFETRIDGE: In view of the time, I will move to Service SA. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 6.16 and Highlights and Targets. One of the targets which was in the 2008-09 budget and which appears to have been dropped from the 2009-10 budget was to utilise VANguard, the computer system, to allow businesses to conduct business online with proof of identity and time-stamping documents. VANguard seems to have disappeared. I notice that we are expanding Bizgate. Can you explain where VANguard has gone, or is it still there?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I will refer the question to Mr Mike Grillo for a response.

Mr GRILLO: The VANguard system is available to do secure business transactions online. We are still conducting investigations with the commonwealth to implement it. There are, obviously, a number of complexities in implementing a system such as that in terms of proof of ID for business, so we have deferred potential implementation until towards the end of either this coming financial year or early next, 2010-11.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Further to that, the Local Government Association seems to be using VANguard: 'V' for signature validation, 'A' for user authentication, and 'N' for notarisation. The LGA seems to have got it under control as of 28 February last year, and it is using Bizgate. Is there a particular difficulty that the government is having? Obviously, there are lots of local government organisations and they seem to be able to get VANguard up and going.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that it is to do with business licensing. It is quite a complex area. I am not too sure whether the honourable member would like me to take that on notice.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Is Bizgate still one of the biggest web sites in Australia? It is a huge website, they tell me.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Service SA does provide electronic services to agencies, including the provision of ecommerce facilities through the use of its Bizgate system, which is managed by an external service provider. Bizgate is a suite of web-based business solutions for agencies wishing to offer their services online. The web-based electronic gateway incorporates secure financial transactions using credit card payments, information workflow transactions (such as approval processes) and agency reporting tools.

Bizgate is used by 33 individual state government agencies, 129 schools and 57 local councils. Transaction types that occur through Bizgate include council and infringement payments, various online shop purchase transactions, EZYReg and data uploads. The Bizgate transactions average about 170,000 a month, and the average value is about \$48 million a month. Total transactions since 1997 is 5.7 million.

Dr McFETRIDGE: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 6.16 and Highlights and Targets. There is one here, and I am not quite sure what to read into it. Obviously from the Service SA website you can access WorkCover and SafeWork SA, but one of the targets includes expanding SafeWork SA services into Service SA centres. What services will be provided in 2009-10 from SafeWork SA through the Service SA centres?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that it is still under review and requires legislative change. It relates to heavy machinery licences, and it is anticipated that it will be implemented in 2010.

Dr McFETRIDGE: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 6.47, program information for Service SA. The Treasurer wants budget savings of \$750 million. Are any of the 11 metropolitan, nine country and nine agents for Service SA going to be closed as part of the Treasurer's cost savings or for any reason?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I have been advised that there are no plans to close any centres and that the Budget Sustainability Commission work will commence mid next year.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Did the minister say in her opening remarks that they are open Saturday mornings now?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: Australia Post.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Is there any move to have the hours made more flexible with late night trading and Saturday morning trading?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: To encourage Australia Post?

Dr McFETRIDGE: No, Service SA centres.

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that market research shows there is limited demand for expansion of services by us, and that is why we have gone to Australia Post. I am advised that we have 300 outlets in the state.

Dr McFETRIDGE: And you do not take American Express cards. I refer to the performance indicators, Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 6.48. In respect of the number of financial transactions processed per annum, the target for 2008-09 was 6.1 million, but it fell short by 800,000. Is there a reason for that?

The Hon. G.E. GAGO: I am advised that the short answer is that it was an overly ambitious target and the numbers reflect the reality. The 2008-09 figures reflect the actual 2007-08 figure.

The ACTING CHAIR: There being no more questions, I declare the examination of the vote completed.

At 18:00 the committee adjourned until Tuesday 30 June 2009 at 09:00.