

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
Thursday 30 June 2011
ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B

Chair:

Hon. M.J. Wright

Members:

Hon. M.J. Atkinson
Mr J.A.W. Gardner
Mr L.K. Odenwalder
Mr D.G. Pisoni
Ms R. Sanderson
Ms M.G. Thompson

The committee met at 9:00

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES, \$2,304,056,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S
SERVICES, \$213,862,000

Witness:

Hon. J.W. Weatherill, Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development,
Minister for Science and Information Economy.

Departmental Advisers:

Dr P. Kilvert, Chief Executive Officer, SACE Board of South Australia.

Mr C. Bernardi, Director, Finance and Investing, Department of Education and Children's
Services.

Mr G. DeGennaro, Deputy Chief Executive, Resources, Department of Education and
Children's Services.

The CHAIR: Estimates committees are a relatively informal procedure 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 changeover of departmental advisers. I ask the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition if they could indicate whether they have agreed on a timetable for today's proceedings and, if so, provide the chair with a copy.

Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure 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 by no later than Friday, 30 September. This year, the *Hansard* supplement, which contains all estimate committee responses, will be finalised on Friday, 14 October.

I propose to allow both the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements of about 10 minutes each if they so desire. There will be a flexible approach to giving the call for asking questions based on about three questions per member, 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 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 in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the house, that is, that 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. The minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. I also advise that, for the purposes of the committees, television coverage will be allowed for filming from both the northern and southern galleries.

I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to Portfolio Statements, Volume 1. I now invite the minister to make a statement if he so wishes and also to introduce his advisers.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: At your earlier invitation, I indicate that, by agreement with members of the opposition, we have one change to the timetable this morning. We have agreed between us to continue the SACE and non-government budget lines until the morning tea break at 10.15am and then commence the education budget lines when we resume at 10.30am. I propose to make an opening statement which will cover the SACE non-government lines, education lines and children's services lines in one consolidated statement.

I want to put the increased investment we are making in education and children's services for the financial year 2011-12 into some longer term perspective. First, I make the point that we have good schools and preschools, and many of them are great schools. However, we can always do better and, as a government, we are working with local communities, teachers and school leaders to ensure that all schools and preschools provide a high quality of education that meets the educational needs of every young person.

As a Labor government, we believe that it is important because education is right at the centre of what we want to do to create better opportunities for young people, while also lifting the economic and social prosperity of our state. When we came into office, almost a third of the students were dropping out before year 12. Far too many of our young South Australians had limited choices and opportunities to go further to study, whether it be university or TAFE, or to have other rewarding jobs and careers and to fully participate as citizens in a global community.

We lifted the year 12 retention rates to 84.2 per cent in 2010, and this has been achieved through a range of measures—legislative action, innovative school retention programs, and a reformed senior secondary certificate to make senior school education more relevant and engaging for all young people. This is the highest level in 16 years, and it means that almost 2,000 more students are staying on to year 12 than would otherwise have been the case if we had not acted to turn around that trend.

Year 12 students this year will be the first to graduate with the new SACE, which is supported by over \$70 million investment in senior secondary education reform. This has been progressively supporting the work of teachers and school leaders in all sectors—Catholic, independent and our public school system—and they have worked together with the SACE Board of South Australia.

New SACE is paving the way for young people to learn skills for work and life by having broader opportunities to learn both at school and in the workplace and the community. There are new opportunities for students to plan for their future and also to develop the sorts of skills—research, analytical and creative skills—which are required not only for university, TAFE and employment but for life generally, and they do that through the new SACE subjects of the personal learning plan and the research project.

Beyond those subjects, they are changing the whole culture of our senior secondary schooling. They are part of broader objectives for students to gain their certificate both by doing academic studies and also by undertaking higher-level vocational, education and training subjects. This means better opportunities for more young people to lift their skills and qualifications, which in turn will benefit South Australia's economic and social future.

However, as part of our long-term commitment to developing the potential of every child, we have realised that the early years, before even children start school, are so crucial. We have listened and acted on the neurological research into the way in which a child's brain develops, which suggests that so much of what determines the future of our children is shaped by what happens in the first five years, and that is not just their learning opportunities, their whole health trajectory is fundamentally affected in the first five years of life.

These elements of inclusion of broadening opportunities for all young people as they progress from birth through preschool and primary school and on to completing their secondary schooling are cornerstones in the way in which we are shaping long-term investment and reform in education in this state. For example, we have led the nation in bringing services together around

young children and families so that more young children have a better start right from the start in those critical early years.

We are working with communities to develop and expand our network of children's centres for early childhood development and parenting. These are flagships in our commitment to integrate health, education and family and community services around the needs of young people and their families, not around bureaucratic structures.

To support school leaders and teachers, this year we are reforming the way we attract, recruit and select teachers and school principals and other school leaders because we recognise their fundamental role in making a difference. This will enable schools to have a much stronger say in the selection and recruitment of teachers that best suit their local school community needs. It will also lead to better opportunities for contract teachers to gain permanent jobs.

We expect to generate an extra 700 permanent job opportunities for contract teachers, while also making it more attractive for teachers to work in regional and hard-to-staff schools by guaranteeing a city position if they choose to return from the country. This follows our implementation of a completely new funding model for schools this year, which gives them much greater flexibility in the way in which they allocate resources provided to support their work.

Overall, this year's significant investment in education and children's services of \$2.6 billion consolidates many of our long-term reforms, builds on our investments in the critical early years and supports teachers and schools at the front line of service delivery. At a time of financial constraint, we have increased our investment on the previous year's budget, which itself was a \$203.4 million increase on the 2009-10 financial year.

This year we will go further in supporting children and families in the early years. We will work with communities to bring preschools and schools together in the one place, and in so doing improve access to learning for children as they progress from preschool to school. This is also in line with the work taking place in partnership with the federal government to enable children to access preschool education and to ensure parents have confidence in the quality of our early childhood services. In that context, we will work with the federal government to establish a new authority to focus on the quality and standards of South Australia's early childhood services while also continuing to build our own network of children's centres.

Our investment in policy decisions also seeks to place more of our energies and investment in the quality of teaching and learning outcomes and opportunities at the front line. For example, from the start of the 2012 school year, public school teachers and students will progressively access a new SchoolNet system to support teaching and learning by harnessing modern information and communication technologies. There is more being invested in teachers, including our ongoing commitment that began in the previous financial year to provide \$265 million over four years to enable schools to employ an extra 700 teachers and school support staff while also helping to reduce the administrative burden of managing information technology.

Classroom teachers are also being assisted through our ongoing investment to support behaviour management and address problems early to get children back on track with the establishment of six better behaviour centres. Meanwhile, we continue to lift the burden of red tape on school communities and enable school and preschool communities to not only have a stronger say over their resources and staffing but also to spend more time on investing professional expertise on their central business of teaching and learning.

We have listened carefully to school principals and professional associations and acknowledge that one of those burdens has been increasing electricity costs. While schools have worked hard and effectively to be more energy conscious, there are competing demands on energy, including significantly increased use of and investment in technologies. To relieve some of the burden on schools we are investing \$16.6 million over five years to help address those pressures.

This budget confirms our long-term commitment to education. Members will note our investment this year builds on every one of our election commitments. These include: the ongoing investment of \$8.7 million over four years to attract and keep science and maths teachers; our \$60 million program to expand four of our specialist high schools to support increased enrolments; and importantly our program in investment and reform to improve services for children with disability through a network of disability units and by relocating six special schools to mainstream school locations.

As a government, we are maintaining our support for Catholic and independent schools through our commitment to measures such as the new SACE. In addition, our ongoing investment of \$20.1 million over four years is helping non-government schools while also supporting our statewide priorities to assist children with special needs and to lift science and maths skills. I am pleased that in South Australia we are continuing to work with all school sectors to maximise the benefits that are flowing from the federal and state national partnership reforms and investment in education.

As members are well aware from their own communities, this has resulted in massive investments in school infrastructure, digital technologies and in supporting young people in disadvantaged communities to stay engaged in learning, to improve their opportunities for work and life, together with the new measures to support teachers and improve the quality of teaching and to improve schooling results in the key literacy and numeracy areas.

While there has been significant infrastructure investment, I am pleased there are a number of ongoing and new capital works investments in this budget that will enable more local schools and preschools to have better school facilities. In addition, all regional students will continue to benefit from our ongoing investment in new school buses, and I am confident that we will continue to listen and work with school leaders, teachers and parents to better shape and refine our services. Our shared aim must be to support young people to learn, teachers to teach and leaders to lead. By doing so, I expect that we will continue to make a massive difference to the opportunities we create for all young South Australians.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Does the shadow minister wish to make an opening statement?

Mr PISONI: No.

The CHAIR: Straight into questions?

Mr PISONI: Straight into questions if I may, Mr Chair.

The CHAIR: Yes, you have the call.

Mr PISONI: Thank you. The first question I relate to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 186, Highlights, the SACE Board. Are you able to provide the committee with the full cost of the annual SACE Art Show and in particular the cost for the 2010-11 art show and the budgeted cost for the 2012 art show?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will take that on notice, or we could come back during the course of the session; we might be capable of doing that.

Mr PISONI: Will the SACE Art Show continue? Have there been any plans to reduce the funding to the SACE Art Show?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Apparently there is an ongoing budget commitment for that purpose, so it is likely to continue, yes.

Mr PISONI: Has the budget been reduced in real terms or otherwise?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No; it continues, I think, at about the same level.

Mr PISONI: How many inquiries about changes to SACE has the SACE Board received this year from students who are studying it? All students are studying it but, in particular, we know that this year is the first year for year 12 students. How many inquiries have been written, how many have been verbal, and are they recorded?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Oral.

Mr GARDNER: We presume they are in words, spoken words.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: They could be smoke signals.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It might assist us if you could be a little more specific about the idea of changes. On an ongoing basis, the SACE Board deals with a range of representations that are made to it. If the essence of your question is about people who are making representations about issues they have with the new SACE that they would like to see made differently, I am happy to take it on notice. I do not think we have a running list.

I know, from my own experience, that I have had representations made to me about elements of the new SACE, some of which, though, were really in anticipation of the new SACE

and perceived concerns about what might happen. However, as the year has unfolded and the new SACE is rolling out—bearing in mind, of course, that we have not yet had a completed year of the new SACE—some of those concerns seem to have dissipated.

The real answer to the question is that it is a new set of arrangements which will have their first full year of application this year, and we are committed to a review, so I think it is probably premature to talk about changes. Some people might have been concerned, for instance, about the research project which takes the place of the fifth subject in the SACE. I know certainly some students and a number of teachers who began the year sceptically about that subject have seen some really fantastic examples of the work that has gone on in that area. I think that we should allow this year to be fully completed and we should then reflect upon what concerns remain for people and deal with them through the process of the review.

Mr PISONI: The question refers not just to complaints, as you inferred, but inquiries about how it works, about any confusion with the new SACE, about any dissatisfaction with the new SACE. What I am after is a record from the SACE Board (or to your office, minister) of that type of communication, in whatever form, and how it is recorded and responded to.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The difficulty is that I routinely have representations made to me about a whole range of matters, including SACE, and some of the concerns that were expressed were before the actual year commenced, before the SACE actually had a full year of operation. Some of them anticipated a dramatic change in student choice on certain subject areas, some of which did not come to pass. I do not know whether you count that as a concern or whether you count it as an anticipated concern that has ceased to be a concern.

Mr PISONI: We will make it easier: ones that have come in this year. I would be happy if that information was supplied.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: So what are you asking? The number of people who have asked me a question about SACE? Is that what you are asking?

Mr PISONI: The new SACE; the number who have raised concerns or questions about how it works.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: What about people who think it is a good idea; do you want to know about them?

Mr PISONI: Yes, sure; we will have those. The reason I have to ask these questions here is that the SACE Board is exempt from freedom of information, so I cannot get that information any other way. I am hoping that we can get some idea of the response from the education community—whether they be students or teachers—about the implementation of the new SACE. A lot of people copy me into correspondence they send to you, minister, so I am aware that there is a lot of correspondence about the new SACE. What I am asking for is some form of table that can give us some idea about the activity between stakeholders, the SACE Board and your office about the new SACE.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We will try to answer the question more fully, but I can say that the main areas of representation that have been made to me, and I think to the SACE Board, have been around particular subject areas. There are concerns that students will make choices that have a disproportionate effect on their subject areas; for instance, geography teachers, history teachers, maths and science teachers, language teachers. Some of those concerns have not actually come to pass.

The reality is that, with the reduction of the fifth subject, you would expect that there would be a 20 per cent reduction in the number of students choosing the various topics because of the fact that you had lost a fifth of the actual subjects. Some subjects were concerned that that would be concentrated in their subject area. What we will know, once the information is gathered, is how the proportions, if you like, have been played out. Judgements can then be made about the effect that has had.

I think what needs to be remembered is that, while these are concerns that have been expressed by particular subject areas, at the heart of this is that students are making choices. They are making choices about the subjects they are choosing to take. I understand that that might be a source of some concern for someone who is a subject specialist in a particular area but, at the end of the day, people are making rational decisions, no doubt on the basis of conversations they are having with their family and other advisers about what is in their best interests for their future.

So we have 10 years of quite general education which covers a range of areas, a number of which are compulsory, so that students have a very broad education, and in that 10th year students begin to make decisions about where they want to take their future, the sorts of skills and aptitudes they want to build upon. They then make choices about that, and those choices play themselves out in students choosing some subjects over others.

Now, if you happen to be a teacher of a particular subject, you may not agree with the fact that students have made that choice, but it is really a matter for the students. In terms of the associations, they should make their subjects as attractive as they possibly can so that students have the broadest range of choices of quality offerings. However, we will give you the information about the various associations that have made representations to us—

Mr PISONI: I just want to make it clear that I am not putting a boundary on who; I am interested in every inquiry, and I am particularly interested in students and parents. You have focused on teachers and teaching associations; I am interested in every communication.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not think I can commit to giving you every communication that has occurred at the SACE board. You are going to have to narrow the scope of your enquiry a little. I mean, what do you want to know? You have to ask a question. You cannot just say 'Hand over your files' and I will bring a dumpster in here and unload it.

Mr PISONI: Do you have that many?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: There have been communications—SACE has general communications with all of its stakeholders. Some of them might fit into the category of concerns. Some will just be general day to day communications. There needs to be some limit to the scope of this enquiry for it to make some sense. We are happy to give you the concerns that have been raised about the new SACE.

Mr PISONI: But you cannot give me a count?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not know what you call a concern and what you call a complaint, or what you call the general process of engagement with stakeholders. I want to answer your question but I also do not want to mislead the committee that I am going to supply every communication that has occurred with every individual.

Mr PISONI: A table—I do not need the letters or the notes that may have been taken down from telephone conversations—but a table of complaints, or those that may have been a concern, and those that may have been of confusion, and those that may be praising. We can have it as simple as that if you like.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We will take the question on notice and see what we can do.

Mr PISONI: What was the outcome of the moderation process of year 12 marking in 2010? That is, what percentage of grades were marked up or marked down when moderators moved in to assess work that was assessed by teachers?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will invite Dr Kilvert to respond. We can provide the information. We just need to explain the nature of the information that can be provided, because the question requires some elaboration.

Dr KILVERT: Thank you, minister. Through the minister, the question relates to the effects of moderation on year 12 subjects. I need to explain that there are different forms of moderation that apply. One form of moderation occurs—in the past, last year—through a statistical process where a student's results in a subject are moderated statistically by their performance in the external assessment. That might be an examination, it might be an investigation but, essentially, it is a form of assessment marked by somebody else apart from the teacher.

In that form of moderation, the student's school assessments are moderated accordingly by their performance in the external assessment. Other forms of moderation relate to what we call central moderation, where the school submits their school assessments and we have panels—specially trained professionals, often teachers—who, through that training, through that benchmarking exercise, then look at the work of the students and make a professional judgement against those benchmarks that may result in those school assessments being moved to a different level.

We have other forms of moderation whereby in terms of student's performances—say, in a drama performance or in the visual arts—where people will visit the site and look at the

performance or the students' art works in that case. The purpose of the answer is to indicate that the question itself covers a range of forms of moderation. They vary from subject to subject. In providing that answer we can certainly provide the information that the member has asked for, but it will need to be identified in terms of the nature of the moderation process and the nature of the subject to supply that full answer.

Mr PISONI: I am happy for you to bring that back. That is not a problem.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think we are looking for some guidance about which subjects you are asking for that information to be supplied, because it seems to be a massive task to do it for all subjects, given the nature and difference of the various moderation processes.

Mr PISONI: Numbers will do. Basically I am interested in where there were changes in the result because of the moderation. The reason I am asking the question, minister, is because we know that this year, year 12 or stage two SACE students are having 70 per cent of their work graded internally for the first time. Previously there has been more of it graded externally. I am trying to establish what the last process was in the former SACE for Stage 2 so that we can have some comparison with what will happen this year.

Last year, SACE engaged 641 moderators over 49 subjects. I am also interested to know how many moderators will be required for the new SACE. I noticed that there is an increase in the wages and salaries this year; I am interested to know how many of those are extra moderators. What preparations have you made for the fact that there will be 70 per cent of work being graded internally? I am aware, because I have a daughter doing year 12, and I also have had people contacting my office raising some concern about consistency in marking to date, so I am trying to establish how you are going to be dealing with that.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Just to understand, your concern is to get sufficient information to allow you to compare the process pre the changes.

Mr PISONI: I want to compare the process from last year to this year from the old SACE, if you like, to this year.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Okay. It is a massive task, but if we know what the purpose is that might assist us in limiting the size of the task.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, pages 198 to 199. Returning to the question of SACE, can the minister describe how resources provided for the implementation of the new SACE are helping to set a new benchmark for learning and achievement for students who complete their SACE?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the member for Reynell for her question. On the part of government School to Work Strategy, \$54.5 million has been allocated to support the Catholic, Independent and public school system to implement the new SACE. In 2010-11, funding to this board was increased with a further \$16.4 million added in last year's budget to upgrade IT and data management systems and to strengthen the assessment and moderation activities. SACE implementation funding has supported a range of measures and has had a strong focus on professional development for teachers and leaders to ensure schools can confidently deliver the new SACE.

It is pleasing to hear recent public comments by senior figures in the education community, including the President of the Secondary Principals' Association who said that teachers had embraced the changes, and the AEU which indicated the trepidation initially felt had subsided. This is important because it is the good work of teachers that will ensure the benefits of the new SACE can be fully realised.

The reforms to the SACE have been unashamedly bold. They stem directly from the recommendations of the independently prepared SACE Review, which concluded that simply tinkering at the edges was likely to compound the shortcomings and problems rather than lead to genuine and sustained improvement in school retention or the engagement of young people in productive learning and work.

It is important to understand that the SACE Review report was not just the product of some education bureaucrats theorising about what might be best for secondary school education. Its conclusions and recommendations were based on an extensive review process involving thousands of teachers, parents, students, business leaders and the public which also took account of the research on international and national trends in senior secondary education.

The review process included more than 170 submissions in writing, more than 200 face-to-face meetings, more than 600 responses to an online survey, and a major two-day conference. This work is also set out in detail and is on the public record in the review findings report—a volume of some 240 pages. The ongoing work of implementing the SACE is being overseen by the SACE Review Implementation Committee which consists of CEOs of the three school sectors and their senior officers, representatives from the Northern Territory system and, of course, the Chief Executive of the SACE Board. University and DFEEST representatives also contribute to relevant issues.

What the new SACE aims to do is signal that high standards are expected, because that is what will be expected of these young people once they leave school and enter the workforce to become adult members of the community. The SACE does this in a number of ways, including:

- placing an obligation on students to complete a personal learning plan that helps them map out their future study and career plans (and this is important, because it instils in them the taking of responsibility for their further learning);
- a requirement to explicitly achieve minimum standards of literacy and numeracy (something the old SACE did not have); and, finally,
- a requirement for students to complete an in-depth project or investigation through the research project subject, to develop their independent learning skills and their ability to communicate, think creatively and problem solve.

High standards are not just being recognised in traditional or academic areas. The new SACE also includes recognition of high standards of achievement in non-academic or non-traditional fields, including vocational education and training.

Consistent with the steady progress made by the government in lifting school retentions, SACE completions in recent years have also risen. Last year the number of students completing their SACE increased to 12,692. That is up from 11,102 in 2002, about 1,600 more students over this time who have gone on to successfully complete school and enjoy the advantages that that offers.

Ms THOMPSON: Can the minister outline the support that has been provided to accompany the introduction of the new research project subject and describe the subject's purpose? This is derived again from Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 198.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I can. Part of the funding that was allocated to develop the new SACE has actually been set aside directly with the introduction of this new subject to deal with it. In 2010 it includes \$1.2 million in grants to schools to pilot the new research project in preparation for its introduction this year, and resources have also been directed to 18 research project standards forums that were held in March and April this year.

More than 700 teachers participated in these forums, which are designed to help teachers assess students' achievement in the subject. Also, there has been a range of resources produced that teachers can refer to as needed for teaching in assessment tasks, including exemplars, instructional videos and guiding documents, and these are also available on the SACE Board website.

The purpose of the research project subject is to ensure students develop their ability to communicate, analyse information, think creatively and learn independently before they leave school. For those students who intend to proceed to university, these research skills are precisely what they will need if they are to succeed in their undergraduate studies.

Professor Marie Brennan, until recently head of the School of Education at the University of South Australia, the state's largest school of education, has made this point publicly, saying:

Research skills are becoming more important for young people entering university because undergraduate programs have a far greater focus on research.

Teachers, too, can see the value of the subject for students who want to push the boundaries of their knowledge. For example, the research project coordinator at Prince Alfred College said in March this year:

It's cutting edge, because it builds educational curiosity. Previously kids weren't rewarded for their intellectual curiosity.

As members are aware, there are wide-ranging consultations with students, teachers, parents, academics and others as part of the review which created the senior secondary certificate (the new

one), and one of the clear messages that came through these consultations is the need to encourage students to stretch themselves by being imaginative and creative while at the same time learning how to plan, research, analyse and project manage their work.

These are the skills that are vital not only for tertiary study but also more skilled employment opportunities. They are the sorts of skills that employers value. This year's SACE students are the first to formally undertake the new research project, and there are myriad topics and interests that students right across our Catholic, independent and public schools are exploring. For example, one student is exploring how important geologists are to the mining industry. It is helping him get more background knowledge about further study in the career that he is interested in, and he is gaining firsthand knowledge of the industry by interviewing geologists.

Another student is combining his passion for fishing with his ambition to be a professional fisherman to explore the fishing industry in South Australia, while other students are tackling other topics, which include looking at the effect Alzheimer's disease has on a person and their family, the effective ways of learning a second language, the process of becoming a police officer, and other subjects that range across science, law, music, art and communications. Just the other day, I was visiting a school where students were exploring subjects such as child-friendly communities, road safety issues relating to vehicle tyres and road handling, water purification and mental health.

Despite the perception often heard that young people are self-absorbed, the topics being explored by students demonstrate that our young people are deeply interested in a broad range of social, cultural and community issues, and it is this that really makes the new research project subject an exciting feature of senior school in this state.

Mr PISONI: I have a supplementary, if I may, Mr Chair. Has the SACE Board had any discussions about any changes to the research project for next year or beyond?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: As part of the ongoing process of reflecting on this first full year of operation, the SACE Board is seeking feedback from the students who have participated in the research project and, of course, teachers and any other stakeholders. In particular, we have undertaken surveys, and we are seeking to collate the information about that. There is no doubt that there will be some changes or finetuning in the research project, no doubt as a reflection of that feedback, but this will abide the broader review we are undertaking into the SACE.

Mr ODENWALDER: Minister, I refer you to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 186. I wonder whether you can outline the initiatives that are taking place to increase opportunities for students to gain VET skills for meaningful jobs while they are still at school.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the member for his question, and I understand that this is a critical issue for the constituents he represents in Little Para. There are a number of initiatives that are enabling thousands of young people to gain practical skills for employment and further training beyond school.

In recent years, we have invested heavily in a range of School to Work initiatives. We sought to lift skills and job readiness of young people, and also to broaden opportunities for all young people. Our approach recognises that there is a diversity of young people, many of whom are leaving school or doing academic subjects for their SACE while not planning to go on to university. We have acted to widen the opportunities for all young people and, in particular, to broaden the choices to learn a trade or other skills through VET courses.

Our initiatives also reflect the increasing demand by industries for more skilled people in a wide range of trades and occupations. Over the next five years, it is estimated that we will need around 134,000 new qualified workers in South Australia to meet the growth in our economy and to replace people who are retiring. These factors all reflect our commitment to develop vocational, education and training initiatives over recent years. These now include our network of trade schools for the future, which enable young people to gain school-based apprenticeships while also completing SACE; our subsequent partnership with the federal government to establish trade training centres across the state and further strengthen this network of support for students to develop the jobs that are in demand; and our industry skills programs, which are directly integrated with the trade schools, the trade training centres and the national partnership measures to support vocational training.

These industry skill programs have been endorsed by industry to enable students across schools with secondary enrolments to do courses that lead to higher-level certificate III competencies in areas of industry skill demand. So far, they cover 13 industry areas, including automotive construction, engineering, food preparation, plumbing, and manufacturing and

technology industries. They have been developed as part of the new SACE to link students into vocational training pathways to certificate III level. This adds to the strength of the new SACE, which offers more opportunities for young people to achieve their SACE by undertaking relevant, recognised VET courses. Under these reforms, students can earn up to 180 of 200 SACE credits by using VET, provided they also meet the compulsory literacy and numeracy requirements of the SACE.

A new VET recognition register lists more than 200 VET qualifications, and the SACE credits that students can earn by undertaking courses in areas as wide ranging as construction through to culture. This reflects our commitment and the support of teachers, apprenticeship brokers, industry skill teams, and industry and education sectors to work together to ensure that there is a broader range of jobs for our young people.

Mr PISONI: I have a supplementary question.

The CHAIR: You are asking a few supplementaries.

Mr PISONI: Exceptional supplementaries, Mr Chair. Are there guidelines in place or are you able to advise the committee how block release school-based apprenticeship students, those who may be away from school for two or three weeks, either on site or at TAFE, can actually catch up on other SACE subjects that they may have missed out on during that process?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am advised that the arrangements for that are school-based and that it really depends on the timetabling arrangements at each school. That is resolved at the level of the school by the school leadership and teachers with the individual students. It is not a general policy matter for the SACE Board.

Mr PISONI: Are our schools resourced to deal with that? The feedback I have had is that they are having difficulty in dealing with that. For a lot of the SACE program, missing a week or missing a second week, particularly if it gets up to three weeks, principals are telling me there is very little opportunity for that child to catch up. They simply do not have the resources to do it.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think the whole point about having trade schools is so that these logistical issues are overcome, so that the student can study the remaining subjects within their SACE as well as the particular requirements of the vocational education and training. The idea is to ensure that the vocational education and training is not instead of the other subjects that comprise the SACE: it is in addition to, and so that becomes a timetabling challenge. The timetabling challenge is assisted by having the facilities on site or in a network of sites in the region.

Mr PISONI: The information I am getting, minister, is that it is not a whole class of students who are going off to block release at one time and so there is a suspension of the program for the year; it could be one or two from a class who are doing the school-based apprenticeship and so the class continues without that student. The feedback I am getting is that there is then no, or very little, opportunity for that student who has missed out on those SACE subjects to study them.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The student has to complete all the subjects that comprise their SACE, so there are no doubt timetabling challenges at the level of the school associated with students having to, on occasions, leave the school site. As I said before, they are minimised by having the trade schools on the site, but to the extent that there needs to be off-site activity, that presents timetabling issues that are worked out at the level of the school. They are not resolved by simply having students miss subjects, I am advised.

Mr PISONI: Are you able to provide a breakdown of the \$9.7 million of accounts paid by the SACE Board as listed in the 2010 annual report?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: This is an examination of the portfolio statement, so what question are you asking about?

Mr PISONI: About SACE, basically. I am referring to the same budget line, looking at page 186: Highlights, or we can go to page 198: the SACE Board. There is expenditure and income listed in the SACE Board. I am happy for that to come back. Again, I am asking these questions, minister, because these are not available through the FOI process.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: What we do have though is a statement of accounts, which sets out all the various categories of what all the money of the SACE Board is spent on. You can ask me a question about any of those categories and I am more than happy to do that.

Mr PISONI: What I am asking for is a breakdown of where that money went, who the suppliers were—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No; you are asking us for—

Mr PISONI: —and what they were for.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: You are asking for the SACE Board to bring in essentially every piece of material that it has.

Mr PISONI: The same sort of thing that I would be entitled to under the FOI process.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: There is a series of items here which indicate the sort of things that SACE spends its money on. I am more than happy to answer any questions that you have—

Mr PISONI: I have asked for a breakdown: who the suppliers are and the number of accounts.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We are more than happy to explain the sort of things we spend and—

Mr PISONI: I am asking for a breakdown. If you are not prepared to do it, that is fine; I will move on to the next question. Can I have the itineraries and reports of the nine staff who took overseas trips, as listed in the annual report?

The CHAIR: I am not sure that the member for Unley should be asking questions about the annual report; he should be asking questions about the budget.

Mr PISONI: There are references to SACE in the budget, including financial references to SACE, and I have given those page references.

The CHAIR: Okay; as long as you can tie it to the budget.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Mr Chairman, I am happy to do it but it is just a question of how much time and work goes into it. I think it is appropriate that we supply details of the purpose of the trip and the general meetings that occurred. The breakdown of every detail of the trip might be a bit onerous but I am more than happy to supply that basic detail—

Mr PISONI: That is available through the FOI process through any other department.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am happy to supply—

Mr PISONI: So I do not know why—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am happy to supply the information to the member. If he has any further questions that arise out of the information we provide, I am sure he will ask them in question time or through some other process. I am just a bit reluctant to committing enormous amounts of time and effort be put into these matters, but I think it is proper that we give him the essence of the material that he is seeking here. It may be easier to provide him with the itineraries and, if it is, then that is something we will do.

Mr PISONI: Thank you. Has all the teacher training for marking the new SACE been completed? In other words, have all teachers who are teaching SACE Stage 2 completed their training for marking?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will invite Dr Kilvert to answer your question.

Dr KILVERT: Through the minister, the reference to the training applies to what we call the clarifying forums that take place during the earlier part of the year, where teachers meet together to look at samples of students' work, to look at benchmarking those standards and then seeing how they relate to their own standards used within those schools.

During the course of this year, we have held a number of those clarifying forums in the research project in term 1, and they were all completed in term 1. There were probably 28 of those clarifying forums. During term 2, the SACE Board has held those clarifying forums for all year 12 subjects for teachers to attend. There will be one or two that we are still completing in these final weeks of term 2 but the great majority were completed throughout term 2. The further training that then occurs is when the assessor panels and the moderator panels meet, and there is an additional training program, again using benchmark materials that are used for those moderation and assessment panels.

Mr PISONI: Could I also have the costs of the merit ceremony? I am happy for that to come back.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes, I will take that on notice. Just to answer your earlier question about the art show, I am advised that \$36,000 was allocated for it in 2010 and \$25,000 has been budgeted for the 2011 art show.

Mr PISONI: We have just had the 2011 show, have we not? The one that was—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sorry, that is the actual cost.

Mr PISONI: And the budget for next year was?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not have that but I will find it for you.

Mr PISONI: Thank you. In the investment activities for the SACE Board we saw actual \$406,000 in 2009-10, estimated result of \$821,000 for 2010-11 and then we have \$110,000. Could you explain what the investment activities are for the SACE Board? These are other payments.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will invite Dr Kilvert to answer your question.

Dr KILVERT: The reference to the investment activities relates to those expenditures that apply primarily to IT. The reason for the higher level in the 2010-11 budget was the SACE Board's purchase of two additional major servers, as well as other IT infrastructure. So the primary components in those investment activities relate to the operations of information technology.

Mr PISONI: I refer to page 160, Administered items, and the first dot point. Enrolment data for languages in year 12 have dropped dramatically this year. Are you able to explain the reasons for that? Has a report been produced, or is one being produced, to investigate the drop in languages, why languages have dropped off in year 12 this year in particular and how that fits in with the national curriculum, which is planned to include languages? Will the South Australian department of education be equipped, by the time we introduce the national curriculum, to provide language teachers to meet that obligation?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The question of language subject selection at senior secondary school requires a bit of background. Over a period of time there has been a decline in students who are choosing language as a senior secondary subject, and that really began considerably before the existence of the new SACE. By definition, there is a reduction in the number of subjects to be taken at year 12 level by 20 per cent, so you would expect there to be a proportionate reduction of 20 per cent across all subjects—subject, of course, to the choices that students make.

For some subjects, and some languages within the set of choices around languages, there has been a reduction in the number of students choosing languages, in some cases by greater than 20 per cent. However, I think it is a misunderstanding to say that that is a matter that has any particular or necessary implications for the new national curriculum. The new national curriculum seeks to put in place the framework of what is taught by way of language teaching across a range of languages, and that will provide, if you like, the curriculum content. It does not necessarily have any implications for the sort of choices that will be made by students. It does not address the question of mandating particular languages or the choices that students make about those languages.

Once again, this is something that will be dealt with in the review that we will be undertaking of the SACE at the end of its first full year of completion, but it was expected that there would be, at the very least, a 20 per cent reduction in the take-up of year 12 subjects across the board because of the reduction in the number of subjects. Some of the areas that are experiencing decline have also been experiencing a long-term decline. The subjects of history, geography and some of the languages have been in a long-term position of being declining choices associated with senior secondary subjects.

The new national curriculum gives us the opportunity to consider what should be the compulsory subjects in the first 10 years of schooling so that students can then make informed choices about what should happen in the senior secondary areas. Ultimately, this comes back to a question of student choice, and that is really the gravamen of these reductions.

Mr PISONI: Minister, can we have the number of year 12 students in government schools enrolled in SACE year 12 languages last year and this year? Obviously, I am happy for you to come back with this.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes, I can supply that.

Mr PISONI: Can I have the same figures for non-government schools, too?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 6, page 26, the Cora Barclay Centre. I am interested in what benefit children with hearing impairment see from the additional investment in the Cora Barclay Centre.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the honourable member for her question. At the outset, I might just clarify that the review of SACE that we speak about is after the second full year of operation, so the end of next year.

Mr PISONI: Can I just clarify: the Cora Barclay Centre—I believe that is a SACE. Does that fall in this category?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, it is a non-government administered item. I thank the honourable member for her question about the Cora Barclay Centre. The centre is internationally recognised for its quality therapeutic hearing programs, and it has had a long record of proven results. For children who are deaf or hearing impaired, the earlier stages of life are particularly important. This is where the work of Cora Barclay begins. It supports children and families in obtaining cochlear implants to improve hearing. It also works intensively with children and their families to develop the children's language and communication skills. This is giving hearing impaired children the best possible start in life.

The work of Cora Barclay has been helped by the government's successful newborn screening testing, but the very success of the program has increased the workload of Cora Barclay, which in turn put pressure on its resourcing. As Cora Barclay identified, its early intervention numbers have more than doubled in the last two years, so the government has stepped in to help. It has provided a \$2.05 million funding packing over the next three years, which is a substantial boost to the centre's existing funding and will help the centre continue to support those children being detected with hearing issues.

As the budget papers show, some of the additional support was made possible by an investment of \$200,000 per annum from the budget into DECS Administered Items, with the balance being made available from the existing administered items budget.

What this means is that Cora Barclay will continue to be able to work its wonders with children, enabling them to hear for the first time, to work with these children to make sense of the new world around them, to develop the communication skills that those without hearing issues take for granted so that by the time they get to school those children should have a similar capacity to hear and interact with their teachers and classmates as any other child. What it means is that we will be able to offer this service to even more children. What it also shows is that we are willing to work with non-government sectors to deliver good educational outcomes to our children, and this is an important observation.

This is one of the great values of the administered items budget, which is designed to promote government working with non-government organisations in the interests of our children, and the extra assistance to Cora Barclay is just one example of its value.

Mr ODENWALDER: I refer the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 198. Can the minister explain, perhaps by reference to an example, how the administered items budget works to facilitate the government working with non-government organisations to improve educational opportunities for our children?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the member for that question, and what a surprise it has been! I mentioned earlier the additional investment we put into the Cora Barclay Centre, which is a good example of the benefits of this budget, but another really important example was the support provided to The Smith Family and its Let's Read program. All members would be aware of The Smith Family and its commitment to disadvantaged Australian children. It seeks to help those children to make the most of their educational opportunities and to try to break the cycle of disadvantage and help those children make a better future for themselves.

I would like to acknowledge here the good work of The Smith Family and its general manager, Graham Jaeschke, who is doing an enormous amount of good work in that organisation. One of The Smith Family's programs is Let's Read. We know that children who have not developed early literacy skills by the time they start school are much less likely to catch up with their peers. We know that one of the key factors, in the absence of these skills, is the fact that families may not be regularly reading to their children.

Let's Read tackles the issue of early literacy by providing parents with the skills, resources and support they need to encourage them to read out loud with their children and supports families to enjoy reading together. It is a program delivered through community partnerships with early childhood professionals, and it sits perfectly with our children's centre model in which child care, family support, health and education services are brought together under one roof. These centres provide those types of services tailored to the needs of the local communities in supportive environments under the care of early childhood professionals.

While there have been small pilots of the Let's Read program in our children's centres previously, this year we were able to provide \$365,000 over three years to bring Let's Read to every one of our children's centres. This will support the children's centres to contribute to performance of the outcomes that we set for them, including the important engagement of parents, children having access to high-quality early learning programs, making sure that communities have the physical and social environments that are necessary to encourage parents to come into these centres.

This will mean that thousands of young people and their families across South Australia will be engaged in reading so that their children are better placed to read when they get to school, and this is an incredibly powerful way in which we can lift the reading and literacy results for our children.

Mr PISONI: This question relates to page 198: Statement of cash flows—Grants and subsidies. The line for non-government schools per capita shows the amount of \$774,970,000. How much of that is state government funding, and can you explain why the state and federal government funding are not shown separately?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the honourable member. In answer to his question about the 2012 budget, it is \$30,000 for the art show. In relation to the presentation of the budget papers, on 1 January 2009, the Inter-governmental Agreement on Federal Relations came into operation. Under the new arrangements, the Department of Treasury and Finance, rather than the Department of Education and Children's Services administered items, are the recipients of the commonwealth funding for National Partnership payments and the national specific purpose payments. So, that is a change. The financial statements recognise that, from 1 January, funding is provided to DECS in the form of appropriation and other transfers from DTF rather than revenue directly from the commonwealth.

Commonwealth funds received through DTF are distributed as grants based on payment schedules received from the commonwealth. Commonwealth funding is now based on the capacity of communities to provide financial support to their schools, and the non-government schools are funded to their socio-economic score—the SES model. The state funding component to non-government schools is allocated according to school enrolments and the needs of students in schools. Each year the state budget is adjusted to reflect the Treasury inflation rate on goods and services, and an adjustment for 25 per cent of costs for salary movements, based on the latest enterprise bargaining rates, applied to the base full-time equivalent, is assumed as part of the funding formula.

There is also an adjustment for increase and decrease of student numbers in non-government schools, and an offset for in-kind assistance provided by the department to the non-government sector, for instance, school card and the student conveyance allowance. In 2010-11, an estimated \$158 million will be paid to non-government schools which includes the in-kind assistance provided by DECS plus allocations to non-government school secretaries and advisory committees on non-government schools. The estimated payment also includes \$1 million for children with special needs.

In the 2011-12 budget, the state component is estimated at approximately \$162.69 million. In addition, a further \$1 million to support children with a disability is included in a separate line in the 2011-12 budget papers. The payments I have quoted from include the 2010-11 budget commitment of a further \$20.1 million over four years, as well as the continuation of \$4 million per annum funding over four years.

This funding is for students with special needs including those with behaviour support needs and with assessed disabilities, Aboriginal students, refugee students, students eligible for school card, students who have English as a second language, and to support the development of skills and knowledge in the key strategic area of maths and science. This equates to an additional \$9 million per annum.

The final 2011 state funded component will be finalised following the 2011-12 mid-year budget review. It will take into account movement in enrolment figures and the impact of wage increases. Individual school auditors have certified the August census data as correct, so that is when those final numbers will be known.

The CHAIR: One last question before we break for morning tea.

Mr PISONI: Of that \$162.69 million for this year's budget, what is the in-kind value?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We will have to take that on notice. We will bring that back.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister; thank you, members of the committee and thank you, advisers. We will now break for morning tea.

[Sitting suspended from 10:14 to 10:30]

Membership:

Mr Griffiths substituted for Mr Gardner.

Mr Treloar substituted for Ms Sanderson.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr K. Bartley, Chief Executive, Department of Education and Children's Services.

Ms J. Andrews, Deputy Chief Executive, Department of Education and Children's Services.

Ms J. Emery, Director, Office of the Chief Executive, Department of Education and Children's Services.

Ms J. Riedstra, Executive Director, Finance and Infrastructure, Department of Education and Children's Services.

Mr G. DeGennaro, Deputy Chief Executive, Resources, Department of Education and Children's Services.

The CHAIR: We will go straight to questions and I ask the shadow minister to take the call.

Mr PISONI: This relates to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 184, description objectives. The senior years aim to provide students with successful preparation for study, training and work. Minister, are you able to advise why DECS and school resources are being used to notify SA Unions of details relating to student placement for work experience when a school is ultimately responsible for maintaining a high standard of student placement?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not know the answer to that question. I presume that is part of some arrangement that has been in place for some period of time to notify the relevant industrial association. Many of the arrangements that occur in this vocational education and training area are, essentially, tripartite arrangements between government business and unions, and I would imagine there are probably similar arrangements about the way in which Business SA or the equivalent associations are also involved in these decisions. I suspect they are arrangements of a longstanding nature. I will check on them.

Mr PISONI: In the workplace learning agreement form that students going on work experience must fill out there is a special provision for the employer to sign. It is employer approval for the purposes of the United Trades & Labour Council which, of course, is SA Unions. There is a box for them to tick: 'I agree' to the school informing the SA Unions of the business name of this work placement provider and its location to assist in maintaining the highest standard of the student work placement, or 'I do not agree'. There is a box for the employer to sign. Can the minister advise the house what happens if the boxes are left blank?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: If it refers to the United Trades & Labour Council I think that gives you a bit of a clue how long these arrangements have been in place.

Mr PISONI: This is dated 2006.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sure, but the United Trades & Labour Council has not been in existence for many a long year.

Mr PISONI: It was there in 2006.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: All right, but just listen to my answer. It suggests it is a longstanding arrangement to notify the relevant peak industrial organisation about the arrangements that are occurring. I presume—I do not know, but I can give an educated guess that it is to ensure that the arrangements in place are proper, and have proper regard for occupational health and safety and for the industrial entitlements that may exist to make sure there is no exploitation of the young people involved. I would have thought it is an entirely appropriate thing to do.

Only someone who is allergic to unions could ask that question in such a way as to suggest there is something wrong with it. I do not know whether you were bitten by a union when you were a young man and now you have some accumulated allergy, but—

Mr PISONI: I have a point of order, Mr Chair. The question was pretty simple. I am asking for justification for it. I have asked the question: what happens if neither box is ticked? Is the union notified?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not know what the details are, but I will try to find out. It is a pretty simple safeguard to protect young people, who are potentially vulnerable people in this context, from being exploited, I would imagine, or having their safety put in some jeopardy. It is pretty orthodox to ensure that the relevant industrial organisation, or at least the peak body, could supervise that to make sure that those safeguards are put in place. As the name suggests, I suspect that this is an arrangement which is of long standing and which has never caused any controversy, but I will make some inquiries about it.

Mr PISONI: Why is Workplace SA or the Employee Ombudsman not informed?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Because I suspect that these arrangements have been in place for a very long period of time. They probably even predated the existence of the Employee Ombudsman, I would hazard a guess.

Mr PISONI: Women were not allowed to work once they were married many years ago as well, minister, but that has changed.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: What I am suggesting is that I do not see this as anything to get too worked up about. I would have thought it is what you would expect to find in arrangements of this sort. I do not understand what the difficulty is. Are you suggesting that there should not be a role to play in relevant industrial associations ensuring that young people are not exploited or put at risk in these circumstances?

Mr PISONI: What I am asking you is: why is it the unions' role to do that when the department has a duty of care and we have Workplace SA that deals specifically with occupational health and safety, and we have the Employee Ombudsman?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I suspect that there are broader issues than that at stake. It is not unknown that schemes that provide young people for the purposes of training can be misused from time to time, which would be a source of concern.

Mr PISONI: Has the department had any complaints?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I would have thought that would be part of the safeguard that would be put in place to ensure that some independent organisation supervised this. It is orthodox for us to do that in a range of ways, when you have vulnerable citizens, to ensure that organisations that traditionally represent those citizens are involved in becoming aware of these arrangements so that they can potentially monitor them just to ensure that those activities are properly undertaken.

Mr PISONI: So, you believe that SA Unions is entitled to know that information? Is that what you are saying?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I suspect that it is an arrangement of longstanding duration, and I am sure it has operated effectively. I would imagine that the broader employer associations would support it. There is a range of tripartite arrangements between government, Business SA and SA Unions that occur in a range of fields involving the education sector, and I suspect that this is just another one of them.

Mr PISONI: So, do you support SA Unions being notified of employers that take on kids for work experience?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes.

Mr PISONI: My next question relates to page 186, Highlights, at dot point 4. We are looking at TER, or ATAR, scores. Why has your department failed to meet the strategic plan targets for science and maths? I refer to page 123 of the Strategic Plan, target 6.17. The baseline was set in 2003, when 39 per cent of students were achieving ATAR (or TER as it was then) in maths, physics and chemistry. Why have you failed to reach the 15 per cent increase, taking it to 45 per cent by 2010? If we look at 2004, it dropped down to 38 per cent; in 2005, it dropped down to 37 per cent; in 2006, it dropped down to 35 per cent; and it flatlined at 35 per cent again in 2007. Currently we are sitting at 37 per cent. Back in 2000, 44 per cent of students were receiving a pass mark in maths, physics and chemistry. Can you explain to the committee, minister, how it is that your department has failed to deliver those strategic plan targets?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: This is an important question. As a starting point we need to explain what South Australia's Strategic Plan is all about. It is a plan with a series of targets for the whole of the community. It is not a plan for governments in particular or any one department. This is what we need to do as a community. This is the same challenge facing just about every country: the declining number of students in maths and science. The truth is we have chosen a stretched target to achieve, and it is a difficult target to achieve.

That is what South Australia's Strategic Plan is about. It is about setting a target for the whole of the community, because it is going to require the whole of the community to achieve this. These are choices that are essentially made by students. How do we get those choices to be different choices made by students? We have a very comprehensive strategy that does not just apply to schools, but applies to the whole of government. The element that is of relevance for today's purposes is the bit that the Department of Education is responsible for.

The Primary Maths and Science Strategy, which was announced in 2009, at \$51.1 million, is funded between 2010 and 2013. That strategy includes a number of matters: a new Teach SA program to boost the number of specialist maths and science teachers in secondary schools, and also a four-year \$8 million program to recruit, reskill and retrain up to 155 maths and science teachers in our high schools through a whole range of mechanisms. That is the idea of keeping ones we have, retraining ones who have some skills or actually diverting graduates who were never going to be teachers from the maths and science subject specialty into maths and science. We are doing that in a range of ways: financial incentives, course payments, mentor support, professional development release time, collegiate support and also recognition activities. The program will commence later this year once the successful tenderers have been announced.

We also have a new outreach program through the Royal Institution (RiAus), which is the sister establishment created outside the UK. The program will help young people learn about careers in science and maths. We have more than 6,000 R-7 teachers who have been trained in Primary Connections. That is something that has occurred in 2010. The same number of R-7 teachers will also be trained in Maths for All in 2011, as well as some continued professional learning in science.

In the secondary years, 11 schools are trialling the Science and Technology Education Leveraging Relevance Program, embedding it into year 9 and 10 science teaching. A further seven schools will be supported to join the group in 2012, with DECS providing \$48,500 to the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering (ATSE) to do this. Three schools in South Australia are also trialling the Science by Doing national resources developed by the Australian Academy of Science. The Teach SA program is currently being implemented. The project manager was appointed in February and we will have the tenders awarded later this year.

What we know is that the percentage of students in maths studies, physics and/or chemistry with a tertiary rank has bobbed around a bit. In 2010 it went up from the previous year, from 37 per cent to 38 per cent. It still remains low for females, and so that is an issue of concern. It is at 50 per cent for males and so there is a substantial gender difference here in the take-up by students of these particular subjects.

The other thing that is important to remember is that we are starting in the early years. From the start of this year students in years 4 to 7 will be spending a minimum of 120 minutes per week on science and 300 minutes per week on maths and numeracy. At the start of 2011, year 3 students will be spending a minimum of 90 minutes per week on science and 300 minutes per week on maths and numeracy. By the start of 2013, reception to year 2 students will be

spending a minimum of 300 minutes a week on maths and numeracy and up to 90 minutes per week on science.

This is a substantial change where we are mandating these arrangements at the school level. This combination of trying to get engagement, lifting the skills of our teachers and making sure that we have mandatory periods of instruction in this area is absolutely crucial. I had an online discussion with a range of students about why they had chosen maths/science or why they had not. There was a range of misconceptions about what the opportunities are with maths and science.

The reality is that many of the jobs of the future are being created in maths and science, and I think students need to be aware of that because they are limiting their opportunities if they are not studying maths and science. Just the other day I was out at the Australian School of Maths and Science based at Flinders and had the opportunity to fly a flight simulator, which is an incredibly exciting way of showcasing some of the opportunities that exist in the maths and science occupations but, more importantly, it is about engaging young people.

One of the things that came through loud and clear from maths and science students who picked it (or did not choose those subjects) was that they found the theory pretty dry and uninteresting. Obviously, it was the practical applications that excited their enthusiasm. The engagement of the teaching is going to be a critical issue around this, as well. There is a lot of work to be done in this area, but we are no orphan, because many countries are grappling with precisely the same issues.

Mr PISONI: So what you are saying, minister, is that you are on to it. I have a supplementary question: you mentioned Teach SA.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes.

Mr PISONI: I have the tender documents here that closed on 3 May, and in those tender documents it states that it is expected that the service tenderer for the three strands and assessment centre will commence operating from 1 July 2011. Have you selected a provider and, if so, is that when they will be starting?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not know the answer to that question just yet. I will see if I can find out in the next little while.

Mr PISONI: Also, if you have a supplier, my understanding is that there was some talk of \$7 million or \$8 million being provided for that program. Where will I find that in the budget?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: You are right: there is \$8.03 million supplied to this four-year program. I suspect it is embedded within one of the budget lines, but I will try to identify it for you. I do not think it is identified as a separate, discrete figure.

Ms THOMPSON: My question refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 187. Can the minister advise on what resources have been directed at school retention activities so that more students can realise the benefits offered by the completion of their schooling?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the honourable member for her question. The benefits of students completing high school are obviously broadly accepted by the community. For those who stay on and complete school, employment prospects are better and they are more likely to be paid at a higher rate, and they are better able to negotiate their day-to-day activities. They are also more able to participate constructively in community life.

The most recent figures on school retention indicate that we have the best retention rates since 1994, at 84.2 per cent in 2010, up from 79.5 per cent a year earlier, and well up on the 67.2 per cent low point under the previous Liberal government in 1999. This government is making those additional years at school count. We are giving young people real support to be engaged in learning that gives purpose to their schooling and prepares them for life after it.

There are a number of measures that have contributed to this. Clearly, requiring students to be earning or learning is one measure, but coupled with this there has been a range of initiatives. More than \$70 million has been directed to reform the SACE, which has included a deliberate approach to recognise and value a high standard of learning and achievement in a broader range of areas. This is especially the case with vocational education and training, where young people can now get a foot in the door of their future careers while they finish their schooling. There has also been large-scale investment in trade training and industry-recognised curriculum in schools by both state and federal governments.

To further strengthen student engagement in school and support learning and achievement, an additional \$20 million over four years has been provided to schools through the Communities Making a Difference national partnership with the federal government. This funding goes directly to schools to provide one-on-one student mentoring, as well as teacher training and building schools' staff skills to better engage and retain students at school through the youth development program. From the beginning of July 2011, 181 targeted schools will be receiving this additional support.

There has also been more support for our schools' efforts to keep vulnerable young people aged 12 to 19 engaged in learning, and linked with local employment opportunities through our ICAN networks. ICANs enable alternatives to mainstream education to be provided that help these young people tackle the complexities their life circumstances add to the task of learning. ICAN networks bring the resources and support offered by family, school, community groups and businesses to bear on this vital task. Flexible enrolment, community mentoring, personal development programs and academic support can all form part of a broad-based community response to meeting the needs of young people.

In 2005 the state government established four ICANs in Adelaide and Upper Spencer Gulf areas, and more than \$5 million has been allocated to support these programs from 2009 to 2013. With the Communities Making a Difference national partnership with the federal government, an additional \$32.7 million has been provided to expand the ICAN programs across the state. So, while those ICANs were in certain discrete areas, they are now going across the whole state with the benefit of this federal government program. It was the recognition by the commonwealth that this program has been so successful.

ICAN funding is provided to local communities through grants for innovative program development, as well as directly to schools to purchase individual case management support for students. In addition, ICAN grant funding provides resources to build teacher and community capacity to support student engagement in accredited learning through partnerships facilitated between school and community flexible learning providers.

In 2010 ICANs were established in the regional areas of Yorke Peninsula, Southern Fleurieu and Kangaroo Island, Northern Country, Murraylands, the Riverland, Eyre Peninsula and the Lower South-East. In the second half of 2011, more ICANs are scheduled to commence operation in the Mid North, Barossa and eastern Hills areas, providing complete coverage of the state. The expanded ICAN program also includes in-school support for students in years 6 and 7 to help the transition into high school.

Currently, ICANs directly support more than 5,000 students who have been significantly disengaged from learning. These are precisely the sort of students who were left to cope on their own in the past, with negative consequences for them as individuals and for the broader community as a whole. They are precisely the students our school retention efforts are putting on a pathway to success for working and community life.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 173. How is the student-centred funding model giving schools greater flexibility in the allocation of budgets?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the member for Reynell and the Chair for the opportunity to comment on the student-centred funding model, which was a matter of great controversy when it was introduced. It has radically changed the way of funding schools. The new funding model gives principals greater flexibility in how they allocate the resources they get. DECS central office used to dictate the numbers of teachers and other staff schools got for their enrolments and provided funding to match that, so most of a school's budget was spent paying for the numbers and type of staff the school was required to have.

Under the new model, schools now get funding based on their enrolments, and it is largely up to them to determine how they organise their schools, as long as they satisfy the relevant industrial arrangements. As we supported the introduction of the new funding model, we also supplied resources of \$265 million over four years of new money going directly to schools. That is more than \$60 million extra going directly into school budgets this year just to support that model over and above any amount needed to provide increased wages and other costs. This means more teachers and more staff in our schools. It also has other benefits for schools. More importantly, it reduces the uncertainty created by the old model.

The model tied staffing components to enrolments and then funded the staffing component. A change in just one or two enrolments could be the difference between gaining or losing a salary, which created real issues for the way in which schools could plan their classes leading into a

school year, not knowing whether they would lose a teacher and would have to reconfigure their classes, with all the consequent interruptions to student learning it entailed.

Under the new model, the same loss of one or two students would lose only a fraction of the teacher's salary and so make that sort of interruption far less likely. The new funding system, because of its significant nature, is a major change for schools. For many principals and schools, I think this year has been a bit of a learning year as they start to re-imagine how their schools could be configured with this new flexibility.

We are having a review, involving the Principals Association and the AEU, on the implementation of the new model just to make sure that any teething problems in the model are ironed out and to start highlighting some examples in schools of what can be done. Overall, there is great flexibility, more certainty, more funding. It is no surprise that groups within the community, the Principals Association and SAASSO have been clamouring for this new funding model for some time.

Mr ODENWALDER: I refer the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 182. Will the minister outline how the government is working to meet the needs of disadvantaged students and their families, including through the Smarter Schools partnership with the commonwealth?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: One of the great endeavours of our public school system—and, indeed, schools generally—is to ensure that all children have the opportunity to benefit through a good education. This endeavour manifests itself in many ways, but in recent years the establishment of the Smarter Schools National Partnerships and, in particular, the Community Making a Difference partnership (sometimes known as the Low SES School Communities National Partnership) has renewed our focus on this task.

Over the period of 2008-09 to 2014-15, the national partnership will put a total of \$159.75 million into initiatives in South Australian schools to support students from low SES backgrounds. Importantly, the independent Catholic and public school sectors are working together to implement the national partnership in South Australia so that any child who needs additional support, regardless of the sector, can benefit. In the public school system, national partnership funding is providing for an expansion of the existing ICAN network so that students from all public schools across the state will be able to access support.

The ICAN programs are also leading Australia in developing new ways to address students who are socially and emotionally isolated from school and the community through an Australia-wide pilot project, notschool.com. The project will help 60 of our most disengaged young people to learn using an online teacher, a virtual learning environment and an online community of support. Partnership funding also supports one-to-one mentoring and youth development activities that help students successfully transition from primary school to high school and remain engaged in learning.

In 2010, 63 schools in metropolitan and regional areas were supported through this initiative to recruit and train volunteer community mentors for their students. There is also an additional \$5.4 million for measures that will help recruit the best teachers and leaders for schools where they are most needed. These measures include incentives to teachers who want to make a difference by working in schools of greatest needs, additional financial support for the training of student teachers in rural and remote and disadvantaged city schools, seed funding to regions and schools for the development of programs and incentives to address local recruitment issues that have been identified.

This funding is in addition to the existing programs, such as Sea Change, for attracting and retraining high-quality maths and science teachers to country locations, the Teach SA program, and the additional payments provided to teachers and leaders working in designated country locations. National partnership funding will be used to support a range of valuable programs being implemented across all three school sectors; in total, 301 schools will benefit from this funding.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I refer to Budget Paper 3, page 121, and specifically the transportation of students. I have a few questions on that. In regard to the private operator provided bus routes, my understanding is that the request for proposals process has involved four calls so far in 2011, with another one intended to occur in July. Can the minister confirm how many bus routes are actually involved in these five calls?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sorry, the number? Could you repeat that?

Mr GRIFFITHS: So far in 2011 there have been four requests for proposals for private operator provided school bus routes, with another one, as I understand it, intended to be in July. How many bus routes are involved in these requests for proposal?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will set out this procurement process and where we are up to in that process. As you would recall, we commenced by calling for expressions of interest in October last year. The second stage of the procurement process, which is inviting requests for proposals from the expression of interest registrants, has commenced with the following volume of routes issued: in February, 41 routes, which is 373 requests for proposals issued to 33 expression of interest registrants; in March 2011, 19 routes, with 198 requests for proposals issued to 32 expression of interest respondents; in April 2011, 29 routes, with 276 requests for proposals issued to 28 expression of interest respondents; in May 2011, 10 routes, with 81 requests for proposals issued to 19 expression of interest respondents. In summary, 99 out of 275 contracted routes or 36 per cent have been issued.

Mr GRIFFITHS: In regard to the private operator, in assessing those, I am advised that they are reviewed against a benchmark figure that DECS has determined what the cost of providing the service should be. I am particularly interested for the committee to be made aware of what factors are involved in that and what weighting each of those factors receives in determining that benchmark figure that DECS has determined that operators have to meet to have any chance of being successful.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Obviously, we are in the middle of a tender process, so we have not disclosed the weightings that we have given to each discrete component of the benchmark. We have talked about the matters that comprise the benchmark, and that has been given to the association and I think also briefing sessions to the various people who have expressed interest. They are the things you would imagine—insurance, wages, etc. That has all been disclosed. A particular loading has been applied in the tender process which gives a positive weighting in favour of existing operators, but all of this has been made clear to the relevant association and through briefing sessions to the expression of interest registrants.

Mr GRIFFITHS: I am aware that existing operators have a 5 per cent tolerance figure that has been provided to them to recognise the service they have provided over many years, but it is this benchmark figure that, in my discussions with the Bus and Coach Association which is the association that you have just highlighted that DECS has also had discussions with, the Bus and Coach Association does not actually believe that the benchmark figure is achievable. I am told that in past discussions there has been an agreement with DECS that it is unworkable.

There has been a review undertaken by DECS, and KPMG has been involved in the review, as well as Pitcher Partners and a variety of legal and accounting firms. I respect the fact that it is part of an ongoing tender review process, but, surely, your putting on the record what the components of the benchmarking figure are and what weighting is attached to them does not jeopardise any of the proposals. I would like you to reconsider that position, because I think it is important that, because it is causing concern to a vast number of operators who cannot reach this benchmark figure, it is subjected to public scrutiny.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I understand your point and I understand that you have invited me to reconsider. It is worth bearing in mind that of the 36 routes that have been awarded, 47 per cent have gone to the incumbents. The fact that we have had such an extraordinary number of people who have decided to tender, and then once the tender arrangements have been concluded, have sought to reach agreement with us and contract with us, rather suggests that the opposite is the case; that is, they feel that they can operate a successful and sustainable business model by entering into the arrangements that they have with us. I think that all evidence is to the contrary. We would have an absence of tenderers and an absence of settled contracts if the benchmark figure that you are suggesting is so out of keeping with commercial reality.

I must say this has been a source of ongoing debate for a very long period of time, well before I was in this portfolio. There was a select committee into these matters and the officers with me now gave evidence to that select committee. This has been an ongoing source of contention but, nevertheless, we are at this stage in the tender process and we are successfully completing arrangements with a range of tenderers. It does not appear to be unduly disadvantaging incumbents, with 47 per cent of the routes going to incumbents.

The remaining routes have also gone to existing operators, so they may not be the incumbents on that route but they are also existing operators within the DECS school network within South Australia. So, if you want to look at it that way, 100 per cent are going to existing South Australian bus operators who operate school bus routes within this state. I would have thought that that suggests the procurement process is proceeding in an orderly fashion.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister, I am a numbers driven person as much as anybody in the world, but numbers do not always necessarily tell the true story. I will give you some feedback that I have had from the Bus and Coach Association. Operators who have been successful and who make up part of that 47 per cent that you have quoted as being successful so far have only come to that position in desperation because they have financial obligations that have to be met for the payment of buses. It comes down to a situation where they are basically working for nothing or, potentially, their business is making a loss, but they had committed to the purchase of new buses in the hope that they were going to be a successful tenderer and, therefore, they had to provide new buses as part of the contract.

The financial viability of a whole industry of people who, for many years—and I am informed that some family businesses have existed for up to 55 years—is now at risk of collapse because the benchmark figure is flawed and it is so difficult for these operators. They are fine people who want to try to provide a continued, good service to the school communities that they have serviced for many years, but with the current situation it is near impossible for them.

I know that you have had operators involved in discussions with the Bus and Coach Association yesterday and a request was made for the tender process to be stopped to allow the benchmark figure to be reviewed to ensure that there is complete transparency and, therefore, allow these family businesses to have a chance to provide the service and to be successful in their operations.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The difficulty I have with that proposition is that the contracts are of a long duration and I cannot imagine anyone locking themselves into contracts of seven years with two four-year rights of extension if they were such punitive arrangements.

Mr GRIFFITHS: It is because they are desperate, minister. They are truly desperate.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That is a little hard to follow, because this is a set of arrangements which largely were put in place by the last government. We had a whole lot of existing contractors whose contracts were open-ended. What, in fact, happened is that the previous Liberal government decided to translate those into fixed-term contracts which are all expiring about now. It was always contemplated that at the end of that process there would be a tender arrangement, and tender arrangements are traditionally carried out on the basis of best value for government.

In this case we have modified that to also ensure that the value proposition was sophisticated enough to recognise quality issues, that is, an existing operator and their long service and the relationship they have built up between the school community and the operator was given proper weight.

That, I must say, seems to be what is playing out with the 36 of the routes awarded, 47 per cent of them going to incumbent operators and the balance going to operators who operated other routes within the South Australian school system. I would not imagine they would be signing these contracts if they felt that they were ones which were not providing them with a sustainable business model.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister, I urge you to have personal discussions with the Bus and Coach Association so you can understand the pressure that these people are under.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I appreciate that the Bus and Coach Association is in a difficult position. All the people who will win or lose these tenders are going to be their members one way or the other, so that they are in a very difficult—

Mr PISONI: Not the Victorians.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, it is not a Victorian operator: it was actually a Queensland operator. In fact, it was an existing operator within South Australia. So it might have been based in Queensland but it was an existing South Australian school operator. So that was a bit of misinformation that was put out.

The reality is that each of them is an existing member so there are different interests amongst their membership. They have competition between their members for these bus routes. They told us that for a lot of operators there would not be any competition for the routes, so we went through an expression of interest process and found out there was competition for every route, including multiple operators seeking to operate those routes.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Indeed, because DECS encouraged operators to tender for every possible route.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is a bit difficult for us not to encourage—

Mr GRIFFITHS: Beyond what they normally would have considered applying for.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It would be a bit difficult for us to open expressions of interest and keep it a secret. It is meant to be an open and transparent process. It is one which you commenced and which we have continued. It is difficult to see how you could really do this in any other way that would be consistent with high standards of probity. As for the question of communicating directly with the Bus and Coach Association, I am more than happy. I spoke personally to the executive officer of the Bus and Coach Association just a few days ago—

Mr GRIFFITHS: After we asked the question in parliament.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, before you asked the question in parliament. Before question time I spoke to them.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: She was concerned that misinformation was being put out there and that people were being unduly concerned that somehow there was a bit of misinformation that had got out there that we had been holding back the awarding of contracts for some purpose that proved to be false, and I was able to satisfy her of that. I am more than happy to have direct discussions with the leadership of the Bus and Coach Association, as I had discrete representations from individual operators as we were designing this process.

Mr GRIFFITHS: By way of a supplementary question, if I may, I put to you a question the Bus and Coach Association has asked me to pose to you. It relates to your reference to the fact that the other 53 per cent or thereabouts of the contracts that have been awarded have been awarded to companies that already have operations in South Australia providing school bus routes.

My understanding, based on what the BCA has told me, is that those operators also provide Adelaide Metro services in some quantity, and therefore the depot costs of their operation, which for all bus operators form a fairly significant component of any tender price they submit, has therefore been absorbed by virtue of the fact the Adelaide Metro service contract provisions cover the cost of their depot and, therefore, that creates an unfair situation for smaller concerns up to, say, the 19-bus situations, which therefore cannot compete.

The Bus and Coach Association really does feel that there is a ACCC issue here about unfair competition being in place because of existing government contracts, which they pay for as part of their taxes, supporting a competing bid being made against them and that that creates an inequity they cannot in any way match up against.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think that we need to remind ourselves that our purpose is just to get kids to school—that is what we want to do—and we want to do that in the safest, most effective and most comfortable way possible. That is why we are putting in air conditioning and improving the safety requirements of the buses. So, that is our principal objective.

The next thing, obviously, is to make sure that the arrangements are orderly so that they are secure and sustainable; we have tried to do that with the procurement process. Quality is important and the relationships are important, so we want to try, as far as possible, to keep them together. But you need to think through what you have just said for a moment to realise that, if someone can, through some natural advantage, provide the service for a lower cost so that we get the same quality service but better value for money, it would be difficult for us to ignore that.

Mr GRIFFITHS: Minister, I do recognise the complications of the question, but I posed that question to you on behalf of the Bus and Coach Association, because it will certainly an issue they will wish to take up with you when they have the opportunity to meet with you.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Are they suggesting that some of the operators have metropolitan bus runs not in the school sector but in some other school sector? Is that the point?

Mr GRIFFITHS: Sorry; I was distracted.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Do they have contracts other than school bus contracts; is that what you are suggesting?

Mr GRIFFITHS: Yes, the ones we are talking about.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: What—public transport?

Mr GRIFFITHS: Yes: Adelaide Metro. I referred to that in my statement.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: So, public transport generally, not school transport?

Mr GRIFFITHS: Yes, and school transport also, which is what you referred to.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not know the circumstances of the winning tenderers, whether they had a cost advantage and how they managed to achieve that. On the face of it, without looking at it closely, they seem to be advantages that are not inappropriate advantages. They are advantages they have sought to rely upon to be able to offer their services on some of these routes. It would be difficult for us to exclude them from tendering on that basis or to make some adjustments to penalise them for that advantage because, ultimately, the advantage accrues to the education system in terms of getting value for money.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 171. Minister, what benefits for South Australian schools will arise from the expenses related to the Teacher Refreshment Scheme?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We, of course, have an ageing teacher workforce; 53 per cent of our teachers are 51 years of age or over. We need to manage the fact of that ageing workforce, because we obviously do not want to have a very large number of people all leaving at the same time. Most of these more experienced teachers are excellent teachers, and management of that issue means finding ways of capturing their experience before they go, or finding ways to extend their time in the service. But not all fit that category.

At the same time we do have too many early career teachers who work on contracts; 20 per cent of our teachers are currently contract teachers. So it makes sense for us to make it easier for some of our experienced teachers—some who have spent years in the classroom and have now lost their enthusiasm for that role—to retire or to move into new careers, and then fill all those positions freed up with graduates or early career teachers.

This is the policy objective for the teacher renewal program, or the teacher refreshment scheme, as it is described in the budget papers. It has provided us with an immediate injection of new permanent teachers in our public schools. We have freed up more than 100 permanent positions in schools, and I am advised that some of those positions are in much sought-after schools which have not advertised positions for many years.

These positions have been advertised. The applications have closed and the response has been overwhelming—literally overwhelming. More than 1,800 applicants have applied for those 100 positions. Appointments will be made over the next few weeks, so that in most cases the successful applicants will start in their positions at the beginning of term 3.

This has been an initiative welcomed by most education commentators. It has been welcomed by teachers and principals, and has clearly struck a chord with graduate and early career teachers. Most importantly, it is good for students. As members of the committee would be aware, the program only works because of the pay difference between the experienced teachers leaving our schools and the early career teachers, and it is that difference that funds the program and provides with it an opportunity to employ the new teachers.

The expenses shown in the budget papers are the additional expenses this year which will be recouped over the next three years from that differential. I appreciate that there are many contract teachers who have been working in our system for a number of years who are seeking greater job security and who will not be eligible for this program, but they will be able to have access to the new recruitment policy, because we estimate more than 700 permanent jobs will become available under that policy, and that is the answer for those particular teachers.

Mr PISONI: I have a supplementary, please, Mr Chair. Minister, you said you had 1,800 applications for the teacher refreshment program. You also said it was self-funding, but you restricted the applicants to only 103 positions. If it is self-funding and you have 1,800 teachers who want to get out of the system, why don't you fund the lot?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We only had 100 people who sought—

Mr PISONI: You said 1,800 applied.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, sorry; 1,800 were the people who applied for the jobs that were freed up.

Mr PISONI: How many did you have apply for the program?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think in the order of 120-odd. There were some who were not eligible. Most that were eligible, I think, were awarded, if you like, the teacher refreshment

scheme. So about 120 applied. I think the explanations for those who were not given the \$50,000 included that they were not eligible—so they did not meet the scheme criteria—or their principal thought that it would be disadvantageous to the school for them to retire.

Mr PISONI: A supplementary in relation to the teachers who accepted the \$50,000 package. We were told yesterday by the minister responsible for TAFE that they are employing more TAFE lecturers, and I asked whether those teachers who accepted this package would be disqualified from applying. His advice was to ask you.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The rules of the scheme are they cannot come back and work as a teacher within the education department, but after three years they are eligible to apply for government jobs, which might include the TAFE lecturer job.

Mr PISONI: But not for three years?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes.

Mr ODENWALDER: I refer the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 161. I wonder if the minister could expand on what the government is doing to improve the attraction, retention and deployment of teachers and, therefore, improving results for students.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the member for his question. In August last year I announced that the government would develop a new policy for the way teachers are recruited into our public schools. We have been consulting on the detailed draft of that policy since February this year. I am pleased to say that the culmination of those consultations came the Friday before last when the policy was overwhelmingly endorsed by teachers.

It was also endorsed by principals and almost universally supported across the sector. It is the most significant shake-up in the way teachers are selected for positions in decades. Under the new policy we abolished the rule that makes teachers move schools after 10 years, which sees good teachers move on or forced into temporary positions regardless of their performance. It will create many more opportunities for contract teachers to get permanent jobs.

All of us in this committee will be aware of teachers in our local schools who have been stuck on the insecurity of contract employment for too long. We currently have about 20 per cent of our teacher workforce on contract, and this is too high. We conservatively estimate that more than 700 extra permanent jobs will be made available through this new policy. It will allow schools to select the teachers that suit the needs and circumstances of the school and its students in the great majority of cases through the new policy.

It will also guarantee placement in metropolitan schools for the small number of permanent teachers seeking to return from the country each year. As country members are all too aware, we need to operate a school system for all South Australian students, and guaranteed access to jobs in the city is vital to ensuring high-quality teachers are enticed to the country, where they often stay, but it is the right of return which might get them there in the first place.

It will mean that the vast majority of teaching positions will be filled by the end of the school year so that there will be far greater stability for students and teachers in those first few weeks of the school year where we have traditionally seen teachers coming and going between schools. This is a major issue for the public education system and in terms of our capacity to compete with the private system. We were still working out what was happening well into the school year, which gave us a competitive disadvantage.

The policy will take effect almost immediately so that teachers will be in place under the new policy for the next school year. I want to pay tribute to the people in education in getting us to this point: Phil O'Loughlin and his team in the department have worked tirelessly and creatively on this policy; principals, through their associations, have engaged positively in discussions; the AEU has negotiated firmly but positively about it; and teachers have been overwhelmingly supportive.

As a result of the combined efforts of all involved and people being prepared to respect other points of view, today we have a far better policy than we had when it was put out for consultation. This is the latest in a series of reforms about how public schools function and comes on top of the extra money (\$265 million) that I spoke about earlier.

These reforms really need to be understood as not just being about recruitment but about lifting the quality of teaching, providing more security, making our public education system more competitive and, critically, giving principals the tools they need to select the teachers that they think match the needs of their school. All of this is directed at one fundamental thing and that is ensuring

that we meet the needs of every single child in our public education system, and this is how we will do it.

Mr ODENWALDER: I want to now refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 182. Can the minister provide an update on progress towards the Teach SA initiative, please?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes; I thank the honourable member. I have spoken already about the fact of some workforce pressures. A particular pressure is in this area of maths and science teaching in our secondary schools. As I said before, we know that many of the jobs of the future will require maths and science skills, and we are working on the quality of our maths and science teaching in primary school, through our primary maths and science strategy.

Having quality, engaging specialist maths and science teachers in secondary schools is equally important. That is why, at the last election, we committed ourselves to the Teach SA strategy. I have spoken about it in general terms, but I want to speak about some of the specifics of the strategy. The 155 teachers is a three-pronged strategy. The recruit strand will target 40 non-teaching maths and science graduates and career change maths and science professionals to undertake a teacher education program, and an assessment centre will be developed to identify applicants with the requisite skills for teaching. So, these are people who might be out in industry or who have completed a course and have decided that they want to get into the teaching area, and they have those maths and science qualifications.

The reskill strand will target 100 existing middle school teachers in maths and science to undertake specialist training, and that strand is about lifting those schools. The retrain strand will target 15 existing secondary teachers in maths and science to gain postgraduate qualifications in teaching senior secondary maths, science and chemistry. Advertising of the reskill and retrain strands has commenced. I will try to find out the answer to the question that the honourable member asked about that.

Mr PISONI: I take you to Budget Paper 6, page 24, FTE savings. The notes explain that it will have no impact on teaching staff in schools. Are you now able to advise whether the contract for the TVSP and redeployment project, the tender which was let earlier in the year and which closed on 11 May, has now been let? If so, who was the successful tenderer? What was the value of that contract? Also, this contract refers to dealing with eligible Department of Education and Children's Services employees who have formally been declared excess to requirements. Are you able to give the number of employees who have been declared excess to requirements?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The contract has not yet been let, so we therefore do not have the final number for that.

Mr PISONI: What advice was the drafter of the tender given when one of the tasks of the successful tenderer was to assist employees in a combination of areas, such as résumé intervention, interview skills, job search support, personal and career counselling, vocational assessment, appropriate professional referral. These are people who are on large salaries within DECS, and you would expect them to be qualified. Are you actually telling us that these people do not have the skills to do this themselves?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think we are talking about two different things here. For the people who have accepted TVSPs, that is funded by Treasury, and there is some money allocated by Treasury for that purpose. With TVSPs, if they are accepted, they separate. You are really talking about those people who have been made surplus through a savings initiative and who remain in the public sector because they have not accepted a TVSP. They are the ones who will be supported with the sorts of processes you have described.

Mr PISONI: Supplementary to that, regarding the \$6 million worth of surplus employees who were identified in the Auditor-General's examination as of 30 June; have any of those been offered retraining, redeployment or TVSPs?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The budget initiatives (largely last budget) have meant that there are some surplus employees. You have identified that there is also a pool of some surplus teachers, I think, identified by the Auditor-General.

Mr PISONI: Yes, about \$4.4 million.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: All those groups are being managed through the process of either the offer of TVSPs and/or the retraining and reskilling and redeployment options that are going to be applied. There is no complete answer to each of those groups, except that they are all being managed through a variety of those means so that the savings target can be achieved.

Mr PISONI: Have you actually formally identified those employees who are excess to requirements and who this tender document refers to? If not, when will you? If you have identified some but not all of them, how many have you identified and what is the target identification?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: A number of the savings initiatives play out over a period of time. All the programs have been identified in last year's budget, so a number of programs that have had changes have been given notice that their program is to cease operation or change in some fashion over a period of time. Because we have quite significant rates of attrition across such a large department, it has meant that when somebody is approaching retirement, they retire and they are in one of those positions, we do not fill that position.

Mr PISONI: I understand that, minister, but what I am—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: What I am really saying to you is that we do not know what the size of the task is. We know theoretically what the size of the task is, but we do not know how many people are going to be left for the purposes of—

Mr PISONI: Well, have you identified any staff members? I will read this whole paragraph, and this is the role of the successful tenderer:

Eligible Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) employees may access an enhanced redeployment process if they have been formally declared excess to requirements because their assigned duties/role or position has or is to be abolished. Generally DECS employees who are declared excess will access the enhanced redeployment process if they elect not to take a Targeted Voluntary Separation Package (TVSP).

What I am asking is: have any been declared excess to requirements as of this date? You have gone to the effort of putting out a tender document to redeploy these people, so I imagine that you are expecting a number of people. I am trying to get some idea of what those numbers are, those numbers that have been identified now and how many more you expect to be identified?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We are obviously preparing the process, through the tender, of how to manage the employees. That is not predicated on a particular number of employees; it is about gaining the services to be put in place to deal with the TVSP and redeployment options when they present themselves. As I said, a number of them will be dealt with through retirements and reallocation of people to other duties, and that is the advantage of doing it the way we did it, which was not to make the changes on day one but to give people some notice so that they can make the appropriate adjustments to their arrangements. Some will choose to retire, some will get other jobs, and those who are left will be offered a TVSP and/or retraining options and they will choose between them. That is how we have seen to manage them, and we will deal with it in that fashion.

Mr PISONI: Is it on schedule, behind schedule or ahead of schedule?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes, I think we are on target to meet our savings objectives.

Mr PISONI: I refer now to page 161: Workforce summary. What, if any, resources or funding are provided by your department to run or support programs or initiatives of MCEETYA and Education Services Australia?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will take that on notice.

Mr PISONI: Can I also have the cost of maintaining corporate and regional offices such as whether they are government-owned or leased; opportunity costs for leasing existing buildings; unused space in buildings used by non-teaching facilities, particularly in the regions; breakdowns in utility costs; ICT infrastructure; and the budgeted figures, as well as the actual figures for the end of this financial year?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am happy to answer that, but it is an extraordinarily big exercise. If we could perhaps narrow the objective, you are looking for unutilised office space—

Mr PISONI: I am actually trying to determine the cost of running your bureaucracy.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Of the regional offices.

Mr PISONI: Yes.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Do you need to have it disaggregated or are you happy just for it to be all of our regional offices and how much it costs to run them?

Mr PISONI: Including a head count, yes.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Can we agree to provide you with a number of FTEs in our regional offices and the operational costs of running the aggregate regional offices?

Mr PISONI: Sure. Could I also have a current departmental organisational chart as of today for the head office and also for the regional offices; the head count and salaries, including on costs by organisational units; again, for this financial year? I would also like to see the budgeted figures against the actual expenditure, and a head count and a value of current consultants and external consultants by project and organisational unit for the financial year.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That is an enormous amount of information that will take some considerable period to provide.

Mr PISONI: So that is what you will say.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The organisational charts are no difficulty; I am sure we would have them for each of the organisations. I suppose it just might bear on the timeliness of when we get that information to you. If you wanted to break it up a little into some discrete components, we could presumably get it to you more quickly. I will endeavour to supply as much of that information. If represents some difficulty in terms of the size of the exercise and the timeliness, I can communicate with you about that.

Mr PISONI: Okay. While we are on the subject of the workforce summary—and I understand that a big part of the department's budget is salaries—can you explain why there are discrepancies in the My School website allocations of money for schools compared to the resource entitlement statements (RES) for schools?

For example, if we look at Kangarilla Primary School, which is a category 7 school, the Resource Entitlement Statement for the 2009 year (which I believe is the year that is expressed on the My School website) is \$553,010. However, the My School website says that that school has an allocation of \$817,071. So, 32.3 per cent of that allocation is obviously retained by the department because the school does not receive it.

Unley High School has 32.6 per cent retained by the department based on the My School website figure of \$13-odd million. Salisbury High School—that is a category 2 school, so a school that is in higher need—has 26.5 per cent retained by the department of the allocated funds as expressed on the My School website. Are you able to explain how that figure is achieved on the My School website and why it does not match the Resource Entitlement Statement?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes, I can. The My School website reports the total net recurrent income for each school as a total dollar amount and per student full-time equivalent. The website only includes income in relation to students in reception or higher, so any CPC funding received by the school is excluded. The recurrent income is further broken down by funding source: Australian Government recurrent funding, South Australian government fees and charges, and other private sources. This is ACARA's approved methodology. The revenue assumptions for schools include both funds received directly by each school for 2009 plus an allocation of the DECS centrally recorded costs.

Recurrent income received directly by schools into their general ledger includes revenue received from DECS, as well as income received directly by the school. The Resource Entitlement Statement (RES) is the state-based funding allocation primarily used for salaries, utilities and breakdown maintenance expenditure; parent contributions and fundraising; and commonwealth funding for particular learning programs. The allocation of the DECS centrally recorded costs are for costs incurred on behalf of schools, departmentally run programs and administrative overheads which are not recharged to schools and, therefore, do not form part of the RES. Again this approach is endorsed by ACARA.

Central costs paid on behalf of schools, which would not be recorded there, include minor works, country incentives for teachers, asset funding programs, eduCONNECT (the ICT system), rental subsidies for teachers and vandalism and maintenance. Programs operated from the department include regional offices, swimming and aquatics program, instrumental music program, site financial services and curriculum office. Corporate overheads include office accommodation and Shared Services charges. The My School income figure represents the total funding that would be needed by a school if it was required to fund all aspects of educating students inclusive of the costs of the department, whereas the RES only records a subset of those costs.

Therefore, the total revenue reported on the My School website will always be higher than the amount reported in the RES for each school. Taking Kangarilla, the example you gave, the total net recurrent reported income on My School was \$817,071 (\$10,611 per student). The breakdown

of the recurrent income by funding source was \$145,000 for the Australian government; \$605,000-odd for the state government; \$37,000 for fees; and \$27,000 for private sources.

So, based on the net recurrent income for students, Kangarilla Primary School was placed 402 highest out of 587 schools. In 2009, reconciled RES for Kangarilla Primary School was \$553,010 (\$7,182 per student). The amount of centrally recorded costs allocated to the school was \$130,036 (\$1,689 per student). A school's approved RES includes both commonwealth and state related funding, which is recorded separately on the My School website; and a school's approved RES plus corporate allocations is not directly identifiable on the My School website. So, essentially, they are different things.

The central costs paid on behalf of the school, and therefore reflected in the DECS corporate allocations, include: minor works, eduCONNECT, maternity leave, site software, learning centres, central security services, maintenance of schools, copyright fees and reading assistance vouchers. Centrally run program costs include: Southern Adelaide Regional Office, the swimming and aquatics program, instrumental music services, Principal as Literacy Leaders program, and the like. So, essentially, there are things that are not measured in the RES which are essential to running a school and which are not found on the My School website.

Mr TRELOAR: I refer to Budget Paper 5, page 15: Capital investment, particularly half way down page 15, high school expansions. Given that the Adelaide, Glenunga, Marryatville and Brighton high schools are all receiving a \$60 million funding boost between them, which, if any, of these schools had a capital works submission lodged at the time of this funding announcement?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thought the member was going to congratulate me on the Cleve school.

Mr TRELOAR: I will do that, and we can put that on the record, minister.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am not aware of that. Obviously, I was not in the portfolio when that set of decisions were made. I must say, those decisions certainly have been popular and welcomed by each of those school communities. Each of those schools—and I think this is a matter of record for any minister for education for a considerable period—has had parents seeking to agitate for their children to get into these very popular high schools, and I am sure what the government did was respond to that community demand.

The government was being responsive, essentially, to the community and sought to go to the election making that commitment. In terms of the arrangements that led to it, I do not think there could be a more open and transparent process than going to an election promising to do something and then having the people re-elect the government and then the government does it. I think that is the imprimatur that we have for that program.

Mr PISONI: Are you going to get back to us about whether the submissions are in?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not know whether they had submissions in, but I do know that—

Mr PISONI: But you would have a record of them if they did.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is rather not to the point. We went to an election promising to do it and we got re-elected. I would have thought that trumps any submission.

Mr PISONI: I think there would be lots of other schools that had put in submissions that would like to know that they were going through the proper process and may very well ask about the process. Has the process changed? Is it a matter of having a survey or a focus group and deciding on policy, or is it about the proper submission process? I think that is the point of the member for Flinders' question.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: There is a small matter that the general election was not a proper process. That is an extraordinary proposition.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes, it is a well worn process, piloted in the 1870s or whenever it was. I think that the demands for the expansion of these schools have been the subject of regular representations made by the community to these schools. I do not think there is a school in the state that has not from time to time imagined ways in which it could improve itself through a capital works program and, obviously, judgements are made about those expansions.

Mr PISONI: I think the member for Adelaide would like to ask a question on a similar topic.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It might be worth adding that the funding that was provided for that was in addition to our ordinary capital works program, and that is—

Mr PISONI: Which is very lean this year: \$33 million in new work.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sure, but the reality is that we have about 20 years of capital works that have been rolled out in our schools by virtue of the BER. I think this thing needs to be put into some context. Anyway, the member for Flinders does not think it has been a lean year on the West Coast; he is very pleased. Even if he is not prepared to say it in here, I am sure he will congratulate me afterwards when we leave the chamber.

Ms SANDERSON: Regarding Budget Paper, Volume 1, page 162, in reference to Adelaide High School, in a press release issued on 16 March 2010, Labor stated that by expanding the schools, which included Adelaide High, we could relax the zone so that students from Prospect or Walkerville, for instance, will be able to attend Adelaide High School.

The press release went on further to state that Adelaide High would be expanded to cater for 250 more students from 2013 without encroaching on the Parklands; the school currently caters for more than 1,200 students. Currently, Adelaide High School has 1,260 students enrolled; the recent benchmark rating of the school was that it was suitable for 1,060; thus it is currently over capacity by 200 students.

Will the expansion therefore cater for 450 students, being the 200 they are already over, plus the 250 as promised, or just 250, which, in reality, is actually only 50 students, at a cost of \$17 million? Does the minister also acknowledge that option 3, as chosen by DECS, almost entirely encroaches on the Parklands, again breaking an election promise? Can the minister please confirm the new boundaries for Adelaide High School's school enrolment zone?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Taking your second question first, option 3 was chosen by you, as a member of the Adelaide—

Ms SANDERSON: It was our second preference.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It was chosen by—

Mr PISONI: It did not encroach the Parklands presented, Jay; you know that.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I get a chance to answer, you see. That is how it works here: you ask and I answer. The—

Mr PISONI: Well, answer the whole question.

The CHAIR: Order! Come on, give the minister a chance to answer the question.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The suggestion that it is my decision, I think, needs to be put in context. There were two preferred options that were put forward by the Adelaide governing council. This was the second of them, and this is the one we chose. It did present a difficulty because the two preferred options did, in fact, encroach on the Parklands. This put us in a difficult position because we had a commitment to do it.

We either had to make a choice which was not a preferred option of the school and which would not have encroached on the Parklands, or we chose to respect, to a certain extent, the wishes of the school by choosing one that did encroach to some extent on the Parklands, and that will create some complexity as we seek to gain the relevant approvals.

I had the opportunity a few weeks ago to meet with the governing council and explain this to the school, and the school confirmed its support for its second choice, the third of the options that were presented to it, and that is what we are doing: we are pressing ahead with that commitment.

The first question that was asked, I think, was the question of the numbers at the school. The election commitment is to expand the numbers at Adelaide High School by an additional 250 students, and that is the commitment we seek to take. As I understand it, the school has already taken steps to deal with its existing zoning rules to ensure that the school is able to grow at a sustainable rate and that we are able to add the additional 250 students in a way which will allow us to expand the zones in the fashion that was contemplated.

It is worth bearing in mind that 70 per cent of the students in year 8 at Adelaide High come from outside of the Adelaide High zone. So, the pressure that is being brought to bear on Adelaide High School is not necessarily coming from students within the Adelaide High zone. Obviously they

run specialist programs, and sibling groups associated with that will have added to those enrolments.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Let me finish. There were three parts to the question, and I am going to answer each of them. We think that, with the changes that were made to the enrolment practices, in addition to the 250 students associated with the expansion, we will be able to meet the commitments that we made. As for the third element of the question, which I think was what would be the new zones, we undertook to engage in a review of the zones.

Some public remarks were made by the former minister about the sorts of suburbs that would be scoped into that zone. That is consistent with the options that we are exploring. There is a range of choices around how that precisely would be done and how you would choose the zones to bring the extra students in, where they would come from and precisely what the boundaries would be for that. We will work through that together with the school community.

Mr PISONI: Can you advise the committee how many options were presented to the governing council and how many of those options did not encroach on the Parklands?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Our original proposal did not encroach on the Parklands. It was further options requested by the school that encroached on the Parklands. This obviously is one of the reasons it has taken some time to come to a landing here. One of the options was extraordinarily expensive and would have overridden the budget that we had for the expansion of the school and did not bear a proper relationship to the number of extra children who were coming into the school in terms of its cost. The option that was most financially viable, had the greatest support from the school and had the most limited encroachment on the Parklands was the one that we have chosen.

Mr PISONI: Were there any options presented to the school that did not encroach on the Parklands?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes: our option.

Mr PISONI: One option?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: There was a range of other options.

Mr PISONI: There were six options in total, and every other option encroached on the Parklands?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No; there were some that did not encroach on the Parklands. The option we initially proposed did not encroach on the Parklands. There was a range of others that did or did not, but the ones that were supported by the school—both of them—did encroach on the Parklands.

Mr PISONI: Did the one you propose have any heritage issues that needed to be dealt with?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think all of them will have heritage issues that will need to be dealt with. It is an item of state heritage, and indeed the Parklands are listed as an item of national heritage. Heritage issues will arise in any circumstance, whatever we do on Adelaide High School.

Mr PISONI: Can you update the committee on the approaches made by the LMC encouraging you to adopt the Liberal Party policy of having a school at Bowden? There is an email from Sandy Rix on 23 July 2010 to Julieann Riedstra:

Schools at Bowden Urban Village

Julieann

We are in to the final and detailed planning stages, for Stage One BUV delivery. Can we catch up (or can you refer me) about the possibilities and probabilities of any 'vertical' schools at Bowden? We would be supportive and flexible—does DECS have a position?

There is a return email from Julieann Riedstra on 2 August 2010 to Sandy Rix that has a section blanked out, but then goes on to say: 'Happy to discuss further.' Are you able to update the committee as to whether, in fact, after the government criticised the plan for a school at Bowden, you are considering a school at Bowden?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think the order of things is that the LMC has been promoting the possibility of a school at Bowden for some time. In fact, that is where the Liberal Party got their position from.

Mr PISONI: No, it was not. That came from pure research by the member for Adelaide. The member for Adelaide came up with that idea after doorknocking thousands of homes and visiting schools.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think the LMC have been doing that—

Mr PISONI: As she continues to do.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think the LMC has been talking about this for some time, and it may well be part of the future at the Bowden estate.

Mr PISONI: Just so you know: in the FOI documents we have, the record of discussions start after the Liberal Party announcement, not before.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It would be interesting to explore that. I will certainly have a look to see whether that is accurate.

Mr PISONI: Are you happy to be corrected?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes. I think we might have done a bit of a briefing. I think the LMC might have done a briefing —

Mr PISONI: You have been withholding FOI documents, have you?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No. I think you might find that the LMC has been talking about this for some time and it is rational for any—

Mr PISONI: You have been talking about additional schooling in Adelaide for the last 10 years. That has been a need—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sure, and the LMC is obviously wanting to make a successful development and it is interested in exploring educational opportunities within that development. I suppose what we are dealing with is an immediate need that can be dealt with within a much nearer term time line. The question of inner-city schooling is an important issue that needs to be grappled with. However, I think you only need to look at those figures—and know that 70 per cent of students coming to Adelaide High are coming from outside of the zone of Adelaide High—to realise that this is not simply an issue about the needs or the desires of people who live within the current or any future zone for Adelaide High.

Mr PISONI: But that is the same for Brighton, Glenunga and Marryatville.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: If we are talking about the needs for inner-city schooling, what we are actually talking about are the desires of people who do not necessarily live in the city for a different form of schooling. There are ways of responding to that that do not necessarily involve building an additional school within the city. That is one option but it is not the only way in which you respond to people who are looking for another form of schooling option, especially if they are not living in close proximity to it.

Mr PISONI: Patrick Conlon, the infrastructure minister, told the Estimates Committee yesterday that if Bowden needs a public school at some point it will get one. Are you planning a public school at Bowden?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: In these budget papers there is no funding for a public school in Bowden but the LMC in that development—it is a matter of notorious fact—is interested in exploring the idea of a school.

Mr PISONI: It was ruled out before the 2010 election by the government. Are you ruling it out now?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, I am not ruling it out. I am just saying that there is a policy here that we took to the election that we are delivering on. What the future is for Bowden/Brompton and other responses to demands for inner-city schooling is another matter, and that will be dealt with.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 160. Minister, can you give some examples of the department's planning for an effective workforce to meet current and future requirements?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the member for Reynell. I referred earlier to the new recruitment policy, the teacher renewal program and Teach SA, all of which are intended to address workforce planning issues. In recent years, the government has engaged in a great deal of work in the area of workforce planning. To name a few: the Teacher Education Task Force has been established to examine, in particular, issues in relation to our supply of teachers; a workforce analysis has been undertaken which revealed the figure I mentioned earlier (53 per cent of our permanent teachers over the age of 51); a survey of career intentions has been undertaken revealing that a third of our teachers over the age of 45 are considering retirement in the next five years.

We know that there will be a significant turnover of the teaching workforce in coming years and this looming turnover has, in part, driven the three initiatives that we have spoken about. The teacher recruitment campaign, Teaching Is Inspiring, is very important in addressing this rollover in teachers. The campaign, the first phase of which was seen on our television screens in April and May, has a budget of \$940,000. What we know is that the quality of our teaching workforce is paramount. Research confirms that it is the quality of teaching more than any other school factor that makes a real difference for children, so striving to ensure that we have the best people we can in our classrooms is a key priority for the government.

There is also an issue about the status of teaching and teaching in the eyes of the community. We want teachers to feel more valued and respected, because they must lift their enthusiasm for this challenging role. Restoring a sense of community pride in our teachers will be fundamental to broadening the appeal of teaching as a career.

This is one thing on which I agree with the member for Unley; he was right when he said in February that the status or prestige of teaching needs to be addressed. We are addressing it. The campaign is designed to lift the status of teaching in the eyes of the community, lift the calibre of students seeking to become teachers, entice mid-career professionals to switch to a teaching career, and help address the looming workforce issues.

At the same time, we are making major changes to the new funding model to give principals greater flexibility in new teacher recruitment policy. There is \$265 million over four years for extra school staff and, of course, the Teach SA initiative we referred to earlier.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 182. Can the minister outline how the government is working to improve literacy and numeracy skills in our schools through the Smarter Schools Literacy and Numeracy National Partnership with the commonwealth government?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the honourable member for her question. In 2008-09 and 2009-10 just over \$12 million in funding has been provided to South Australia through the literacy and numeracy national partnership. The partnership involves federal and state governments and all the sectors, with 78 schools participating in South Australia. This funding has supported a network of literacy and numeracy coaches to work alongside classroom teachers to help them provide high quality instruction.

These coaches and teachers are building student skills in areas of reading, spelling and maths, using innovative teaching methods designed to lift results. The funding has also supported professional learning for school principals that helps them to deal with a whole-of-school learning effort in these key learning areas, to build a culture of high standards and improvement in their schools. Based on its achievement in the first facilitation phase, we have seen the awarding of \$14.136 million in funding—and that was announced just the other day.

Literacy and numeracy are, of course, key skills for work, school and life, and they are the basic building blocks for everything that follows. With this reward funding, we will be able to secure further initiatives within our schooling systems. The early results of the national partnership are promising and are a credit to the teamwork of our inspirational teachers.

Mr ODENWALDER: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 176. Will the minister outline how the government is helping students build their understanding of science and maths throughout their years of schooling?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: As we have touched on before, in a world increasingly characterised by advanced technologies, and with industries right here in South Australia demanding that employees have the skills to help work in these technologies, we need our young people to have a solid grasp of science and maths more than ever before.

One of the things we are doing is injecting more engagement, more interest into the way these key learning subjects are taught: using addition and subtraction and other mathematical skills for personal budgeting and shopping, so relating it to people's personal lives; investigating alternative materials for making clothes and using measurement skills to design them; collecting and presenting data about wildlife populations, such as frogs and birds, in the local area, and so using some of our natural resources to excite young people to a fascination with maths and science; organising school science expos; and growing their own gardens and monitoring germination using science skills.

These are things that are driven by some of the investments that are now being made in the physical environment of our schools—the Stephanie Alexander kitchen gardens are an important part of that—and more schools are taking advantage of grants that are available for water re-use that permits a whole range of scientific application. So, as well as the Teach SA program and the primary skills and maths strategy that I spoke about earlier, we are trying to use ways of engaging young people so that they can see maths and science as an exciting and interesting career.

I mentioned earlier the visit we had to the Australian Science and Mathematics School and the flight simulator. Those are examples of ways in which schools are using their imagination to turn young people on to maths and science.

Mr PISONI: I refer to Budget Paper 3, page 52, school revenue, sale of goods and services. School fees are estimated to increase by an extra \$25 million over the forward estimates, yet this year—and a continual trend for the last 10 years of reducing enrolments in favour of the non-government sector in schools—we have seen a reduction of about 1,800 students enrolled in government schools, as opposed to the previous year, yet your budget is expecting an extra \$25 million to come from the pockets of parents in funding their children's education in government schools.

Are you able to explain how that expectation is reasonable at a time when your own budget papers are using the global financial crisis as a reason for expenditure cuts and revenue increases?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Well, what I cannot explain is where you get those numbers from, because we cannot find them anywhere. There has been an increase—

Mr PISONI: Well, there it is, it is—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, I get to answer.

Mr PISONI: You have asked me where the numbers are from. I can show you where the numbers are from.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is a rhetorical question: it is a device that permits you to listen to a question by way of exposing the deficiencies in your question. The number of students in government schools has increased rather than decreased. I do not know who does your research for you, but they get you into a lot of trouble. It is going up, so the absolute number of students is increasing. The premise of your question is wrong and, of course, everything that flows from it.

Mr PISONI: How many students did you have in 2000 in the government system, and how many students do you have now?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: You are talking about forward estimates. You are talking about this year the number of students falling—it did not: it increased from last year. What has happened recently is that the absolute number of students in schools has turned around. It had been falling, and now it is increasing, and it is projected to increase over the forward estimates. So, your question is predicated on how could you have an increase in school fees if there were going to be falling student enrolments in the public school system. Well, that is false, and the documents demonstrate that it is false.

Mr PISONI: Can you confirm then that there will be \$25 million extra collected in school fees over the forward estimates?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am trying to find where your reference is. I cannot find the reference you are talking about. Schools set their own fees. Section 168A of the Education Act enables schools to continue to set and collect a material—

Mr PISONI: They set their fees above a minimum.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That is right. The charge is intended to cover the cost of essential services, and the legally recoverable amount is set by regulation. That is indexed by CPI, and it goes up to \$203 for primary students and \$270 for secondary school students for the 2011 school year, and I suspect that over the forward estimates the projection is for CPI.

Mr PISONI: You are collecting \$80 million in school revenue this year; next year, you are expecting an extra \$2.5 million on top of that \$80 million figure. The year after, you are expecting an extra \$5.1 million on top of that \$80 million figure this year. The year after that, you are expecting an extra \$7.7 million on top of the \$80 million you got this year, and you are expecting an extra \$10.4 million in the 2014-15 year.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I have not looked at it carefully but, on the face of it, it looks like an adjustment for CPI and maybe some modest increase in school enrolments over that period. I will provide an answer to you on what the basis is for those numbers. They do not seem to be going up by very much more than CPI, which is what you would expect with modestly climbing school enrolments.

Mr PISONI: This refers to page 188: Statement of comprehensive income. The budget line shows borrowing costs in 2011-12 of \$22.895 million—double what the borrowing costs were estimated to be for this year—yet just two years earlier we had borrowing costs of \$18,000. Can you explain the rapid increase in borrowing costs?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think that this is explained by the financing component of the PPP project. That is a substantial component of the increase.

Mr PISONI: So they are PPP costs.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Just to explain, the accounting treatment for PPPs, as has been explained, is more explicit. If it was ordinary capital works, the financing costs associated with that across the whole of government would be reflected in the general accounts; they would not be found in the education accounts in this way. So, in the ordinary way, we would procure capital works for a new school, that would add to the overall government debt question and that would be reflected elsewhere in the budget papers. That is why it jumps into our budget papers in this way because of the way in which PPPs are accounted for.

Mr PISONI: The education department is covering the financing costs which previously would have been covered by Treasury?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, we are funded for it. It is just how it is presented in the accounts.

Mr PISONI: So what you are saying is that you have additional funding somewhere in the budget of that \$22 million to cover that from Treasury that you would not have had otherwise?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No. The way in which the PPP project was funded, and how the whole Education Works system is dealt with, was essentially through capital works funding that was allocated to this but also the savings that were associated through a series of amalgamations. It was an overall transaction that led to the PPP project which involved some contributions from the education budget in an ordinary way and also some savings that occurred as a consequence of the amalgamation of a number of schools and also contributions through general revenue, so there is a combination of those factors. The reason it is differently expressed is because of the different accounting treatment of PPPs.

Mr PISONI: This refers to page 160 regarding leadership in education and care responsibilities. Are you able to confirm why the CCTV camera system that was used in certain schools selectively between 2002 and 2006 was not continued? Are you also able to confirm whether Craigmore High School has recently had CCTVs installed?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think you said 'secret'. I do not think there was anything secret about it.

Mr PISONI: I didn't say 'secret'.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sorry, I misheard you.

Mr PISONI: I said 'CCTV'. I might have had a bit of a stutter.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sorry, that is what it was. It was my fault; I misheard you. Between 2002 and 2006 a range of trials of CCTV were undertaken in a range of schools. There was an evaluation done of them. We are pretty open-minded about CCTV in terms of managing

security in schools, although the evaluation did not suggest that they were the complete answer. We would use them in discrete schools, in particular places, because they can have some advantages. They are not the complete answer to school security issues, but we consider them on a case by case basis. Obviously, a moment's thought can lead you to the view that if students are going to misbehave, they are going to choose a place that is not monitored.

There may be a case for having some particular parts of a school monitored, given a particular physical layout of the school, and that needs to be considered on a case by case basis. I am not aware of any particular request by Craigmore High School, but I will make some investigations about that.

Mr PISONI: On page 175 of the same budget paper, descriptions and objectives, you mentioned earlier in answers to previous questions, minister, moves about the national curriculum and your change to prep was described as 'Moving South Australia into line with the other states'. Queensland and Western Australia have now confirmed and funded moving year 7 into high school and, yet, I think I recall in media about 12 months ago, you ruled that out for South Australia. With the national curriculum due to start rolling out next year and the year after, how could it still be viable for South Australia to remain the only state not to have year 7, which includes specialist teachers in particular areas, not in the high school system?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: South Australia is not the only state that—

Mr PISONI: No, but those that are not have allocated funds to move into the high school system. Western Australia and Queensland made announcements just recently: \$620 million in Queensland, and Western Australia made the announcement that they were going to move forward to do the same thing.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I suppose the first thing is that if I had \$620 million I do not think this is what I would be doing with it. I think it is a really interesting question, the whole question of where year 7 exists. For some students it seems like too early to be at high school; for other students it seems as though—

Mr PISONI: What about those in the super schools?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: In fact, that is probably part of the answer—to create a series of schools within schools—and I think middle schooling, which is in place in the super schools, is really an example of the best of both worlds, with the ability to gain access to all the resources that can exist in that broader school environment but some discrete, sensible groupings of students so that they can make the transitions that are necessary for what can be some quite challenging transition points for students. I think the real question is: how do we provide pastoral care and build that around students, wherever they are, whatever the structure is, so that their needs can be met?

I think the National Curriculum understands the different arrangements that exist around the nation, and the National Curriculum has been designed consistently with the different arrangements in place in South Australia. I am not yet persuaded that a big structural solution, especially a very expensive one, is necessarily a good answer. You need to remember that Queensland and Western Australia are fast growing states where they are already investing in new school infrastructure, so the context in which they are making their adjustments is quite different.

It remains a topic that we are actively considering, but I am more interested in meeting the educational needs of every child and trying to find a solution for that. I think one big solution is not necessarily the answer. There is considerable educational disruption that exists during transitions from one school to the next, and the curriculum should not drive this. There should always be a focus on teacher and student wellbeing.

I think that a lot of attention has been given to whether this is the big answer for kids, and I do not think that is actually the correct question to ask. I think we should be focusing on the individual needs of each child, and I think this could be a very expensive way of replicating just another problem at a different structural level.

Mr PISONI: It was not an argument for a national curriculum: it is that we have a very transient society now, so that when students move from one state to another there is little disruption. That was the argument. Now South Australia will be left like a shag on a rock being the only state that has year 7 in primary school.

I think it is fair to say that my experience as a parent and a governing council member is that, even 10 and 15 years ago, grade 7 students had their 12th birthday in grade 7 and now they

are having their 13th birthday. With the new changes to the entry point for school where there is only the one year entry point, we will see children who are five years and eight months old starting school for the first time in prep. because we do not have the staggered starting.

That is the reason the Queensland government decided to move, because it was moving to a similar program that meant that school starting ages were increasing and children would be older in year 7 than they were historically. I am not quite sure that I understand your argument for going it alone, when all the federal commentary has been about a national curriculum and making it easier for parents to move from one state to another with their children.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not think this is inconsistent with having a national curriculum. In fact, I do not think it bears on a national curriculum. There are only a few practical issues that arise in terms of facilities for students that might be predicated on particular facilities that might exist in a high school setting. The national curriculum needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the South Australian situation, so there will be no issue about moving between the states and having any disadvantage there.

I would rather see the South Australian system as a shining beacon than a shag on a rock. I am not persuaded yet. I have an open mind. Obviously, you have to be open to the fact that other people have made this choice, but I have to say that what I see is that primary schools have a massive focus on the learning of students and a very individualised, personalised approach to meeting the needs of individual students.

That is not to say that is absent in high schools but there is much more of a focus on the subject, and I think many students need that very careful pastoral support, especially in those incredibly challenging years around the ages of 12, 13 and 14. I am not yet persuaded that those are not better met in a primary school setting, yet I can understand some of the arguments that are put against that and we will consider them carefully.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I thank members of the committee and the advisers for their attendance.

[Sitting suspended from 12:34 to 13:30]

Membership:

Mr Whetstone substituted for Mr Griffiths.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr K. Bartley, Chief Executive, Department of Education and Children's Services.

Ms J. Emery, Director, Office of the Chief Executive, Department of Education and Children's Services.

Ms T. Winter, Executive Director, Early Childhood Services, Department of Education and Children's Services.

Ms J. Riedstra, Executive Director, Finance and Infrastructure, Department of Education and Children's Services.

Mr G. DeGennaro, Deputy Chief Executive, Resources, Department of Education and Children's Services.

The CHAIR: We are now going to early childhood development. Do you wish to make any statement, minister?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, I think I covered that in my opening statement.

The CHAIR: Is the shadow minister happy to go straight into questions?

Mr PISONI: Yes.

The CHAIR: You have the call.

Mr PISONI: Thank you, Mr Chair. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 161, 'Program net cost of services summary'. In the budgeted figures for early years education and care (birth to preschool), there is a figure budgeted for the 2011-12 year of \$104,342,000, which is about

11 per cent less than the estimated result for the 2010-11 year, which in itself is about a \$7 million overspend on the budget that was there for that same year. Are you able to confirm, minister, whether there is, in actual fact, an intention to spend less money on early years education and care in 2011-12?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think what you have focused on is the income. What needs to be focused on is the measure of output, which is the expenses, and the expenses are projected to grow from \$168-odd million to \$185 million in 2011-12.

Mr PISONI: What page are you looking at there?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The same page, page 163. The two numbers you have—

Mr PISONI: No, that is a different page.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Page 163 of the budget papers; I think that is what you were referring to earlier.

Mr PISONI: I was referring to page 161, the early years, 'Program net cost of services summary'.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Anyway, that number on page 161 is \$104,342,000. You then go to page 163, and you will see the same number, \$104,342,000, which is the income measure. That demonstrates that that this is the income that is being applied to the task from one source. The real measure of effort, though, is the expenditure on early childhood, which is the movement of the \$168,726,000 in the column above to \$185,951,000 in 2011-12. So, that obviously represents a substantial increase, rather than a decrease.

Mr PISONI: What is the reason for the reduction in income?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The grant revenue has gone up. You are looking at the net cost of providing services; that is the difference between the expenses and total income to get the net cost of providing services. What we are talking about in terms of output is the total amount of expense that is going into early years education. Your question was framed around are we putting less effort into early years education, and the answer is no; we are putting more effort in.

Mr PISONI: What was the reason then for the budgeted figure on page 161 in 2010-11 being \$110-odd million? The estimated result was \$117 million.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not think that is the right one to focus on if you are interested in how much effort we are putting into early childhood education.

Mr PISONI: I am actually interested in these numbers.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sure, but the total expenses are what tells you what we are spending on early childhood, so the expenses are the relevant—

Mr PISONI: I am also interested in how departments run. There was a budgeted amount of \$110 million, but \$117 million appears there and I am just asking why the difference.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That is all explained on the next page, page 164, which explains the financial commentary on the difference between the 2011-12 budget and the 2010-11 estimated result, and the 2010-11 estimated result and 2010-11 budget. The \$1 million increase in expenses due to carryover for the commonwealth funded family-day-care program, \$13.8 million increase in expenses due to the commonwealth funded family-day-care program, commencement of government election commitment to fund 10 new children's centres, higher employee expenses from the last enterprise bargaining agreement and other variations.

Mr PISONI: The figure of \$8.2 million for other variations—can we have some detail on those? It is the biggest figure in that group and it has the least detail.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will supply you with those explanations, but they fall into the category of a large number of smaller items than the ones that have been described. We will supply those to you.

Mr PISONI: Thank you. This refers to existing projects at children's centres. I am trying to establish just where we are at with the building program and what the costs were, because the budget papers in 2006 had 10 centres for a cost of \$13 million and in 2007 the budget papers said that 20 centres would be completed by 2010 at a cost of \$16.3 million. In 2008 the budget papers said that the 20 centres would cost \$26.5 million. In 2009 the budget papers said there were 20 centres at \$30 million.

I am just trying to establish the reference to the centres in the Budget Paper on page 162. We have an underspend in 2010-11 as opposed to the budget. Can you tell us what the full cost—I believe that the total is 30; you are going to end up with 30 learning centres—of those 30 learning centres will be, and can you identify how many have been opened under that program, how many are operating, how many more we are waiting for, when they are likely to open and what the total cost will be?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The total number is 38, comprised of the 30 that you mention, plus four in the PPP arrangements for the Education Works schools, plus another four that are funded by the commonwealth, the Aboriginal Children and Family Centres. They are essentially children's centres, as we would understand them. So the total is 38. I think what needs to be said by way of background is that a number of these children's centres are almost established, in some respects, because there is a kindergarten and a childcare component.

Sometimes there is an area where family activities and parenting activities can be carried out, and also a place where health and other services can be provided. Indeed, I was with the member for Flinders at the Cummins Area School, which has a preschool and childcare and is almost there as a children's centre but does not necessarily have a lot of the elements of it.

There are a number of primary schools that are almost established, and they obviously require less capital works than ones where we have to make substantial alterations to an existing preschool or build them from scratch, which is the case in some places. The answer is 38 in total (34 and four) and there are 23 operating out of the 30, and another three in the PPP schools, the Education Works schools. So it is a total of 26 operating out of that 38.

Mr PISONI: So we are still waiting for seven out of the 30 that were mentioned in the budget. If we take the PPPs out and take the federal-funded ones out—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Seven out of the 30. Of course, there were the 10 that we announced in the election commitment that are in the process of being completed. Obviously, they were only funded in last September's budget, so many of them are still to be finalised. In terms of the financial elements I will pass to Ms Julieann Riedstra. She is the Executive Director, Finance and Infrastructure, and she can answer the member for Unley's questions about the opening dates and some of the financial questions.

Ms RIEDSTRA: The budget papers represent an accumulation of each announcement. The first reference was to \$13 million in 2006-07, which I think you mentioned. Each year, as announcements have been made, the previous year's announcement is added to the next year's announcement, which has led us to the \$43 million in this particular year's budget papers.

Mr PISONI: How do you explain 20 centres at \$26.5 million in the 2008 budget but in 2009 it is 20 centres at \$30 million?

Ms RIEDSTRA: The movement from 2008-09 to 2009-10 included a refinement of the estimate of the costs of those 20. There was an amount included in the budget in anticipation of going to tender. In the following year, in the budget papers for 2010-11, that figure was then back down to \$27.511 million once the tenders had been let.

Mr PISONI: So that was a rescoping of the program, was it?

Ms RIEDSTRA: It was a result of the tenders. There was an allowance made prior to going to tender, and then the budget was adjusted after the tender and represented in the 2010-11 budget papers.

Mr PISONI: There were 10 centres announced in the budget in 2006 and there was an announcement of 20 centres in 2010, so that is an extra 10 centres on top of the 10 that were in the budget in 2006. Is that right?

Ms RIEDSTRA: Yes.

Mr PISONI: Then in 2007, those 20 centres (the 10 existing and the 10 new ones) were in the budget costing \$16.3 million. Then in 2008 they were \$26.5 million.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Just to correct you: the two lots of 10 were at each of the elections. In the 2006 election there was a commitment to an additional 10 and in the 2010 election there—

Mr PISONI: We have not got there yet; we are looking at what happened before the announcement. In 2009, before there was an announcement of another 10 centres, the cost had gone from the 2007 figure of \$16.3 million in the budget to \$30 million in the budget. Then during

the election you announced another 10. What is now the total cost of those 30 centres, and how many of those 30 centres are we still waiting for?

Ms RIEDSTRA: The total cost for the 30 centres is \$43.145 million.

Mr PISONI: How many are we still waiting for, and where are they?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We have the operational progress. Of the original 20, 19 are up and running: Enfield, Elizabeth, Angle Park, The Parks, Hackham West, Wynn Vale, Keithcot Farm, Taperoo, Renmark, Port August, Elizabeth (Kaurana Plains), Paradise (that is the Il Nido one), Woodcroft Heights, Mount Gambier, Cowandilla, Playford South, Forbes, Parafield Gardens, Kirton Point, Trinity Gardens, Murray Bridge and O'Sullivan Beach. Construction is occurring at Gawler for the 20th, and that is part of the Education Works project which is being completed soon.

Three of the four Education Works centres are operational: John Hartley, Birth to 7; Blair Athol, Birth to 7; and Woodville Gardens, Birth to 7. The Mark Oliphant College, Birth to 12, is the one that is not yet operational. So, three of those four are operational. The next 10, which were funded in the 2010 budget and which are not yet operational (although some of them are very close) are: Adelaide, Sturt Street Community School; Aldinga, Aldinga Primary School; Goolwa, Goolwa Children's Centre; Hewett, the Elsie Ey Kindergarten (which is very imminent, I think it might even be up and running); Hillcrest, Gilles Plain Primary School; Ingle Farm, Ingle Farm Primary School; Port Pirie, Port Pirie West Primary School; Salisbury North, Lake Windermere CPC-7 School; Seacombe Gardens, Darlington Primary School; and St Agnes, Ardtornish Primary School. They are the ones that were promised and are being worked on. Some that required relatively minor capital works are ready to go.

The four Aboriginal Family and Children Centres are: Ceduna, the Ceduna Area School; the Hincks Avenue Primary School at Whyalla; Christies Beach Primary School at Christies Beach; and the other is Ernabella, or Pukatja, at the Ernabella Anangu School there. They have been only relatively recently identified as the sites, so work is continuing there. It is also worth pointing out, though, that in a range of these areas the community development coordinator is already in place, as well as the family services coordinator, and working with families to provide them with the sorts of support that will ultimately be based in the place that will represent the children's centre.

Mr PISONI: Are you able to provide the months when those centres will be open?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not have that information.

Mr PISONI: I am happy for it to come back.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Most of them are due for completion in 2013, but we do not have precise dates yet.

Mr PISONI: Is it something that you have not yet worked out or—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: They were an election commitment in 2010 to build them during the life of the government, and we are confident that we will meet that commitment.

Mr PISONI: I want to now move to the preschools relocation program. This is page 162. Can I have the number of schools that will be moved or relocated, and will any be amalgamated? Are you able to provide the committee with the estimates of asset sales revenue coming back to the department or to Treasury from the sale of the closure of the centres that are being moved onto school sites?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: With this scheme, it is worth remembering that it is a voluntary scheme for preschools to move onto primary school sites. We have become aware that a number of preschools do have ambitions to upgrade their facilities and have worked closely in collaboration with the primary schools they have a connection with. Many see advantages in being on the same site, much the same way as the children's centres operate.

The preschool program will probably be able to get approximately eight to 10 preschools over the next four years, but the number will depend on the cost of funding the relocation; it will largely depend on that. It is not directed at the idea of amalgamation of preschools, or it is not contemplated that there is a process of amalgamation with the relevant primary school but, once again, these are matters for the individual schools. We would not anticipate that that would be part of the process in simply moving onto the school site.

A lot of these preschools do have demands for improved facilities. That has become even more important with the move to universal access with the additional hours. It may be that we can

achieve two objectives, that is, providing the additional capital funding support they need and also this opportunity to integrate the services more effectively. We know that the new standards are going to require the upgrade of facilities, so that may also have a bearing on some preschools.

As to asset sales, you find that many preschools are actually on council land or community land. It is not necessarily land that is owned by the state government, so obviously there is no asset to be realised in the event that they move. To the extent that they are on land that we own, presumably that land would be dealt with in the ordinary way, that is, to see whether there is any other use within government or local government that could be made of it and then, potentially, the sale of the land. I presume that the sale of the land would assist the economics of the scheme and may just assist us to provide relocation of additional preschools.

I do not think that it is anticipated that there will be large sums of money available. It may be that the land that preschools are on tends to be reserves that would not necessarily be calculated as things for some higher market use. It would just depend on what the situation was with that land.

Mr PISONI: Is that the same thing with the special schools?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Special schools would almost always be on DECS sites, I imagine; once again, there would be land disposal issues there, and they would be dealt with in the ordinary way, as I have just set out.

Mr PISONI: Can I have a list of the sites that will be closing, for special schools that will be vacant, to allow for land sales?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Sure. Each of the special schools that were identified for relocation, which I think were all identified by name, will be the sites that will be potentially available, unless there was some alternative use, but we can clarify that for you. The first step is: is there an alternative use within the agency? If not, then all other agencies and local government are given an opportunity to see whether they need the land and are prepared to purchase it. If that is not the case, an approach is generally taken to the market. That is not managed by our agency; that is managed by the Land Management Corporation.

Mr PISONI: So you are able to give me a list.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will give you a list of all the schools that are proposing to be relocated.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 165. Can the minister please describe how quality of child care of children in early education will be monitored?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the honourable member for her question. We know that the early years are crucial to the future and wellbeing of our children and, with this in mind, the quality of care of children in early education is vitally important to their wellbeing. The new national standards, and the new independent regulatory authority that will oversee them, will help ensure children are given quality education and care. They will give confidence to parents that their childcare centre, preschool, family daycare centre or out-of-hours care services will be providing quality education and care.

The 2011-12 budget provides \$9.5 million over four years, including \$6.3 million in commonwealth government allocation to establish this independent authority to oversee the new national standards. Legislation underpinning these new arrangements will be introduced to parliament later this year. The independent authority will replace the existing bodies that previously regulated child care in South Australia as well as overseeing out-of-school hours care, family day care and preschool for the first time.

The establishment follows extensive and regular consultation on the quality of reform by the Australian government and South Australian government over the past 18 months, and the new state independent authority will assess and rate services against the new national quality standard. Assessor training is an important component of the national approach to sector preparation in readiness for full implementation of the reforms by 2012.

A range of appropriate and proportionate enforcement responses to non-compliance will be available to the state regulatory body, and our new national body is overseeing the implementation to ensure that there is national consistency.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to the same budget paper, page 164. Could the minister please advise how parents are continuing to engage in early childhood development through the Learning Together program?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the member for Reynell. I know that she is very interested in this question of the way in which students and parents actually learn together. I know that she is promoting a program in her electorate which seeks to engage parents as partners in the child's learning, and this is also occurring in the preschool space. In a way, it is more familiar in the preschool space because people have always seen that as a place where parents and children work together, so we are building on that.

South Australia has long been recognised as a leader in the field of early childhood development. One area in which we are held in high regard is in engaging parents to support their children. The Learning Together program is a family literacy and support program which aims to improve early literacy learning for children from birth to three years. The Learning Together program provides an important focus on literacy for children and parents and has been a path for many young parents to engage and re-engage with the education system.

In 2010-11, 35,410 attendances have been recorded for the Learning Together programs. There were nearly 1,000 families and about 1,243 children enrolled in and attending programs. This represents an increase of 56 per cent since the previous year. Of the families attending Learning Together programs, 9.5 per cent are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. There are currently 82 Learning Together groups running each week—24 per cent more than last year. In 2010, the number of Learning Together groups run was 100, including one-off sessions.

In addition, 40 parents are currently studying for their SACE through Learning Together. In 2011, new SACE subjects were developed to meet the needs of parents in the program and enable them to support their children's learning. With support from Learning Together, an additional 34 parents are involved in TAFE or university study. A successful resource called *Together* was developed in conjunction with families participating in the program and emphasises the benefits of parents forming a close bond with their children.

In 2010-11, an additional 30,000 copies have been printed for distribution in addition to the first 20,000 copies that were distributed last year; and 3,000 copies of the *Together* pamphlet have been printed in Vietnamese. The Learning Together at Home program has had 588 families, with 761 children receiving services. These families received 5,377 home visits in 2010. This includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and children under guardianship.

The Learning Together family survey also demonstrates the benefits for families involved in the program, including an increase in adult literacy and learning behaviours such as reading, singing, talking and playing more with their children. Since taking part in the program, 72 per cent of respondents demonstrated an increased confidence in their role as a parent; 74 per cent of respondents demonstrated an increased understanding of their child; 63 per cent of children are asking to be read to more often; 76 per cent of children are observed to have improved communication skills; and 81 per cent of children have been observed to have increased confidence. The state government is incredibly heartened by these positive results.

Mr ODENWALDER: I refer the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 169: Can the minister outline how the South Australian government is progressing with the Universal Access to Early Childhood Education initiative?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I thank the honourable member for this question. The experiences of children in the early years are obviously profound in terms of their future capacity to contribute, and so our quality child preschool program, which is delivered at 11 hours, is to be expanded through the universal access program to 15 hours. It flows from an agreement with the commonwealth in 2008 to commit, on a national basis, more than \$970 million over five years. The central component is universal access to preschool; to make this successful for all four-year-old children; and 15 hours a week by the end of June 2013.

South Australia's share will be \$65.4 million. In South Australia, a stakeholder advisory committee has been established to provide advice on key policy issues in relation to the implementation. Universal access is being delivered in South Australia in a range of ways including expanding service provision in existing preschools. Children enrolled in the 416 government funded preschools have increased provision from 11 to 15 hours creating new preschool services. New partnerships will be entered into with childcare operators and non-government schools to help

deliver early childhood education to children currently not accessing or unable to access government funded preschools.

Delivery options for rural and isolated children: service delivery options to be explored include the use of new technologies to deliver preschool online. Preschools in metropolitan and country areas with the highest proportions of Aboriginal and disadvantaged children were prioritised in the rollout when we began it in 2010. Today, a total of 136 preschools have received funding to deliver 15 hours of preschool. A further round of government funded preschools is due in term 3 this year to move to 15 hours. On the completion of this round, an estimated 36 per cent of all four year olds in government funded preschools will have the 15 hours, including 82 per cent of all four-year-old Aboriginal children.

Forty-five non-government childcare and preschool providers are also invited to participate in this initiative. Invitations to participate will continue to be extended to the non-government childcare, private school and preschool service providers. Up to 2,400 new preschool places may be delivered through this initiative across South Australia, which will improve the opportunities for parents to access preschool. In addition, two inclusive preschool programs for students with disabilities will be established, one in Port Pirie and the other in western Adelaide at the Parks Children's Centre.

Inclusive preschool programs are integrated preschool programs supporting up to seven children with additional needs. Facilities are modified and additional staffing is provided to assist those young people to make sure that their development needs are met in this preschool. There cannot be a more important way of addressing learning difficulties than intervening at this early stage.

Mr WHETSTONE: Under targets for 2011-12, the first dot point refers to a further two children's centres being opened. Where are these centres to be located, and when are they scheduled for completion?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The expectation is that those two children's centres will be the Elsie Ey kindergarten that I referred to earlier in Gawler, and the Sturt Street Community Child Care Centre in Adelaide.

Mr WHETSTONE: There are a number of children's centres in the regional areas, such as Renmark. Are there any plans to open other centres in regional South Australia? If so, what conditions would need to be met for new centres to be established?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Port Pirie, in the next round of 10, is in a regional area. Obviously, we are constrained by resources. I would like to encourage as many children's centres to exist as possible. I suppose one of the constraints is the physical infrastructure, and that is building them. However, as I discussed earlier, especially in regional areas, a lot of these services are co-located, anyway, so they are almost there, if you like.

We are exploring ways in which we can create, if you like, almost children's centres in a number of these places, trying to integrate as many services as we can. Some have sufficient room for that already, so that can be explored; but many do require some capital works modifications where the preschool relocation program may provide some opportunities for regional preschools to co-locate on the primary school campuses and thereby create the opportunity to bring these services together in one site.

So it is constrained by resources, but I am very keen to find ways in which, even if we cannot get the complete idea, we might be able to move towards it, because there are massive benefits in service integration, and that occurs more readily when services are all on the same site. The essence of it is that all those things that bear on the development of a child in the first five years of life—health services, disability services, preschool care, parenting support—should be in the one place.

The services do not necessarily have to live there but, if there is provision for them to visit, that can also be important. I am certainly open to any regional member who observes opportunities for doing this to bring these services together. It may be that we cannot create the complete children's centre idea, but we can at least take a step towards it and, when the funding becomes available, we can provide the other wraparound bits that make it a success.

Mr WHETSTONE: I refer to Budget Paper 4, page 167, the performance indicators of government expenditure per child in early childhood education and care services. The cost per child in family day care has risen by \$304 despite a targeted reduction in cost per child. Why has that cost risen?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Once again, this is a net cost, so it does not necessarily reflect the cost of the provision of the service but rather the net cost after the application of the income. So it does not necessarily reflect a dramatic increase in the cost. I think we will take that question on notice so that we can provide a more detailed answer.

Mr PISONI: This question refers to page 170 of Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, performance indicators, the number of children participating in early childhood by group. The estimate for 2010-11 was 1,240 Aboriginal children of the 3,020 children who should be participating in the preschool bilingual program. I imagine that the Aboriginal children will be participating in that as well, as many of them have limited English. For the 3,420 children who are eligible for this program, there are 130 teachers in South Australia covering 26 languages. How many of the eligible children are participating in the prescribed programs?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Can you take us to where you are with that number—that is page 170?

Mr PISONI: Page 170. There are 1,240 Aboriginal children participating in early childhood education, which represents, it says there, 6.8 per cent of the number of children, and children from culturally diverse backgrounds. I am trying to establish how many of those children are participating in the preschool bilingual program.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: How many Aboriginal children are participating—

Mr PISONI: You have two lots: you have the Aboriginal children and children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: So, is there any crossover in those two categories?

Mr PISONI: No, I am just trying to establish how many—I think the total there is 3,420—of those two groups, the total available, are participating in the preschool bilingual program.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will have to take that on notice to see whether they are discrete categories or whether there is some overlap. So, the Aboriginal children who are participating in—

Mr PISONI: And also children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think I understand the question, and I will bring back an answer. We just do not have—

Mr PISONI: Your website describes the bilingual program as being available to Aboriginal children as well. From what I can gather, my maths tells me that 3,420 children would qualify for that program, and I am just trying to establish how many of them are using those programs. Also, are you able to advise me of the English level of the bilingual teachers: is it proficient enough for them to be teaching English to non-English speaking children? For example, are English teachers teaching English or are those who are qualified to teach other languages teaching English to those children?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will take those questions on notice. I think it would be wrong to assume that all Aboriginal children are speaking a language other than English at home. There is, of course, a category that does. In fact, there is a category of Aboriginal children who are essentially treated and given the same sort of intensive English language program, at least in the school environment, as new arrivals. So, their English needs are obviously equivalent to the sorts of needs for English instruction of students from culturally diverse backgrounds. There would be a very large proportion of Aboriginal children who would not necessarily fit into that category. But as for the qualifications of the teachers who are teaching these children, I will bring back an answer to you.

The CHAIR: Do you have one last question?

Mr PISONI: Just one quick one perhaps, and I am happy for that to be brought back. This relates to page 163, Expenses—grants and other subsidies. In that column, we have listed 'Other expenses' and 'Other income', and I wonder whether we can have a breakdown—\$3 million and just over \$1 million.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will bring back an answer for you.

Mr PISONI: Thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I thank the members of the committee and the advisers. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the proposed payments concluded.

**DEPARTMENT OF FURTHER EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,
\$409,791,000**

Membership:

Mr Hamilton-Smith substituted for Mr Pisoni.

Mr Venning substituted for Mr Treloar.

Witness:

Hon. J.W. Weatherill, Minister for Education, Minister for Early Childhood Development, Minister for Science and Information Economy.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr R. Garrand, Chief Executive, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

Dr C. Fowler, Deputy Chief Executive, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

Ms C. Anderson, Director, Science and Information Economy, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

Mr J. Kolovos, Director, Strategic Finance, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology.

Mr K. Cantley, General Manager, South Australian Government Financing Authority.

Dr J. Michaelis, Chief Executive, Bio Innovation SA.

Ms A. Nelson, Deputy Chief Executive, Bio Innovation SA.

The CHAIR: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to Portfolio Statement, Volume 2. I call on the minister to make a statement if he so wishes.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am pleased to make a brief statement about the science and information technology portfolio. I think it is important to recognise that, of course, science and technology do not recognise borders. They permeate industry, health, education, research, environment, communication and the space within and beyond our global economy. They are also important not only to our state's economic, but also to our social, and increasingly our environmental, protection. It is a pretty profound area of activity.

It is particularly evident at a time when South Australia's economy is being transformed by the development of new and emerging industries. They include defence, biotech, mining industries and the growth of clean air technologies. We must also be more competitive and skilled in a range of our traditional South Australian industries, so that requires us to innovate in areas of manufacturing, wine, agriculture, aquaculture and other food related industries. Science and the information economy are at the heart of that.

Nationally, we are on the cusp of a major transformation in information and communication technologies, with the rollout of the national broadband network. However, governments alone cannot integrate science and ICT into our way of life and the advancement of our industries and services. So it is important that we work across agencies and with industry and education to harness science and ICT as we progress our social and economic development.

That is why we are taking a partnership approach with industry, education and research organisations to develop science and information technologies that support our development. The report of the former Adelaide Thinker in Residence, Dr Genevieve Bell, and the work of the Premier's Science and Research Council are helping to inform our policy initiatives, together with the significant expertise and advice from our newly-appointed Chief Scientist, Professor Don Bursill, and other leading scientists who comprise the Science Research Council.

On the ICT front, we are helping to enable more people, including those in rural and regional communities, to access business, education and community services through wireless broadband. For example, in recent months, we launched the Murray and Mallee Broadband Project, which means that hundreds of residents and business owners in the region have joined the series of South Australian regions to benefit from being connected to high-speed broadband internet. This particular investment delivers fast internet speeds for more than 500 premises in the region, which includes Lameroo, Pinnaroo and the south of Loxton.

Our shared initiatives also include the success of the AdamMax project, which was supported by an investment of \$3 million to spread those services, and the Remote Indigenous Public Access Centre in Oodnadatta. In turn, the vision of Thinker in Residence, Dr Bell, of the internet being transformed from a destination to an essential part of everyday life is being realised. We are supporting industry-led initiatives to increase professional ICT skills. For example, the MEGA program brings together creative, technical and business students and professionals to help develop employability skills and develop services and products.

Similarly, business, industry, educators and governments recognise the importance of lifting science, technology, engineering and maths (the so-called STEM skills), and while the demand and supply of people with these skills is a national and international challenge, the growth in our biotech, minerals, defence and cleantech industries make this an especially important focus for the partnership between government, industry, education and training. We are also, through our schooling system, which I outlined earlier, engaging in a range of ways in which we can promote the take-up of maths and science in our schools.

Underpinning our activities is the development of research and development capability in South Australia. We continue to work with the state's universities and research organisations. On behalf of the government, the Department for Water and DFEEST, we facilitated the establishment of the Goyder Institute for Water Research, also supported by the CSIRO, and it will help position South Australia as a world leader in water innovation and science.

The government has also invested \$5 million in the Institute of Photonics and Advanced Sensing at the University of Adelaide. We have continued to secure various grants over the years in support of potential CRC applicants, with two out of the four CRCs funded nationally in 2010 being headquartered in South Australia, which is a significant achievement by local researchers.

We have also committed \$3 million to six strategic research and development projects through the Premier's Science and Research Fund. Through the federal government's Super Science initiative, we have allocated \$3.8 million to develop leading-edge research capabilities in five local research organisations including the internationally renowned Ian Wark Research Institute, the Institute for Photonics and Advanced Sensing and the Australian Wine Research Institute. Overall, this partnership approach with industry and research organisations reflects our strong support and culture of innovation here in South Australia.

The CHAIR: Is there any statement from the shadow minister?

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: No, other than to thank the minister, Mr Garrand, Dr Fowler and Ms Anderson for their efforts in preparing for today. I would like to start with Program 1.3: Biosciences. I then have some questions on Playford Capital and grants and a range of other issues. First of all, referring to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 200, how has the government progressed with its cuts to Bio Innovation SA announced in last year's budget? Have all the cuts been successfully made? Have we underachieved or overachieved?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes; they have been made, and they have been successfully implemented.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Could you advise what the impact of those cuts has been in terms of lost staff numbers, reduced grants and subsidies and reduced activities? Can you explain to the committee what the consequence of those cuts has been, a year on?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I invite the representative from Bio Innovation SA, the Chief Executive Dr Jurgen Michaelis, to elaborate on that.

Dr MICHAELIS: The staff numbers of BioSA have been reduced from about 16 FTE to 12 or 13 FTE. We have made reductions across all our operating expenditure and support for marketing and networking activities and have, to the extent possible, tried to maintain our grant funding to organisations. If you look at the grant funding lines that will be published, or have now been published, we have maintained that. In the out years it will be a slight reduction to grants, too.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I go to that same page, page 199-200. I am hearing that staff numbers have been reduced from 16 to 12 or 13. Could you be more specific about any programs that have been cut or any grant programs that might have been reduced—either the number of grants or the quantum of the grant—as a result of those budget cuts?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will invite Dr Michaelis to answer that.

Dr MICHAELIS: There is a strong emphasis on providing sufficient capital to individual organisations; that means that the overall number of grants has reduced but the total awarded per organisation has basically remained the same, to have the least impact for those companies that we have fostered. So rather than reducing the impact overall, we provided a smaller number of grants but to the same magnitude to companies—so fewer companies will be awarded grants.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: How many grants would have been made before the cuts and how many would have been made after the cuts? What would be the average size of each grant, if you can put a figure on that?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will ask Dr Michaelis to answer that.

Dr MICHAELIS: In 2009-10 we provided about 25 grants, and in 2010-11 there were 18 grants. For this year I will have to take it on notice because we are just finalising the last grant payments, but it will probably be less than 18. The dollar figures have remained almost constant: in 2009-10, \$3.2 million; in 2010-11, about \$3.4 million; and, in 2011-12, \$3.1 million. So we tried to maintain that.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: What new cuts, if any, have been made to Bio Innovation SA and its activities in this budget—or increases, if there have been any increases?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: There have been no additional savings initiatives in this budget.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 199. How were the \$0.7 million in savings measures from Bio Innovation SA achieved? You might have already partly answered that question, but you have given a figure of \$0.7 million savings; could you give a break-up of that \$700,000?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That was essentially the answer we gave before: that is the amount, and the answer was that it is spread across programs, trying to quarantine grant funding as much as we possibly can, with the reduction in staff that has been explained.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: So that figure is directly related to the reduction in staff from 16 to 12 and the reduction in grants from around 29 grants to around 18 grants. Does that constitute most of the \$700,000, or is there any other saving that forms part of that amount?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is across the board, so all the things that money is spent on within an organisation—such as goods and services, wages, you have it described—probably are less than a proportionate cut in grant funding because there has been a relatively small reduction in the actual dollar amounts of grants but spread in the fashion that we described.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to the same budget paper, page 200. I am interested in the relationship between Bio Innovation SA and the plant functional genomics centre at Waite. Have the budget cuts last year, which have been sustained this year, affected the plant functional genomics centre? Has its funding been cut or changed?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am advised no.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: How much is it receiving? Is it adequate to meet its needs?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The funds for the Australian Centre for Plant Functional Genomics, we are contributing \$8.7 million over five years to 2012. Bio Innovation SA administers the funds and acts as a shareholder representative on behalf of the South Australian government. The company is a joint initiative between the ARC and the Grains Research and Development Board and the universities of Adelaide, South Australia, Melbourne, Queensland and the state governments of Victoria and South Australia. The total funding from partners over two five-year rounds will be \$70 million.

It also won a National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy Grant in 2007-08 to build the plant accelerator, and that building, of course, was completed in 2010. It has been funded adequately, but I am sure any organisation would seek additional funding. It certainly has been funded adequately to achieve the objectives that have been defined for it.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Just exploring that further, you mentioned that funding is in place until 2012. Is the government in a position to make an ironclad affirmation that funding will continue to be provided after 2012, and is any funding so budgeted?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We have a funding agreement that we will honour, and I am advised that there have been no representations made to us yet about the next round of funding. When and if that occurs, we will entertain that funding application. I do not think that there is any reason to think that the funding for this organisation is in any form of jeopardy. We have certainly complied with the requests that have been made of us, and we are happy to entertain further requests.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Let me just pin that down. The funding agreement at present ends in 2012. Am I hearing that you are happy to entertain a further approach but that nothing at this stage has been signed up to or agreed in regard to ongoing funding?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I am advised that we have not yet been approached, but that is probably reasonably orthodox. I think that the agreement has some time to run, and I presume an approach will be made to government at some point, depending on the future needs of the organisation.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Is there any funding in the out years of this estimates period beyond 2012, because that is next year and the financial year after the one we are going into? Is there any funding actually there in the estimates period to extend that support to the Plant Functional Genomics Centre beyond 2012 at the moment?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The way in which these matters are dealt with in the published accounts are that individual departments like ours are allocated funding to cover our present commitments. I am not aware whether any contingencies have been made by Treasury generally. This is not uncommon to have agreements that have a certain lifetime for which agencies are provided with funding, and that appears in their forward estimates.

Treasury has a list of those agreements where they monitor and maintain central contingencies about what might happen in the future. With some of those funding agreements, it would be reasonable to expect that similar amounts will be requested in the future, and that is something that government plans for at a central level. In this area it is notorious for there to be funding arrangements that have a beginning and an end and others that continue. No doubt, that is managed centrally by Treasury, and they make judgments about what contingencies are needed to manage those situations.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Why I am asking is: I understand the Plant Functional Genomics Centre is one of the three leading world centres for agri-science in the fields in which it focuses. Is there a risk that it could be attracted away from South Australia by an investment from another state which might seek to poach it into their university because there is a hiatus or an absence of security? The point is if there is no money in the books, there is no money in the books. Are we at risk of losing this asset to Queensland or Perth where they are focused in this area? How can we prevent that from happening?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That is a risk that you are identifying. Presumably it is not a risk that has been identified to me by my agency, nor as I am advised by them has it been a risk identified by the Plant Functional Genomics Centre themselves. If you know something that we do not know, we are more than happy to hear about it, and we can take some steps to satisfy ourselves about the nature of that risk and see how we respond to it. Presently, it has not been something that has been raised with us by the centre itself or with me by my agency, but if you have some information that suggests that they have concerns or they have raised concerns with you, I would be really keen to know that.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I would just make the point that if there is uncertainty there, it creates an opportunity for another state to come in with its bag of gold and take these things away, and we have been victims of that in the past. I just identify as a risk: if there is no funding in the books beyond 2012, then—

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think it would be wrong to say that there is no funding in the books. I think what exists in the accounts is just the orthodox way in which we account for programs that have a certain duration. It should not be represented to anyone, least of all to the Plant Functional Genomics Centre, that somehow there is any uncertainty after 2012. There does not seem to be any uncertainty in their mind because they have not raised that with us, and it

would be unfortunate if we created the impression that there was any uncertainty because I do not think there is.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I hear what you are saying, minister, but the fact is that there is no money in the forward estimates period in this budget with concern to funding the Plant Functional Genomics Centre beyond 2012. Your answer has been that you hope that Treasury will have some provision for that, but I do not see that either in the budget papers. Unless it is coming out of budget headroom, I note with concern that there seems to be a question mark about what happens after 2012.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not think that you can infer that there is any uncertainty or doubt about the funding arrangements that exist with the Plant Functional Genomics Centre.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: There is nothing in the books beyond 2012.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I do not think you can infer from the fact that a program of limited duration has been fully funded for the life of that program that somehow there is going to be the cessation of that program after 2012. It may well be that the Plant Functional Genomics Centre has different needs after that point and they might want to make representations to us about that.

We generally do not make allocations of funding to people before they ask us for those arrangements, because we might make an incorrect allocation. It is just not the orthodox way in which we go about doing it. I think it is an appropriate matter to consider but, as I say, if you are in possession of some information we should be aware of, I am more than happy to hear it.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Thank you, I will move on. Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 200, talks about Terra Rossa Capital, and it gives some information about investments made by Terra Rossa Capital. Is there any further elaboration you can provide to the committee on the activities of Terra Rossa Capital? With whom have they made investments and how much has been invested in each case?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Terra Rossa Capital manages the \$35 million South Australian Life Sciences Advancement (SALSA) fund, based in South Australia and specialising in life science based technology. Bio Innovation SA committed a total of \$1.9 million over ten years towards the administrative and operating costs of the fund. It has invested in nine companies to date, eight of which are South Australian. There are some limitations on the amount of information that can be supplied in the public sphere, but I will ask Dr Michaelis to answer the question, and he will obviously use his discretion about how much information is appropriate to be placed in the public sphere.

Dr MICHAELIS: To date, Terra Rossa Capital has made 11 investments, two only in the last six weeks, so therefore they are not on the minister's information sheet. Terra Rossa Capital has invested about \$13 million into life sciences companies. We have leveraged additional private money into those companies of about \$56 million and leveraged additional grant funding of about \$12 million, so the total money being put to work across the 11 companies is about \$80 million.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Have any of the cuts to Bio Innovation SA impacted upon Terra Rossa Capital? Just in exploring this relationship between Bio Innovation SA and Terra Rossa Capital, how inter-dependent are the two entities? Can one live without the other or are they joined at the hip?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The answer to your first question is no. The answer to the second question about the anatomical relationship between these two organisations, I might ask Dr Michaelis to explain.

Dr MICHAELIS: There are two components to be considered; the MTAA Super, as the capital provider of the \$35 million, has made the provision of the investment capital contingent of an operation of Bio Innovation SA over the life of the fund, which is a ten-year fund. The state government has honoured that commitment. The two roles of the organisations are that the government provides what we call the soft infrastructure, business incubation facilities, mentoring and small grant funding to get the companies up to the first stage where they can go out and raise capital, and then the companies can go either to Terra Rossa Capital or other private investors to seek further capital.

Having said that, through the work of BioSA over the last 10 years, the majority of the Terra Rossa Capital in these companies has been generated by BioSA and now the private sector is taking over the investment risk of Terra Rossa Capital for those companies. The model that we

have in South Australia, this public-private partnership with two organisations with the same goal—one is to foster employment and the public good, the other to get a return on investment—is a unique model, and I think it works well. But, legally, there are two separate entities and no company is being directed to get investments from Terra Rossa Capital.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Could Terra Rosa Capital, with its key investor, the MTAA, if it felt that the South Australian government was not as supportive as, for example, another state government, decide to leave South Australia and set up in, say, Brisbane, Perth or Canberra? Is there anything holding it here contractually, or is it simply a gentleman's agreement?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Dr Michaelis can answer that question.

Dr MICHAELIS: The agreement between the state government, RSA and Terra Rossa Capital calls for both parties to continue to contribute, and both parties have honoured that commitment. Terra Rossa Capital, with its team of investing companies, is really anchored in South Australia. Like any commercial operation, they can move and go to a different location but the costs and the hurdles are significant. That does not mean it will not happen but there are currently no plans to do that.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: It could decide to move?

Dr MICHAELIS: Yes, it could decide.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: It is not a government entity, as such. It is really a private entity that is just located here because we have supported it in the past?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think it is more than that. I think the answer to the question is that one of the agreements in place is an agreement that we are party to and, presumably, the terms of that agreement are not uninfluenced by the fact that this is all happening in South Australia. The other thing is there are obviously significant barriers and administrative and logistical burdens associated with moving the organisation elsewhere. Subject to those caveats, it otherwise is a separate corporate entity.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 198. Can you tell us how the metropolitan broadband blackspots project is addressing the issue of ADSL broadband blackspots across metropolitan Adelaide?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The issue of broadband blackspots—those locations where the most common form of broadband technology cannot be accessed due to problems in Telstra's copper line network—is a serious one affecting many metropolitan areas across Australia, including Adelaide. Although telecommunications is largely a commonwealth responsibility, in order to find a solution to this problem, a request for a proposal was issued by DFEEST in 2009 and local Adelaide-based internet service provider Adam Internet was successful in putting forward the solution known as AdamMax, based on high speed, wireless broadband connections that effectively by-pass the problems of the copper network and provide that broadband access using fixed wireless connections.

To facilitate this, the state government is providing once-off funding of up \$2.95 million from the Broadband Development Fund to ensure uniform coverage across Adelaide. Support is also being provided by the commonwealth's Australian Broadband Guarantee program, which provides connection subsidies to the project, which have totalled \$3.8 million to April 2011. The first customers were successfully connected in November in the southern suburbs.

The network construction phase was completed in December 2010 on schedule, with 59 towers providing coverage from Sellicks Beach in the south to Gawler in the north. Most of the towers were already existing, not requiring new towers to be built. Already, more than 4,400 customers either are directly benefiting from the new services or have ordered an installation via this initiative, which is unique in Australia.

Residents and businesses within the coverage areas have gained access to alternative high-speed broadband services of up to 12 megabits per second, which is often higher than that available using the copper-based ADSL technology. Although the commonwealth has determined the Australian Broadband Guarantee program will come to an end in June (today), pending the implementation of the national broadband network, Adam Internet will continue to offer this service.

By continuing to offer competitive pricing and strong customer performance, Adam Internet has the ability to retain customers already using the Adam Max service, particularly as the NBN service is not expected to be available for some time in the Adelaide metropolitan area. For customers not already connected, Adam Internet will continue to provide connections beyond July

2011. This particular company was given a DFEEST role, and it was recently given a Premier's award for its work.

Ms THOMPSON: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 198. How is the Outback Connect program assisting regional South Australians to develop basic online skills?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Thank you, member for Reynell. The Outback Connect online interactive classroom was established as a state government initiative in 2008, in collaboration with TAFE SA. The program offers free online interactive classes for beginners in regional and rural areas in a range of ICT topics.

The Outback Connect program currently has 2,134 registered users, who can choose from a broad range of ICT topics at a foundational skill level. Classes are offered at a variety of times to optimise involvement, and participants can access the program from home, a public library or community centre. The interactive nature of the classes offers learners the opportunity to develop basic ICT skills in a flexible, personalised and responsive environment.

Recently, the Outback Connect program has been expanded to include the unemployed as a means of promoting job readiness through the acquisition of digital literacy skills. The Outback Connect program is one digital literacy initiative which recognises the important role of ITC skills in our new environment and the increasing array of services that will flow from the NBN when it is rolled out.

The imperative of having a digitally skilled and competent population is increasingly evident, none more so than in our rural and regional areas. The Outback Connect program demonstrates an e-learning approach which is learner-centred and targeted at engaging people who are disadvantaged either by geography or circumstances, and it is proving to be very popular and successful.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Can I go back to the biosciences, please, minister? I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 200, the Thebarton bioscience precinct. Can you update the committee on the status of the Thebarton bioscience precinct in regard to plans for the future? I note in the budget papers that a parcel of land is to be sold. Can you please give us an overview of what parcel of land is to be sold, how much will we raise from it, and what are our plans, if any, for the future down there?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: As you noted, BioSA is responsible for the development and management of that commercial bioscience precinct in Thebarton, which is a bioscience business incubator. BioSA's role was to build a cluster of advanced industry activity and secure a supply of research and manufacturing space. The South Australian government has invested more than \$60 million in the past 12 years to facilitate a bioscience cluster at Thebarton, which includes five specialist research and manufacturing facilities and five hectares of land under management, which includes 2.5 hectares of vacant land for future development.

The specialist bioscience incubator was completed in 2008, offering business assistance and research and office space to early stage companies to accelerate their growth. The strategy has been successful. The Thebarton cluster has increased from 12 bioscience companies in 2002 to over 30 firms by 2008. The incubator has remained above 97 per cent occupancy since its completion.

The five-hectare bioscience precinct at 40-46 West Thebarton Road, Thebarton is owned by the government in the name of the Minister for Science and Information Economy. The site, which was formerly a tannery, was recently included as a site of interest for contamination, but the site is actually a showcase in how to remediate a site. It has been remediated and environmentally audited as being suitable for commercial development.

The future plans for the precinct include selling land for new privately funded projects, as well as building a stage 2 incubator building for rapidly expanding companies. That is a possible future and consideration will be given to that at some future stage.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: How much do we hope to raise from the land that we are selling for private development?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, there is no present proposal to do that. We have essentially completed the first stage. There just happens to be the 2.5 hectares of land which is potentially available for the next phase, the project's stage 2 phase, but it is not something which we presently have funding allocation for.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: So, am I understanding that there are no plans to further expand or develop the site, that are funded?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No funded plans, yes.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Just moving for a moment to grants and subsidies, referring to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 195: I note that grants and subsidies in 2009-10 were \$14.5 million and they dropped to \$12 million in 2010-11, and in this budget they are only \$8.7 million in 2011-12. That is almost a halving, not quite a halving, but nearly, of grants and subsidies in this portfolio. What has been the reduction in the number of grants and the quantum of grants, and what has been the impact of pulling that amount of money out of grants and subsidies over the period of the last three budgets?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is more a timing issue in relation to the end of a number of significant programs. The 2011-12 budget compared with the 2010-11 estimated result: the \$5.3 million decrease in net costs is primarily due to a reduction in grant expenditure within government and with the private sector, due to the completion of the broadband initiative in 2010-11; lower expenditure on NCRIS, \$1.2 million; the carryover expenditure associated with the education investment fund from 2009-10 to 2010-11; lower expenditure associated with the Playford Centre; and \$0.9 million in savings measures to reduce the operating costs of BioInnovation SA of \$0.7 million.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Did I hear in there the number of grants that have been reduced before and after that?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: No, I was just saying that is was grant funding, grant expenditure within government, as you noted in your answer to your question. There is a number of NCRIS grants which come to an end and, in the absence of winning new grants and our making contributions to them, it is the natural ebb and flow of the grant funding cycle.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 195, Innovate SA. The government announced last year that funding would be cut to Innovate SA. Can you update the committee as to what is the future of Innovate SA, if any?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: That comes within the portfolio of DTED, so it is a matter that I invite you to direct to the minister responsible for that budget element.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: All right. There is mention in the budget paper on page 195 of intragovernment transfers having dropped from \$9.3 million to \$7.5 million. Can you explain that, please, to the committee?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Which line, intragovernment transfers?

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Intragovernment transfers have dropped by around \$2 million.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think that represents the commonwealth grant funding program of NCRIS and the corresponding reduction in commonwealth grants that certainly are contributed to by state government grants. As that grant funding program reduces, that represents the reduction that flows into the state.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: So that reflects reduced commonwealth funding to the state?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Yes.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Turning to Playford Capital for a moment, the government—this is Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 196—your predecessor announced last year that the government would be winding up Playford Capital. What is the status of your plans to do so, and how do you intend to deal with the issue of the government's investments already made in various companies by Playford and the future of those investments?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The short answer is that the decision to wind down the program is one that is maintained. The decision that was made earlier is one that has been continued, so there has been no change in that. In answer to the question about how we deal with existing investments, I suppose the key thing is 'carefully', to make sure that we do not jeopardise those arrangements.

There is obviously a detailed wind-down process that has involved the state government having discussions with Playford Capital and involving the South Australian Government Financing Authority, which has assisted me in developing and implementing a wind-down strategy. It has also

involved a reduction in staff but making sure that we maintain the quality of our supervision of the existing arrangements.

Ministerial responsibility for the Playford Centre has been transferred to me. Playford Capital will continue to manage the current portfolio of investments with a view to eventually exiting those arrangements, and the process of SAFA and Playford Capital working collaboratively together is under way.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Could the minister expand a little on the timetable: when does he expect that Playford Capital will be wound up?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We announced that we would want to target completion of the investment exits and wind-down by December 2012, but we are mindful that it needs to be done in an orderly way. It is possible that Playford may not be able to achieve exits from all of its investments within that time frame, so an extension to the current funding agreement may be requested. The critical thing here is to try to manage this in a way that causes the least dislocation.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Minister, your predecessor indicated that he had made this decision himself, I think, without referring it to cabinet, based on a report, I think, by Deanna Reid (or Leanna Reid) into the options. He also refused to make that report publicly available. I just wonder whether, as the new minister, you would be prepared to be open in respect of that report so that the committee, the parliament and the public could see what the options were, and we could have disclosure.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I think what the former minister said was that he arrived at his own decision. I do not think he could have implied that he did not take it to cabinet, because he did; it was a cabinet decision. I think what he was suggesting was that he reached his own conclusions having regard to, but not necessarily based on, the report that was prepared to assist him to make those decisions. That is appropriate; he is the one who has to make a judgement. He took it to cabinet and his recommendations about those matters were confirmed.

I saw your FOI application, and I asked the same question: why? It was not my decision—it was a matter for the FOI officers, who are independent—but my inclination was, as far as possible, to be open with that and disclose it. However, the very strong advice was that it was one of those situations where there were some real risks, in a commercial sense, to the companies involved if the report were disclosed. I understand the decision was made on that basis, and I did not feel it was appropriate for me to overrule that or find some alternative means of disclosing it independent of the FOI process, which had already ruled against disclosure for those reasons.

My bias is to produce reports where we can, but there seem to be some proper reasons in this sensitive commercial environment where you are talking about companies which, by definition, have quite sensitive financial needs. That is why they are coming to this organisation rather than going to the market. These are obviously quite risky and sensitive investments.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: The government has previously indicated that it was of the view that the gap that would be left by the closure of Playford would be met by the private sector. I think your predecessor mentioned a couple of companies that he thought would pick up the slack. What is the status of transition, if you like? Has the government played any role in trying to transition the functions of Playford to the private sector? Can you name any companies that you think will pick up the slack here?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The first thing to say is that this analysis about the role of government in providing venture capital is one that is shared between both the government and the Liberal opposition. In your party's campaign document for the last election you also shared the view that it was not the government's job to provide venture capital, so I think there is common ground there. The question is about how we deal with this particular wind down, and we are obviously trying to handle that in a very managed and careful way so as to ensure that these companies are not disturbed.

However, we do accept that there are other opportunities for government to provide contributions which can assist organisations of this sort, and we have already spoken about Terra Rossa Capital and its investments, and minor funding that we provide to a range of other capital funds such as the Trans Tasman Commercialisation Fund and the South Australian Life Sciences Advancement Fund. The state government has no equity interests or control over investment decisions of these funds.

We have also committed \$1.25 million over five years to the state's three universities as a contribution towards administrative and operative costs, South Australian operations of the \$30 million Trans Tasman Commercialisation Fund.

We do make contributions, but the view of government is that we did not want to be involved in such a direct way in organisations of this sort. We have sought to withdraw our ownership of equity and start-up companies and avoid the direct provision of finance in early stage start-up companies. We are taking a range of policy and other funding decisions to support other institutions to step into that space.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Did you consider, and is it too late to consider, selling Playford as a going concern or entering into a partnership with the private sector to take over the role of Playford? You mentioned venture capital, but really it is a seed capital fund, Playford, not administering large amounts but really seeding it.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: As I said earlier, the way in which the wind-down is to occur will be the subject of supporting advice from SAFA. As we approach the wind-down to the end date of December 2012, well before that time a review will be undertaken by SAFA for the purposes of giving me advice about what will be the appropriate way of protecting our interests and those of the various organisations. It may well be that there is an option for the sale and disposition of the remaining interests, if you like, in this company, and that is something about which I will take advice from SAFA.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: As just a general question (and I will be interested to know the minister's opinion on this), this entire budget area has to do with science and innovation. It is closely connected to industry, whether it is the biosciences or through Playford Capital and others, and the technology sector. Would this portfolio or capability be better placed with, say, Trade and Economic Development, where there is a direct connection? It seems to be tucked away, and has been for some time, in education, and I really wonder if the government ought not review whether this is an economic enabler. It is linked very closely with primary industries and also manufacturing, rather than an education portfolio. Should it be shifted?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is a really good question. The reality is that I think a case can be made cogently for it to be almost anywhere because, if you want to look at it just in terms of investment, the health portfolio probably has more scientists and more investment in research than any other portfolio. By the same token, if you are looking at what are the most significant challenges in the science and information economy, it could be argued that it is the lack of people in our community who have science and information technology skills.

In a way, the connection with employment and training probably has never been more important. I think one of the advantages that we are seeing in the current not so much departmental arrangements but the way in which the portfolios are allocated to the Minister for Education is that school-based education is really the place where you are going to make the pretty substantial gains on getting young people to take up science and maths.

I think that a lot of people are feeling quite pleased that this area of portfolio responsibility has been attached to the school education system for the first time in a while at least and that there are some real advantages with that. I think that the case to be made really for it to be in a range of different portfolio areas.

I heard an interesting statistic the other day that the largest biotech company in Australia is BHP, so the mining industry has a big interest in this area. The truth is that science and innovation and information economy are at the heart of just about everything we do now. It is an interesting debate. I think it really just goes to the question of how important this area of endeavour is and the fact that it does affect so many different portfolio areas.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Minister, as sort of a general comment—and I will ask for your response—it seems that we have taken quite a bit of money out of this portfolio over a period of time. I notice on page 195 that it was \$31.3 million in expenses in 2009-10; it is now \$20 million. It is a very significant disinvestment from this important area over time. I raise with you the question of the government's direction and its priorities in this regard. It seems to be winding down this area. Can you give us some hope that the government values science and innovation by putting the money where it sees value? Based on the overall figures, it looks like we do not see value here.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The variation in numbers is better understood as the ebb and flow of the beginning and the end of projects. There are some rather large, lumpy projects that create that explanation. For instance, one of the fairly substantial changes has been the increase in

the additional money that has been put into the Premier's Science and Research Fund which has gone from \$1 million to \$4 million which supports a range of grants to scientific and technological endeavours, so that is a measure of support at the highest level, the Premier, to that particular fund.

What we are seeing in South Australia generally—and you must remember we are not the only players in this space. This particular area of the portfolio just represents, in a sense of policy directorate, quite a small area. What we are doing across government is extraordinary in this area. As to the commitment by the South Australian government to the new photonics centre and the \$200 million capital investment in the SAHMRI building, I do not think there has been a larger single capital investment in science. In other portfolio areas, we have the Goyder Institute (\$5 million per annum over five years), and that is through the Department for Water.

So, while we are seeing the beginning and the end of projects that are supervised by this particular small portfolio, we are seeing other portfolio areas that are stepping up into this area. The STI¹⁰ mid-term report shows that \$206 million state government expenditure leveraged projects supporting science and R&D worth about \$1.3 billion, and that was verified independently that number. R&D expenditure in this state is evidenced by the ABS stats which show that, by way of public sector expenditure, South Australia expends on research and development 1.2 per cent of its gross state product which is greater than New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and WA which are all less than 1 per cent. So, there is a broader picture than just this agency; there is the whole of our government and the whole of the state effort.

Expenditure on R&D by public universities in South Australia has increased from \$325 million in 2004-05 to \$505 million (the latest data). Grants and contracts revenue are up to \$251 million in 2009 from \$165 million in 2005. The 2009 performance is about 16 per cent above what might be expected as a per capita share on these projects, so we are winning more of these grants than you imagine because of our size. Expenditure by R&D in South Australia has increased by \$932 million in 2008-09 from about \$844 million in 2006-07.

South Australia experienced the largest increase in the ratio of business expenditure to gross state product over the period 2005-06 to 2008-09 from 0.99 per cent to 1.2 per cent compared with other states. So, there is what we do in this portfolio which has largely been affected by timing issues, there is what we are doing across government which is some dramatic investments, and then there is what is happening within the sectors that are influenced by government.

Our role, essentially, in this portfolio is a bit of a catalytic organisation. It is a very small unit within a large agency, and the idea is to get essentially other people to invest and to drive this agenda forward. I think that with a very small agency, we do an extraordinary amount and leverage an enormous amount of expenditure.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister, and thank you to the members. Thank you to the advisers. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology concluded.

[Sitting suspended from 15:20 to 15:30]

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$137,204,000

ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, \$42,833,000

DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET, \$124,559,000

**ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET,
\$9,733,000**

Membership:

Mr Goldsworthy substituted for Mr Hamilton-Smith.

Mr van Holst Pellekaan substituted for Mr Whetstone.

Ms Sanderson substituted for Mr Venning.

Witness:

Hon. G. Portolesi, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Minister for Youth, Minister for Volunteers, Minister Assisting the Premier in Social Inclusion.

Departmental Advisers:

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

Mr A. Hamilton, General Manager, Office for Volunteers.

Ms J. Byrne, Deputy Chief Executive, Building Communities Division, Attorney-General's Department.

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

The CHAIR: The estimates committees are a relatively informal procedure 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. Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur. If the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the committee secretary by no later than Friday 30 September. This year the *Hansard* supplement, which contains all estimates committee responses, will be finalised on Friday 14 October.

I propose to allow both the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements, if they so desire. There will be a flexible approach to giving the call for questions based on about three questions per members. A member who is not a 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 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 in *Hansard* is permitted on the same basis as applies in the house, that is, that it is purely statistical and limited to one page in length. All questions are to be directed to the minister, not the minister's advisors. The minister may refer questions to advisors for a response. I also advise that for the purposes of the committees, television coverage will be allowed for filming from both the northern and southern galleries.

I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to Portfolio Statements, Volume 1. I call on the minister to make a brief statement if she wishes.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will not be making an opening statement. I am very happy to go straight to questions.

The CHAIR: Does the shadow minister wish to make an opening statement or go straight to questions?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I will go straight to questions. I refer the minister to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, Attorney-General's Department, Program 15: Building Communities—Multicultural, Youth and Volunteer Services, Sub-program 15.3, Volunteer Services, pages 63 and 64. Referring to page 64, minister, expenses under the 2010-11 budget of \$1.502 million, what has been the cost of this year's Volunteers Day concert?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am very happy to report that it cost about \$25,000. I think that is what it has basically cost since we have been running it. It is a fantastic day for us to celebrate and acknowledge volunteers. It is a really important way for the government and the opposition to demonstrate to the volunteering community that volunteering is something that is so important that it sits above party politics, which is why both you and I get an opportunity to shine, shall we say.

Of course, on that day we also hand out important awards such as the Joy Noble Medal, the Premier's Business Award in Volunteering and the Andamooka Community Project Award. It costs about \$25,000. Despite the glitch we had this year in relation to the performer, we have had lots of very positive feedback about the concert.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Does Mr Goers get paid for his services, or does he volunteer his services for the day?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am advised that Mr Goers gets paid approximately \$900 to host the event, and I have to say I think he is worth every cent. He does a great job. The jokes are the same from year to year. I still laugh every year—it is hilarious.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: He does need to get some new jokes.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I know, but they still surprise me. It is \$900, and I think it is a worthy investment.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Does the Office for Volunteers, that is, the taxpayer, pay each one of the performing artists for their contribution?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We do. We can confirm the payment arrangements that we have with the Cabaret Festival, but I am advised we think it is about \$4,000 for the performances. I think it is a great connection, celebrating volunteers day and having a couple of acts from the Adelaide Cabaret Festival. A lot of the volunteers in the audience would not necessarily have the opportunity to attend the Cabaret Festival and, like I said, I think it is a great connection between the two. We get to showcase a great festival and demonstrate our appreciation to our volunteers.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Does the Festival Centre invoice the office? How does that arrangement work?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, they do. They invoice the Office for Volunteers.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Historically, what has been the cost? Do you remember how much it was last year?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Are you talking about the actual festival performances?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Or about the whole event?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: No.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I imagine they would invoice us and we would pay that bill, but we can confirm that. I am told that what we pay for the act varies from year to year, depending, of course, on the act.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Do you get one invoice from the Festival Centre for the hire of the centre and the use of the facilities plus the artists, or do you get a separate bill for the performance of the artists? Do you get two bills: do you get one for the hire of the Festival Theatre and all the expenses around that, and do you get another bill for the performing artists?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Every cost component of the event is broken down. We are not sure if it appears on one bill or whether it comes in separately. There is also a catering component to the function. We are able to break down the costs from year to year, but it costs about \$25,000.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Do you get the bill to pay?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Me personally?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: No, your office.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The Office for Volunteers, yes.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Do you have any historic information—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, we do.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: —here today.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Here today? About?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Or maybe last year, the individual breakdown of the costs?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We do not have that, but if you really want that, we can get that for you. What is it that you want exactly?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I just want to know the breakdown of the costs, that is all.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, we can get that for you.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: But you do not have that historic information here today?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I can give you the total.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It was 25 grand.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Over the last five years, I am advised, somewhere between 20 and 25 grand. We do not have here in a briefing today the itemised costs for last year.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Or this year?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I mean for this year.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Or last year?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, not here today. If we do not have it for this year, we are unlikely it for last year. We do not have that breakdown of detail. Can I be clear about what it is exactly that you want?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I just want a breakdown of the costs.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: For this year?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, and last year, while we are at it. It is always good to compare costs.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, it is important.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Does the agency have any oversight over the content of the performances, given that you said that there was a glitch. I would actually say that one part of one of the performances was totally inappropriate.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, I agree with you. I was sitting next to the Governor, and my hands fell into my lap and I thought, 'Oh, my goodness!' We have had—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I saw people were walking out.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I was not aware that people walked out. We did have some letters of complaint, and we have followed up each one of those. I have to say that with the letters of complaint also came letters expressing an appreciation for the concert. What I can advise is that the Volunteers Day event is chosen by the Adelaide Cabaret Festival management, and they are done so in consideration of the day's theme and the likely demographic of the audience, and each performer is briefed as to the nature and the purpose of the event.

Regrettably, this year, it appeared that one performer did show an error of judgement and did not adhere to the management instructions, resulting in the use of language that was offensive. So, it was as much a surprise, I imagine, to the Cabaret Festival organisers and to my own office as it was to me. I can only extend my most sincere apologies, and I will be making it absolutely clear—and it has been made clear to performers, according to the letter I received from Douglas Gautier.

I did receive a letter from the Chief Executive of the Adelaide Festival (I do not have it with me, I am afraid) basically saying that they had undertaken quite a rigorous process to witness a snippet of a performance, and they did. So, they had no indication from him at that stage, but they also made it very clear to the performer the nature of the event that was being hosted. So, it was a bit of a surprise. But I have to say that the feedback on the day was overwhelmingly positive, including the fantastic feedback we received about the performance by Carrie Rawlings. She was fantastic.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: She was fantastic.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, she was.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: She had a lovely voice and a highly professional act. The second act obviously left a lot to be desired.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: What we have to remember as well is that we are dealing with art and performances—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You are right. When that performer dropped the f-word at the beginning of his performance, I raised my eyebrows and thought, 'Oh, well, all in the name of art.' But we all know—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I know; it was appalling.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: —what the sentence was later on. Everybody agrees that it was completely—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Unacceptable.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: —inappropriate and unacceptable.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I agree with you completely. I think I recall that one of last year's performers, I think, also used the f-word. I cannot remember exactly, but I remember thinking, 'Oh, okay; you'll overlook it maybe once', but—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: In the name of art.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Well, not really. It was—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I mean, there were kiddies there.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, look, I agree with you on this. But he then even took it further. I was shocked. It was shocking and it was unacceptable, but I am satisfied that my officers and the Festival Centre did what they should have done, which was to satisfy themselves and brief the performer as to what kind of behaviour is acceptable. So, it was big shock to everybody, but the main thing is that we have all learnt that—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: We have all learnt a lesson.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We have! It could happen to you.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Maybe, but I am a triple checker, even though my staff sometimes hate it. I am a person who likes to triple check things. To answer my question, nobody from the office actually went and viewed that performance.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I can tell you that staff from the Office for Volunteers did see a snippet of each performer's show at a rehearsal on the morning prior to the concert and provided the performers with a further brief about the day's proceedings and the audience demographics. In other words: 'It is likely that you are dealing with a group of people who tend to be older.' In previous years this has proven an effective strategy in identifying potential sensitivity. My staff did do the right thing. Mr Griffiths' rehearsal and the final briefing with him did not reveal any suggestion of cause for concern about the use of inappropriate language during his performance. It really was a bit of a surprise to everybody.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: So there was a rehearsal in the morning that somebody from the Office for Volunteers went and saw?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That's correct.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Only a snippet?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Well, you are not going to stay for the whole rehearsal. They have to organise a concert for 2,000 people. I have to say that it is a massive logistical effort, organising that concert.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I understand that.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, it is, because—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I thought the voucher book was all good. I understand a lot of work was put into that.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We have to handle—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: That does not happen in five minutes.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No. I have to say that is the easiest—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I am not criticising. Don't misunderstand. I will put this on the record: I think the concert is fantastic; it is good, but what happened I think soured the day.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I disagree. I think it was shocking, but I think the overwhelming feedback we had from people was that it was a very positive experience. I think people are sophisticated enough to know that it was offensive and unacceptable, but that there is no way that I as minister or my staff, would have allowed a show like that to go ahead if we had known—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: No, of course not.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: —that he was going to use such appalling terms.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: No, but the point is that it really should have been more thoroughly checked.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Well, I have to say, it was thoroughly checked by the Adelaide Festival Centre people and our people, government people. We did check. As I said, the bonus book is one of the easiest things to organise for the day, probably, because all those RSVPs have to be handled by the office. There is always a massive waiting list and people, sadly, who miss out. It is a big logistical nightmare and I want to put on record my thanks to the Office for Volunteers, which actually does a really good job at pulling together an event like that. It does go down well every year.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes, absolutely. I know other years it has been oversubscribed, that you have had a big waiting list. Did you have a waiting list this year—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: —because it looked like some seats were not filled?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I understood we did have a waiting list. We had a waiting list, but as I understand it—because people approach me and they say, 'Look, we tried to get here last year'—the people who sit on the waiting list but miss out then go automatically to get tickets for next time. It is unfortunate if people say they are coming and they do not rock up, but there is a waiting list. It is a great event; it is a fantastic event.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: So it was fully subscribed but some people did not come, basically?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: How many complaints did you receive in relation to the offensive nature of that act?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: About a dozen. Between my office and the Office for Volunteers, we made personal contact with the complainants. I saw some emails and people were clearly upset by what had occurred but they also expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to attend the concert. It was unacceptable and I wish it had not happened, but it did happen and we will go to extra, extra lengths next year to bring home the message about acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour—as, I have to say, we did this year.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Have you formally written to those people who contacted the office?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We called them. I think I sent some correspondence but we also called them. I have written and Andrew Hamilton has spoken to people. My office, I believe, has spoken to people. We have gone out of our way (as we should) to let people know that we agree with them; we think it was very bad.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Yes. You apologised and—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes. I am very happy to apologise.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: —it won't happen again.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Sorry?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It won't happen again.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We can do what we did this year. We made it very clear to the artists, 'This is what you can do. This is what you can't do'—and stuff happened anyway. We will keep doing that because it is important.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Specifically telling them, 'No swearing.'

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We will say to people, 'No swearing,' but they might get up and take their clothes off. They might find some other way of expressing themselves in an artistic way. Maybe we had better tell them, 'Don't take your clothes off,' as well.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You had better draft up a code of conduct.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Then they might find something else to do. A code of conduct for artists?

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: A code of conduct.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, good luck! When you can make them stick to it, good luck.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I think we have dealt with that issue, given that we only have seven more minutes to go.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: If people want to nude up, I mean—

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Time flies when you are having fun, minister, doesn't it?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We do, and that is the joy of volunteering.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Indeed, it is. Just going to page 60, looking at employee benefits, expenses and things of that nature, how many FTEs are there in the office at the moment?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: There are six FTEs.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Six FTEs.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, six FTEs.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: So that has gone up slightly from last year. I think you advised the committee last year that it was 5.1.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: My advice is that we do not think so, but we will check it. The Office for Volunteers was quarantined. I managed to quarantine the Office for Volunteers from SBC cuts but we will check that.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Is there any review concerning the structure of the office taking place?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: As I mentioned last year, the Office for Volunteers sits inside the Attorney-General's Department and there is a restructure going on inside that department. The Office for Volunteers is part of that organisation, so it is part of that ongoing restructure and review that is going on inside the department more broadly.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Do you have any idea of what the results of the restructure review might be?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: What I am going to do is throw to the head of the department, Jerome Maguire, but I want to make it clear that the Office for Volunteers is not being reviewed per se; it is just a case of where it fits into the organisation.

Mr MAGUIRE: I can advise that we are in the very early stages of a restructure and, as the minister said, there is no plan at all to reduce the number of FTEs doing volunteering work. But we are in the early days, so we cannot really talk about what it is going to look like.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: There is no reduction in the FTEs in the Office for Volunteers?

Mr MAGUIRE: That is on the record, yes.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It is about the organisation and not about the Office for Volunteers, if you get my drift.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: Sure. Can I also say that I was pleased that in this year's budget you had a separate listing for expenses and income and the net cost of subprograms. I remember I raised that in last year's budget and you said that you would have a look at it, so I am encouraged that you picked up on my suggestion.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We take your commentary very, very seriously, so thank you for that feedback.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I am sure you do. I refer to page 64 and Targets and Highlights: Advancing the Community Together Partnership. In relation to the Volunteer Ministerial Advisory Group (VMAG), can the minister advise how the group is comprised: the make-up of the group, and whether they are appointed by yourself or your office or are nominated by the respective volunteer groups?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: VMAG is made up of representatives from the volunteer community, and is presently chaired by Tony Piccolo, the member for Light, and I have to say that he does a fantastic job with that. VMAG's role is to assist in the development of a positive and active policy agenda for community engagement and to ensure that government receives expert policy advice, to provide advice on appropriate consultation and engagement, and to provide

advice and information to the Office for Volunteers. It reports on an annual basis to me as Minister for Volunteers.

I can advise that the following 18 people are currently appointed to VMAG until August 2011: Tony Piccolo, Anne Bachmann, Judith Bundy, Cathy Chong, Michael Dawson, Andrew Hamilton (who is, obviously, the head of the department), Janine Keulen, Alexandra Lawson, David Mitchell, Debra Petrys, Leanne Powell, Pat Rix, Darilyn Roman, Jock Statton, Janet Stone, Jan Sutherland, Wayne Thorley and Dr Kathryn Zeitz. They are a very important group, and I take their work very seriously.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: You have just recently launched the Youth Volunteer Scholarship Award initiative—even though you could not remember the name of it at the Volunteers Day concert! Can you provide some more detail about that initiative?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, sure. I have to say that when I became minister it was obvious almost straight away that there were two areas in which we needed to recruit more volunteers. One was the need to recruit young volunteers. If you take Meals on Wheels, for instance, the average age of volunteers is over 70 and the recipients are over 80. It is obvious that in time the people doing the volunteering will be the ones needing the volunteer services. This is a real problem that we face, so we thought 'Okay; we need to start recruiting some young people to volunteer.' I have to say, though, that young people do their fair share of volunteering, there is no question about that.

The other thing that became really obvious was that we also need to recruit volunteers from diverse cultural backgrounds. The Italian community, for instance, is the largest and most rapidly ageing ethnic community. As people get older, they lose the little bit of English they might have and revert to their native tongue. We have a real problem.

This is an attempt to address certainly the issue in relation to attracting young volunteers. Many volunteer groups (and I get it from VMAG) have expressed to me a need to actively attract and recruit more young people to volunteer to address recruitment issues relating to an ageing population.

The Youth Volunteer Scholarship Award program—and that is why I could not remember the name: it is five words long—recognises the choice of pathways young people have and highlights the value of community involvement. With this initiative, we will see young volunteers (25 years and under) across metropolitan and regional South Australia—it does have a focus that goes beyond just Adelaide—honoured with scholarship awards acknowledging their contribution to the community. They have to be volunteering, but they do not necessarily need to be studying or have a line of study is connected to volunteering.

We will establish a panel that will judge the applications. I have to say that the feedback thus far, including from Volunteers SA & NT has been that this initiative has gone down really well. We are going to spend about \$30,000, which in the scheme of things is not a long of money. I have to say, as I found the other night at Flinders University, when I was launching the Community Voices program, you do not to spend a lot of money to make a big difference. That goes to the very heart of volunteering.

The CHAIR: We thank the advisers for their cooperation.

Membership:

Mrs Redmond substituted for Mr Goldsworthy.

Mr Gardner substituted for Ms Sanderson.

Mr Whetstone substituted for Mr Venning.

Departmental Advisers:

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

Mr R. Lean, Acting Director, Multicultural SA, Attorney-General's Department.

Ms J. Byrne, Deputy Chief Executive, Building Communities Division, Attorney-General's Department.

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

The CHAIR: Minister, would you like to introduce any new advisers who have joined you?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I introduce Mr Roger Lean, who is the Acting Director for MSA. Simon Forrest was in his place last year, but he has gone on to retire and enjoy life. We have Roger Lean here with us, who does a fantastic job in the office.

The CHAIR: I do not think the minister is going to make an opening statement. Does the leader wish to make an opening statement?

Mrs REDMOND: No, thank you, Mr Chairman.

The CHAIR: We will go straight into questions.

Mrs REDMOND: Just to get them out of the way, I will start by reading the omnibus questions.

1. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors above \$10,000 in 2009-10 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?

2. For each department or agency reporting to the minister how many surplus employees were there as at 30 June 2011, and for each surplus employee what is the title or classification of the employee and the Total Employment Cost (TEC) of the employee?

3. In financial year 2009-10 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on projects and programs was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2010-11, and how much was approved by cabinet?

4. Between 30 June 2010 and 30 June 2011, will the minister list the job title and total employment cost of each person (with a total estimated cost of \$100,000 or more)—

(a) which has been abolished; and

(b) which has been created?

5. For the year 2010-11, will the minister provide a breakdown of expenditure on all grants administered by the departments and agencies reporting to the minister—listing the name of the grant recipient, the amount of the grant and the purpose of the grants, and whether the grant was subject to a grant agreement as required by Treasurer's Instruction No. 15?

6. 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?

7. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, how many Targeted Voluntary Separation Packages (TVSPs) will be offered for the financial years 2010-11, 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15?

Those are the omnibus questions, which always seem to be a test of whether I can read or not I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 61. Referring to dot point five under the highlights, there is a reference to 64 new interpreters and 12 new translators. I noticed that there is no change in the 2011-12 target for the number of interpreting assignments, and I was wondering why, if we have all those extra people. Could you also advise what new languages were added with the introduction of those extra translators and interpreters?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am very happy to advise that the Interpreting and Translating Centre recruited and implemented the utilisation of new interpreters for the provision of interpreting services in the South-East of the state, notably in Mount Gambier and Naracoorte. Local interpreters were recruited to meet the demand for the following languages: Dari, Hazaragi, Persian, Karen, Burmese, Mandarin, Filipino, Spanish, Lingala and Swahili. Leader, what was the second part of your question?

Mrs REDMOND: If you look at the table at the bottom of page 61, there has been no change in the number of interpreting assignments or the number of translating assignments in terms of the target for last year or the target for this year. Although they did not quite meet the target in the last year, they did exceed the target the previous year, so I am just curious that if you

have added those extra services why there would not be an expectation that you would actually have a higher target.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It is demand driven. I suspect that when the ITC devises that target, it is a bit of a stab in the dark. I can take it on notice and try to do a bit more work around that issue. We just cannot predict; it is demand driven. We cannot predict the number of assignments. I think what is happening is the diversity of the languages required is growing, and that may not necessarily be reflected in the target. We will go away and see if we can make a bit more sense of that, but it is just because it is demand driven.

Mrs REDMOND: I wanted to ask a question on the third dot point on that page 61 which is about religious diversity and then I will hand over to the member for Chaffey, because he has a couple of questions on that topic as well, to keep it in some sort of order. My question is this, minister, and it is not something that has come up in this state, but I have been aware of it coming up a number of years ago in Tasmania.

I am sure that we all welcome religious diversity, especially in this state, of all states, which was the paradise of dissent, because back when they founded the colony you could not even progress in the public service unless you were a member of the Church of England. So, we all welcome religious diversity but I know that in at least one other state, there has been an issue where that religious diversity has led to some dilemmas, particularly if, for instance, you have a religious-based view that a female is a chattel and 'ownable', and on things like the ownership of females, and questions about female circumcision.

I wonder if you can give us some information on how the task force on religious diversity is dealing with and/or making any recommendations in relation to the sorts of issues that can come up when you get religious practice which may be so divergent from our expectations, because I am sure that our founding fathers were not contemplating some of the complications that could arise in modern secular Australia.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I set up the task force into religious diversity because I was concerned about a number of incidents that were reported to me in particular by Muslim women. It is very interesting, because we have various perceptions about what a Muslim woman might look like, and I remember speaking to one and I think she was a seventh generation Australian. Incidences of violence on the basis of their appearance and what they were wearing were reported to me.

The other thing that really disturbed me was the fact that, in a lot of cases, there was ignorance and there was a reticence on the part of the women to take any action when they had been spat at or hit in a shop or treated very badly. There was a reticence to do anything about it, so I asked Hieu Van Le, who is a most eminent South Australian, to chair this group. I do not think I have the recommendations in front of me, and I am very happy to get you the recommendations but, basically, it concluded—and common sense is the key—that ignorance drives a lot of fear in our community around people who may have different religious practices or different cultural practices.

The task force very much came down on the side of the need to improve community awareness and information about what it means to be a Muslim, or what it may mean to be a Sikh. This is not about indoctrinating people, but it is about making sure that, as a community, we have information that can assist us as members of the community to make informed decisions and judgements about people and not revert to cultural stereotypes.

I did lots of media about this issue. I get distressed about various practices that we hear about, female genital mutilation, for instance. People operate within the law here in Australia, and that is important. I am hopeful about increasing people's awareness, and I think schools are a really important way for us to do that. It is not about indoctrinating young kids, but it is about saying that our community is made up of a diversity of cultures, a diversity of faiths and religions, and that is okay. For me, diversity strengthens our community.

Mrs REDMOND: Minister, I do not think anyone—well, very few in this place particularly—would dispute anything you have said, and it is all well based and well founded. The point of my question is more: is this task force on religious diversity doing anything to address potential problems about things like female genital mutilation, and how do we actually discover them?

My understanding is that that would be against the law in this country and, therefore, it would be punishable in the normal way as any other criminal offence. Most of the time it seems to me, from the discussions I have in these communities, that these things stay very hidden.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The task force is no longer meeting. It had a brief and did not address issues such as female circumcision, for instance. By the way, that is not a religious practice. It took quite a general approach, although I have to say it made quite specific recommendations. The task force's view was that the stronger emphasis on community education can only be a good thing for all of us. It does not meet anymore and did not have that specific brief, as you have just described it.

Mr WHETSTONE: I also refer to the task force on religious diversity. What was the cost to the government in supporting this task force?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Nobody was paid; they are all volunteers. The task force included representatives of business, commonwealth and state government agencies (including SAPOL), education agencies and universities. People like Pal Ahluwalia, who I believe is one of the pro vice-chancellors at the University of South Australia; members of the Muslim community; and a very smart, clever woman who is the general manager of Elders, Miriam Silva, who is a fantastic South Australian, are all volunteers. It was just a secretariat support.

Mr WHETSTONE: When can we expect the government's response to the recommendations of the task force? Do you envisage that legislation will be required to adopt any of these recommendations?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We are just working through the recommendations. The task force had a very strong focus on community education and awareness. I am not envisaging there will be any requirement for legislative change. The report proposed a range of measures specifically aimed at raising the level of education and awareness about religions and religious communities in South Australia, protecting the rights of people to practise their religion without discrimination, vilification or unfair treatment. It made very simple recommendations.

For instance, I have to say that SAPOL does a fantastic job in bridging cultural divides between communities. I was very pleased to attend an event in Burnside put on by SAPOL. It goes back a while. It was for Ramadan and the breaking of the fast with members of the Muslim community. It was a great event and a great way of bridging those gaps.

Mr GARDNER: Still on Portfolio Statements, Volume 1, page 61, in the highlights, the second dot point talks about showcasing multiculturalism at events and it lists a number of them—the Australia Day parade, Anzac Eve Youth Vigil, the Christmas pageant and so forth. I am happy for the minister to take this on notice. Can she supply the cost and what sort of showcasing it was? Was it in the manner of sponsorship or the department putting groups of people together in the fun run, for example? I wonder if there is any detail that can be provided in relation to each of those events and whether that same support will be provided next year.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, we will continue to undertake that work. It is a really important form of community engagement. The agency supported involvement of multicultural communities in these events through the MSA grants scheme. Thirty-six community organisation have received a total of \$14,500 in grants towards their participation in these events.

Mr GARDNER: I am looking at the highlights, the dot point that talks about a range of events; they do not look like grants programs. The South Australian National Football League multicultural round, for example: was that an MSA grant or was that a separate objective of the department?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I understand that organisations seek grant assistance through that program. We increased the funding from \$300,000 to \$600,000, which was an election commitment we delivered on. Those organisations seek funding assistance at times to assist them to participate in those events and, by their presence, we are showcasing multiculturalism. With the Australia Day Parade, some organisations apply for assistance to help them to participate in these events, and they are fantastic events where, by the very presence of the various groups, we do showcase multiculturalism in action.

Mr GARDNER: Just to clarify: the list of items in the second dot point are within the Multicultural Grants Scheme, which is the first highlight?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It is as I thought. It is possible for community groups, if they are participating in one of these events, to apply for money out of that \$600,000 grants scheme.

Mr GARDNER: So, these events get no direct funding at all from your department? The dot point therefore reflects that groups apply separately for funding under the MSA grants scheme

and then they have their own involvement in the City to Bay Fun Run and the SANFL multicultural round and so forth; is that what you are telling me?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes. It is as I said. We have one great big grant in MSA, and that is the one that is described in the first dot point. So, organisations, different community groups associated with one of these events, for instance, apply to that big pot of money, if they so choose, but there are lots of other things that that \$600,000 goes towards as well—and you all get letters that I send to you.

Mrs REDMOND: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, page 59, under Program 15: Building Communities. The previous state budget indicated, under the Building Communities program, that \$9.9 million would be saved over four years by consolidating the common business functions of several government offices, including Multicultural SA. Can the minister advise what level of saving has been achieved to date, and is the government on track to achieve that \$9.9 million savings target?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The savings targets in terms of FTEs for MSA—

Mrs REDMOND: Your savings target last year was \$9.9 million over four years.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That is not for MSA: for Building Communities.

Mrs REDMOND: What it said last year was that there was an amount of \$9.9 million to be saved over four years by consolidating the business functions of several government agencies and units, and one of them was Multicultural SA.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: MSA currently has a total savings measure of four FTEs indicative and \$353,000 per annum by 2014-15. We do not have in front of us the broader figure for Building Communities, but that is information as it applies to MSA.

Mrs REDMOND: Well, minister, that is not all that useful, in the sense that—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am happy to take it on notice. Do you want to know the savings target for the Building Communities division?

Mrs REDMOND: Last year your budget said that Building Communities would take in the business component, running operative services, as I understood it, of a number of agencies, including Multicultural SA, and it was going to save \$9.9 million, or close enough to \$2.5 million a year. Clearly, \$353,000 some years out into the future is not going to save you \$9.9 million over four years. I am just curious as to how effective that suggestion has been.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The Office for Volunteers, MSA and Youth all fall into that division in AGD, as do many other units inside that agency. I am only at liberty to give you the information for my agencies, as I have just outlined. I will just ask Jerome Maguire if he has the information for the broader figure. We are happy to take that on notice.

Mrs REDMOND: Thank you. I also refer you, minister, to page 60, the program summary at the top, the expenses and income. Under Income, last year there was \$142,000 in commonwealth revenues, this year only \$19,000. I note that the previous year it was quite low; I just wanted some explanation as to what caused the spike in commonwealth revenues in the current year.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am advised that we had received a grant from the commonwealth to undertake a social inclusion initiative, so that is why it was high in one year and low in the next.

Mrs REDMOND: Thank you. On page 61, there is a reference under Targets, second dot point, 'Conduct community consultations'. Could the minister advise what form those community consultations will take, how many are envisaged and where they are going to be? Are specific communities being targeted? What is the aim of the consultation process?

Mr GARDNER: Will local members be invited?

Mrs REDMOND: And will local members be invited, the member for Morialta wants to know?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: SAMEAC is planning two regional meetings this year. The first meeting was held in Mount Gambier from 25 to 26 June. The second regional meeting is yet to be organised, but it is intended to be held in the Riverland in October or November 2011. The commission is keen to ensure that the state government is aware of the issues and views of the

diverse communities represented, in particular in our regional communities. One mechanism for ensuring this is for SAMEAC to hold community consultations for local community—

Mrs REDMOND: Sorry, minister, could you just read that last bit again? You mentioned Aboriginal communities?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No. No, I didn't say 'Aboriginal'. Did I say 'Aboriginal'? No. Regional?

Mrs REDMOND: Okay.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will repeat that last dot point: one mechanism for ensuring that the government is aware of the issues is for these community consultations to be held; so members of SAMEAC attend the consultation. For instance, whilst in Mount Gambier just recently, the commission had planned the following activities: a commission meeting, a meeting of the South-East regional advisory committee, a community consultation, a youth consultation, a dinner and an informal meeting with community members at the Liberty Church.

Those invited to the activities included members of the migrant and refugee communities, service providers and support groups, government agencies, mayors and representatives from Regional Development Australia. I am very happy to pass on your request to SAMEAC for local members to be advised.

Mrs REDMOND: Can I just clarify that you are saying that the conduct of community consultations actually involves two regional meetings: one in Mount Gambier and one in the Riverland?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No. They are two examples. There was one held just recently in the Riverland and I am advised that they are going to hold one in the Riverland, but there are also, at other times of the year, consultations with specific ethnic communities. I do not have any of the details of those.

The CHAIR: I thank the minister, the members and the advisers. We will go to the Office for Youth.

Membership:

Mr Pisoni substituted for Mrs Redmond.

Ms Sanderson substituted for Mr Whetstone.

Departmental Advisers:

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

Ms T. Downing, Director, Office for Youth.

Ms J. Byrne, Deputy Chief Executive, Building Communities Division, Attorney-General's Department.

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

Mr PISONI: This refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 1, Youth Services. The total responsibility in the way of the size of the budget—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Excuse me, what page are you on?

Mr PISONI: Page 62; there are only about three pages for youth. There is a budget figure there of \$3.805 million. That is the total amount of money that you are responsible for as the Minister for Youth?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That is correct.

Mr PISONI: So you have about 14 people in the gallery advising you on this hour for youth?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I do not know who is in the gallery at the moment.

Mr PISONI: Are they all advisers of yours from the department and the ministerial office?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: If you want to waste your time with me going through everyone in the gallery, I am happy to do that.

Mr PISONI: If they are your staff and you want to name them I would be very happy for that to happen.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am very happy to answer questions about matters related to these budget papers.

Mr PISONI: This does relate to your budget paper; it is about your budget. If you do not want to answer it, that is fine, but I have given you the opportunity to answer it.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am going to ask Tiffany Downing to outline, for the member's benefit, the people working in the Office for Youth, apart from their names.

Mr PISONI: The ones who are here.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I get to decide how I answer the question, not you.

Mr PISONI: No; my question was about those who were here.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I do not know who was here from the Office for Youth. I am told that there are a couple of people here.

Mr PISONI: I am sure your CE would know.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Can I just say—

Mr PISONI: You could look around.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Can I just say that I have not made an opening statement, I am not going to do Dorothy Dixers, I am not going to do questions, but if you want to start off on this footing I am happy to go down this path. It will not be very productive for you or for me.

Mr PISONI: We have over 4,000 public servants being cut in the budget—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Just as you had promised to do at the last election.

Mr PISONI: I think it is an appropriate question to ask about the staff you have here advising you today.

The CHAIR: The minister is going to answer the question. She has already referred to her adviser, who is going to give us some detail.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Thank you, Chair. I will ask Tiffany Downing to provide some information about the numbers of staffing in the Office for Youth.

Ms DOWNING: We have three teams within the office. We have a youth engagement and health and wellbeing area, a youth development and attainment area, and then a centralised business services division. Within the office we have 17.9 staff.

Mr PISONI: Could I have their category by ASO level? You can bring that back to the committee, if you like.

Ms DOWNING: We can provide you with a full listing of staff, yes.

Mr PISONI: My next question refers to program highlights, and *youthconnect*. One of the highlights for 2010-11 was the release of *youthconnect*, a government document which contains guiding principles to underpin the development of policies and programs. Was the minister and/or the Office for Youth consulted prior to the health minister's decision to cut services to ward 4G and move ward 4G? What was her advice to the Minister for Health, from a youth point of view?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: You are correct; *youthconnect* (and I have the document here in front of me) is the South Australian government's new youth strategy. It is a four year youth strategy. It has a focus on three areas: health and wellbeing; education, employment, and skill development engagement and participation; and, of course, better connections across the system. During the development of *youthconnect*, it was informed by the findings of the youth report 'South Australia's Young People: Emerging issues and priorities', which was undertaken for us by the Australian Institute for Social Research at the University of Adelaide.

I do not have the specific information that the member refers to, although I can very confidently report that the body image summit—an action which we said we would do in the *youthconnect* policy and which we have done—has been incredibly successful. It was a very

positive way of engaging somewhere between 60 and 70 young people. The recommendations and highlights of that summit have gone on to inform minister Hill's policy work at a departmental level.

Mr PISONI: What advice did you give on the moving of ward 4G?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I said to you that I do not have that information. I will take that on notice.

Mr PISONI: So you are happy to bring that back?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am happy to take that component of your question on notice.

Mr PISONI: Will that include any advice that you gave the Minister for Health on that issue?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will have a look at it.

Mr PISONI: Was the minister consulted prior to the decision to cut the Second Story services to GLBTIQ (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex or Queer) young people who use that service? What was her advice to the Minister for Health?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Those programs are not being cut.

Mr PISONI: The Second Story program?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes; I am advised that they are not being cut.

Mr PISONI: Can you give details about the staffing levels of the Second Story program for last year and this year?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: You would have to get that information from the Minister for Health. He is responsible for that service.

Mr PISONI: So the Office for Youth is not involved in Second Story?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No. On that other question, the one just before this last one, I am advised that we did not provide any advice in relation to that. So I do not need to take it—

Mr PISONI: Were you asked for advice?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will need to check that, but we did not provide any advice in relation to that.

Mr PISONI: Continuing with *youthconnect*, the release of the *youthconnect* sets out a vision for South Australia's young people, guiding principles to underpin the development of policies and programs and a number of actions. This is from the *youthconnect* program. The Australian Institute for Social Research at the University of Adelaide was commissioned to undertake the *youthconnect* research paper. How much did that cost?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, we have that information because I have asked that same question myself. We certainly had that information last year, but we might have to take it on notice. It was prepared for the previous financial year, but we are happy to give you that information.

Mr PISONI: Is there any grant money in the budget for implementing the program for the 2011-12 budget?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Implementing which program?

Mr PISONI: The *youthconnect* program.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Everything we do is about *youthconnect*. *youthconnect* is our policy that drives the work that we do.

Mr PISONI: Is any of the money in the budget, any of that \$3.8 million, set aside for grants for implementation?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes.

Mr PISONI: Can we have details of that?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, but can I just be clear about what *youthconnect* means. *youthconnect* is our policy that drives what we do. It drives me as Minister for Youth and therefore drives what the Office for Youth does. Everything that we do now has to connect back to *youthconnect* and needs to be driven by *youthconnect*. I am very happy to say that, as part of that

policy work, we announced the *youthconnect* grants, which were established to support the implementation of *youthconnect*, South Australia's youth strategy.

Funding of between \$10,000 and \$50,000 was made available through a competitive two-stage grant funding process for organisations supporting young people to achieve positive life outcomes in the following three priority areas: early intervention and prevention initiatives that assist young people to be positive about their health and wellbeing; support for young people who are disengaged from education to develop skills, including life skills, to return to school, access further education or gain employment; and support for young people to be actively engaged in their local communities.

The grant process was oversubscribed, with 50 organisations seeking \$3.1 million in funding. The *youthconnect* grant process has now been finalised, with successful and unsuccessful applicants being notified via letter in the week ending Friday 17 June, and I think that is correct. I talked about this parliament last week, but I stand to be corrected. I am pretty sure that I spoke about these targeted youth grants because the figure is just short of \$600,000. That is, \$591,610 in grant funding was provided for 19 projects. The new *youthconnect* grant round will open in late 2011. Topics will be determined based on the priority areas in *youthconnect* and will take into consideration current service and funding gaps.

I will give an example of some of the fantastic projects—and these are not insignificant amounts of money—that we were able to fund with this grant program:

- Boystown, an education employment program;
- Heta Incorporated, a youth community green social enterprise project, \$30,000;
- Murray Mallee General Practice Network, again we have a very big focus on regional and rural communities, \$15,000;
- Para Worklinks Incorporated, an education program, \$50,000;
- Save the Children Australia, a school attendance program, \$50,000;
- Sammy D Foundation, a vocational connect program, \$50,000;
- Carer Support and Respite Centre Incorporated, a health and wellbeing project, \$30,000;
- Mission Australia, which does a fantastic job, has a body image project around health and wellbeing, \$35,000;
- Multicultural Youth SA Incorporated, which is fantastic, has a health and wellbeing project, \$50,000;
- Services to Youth Council Incorporated, a health and wellbeing project, \$25,150;
- another Services to Youth Council grant, \$48,000;
- Autism SA does a great job and has a peer-mentor healthy eating and cooking program, \$8,200;
- City of Marion, an engagement and participation project, \$13,500;
- Northern Futures, \$30,000;
- Outback Communities Authority, \$10,000;
- Peterborough Youth Network Incorporated—where is Dan van Holst Pellekaan?—\$30,000;
- Riverland Youth Theatre Incorporated—where has Tim Whetstone gone?—\$22,000;
- Yorke Youth Services, an engagement and participation project, \$17,000; and
- Uniting Care Wesley Port Adelaide, a really important Afghan youth project, \$28,000.

As you can see, those youth grants reflect the policy focus in the policy which is *youthconnect* around those three key themes of health and wellbeing, employment and education, and engagement and participation.

Mr PISONI: Programs for disadvantaged young people, on page 63: the estimated result of the Office for Youth grant funding provided to initiatives which engage disadvantaged people increased from the budgeted 35 per cent to 57 per cent. This suggests that maybe there was a change in the proposed programming. Can you explain what has happened there?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Sure. During 2010-11, an estimated 57 per cent of the Office for Youth grant funding was provided to initiatives which engaged disadvantaged young people. Both the actual results for 2009-10 and the estimated results for 2010-11 are higher than the target of 35 per cent due to additional grant funding being applied for through mainstream programs for initiatives for participants from disadvantaged groups. The 2011-12 target for funding for disadvantaged young people remains at 35 per cent, although the actual amount of funding that will be directed to initiatives for disadvantaged young people is likely to be higher.

Mr PISONI: If I could take you to net cost of programs on page 62, dealing with grants, of the 3.91 2010-11 estimates result in expenses, how much of this went to grant funding?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will describe to you the grants. The grants totalled around \$1.25 million and programs for things like to Active8, the Minister's Youth Council (MYC) and the Youth Advisory Committees (YAC) that are a really fantastic initiative at the local council level. They totalled about \$515,000, so you have \$515,000 plus \$1.25 million (more or less). That is the total that we expended in relation to grants.

Mr PISONI: Could we have a list of those organisations that received those grants?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We could provide that. I will take that on notice.

Mr PISONI: At page 62, a highlight on the budget for 2010-11 was that you delivered a body image summit at Parliament House. I looked hard enough, but I was not able to find any report from that summit on the website. Is there a publicly released document that reports the recommendations of that summit?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, I would be very happy to give you some information about that.

Mr PISONI: The question was: is there a report publicly available on the outcome of that summit?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The report is currently being finalised but I have to say that this was a fantastic initiative, according to the feedback that I got from young people. All of the research—a lot of work done by fantastic organisations in the sector—and the federal government, for instance, reports that body image is a big issue for young people, so we decided that one of the priority areas for *youthconnect* is to support young people to feel positive about their health and wellbeing, and we delivered this Body Image Summit for young people at Parliament House. This was a key action under the priority area. It was held on 14 April, and 70 young people were invited to attend the summit through expressions of interest circulated through stakeholder agencies; 58 young people attended on the day.

Prior to the summit being held, a pre-summit survey—and I talked about this in the media at the time—was released on Tuesday 15 March through Office for Youth, networks, websites and Facebook pages. There were 329 respondents to the survey and that was broken down into 271 females and 58 males. The majority of the respondents were aged 16, 17 and 25. An overwhelming number of respondents (about 83 per cent) responded that they were concerned about their own body image. Both males and females were concerned—in particular, 84.5 per cent of females and 79 per cent of males responded that they were worried about their own body image.

The discussion topics at the summit were informed by the results of the pre-summit survey and included family, sport, school, friends, media and you. From these topics, 33 recommendations were developed. The participants were asked to vote on the recommendations to establish the three top recommendations for each topic, resulting in a final 13 recommendations.

I met with a small group a number of weeks after the summit, who presented the findings and recommendations of the summit to me. Importantly, the recommendations were presented by a summit participant to the Body Image and Eating Disorder Forum on Tuesday 10 May 2011. I understand that that was a forum made up of experts in this field. The forum was aimed at service providers and researchers and will contribute to a statewide project plan on eating disorders.

Mr PISONI: The Liberal Party received support in the Legislative Council for a bill to classify magazines targeted at the tween and teenage market, which was then defeated by the government in the House of Assembly. The concept was supported by organisations including the YWCA and the Australian Council on Children and the Media. Why did the government not support that bill and what will the government be doing to implement a similar plan?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Where are you referring to in the Budget Papers?

Mr PISONI: Body image.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Where are you looking?

Mr PISONI: 'Delivered a Body Image Summit at Parliament House.'

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: So, now you are talking about legislation that was defeated?

Mr PISONI: Yes, that relates to body image.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It was defeated.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Odenwalder): It does not relate to the budget line for the Body Image Summit.

Mr PISONI: It does. It relates to body image, which is reflected in the answers that were given to the question by the minister previously.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am not going to debate the merits of the legislation here. It was defeated, as you said. That is my response.

Mr PISONI: Do you have any plans to introduce similar legislation? Have you discussed the merits of such legislation?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We believe that something that is really powerful in tackling this issue—and the most important thing that you can do, I reckon, and I say this as a mother—is to breed resilience in young people, because they are confronted with this every day, whether it is by way of magazines—magazines are just one aspect of it—television, radio, their peers or their parents.

This is the feedback that I got from the young people who participated in the summit. They pointed the finger at their own families and felt that there should be greater accountability. I am saying it is overly bureaucratic, but they want greater accountability in terms of their immediate family and the messages that they get from them in relation to body image.

The thing that I will do and am doing as Minister for Youth—it is really easy to slap through a piece of legislation, but what is more challenging as a community—is to start challenging these stereotypes. What you need to do is to breed resilience in young people so that, when they are confronted with the stereotypes of what is considered to be an acceptable body image or a not-so-acceptable body image, they have the tools within themselves to deal with that question.

Mr PISONI: So, what are you doing?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I can go through what I just said again. We had a Body Image Summit—

Mr PISONI: I know you had the summit, but what have you done since then?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I answer the question as I see fit, and that is what we are doing. We are hoping to breed resilience in young people by giving them as many tools as we can to challenge unacceptable notions of body image.

Mr PISONI: Can you give us some detail?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I just gave you a stack of detail.

Mr PISONI: What tools will you be giving them?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Education, for instance. One of the things we are doing as a 2011-12 target as a direct result of the Body Image Summit—because we do believe in putting our money where our mouth is—is entering a partnership with the Cooperative Research Centre for Young People, Technology and Wellbeing. That partnership has been established, and we are in the final throes of negotiating that. It will progress the development of digital content and resources about positive body image based on the outcomes of the Body Image Summit.

I cannot think of anything more powerful that I can do as Minister for Youth than to go to young people and say, 'We do not need to reinvent the wheel. We know from every bit of research that we get that body image is a big issue, so we are not going to sit in our lofty towers in Parliament House and tell you how to respond. We are going to go to you and invite you to tell us what you think should be done,' and that is what we did.

Mr PISONI: Have you explored any of the options on body image that were proposed in the national strategy on body image released by the federal Minister for Youth, Kate Ellis, last year?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Someone had a particular focus on young South Australians. I know that minister Ellis has been talking about the same issue of body image, but it had a focus on South Australian young people.

Mr PISONI: One of the recommendations in that report refers to engaging stakeholders, and stakeholders were described as government at a federal, state and territory level. Are you able to inform the committee as to what engagement your department has had with the advisory group that developed the proposal for a national strategy on body image for the federal government?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Tiffany Downing is a member of this federal body, and she is engaged with the commonwealth at a very serious level, so we are working actively with our commonwealth partners. But I have to say there is one stakeholder that counts here, and that is young people—and let's not call them stakeholders: they are actually just young South Australians.

Mr PISONI: What input have you had with the Department of Education and Children's Services and the Department of Health in delivering the OPAL community health program which deals with obesity?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am advised that the Office for Youth is not involved with that program.

Mr PISONI: One of the listed checks, if you like, for body image-friendly schools in the federal report says that schools should ensure that there is no weighing, measuring or anthropometric assessment of students in any context. Minister Hill has confirmed that children in the OPAL program are measured for weight and height. The report goes on to say that this is common practice in physical education PE classes and sometimes even used in mathematic classes to illustrate a point, and that it can cause great embarrassment and humiliation of some students. Do you have any recommendations in your Youth Summit that might mirror that concern for South Australian schoolchildren?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I do not have the federal report to which you refer. Can you explain to me what anthropometric means? I do not understand what that means.

Mr PISONI: I do not know, either.

Ms THOMPSON: Anthropometrics—

Mr PISONI: Do you know what it is?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: So, you do not know the question you are asking me?

Ms THOMPSON: It is details of body size and shape. It is very important in issues of occupational health and safety. For many years, there were no—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Are you listening, member for Unley?

Ms THOMPSON: —anthropometric data relating to women, for instance, and office chairs were all designed for men.

Mr Pisoni interjecting:

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I was not asking the question.

Mr PISONI: It obviously relates to—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Clearly, I support what minister Hill is doing. I have a young child in primary school; she goes to a state school. I support what the government is doing.

Mr PISONI: Why then is the state government in conflict with the body image program that has been released by the federal government?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I do not know that we are in conflict; that is in your view. I support what the state government is doing.

Mr PISONI: It is not my view: it is clear in the federal report. In attachment B, there is a checklist for body image-friendly schools which states: 'To provide body image-friendly policy and environment, schools could....' One of the recommendations is to have no weighing or measuring. You do not agree with that, is that what you are saying?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: You are referring to a government report; I understand that is not a government report. I understand that that is an independent report that has been commissioned.

Mr PISONI: It has Kate Ellis's photograph on it.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: So what?

Mr PISONI: So, it is not a government report. It has Kate—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Is it a report representing the position of the commonwealth or is it an independent report? I would like to see the report.

Mr PISONI: You should have seen it. You are the Minister for Youth.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I would like to see the documents to which you are referring. How can I comment on documents I cannot see?

Mr PISONI: The minister's foreword, signed by Kate Ellis.

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Odenwalder): Member for Unley, can you identify the document at all?

Mr PISONI: I have identified the document. It is called—

The ACTING CHAIR (Mr Odenwalder): Will you name the document?

Mr PISONI: 'A proposed national strategy on body image' by the national advisory group. There is a foreword by the minister, and the minister is referred to throughout the document.

Mr PISONI: Yes, a former minister. It is an advisory group, and you would appreciate that advisory groups present all sorts of advice. That does not necessarily mean that that becomes government policy, and Kate Ellis is no longer the minister. Peter Garrett, I understand, is the Minister for Youth, and he may have a very different view. What matters is that I support, as Minister for Youth, what John Hill is doing. I think it is a very, very good idea.

Mr PISONI: I suppose that is consistent. What they had before the election is different after the election, such as the carbon tax.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I do not know what you are talking about, and I doubt that your colleagues do either.

Mr PISONI: As youth minister, do you support the measuring of weight and height in children's schools is what I am asking?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I support the government's position as enunciated by John Hill, the Minister for Health, who has responsibility for this. As far as my area of activity and responsibility goes, the Body Image Summit made it very, very clear to me in their recommendations that they presented to me at Parliament House that they were concerned about parents, peers and the media. They were also reflective about themselves as well and what they could do to challenge these things.

So, for me, the most important thing (and we can do it in a number of ways) is to build resilience in young people. It is really important as young people, and as adults as well, that we have an awareness of what is a healthy body weight, what is healthy and what is unhealthy, what is acceptable and what is not unacceptable. This is a very tricky issue, because it is about the community in which we live. It is about cultural norms and stereotypes.

Mr PISONI: So what is going to come out of the Body Image Summit?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I have told you.

Mr PISONI: No, you have given us a whole lot of fluff. You have given us no details.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, I haven't. I haven't.

Mr PISONI: What are you doing for parents? What are you doing for parents who are bad role models for their children? What are you doing there? Start with that one.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I have to say that we held this Body Image Summit because we know that that is concerning young people. They made a series of recommendations. Those recommendations were then given to an expert group of people who were meeting around the subject, and it was fed into the work that they were doing.

These are the people who are actually providing advice to government about what our policies should look like. I think it also included representatives from the universities. We are going one step further. We are actually entering into a partnership with the Cooperative Research Centre for Young People, Technology and Wellbeing to progress the development, for instance, of digital content and resources about positive body image based on the outcomes of the Body Image Summit.

Although we are finalising this, this is a financial commitment that we are making to this partnership. We have done the work; we have engaged with young people in a very serious and detailed way. We have then fed that into experts in minister Hill's area and other institutions around town and we are now entering into a partnership with the cooperative research centre.

Mr PISONI: The members of the summit—the participants of the summit: how were they made aware that the summit was available and that they could actually register an interest to attend?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: As I said before, we advertised for expressions of interest circulated through agencies, on websites—

Mr PISONI: Agencies—which agencies? Were schools involved?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will just ask Tiffany Downing. I will give you more detail. I will ask Tiffany to provide more detail.

Ms DOWNING: We established the Body Image Summit in partnership with all the members on the Body Image and Eating Disorders Forum. We worked through those organisations to identify young people who were interested in the topic. We asked those organisations to actually support the young participants through the summit, because we thought that there would be some issues that would arise through the summit.

We wanted to make sure that they were supported. We did not do an open call, because we did not feel that it was appropriate to establish criteria to decide who was more relevant and more appropriate to attend the summit. We worked through those organisations to get nominations.

Mr PISONI: Did any of those participants suggest that being measured and weighed at school would be a good idea in dealing with body image?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am advised that it was not raised at the summit.

Mr PISONI: I didn't think it would be.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: So what is the point that you are trying to make and understand?

Mr PISONI: I am asking questions. There has been no public report of the summit. There is nothing available.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That is actually not true.

Mr PISONI: Where is it? It is not on the website.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: For a start, it is in the next place. I actually answered a question in the parliament and provided a report to the parliament on the Body Image Summit. I did more—

Mr PISONI: What sort of report? A written report, available online?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The report—

Mr PISONI: You tabled a report, did you, in the parliament?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I answered a question on this matter in the parliament.

Mr PISONI: That is not a report. That is not available on the website.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: There has been full public disclosure. The report is just being finalised. There has been full public disclosure. I have seen the recommendations that were presented to me by a handful of young people. I have been very clear about the nature of the issues that they highlighted. The report that is just being finalised will bring together the results from the survey and recommendations from the summit, and it will align to priorities in *youthconnect*. There is nothing to hide with this Body Image Summit—absolutely nothing.

Mr PISONI: So is there going to be a report available online or tabled in the parliament?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We put everything online at the Office for Youth; yes, absolutely. I will make sure you get a copy.

Mr PISONI: There will be a report tabled in parliament, will there?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: You can have a copy tabled in parliament if you like, but I will get you a copy of the report.

Mr PISONI: If it is online, I can read it online.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It will be online when it is finalised. I advised you about three seconds ago that it is just being finalised.

Mr PISONI: So I can have that before it is online, can I? I can have that now; is that what you are saying?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Why are you wasting your time? This is your time.

Mr PISONI: No; I am just trying to establish—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The report is being finalised. I will make sure that you get a copy of the report. Everything we do in the Office for Youth is put online. At the same time as it goes online, I will make sure that you get a copy.

Mr PISONI: If it is online, I do not need a copy. I will see it online and save the paper, thank you very much.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Is this like a scene out of *Fawlty Towers*? I do not get it.

Mr PISONI: That is fine. If it is online, I can have it.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It is not online yet. It is like last year—last year we had little boxes and this year we have a little online discussion happening. When it gets finalised and it goes online, we will notify you.

Mr PISONI: That would be great. Thank you very much.

Ms SANDERSON: Given the importance of body image and the recommendations by the WYCA (which were also followed up through legislation) of putting a PG or M rating on magazines, you have said that the media was identified as one of the top three.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes.

Ms SANDERSON: Do you think that that could actually be quite a worthwhile thing so that parents are able to distinguish whether the magazine is suitable for their child and, taking it further from the forums that I have been to and personally looking at *Video Hits*, for example, on a Saturday morning, the possibility of rating even video clips as PG or M and not having them during children's viewing times?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The media is very powerful—we know that. There is no question about that. However, as I said at the time, I am not sure that censorship necessarily is the way to go. What we need to do is to look at a whole bunch of strategies. Media was highlighted in the recommendations that came from young people and I think we need to consider all those things. However, at the same time, I do not want to go off in one direction without thinking about the impact of that particular direction on a whole bunch of other things. Media was certainly a focus and video clips are incredibly powerful—I do not let my daughter watch them.

Ms SANDERSON: Exactly. I just think that it is quite harmful right now and it is something that we could easily stop immediately by putting a PG or an M rating on a magazine. Straightaway you have identified some issues and you have given parents and children some information, and it does not really cost anything to put a PG or an M rating on a magazine. This report was done federally years ago and the recommendations have not been followed through. How many children's body images and mental attitudes are being affected because we are delaying and taking a long time and doing more research?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Just for your information, the classifications are in the commonwealth jurisdiction, but I know what you are saying.

Mr GARDNER: I want to ask a couple of brief questions in relation to the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, which is in the performance indicators on page 63, Budget Paper 4, Volume 1. Looking at the table under (d) talking about the commitment to double the number of participants in

the Duke of Edinburgh's Award by 2014, can you refresh my memory as to when that commitment was made?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That was made in *youthconnect*. It was one of the new initiatives that we had in *youthconnect*. I can also report that grant funding—just for your information because the Duke's Award is a fantastic initiative—is not provided for the operation of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. The award is delivered by the Office for Youth and operating costs of delivering the award are provided by the one-off participant registration fee and the annual operator fee paid by the organisation which delivers the award.

These fees were not increased during the 2010-11 financial year. The award is an international youth development program for young people aged 14 to 25. Participants undertake a range of activities that encourage physical activity, community service and skill development. As the Minister for Youth, I am the state licence holder of the award in South Australia.

For 2010-11, we estimated that 1,500 young people will have commenced their Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Of these, it is estimated that 670, so 45 per cent of the total, will be from public schools; 44 per cent from private schools; 9 per cent from community groups; and 2 per cent from other organisations, including correctional facilities.

In fact, in Port Augusta they operate what I think is called the Sierra Program, which is a great initiative. Around \$150,000 in funding was provided in 2010-11 through the Reach Your Dreams initiative to support an estimated 530 disadvantaged young people to participate in the award.

So, what we have sought to do is make sure that the Duke of Edinburgh's Award—and I recall very clearly being present when the Chair's daughter, Victoria, received her gold award at Government House for her participation—

Mr PISONI: I was there too.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: What we want to do is make sure that the Duke of Edinburgh's Award is available to as many young people as possible, in particular those who may not have the financial wherewithal. Action 42 in the *youthconnect* policy is to double the number of young people participating in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards, with a particular focus on increasing the diversity of participants.

Mr GARDNER: I think that is a commendable target; I think that the Duke of Edinburgh Awards are very important.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Did you do it?

Mr GARDNER: I certainly did. I never reached lofty heights of the gold award at Government House, but I managed to get my bronze award in my own little way.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Hey; celebrate everything!

Mr GARDNER: Doubling participation would be tremendous, but I cannot help noticing the 2009-10 actual result of 1,552 participants from the estimated result for this year of 1,500. Given, as you say, that there is no direct funding for the award, and that we already have some pretty strong results in terms of involving public school students and students from disabled backgrounds, what exactly is the government doing that will result in that doubling?

If we are doubling it by 2014 we have to first arrest a decline that has occurred in the last year. We have a target of an increase of 150 next year, and by 2014 we are somehow supposed have an increase of 1,500 so I am a little unsure of the roadmap.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We do have a roadmap. We are targeting new schools, and we have just released the Reach Your Dreams initiative, which is \$150,000 in funding provided to reach these 530 disadvantaged young people. So we do have a roadmap, but I will get Tiffany Downing to add to that.

Ms DOWNING: We are looking at contacting new schools and new community organisations that have not participated previously, particularly community organisations that represent disadvantaged young people. We are also working with existing licensed operators to provide them with better support so that they are able to increase the numbers they support, and we are looking at conversations with DECS to see how we can better support all public schools across the state to participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I think the main thing is that we are seeking to do this. We may not get there—although I am confident and hopeful that we will—but the main thing is that, for me as minister, it is a very clear target that we reach all South Australian kids and acknowledge that there are some who do not have those resources or opportunities. I had never heard of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards when I was going to school. I think we do have a strategy for doubling the number of participants.

Mr GARDNER: I would like to ask something that you may like to take notice. You are talking about reaching schools where the kids may not have heard about it, such as in your own experience. Is it possible to get hold of the numbers of schools which are currently participating and which have participated in recent years so that we can get a sense of how many schools there are out there that have not been participating and where the kids may never have heard about this program?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I think it is easier to identify the schools that have been participating.

Mr GARDNER: Okay; if you could provide that list it would be fantastic.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am happy to give you a list of schools that have participated.

Mr PISONI: On that same point, minister—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Did you do the Duke of Edinburgh Award? Did they have it back in your day?

Mr PISONI: Salisbury? No, I do not think so. During last year's estimates questioning, the government stated that there were 150 at the last bronze/silver award, which was heavily dominated by government schools. A list of government schools that participated was given to the opposition post estimates, and it showed that 1,172 individuals within government schools were participating in the bronze award, compared with 1,266 in the non-government sector. By the silver awards, 183 individuals participated within the government sector, compared with 315 in the non-government sector, and by the gold award 38 within the government sector were participating compared with 155 in the non-government sector.

The minister stated, 'I can say that the Dukes is now doing quite a bit of work in government schools.' The estimated target for this year shows that we did not reach the figures of 2009-10. Are you able to produce that same table that compares government and non-government schools for the latest Duke of Edinburgh Awards?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, we are happy to provide that information. We just have to wait for the end of the financial year.

Mr PISONI: I refer to page 63, young drivers. The budget target is to investigate and develop initiatives that support young people to gain and retain their driver's licence. Are you able to advise the committee what the initiatives are?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Assisting young people with driving skills is a really important issue for young people, and this is a big question, particularly in rural and regional South Australia. Again, through *youthconnect*, which is that policy document to which I referred earlier, we recognise this issue. We are committed to ensuring that young people have the opportunity to participate in a range of actions, including investigating and developing initiatives that support young people to gain and retain their driver's licence, particularly for employment purposes. This is a really important issue for refugees and the children of new arrivals.

We are also very committed to continuing to supporting safe driving practices by young people, particularly Aboriginal young people, to reduce the number of young people killed and seriously injured on the road. I do not know what number the target is in *youthconnect*, but it is certainly on our radar. It is certainly on my radar, and I hope to be in a position to make some announcements about this particular issue later in the year.

Mr PISONI: So, what are the initiatives?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We are just finalising what they might be. As you would appreciate, minister Kenyon, as Minister for Road Safety, also has a big say in this matter. My agency, the ministry for youth, is just working through what that initiative might look like, and we have some firm ideas. I have been talking to groups like Multicultural Youth SA (MYSA) because we know that it is an issue for young people, and we also know that it is an issue for young ethnic people.

Mr PISONI: Was your office involved in advising the Minister for Road Safety that young men would listen to an old man calling them a 'nob' and a 'wanker'?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Are you referring to those MAC ads?

Mr PISONI: Yes.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I do not know if my department was, but I certainly was not. I have to say that the MAC is a pretty serious outfit, and I doubt that it would go ahead with any ad campaign—and these are just my uninformed views; I am not referring to any particular advice—that had not been properly researched or tested. I will check with the head of my department.

Mr PISONI: Would the department of youth engage 60-year-old men to relate to youth for a particular message in any other campaign it was planning?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We are finalising our plans to address this important policy area. I do not know; we might do that but we might not. What we are going to do is what we think will work, that is the most important thing. Obviously, the MAC Board thought that that was an important campaign and strategy. It is up to them.

Mr PISONI: Do you have any costs for the initiatives or any budget for the initiatives that you are going to announce to support young drivers gaining and retaining their driver's licence?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Not at this stage, no, but as I said we are still working through it. The important thing is that it is on the radar; the important thing is that we know that this is an important initiative.

Mr PISONI: Will you be expecting funding to come from your department or from other agencies or departments?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We are working through that issue.

Mr PISONI: This relates to multicultural youth and youth volunteers. We know that in the 2010-11 budget the government intended achieving a saving of \$9.9 million over four years by establishing the Building Communities Division. It was estimated that \$773,000 was budgeted to be spent in 2010-11 and \$2 million for the 2011-12 year to establish a division. What has occurred to date under the banner of the Building Communities Division? What was the \$773,000 spent on?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will take that on notice.

Mr PISONI: Has this had any impact on the services of the Office for Youth?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: As I described before—and I cannot remember who asked me this same question—the Building Communities Division is a new division within the Attorney-General's Department. Multicultural affairs, youth and volunteers are three of many government units that fall within that new division, so I can only speak for the Office for Youth. The Office for Youth, like every other government agency, has a series of savings targets that it needs to meet, and that is independent of the general restructure that is going on in AGD that has now formed this Building Communities Division.

Mr PISONI: So what were the savings identified in the Office for Youth by joining the Building Communities Division?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It was not driven by savings. Jerome Maguire can speak for himself because he was leading that restructure, but it was not driven by savings from my perspective. Like I said, Jerome can speak for himself, but we have savings targets that need to be met under SBC requirements and previous savings targets, and we are on track to meet those targets; that is just a fact of life. That restructure was not about driving savings in my agencies.

Mr PISONI: Was it not a Sustainable Budget Commission recommendation?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will ask Jerome to answer that question.

Mr MAGUIRE: Through the restructure we will achieve the savings but, as the minister said, the restructure was not because of the savings but the savings created a parameter, if you like, that we have to meet.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: In the Office for Youth, like lots of other agencies, we have savings targets to be met. Those savings targets were not the imperative for the restructure of AGD, but we are driving those savings anyway, and the agency is being restructured anyway. So, they will all line up but one did not drive the other.

Mr PISONI: But I asked: what savings have been delivered by joining the Building Communities Division?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: As they have been articulated in the budget.

Mr PISONI: Do you want to give us a dollar figure?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will tell you what the savings are for the Office for Youth. The Office for Youth has achieved its required savings in 2010-11 which amounted to approximately \$122,000.

The CHAIR: I thank the minister; I thank the members of the committee and I thank the advisers for their assistance. We will move to the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division.

Membership:

Dr McFetridge substituted for Mr Pisoni.

Mr Marshall substituted for Mr Gardner.

Mr van Holst Pellekaan substituted for Ms Sanderson.

Departmental Advisers:

Ms N. Saunders, Executive Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Mr J. Hallion, Chief Executive, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Ms P. Peel, Deputy Chief Executive, Sustainability and Climate Change, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Ms L. Forrest, Director, Aboriginal Policy and Coordination, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Ms M Longstaff, Manager, Strategy and Support, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Ms F. Ward, Director, Projects and Planning, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Mr B. Morris, Executive Director, Services Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

Ms T. Ponzio, Business Manager, Sustainability, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, Department of Premier and Cabinet.

The CHAIR: Minister, good to have you back. We are still going to finish at 6.30, I will guarantee that, or earlier if there is any will to do so.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am very happy to forgo a ministerial statement and any government questions; I am sorry, member for Reynell.

The CHAIR: I have just been advised that the member for Norwood has been elevated to the lofty position of being the lead spokesperson for this session, so I will hand over to the member for Norwood. I do not know whether he has an opening statement or not.

Mr MARSHALL: No.

The CHAIR: We will go straight to questions, and you have the call.

Mr MARSHALL: My first question relates to essential services provision on the APY lands. Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 158, notes that the maintenance and upgrade of essential services and the implementation of retail reform on the lands will cost \$5.6 million in the next financial year. Can the minister tell us how much of the total expenses will be spent on, specifically, the energy infrastructure?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We are just working that out at the moment. We do not have a breakdown, but we very happy to provide that information to you once we are clear about that.

Mr MARSHALL: In June 2010 the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation obtained a licence to generate retail electricity on the APY lands and in the communities in Yalata

and Oak Valley. My focus is on this because, recently, there have been some significant power outages on the lands which forced some of the schools to close. Reports of those school closures appear in *The Advertiser* on 17 June.

Later that day, you announced that the responsibility for electricity activities in Aboriginal communities will be transferred from AARD to the experts in the Energy Division of DTEI. Because that announcement was made after the budget was completed, will there be a transfer of funds from one department to the other—from AARD to DTEI?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am very happy to provide as much information as I can in relation to this. It is all transparent in the budget papers. There was a situation in Ernabella that the government—the Minister for Energy, minister O'Brien, and I—take very seriously. You mentioned the school. I understand that part of the reason power went down was that some upgrades that occurred at the school basically shut down the town.

Whenever there is a crisis like that in a community, I expect officers to get on the ground and fix it, and that is what they did. We know that infrastructure in these remote communities is always a very big challenge. That is not an excuse: that is just the way it is. I wish it was not that way, but it is. It is a fact of life when it comes to infrastructure in remote communities in the APY lands.

Until now, my department has been responsible for the delivery of remote infrastructure and, to be quite honest, that has not made a lot of sense to me. What we have done, and it was announced in the budget, is transferred those functions that have sat until now with AARD to agencies within government that actually have the expertise to deliver those services.

For instance, we in AARD do not deliver health services. We have a lot to say about how we think the government can deliver health services effectively to Aboriginal communities, and that is what I think we should be doing with remote infrastructure. That now is what we are doing. We have transferred from AARD—starting tomorrow, I suppose—electricity to DTEI, and water and related services to SA Water. We have an MOU with transport presently, and that is unchanged.

The reason that, at the time the Ernabella thing was being reported, you had two ministers talking about it is that we were in the middle of this transition. That transition will take effect from 1 July and there will be bumps along the way; but, basically, those functions are being transferred out of AARD into those agencies that actually have expertise in delivering those services. I hope that means that we will get better service delivery on the ground.

At the same time, we have committed a lot of money to remote infrastructure that we have not seen before. So, for 2011-12, the budget is \$5.614 million that we are investing in remote infrastructure on the lands. I think over four years we are investing about \$10.87 million.

We are seeing a concerted effort to improve remote infrastructure, the actual infrastructure, as well as the delivery of those important services. I have not been able to speak about it publicly, really, up until now because it is in the budget and we cannot debate the budget in parliament, etc., but I put out a release at the time that the Ernabella issue was happening.

Mr MARSHALL: Thank you. How much of the \$5.6 million announced in the budget is for retail reform, and what do these retail reforms entail? Do they include any kind of retail subsidy?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: None of that \$5.6 million is going towards this retail reform. What we are doing, as part of this broader activity push in relation to remote infrastructure, is looking at retail issues on the lands. For instance, I am advised (and I stand to be corrected by my many advisers here) that on the lands they have very high levels of electricity use at about six times higher than other comparable communities. Adelaide is not a comparable community, but they have very high levels of electricity use and I think they have very high levels of water use.

There is one view that that is because those services are not paid for. We know that many other states have gone down the path of retail reform. What I have said to my department is that we need to look at this from a demand management point of view. If we are serious about climate change and driving down the cost of delivering infrastructure, we cannot ignore this issue. So, over the next 12 months—

Mr MARSHALL: I am not even sure what 'retail reforms' is referring to.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Demand management, for instance. I want the agency to look at—

Mr MARSHALL: So, this is what DTEI is going to be doing?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: My agency, AARD, is going to be doing this policy work. Of course, we would do it with DTEI, and we would do it with water and we would do it with roads. There is a big policy chunk of work that has to be done in relation to retail reform, and we may or may not decide to go down that path. Who knows? But we need to do the work; that is the responsible thing the public sector should be doing. That is what my agency should be doing, instead of fixing up poles and wires that fall over; we should leave that to other people.

Mr MARSHALL: Can the minister advise on the operation and status of the Umuwa solar power station, and what are the plans for that facility going forward?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I understand that it is currently not operational.

Mr MARSHALL: I think that is pretty clear. When I was there last, the dishes were actually pointing in the opposite direction to the sun! They are right once a day, apparently, so that is good.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Let me provide a more serious answer. The prototype solar power station at Umuwa was constructed in 2003, with funding from the commonwealth government. At the time, the commonwealth was of the view that Umuwa was an ideal location to trial the prototype solar power station and that the station would be built prior to the construction of the central powerhouse. The prototype trial commenced in 2003 and delivered power into the Pukatja grid.

Mr MARSHALL: We got much of the history in the previous section. I am wondering what is the operational status and what is going to happen with the facility going forward.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: There is a long answer I could give you, but the short answer is that we have investigated the options for what to do with this prototype, and my advice is that it is not financially sensible for us to do anything more with this.

Mr MARSHALL: So, it will be closed or mothballed for the time being?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: At this point in time, yes, because I understand that it will cost money to remove it. So, we do not want—

Mr MARSHALL: Incur any additional costs.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: —throw any more money at it. Can I say that it was commonwealth funded; it was a prototype and it was a trial. Nonetheless, despite the way it is gone, I think it is still important to give it a go.

Mr MARSHALL: Who provided that advice that it would not be cost effective to get it operational again?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: My department has undertaken various investigations about what to do with it.

Mr MARSHALL: Is that part of the overall investigation into essential service provision on the lands, or is this a specific one into the Umuwa power station?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The department has done specific work in relation to the Umuwa power station.

Mr MARSHALL: I understand also—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: But can I say, I do not think they are particularly hopeful, but we are still looking at some other options about what we can do with it. I can advise you that a working group of DTEI, DPC and ARD was established to review the CCS report. This group concluded that the station is not a financially efficient proposition.

Mr MARSHALL: Can the minister advise how many power outages there have been on the lands this year and what proportion of the expenses listed in the budget has gone towards fixing electrical infrastructure problems?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Hold on; there are quite a few questions in there. I will just see if we have any information about the number of outages. Yes, we do. I do not think I have a total. I have some information about incidents that occurred. Would you like that?

Mr MARSHALL: Sure.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: On 5 December 2011 the Ernabella to Kenmore Park distribution line was struck by lightning—that is, I have to say, what we are dealing with at the moment as well on the lands: the weather—damaging an insulator. On 16 December, a lightning

strike again, knocked out the bore feeder in Kenmore Park. I was at Kenmore Park just recently; it is an beautiful part of the world. They have an amazing garden out there.

An honourable member: How's Donald?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Donald Fraser! You see, you should take a leaf out of—

Mr MARSHALL: I often do.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Donald Fraser was fantastic. He is fantastic.

An honourable member: Still chasing camels?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Still chasing camels. I didn't see any camel chasing, but I saw lots of gardens. On 22 December vandalism to the power station in Fregon affected electricity delivery. On 7 January a lightning strike caused power to go out in Ernabella and nearby homelands. On 9 January three engines with a central powerhouse ceased operation; cause unknown. Later on 9 January the area surrounding the central powerhouse received seven inches of rain in a period of two hours! That is slightly problematic.

On Monday 24 January homelands located near Ernabella were without electricity. On 10 February heavy rains across the APY lands caused extensive damage. On 12 February an insulator fault caused electricity transmission to cease to a nearby homeland. The picture you are seeing there is that delivering infrastructure is quite tricky. What was the second aspect to your question?

Mr MARSHALL: With regards to costs for these outages, but perhaps that is something that you could come back to us with.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes.

Mr MARSHALL: Minister, I understand that the department has commissioned an external report—I cannot remember whether it is KPMG or PWC; one of the big consulting firms—looking at essential service infrastructure on the APY lands. Can you give us more detail about that report and findings?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Sure. Again I stand to be corrected, but I think it was PWC that prepared the report. We commissioned that report to guide us in the future arrangements for remote service delivery, so that was the report that we used to inform the decision that was then announced in the budget. This is an issue that has been on the agenda for a very long time. I think it makes sense. If you are on the lands, or in any community, really, all that you care about is that you have a reliable electricity supply and water. It is really up to us to decide how we can best deliver that. All of that stuff is completely transparent.

Mr MARSHALL: Completely transparent; so is that report available?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I can check as to the status of that report, yes.

Mr MARSHALL: Because I have had an FOI request in since January of this year.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Not to me.

Mr MARSHALL: Absolutely, to your department.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: On the PWC—no. Well, to whom have you got that FOI request in to?

Mr MARSHALL: To your department.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That is different to me. What is the FOI request?

Mr MARSHALL: That we would like a copy of the report.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Of the PWC report?

Mr MARSHALL: Yes.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Okay; we can provide that report.

Mr MARSHALL: Okay. Perhaps if we can move on to another topic, in particular, the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara task force. The APY task force is administered by DPC, and I am going to specifically refer to Budget Paper 4, Portfolio Statement 3, page 124.

For the past six years the task force has been responsible for allocating around \$5 million per annum for services and programs on the APY lands. During last year's estimates the Executive Director of AARD, Nerida Saunders, noted that the task force had not met in the last three months simply because 'we were reviewing the new funding budget for next year'. That is what was stated. How much funding has been allocated to the APY task force for 2011-12?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: In 2011-12 a total of \$5.73 million of state funding will be allocated to the APY lands programs.

Mr MARSHALL: Has the task force decided how this allocation will be spent and, if so, can you provide the committee with an itemised list?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I have some information. The expected distribution in 2011-12 will be similar to 2010-11: allocation of \$3.89 million for delivery of substance misuse, rehab and family, homemaker and youth support programs and services across the lands. Funds will enable the continuation of Nganampa Health. Nganampa Health operates environmental health programs in communities.

The allocation of \$1.84 million will be provided to continue to develop and implement the food security strategy, improve capacity of building in communities and create sustainable economic development, employment and training opportunities, including governance training—which is a big deal—interpretive services and art-based tourism. The allocation will also provide for the maintenance of three swimming pools, Service SA Rural Transaction Centre services and a range of other projects and programs on the lands.

Mr MARSHALL: How many times has the task force met during the last 12 months and what was the month of the last meeting?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I understand that the APY task force no longer meets. It has been rolled up into SOGA and CEGAA. CEGAA is the Chief Executives Group for Aboriginal Affairs. Basically all the chief executives across government come together, and that is a very effective mechanism for us to drive policy, programs and service delivery across government.

Mr MARSHALL: When was the APY task force disbanded?

Ms SAUNDERS: The decision was made early this year to actually combine the APY task force into the Board of Management with the Remote Service Delivery national partnership and the agreements that are happening around that. The Board of Management of the RSD is now being extended to include other parts of the APY and other communities. The task force now is incorporated into that.

Mr MARSHALL: How often do they meet?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: On a regular basis. I will ask Pauline Peel to answer that.

Ms PEEL: Every six weeks. Now that the decision has been made to broaden the role of that group they will be the group that will be looking at this issue.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I did not have much involvement with the task force, but I have to say that SOG and CEGAA (SOG stands for the Senior Officers Group of government, I think) is a much more effective way of bringing together people across government. I know you understand this, but it is worth making the point: as I said before, in AARD we do not deliver health services, we do not deliver education services.

Mr MARSHALL: Sure. I understand that.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: But what we need to do—

Mr MARSHALL: Is bring everybody together.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: —is to make sure that those who are delivering those services use the expertise that we have in AARD so that we do it once and we do it properly. I have to say also that any kind of service delivery in any remote community, but particularly in remote communities on the APY lands, is always going to be tricky.

Mr MARSHALL: Sure.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: What we need to do is not be too proud to change direction in what we do.

Mr MARSHALL: Sure.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We are dealing with difficult communities.

Mr MARSHALL: I appreciate that. Does the new body—I cannot get my mind quite around CEGAA and SOG. I thought it was a game you played, back in the day. Does this group have a mechanism for a cost benefit analysis of individual projects, and does it review the effectiveness of the spend? Is this information generally available?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: CEGAA's terms of reference consolidate the forum as setting the tone and identifying strategic policy issues. CEGAA also monitors the implementation of the key whole-of-government and across government Aboriginal specific activities. It does have the capacity to evaluate and I expect it to be evaluating what we do; so, yes.

Mr MARSHALL: Has it done any evaluation of past projects?

Ms PEEL: No, because the decision to broaden the role, first of all, of the Remote Service Delivery Board of Management, has only just been made. So in relation to this particular matter, in the future that is exactly what it will be doing. In the matters it has been addressing over the last 18 months—which does include the Remote Service Delivery National Partnership Agreement in Amata and Mimili—those are matters that have been brought to the chief executives' group; and yes, they do constantly monitor and evaluate.

Mr MARSHALL: So in the past, before the establishment of this new group and when we had the APY task force, was someone actually looking at projects, doing a cost benefit analysis on each of the projects as they were going forward and also looking at the effectiveness of the spend in the past?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: There is always an analysis before we give something money, before we give a program a tick, of whether it is worth doing. Call it a cost benefit analysis or whatever it is, but—

Mr MARSHALL: But is there a formal process? That is what I am trying to get at.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes; the agencies do this work. It only makes sense (you would hope) that agencies, when they are putting up an initiative or a program, do that kind of analysis about whether it is something that is worth doing or not. That is a basic fundamental of good public policy. I am just going to ask Jim Hallion to speak, because he wears another hat at a national level in terms of infrastructure, and I think this would be really important information for the committee to hear.

Mr HALLION: As well as looking at this from a state point of view, at the national level I am one of the Infrastructure Australia council members, and I also chair a subgroup of IA that is looking at Indigenous infrastructure. One of the issues we are looking at closely now is a new structure and framework for evaluation of projects at a national level, which will obviously also have an impact at the state level. It is not just about benefit cost but also, in relation to infrastructure, about starting from a town planning perspective to see what the right place is for the right infrastructure. The commonwealth is also very keen on ensuring that it has the right infrastructure in the right townships. It cannot put everything everywhere, so—

Mr MARSHALL: But this funding we are talking about was not really infrastructure; it was more programs. I am just wondering whether there was some evaluation mechanism of programs' cost effectiveness before they were proceeded with, rolling out for next year. It was a simple question, that's all.

Mr HALLION: That was infrastructure. Outside infrastructure, of course, COAG has quite a number of targets, and at the State Strategic Plan level we also have a number of targets that we have to achieve. They are in the service delivery area, and really the programs are aimed at delivery and the achievement of those targets. So, generally, that is the approach taken. Sometimes you cannot necessarily evaluate precisely the effect of one individual program; it is often a package of measures. You will see in the audit report, for example, from the SA Strategic Plan, the progress the state is making on the targets in that area—

Mr MARSHALL: I understand that.

Mr HALLION: That is the sort of general approach that is taken.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Never before, I think, have we operated in a policy or government environment where there has been so much accountability and where, for the first time, you have the commonwealth and the state basically on the same page, plus the community. We know that the work we do gets evaluated, as it should be. We should be held to account.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Last year I asked questions about the visits of the various chief executives to the lands, because I have been FOI-ing the reports. As recently as 10 days ago I got the last determination back on an FOI on the visit of the chief executive officer of the department of primary industries to the lands. It said, 'PIRSA confirms the agency's chief executive did visit the APY lands on 19 and 20 May,' and this was part of the Senior Management Council. Is that CEGAA again?'

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, the Senior Management Council is a group of the most senior chief executives across state government. It is a different body from CEGAA but made up some of the same people.

Dr McFETRIDGE: It says that there was no individual report by the Chief Executive of PIRSA. Is there a report that has been produced by the Senior Management Council the parliament can have access to?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am not sure what the purpose was of SMC's visit to the APY lands. I can give you some information about the May 2010 visit to the APY lands, but can I say that it is a very good thing that the SMC is going up. I would not necessarily expect a report to come to me as a result of that, but what I would expect is, say, Jim, wearing his old hat as head of DTEI, to go back to his agency after his visit to the lands and—

Dr McFETRIDGE: Report.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Well, that is right, but it does not have to look like a report. I would expect that, if a chief executive was going up to the lands, before they went up to the lands I would get a briefing about all the activities the agency is undertaking and then have a discussion within its group. I can say that that in May 2010 chief executives attended a two-day visit of the APY lands. The communities identified a list of emerging issues requiring an immediate, medium-term or longer-term policy response by government. The chief executives' action plan included five immediate actions, eight medium-term actions, and three long-term policy interventions.

These actions were cross-referenced with those outlined in the local implementation plans (LIPs) for Amata and Mimili, which I am sure you are familiar with. They included very simple things that we take for granted here in Adelaide but that are a big deal in these remote communities: repair of hot water services in some houses, repair of broken streetlights, and investigations into high bank charges. They were the immediate actions.

Medium-term actions included: creating awareness around health and food, considering options for the Amata misuse facility, and developing opportunities for youth participation. These have all been included in the local implementation plans. Then there are the longer-term policy interventions. I am very happy to give reports, where the reports exist, but I am not fussed by chief executives going up there and not providing me with a report. I do not want them to be bogged down in unnecessary bureaucracy. What I want them to do is go up there and, if a community is reporting that there are some basic essential things that are being unattended to—

Dr McFETRIDGE: And, minister, that is what I have been trying to chase down—reports, briefing papers and minutes of meetings following their visits to the APY lands. There do not seem to have been any at all, which I think is quite strange, but we will move on.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We are happy to provide that information for you. I understand that you raised it last year as well.

Dr McFETRIDGE: I did.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: And you have received some information, but I am very happy to give you the information as it exists. You might have a different impression in your head about what it might look like, but I am happy to give you the information as it exists.

Dr McFETRIDGE: Well, those short, medium and long-term objectives would be good.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes.

Mr MARSHALL: I thought I would talk about community council support officer positions because it is a nice easy one and relates specifically to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Knock yourself out and ask me whatever you want—as long you do not do it in Pitjantjatjara!

Mr MARSHALL: Wiya—we will get Duncan to talk for you in a minute. How much did ARD spend employing community council support officer positions during 2010-2011?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The estimated result for 2010-11 is \$408,000 from the commonwealth. ARD has contributed nearly \$100,000 in 2010-11 to fund these positions. I want to clarify something—yes, that is correct.

Mr MARSHALL: When you announced these positions in May 2010, you said the officers would be employed for up to 12 months with all positions essentially ending today. Is that still the plan?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It was the intention to give people contracts for 12 months but, as you would well appreciate, we had difficulty with recruitment. We had great difficulty with recruitment because we tried to recruit locals as much as we could. I have some details here for you.

Mr MARSHALL: But is the plan to complete that program today?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, absolutely not. I just want to give you some more information. The CCSO contracts have been extended for a further three months and the relevant community councils have been advised. We are currently negotiating with the commonwealth government around continuing joint funding.

Mr MARSHALL: Have you allocated a budget for that beyond the three-month extension?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, we would.

Mr MARSHALL: What if the commonwealth does not come up with their proportion of it? Will you then fully fund that program?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We need to think about that. The community councils are very clear that these positions are important. We need to evaluate the effectiveness of those positions. It has not been easy in getting those positions up and running, but we think they are worth investing in. The commonwealth government has indicated that they are willing to continue in partnership with the state; in fact, when I met with Jenny Macklin a few weeks ago, we talked about this. So, I think they see the value in them, but again—

Mr MARSHALL: My understanding of your original announcement was that there were going to be six of these officers on the lands. Was anybody ever appointed at Pukatja or Pipalyatjara and, if so, when?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: An appointment in Pipalyatjara was delayed due to rain that restricted access to the APY lands. AARD, in conjunction with the community council, selected a candidate and is awaiting a police clearance. On 30 August 2010, an applicant in Pukatja was recommended for appointment; however, the applicant subsequently withdrew her application. A new CCSO was selected for the Pukatja community and commenced work on 9 May 2011, pending confirmation—

Mr MARSHALL: 9 May 2011? As in a month ago? Eleven months into the 12-month period that they were going to be appointed for.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I explained to you that we had an applicant back in August who was recommended for the appointment. The applicant withdrew her application, and we had to start all over again. I am as frustrated as you are by this. I make announcements; I have expectations about these things occurring in a timely way. What I am learning is that I cannot control everything, and sometimes it is one step forward and two steps back, and this is a good example. The main thing is that we are doing it, we know it is hard, but we are investing the time and the money—

Mr MARSHALL: But you are going to proceed with that program? You are actually seeking federal government funding to continue this program?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, we are just as committed to stumping up our financial contribution.

Mr MARSHALL: No, I understand that. It will be joint funding, federal and state.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: What is your question?

Mr MARSHALL: My question is that this model has been difficult. You have just acknowledged that it is difficult finding people and recruiting people, yet going forward to support the communities you are saying, 'We are going to stick with the same model which has been fraught with difficulties for the last 12 months.'

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, because what we need to do is to get over the hump of recruiting people, and what I am hoping is—

Mr MARSHALL: A big hump—11 out of 12 months.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Well, no. I want to be serious about this. It has not been difficult in every community, but I think despite—

Mr MARSHALL: What about Pipalyatjara?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Can you let me finish talking? Despite the difficulty, it is worth investing in doing the process properly, trying to get as many locals as we can. I see it in Pipalyatjara. The appointment was delayed due to rain that restricted access to the APY lands, and we have a candidate awaiting clearance. I am as frustrated as you are.

Mr MARSHALL: So there has been no appointment in 12 months at Pipalyatjara, and the person at Pukatja was appointed just in the last month.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We have an appointment. The process is difficult; it is not easy. I am sure that you would appreciate that I, more than anyone else, would want to get these appointments up and running as quickly as possible. I need to be patient.

Mr MARSHALL: Did your department provide any other assistance to the community councils in lieu of not being able to appoint somebody because of the difficulties that you have very clearly identified?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We have been working with the community councils closely on the recruitment process.

Mr MARSHALL: But given that there was not anybody appointed, did you provide any additional services to those community councils to support them?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Our people are on the ground. We continue to provide assistance. We have government business managers who are on the ground.

Mr MARSHALL: So, you provided additional services out of that budget line?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, the two budget lines are separate. We have the budget line for the community council support officers, and then there are the policies and the programs that include the government business managers who are on the ground, and they do a fantastic job, day in, day out. The CCSO initiative was an additional thing that the community councils had been requesting, so on my first visit to the lands, I think in May 2010, I announced that we were going to be doing this. I wish that it was easier.

Mr MARSHALL: Minister, last year's budget papers stated that a regional service delivery framework for the APY Lands would be developed in 2010-11. Has that policy framework been completed and, if not, what is the current timeframe for finalising this work?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, it has not been completed but it is an important priority. It was something that I talked about with Jenny Macklin when I met her recently; it is a priority.

Mr MARSHALL: So, that was going to be completed last year. It is going to be completed this year. What is the timeframe for delivery for that very important document?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Are we talking about the same thing? What are you talking about?

Mr MARSHALL: In last year's budget papers, it talked about—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Where are you looking?

Mr MARSHALL: —regional service delivery policy framework for the APY Lands would be developed in 2010-11. I am just wanting to get an update on what the status of that report is. It just seems to have dropped off the list.

Ms PEEL: Chair, I will answer as I see it, and then you could perhaps ask more questions if it is not the right answer. I think what you were referring to was the remote service delivery framework. When we were in this place this time last year, we would have been just in the process of putting in place the one-stop government business managers, the regional operations centre, the local implementation plan, all of which form part of the remote service delivery framework.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That is why your question confused me. When I talked earlier about the LIP programs in Amata and Mimili, that has all been done.

Mr MARSHALL: I was not referring to the LIP programs.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That remote service delivery initiative is well underway. In fact, we were the first state in the nation to wrap it up in Amata and Mimili.

Mr MARSHALL: I understand the LIP program in Mimili and Amata but in last year's—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That is part of the remote service delivery initiative.

Mr MARSHALL: In last year's Budget Paper 4, Portfolio Statement 1, exactly the same one as this year, section 141, basically it states that regional service delivery policy framework for the APY Lands would be developed in 2010-11. I think it is a reasonable question. We completed 2010-11 today, and I am just trying to find out whether it was done and whether we can have a look at this framework. It is a little bit disappointing that the minister does not actually know what she has committed to achieving this year.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, it is ongoing and we are happy to provide you with whatever information we have.

Mr MARSHALL: It is just that there is no reference to it in this year's budget paper.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: But that does not mean that it is not occurring.

Mr MARSHALL: That is pretty nebulous but I will move on. I would like to ask some questions now about the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act. In November 2008, the state government commenced a comprehensive review of the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act. Last year's budget papers indicated that AARD expected to complete the review of the act during the 2010-11 financial year, which I again remind everybody concludes tonight at midnight. This year's budget papers indicate that AARD now expects to continue the review during 2011-12 financial year. Why has the review of the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act not been completed as anticipated in last year's budget papers and were there any specific things that held up this finalisation?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I need to check this but I think that the reference group might have asked for some more time. I expect to be in a position to bring some legislation to the parliament this year. I understand that this is a review, along with the review of the Aboriginal Heritage Act, that has been going for some time, started by my predecessor. I have met with the ALT a number of times to talk about it. I think we are making some progress. The changes proposed, I hope, will enable the ALT residential community, and Aboriginal South Australians as a whole, to ensure that this really important land asset provides the economic, social and cultural benefits that are intended by the act. I am sure you would agree with the direction that we are heading in relation to this legislation. Sure, it has not been completed, but we are well on track to, I hope, have something in parliament by this year.

Mr MARSHALL: With respect, it is not on track, because it was started in 2008. We are nearly three years down the track. In last year's budget papers you said that it would be completed this year. It has not been completed this year. It is actually down as a target—not to even complete it this next financial year but just to continue negotiations. We are trying to work out what the sticking points are. What is holding up this process?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It is complex, and the nature of the legislation means that I would rather spend two or three months more ensuring that communities are absolutely on top of the proposed changes. That is tricky.

Mr MARSHALL: With respect, it was determined in last year's budget estimates that there had not been consultation for a 12-month period, so it is—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am not sure that that is correct, actually.

Mr MARSHALL: We can read it again, but it was in last year's estimates *Hansard* and I would be happy to provide you with a copy.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No; I think there was some confusion about that at the time. I can tell you that consultations were held in all Aboriginal Lands Trust residential communities and some regional centres in 2010—

Mr MARSHALL: This financial year. That's great.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, in 2010 and early 2011.

Mr MARSHALL: That is this financial year.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: But also in 2010.

Mr MARSHALL: Well, 2010 is in this financial year. It starts on 1 July; and there were none in the previous financial, year, which was 2009-10.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Members of the reference group appointed to provide expert advice on the review participated in the consultations and met and subsequently discussed and developed their views.

Mr MARSHALL: The review will be completed this year. Is that correct?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am hoping to bring back to parliament a piece of legislation that parliament will be able to debate this year. I am going to keep saying this: I am not going to be fussed about an extra two or three months here or there. Sure, these pieces of legislation are taking a long time. We are dealing with legislation that is older than I am (and I am 43), and I am not going to jeopardise these communities or the goodwill that we have built up with them around this legislation. That is just the way it is.

Mr MARSHALL: For clarity, a bill will be introduced into parliament this year to give effect to the findings of the review? The review will be completed and a bill introduced to parliament this year, 2011, to specifically address the findings of this report?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am hopeful that we will have a piece of legislation—

Mr MARSHALL: Hopeful!

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: It is my intention that we bring back a piece of legislation to the parliament. It has to go through cabinet. I do not just click my fingers. I want it done properly. I would hope by now you would appreciate that, when it comes to service delivery or proposed legislative changes or other initiatives, things take longer than normal when it comes to Aboriginal communities, because we need to do it properly. We need to get to communities, and that is difficult to do. We are dealing with communities and populations that are spread over a very large area. So we need to do it properly.

Mr MARSHALL: Did the minister advise members of the Aboriginal Lands Trust at a meeting earlier this year that the review would not be completed until next year, as was pointed out to us recently on a field trip to Point Pearce with the Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I did go to a meeting not that long ago recently with the ALT, and I have been very clear that I expect the review to be done this year.

Mr MARSHALL: This year?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yes, absolutely. I do not know who you have been speaking to or what they have told you, but I think I have a very good—

Mr MARSHALL: It is who you have been speaking to and what you have told them, actually.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I can tell you what I have told them. I have a very good working relationship with people like Uncle George and John Chester. In fact, I am seeing them again soon, and I expect to be tabling a piece of draft legislation. They might have got confused; I do not know. I cannot speak about what may or may not have happened, but I have been very clear with my own department that I expect this to be done this year.

Mr MARSHALL: Moving on to the housing audit that was being done by AARD, a lack of dedicated staff housing is undermining the viability of some of the art centres on the APY lands. In August 2010 the state government confirmed that a review of staff housing needs across the APY lands would include the needs of art centre staff. Can you give us an update on that housing audit?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am very happy to give you an update. The objectives of the audit were to establish the current housing stock held by governments and also the NGO sector to establish actual occupancy as opposed to booked occupancy, and to review current management models to improve efficiency and to determine alternate models for the occupancy of houses. In August 2010, AARD invited consultants to tender to undertake the audits, and tenders were received in early September. I have to mention, though, that this audit was motivated by the arts

housing issue on the lands. Minister Hill has announced, I think, \$450,000, which is going to be spent on AARD's accommodation. You and I agree about the need—

Mr MARSHALL: We do agree on this point.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am disappointed that there are not many more. You know that we met with an important delegation. We know that the art centres are a really important source of enterprise potential for tourism; it is a great way of engaging locals—

Mr MARSHALL: This question is really about the housing audit and, as you rightly identify, what are the houses and what is the utilisation of those houses?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That is what we are getting to the bottom of. My officers have a preliminary model, which is only in their mind, and we have just talked about what it might look like. I think the thing hinges on this notion of booked occupancy versus what is actually occupied. What that means is that people on the lands have a perception of what is available because they might see empty houses, but what we know is that those houses are booked. So, we are undertaking a serious review, but, in the meantime, the government has—

Mr MARSHALL: What is the time frame for that review?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Let me just check the—

Mr MARSHALL: The Aboriginal Lands Parliamentary Standing Committee received evidence from DPC/AARD in, I think, October/November last year, which I thought indicated that the housing audit was well underway and due for—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: That is well underway. What we need to do—

Mr MARSHALL: I thought it was June 2011 now, and it is still underway.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, there has been a housing audit, and what we have identified is that we need to look at a different model. So, we are verifying the audit we undertook, and we are doing this next step of work, which is around this notion of booked occupancy versus what is actually occupied. So, we have done the audit, and we are now doing the work on alternative models, potentially, of accommodation, but you would appreciate that that is quite a tricky issue because, for instance, teachers have—

Mr MARSHALL: I understand it; it is complex.

The CHAIR: Order! The minister is still answering the question.

Mr MARSHALL: I am agreeing with her.

The CHAIR: No, you do not interrupt while she is still in the process of answering her question. You are getting all of the calls, so what does it matter?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am showing incredible restraint.

Mr MARSHALL: Thank you.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: You are welcome. Thank you for your protection, Chair. The work has been done, and we are doing the next tranche of it, which is looking at alternative models.

Mr MARSHALL: When do you envisage that will be presented?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: End of the year. This is about a model—

Mr MARSHALL: It is not acceptable that it would take a 14-month period to conduct a housing audit to determine an alternative model when these people are in crisis.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No, the audit has been done. No, you are misrepresenting the facts.

Mr MARSHALL: Well, to come out with some recommendations.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The audit has been done and, as a result of the audit, we are doing the next step, which is to look at a—

Mr MARSHALL: Too slow.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Too slow—by directive of the member for Norwood!

Mr MARSHALL: I am glad you find it hilarious, but people are in crisis there.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: What I find hilarious is your attitude.

Mr MARSHALL: There are people who are sleeping on the floor of houses while they are trying to support our arts community.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: Yesterday, I sat in estimates with your leader, and she showed impeccable manners. You should take a leaf out of her book.

Mr MARSHALL: It is very frustrating. I am advocating on behalf of people on the lands.

The CHAIR: Does the member for Norwood have any more questions?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I take this matter very, very seriously. The government has put its money where its mouth is.

Mr MARSHALL: Too slow.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We have committed \$450,000 to arts housing. We have undertaken the audit, and we are now going the next step, which is to look at alternative models of accommodation. You would appreciate, I would hope, that we have to look at the industrial awards for police, for instance, who have agreements about their accommodation, and teachers have various agreements about their accommodation. This is a really complex matter. I know that you would like to have a very simple answer. Not that you will ever get the opportunity to discover it, service delivery is complex on the lands. It just is. It is not an excuse. It just is, if we want to do it properly.

Mr MARSHALL: Thank you. I would just like to ask a question about the Umuwa courthouse. Can the minister explain what has happened is to the \$4.5 million that the government expected to spend back in 2010-11 financial year on building a court and administration centre in Umuwa, as highlighted in last year's budget papers?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: This is a subject that I talked about with minister Macklin when I met her just recently. I am very pleased that the money committed by the commonwealth is still there. We are currently discussing what the services might look like. I share your frustration, because I am frustrated about the fact that this is something that we have been discussing for a couple of years, but the model since it was first envisaged has changed. I met with minister Macklin. There is no question that the money will continue to be expended on the lands. We are just thinking about what that might look like.

Mr MARSHALL: My understanding is that it has been leaked that it is going to be spent on wellbeing centres on the lands. That was the indication from minister Macklin's office that that is what she would like the money to be spent on. Can you confirm that the federal Minister for Indigenous Affairs rejected the South Australian government's proposal to use the money to build office accommodation for state public servants? Can you also tell me how much of the total expenses were spent on developing the rejected proposal?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The discussions regarding the development of a facility for specialised child protection services were undertaken and involved the relevant state and commonwealth agencies. There are ongoing negotiations. It is not surprising that the commonwealth wants to spend as much of its money in Amata and Mimili, which are the priority communities. We are continuing to have negotiations, but I am not going to say anything here that is going to prejudice those negotiations.

Mr MARSHALL: Specifically my question was about whether you took a proposal to minister Macklin at your meeting on 1 June, whether it was rejected and how much money was spent on that proposal that was ultimately—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We discussed a number of things.

Mr MARSHALL: Where is the federal money being parked, the \$4.5 million—

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will just check that.

Mr MARSHALL: —and has any interest accrued? If so, how much and how will this money be spent—or will it be actually returning to general revenue?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I will take that on notice. The main point is that that \$4.5 million—

Mr MARSHALL: —has been secured.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: —is secured. There is no question about that. It will be spent on the lands. We are just negotiating what that is going to look like.

Mr MARSHALL: So, do you have an idea at what time that money will actually be expended?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We are negotiating the design of the services.

Mr MARSHALL: I would just like to speak now on food security. This is Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 159. Can the minister perhaps give us an overview of specifically how the money that she recently announced, the \$800,000 of new money for the implementation of the food security plan, it will be spent: specifically, what programs it will be spent on?

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I visited the APY lands on the 29 and 30 March earlier this year and found that there was broad-based support and very positive feedback for one of the specific initiatives that are talked about in the plan, which was the raised garden beds, which is why it was great to visit Donald Fraser's homeland at Kenmore Park, where I met Mr and Mrs Pope, who had a very serious garden where they were producing tons and tons worth of fruit. So it can be done.

The Arid Lands Garden Horticulture Project has approved new raised garden beds at Sandy Bore and Kalka. The Watarru garden project is well established. Funding has been provided to the Red Cross to provide a new program called Come and Cook with your Kids, a school holiday cooking and nutrition program to expand their breakfast program to include school holidays and, importantly, for the appointment of a community development officer. The audit of cooking programs is also well progressed.

In terms of 2011-12 targets, we are working on a consumer protection strategy. We have established what we are calling the APY Executive Action Team, which is a body across government that brings together all the players on the lands in relation to this issue. For the first time, we have brought together all the stakeholders and all the players on the lands who have a stake in this issue.

They have been looking at issues of money management, consumer protection, healthy food and nutrition for vulnerable children, community store management and freight improvement. The budget allocation of \$425,000 aligned to the food security strategy initiatives for 2010-11 is expected to be fully expended on the Arid Lands Garden Horticultural Project and the Come and Cook With Your Kids program. To achieve the 2011-12 targets described above, the budget allocated to the food security initiatives is \$375,000.

We are making real progress. I was on the lands not that long ago. Again, this is another one that is complex but I did give a commitment that we were going to look at this issue. For the first time across government, we are looking at it. We can argue and tweak things between us, but I think the main thing is that we do have a focus on food security, which we have not—

Mr MARSHALL: But not subsidy.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: No; I absolutely rule out a subsidy.

Mr MARSHALL: Even though we subsidise electricity, water, housing—but not food.

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: The key to this issue is community development because there might be—

Mr MARSHALL: A carton of eggs last week was \$13.80 at Mimili.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I am well aware of the issues on the lands.

Mr MARSHALL: So educate your heart out!

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: I was the one who started talking about it. I have to say I would like some acknowledgement at some stage for being courageous enough to talk about issues which the government does not necessarily have an easy solution for. I acknowledge that. That is the case with just about everything we do in Aboriginal Affairs. It is very difficult, but I am not going to pretend that I have the answer. I am not going to pretend that we are doing something when we are not. I am talking about issues that are difficult—remote infrastructure, food security, renewable

energy. There is a long list of one thing after the other. These are difficult issues but they are worth getting right and they are worth trying—

Mr MARSHALL: Have you had any wins in the last 12 months?

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We have had a lot of wins.

The CHAIR: Order! We are not going to have any more questions at this stage.

The Hon. G. PORTOLESI: We have had the local implementation, plans have been done at Mimili and Amata. They were the first in the nation. We have rolled out a program of new money (more than \$800,000) in relation to food. We have police stations and social workers for the first time in areas where we never had them. We are making progress on the lands and in other Aboriginal communities. You can shake your head. I disagree with you; I think we are making progress.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I thank members for their cooperation. I also thank the advisers and, on behalf of the committee, I acknowledge and congratulate Mr Jim Hallion on his elevation to Chief Executive of DPC. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for all of the proposed payments adjourned until Friday at 10am.

At 18:33 the committee adjourned until Friday 1 July 2011 at 10:00.