

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**Tuesday 2 July 2013****ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B****Chair:**

Hon. L.R. Breuer

Members:

Hon. S.W. Key
Ms F.E. Bedford
Ms V.A. Chapman
Mr A.J. Sibbons
Mr P.A. Treloar
Mr M.R. Williams

The committee met at 10:30

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, WATER AND NATURAL RESOURCES, \$184,701,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, WATER AND
NATURAL RESOURCES, \$19,361,000

Witness:

Hon. I.K. Hunter, Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr A. Holmes, Chief Executive, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Mr W. Zacharin, Executive Director, Biosecurity SA.

Mr T. Goodes, Group Executive Director, Strategy and Advice, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Ms M. Griffiths, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Mr A. Gerace, Manager, Corporate Accounting, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Mr B. Bruce, Group Executive Director, Customer and Corporate Services, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Ms K. Prideaux, Manager, Budget Strategy and Support, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Dr J. Virtue, Manager, Natural Resources Management Biosecurity, Biosecurity SA.

Mr A. Fischer, Ministerial Adviser.

Mr T. Mooney, Chief of Staff.

The CHAIR: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen, and welcome. The last day of estimates. I am sure the member for Bragg will be upset about that, knowing how much she loves estimates. The estimates committees are a relatively informal procedure. Changes to committee membership will be notified as they occur via a request to be discharged form. There is no need to stand to ask or answer questions. 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. All questions are to be directed to the minister and not to the minister's advisers. 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*, but all answers to questions taken on notice must be submitted to the committee secretary by no later than Friday 27 September 2013.

There is no formal facility for the tabling of documents; however, documents can be supplied to the chair for distribution to the committee. I advise, for the purposes of the committee, television coverage will be allowed for filming from the area behind me. We do not have any here today. I understand that the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition have agreed on a timetable for today's proceedings. Is that right, member for Bragg?

Ms CHAPMAN: Correct.

The CHAIR: I propose to allow both the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements of about 10 minutes each. I declare the proposed payments open for examination, and I refer members to Agency Statements, Volume 2.

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Chair, I think that Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, which covers Zero Waste SA, is also under the jurisdiction of the minister because I will be referring to it.

The CHAIR: Is that right, minister?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It is.

The CHAIR: We will need to amend that.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I advise that that is going to be covered in the next session, at 12.30.

The CHAIR: Minister, do you wish to make an opening statement?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Thank you, Chair, for this opportunity. The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources was formed on 1 July 2012 following the amalgamation of the former department of environment and natural resources and the department for water. The department operates across a diverse range of areas, including climate change, water security, the health of the River Murray, nature conservation, sustainable land management, built and cultural heritage, animal welfare, and the management of parks and public lands.

The agency works in partnership with the state's eight natural resources management boards to advise and support community and government decision-making and service delivery. The department also works with local government, industry, landholders and community organisations. The department's strategy is to ensure that healthy and productive natural resources sustain our wellbeing and economy by delivering four strategic outcomes. These are:

- resilient landscapes and livelihoods;
- sustainable water resources for all;
- community benefits from parks, public places and heritage; and
- effective and informed services and advice.

The establishment of South Australia's 19 marine parks is one of the most significant conservation initiatives ever undertaken in our state. Following the proclamation of the outer boundaries of South Australia's network of marine parks, the government worked closely with stakeholders and community members to develop proposals for zoning within them. In August 2012 the zoning and draft management plans were released for eight weeks of public consultation. On 29 November 2012 final management plans for South Australia's 19 marine parks were authorised by His Excellency the Governor and tabled in parliament.

The marine parks have been carefully designed and zoned to protect fragile marine habitats while minimising the impact on industry and recreational users. The government especially acknowledges the significant contributions of the 180 community volunteers and the 14 local advisory groups. Around 70 per cent of their advice is reflected in the final zoning outcomes.

During the final round of consultation last year more than 8,600 submissions were received, with more than 80 per cent not only supporting marine parks but also supporting the increase in the number or size of sanctuary zones to achieve a stronger conservation outcome. Responding to the advice received from the community, stakeholder groups and others during the consultation process, the government made more than 50 amendments to the marine park management plans. The changes ensure that we will achieve excellent conservation outcomes

whilst further reducing the impact on users of the marine environment, such as commercial and recreational fishers.

Marine parks are zoned for multiple uses, meaning that people can still enjoy their favourite activities—whether it be swimming, diving, boating or fishing. We have ensured that recreational fishing will be largely unaffected by the introduction of marine parks. I am told that fishing from all jetties, breakwaters and popular beaches will not be affected. It is only within the sanctuary zones of marine parks—which cover about 6 per cent of the entire state waters—that fishing will not be permitted.

We have chosen to take a responsible approach to implementing marine parks by phasing out fishing activities over two years. Trawling restrictions came into effect in late March this year, and the remainder of the changes come into effect in October 2014. This is a sensible approach to ensure that industry and the community have plenty of time to prepare for the changes.

It is important to mention that in the first half of 2013 the government undertook a broad community education campaign to help convey important information to the South Australian community about the new marine park arrangements. The education campaign was also very useful in correcting misinformation that had been circulated about marine parks. There is a greater variety of marine life in South Australian waters than in the Great Barrier Reef, and the state government recognises the importance of protecting and preserving these habitats for future generations.

Another key achievement has involved our natural resources. Following the launch of the State Natural Resources Management Plan South Australia 2012-2017 in June 2012, nine new natural resource centres have been opened across the state for the eight natural resources management regions. The centres form a network across South Australia to increase community involvement and access to advice and information about the management of natural resources in their local area. The centres are a hub for obtaining information on a range of issues, such as land, pest and water management, national parks, and accessing wildlife and environment services. They are essential to connecting community to the services that these regional boards provide.

In 2012-13 the South Australian government continued to support action to address climate change through the launch of 'Prospering in a Changing Climate: Climate change adaptation framework for South Australia' in August 2012. The key components of the framework are:

- regional planning for climate impacts and opportunities;
- coordination of state government processes, with a focus on working more closely with regions;
- establishing a statewide research agenda; and
- effectively engaging with the community by empowering regional leaders to communicate climate issues.

The South Australian Climate Change Adaptation Showcase was held on 14 March 2013 and featured a broad range of stakeholders involved in the implementation of the framework. Over 170 delegates from industry, universities, community organisations and state and local governments were in attendance. Delegates from the commonwealth, Western Australia, Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania also attended and were keen to hear about the outstanding leadership shown by South Australia in this field. The showcase demonstrated the close collaboration of regional leaders, academia, and state and local governments in tackling the impacts of climate change.

Just last week, this framework was awarded the Adaptation Champions Award at the National Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility's national conference in Sydney. This was a great recognition of what we are doing in this state. Also that night, Mr Brian Foster, a farmer from Eyre Peninsula who has firsthand experience in rural and regional adaptation to climate change, was awarded a national champion award for his work as an advocate. This is great recognition for an everyday South Australian who has become a leader in pressing government to act on the threat posed by climate change. These awards are examples of the great work that the government, together with community, is achieving in preparing the state for climate change.

Additionally, the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources undertakes important fire management activities across lands under my care and control as the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation. This includes land under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972, the Wilderness Protection Act 1992 and Crown Land Management Act 2009.

A number of fire management activities were delivered in 2012-13 as part of the \$23.1 million of funding over four years announced in June 2011 to help protect the state against the ongoing risk of bushfire. Comprehensive fire management plans developed by the department for public land are risk-based and provide the strategic direction for fire management activities necessary for mitigating the risk that bushfire poses to life, property and the environment.

Fourteen fire management plans have been adopted across the state, covering approximately 49 per cent of parks and reserves managed by the department. A further five fire management plans are being developed. These plans will cover the South Para area, the Mount Lofty Ranges, the Central Eyre Peninsula, the Northern Flinders Ranges, the Dudley Peninsula on Kangaroo Island and the Alinytjara Wilurara region in the Far North West of the state. The department has successfully gained funding through the federal Natural Disaster Resilience Program to develop the Phoenix bushfire simulation model for South Australia to assist with modelling fire spread, impacts and risks.

Another key highlight over the year includes the construction of the sand transfer infrastructure component of Adelaide's Living Beaches strategy. The South Australian government's Adelaide's Living Beaches: A Strategy for 2005-2025, is about keeping sand on Adelaide's beaches and reducing the amount of sand carting required. The sand transfer infrastructure project is a component of the Adelaide's Living Beaches strategy and will protect coastal properties and infrastructure and maintain the amenity of Adelaide's beaches. It has been designed to pump and distribute sand along some of the most popular sections of Adelaide's metropolitan coastline.

The system collects sand from locations along the northern reaches of the metropolitan coast where it accumulates and recycles it to areas along the central and southern metropolitan coast where there is a sand shortage. The construction of the sand transfer pipeline and pumping system facilitates sand management, causes less disruption for beach users and to the coastal environment, helps preserve beach amenity, and reduces the number of trucks on our beaches and beachside roads.

This year, the management and extent of the protected areas system in South Australia has been further enhanced, with amendment being made to the Wilderness Protection Act 1992 to provide for comanagement of wilderness protection areas and zones ahead of proclamation of the Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area on 6 June. The proclamation of the Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area, created using 900,000 hectares of land from the former Nullarbor National Park and a portion of the Nullarbor Regional Reserve, doubles to 1.8 million hectares the amount of land in South Australia that this government has given the state's highest level of protection. When Labor came to government in South Australia in 2002, just 70,000 hectares of South Australia had wilderness protection status.

The Nullarbor is an iconic South Australian landscape and has long been a popular tourist destination. The proclamation of the Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area guarantees that future generations of South Australians and visitors will be able to continue to enjoy it.

The government has continued to expand comanagement, with agreements under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972 being established over Lake Eyre National Park, Elliot Price Conservation Park and Wabma Kadarbu Mound Springs Conservation Park this year. The Aboriginal-owned Breakaways Conservation Park was created and co-management agreements were established with the Antakirinja Matu-Yankunytjatjara native title holders.

In addition, strategic management plans for Bimbowrie Conservation Park, Ediacara Conservation Park and five reserves of the Yellabinna region were adopted. Consultation on a draft management plan commenced for seven reserves on eastern Eyre Peninsula and work commenced on the preparation of the management plan for the Arkaroola Protection Area.

The government also purchased strategically important land at Hanson Bay to add to the Flinders Chase National Park to link conservation lands on the western end of Kangaroo Island. The land at Hanson Bay is an extraordinary piece of land that sits between two major parks: Flinders Chase National Park and Kelly Hill Conservation Park. This land presented a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to bridge a gap and create a continuous coastal conservation corridor for the south-western end of the island.

The CHAIR: Minister, you have had more than 10 minutes. Are you about to wind up?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Almost finished, Chair. There are a lot of wonderful things that this government can be proud of, and I am sure the committee would like to hear about it. The

purchased land is largely undisturbed intact Mallee and coastal heath vegetation that provides habitat for a range of threatened species, including the western whipbird, the rock parrot, the osprey and the white-bellied sea eagle. This was a significant strategic addition to the state's reserve system.

The government has also continued its investment in our national parks with the development of shared-use cycling tracks on 45 kilometres of existing park management tracks in Belair National Park and Cleland Conservation Park. In addition, a network of shared-use trails has been developed in Cleland Conservation Park and Sturt Gorge Recreation Park near Craighburn Farm.

The 2013-14 state budget papers reflect an operating budget allocation of \$190.946 million on a net cost-of-services basis for the department. This is to deliver a range of programs during the year for the sustainability, environment and conservation and water and the River Murray portfolios. The budget also reflects the ongoing commitment to meet savings measures already assigned and those announced as part of the 2012-13 Mid-Year Budget Review. The department will continue to contribute to the government's overall budget savings strategies.

Also, the departments 2013-14 investing program for the sustainability, environment and conservation portfolio includes \$1.072 million for fire management on public lands—enhanced capability, and \$1.1 million for the Heysen Trail—realignment and further development. As the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, I am also responsible for Biosecurity SA, a division of the Department of Primary Industries and Regions.

Biosecurity SA contributes to the effective management of South Australia's natural resources through the provision of weed and pest animal management expertise. Biosecurity SA works closely with the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, particularly with the eight natural resource regions, in providing coordination, technical and policy support.

Biosecurity SA has led the review of the declared plant list under the Natural Resources Management Act 2004. It has also engaged with natural resources management boards and the wider community on modernising the list of pest plants requiring control, a list which has not been reviewed since the early 1990s. Biosecurity SA has also led the development of a state strategic plan for buffel grass, an invasive African grass that threatens rangeland biodiversity and increases fire risk.

This government, through agencies like the Department for Environment, Water and Natural Resources, has continued to ensure the protection of our environment. Maintaining the health and productivity of natural resources will ensure the sustainable growth of the state's economy and population.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I give a special welcome to the people in the gallery who are watching today. Member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will start with some omnibus questions for the minister, who has a number of portfolio responsibilities.

1. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors above \$10,000 in 2012-13 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 in 2012-13, please provide the number of public servants that are (1) tenured and (2) on contract, and for each category provide a breakdown of the number of (1) executives and (2) non-executives?

3. In financial year 2012-13 for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on projects and programs was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2013-14?

4. Between 30 June 2012 and 30 June 2013, will the minister list the job title and total employment cost of each position (with a total estimated cost of \$100,000 or more)—(a) which has been abolished; and (b) which has been created?

5. For each year of the forward estimates, provide the name and the budget of all grant programs administered by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, and for 2012-13 provide a breakdown of expenditure on all grants administered by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister—listing the name of the grant recipient, the amount of the grant

and the purpose of the grants and whether the grant was subject to a grant agreement as required by Treasurer's Instruction No. 15?

6. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, what is the budget for targeted voluntary separation packages for financial years 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17?

7. What is the title and total employment cost of each individual staff member in the minister's office as at 31 May 2013 including all departmental employees seconded to ministerial offices and ministerial liaison officers?

I am happy for the minister to take those questions on notice. I seek clarification on one other point; that is, the minister mentioned biosecurity, which I think he said he was responsible for. That was a division of PIRSA that was dealt with by minister Gago yesterday. So, if in fact he has the legal status of the direct minister responsible for that section, rather than working in cooperation under minister Gago, then I would ask that biosecurity come into the questions I have just asked. If he is not and minister Gago is right and she is responsible for it, then I trust I will have the answers from her.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I believe the accepted custom is to take those omnibus questions on notice. In terms of biosecurity, I am responsible for some aspects of the management, but minister Gago is responsible for the overall running of biosecurity.

Ms CHAPMAN: I look forward to her responses on that aspect then. May I first move to the question of the total cost of expenditure for your department for the forthcoming year. Yesterday, minister Gago indicated that Treasury had provided her department with, as it apparently prepared for all departments, the total cost of carbon tax it has to meet in the forthcoming year. It was some \$200,000, she reported to the committee. What is the total cost of expenditure provided in the forthcoming budget for carbon tax for your department?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Chair, could I ask for some clarification from the member for Bragg? What budget paper is she referring to and what line?

Ms CHAPMAN: I am talking to the total expenditure of your department with respect to expenses that you are to meet. Your division starts at page 149 and your total expenditure, which is then subsequently broken down into subprograms, is covered on pages 153 to 154, and the specific expenses for the forthcoming year, your financial accounts as published under expenses, are detailed on page 184. I am asking you, with regard to that expenditure, whether there is any provision for carbon tax, and if so how much it is? On the basis of advice received by minister Gago yesterday, she has made provision for it in her department and she advised the committee that all of the divisions had been provided with an estimate of that, apparently from the Treasury office, so I am expecting that you have not been excluded.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: If I can just advise that I have not received advice from Treasury about provisions for carbon tax. I would have thought it would be provided out of our regular budgetary appropriation, but what we will do is undertake to take that question on notice and bring back a response for the member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: If you have not received advice, has your department prepared, in its budget of expenditure for the forthcoming year, an amount for carbon tax, and if not why not?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that our approach to this, pending further advice from Treasury perhaps, is that we would do all this as part of our normal business expenses and part of our cost of business. It is just a normal part of our everyday approach to business; it is just another component of our normal business procedures. It is nothing for which we would particularly make provision outside the everyday cost of running our business. We will seek out the advice that Treasury is supposed to have offered and come back with a response for the member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: I can only assume in that regard that the department obviously knows it has to pay it, and that whatever it is it will be met. As I understand it, you are saying that there has not been any specific amount as an estimate put in for this forthcoming 12 months expenditure?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am not quite sure the point the member for Bragg is trying to drive at. We would obviously pay any carbon costs through our electricity bills, as we would in the normal course of events; I am not sure whether there is another provision at which the member for Bragg is driving.

Ms CHAPMAN: I hazard a guess that your department would be paying it under the electricity costs, not just for your head office but also for the number of vehicles you use for

monitoring, and the like. You operate a number of parks. It would be quite substantial, I expect—a lot more than the Department of Primary Industries and Regions, which has a couple of boats that zip around and some vehicles. Otherwise there would be significant total electricity costs for your department, especially as you do not have Parks and Wildlife as a separate division.

In any event, if your department has not yet done that calculation, but you are saying that whatever it is you will pay it—I assume you will, because it is the law, at the moment anyway. I am not making a statement as to the efficacy of the tax or anything else—it is with us—but I make the point that for the forthcoming year, as the Department of Primary Industries and Regions has indicated that its estimate, on advice from Treasury, is about \$200,000, similarly, if you have not received that advice from Treasury yet, and have not investigated it in your own department for the purposes, I can only assume at this point that there is no provision in your budget for it.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The only provision we make is during the normal course of our business activities, whereby we would obviously make provision for the costs of running the business—electricity costs to which the carbon tax would be attached. I wonder whether the member for Bragg is confusing that perhaps—and she can correct me—with carbon offsets, which have been discussed in the past.

Ms CHAPMAN: No.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Prices that are impacted by the federal government's carbon tax would be dealt with in the normal course of our business. We pay for electricity that way, and the carbon tax is just part of that.

Ms CHAPMAN: I noted that you will take it on notice and I thank you for that. The first question I would like to ask is in relation to the proposed marine parks, which you have set out in your opening statement as being a reform in which your department takes some pride. My first question is in relation to the advertising budget for the promotion of the benefits of marine parks. What was the total amount spent on advertising and promotion in the 2012-13 year, and what budget is provided for the current financial year?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: As I said earlier, the marine parks management plans and zoning were finalised in November last year, and the public education campaign put in place to raise awareness about parks to explain how the zoning will work and how the parks can continue to be able to be enjoyed for recreation, including fishing, is an important part of our communication strategy. The purpose of the campaign, obviously, is to encourage people to be aware of the marine parks, why we have established them, how important they are and how people can still enjoy their everyday activities in those surroundings.

The campaign advertising points the community to sources of more information about parks, why they were established and how they can be enjoyed by people, and there is specially-designed information, including maps as part of the campaign to help recreational fishers understand how changes to zoning apply to recreational fishing. The budget for the entire education campaign, I am told, is \$1.18 million excluding GST with \$800,000 to be spent on advertising.

Other activities such as nonpaid media, brochures, the marine parks website, shopping centre information sessions and roadshows are also part of the campaign. I understand that the campaign has been well received by the community, with over 1,000 people liking the TV advertisement since it was posted on the Parks SA Facebook page, so honourable members who are up with technology and can access that on their flat things call pads might like to click the button and like it and increase our numbers. That is the advice on the total expenditure that I have before me.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, minister, and in relation to the advertising, I refer in particular to the promotion of recreational fishing with the aid of a young red-headed boy who is espousing the virtues of being able to fish, not unlike one of my nephews who is interested in fishing and is also a young redhead. With all the commitment the government has to protecting children from the sun, minister, why is it that you have an over \$100,000 advertising campaign featuring a boy with no hat going out in the sun fishing?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I thank the member for Bragg for giving me another opportunity to talk about our wonderful marine parks.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think even your chief of staff has a touch of the ginger, so I would have thought he would want to be closely watching this issue.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The member for Bragg is making an awful lot of assumptions in her questions and, as usual, the premises are often illogical or not well thought through. It may very well be that the young child was smothered in 30+ or 50+ sunscreen. It may very well be that they were depicting activities taken in winter or autumn when the sun is not quite so powerful. Indeed I would advise redheads always to use sunscreen, of course, as I do when I venture outdoors, but the honourable member makes a lot of assumptions about the TV advertising without actually having thought this process through, I think, in detail.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am sure that the Cancer Council will be very interested to hear your answer, minister—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Well, the member for Bragg might like to take that up in estimates with the Minister for Health, Madam Chair.

Ms CHAPMAN: —because I can tell you, whilst you might have had a positive response, that is a matter—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am happy to have a free-for-all on our marine parks. It is a fantastic initiative of this government, and—

Ms CHAPMAN: Excellent, I have some more questions for you.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: —we will be very pleased to take those up with the member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: Very good. I would suggest you put aside some provision of service for all the children who might have cancer in the future but, in any event, let's go to the marine parks. For the forthcoming financial year, what has been allocated for displaced effort?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The government has developed a three-year implementation plan for the parks and activities around the parks. Part of that is displaced effort management for commercial fishers. The overall displacement of commercial fishing as a result of the marine parks is estimated at 1.7 per cent of industry's gross value of production statewide, with some variation between different fishing sectors. This estimate is derived from a report prepared by the South Australian Research and Development Institute which took into account additional data supplied by the fishing industry, I am advised.

The government is currently preparing to undertake a voluntary catch effort reduction program to offset the displacement of commercial fishing. This program is being administered by the Department of Primary Industry and Regions SA and is due to be completed during 2013-14. The government will only proceed with compulsory acquisition, obviously, as provided under the Marine Parks Act 2007 should the voluntary program be unsuccessful in delivering the necessary reductions. I can advise that there is no provision in the budget of my department for that. That contingency, I think, has been allowed for under Treasury lines and therefore I will not be answering the question.

Ms CHAPMAN: But, minister, I did not ask about the buyback or the provision which has been dealt with yesterday in Primary Industries. I have asked about what funding you have allocated for displaced effort management. If you say 'none'—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I think I have just given the answer, and the honourable member would be aware, of course, that the amounts that have been allocated by Treasury, and held in Treasury I understand, are commercial-in-confidence and will not be released publicly.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am not asking about the buyback, I repeat that again. We have established that. I agree with you. I am asking generally about the displaced effort management and whether your department has allocated any funding to monitor that.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that the matter the honourable member is referring to is being managed by another agency, that being PIRSA.

Ms CHAPMAN: Okay. So, zero. And any funding for the—

The CHAIR: The government may wish to ask a question. Member for Ashford.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. My question refers to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, Program 1: Strategy, Science and Resource Monitoring, Sub-program 1.1: Natural Resources, Parks and Places—

Ms CHAPMAN: Page?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I beg your pardon; I'm about to say the page. I haven't even finished my question yet. Page 156. Will the Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation provide an update on the progress to date on the revised State Natural Resources Management Plan?

Ms CHAPMAN: I still can't find the volume of reference, Madam Chair. I am sorry, but can I just clarify that?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, Program 1: Strategy, Science and Resource Monitoring, Sub-program 1.1 on page 156.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: If it assists the committee, I think the honourable member is referring to the second dot point under Highlights on page 157 as well.

Ms CHAPMAN: On page 156 all I have got on that particular subject is 'reduced expenditure relating to the state Natural Resource Management (NRM) program'. Is that what it is?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: That is one reference, yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: Okay, and the other one is on page 157, minister?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I believe it is the second dot point under Highlights, if that is the question the honourable member is getting to.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes, that seems more like it, thank you.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order!

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It does, Madam Chair, continue over a number of pages. I would happily have picked it up from the first page reference.

Ms CHAPMAN: You could have given her the right page, minister.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Well, I think the honourable member came to the right page, but it does continue over a number of page references and I would have happily dealt with it using just the first page reference but, for added clarity, if that helps the committee, I am happy to assist. I do thank the honourable member for her question. Page 156 is one of my favourite pages, and I was hoping someone would pick that up, and 157 is even more enjoyable.

In accordance with section 74 of the Natural Resources Management Act 2004, the Natural Resources Management Council released the revised plan Our Place—Our Future State Natural Resources Management Plan South Australia 2012-2017 in June last year. The act establishes a policy and planning framework where the State Natural Resources Management Plan provides state level policy guidance for all regional natural resources management plans.

In 2012-13 the department provided \$700,000 in funding for the implementation of the plan and this is recognised as a key whole of government initiative in the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources Corporate Plan 2012-14.

The department and regional natural resources management boards have key roles in implementing the state plan. This is undertaken through the implementation of the strategies and activities identified in regional natural resources management plans which, of course, undergo a statutory review and amendment process every five years.

Two key actions arising from the State Natural Resources Management Plan that are the focus of work by the department are the development and implementation of the Natural Resources Management State and Condition reporting framework and the Guide to Natural Resources Management Business Improvement.

The Natural Resources Management State and Condition reporting framework was released in December 2012 for a one-year implementation trial. The framework will provide a repeatable, transparent process to report on the condition of our natural resources and to date the implementation trial has produced the first four State and Condition Report Cards which are aligned to the state NRM's plan, Guiding Targets. These trial report cards have been considered by the Natural Resources Management Council and are being delivered to each of the natural resources management regions for feedback and support.

The guide to natural resources management business improvement is a continuous improvement framework primarily for the business conducted under the Natural Resources

Management Act 2004. Pilot projects for the guide will be conducted during 2013-14 in conjunction with other agencies and regional natural resources management boards. These are important information and accountability measures and I am looking forward to hearing more of their implementation over the coming financial year and perhaps how they might be improved upon into the future.

Ms BEDFORD: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, Program 1, Sub-program 1.1: Natural Resources, Parks and Places. Just to be fair we will go to pages 156 and 157—maybe that is safer—and talk about Arkaroola. Now that Arkaroola has been protected through the Arkaroola Protection Act 2012, will the minister please outline the next steps in the management of the Arkaroola Protection Area?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I thank the member for Florey for this question. As members would be aware, the Arkaroola Protection Act 2012 was brought into operation on 26 April 2012. The purpose of the act is to establish the Arkaroola Protection Area to provide for the proper management of the area and to prohibit mining activities in this very special part of the state.

The act requires the development of a management plan to further the objects of the act. The management plan does not affect rights or liabilities. The act requires any person administering another act to act consistently with the management plan. The act sets out a detailed process for preparing the management plan.

It requires me, as the minister responsible to the act, to consult with persons or bodies who hold interests in or adjacent to the area prior to developing a draft plan. It also requires general public consultation on the draft plan before the plan is adopted. Those with an interest in or adjacent to the area are the native title holders, landowners, lessees, custodians and holders of mining tenements. The act also requires that I consult with an Aboriginal person or organisation if they have a particular interest in the area.

I am advised that the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources has established a steering committee to prepare the management plan. The steering committee comprises departmental staff and representatives of both the Arkaroola and Mount Freeling pastoral leases. The department will meet with the Adnyamathanha Traditional Lands Association later this year to brief the native title holders on the process and discuss their involvement in developing the plan.

As required under the act, I have written to those with an interest in or adjacent to the land to seek their views and a draft management plan will be prepared for public consultation within the next 12 months. That is my advice.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have a supplementary, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: If it is a supplementary, yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am sure you will be a fair judge of that. Is there any radioactive waste stored in the Arkaroola Protection Area or the adjacent vicinity—to use your description—and, if so, under this plan is it proposed that it will be moved and, if so, where to?

The CHAIR: I do not think that is a supplementary but I will allow it.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I thank the honourable member for her supplementary question and your leniency in allowing it, Madam Chair. I am advised that we are not aware of any notifiable waste stored on the area or adjacent to it. The honourable member may be referring to perhaps some mining waste left over by a previous mining operation. My advice is that that would just be ordinary earthen material that has been disturbed and that there has been no change in its form that we are aware of. However, if the honourable member has any information about that we would like to hear about it. If it is present and can be shown to be present, it will be part of our development of the draft plan.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is why I asked whether it is in the plan, but I am assuming, minister, that it is not because you are not aware of anything like that.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The advice we have is that it is nothing we need to be aware of; there is no notifiable waste. Of course, if we do find that there is or has been waste there, we could consider that as part of the draft plan, but it is not part of the draft plan at the moment because we have no knowledge of such waste.

Mr SIBBONS: I am going to refer to a different page from that infamous page we were just talking about. I refer the committee to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, Program 2: Operations and

Service Delivery, Sub-program 2.1—Regional Service Delivery, page 167. Will the minister outline what initiatives the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources has in place to facilitate Aboriginal employment?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I presume the honourable member is referring to the table which is at the top of page 167 and our FTEs at 30 June. The department's objectives are in line with South Australian Strategic Plan Target 53, which provides for increasing the participation of Aboriginal people in the South Australian public sector, spread across all classifications and agencies, to 2 per cent by 2014 and to attempt to maintain or better those levels through to 2020.

As at March 2013, the department has achieved 2.14 per cent Aboriginal employment, and I congratulate the officers within my department who helped get us to this point. However, we want to continue this trend, and the department has revised its Aboriginal employment strategy to include an action plan that contains key milestones to be achieved by 2015.

The action plan includes initiatives designed to retain and develop the department's existing Aboriginal employees, such as implementing Aboriginal networking conferencing to provide avenues for Aboriginal staff to participate in networking; to provide Aboriginal staff opportunities to engage a mentor from within or external to the department; to improve the skills and qualifications of Aboriginal staff, including building their leadership capabilities by promoting learning and developing opportunities to Aboriginal staff and encouraging their participation; to ensure that managers provide regular feedback to Aboriginal staff, both formal and informal, on their development options; and to enable opportunities to gain insight and understanding into Aboriginal perspectives and the link between their cultures and the way in which we deliver our business as an agency.

The action plan also provides for the development of Aboriginal cultural awareness training to promote an environment that welcomes, values and respects Aboriginal people. A cultural competency training program has also been developed. This training program is designed to educate line managers and human resource practitioners to improve their ability to attract, recruit, retain, manage and support Aboriginal staff. The department currently has one Indigenous cadet within Cleland Wildlife Park and is currently liaising with the universities to recruit additional cadets.

In addition, the department is working with the Environment Protection Authority to assist in increasing its Aboriginal employment by sourcing suitable cadets and providing support and advice to open up Aboriginal employment there. A key factor in achieving this rate has been partnerships and scholarship opportunities the department has established with tertiary institutions in order to provide improved career employment pathways within the department. These include:

- A partnership with Para West adult campus which sponsors Aboriginal students and enables them to undertake a Certificate II in Conservation and Land Management. It also provides these students with work experience at Para Wirra Recreation Park.
- A school-based traineeship proposal has been developed to recruit one Aboriginal student following their successful completion of the Para West adult campus conservation and land management program in 2012.
- The department itself will be offering two scholarships this year to final-year Aboriginal university students. The successful students will be provided with networking opportunities and will undertake work experience within the department.
- The Aboriginal groundwater scholarship, which was established in 2011 in partnership with Flinders University.

This program was not only designed to increase the number of Aboriginal people employed within the groundwater sector but also to help the sector to better understand the cultural significance of water to Aboriginal people and gain Aboriginal perspectives on sustainability. Two of the participants will be offered graduate placements within the department upon successful completion of their degree.

In addition, the public sector Aboriginal Employment Cluster, which is coordinated by the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, contains a number of representatives from each government agency. The committee is investigating ways to create long-term change across the public sector to support the sustainable employment and retention of Aboriginal people in government. The committee has proposed the development of a public sector pre-employment program that would provide 12 to 16 traineeship opportunities for Aboriginal jobseekers across the public sector.

Ms CHAPMAN: I look forward to meeting the new cadet in Cleland park, in my electorate, when I next visit. That is a good result.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: If the member for Bragg would like to bake the scones, I will bring the coffee and tea.

Ms CHAPMAN: We were very pleased to have the committee up there recently, in Cleland park, and we would be pleased to welcome the new cadet. Back to marine parks: how much money is allocated for funding the monitoring of the proposed marine parks and, in particular, the exclusion zones?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I will answer in some generality in the beginning, but then I will come back to a couple of specific comments about the question in relation to the term 'monitoring'. Management plans for South Australia's 19 marine parks were authorised on 29 November 2012, as I mentioned. The restrictions on fishing in sanctuary zones do not start until 1 October 2014. This gives existing fishers time to modify their current practices if needed. It also provides time for the government to establish a monitoring program to help measure the effectiveness of the marine parks management plans over time. That is one sense of 'monitoring'.

The government is required to review the management plans at least once in every 10 years. The results of the monitoring program will be critical to the review. South Australia's marine park monitoring program will measure the effectiveness of the management plans in delivering the predicted outcomes to inform adaptive management. It will include:

- linkages to relevant state, national and international monitoring, evaluation and reporting frameworks;
- set out targets and indicators linked to strategies and outcomes for monitoring, which include ecological, socioeconomic, environmental and management elements;
- monitor the delivery of education, research and governance mechanisms; and
- assess the effectiveness of compliance activities.

Experience interstate has clearly shown the importance of an effective marine park monitoring program. Marine parks monitoring will, for the most part, be undertaken by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources. However, partnerships will be developed with other interested parties to ensure monitoring activities are efficient and cost-effective and that resources are pooled wherever possible.

Prospective partners include the Environment Protection Authority, the South Australian Research and Development Institute, Marine Innovation Southern Australia, the commonwealth government, and various universities in South Australia and interstate. The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources is also working with the Conservation Council of South Australia to roll out a 'citizen science' program that will directly contribute to marine parks monitoring.

In August 2012 South Australia hosted a national marine protected area monitoring workshop to share knowledge and experience, and to find common approaches among the states' and commonwealth marine protected areas monitoring evaluation and reporting. The government is also taking advice from both the Marine Parks Council of South Australia and the Marine Parks Scientific Working Group on the design and implementation of South Australia's marine parks monitoring program.

Over the next three financial years the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources expects to invest up to \$2 million, or around one-third, of its marine park budget of \$6 million on monitoring and research activities associated with South Australia's marine parks. The contributions of other partners will significantly increase this investment. With combined investment over the next 10 years, we will be well positioned to report on the effectiveness of marine parks and management plans as part of the 10-year review. That is one aspect of the monitoring the honourable member may have been referring to in her question.

Ms CHAPMAN: Yes. I will come to the issue of assessment of compliance in a moment, if I may. In relation to the monitoring to determine the effectiveness and the evaluation, as I understand it, your agency is the lead agency on it. You are going to consult with various other bodies as to what model you adopt to ensure that that is the best modelling process, presumably, and you have allocated \$3 million over the next three years. What are the amounts per year that have been allocated of the \$3 million which is your contribution?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I will correct the honourable member. I said \$2 million in my statement. A third of the \$6 million has been allocated for marine parks.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, up to \$2 million. How much—I am presuming not much—in this forthcoming financial year and then in the next two, is that right, only because it is not supposed to be starting until October next year?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I assume there will be some expenditure whilst we are determining the profile of the model that will be utilised, but the great bulk of the expenditure we expect to be towards the end of the process.

Ms CHAPMAN: And if you do not have a breakdown before you, are you happy to take that on notice and provide me with each of the next forward estimates payments?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Certainly. If we have that advice, we will bring it back for the honourable member.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think you were going to go on to the assessment of the compliance effectiveness; and perhaps if you could outline whether your department is going to take a principal role in that or if that is going to be the department of fisheries or some other agency.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The member for Bragg is quite correct: any compliance efforts will be funded from the \$2 million allocation that I have mentioned but, predominantly, through a relationship with PIRSA and their fishing compliance officers. However, great emphasis will be placed on voluntary compliance and respect for the purpose of our sanctuary zones. We expect the education program will leverage great results in that regard, but we will be working closely with PIRSA in their normal day-to-day operations to leverage further value.

Ms CHAPMAN: So if they are going to be generally in charge of the compliance, are you satisfied that they have the adequate resources and funding to carry out that task over the forward estimates?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that PIRSA compliance efforts are funded for fisheries only, so we will be funding their extra efforts in relation to marine parks. As I said, we will rely on the expertise and work on synergies between our two departments to get greater value and leverage. Also, through the education program we will be running, we will seek voluntary compliance with the program.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can I have a breakdown of the amount that you have allocated from your budget over the forward estimates, first, as to how much you are going to pay PIRSA so you can utilise the benefits of their experienced fisheries officers and, secondly, how much you are going to spend on education of the population to, presumably, have some kind of sea watch voluntary education—a bit like a neighbourhood watch, I suppose, except on the water. Is that the idea? What are the two amounts that your department is going to expend over the forward estimates for that?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that we have not yet finalised that process with PIRSA. We will be working with them very closely over the next six months to work out how we will be allocating those resources and how that might shift over the time ahead of us. As I said in an earlier answer to a question from the member, obviously, we will be ramping up that expenditure over time. We are talking about profiling our model at the moment, and the bulk of the expenditure, we expect, will be in the latter stages of the forward estimates. Citizen science is another way that we will be engaging with the community about voluntary compliance and we have tried to make it an exciting way of engaging our community.

Ms CHAPMAN: Hence my question, minister, as to how much you have budgeted for to cover that. I appreciate that you are going to work out the model and negotiate the terms with minister Gago, etc., but all I am asking at this point is how much you have allocated over the forward estimates in each year, if you have it. If you do not, I am happy for you to take it on notice. However, a total at this point would be appreciated.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: As I said in an earlier answer, \$2 million a year over the forward estimates will be allocated to these functions.

Ms CHAPMAN: That includes the compliance?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Indeed.

Ms CHAPMAN: I might move to page 156, Sub-program 1.1: Natural Resources, Parks and Places. You have outlined a number of programs that you are going to pursue, but I note that

this subprogram is losing \$10 million from its \$35 million program and also reducing staff from 227 to 167 full-time equivalents. Can we have a list of all the programs that are (1) being cut and/or (2) being axed?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Whereabouts on page 156?

Ms CHAPMAN: Page 156, Sub-program 1.1: Natural Resources, Parks and Places, under FTEs.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: So the net cost of the subprogram?

Ms CHAPMAN: I will just find that for you. You will see at about point 3 on that page 'Net cost of sub-program', which is going from \$34 million or thereabouts down to \$25 million or thereabouts.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Yes, we have that. Member for Bragg, are you asking for further details to what is already listed under the financial commentary and the variances?

Ms CHAPMAN: I am specifically asking for a list of the programs that are going to be (1) cut and/or (2) axed.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I will just read from the statement on page 156. The general reductions there are listed in terms of various savings measures. The corresponding reduction, for example, in corporate services, is listed there as well, at \$3 million. There is various expenditure related to various programs funded from the department's administered items, \$0.8 million, and reduced expenditure relating to the state natural resource management programs, \$0.6 million. This is listing the savings targets.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is the amount, minister. However, I am asking you: what are the programs?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The programs are listed there.

Ms CHAPMAN: No, they are the areas from which various projects are going to have reduced expenditure. They do not actually tell us what the programs are. My question is: what are they? If you do not have it in front of you, I am happy for you to take it on notice. Simply identifying the division of your department that is going to be responsible for it does not actually give me any particularity of what they are.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It would not, of course, because we are talking about the program expenditure, not the project expenditure. If you are after the information on projects you would need to go to another heading. This is the program expenditure, giving—

Ms CHAPMAN: That is what I have asked you, programs, a list of all the programs that are, one, being cut, or, two—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: No; I am trying to correct the honourable member's terminology. The programs are listed here. You are asking for program expenditure and cuts, they are listed here at page 156. You are asking for a list of projects within those lines. That is what you are asking for, the details of the projects within those programs. So, the programs are here: NRM program, Adelaide Living Beaches—

Ms CHAPMAN: With respect, minister, can I clarify this? On page 156, in fact, there is a summary of what the expenditure is of this program, at the top, with the FTEs. What is underneath it is a financial commentary to explain to the reader why there are differences between various budget and actual lines, and that is very helpful, but it does not give me the detail of the projects or programs—I do not mind what you call them, but you know what I am talking about.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: You are asking for specific projects under those programs.

Ms CHAPMAN: Whatever. I will give you an example. I will go through some, if you like.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Please.

Ms CHAPMAN: NatureLinks to be cut and/or discontinued.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I can only explicitly take the member to page 156 and I will read what she needs to know, I think. There is reduced expenditure relating to corporate services, we have to reduce that overhead, and it lists there how much we intend to reduce it by: \$3 million. There is reduced expenditure relating to various projects funded from the department's administered items of \$0.8 million. There will be reduced expenditure relating to the state natural

resource management program of \$0.6 million, reduced expenditure relating to various minor externally funded projects of \$0.6 million, reduced expenditure relating to the Office of Sustainability and Climate Change of \$0.5 million, a one-off increase in expenditure relating to the Adelaide Living Beaches project in 2012-13 of \$0.5 million and reduced expenditure relating to targeted voluntary separation packages in 2012-13 of \$0.3 million.

This is how we intend to make our savings. These are the programs that are having those savings directed to them. Under the first dot point, reduced expenditure resulting from various departmental savings measures of \$3.5 million, there are approximately, I am advised, 60 to 70 project items that are being reduced to find those savings.

Ms CHAPMAN: Sorry; 60 to 70?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Yes; 60 to 70. The savings are largely going to be a function, I understand, of FTE reductions.

Ms CHAPMAN: When these good people go, which we have identified is going to be a significant number of them, because they have been undertaking their work in the department in respect of various projects then various projects will go, or parts of them will be diminished. That is why I am asking you, minister, whether the reduction in money and the reduction of people, which is what I have started with, and given that you have announced a number of new initiatives, presumably including development of the Hanson Bay area, etc., even opening a file or a new pamphlet base for it, there are certain projects to go.

I appreciate that under the \$3.1 million of departmental savings measures, that that is probably not project orientated, but a number of others would be. I am asking you to provide, on notice if you do not have it in front of you, a list of the projects as you have described them that will be cut and/or discontinued.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The answer I can give is essentially this: I need to correct the honourable member—I think she said \$3.1 million—\$3.5 million is the correct amount. Essentially we will be reducing the number of FTEs across the department; that is pretty clear. We will be doing, obviously, less policy work than we have done in the past, but we will be attempting to maintain the important work that the community expects the department to provide. We will attempt to maintain those services for which the community depends on us, and we need to understand that the priorities of the department and, of course, the directives from the government change every year. This is not an unusual situation, and there will be projects of short duration that will come and go, will be completed and will no longer be done into the future because that function would have been finished.

There is nothing unusual in this: projects come and go through the department at different times, sometimes because of commonwealth funding given to us for only a two or three-year program. That will be the continuing position, but the \$3.5 million will be funded largely through FTE savings equivalents. We will continue to attempt to maintain the work the department does and which the community expects of us.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am happy to accept that you will, as diligently as you can, continue the good services, together with allocating your personnel to the priorities the government set—I do not take issue with that. Are you saying to me that you will not even tell the committee what are the projects that will be discontinued or reduced at all, that you will not even take it on notice?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I just said that these programs change from time to time, according to government priorities. They have changed from time to time in the past and will change from time to time in the future. The question the honourable member asked is actually not a logical one, unless she is asking for every change that has happened to government project delivery over the last several years or into the future, and I cannot predict what will be the government's priorities in 12 or 18 months time, as our situation changes. It may be that we will have the benefit of some funding from the federal government and that we will start new programs and projects. These things are ephemeral and will be done within the existing resources of the department.

Ms CHAPMAN: How soon will the personnel go?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that we are attempting to finalise our voluntary separations as close as possible to the start of the financial year. We have managed to, I think, find half our voluntary separations before the financial year started, and we think the next several weeks will see a practical completion of those.

Ms CHAPMAN: How many park rangers do you employ now and how many do you expect to be employing as at 30 June 2014?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources currently employs 88 park rangers across the state. This figure includes the additional 20 park ranger positions that were created and funded as part of the state government election commitments in 2006. The number of park ranger positions, I am advised, has remained relatively stable despite the stringent savings targets that all state government departments have been required to meet over the last few years.

Park management activities have been refocused to deliver priority programs in those areas where we can make real differences. Park rangers provide additional support for fire management work including prescribed burns and bushfire response, nature conservation activities and support for volunteers and community groups. The state rangers are also supported to deliver park management activities by 44 seasonal fire crew staff, 38 full-time fire management staff, 35 construction and maintenance staff, and other state-funded staff such as regional ecologists.

As a result of the government's improvement agenda, an integrated environment, conservation and natural resources management workforce will result in a stronger focus on natural resource management and conservation management projects and programs across the entire landscape. This will complement the work that DEWNR undertakes as manager of the state parks and reserves and, as I said earlier, we run a graduate ranger program, which has been in place since 2006 and four new graduate rangers were recruited to the program in March 2013, is my advice.

Ms CHAPMAN: So the answer to my question is, how many have you—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Eighty-eight.

Ms CHAPMAN: How many have you budgeted to have, my question was—it was that long ago—on 30 June 2014?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that we have not yet finalised those details in the forward plan as it will impact on those classified strictly as rangers. However, of course, as I mentioned earlier, we will attempt to insulate front-line services as much as possible from our budget savings but there is likely to be a small reduction in terms of those rangers that I outlined earlier. We must remember, of course, that we have also had an increase in funding in 2013-14 in terms of firefighters, so the effort displaced, if you like, will not be greatly different.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, we might have fewer park rangers but you say that you will have more personnel and resources allocated to other tasks that they do.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: That is potentially the outcome, and we must also remember the augmentation that is going to be provided by other regional offices, other staff, that will enhance our capacity across those areas.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can I just clarify one other thing on parks, minister? Is it proposed in this financial year that you are going to have a new park logo and, if so, how much is budgeted for it?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that we will be continuing to maintain Sturt's desert pea as a logo for parks and, as such, there is no budgeted amount for change. We may evolve it into a funkier, sexier styled Sturt's desert pea perhaps to bring it into line with our times but I am sure there will only be minor changes.

Ms CHAPMAN: But apart from the floral enhancement of our current state floral emblem in the logo, are you saying there are no budgeted funds for a reprint, for example, of the new amended logo?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: There are no funds, I am advised, for changing our Sturt's desert pea logo for parks.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: As the minister would know, I have been on the Natural Resources Committee of parliament for seven years, and one of the things that has, I think, dominated the concerns of the members is the issue of weeds and pests. I refer the committee to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, Program 1: Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Sub-program 1.6: Biosecurity, statement pages 134, 135 and 136. Noting our committee's recent trip to the northern part of the AW APY lands, we were very concerned hearing about weeds of national significance.

I think most of us in parliament are across the issues to do with branched broomrape, and also *Caulerpa taxifolia*. For some of us who have been in parliament a bit longer, and I know the

member for MacKillop will understand what I am saying, the issue of buffel grass was of real concern. So, minister, I would like you to comment on what the government is doing with regard to weeds of national significance, and also whether we can get buffel grass on the weed list, because I do not think it is at the moment.

Ms CHAPMAN: Can I just clarify for the purpose of the committee questioning, Madam Chair, because this agency is under Primary Industries and Regions, and I have no problem—I am interested to hear the answer actually—but just for the purposes of this exercise can I clarify that this section is now open that the minister is being asked questions on.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Actually my understanding is that I have control of, if you like, vertebrates and weed pest species, not fish—that comes under Biosecurity and PIRSA—but I can give an answer to the honourable member, and no-one would be surprised about that. In fact, I might say that I will have something further to say about buffel grass later on.

Ms CHAPMAN: Hopefully the eradication of it.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I thank the honourable member for her question. The eradication of buffel grass is probably a hopeless aspiration—

Ms CHAPMAN: Wishful thinking, minister.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: —but control is what we need to do. The government is a strong supporter of the Weeds of National Significance program and is firmly committed to working with industries and all regional communities to reduce the impact of these weeds. Since 2009 the state government has spent more than \$700,000 on combating key infestations of weeds of national significance. These include boneseed control in the South-East, bridal creeper management in the Adelaide Hills and Mid North and invasive cacti control in the Rangelands and Mallee. Significant progress has been made to destroy small, isolated infestations, prevent the spread of large established infestations and to release biological control agents when they are available.

Biosecurity SA hosts two national coordinators, one for the agricultural weed silverleaf nightshade and a second coordinator for opuntoid cacti, a group of invasive cacti species which includes wheel cactus, I am advised. These coordinators provide support to natural resources management regions, community groups and individuals through technical advice and the identification of potential funding sources. Biosecurity SA has managed the development of national strategic plans for silverleaf nightshade and opuntoid cacti. This has included engagement with natural resource management boards and other stakeholders to identify current distribution, management priorities and information gaps. The national strategic plans provide information on:

- direction on eradication (if possible) and infestation targets;
- high priority targets at risk from these weeds; and
- the need for further research and best practice management tools, such as identification materials and control guidelines.

South Australia has also contributed to strategic plans for other weeds of national significance which will lead to better management of species such as African boxthorn, asparagus weeds and aquatic weeds, such as water hyacinths and sagittaria.

I am advised that in April 2012, 12 new weeds of national significance were announced and the government has responded by proposing to declare all of these weeds under the Natural Resources Management Act 2004 where they were not already declared. Public comment was sought from October to December 2012 on draft policies for flax leaf broom, cat's claw creeper, asparagus fern and Madeira vine.

Pending endorsement from the natural resources management boards and the Natural Resources Management Council, it is likely that these weeds will be declared later this year. I can also advise that draft policies for bellyache bush, gamba grass, a group of asparagus weeds and fireweed will also be released for public consultation later this year. In terms of buffel grass, there will be something that I will have to say on that later this week.

Mr TRELOAR: Minister, I take you to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 157 under Highlights. In the second to last dot point it talks about the enhanced management and extent of the protected area system in South Australia. Can I ask you about the funding and expenditure available for the control of vertebrate pests within those protected and wilderness areas? I refer particularly to camels, for example, in the Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area. There are many

other feral animals, as you know, such as pigs, goats, deer, etc. Is the expenditure of that funding providing effective management or even eradication?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I will make some general comments in relation to pest control whilst we are looking for an answer to the member's question about cost. I am told that feral camels are a pest animal of national significance and that they have a significant impact upon biodiversity. There are a number of animal controls, some at a significant geographical level, some at a species-led level and then we come down to the controls that are exercised at park boundary level, so it is very large scale, species scale and then localised to geographic area—smaller geographic area scale usually.

The camel situation impacts especially upon biodiversity and Aboriginal cultural sites in particular, but also precious water resources in the arid lands, and infrastructure can be damaged by camels as well. There has been a four-year program funded from the commonwealth government of about \$19 million. We are in the fourth year now of that program. This comes from Caring for Our Country funds from the Australian Feral Camel Management Project.

In addition to commonwealth funding, the South Australian, Western Australian, the Northern Territory and the Queensland state governments are also providing funding. The South Australian government has invested \$2.3 million, I am advised, through the state NRM program into the project in the four years since 2009-10.

The aim of the project is to reduce the number of camels in key areas, ensuring that critical environmental and cultural assets are protected into the future. The camel management program is delivered in South Australia through Biosecurity SA. The project is a collaboration between the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources and various affected landholders in the rangelands, particularly Aboriginal communities.

Current removal activities focus on aerial culling and mustering for sale and slaughter. I am told that strict animal welfare guidelines are applied at all times to ensure that feral camels are humanely removed—as humanely as possible. I am advised that to date approximately 16,000 feral camels have been removed from South Australia, with around half being removed via mustering and half via the aerial culling approach.

National priority regions for feral camel removal in South Australia are the APY lands located in South Australia's north-west and the Simpson Desert region in the state's north. The success of the camel removal program in the APY lands is highly dependent upon maintaining the strong working relationships that exists between departmental staff and the APY Executive. This is critical as this region has the greatest density of camels in the state. I am advised that a formal agreement with the APY Executive for removal of camels by mustering and transport to abattoir for slaughter is currently in place. I am told that, under this agreement, over 7,000 animals have been removed from the APY lands in the past 12 months. The government is committed to continuing to work with the APY Executive to build upon this initial success.

I am advised also that the APY Executive met in May and agreed to the Department of Primary Industries and Regions South Australia undertaking consultation with local communities on the APY lands. This is a very positive step towards further reductions in camel numbers across the state. I am advised that aerial surveys conducted in March and April of this year identified that camel numbers have been substantially reduced in the South Australian portion of the Simpson Desert and are well below targets set for that part of the state.

I am also advised that there are a number of introduced animals and plant pests which are not currently established in South Australia but which are identified as having the potential to cause significant damage to the state's agriculture and environment. Biosecurity SA has been raising community awareness to foster the early detection of these alert pests in the state. I understand that all alert pests are declared under the National Resources Management Act 2004 in recognition of their serious threat to South Australia.

I am advised that a small number of alert pests have already been found within the state but these pests have been managed and no longer pose an immediate threat. Examples of such pests include the Indian myna bird and the water hyacinth. Prevention, of course, and early intervention are the most cost-effective investments in biosecurity, including for pest animals and weeds. Once a pest animal has become well established, eradication is rarely feasible; member for Bragg, I bring you back to the buffel grass situation. Ongoing management of these pests to prevent their spreading across the state is resource intensive and quite expensive and, as such, it is important that positive steps are taken to ensure that these pests are detected before they can become established.

I am advised that pest surveillance is routinely undertaken by the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources across the state and that Biosecurity SA has also created a national pest hotline, which industry and community groups can use to report sightings of pest plants and animals in the state. Biosecurity SA is also working with the Australian Invasive Animals Cooperative Research Centre and other research organisations to analyse pathways for the introduction of alert pests. Targeted communication and engagement with stakeholders, media and the community has been undertaken to promote the risk posed by alert pests. It is hoped that this will encourage industry and community groups to report new incursions of alert pests as and when they arise.

The CHAIR: Minister, can I ask you a supplementary on that?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Yes.

The CHAIR: There was an overseas businessman who was interested in harvesting camels and setting up an abattoir and set up hopes in a couple of communities. However, he was concerned at the problems we presented to him. Have you any idea whether that has progressed at all? Is there anyone privately looking at harvesting camels?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am not aware of the operation you are referring to, Chair. I do understand that there are some very significant complications with camels. You cannot transport male and female camels together; you cannot transport juvenile or young camels with older, larger (particularly male) camels—they will kill them. So, there are a number of problems.

When you muster a herd of camels, of course, you have to segregate the young camels from the male and female camels and then transport that segment. And what do you do with the camels you have mustered? Do you have to let them go or do you shoot them? So, there are complexities involved in sending camels to abattoir. My understanding is that there is a business organisation from Qatar that is currently looking at the situation and, if they can make a business case for it, we will be very pleased to support them.

The CHAIR: Thank you. Minister, never be afraid of culling feral animals. Cull them; our environment is so fragile. It is now time for us to move on to the next section of the estimates, which will be the EPA and Zero Waste.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Your advice is always welcome, Madam Chair.

Membership:

Mr Pederick substituted for Mr Williams.

Mrs Geraghty substituted for Ms Bedford.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr C. Gemmell, Chief Executive, Environment Protection Authority.

Mr T. Circelli, Deputy Chief Executive, Environment Protection Authority.

Mr. R. Jacka, Chief Financial Officer, Strategy and Sustainability, Environment Protection Authority.

Mr. A. Wood, Executive Director Operations, Environment Protection Authority.

Mr P. Dolan, Operations Director Science, Environment Protection Authority.

Mr G. Palmer, Manager, Radiation Protection Branch, Environment Protection Authority.

Ms H. Hershman, Ministerial Adviser.

Mr T. Mooney, Chief of Staff.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The Environment Protection Authority is South Australia's leading environmental regulator, responsible for the protection of air and water quality, and the control of pollution, waste, noise and radiation. The EPA's vision is 'A better environment—protected for all South Australians', and this is supported by its strategic priorities:

- robust regulation, through which the EPA will employ best practice to support the willing, tackle the important issues, withstand challenges, and be decisive and timely in taking strong enforcement action when needed;
- sound science, to ensure that the EPA's actions and decisions are appropriate and scientifically based;
- strategic influence in partnership, by which the EPA will create effective partnerships and influence good environmental outcomes;
- genuine engagement, to ensure that the EPA is accessible, transparent and respectful through listening, acknowledging, considering and responding to the voices of those who have an interest in its actions; and
- adaptive organisation, so that the organisation is well run and high performing through making the best use of the resources available to it.

I am told that the EPA held its annual round table on 24 May this year, the focus of which was to discuss the key environmental challenges that the EPA and South Australia face in the short and medium term. Expert stakeholders were invited to the event to engage in a conversation about the priority areas within these challenges, and the tools and approaches that the EPA could consider to effectively and efficiently address them.

This year also saw the release of the new Communications and Engagement Framework for the EPA, to reflect its commitment to high-quality engagement, which was launched at the round table. This framework, which was guided by feedback from the 2012 round table, aligns strongly with the principles committed to by the state government in seeking to create an ongoing dialogue between the EPA, the government and the community.

As a result of concerns expressed by residents in the vicinity of the Waterloo wind farm in the Clare Valley, the EPA initiated an independent noise study at the wind farm over two months from mid-April this year. The noise study included monitoring at six houses, combined with a broader community diary component, for which approximately 60 participants volunteered and 15 diaries were provided to the EPA.

Audible noise and infrasound was monitored and weather information gathered by the EPA during the study to capture as much relevant data as possible to assist with analysis, and I am advised that 1.1 terabytes of data has been collected, which can now go on to be analysed. The study also included volunteer diary respondents who provided weekly summaries to the EPA, including descriptions of any noise events with supplementary information on other factors such as the weather and other impacts that they might perceive. The collection and assessment of this information will assist the EPA to gain an understanding as to whether there is any physical basis for the specific noise characteristics that have been described by members of the community.

The EPA has remained in communication with the community and wider public during the study and will provide summaries of information on its website and make detailed data available on request to those who wish to undertake their own analysis. A final report will be published on the EPA's website, projected for August or September of this year.

In June 2013, the EPA established South Australia's first groundwater prohibition area under the Environment Protection Act 1993 in the Allenby Gardens-Flinders Park region, which demonstrated all of the strategic priorities the EPA has adopted. This proposal is the first time the EPA has initiated such an action and was undertaken as a result of the EPA reviewing detailed knowledge of both on-site and off-site groundwater contamination and concluding that the contamination requires ongoing management in the form of a water prohibition area. Restricting access to the groundwater will ensure the risk of exposure to the contaminants is addressed and will also assist with minimising impacts on the plume itself by minimising the plume's movements.

The year 2012-13 saw the continued implementation of the obligations for resource recovery of waste under the Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010, which commenced operation on 1 September 2010. The objective of this policy is to achieve sustainable waste management and ecologically sustainable development in South Australia and to further the objectives of South Australia's waste strategy.

The EPA, together with Zero Waste SA, has been implementing, and continues to implement, a range of actions to support the Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy. This includes guidance on the requirements for resource recovery facilities—

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Chair, as interesting as this is, we are 10 minutes into a 30-minute provision for this area. I would ask that we ask some questions.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Madam Chair, it is an important area of our work as government and I think it is very important that we give an indication of the work that we have done over the last year.

The CHAIR: Minister, I would ask you to wind up as quickly as you can.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Thank you, Madam Chair. The honourable member was offered a reduction in time for this and she rejected it, and so I will continue—

Ms CHAPMAN: Is this the payback? Are you just going to talk it out?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I will continue putting on the record the very important work this agency does.

Ms CHAPMAN: Madam Chair, can I just clarify this? I thought you indicated a 10-minute opening. The minister is obviously going to do it in every division. We are now at 12 minutes past 12.

The CHAIR: Yes. We did not start until late. I will give the minister another three or four minutes and then ask him to wind up. Minister, you have four minutes.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I will take your very strong hint to wind up. The next stage, to be implemented in September 2012, saw the requirement for metropolitan waste, with the exception of municipal solid kerbside waste, be subjected to resource recovery processes. Televisions, computers and their peripherals, along with fluorescent lighting produced in metropolitan Adelaide, were also banned from 1 September 2012. These bans are scheduled to extend to the rest of the state on 1 September 2013. This will significantly enhance the diversion of waste from landfill in South Australia.

To assist with the diversion of waste from landfill, the 2013-14 budget has proposed to increase the solid waste depot levy by \$5 per annum over the next four financial years. This starts with an increase on 1 July to \$47 per tonne (up from \$42 per tonne) for waste disposed in metropolitan Adelaide and \$23.50 per tonne (up from \$21 per tonne) for waste disposed outside of metropolitan Adelaide. The increase in these levies will help fund the EPA to ensure its important front-line environment protection and regulatory services are maintained.

The liquid waste levy is significantly lower in comparison to other states. The current liquid waste levy is \$66 per tonne in New South Wales and \$30 to \$250 per tonne in Victoria. There is also a very strong argument that we should be consistent, one state to the next, in terms of setting our waste levies.

The funds collected through the levy are used, in part, to support programs such as waste minimisation, resource recovery and KESAB litter strategies. It is also used to support the Environment Protection Authority in administering the Environment Protection Act 1993, including licensing, waste tracking and compliance.

It is important to add that, during 2012-13, the EPA has been the subject of parliamentary inquiries by both the Statutory Authorities Review Committee (which undertook a very rigorous review of the EPA, with particular emphasis on the management of site contamination) and the Environment, Resources and Development Committee (which inquired into the EPA's Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010 and the standard for the production and use of waste-derived fill). It is pleasing to note the recommendations from these inquiries focused more on minor operational issues, as opposed to the need for any large scale or strategic changes. A healthy environment that is well protected through sound decision-making and planning, strong, consistent regulation and well-managed remediation of legacy pollution will provide for a strong foundation that will assist sustainable economic development.

The CHAIR: Member for Bragg, do you have some questions?

Ms CHAPMAN: I certainly do. I thank members of the EPA division for their attendance today. I do not think any of them are wearing blue ties, minister, so you are behind the times in what is politically correct. It is disappointing to see, as you have been the acting minister for the status of women this year, that we do not have any women at a high level in this department.

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: Thankfully he was the acting minister for women for only a week or so. In any event, I refer to page 138, which is the division's program 1. Also, in the Budget Measures Statement, which I am sure you have read with interest, there is provision for this department at pages 52 and 53. There is a statement that the levy rates will need to be increased to align with interstate levies. Assuming that that is not just a catch-up with what other states are charging people but that there is some alignment requirement, can the minister explain what evidence there is that transport of waste across South Australian borders is occurring? If it does occur, what difference in levies does there need to be before there is a realistic chance that cross-border waste transport occurs?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I will attempt to give the honourable member a concise answer. The solid waste levy is lower in comparison to some other states. The current waste levy is \$95 per tonne in Sydney, I am advised, and \$53.20 per tonne in Melbourne, and the levy is scheduled to rise further in both New South Wales and Victoria, with the levy in Melbourne scheduled to reach \$58.50 per tonne by 2014-15. I have mentioned the significant lower liquid waste levy—I will not go there again.

There is very strong argument, as the member for Bragg indicated, that the waste levies should be consistent from one state to the next, particularly if they are adjacent states. If South Australia had lower waste levy fees, it could provide an incentive for those within the waste industry to bring their waste from interstate to deposit it here. This is a concern for Queensland, I am advised, which has recently removed its waste levy.

I am advised by my advisers that this dumping across the border is an issue for New South Wales. They have this information from conversations with their counterparts in the New South Wales EPA. I am further advised that there have been media reports in New South Wales about this problem. We obviously do not want to encourage the problem of waste being dumped across the Victorian border into South Australia, so it is important that our levies are commensurate, although I believe we will be setting ours at a slightly lower level than they have in Victoria.

Ms CHAPMAN: So I take it there is no evidence of it happening in South Australia but that this is like a pre-emptive strike, minister: you are going to increase the levies just in case someone comes up with that bright idea.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: We know that there is a problem of exactly this dimension between New South Wales and Queensland; we want to prevent it from happening here.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am still at page 138. As the minister is aware, the allocation to the Waste to Resources Fund is hypothecated. The revenue collected has now increased the balance of unspent funds in the Waste to Resources Fund to approximately \$47.7 million, increasing to \$59.8 million by the end of the 2012-13 financial year, which presumably was Sunday. Can the minister outline how it is proposed to use these funds and is there a program for the long or short term? What consultation has taken place with local government and the waste industry for this expenditure, if any?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Madam Chair, I wonder if the honourable member for Bragg would like to delay the answer to that until we get onto the Zero Waste part of the examination. I understand that I have an answer for her in that segment.

Ms CHAPMAN: I will look forward to receiving it in 11 minutes. The EPA online public register, this is at page 140, Highlights, is designed to 'enhance and improve accessibility', is that online public register fully up and running? Does the register show 'development authorisation referrals' and if not can the minister please explain what has been budgeted to complete this work?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that we currently have in place a manual system. We are updating that to an automatic process. A sum of \$2.5 million has been budgeted in previous budgets to deliver this system. I am advised that it is nearing completion, and this may be aspirational but I am advised that completion date should be about six months away in this current financial year. The information available now on the public system, and that will be available on the new internet system, includes information on enforcement issues, licensing issues, groundwater notification issues and site contamination issues.

Ms CHAPMAN: Just one other question and then I think my colleagues also have some questions. One of the roles of the EPA is 'development of options and assessment of proposals for radioactive waste management'. What advice has the EPA provided for the long-term management of South Australia's nuclear/radioactive waste, and is any report it has prepared on it available publicly?

The CHAIR: While we are waiting for the minister's response, I would like to recognise that we have in the gallery Mike Stewart from Hastings in the UK, who is a guest of the member for Florey. He is from the Rotary Club in Hastings. Hastings, of course, is where our Muriel Matters spent much of her time. Welcome. Minister?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I will invite Mr Graeme Palmer to give a response to the honourable member on that part of the question.

Mr PALMER: I am the manager of the Radiation Protection Branch in the Environment Protection Authority. Several years ago, in 2003, we did a comprehensive review of the radioactive waste in South Australia. Since then, in 2005, we did a feasibility study of the state establishing its own store and repository. The estimates of the cost of that at that time was about \$1 million to actually establish a store and repository in South Australia, and it was proposed by the government at that time that the repository and store would be in the Woomera area. Since then the EPA had proposed that we would do a further feasibility study of identifying a particular site in that area, but since then, while we cannot necessarily rely on the commonwealth to provide the solution, there has been significant advancement by the commonwealth in passing legislation to establish a store and repository.

Given the small amount of radioactive waste that South Australia actually owns, it would be prohibitive for the state, as now the cost might be several million dollars to establish a store and repository. So the EPA is keeping an ongoing audit of our radioactive waste. In the last couple of years the owners of waste, the Royal Adelaide Hospital and the university, have disposed of significant activities in a therapy source and some scientific sources that have been taken by ANSTO to be reused or stored there for the time being, and they no longer belong to the state.

The actual inventory of radioactive waste in South Australia is quite small, tiny in comparison with the commonwealth's waste, and the commonwealth is now more open to accepting the waste in the national store and repository. For the time being we are managing the storage of radioactive waste. Most of the waste that is quoted as being at 78-odd sites in South Australia includes places like hospitals and nuclear medicine departments, and that waste is stored for a short period of time until it is disposed of as being no longer radioactive.

Really, South Australia does not have an issue with the amount of radioactive waste we have; it is more a commonwealth issue of trying to establish the national stores and repositories, but we are keeping tabs on the amount of radioactive waste. We are also facilitating industry on pathways to dispose of waste. A lot of sources that become classified as waste are reusable, can be encapsulated and used elsewhere. Wherever possible we are advising the owners of waste, if they have issues, of a means of disposing of them appropriately, but in a lot of cases small amounts of waste need to be stored until a permanent solution is established.

Ms CHAPMAN: Do I take from that, minister, that the announcement by the Rann government that it would have a dedicated repository for waste has now been abandoned?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I think we can take it from the information you have that it has been superseded by the proposal for the commonwealth to run a national waste repository, given that we have so little and given that an amount of our hospital waste would be tritiated hydrogen.

Mr PALMER: There is tritium and carbon-14, which is very low radio toxicity. The majority of the waste used in nuclear medicine departments are like iodine for therapy treatment and other very short half-life radionuclides.

Ms CHAPMAN: Sure, just that at some stage there was announcement that there would be a federal repository. I think Senator Minchin was in charge of that at the time. The previous government, under premier Rann, announced, 'No, no, that's not good enough, we have to have our own,' and 10 years later we are still waiting. So, I am pleased with Mr Palmer's advice to the committee—thank you very much for that.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: And, of course, the other thing to understand with radioactive isotopes, with a short half-life they very rapidly become non-radioactive, and therefore do not need to be part of this long-term process.

Ms CHAPMAN: You could let Mike Rann know that.

Mr PEDERICK: I refer to page 7 of the budget speech: 'to ensure we continue to protect our environment, the budget delivers \$5.9 million over four years to the EPA'. I also refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 140, dot point 4 under Targets, which is 'Establish and implement the

inaugural EPA 2013-14 Compliance Plan'. I say this in regard to shacks along the River Murray. I know that I brought an example to the minister's attention a couple of months ago.

The EPA seems to employ the precautionary principle with regard to people being able to rebuild shacks on exactly the same site where they have holding tanks for their waste, but the EPA flatly says, 'No, we don't trust you; you might put a hole in your tank and the muck or sludge or waste might go straight into the river.' Will the EPA be using more of a compliance regime so that people can build decent dwellings on these sites, or will it still be the precautionary principle? I would have thought that they would have been able to employ some compliance officers with the extra \$5.9 million.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Can I just ask the honourable member: is he referring to freehold shack sites or those that are on perpetual leases?

Mr PEDERICK: Freehold shack sites and also if you can give me an indication of what would happen with perpetual leases as well, in regard to the fact that on some of these sites it has been near on impossible, for reasons of logistics and expense, to put in community wastewater management schemes.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that the approach taken by the EPA is actually a risk-based approach. When we are talking about compliance with measures, it is to prevent further risk to the river. It is preventing risk of leakage into the river, be it from either a point source or more diffuse sources. It is not about blaming anybody in particular; it is actually about preventing pollution to our important River Murray. I am also advised that the inaugural compliance plan, which talks about key point sources or diffuse sources of pollution, has just been posted on the website last Friday.

We must remember that in regard to shacks, it was a former government in the nineties, I believe, that made a decision about shacks to be freeholded and shacks to be given perpetual leases which would expire on the death of the lessee. We are doing nothing different, as a government, from what the former Liberal governments have done in following this policy position.

Mr PEDERICK: Minister, are you saying nothing will change? Even though the EPA has more funding, there will not be physical inspections made so that people can attempt to do the right thing?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I did not say anything of the sort. What I am saying is that we will be continuing to use our expenditure authority to maintain the health of the river, guiding communities in how they can appropriately deal with wastewater management.

The CHAIR: We are supposed to be moving on to Zero Waste. Do you want to go on to Zero Waste or do you want to ask a question?

Mr TRELOAR: EPA.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am happy to take it.

Mr TRELOAR: I was hoping to get this question into the previous session but I think I can relate it to a budget line here—page 139, dot point 2: licensing, inspecting and auditing activities. My office and many other offices particularly in regional areas have received letters from individuals and councils concerned about the way in which vegetation is managed underneath powerlines. What efforts does the minister's department make to ensure that pruning of vegetation is carried out in an environmentally acceptable and amenable fashion? It seems to be that that is not occurring at the moment.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that this is pretty strictly a DEWNR issue. Will the honourable member be here after 2 o'clock?

Mr TRELOAR: Yes.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: We might be able to get to that question then. I know that is a different part but we could be flexible and come back to that one if he likes. DEWNR will be back at 2 o'clock.

The CHAIR: We will move on now to Zero Waste.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have a question on EPA.

The CHAIR: You have a question on EPA? It is up to you.

Ms CHAPMAN: Interstate—in Victoria—the way the equivalent EPA deals with stockpiled treated pine posts is to permit them to be chipped and then used for, presumably, land cover in some way. Apparently that is not available in South Australia. As you would have observed in going to the Riverland, there are stockpiles of these. In fact, as shadow minister for emergency services, I know there are a fair few fires that people are called out to, to have to deal with the fact that these suddenly go up in flames overnight, given the cost, no doubt, of disposing of them. It is back to the old question, that if you make laws too harsh, you make good people into criminals.

My question is this: is there any provision in the forthcoming year for the review of this policy which does not allow for, in South Australia, the chipping of the treated posts (we are talking about pine posts as distinct from creosol posts) which apparently need to be replaced most often as a result of machinery cutting fruit on blocks? What is the situation?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Madam Chair, we might be able to finish with some good news for the honourable member for Bragg. Whilst we lead the nation and, in some aspects, parts of the world in terms of our EPA policy, we are always pleased to look at instances where other states do it differently. Where they can show evidence that they have a safe disposal manner for some stockpiles of certain types of material, we will always look at that and perhaps introduce it into our own policy. I am advised that we are currently reviewing our waste management policies right at this minute and over the coming 12 months we will look at the evidence from Victoria to see if we can take a more risk-based approach to the issue the honourable member raises.

Ms CHAPMAN: Excellent, thank you. I have one other question on the EPA. Has the EPA determined if there is a significant contamination—

An honourable member interjecting:

Ms CHAPMAN: They all cover the waste levy. Has the EPA determined if there is a significant contamination emanating from the dumping in the Keast Road quarry?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: We have no advice about the Keast Road quarry in terms of contamination and we are happy to take it on notice and come back to you.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you. May I have now an answer under the new section to my question that I asked that you said would be answered in this section?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The question was?

Ms CHAPMAN: As the minister is aware, the allocation of the Waste to Resources Fund is hypothecated. The revenue collected has now increased the balance of unspent funds in the Waste to Resources Fund to approximately \$47.7 million, increasing to \$59.98 million by the end of the 2012-13 year. Can the minister outline how it is proposed to use these funds? Is there a program for the long or short term and, if so, what consultation has taken place with local government and the waste industry for this expenditure?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Madam Chair, I will give an answer to that question now, but I will be bringing forward my Zero Waste advisers in the process of that happening, if that is acceptable to the committee.

The Zero Waste SA Act 2004 establishes a dedicated fund—the Waste to Resources Fund. Zero Waste SA uses this fund to achieve its objectives set out in South Australia's Waste Strategy 2011-15. The fund is made up of 50 per cent of the levy paid by waste depot licence holders under section 113 of the Environment Protection Act 1993. The Zero Waste SA Act 2004 ensures that the Waste to Resources Fund can only be used for purposes pursuant to the act—an action through a business plan approved by me as Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation. Where revenue exceeds expenditure authority in the budget year, these funds are held in the Waste to Resources Fund for access in future budget years. Moneys in the Waste to Resources Fund attract monthly interest which is also deposited in the Waste to Resources Fund.

From 2003 to May 2013, Zero Waste SA has spent approximately \$72.7 million of waste levy funds into programs and projects that have stimulated councils, businesses and the community to reduce, recover, re-use and recycle, thereby cutting the amount of waste going directly to landfill. Expenditure authority to apply moneys in the Waste to Resources Fund is approved in the annual state budget.

Everyone in the community benefits from this reinvestment of the waste levy through access to new or improved household kerbside recycling services, creation of jobs to construct,

operate and maintain new and expanded reprocessing and sorting facilities throughout the state, and industry-focused programs resulting in less waste produced and reduced operating costs.

Zero Waste SA Treasury approved expenditure for the financial years 2013-14 and 2014-15 is \$17.6 million. While any future expenditure from the waste fund must be framed in the context of global economic conditions, the state government will continue to explore other ideas and projects to access and use moneys from this fund for the purposes pursuant to the Zero Waste SA Act 2004.

Ms CHAPMAN: And the answer to my question then is: how are you going to spend it in this forthcoming financial year or the one that we just started yesterday?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I might just announce my advisers.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr V. Levitzke, Chief Executive, Zero Waste SA.

Mr P. Fioretti, Director, Corporate Support, Zero Waste SA.

Mr I. Harvey, Director, Strategy and Policy, Zero Waste SA.

Ms V. Caire, Manager, Government Business, Zero Waste SA.

Ms H. Hershman, Ministerial Adviser.

Mr T. Mooney, Chief of Staff.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The key elements, I am advised, of the Zero Waste 2013-14 business plan will include:

- Waste infrastructure grants: a combined funding of \$2.07 million is allocated for waste infrastructure projects to encourage greater resource recovery in metropolitan and regional areas of South Australia.
- Industry programs: \$983,000 has been allocated to assist industry and government implement more effective resource efficiency measures.
- Kerbside waste incentives and associated strategies: \$964,000 is allocated to provide councils with a further opportunity to seek assistance in introducing food waste collection systems within their council areas.
- Household hazardous waste programs: \$613,000 for the continued collection of hazardous waste from householders and farmers across the state.
- Continued partnerships with KESAB to the value of \$444,000; the University of South Australia to the value of \$246,000; the Waste Management Association of Australia, \$87,000; and the Local Government Association, \$59,000.

There is \$142,000 allocated to undertake a review to assess its adequacy. There is the review of South Australia's Waste Strategy 2011-15 to address its strategy and progress with the implementation of the waste strategy, and the findings and directions will inform the next waste strategy obviously.

I am advised that \$50,000 is allocated to encourage and assist the sharing and use of unused or idle assets and resources in the community through a proposed sharing initiative which will create social and environmental benefits within the community. Sharing helps people save time, money and resources by meeting their needs, in collaboration with one another, and works to address the top tiers of the waste hierarchy—avoid and reduce.

Ms CHAPMAN: That sounds interesting. Is it share a bin, share a bath or share a husband? But, anyway, it sounds interesting. But, minister—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Some of those are beyond our remit, I think.

Ms CHAPMAN: —that adds up to, on my calculations, about \$5.5 million. Is that all that is going to be spent out of the fund this year?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that the total expenditure in the budget for 2013-14 is \$8.7 million (and a tiny bit) so the vast bulk of that expenditure is what I have just read

out, and the rest, I imagine, will be running the business and other programs that we might initiate during the next 12-month period.

Ms CHAPMAN: Are you happy to take that on notice—the list of the balance?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that the business plan is all published on the website and the honourable member will be able to access that for herself.

Ms CHAPMAN: It is just that you talk about waste infrastructure projects of \$2.07 million but you do not tell us who gets them, how much they get and what it is for. We just get this general statement, that is all; that is why I am asking you for a list.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that these programs are an open call for tender funding, and I will make announcements about who has received that funding as we progress through the year.

Ms CHAPMAN: Still at page 138, can the minister explain why the levy revenue continues to increase but the investment in the waste management sector is to be cut with the demise of Zero Waste SA in 2015?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The state government is considering a new model for the continuation of the functions of Zero Waste SA. A grant of \$1 million per annum will be retained to support the organisation in its role. It is not the intention to see the functions of Zero Waste lost at all. The state government recognises the expertise of Zero Waste SA and that its work is instrumental to helping South Australia become a leader in waste management and resource recovery, and that is recognised internationally and nationally.

Since 2003, Zero Waste has worked as a catalyst for waste management, recycling and resource recovery in South Australia, and these efforts have continued to drive and create a more sustainable community environment. Central to our achievements have been statewide direction in waste management through implementing the first South Australian waste strategy 2005-10, implementing the second South Australian waste strategy 2011-15, as well as providing ongoing investment in the waste industry, local government and the community. This has helped achievements, including the rollout of high-performing kerbside recycling systems, investment in important waste infrastructure, improvements in the recovery of materials from regional areas, industry resource efficiency and commercial recycling incentives.

Our recycling rate has improved and is among the world's best. We are diverting from landfill approximately 75 per cent of all waste generated. Since 2004, more than \$13.2 million has been directed towards grant funding for waste infrastructure across the state, and this has contributed to new ventures in the areas of electronic waste, composting, recycling of construction and demolition waste, and improved regional waste planning and infrastructure.

Zero Waste SA's assistance to local government has been significant. Since 2003, total Zero Waste SA funding for local government programs is more than \$27 million, which has provided many benefits in our state, including improved infrastructure and kerbside collection systems, which has helped approximately 685,000 households across metropolitan and rural councils to increase their recycling effort.

Zero Waste has assisted South Australian businesses and industry to improve their waste management practices, targeting manufacturing, wine, printing, hospitality, aged-care services, government and not-for-profit sectors. From 2007 to May 2013, Zero Waste SA engaged a total of 401 businesses and industry clients, covering 646 sites, to achieve resource efficiencies. Significant funding has also been directed to supporting leading-edge school education projects, litter reduction, free household collection services for hazardous waste, electronic waste and light globe recycling.

The state government will, of course, be consulting on options for the delivery of Zero Waste's functions with stakeholders, including the South Australian Local Government Association and industry. This will provide an opportunity to review the model alongside other alternatives and to seek greater involvement from industry, local government and other stakeholders in Zero Waste's future.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, clearly you are still collecting more and giving out less money in relation to this fund. My question relates to the budgeted revenue for the Waste Resources Fund. During last year's estimates hearing, it was flagged that the minister was looking to release the review conducted by Allen Consulting during 2011-12. Can the minister outline what is the status of this report and what review processes have occurred over the past 12 months?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Review processes of what?

Ms CHAPMAN: The Allen Consulting report, which was discussed at last year's estimates hearing. I assume that your department has it. Are you going to release it publicly, are you going to do more work, or what is the situation?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: In 2011-12, independent consultants undertook a review of the solid waste levy on behalf of Zero Waste. The report was prepared to inform government decision-making on the solid waste levy and as such was not publicly released, I am told. The report, however, has since been made available, under the state government's freedom of information process, to applicants who have requested it.

The Allen Consulting Group's report models and discusses the positive and negative impacts of increasing the levy to \$50 for metropolitan areas and \$25 for regional areas. Allen developed a baseline case which also included the commonwealth government's carbon price—which was, I think, about \$23 per tonne at the time—introduced in July 2012 through the carbon price mechanism, under which large landfill operators are liable.

The baseline case was compared to four different scenarios, and I am advised that it was found that a modest increase of resource recovery of about 2 per cent is forecast. The Allen report suggests that the investment of the levy revenue into resource recovery is critical in improving resource recovery rates.

The report noted the challenges in meeting the sector-based diversion targets in South Australia's Waste Strategy given that the waste levy, as a price signal alone, has an inelastic market response. However, there was a significant exception, and that was the commercial and demolition sector, which is more sensitive to the waste levy as a price signal. I am also advised privately, by industry in the composting sector, that they find the price signal to be a significant driver for that industry.

When considering the direct economic impacts of diverting waste from landfill to the resource recovery sector, there is a small net cost to the state's economy. Indirect economic benefits generated—for example, economic benefits from the substitution of virgin resources with recycled materials (we must have a better phrase than that)—

Ms CHAPMAN: I hope so.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: —show that it is likely that there would be a positive contribution to the state's economy. The report also found that the resource recovery sector would increase by around 375 jobs between mid-2012-13 and 2014-15. On average, business operating costs will increase by roughly \$86 per business per year, and greenhouse gas emissions in landfill will reduce by 34,800 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent. Allen's report also noted that the effectiveness of the levy could be limited but is likely to benefit from the support of additional complementary measures—which is, in fact, what we do—including:

- education campaigns and information provision aimed, in particular, at households and small and medium enterprises;
- incentives to encourage source separation in the commercial and industrial sectors; and
- support to promote on-site treatment of construction and demolition waste.

The findings of the review have informed development of Zero Waste's business plans, with key recommendations incorporated into Zero Waste programs. The review included many recommendations that are extensions of Zero Waste's current activities. Zero Waste has therefore extended its activities where possible, including key recommendations of the review; for example, Zero Waste's metropolitan infrastructure and regional implementation programs to enhance the amount of material processed in South Australia through support for expanded local reprocessing infrastructure. I understand \$2 million will be provided over the next two years for that.

I could go on at length, but suffice to say that the solid waste levy is lower in comparison to some other states. The current waste levy rate is \$95.20 per tonne in Sydney and \$53.20 per tonne in Melbourne, and I am advised that the levy is scheduled to rise further in both New South Wales and Victoria, with the levy in Melbourne scheduled to rise to \$58.50 per tonne by 2014-15.

We had this argument earlier. There is a strong argument that the waste levy should be consistent from one state to next. If we were to lower our waste levy fees it could provide an incentive to those within the waste industry to bring their waste from interstate and deposit it here,

should that be commercially viable. We understand that is exactly what is happening between New South Wales and the Queensland border right now.

Ms CHAPMAN: So the Allen Consulting report, which you have indicated was the subject of provision of a copy under an FOI application, is that now going to be made publicly available, or has it been?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The document in question was an internal document prepared to advise Zero Waste on this issue. I have not given consideration to releasing it further.

Ms CHAPMAN: Sorry; perhaps I misunderstood your answer. I thought you said it had actually been released under freedom of information. Was it in fact rejected under an FOI application?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that it has been released to applicants who requested it.

Ms CHAPMAN: So is that the government's position then, that it is only going to release it to parties who lodge a freedom of information application? They are not now going to place it—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The honourable member is putting words into my mouth; that is not exactly what I said. She should go back and consult *Hansard* when she has a moment to reread my comments.

Ms CHAPMAN: Having read that you have provided copies to applicants under freedom of information, is it your position, minister, that you will not make the report available publicly?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The honourable member should reread my comments which I just made, which is that I have not given a considered position to that decision yet. The current position is it is an internal document that was produced and used for Zero Waste internal purposes. It has been released, I understand, to applicants who have applied for it under freedom of information.

Ms CHAPMAN: Open and transparent. Did the report recommend to get rid of Zero Waste SA and take the services in-house?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I do not believe that was the purpose of the report. I think I said in my introduction one of the purposes was to model increases to the levy to \$50 for metropolitan areas and \$25 for regional areas.

Ms CHAPMAN: So that is the extent of it: to look at the modelling of the levy only? How much do we pay them? It is a lot of money. I could have rung up the states around Australia and asked how much levy they charge.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is it was specifically for the review of the levy and other scenarios around the waste levy.

Ms CHAPMAN: In relation to that, would any consultation take place with the LGA or other industry representatives?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I understand a steering committee was put in place, which included representatives from the LGA and the Waste Management Association and, additionally, as part of the process, I understand there were consultations across industry and local government.

Ms CHAPMAN: So why are we having another review, of which \$142,000, you have just told us, has been allocated in this forthcoming year?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The honourable member probably will remember in my opening statement I mentioned we have already had two strategies, I think from 2005, and this will be reviewing our strategy to take us into the future as part of the normal business processes that Zero Waste undertakes.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think this is the 2005 to 2017?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: No, 2005 to 2010 and then 2010-11 to 2015. So this will be for 2015 to 2020.

Ms CHAPMAN: Has anyone been contracted to provide a strategy review for that?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that that is currently out to tender.

Ms CHAPMAN: As this is a document to support not the fee proposals—for which I will put in an FOI application: you can be sure of that—but to look at the strategy for the development of the plan, is that going to be kept secret, too, or is that going to be available to the public?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is the review has been published in the past and I can see no reason why we would not do that into the future.

Ms CHAPMAN: That concludes my questions on Zero Waste. Are we going to be able to have any aspect of it next year, because I think it is disappearing in the following year, is that the situation? Or are we going to have future estimates just in under the general department?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: To help the committee, I understand the budget papers make it plain that we will be here until 2015.

Ms CHAPMAN: I thank the members for their attendance, and I thank the members of the department.

[Sitting suspended from 12:59 to 14:00]

Membership:

Ms Bedford substituted for Mrs Geraghty.

Mr Whetstone substituted for Mr Treloar.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr A. Holmes, Chief Executive, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Ms M. Griffiths, Chief Financial Officer, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Mr T. Goodes, Group Executive Director, Strategy and Advice, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Mr R. Faunt, Technical Regulator and Director Energy Regulation, Office of the Technical Regulator.

Mr B. Bruce, Group Executive Director, Customer and Corporate Services, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Ms K. Prideaux, Manager, Budget Strategy and Support, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Mr A. Gerace, Manager Corporate Accounting, Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources.

Ms R. McClelland, Ministerial Adviser.

Mr T. Mooney, Chief of Staff.

The CHAIR: I presume the first half hour will be the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources and the second half hour will be SA Water.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: That is how I have planned the day. I will kick off by publicly thanking and acknowledging the efforts of staff in the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources, led by my chief executive, Mr Allan Holmes. I would also like to acknowledge the Hon. Paul Caica, my predecessor in this portfolio. I have picked up many of the initiatives that he has put into place across the range of my portfolios, and I want to pay tribute to the excellent range of work that he has done.

Since coming to the portfolio, I have been impressed by the sense of passion that staff have in the way they approach their work. This passion is visible in the way staff deliver the wide range of programs which ensure that our natural resources are able to be enjoyed and used by South Australians.

The last year has seen this government continue its action to ensure a healthy River Murray through the delivery of several initiatives designed to enhance environmental conditions and improve the security of access to water for industry, the environment and the community. In

2012-13, this government maintained its fight for the River Murray, ensuring South Australia's interests in negotiations on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, and developed the South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Plan Implementation Strategy. South Australia has now formally signed up to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan to secure the future health of the River Murray for future generations.

Throughout the development of the basin plan, the government actively championed the interests of the river. We joined together with industry, irrigators and the community to demand a level of water recovery that would ensure a healthy river system, restore environmental values and provide for viable and productive industries and communities into the future.

Through this partnership, South Australia's proactive stance and the support gained through the Fight for the Murray campaign has allowed key changes to be included in the plan that will deliver much better environmental, industry and community outcomes in South Australia, as well as across the basin. Support was not universal. Indeed, there were many in the opposition who begged us not to take up this fight and to accept the inadequate initial plan being pushed by the upstream states, but this government persevered and demanded a fair outcome for South Australia. As a result, we now have a commitment to return more water to the River Murray so that river health outcomes consistent with recovering 3,200 gigalitres of water can be achieved.

The commonwealth has committed \$1.77 billion in funding to recover the additional 450 gigalitres and to do so in a socioeconomically neutral or beneficial manner. This may be achieved through on-farm water efficiency measures or alternative arrangements. Some \$200 million of this funding will be spent on addressing constraints. The plan requires the Murray-Darling Basin Authority to develop a constraints management strategy to implement measures to remove constraints that include such things as low-lying bridges, undersized dam outlets and river operating rules that currently limit the volume of water that can flow through the river systems. The plan also includes improved salinity targets and minimum water level objectives for the river below Lock 1.

The plan requires that climate change risks must be assessed and considered in any future reviews, along with the improved information on groundwater and surface water connectivity that must be obtained. The plan also includes a mechanism to increase or reduce groundwater sustainable diversion limits based on better knowledge of recharge rates, surface-groundwater connections and usage. Importantly, the government has secured commonwealth government funding of \$445 million for water recovery, industry regeneration, regional development and environmental works and measures projects in South Australia.

Another significant achievement is a suite of projects under the Riverine Recovery project that continued to be delivered in 2012-13, including: early on-ground works designed to mitigate long-term detrimental ecological impacts on the river; commencing processes required to construct regulators and relocate pumps as required to better manage priority River Murray wetlands and flood plains; and the completion of 26 wetland management plans.

Other key highlights for the water and the River Murray portfolio include the passage of the Water Industry Act 2012. Key milestones in the implementation of the act include the appointment of an independent technical regulator and water industry ombudsman. Eight key stormwater harvesting projects are progressing under the Australian government's Water for the Future program. South Australia obtained \$3.1 million in Australian government incentive funding for signing the National Partnership Agreement on Coal Seam Gas and Large Coal Mining Developments. The agreement introduces a more rigorous and transparent assessment of the water-related impacts of such projects by the Independent Expert Scientific Committee. In addition, six regional natural resources management boards each received \$400,000 from the commonwealth to identify and collate data relating to water assets within their regions.

Another range of significant programs were funded in 2012-13 by the Save the River Murray Fund to a total of \$26.727 million. These include programs to manage and improve water quality, conserve the ecological health of the River Murray, implement water allocation plans in the Murray-Darling Basin, acquire environmental water, provide input into the development of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and part fund South Australia's contribution to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority. From 1 July 2013, the Save the River Murray levy will no longer apply to properties that are in no way connected to the River Murray. However, the fund is and will remain vital to achieving improvements in the environmental health of the river and ensuring the adequacy, security and quality of the state's water supply. I will stop there.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Member for Bragg, do you wish to make an opening statement?

Ms CHAPMAN: I have one question of the minister before my colleagues have some important issues to raise, and I am sure all committee members will be doing that. In respect of the demise of the climate change unit, which is now absorbed as a responsibility into your division, did you or your department recommend that that occur?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am not quite sure to what the honourable member's question refers. The sustainable and climate change branch of the department still exists and still does its work.

Ms CHAPMAN: Sorry; perhaps you misunderstood my question. I was not clear enough. The climate change unit, which was in the Premier's department, has been dismantled and you have now absorbed the residue, as I understand it, into your department. Did you or your department recommend that that occur?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that, as a result of machinery of government changes, that unit was transferred back to our department. I presume it was there originally. It is still functioning, I am advised, and performing the roles that it was designed to deliver. I presume, given that history, that that decision was taken by the Premier.

Ms CHAPMAN: I had asked whether you had advised it, but perhaps you are not aware of that. How many people in your department are allocated to the responsibility of advice on either policy or implementation of climate change/sustainability matters?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that the unit did not transfer back as one whole unit. About eight to 10 people, I am advised, are currently still in that unit but the responsibility for policy development has been spread across the whole agency, particularly also NRM groups, and I understand that is where we invested \$450,000 for adaptation functions particularly through that NRM organisational arrangement.

Ms CHAPMAN: So did you take some of the eight to 10 people or is that still existing somewhere else?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: No, the eight to 10 exist in my department.

Mr PEDERICK: My question is with regard to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 154: Investing expenditure summary. In the 2012-13 budget, \$21 million was allocated to Riverine Recovery, yet only \$2.9 million is estimated to have been spent. To what is attributed this underspend?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is almost entirely that underspend can be attributed to climatic conditions which effectively meant we could not get in and do engineering works on the flood plains.

Mr PEDERICK: What has happened to those unspent moneys? Have they just been absorbed back into the department?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that if you look at the chart on page 154 you will see in the first column 2013-14 budget that \$15.995 million has been carried over for that program.

Mr PEDERICK: So that is carryover, not new money. On the same page, can we have a list of all the projects and budgets for the Riverine Recovery project, the minor works and equipment and the water-monitoring equipment?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I thank the honourable member for his question. I can go into some specifics about the Riverine Recovery program, if he would like. It is a component of the Murray Futures program which aims to achieve measurable long-term improvements in the health of the riverine environment between Wellington and the South Australian border.

The Riverine Recovery project is comprised of two funding packages, early on-ground works and the Riverine Recovery project proper. The suite of works and measures undertaken as part of the project proper complement and build on those under early on-ground works. The \$9.2 million early on-ground works package includes works at Pike River, Katfish flood plains and Yatco Lagoon. Further investment of \$86.7 million is being used to undertake activities across a suite of projects between Lock 1 and Wellington.

The Riverine Recovery project experienced some delays, I am advised, to on-ground activities as a result of higher than average flows over the last two years that restricted access to

the flood plain, which goes to the previous question. These higher flows eased in late 2012 and the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources has implemented an intense program of on-ground activity to capitalise on good site conditions to progress works.

During 2012-13 an analysis of required irrigation pump modifications were undertaken for the Pike River flood plain to prepare for future managed water levels. A market wide tender process is proposed for the construction of the regulator, with a view to commencing construction in 2013-14. Katfish Reach on-ground activity will improve habitat conditions for the nationally and state-listed Murray hardyhead, as well as improve other fish passage within the flood plain. Earthworks and the upgrade or replacement of infrastructure is expected to be completed in August 2013.

Works at Yatco Lagoon focus on improving the ecological condition of the wetland by reinstating a more natural wetting and drying regime. This will be achieved through the installation of regulators and relocation of existing water offtakes from the wetland back to the river. These works commenced in November 2012 and are due for completion in March 2014.

The project proper works on the Pike and Katfish flood plains are underway, I am advised, which includes the replacement of existing in-stream regulators to reinstate fish passage and flow connectivity. During 2012-13 the government acquired the last piece of grazed land on the Pike flood plain. This will ease grazing pressure at the site to enable measurable long-term improvements to the riverine environment. During 2012-13 both these projects have completed the necessary survey and design activities and will be presented to the Public Works Committee in 2013-14.

A suite of wetland projects are also underway. These projects include the installation of infrastructure to reintroduce more natural wetting and drying cycles to improve ecosystem health, while at the same time reducing the evaporation of environmental water. Significant effort has been invested in landholder engagement and in establishing relationships to promote negotiated and mutually beneficial outcomes. The project has also entered into funding arrangements with Indigenous nations.

The Riverine Recovery weir pool project commenced in 2012-13. Significant progress has been achieved in planning for future weir pool manipulation trials, with the intent of establishing variable weir pool levels as part of the standard operating practice for the River Murray. The Riverine Recovery information management project has also progressed with the development of the management action database as a central repository of environmental and water management information for the River Murray. This system, together with additional ecological and water quality monitoring activities, will be used to inform the management of environmental water to maximise positive ecological and biological outcomes.

The Riverine Recovery project is progressing on target to deliver against commonwealth requirements by June 2016, with the project continuing to build resilience and contribute to improving the health of the River Murray. The honourable member may prefer a face-to-face briefing to provide details and answer any specific questions about the other programs, and I am happy to organise that for him.

Mr PEDERICK: Absolutely, happy for that.

Mr WHETSTONE: Now that South Australia has signed the long-heralded seven-month wait for the intergovernmental agreement with the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, can the minister outline what the guidelines are for irrigators to access the \$265 million allocated to the Water Industry Alliance Program and why has there been such a delay in that announcement?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Responsibility for this program rests with minister Gail Gago and I ask that you direct that question to her through PIRSA, but I can say that the delay has been significantly driven by our desire to get a better outcome for our state irrigators. That is what we have achieved and that is why we signed up.

Mr WHETSTONE: Minister, the \$265 million was announced before the signing of the agreement, so I do not think you have achieved any more. It is about the guidelines.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: That is exactly right, and how they would be administered. I have said before publicly that those guidelines were drafted with Victoria and New South Wales in mind, where there are plenty of water efficiencies to be gained. Our irrigating community has been driving those efficiencies for the last 50 years and so we thought it unfair that they should be held to the same accounting mechanisms. We wanted more flexibility for them. However, I can confirm, as you know, that we have signed the agreement with minister Tony Burke (as he was then).

Minister Burke's letter has confirmed the commonwealth will fund South Australian River Murray communities to the tune of \$260 million, as you have indicated. The letter sought agreement on a number of terms and conditions to be formalised in the form of a national partnership agreement. I am advised that the terms and conditions specified in the letter are reasonable and will enable the outcome sought by the state, the Water Industry Alliance and the River Murray irrigation industry and its communities to be realised through implementing the program.

To confirm arrangements set out in the terms and conditions for the national partnership agreements, minister Burke then sought for the state to sign the Intergovernmental Agreement on Implementing Water Reform in the Murray-Darling Basin. On 27 June the Premier signed the IGA on the basin plan. This confirmed South Australia's commitment to implement the historic basin plan reforms and confirmed arrangements to secure the \$265 million South Australian River Murray sustainability program.

The signing of the IGA on the basin plan has resulted in South Australia's realisation of an historic win for the river through science-based programs—we always said that we would base our arguments on the best available science—and our uncompromising Fight for the Murray campaign that resulted in an increase in the volume of water to be returned to the river by 450 gigalitres, from 2,750 gigalitres to 3,200 gigalitres, as well as a huge investment in the South Australian River Murray communities currently totalling \$445 million.

The state stands at the ready to implement these programs. We have not, of course, done this on our own. We are grateful for the foresight shown by the Water Industry Alliance and our irrigator communities in identifying the next evolution in water recovery projects. In recognition of the need to recover water from the Murray-Darling Basin, the South Australian basin, leading efficient water use practices, the WIA gathered the South Australian irrigation industry together and began developing the \$240 million River Murray Improvements Program.

The preparation of these programs has been a great example of how industry, communities and government can work together in good faith to develop innovative and practical solutions to complex problems that suit our irrigators—and that is what we did.

Mr WHETSTONE: Thank you for advocating my good work.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Always happy to share the credit.

Mr WHETSTONE: With regard to the negotiations within the intergovernmental agreement, were irrigators' carryover provisions part of a negotiation through South Australia to the commonwealth, and does South Australian irrigators' water now still sit horizontally on top of environmental water or do they sit equally with the other states?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: As to the second part, I believe the water sits horizontally, and that will be the next stage of a fight that we need to have with the Eastern States. I will be welcoming support from Liberal members as we raise this issue with our interstate governmental friends.

Ms CHAPMAN: You should have signed up before you got the agreement.

Mr WHETSTONE: Exactly.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It wasn't on offer, of course.

Mr WHETSTONE: Anyway, that is—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: And the support from the Liberal Party was not on offer either at the time, I understand, but I am happy to go into the sunlit uplands with you, hand in hand, fighting for our state together.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order!

Mr WHETSTONE: To achieve our national target of 2,750 gigalitres by 2019, South Australia will have to return approximately 183 gigalitres back into the system.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Yes.

Mr WHETSTONE: The WIA agreement will see a further 40 gigalitres returned; SA Water has committed to contributing 20 gigalitres.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Yes.

Mr WHETSTONE: How will South Australia achieve the remaining 23 gigalitres—stating that the Premier has said that no further water will come from irrigators.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I understand we have already found more than half of what we are required to get out of that 183. Roughly 93 gigalitres has already been found which remains—it is 103. I stand corrected—we are doing even better. We need to find some remaining water and we will be doing that through consultation with communities, looking for efficiencies, removal of constraints down the river and possibly even buyback of licences.

Mr WHETSTONE: I understand you mentioned addressing constraints; constraints will not put any more water back into the river. It is about the 40 that the irrigators will have to give up through the Water Industry Alliance. I understand the Premier has agreed for SA Water to give up 20; however, there is still remaining 23 or thereabouts to come out of South Australia. The Premier has given his pledge that no more water will come from irrigators. Where will we find that water?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that there are a number of other programs on offer we can explore to find that extra water. One is through the NRM Board, and there are other possibilities that the commonwealth may well fund. The key aspect of this, of course, is that we will not be proposing any new proposals until we have discussed this with the irrigators concerned. Former minister Caica and I have given guarantees to the community that we will consult first before we start drawing up plans for the future.

Mr WHETSTONE: Minister, would one of those contributing factors possibly be unregulated water from the South-East drains?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that such a proposition would not actually recover any water for the river, but it may well be, possibly, a sustainable diversion limit offset which we could negotiate with the commonwealth government as being part of that process.

Mr WHETSTONE: Thank you, minister. I have one final question. Minister, I am wondering how you can conclude that representing South Australia's interests in the negotiations on the Murray-Darling Basin as a highlight in 2012-13 when your decision to slash the government's contribution to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority from \$28.6 million to \$14.3 million a year proved that there is a lack of total commitment to the river and its environment.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: First of all, I totally reject the premise loaded into that question. The honourable member, as has been the wont of Liberal Party members in this place, has completely ignored what their Liberal government colleagues in other states have been doing in regard to the river and not being willing to contest their statements and have repeatedly ignored Eastern States' unwillingness to work with the commonwealth and with us in terms of getting a proactive response.

South Australia continues to work, as best we can, in collaboration with other jurisdictions. We always say to them that we want to work with them, but the response from the Eastern States has been underwhelming, to say the least. Around the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, we need to achieve long-term sustainable management of the River Murray in South Australia. South Australia, together with other basin states and the commonwealth, will contribute a total of \$85.713 million for the operation of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority in 2013-14.

In 2012-13, New South Wales reduced its annual contribution to the authority by 60 per cent. New South Wales also capped its contribution to the authority in 2013-14 and 2014-15 to \$8.9 million, which is about a 78 per cent reduction in their funding. Not one word of censure have I heard from the Liberal Party in South Australia about that. Despite this unilateral action, South Australia and the other jurisdictions committed to maintain their contribution for 2012-13 and 2013-14.

With the reduction in the New South Wales contribution levels, South Australia is effectively subsidising New South Wales at the expense of other programs for the environment, health or education within South Australia. That is never going to be a sustainable position. It would be totally irresponsible for South Australian taxpayers to be subsidising programs that the New South Wales government should be funding, but that is what the Liberal Party in this state has been advocating for some time now.

In light of this, South Australia has announced a reduction in the 2014-15 contribution to the Murray-Darling Basin Authority of \$14.3 million. Basin states and the authority have committed

to further discussions on potential efficiencies and therefore the most appropriate level and mechanisms of funding for the Murray-Darling Basin Authority in the future.

A review covering authority activities which basin states jointly fund is currently being undertaken, I am advised, at the request of the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council. The impetus for this review is the ongoing reduction of funds into the future. The focus of the review to date has been finalising the recommendations for the authority's 2013-14 budget. The final authority 2013-14 budget is expected to be approved by the ministerial council this month, following endorsement by the Basin Officials Committee. As I said earlier, I would always welcome support from the Liberal Party in this state for getting a better outcome for the river and our river communities.

Mr WHETSTONE: Minister, if you are advocating for being a champion of the river, that is one way of not being a champion. I have a question on a general issue, and I refer to Regional Service Delivery, page 166. Currently, options for an additional water supply to Coffin Bay are either an additional allocation from the 'A' lens, where the water comes from currently, or a pipeline from the Uley borefield. Either option would require some form of capital investment and, as I understand it, the existing borefield would need to be reconfigured. What work has been done to further either of these projects, what are the anticipated costs, and where will these funds be drawn from?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that the government has been jointly working on research into this water together with the NRM board, the CSIRO, SA Water and Flinders University. When there is a demand that will outstrip the supply, through our annual statements an independent planning process would be triggered. I am advised that any determination about costs is a question that should be directed to SA Water.

The CHAIR: That draws to a close the—

Mr PEDERICK: Can we have one more?

The CHAIR: It is up to you; it is your—

Ms CHAPMAN: I am happy for the honourable member to have another question.

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you, Madam Chair, for your lenience. I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 173, Targets 2013-14. The second dot point talks about completing the Lake Albert scoping study for the long-term management of the lake and the Narrung Narrows. In that study, will the minister be consulting with groups such as the Meningie and Lakes Action Group, and will that study include looking at the feasibility of and environmental studies in relation to a connector to the Coorong from Lake Albert?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that, as is our usual practice, we will have consultations with community organisations. Indeed, I think I was down there recently talking to a group—

Mr PEDERICK: Probably the Meningie and Lakes Group.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It may well have been. We will, of course, consult with local communities. That discussion was about the scoping study. No decisions have been made as yet, I am advised, but they will always be part of the focus of our consultation process.

Mr PEDERICK: Minister, the second part of the question was: will the potential connector be investigated, both its feasibility and environmentally?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I have already given an answer to that question in parliament; the answer is yes.

The CHAIR: We will now move on to SA Water.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I did say earlier today that I might be giving some more information about buffel grass and, if the committee is interested, I will take 60 seconds. Two critical projects to control one of South Australia's most damaging weeds will benefit from more than \$620,000 in funding through a Native Vegetation Council grant program. The projects to manage buffel grass across about 80 per cent of the state have been awarded the funding through the council's Significant Environmental Benefit Grants program.

Six projects have received a total of \$750,000 in this current round of the program's funding. This grant program funds large-scale native vegetation projects across the state. These grants provide funding for on-the-ground restoration of native vegetation in South Australia and,

since its inception in 2009, the program has provided more than \$10 million to 53 projects around the state.

Funded in this round of grants is a three-year \$500,000 collaboration between Biosecurity SA and the natural resource management regions of Northern and Yorke, Eyre Peninsula, SA Arid Lands and AW to examine the management of buffel grass. Buffel grass out-competes native grasses and burns much—members know all that. A second project aimed at eradicating buffel grass in the Anangu, Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara lands in the state's Far North by 2015 will receive more than \$120,000 worth of funding.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Can I ask a supplementary question to that, please?

The CHAIR: It was not a question: it was a statement. However, I will let you ask it.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: When I originally raised the issue of buffel grass, minister, I asked also whether buffel grass would be seen as a weed of national significance. I did not hear you say that it might be put on that list.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I do not have that advice, but I will take that on notice and bring it back for you.

The CHAIR: We will move on now to SA Water.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Ringham, Chief Executive, SA Water.

Mr G. Henstock, Corporation Secretary, SA Water.

Mr B. Naylor, Manager, Treasury, SA Water.

Mr R. Faunt, Technical Regulator and Director of Energy Regulation, Office of the Technical Regulator.

Ms R. McClelland, Ministerial Adviser.

Mr T. Mooney, Chief of Staff.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: South Australia is the driest state in the driest inhabited continent on earth. As such, the government's number one priority for SA Water remains ensuring that South Australia has secure and safe water supplies for future economic and population growth. Whilst traditional water supply sources such as dams remain integral to a secure water supply, we are embracing more innovative source options such as stormwater reuse. The challenges of climate change, however, mean that we cannot rely on rain-dependent sources.

For many years, South Australia has led the nation in innovative water management. Adelaide recycles more waste water than any other Australian city and we have implemented a culture change leading to water use efficiency. Now, South Australia has delivered one of the most cost-effective desal plants in the world. The plant is one of the most—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The plant is one of the most capital-efficient plants in Australia. It has the lowest operating cost per megalitre of desal water. The Adelaide desal plant also delivers groundbreaking energy efficiency through energy innovation such as the turbines at the bottom of the outfall shafts which generate electricity.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIR: Order, I cannot hear the minister! Order!

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The Adelaide desalination plant demonstrated the highest level of project management and delivery skills. Our Adelaide desal plant is able to deliver up to half of Adelaide's drinking water needs, even during times of drought. The plant was delivered within its approved budget ahead of the planned completion date at the end of 2012. It has been supplying water to consumers in Adelaide since late 2011 and guarantees water security for Adelaide for many decades to come.

SA Water's expected capital expenditure for 2012-13 was \$451.7 million. Much of this was for projects that enhanced our state's water security, ensuring a sustainable water supply for future

generations. The capital plan for 2013-14 is \$407.2 million, a 10 per cent reduction over spending in the previous year. Work on the \$403 million north-south interconnection system project is on track and within budget. Due for completion this financial year, much of the project has already been completed and is now in service.

Underpinning our investment in innovative water management has been our commitment to legislative and regulatory reform of the water industry. Following the passage last year of the Water Industry Act 2012, South Australia has embraced independent economic regulation of water and wastewater services. While maintaining state ownership of SA Water and its infrastructure, we have opened its infrastructure up to provide third-party access and facilitate new entrants.

Along with our strong focus on water security, existing infrastructure asset maintenance renewal remains a high priority for SA Water. For example, important work has commenced to replace water mains, some of them over 100 years old, along Marion Road. The \$227 million Christies Beach Wastewater Treatment Plant upgrade is well underway and this project is scheduled for completion in 2013.

SA Water's capital budget for the years 2013-14 to 2016-17 provides for expenditure of \$1.5 billion. In comparison, capital expenditure for the previous four years, 2009-10 to 2012-13, was \$2.9 billion. The planned decrease of 48 per cent is primarily due to the anticipated completion of major water security projects, including the desal plant.

Several major projects have also recently been approved and are to be delivered over coming years. At the Bolivar Wastewater Treatment Plant, the mechanical and electrical upgrade of the main pumping station is on track for completion by April 2014 at a total cost of \$24 million. In addition, in 2012-13, \$20 million was spent to optimise energy use at the plant. With a total cost of \$26 million, this project is due for completion by December 2014 and will have a positive impact on greenhouse gas emissions and operating costs—a win for the environment and a win for customers.

In the water business, \$18 million has been allocated to upgrade the chlorine station at the Happy Valley Water Treatment Plant. This project is due for completion by December 2014 and will provide a new facility that is essential to the maintenance and security of water quality for a large proportion of Adelaide's population.

Regional South Australia is benefiting from investment in water infrastructure, with \$5.8 million allocated to the construction of a desal plant for Hawker and \$17 million allocated for upgrading the water supply to the Port Wakefield area. The new plant at Hawker will deliver a significant improvement to the aesthetic quality of the potable water supplied to that community.

The new pipeline to Port Wakefield is an example of how SA Water is working with local government, the federal government and industry, to provide additional supply. The upgrade will result in additional capacity for growth in the poultry industry and for residential growth in the communities of Balaklava and Port Wakefield. It also incorporates capacity to supply the Rex Minerals mining development on the Yorke Peninsula.

The government makes no apology for its prudent investment in water security but we recognise that it has had an impact on everyday South Australians. For that reason, the government has increased pensioner concessions to assist pensioners to manage their water bills. This will mean that those entitled to concessions will receive at least an additional \$30 off their SA Water bill.

As part of the determination of SA Water's maximum allowable revenue for the regulatory period 2013-14 to 2015-16, ESCOSA conducted a thorough review of SA Water's proposed capital expenditure. That review concluded that the substantive part of SA Water's proposed capital expenditure was both prudent and efficient and recommended only limited adjustments. The outcomes of the Essential Services Commission of South Australia's regulatory determination saw a reduction in real terms for water prices and a very modest increase in wastewater charges in 2013-14.

SA Water contributes to the community in a number of ways beyond water security projects. SA Water is committed to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce representation. SA Water was recently nominated as a finalist in the national Australian Human Resources Institute Diversity Awards for Indigenous Employment.

A number of these appointments have resulted from SA Water's scholarship partnership with Tauondi College, which provides TAFE-level qualifications in a variety of areas to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, as well as Access Working Careers, which continues to provide

SA Water with a pool of job-ready Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander job seekers. These students are ideal for SA Water's entry-level employment programs, such as traineeships, apprenticeships and cadetships.

In addition, SA Water was ranked fourth in the Australian Association of Graduate Employers Ltd top graduates employers list in recognition of providing the most positive workplace experience for graduates, as voted by the graduates themselves. SA Water's Graduate Program continues to provide a talented candidate pool to enable a sustainable future workforce, with particular focus on engineering, science, and information technology disciplines.

SA Water's community education programs include tours of water and wastewater treatment plants, community presentations and sessions at the new Kauwi Interpretive Centre at the Adelaide desal plant. In 2012-13 the community programs attracted a total audience of 1,313 people.

In conclusion, I am proud that SA Water remains a recognised world leader in sustainable water management in terms of both policy and technical and infrastructure innovation which supports our economy, our lifestyle and our environment into the future.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to Budget Paper 5, pages 58, 59 and 60. You touched on this during the course of your address, oration, time filler—whatever you want to call it.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Explanation.

Ms CHAPMAN: Explanation? Do you think it is necessary to explain, minister? Let me ask you this question. Have you provided any ministerial directions in the last 12 months, that is, to 30 June 2013, to SA Water with respect to any financial matters?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: What were they? You had better help him out, John, because he cannot remember what they are.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that direction is published on the website. It was a direction related to the use of the Valuer-General and how that would be recouped.

Ms CHAPMAN: Has there only been one?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: As you have not been the minister for the full financial year, are there any others in that year by your predecessor?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that we are not aware of any previous directions for the last financial year.

Ms CHAPMAN: The list of capital projects in Budget Paper 5 is a list which identifies some of the new projects proposed to at least commence planning in the forthcoming financial year. One of them, at the end of the section under New Projects, is the Tod River Dam Safety program, which is a \$14.4 million program to be completed in June 2018. My first question is, is this the same Tod River that is on the West Coast?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The answer, I am advised, is yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: And, minister, you would know that it is not spelt T-o-d-d.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: In fact I would not know, but I will take that advice.

Ms CHAPMAN: You would not know? Goodness me, you are the Minister for Water! Well, the Tod (T-o-d) River Dam, can you just explain what this \$14.5 million is going to be spent on, given that I understand this water is not being used because it is too salty? We are going to make it safe but we cannot drink it, is that the sort of situation that we are at?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The answer is in two parts. Part of the construction is for an increase in flood capacity, but I am also advised that we need to bring the dam up to Australian national standards. I am further advised that SA Water is in negotiations with an entity to use non-drinking water for a commercial operation.

Ms CHAPMAN: When you say national standards, that is for the level of salinity or safety standards or both?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that is national safety standards for large dams.

Ms CHAPMAN: That is so that if there is an excessive amount of water there is sufficient infrastructure there to ensure that it does not break and flood all of the salty water down the river and cause environmental and potential human damage? Is that the sort of situation we are at?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is yes, that is, in general terms, the answer. The improvements are to prevent overtopping of the dam in flood conditions or failure of the dam.

Ms CHAPMAN: So, we are going to spend \$14.5 million on making it safe, and this is for, potentially, use to support a mine, is it?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am not aware of the commercial activity that we are discussing and it is probably not appropriate to mention at this stage who or what that might be.

Ms CHAPMAN: The only proposed mines around there, of course, are iron ore mines, and the person who is doing the negotiation is sitting next to you. I am assuming it is Centrex or some other company that is putting forward proposals which are all in the public domain, so I do not know what the secret is.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: There is no secret. I am just advising you that I am not aware—

Ms CHAPMAN: Well, do you want to ask the person sitting next to you?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: —and at this early stage, I do not think it is appropriate.

Ms CHAPMAN: But in any event your understanding is that it will be used for a purpose in respect of some industrial use?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My understanding is that we are in negotiation with a commercial entity for a future potential use of that water.

Ms CHAPMAN: Is it proposed that either humans or stock will drink it?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Not to my knowledge.

Ms CHAPMAN: So you know enough to know that it is not for pastoral or human consumption, but you do not know what it is. I am not sure what else would use water, apart from mining projects.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I know enough to say that it is not to be considered for potable purposes.

Ms CHAPMAN: For potable purposes? Do you know of any other purposes proposed on the West Coast, other than mining?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I think I will just refer you to my previous answer.

Ms CHAPMAN: In any event we are going to spend this money. Will there be any recouping of these funds from the prospective purchaser of this water, the nearly \$15 million you will spend to upgrade this facility so that it can be for a commercial purpose?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: One can expect there will be a commercial arrangement in place which will allow us to recoup some money.

Ms CHAPMAN: Your government has approved a \$14.5 million exercise: are you telling me that you have not secured some arrangement so that, if it is built and if there is a contingency of progress, it will be recovered—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Madam Chair—

Ms CHAPMAN: —or will this person get all the benefit of this and no-one else?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Madam Chair—

The CHAIR: Order! The member for Bragg, order!

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The honourable member is trying to put words into my mouth. Having had her detailed explanation, she is trying to say that the only purpose for this construction is a commercial one, and that is very clearly, from a rereading of my answer, which she will be able to do tomorrow, not the only purpose.

Ms CHAPMAN: Have you then secured any revenue stream that will result from the use of this water by whomever to recoup the cost of the \$14.5 million?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice, as indicated earlier, is that we are in negotiations with a commercial entity.

Ms CHAPMAN: Anyway, you have signed off on it and agreed to get it started, which is to occur while people are paying huge water bills here in Adelaide?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Again, I refer the honourable member to my earlier detailed answer. We need to bring construction of the dam up to national standards, and I invite her to read her *Hansard* tomorrow and refresh her memory.

Ms CHAPMAN: I do not need to—I have a pretty clear idea. We will go to the desal plant. There is a visitor interpretation centre.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Excuse me, what page are we on now?

Ms CHAPMAN: The next line under what we were on before.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I have you.

Ms CHAPMAN: You have visited it?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Excuse me, what was the question?

Ms CHAPMAN: The visitor interpretive centre at the desal plant?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I have not; I have been to the desal plant.

Ms CHAPMAN: It is right next door to it.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Well, there you are.

Ms CHAPMAN: Do you think now, in refreshing your memory of your visit, that you did actually see it?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I do not believe I did, but I stand to be corrected. If the honourable member would like to go down and visit the visitor interpretive centre—

Ms CHAPMAN: I have already seen it.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: —I am happy to accompany her.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have already seen it with your predecessor. You are not sure what I am referring to, but you have your advisers around you, so how much of the total cost of the desal plant was for the visitor interpretive centre?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am happy to advise the committee that in fact I had a glass of water at the interpretive centre.

Ms CHAPMAN: Oh, you remember! See, he refreshed his memory—he should be thanking me.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It was an excellent glass of water, too. I can advise that the interpretive centre—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I imagine the water tastes exactly like the water the Hon. Mr Pederick is drinking now, because he drinking desal water right this minute. So, if he expects that to be slightly salty—

Mr Pederick interjecting:

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It is a shandy, of course, and that is what I drank. The interpretive centre formed part of the scope of the project, I am advised, undertaken by AdelaideAqua, under the design and construct contract, the cost of which was in the order of \$3.6 million.

Ms CHAPMAN: Will this visitor centre be open even after the desal plant is turned off?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: If the honourable member is asking whether the desal plant and the interpretive centre be open, regardless of whether or not the water is being pumped through, the answer is yes.

Ms CHAPMAN: What will they looking at if it is turned off?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I invite the honourable member to go down and look at the buildings and the pumping station and she will understand that there is quite a lot to look at.

Ms CHAPMAN: I think most of the members of the committee have actually been there on tours.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Excellent!

Ms CHAPMAN: We have had a good look at the facility and it is an excellent piece of infrastructure—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It is indeed!

Ms CHAPMAN: —including the pipeline up to the reservoir. I am not so keen on the pipeline that is crossing my electorate after that but, nevertheless, the infrastructure down there is quite impressive. My question is genuine, as to whether you are going to keep the interpretive centre open to inspect the premises even if the desal plant is turned off?

The CHAIR: I think the minister has already answer that question—however.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am reminded that you cannot actually see into the desal plant from the visitor centre and you need to have a tour of the desal plant, which could happen independently of the use of the visitor centre but it also involves, I understand, a lecture theatre which will be used from time to time by the community for various functions and events. There are a number of interactive programs at the interpretive centre, and those facilities, I am advised, will be open regardless of the mode that the desal centre is being operated in.

Mr WHETSTONE: When will the water department hand over the six gigalitre contribution to the commonwealth government as its commitment to the desal plant agreement?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that that six gigalitre contribution was handed to the department for water (now DEWNR) in around about November/December of last year and handed on, we believe, to the commonwealth water holder.

Mr WHETSTONE: When was that water handed to the commonwealth?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: We believe it was handed to DFW in November/December. We can only presume it was transferred promptly, but if you like, I can take that on notice and come back with a response.

Mr WHETSTONE: Please.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I will do so.

Ms CHAPMAN: Of the wastewater treatment projects that have been detailed—and there are several of them—the minister would be aware that SA Water is requiring a number of businesses to install devices to remove solids from their wastewater discharges. This is obviously before it gets to the treatment plants. What is the business case for these devices; and is such information publicly available? How many of these devices will be installed across the state and how has this impacted on SA Water's upgrade requirements?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Is the member for Bragg referring to grease traps being installed into businesses or—

Ms CHAPMAN: I do not know what they are, but they are solid waste devices—that is what they have been described as. In other words, you have to sift out all the hard bits before it gets into the system.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I assume the honourable member is referring to grease traps rather than specifically the solid engineering constructions that are often around in parks—the gross pollutant traps, I think they are called.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am not talking about the large ones on the Torrens that collect all the leaves. Now that we cannot burn them in the incinerators, they all go down the river.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: So it is not the gross pollutant traps; it is grease traps.

Ms CHAPMAN: I am talking about the businesses that have to put these things in.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: So we are on the same page. The core aim of setting conditions and authorisation to discharge trade waste is to reduce the risk of harm to public health and sewerage infrastructure. As a practical expression of this, water entities set the maximum

concentration of contaminants that they will accept in discharge. They have the potential to harm or interfere with their sewerage collection and treatment processes and disposal options.

Whilst, I am advised, there is no universally-applied national set of discharge criteria for trade waste, owing to differences between the capabilities of individual sewerage systems to effectively manage various contaminants, maximum concentrations are set for various contaminants. Customers discharging trade waste to SA Water's sewerage infrastructure must normally achieve discharge quality that meets SA Water's restricted wastewater acceptance standards. These standards are consistent with the values set out under the National Water Quality Management Strategy and Guidelines for Sewerage Systems—Acceptance of Trade Waste (Industrial Waste) by the Agriculture and Resource Management Council of Australia New Zealand and the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council.

This has been the principal guiding document across Australia since it was published in 1994 and updated by the Water Services Association of Australia, which developed the Australian Sewage Quality Management Guidelines which was released in June 2012, I am told, and which SA Water uses to assess and order its trade waste procedures.

SA Water has recently participated in a review of the basis and validity of these discharge values by the Water Services Association of Australia, as detailed above. In SA Water's experience on-site pretreatment is usually required to consistently achieve acceptable discharge quality from businesses preparing and selling food and drink, mainly to avoid sewer blockages downstream from greasy wastewater discharges.

Typical pretreatment on-site is by passing through a grease arrestor which traps most of the grease, oil and fat and suspended solids in the wastewater stream discharged from the food preparation area and equipment cleaning operations. This is the almost universally employed device for treating greasy wastewater, I am advised. The program for managing greasy wastes in this way has been in place for at least 30 years. While remaining mindful of the costs borne by individual customers, SA Water has aimed to protect the general expectations by its customers to minimise the frequency of sewage blockages and other negative impacts associated with trade waste discharges from commercial customers to an acceptably low level.

Ms CHAPMAN: One of my questions was how many do you expect to install?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is these are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and judgements are made on their merits. There are about 9,000 trade waste customers, I am advised. I am also advised that arrestors smaller than 1,000 litres are much less likely to consistently achieve acceptable discharge quality so, as I said earlier, there will be a case-by-case basis judgement.

Ms CHAPMAN: Because this is a prerequisite, and for all the reasons you say it is necessary to do, is there any expected delay in the upgrading of these treatment works which, of course, ultimately receive this waste for the purpose of processing?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is no, the impact is really through the greases and fats which block pipes and sewers, so by reducing the amount of grease, fat and oil that goes down the pipes, we can make efficiency savings in terms of having to replace the pipes less often and having to clean them less often.

Ms CHAPMAN: Thank you, minister.

The CHAIR: Thank you. As it is after 3 o'clock, and there being no further questions, I declare the examination of the proposed payments to the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources and administered items for the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources completed.

Membership:

Mr Treloar substituted for Mr Whetstone.

Mrs Redmond substituted for Mr Pederick.

Mr Marshall substituted for Ms Chapman.

DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET, \$95,827,000
ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET,
\$7,930,000

Witness:

Hon. I.K. Hunter, Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation, Minister for Water and the River Murray, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation.

Departmental Advisers:

Mr J. Hallion, Chief Executive, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Ms N. Saunders, Executive Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division.

Ms A. Reid, Group Executive Director, Arts and Cultural Affairs, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr J. Loulas, Manager, Financial Performance and Strategy, Corporate Operations and Governance, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Ms S. Bartlett, Manager Strategy and Support, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division.

Ms F. Ward, Director, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division.

Mr B. Morris, Executive Director, Corporate Operations and Governance, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr S. Webster, Ministerial Adviser.

Mr T. Mooney, Chief of Staff.

The CHAIR: I declare the proposed payments open for examination and refer members to Agency Statements, Volume 4. Minister, you might like to make a statement.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am very pleased to be here today with you all. This is a very important portfolio and a very important process that we are going through. This is a portfolio that has a direct impact on South Australia's Aboriginal peoples, many of whom are among the most disadvantaged members of our community.

I would like to recognise and thank my parliamentary colleague the Hon. Paul Caica for his contribution to the portfolio in the first half of this financial year, as well as during 2011-12. Aboriginal Affairs is both challenging and rewarding and I know that those who worked with Paul during his time as minister appreciated his commitment and his professionalism. In my time as minister, I have been encouraged by the energy and the commitment evident in the wider community, three tiers of government, the NGO service sector and, of course, in the Aboriginal community to deliver positive outcomes for Aboriginal South Australians.

The South Australian government remains committed to working with all stakeholders and across all areas of government to ensure that Aboriginal South Australians are able to take advantage of all that is available in our state. We are transparent in our commitments which are published in plans and agreements like the South Australia's Strategic Plan, the National Indigenous Reform Agreement, the Overarching Bilateral Indigenous Plan and the various portfolio specific documents that are guiding our efforts. We expect to be held accountable for achieving the objectives set out in these documents.

We are working collaboratively with Aboriginal people to tackle the most challenging issues at both a strategic policy level through structures such as the SA Aboriginal Advisory Council, and the Office of the Commissioner for Aboriginal Engagement and, at a local level, for example, through the Urban and Regional Strategy at Port Augusta and in northern Adelaide. In particular, these local initiatives are achieving substantial success in ensuring that local Aboriginal people have a strong say in the decision-making that affects their communities.

We are also continually reviewing the way we are working and how we could do it better. The Aboriginal affairs portfolio is a dynamic one. Governments need to continually review

structures and functions to ensure that they remain responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people, organisations and our service providers.

Recently, I worked with the Premier to identify some necessary changes to the focus of the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. To ensure that the division is in a position to drive policy and function in a strategic and targeted way, we decided to move the more service-focused functions into line agencies that have similar service responsibilities for the wider community.

This does not mean an abrogation of responsibility but, instead, represents a more effective way of doing business, we believe. Indeed, the transfer of a service-focused function from the Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division does not necessarily mean an end to the division's involvement in the issue. It simply means that leadership for the issue is passed to a department that is better placed to deliver outcomes in that service area.

Even with the most effective government structures and systems in place, addressing issues that have existed for generations is not easy but we are beginning to see results. In 2012, South Australia had the highest rate in the country (69.4 per cent) for school retention rates for Aboriginal students from years 7/8 to year 12. The SACE completion rates for Aboriginal students increased from 78 per cent in 2010 to 83 per cent in 2011. The gap to non-Aboriginal students decreased by three percentage points during the same period—12 per cent to 9 per cent.

For the five-year period from 2006, the national peri-natal death rate for Aboriginal children from 20 weeks gestation to 28 days after birth was 12 per 1,000 births compared to 8.1 per 1,000 for non-Aboriginal births. In South Australia the Aboriginal death rate, which has gradually reduced over the past decade, was much lower—4.7 deaths per 1,000 births.

In 2011-12, SA also had the lowest rate nationally of repeat homelessness amongst Aboriginal people who have accessed homelessness services. That is 6 per cent compared with 8.5 per cent nationally. We have improved our services to older Aboriginal people, and we now have the highest rate nationally of Aboriginal people using home and community care services (365.6 per 1,000 compared with 219.1 nationally).

I am also very pleased to reflect on a number of our recent achievements in the areas of reconciliation and community healing. First, the amendment of the South Australian constitution to acknowledge and respect the Aboriginal peoples of South Australia as the state's first peoples was a significant step forward for reconciliation. It was a proud day for the parliament, and I hope for the state, when the Legislative Council passed the amendment bill on 21 March in front of around 100 Aboriginal South Australians and their supporters. I am also pleased to announce that a reception to celebrate the event is being held by His Excellency the Governor at Government House on 11 July.

Secondly, the community consultations were completed on the draft Aboriginal lands trust bill across the state. This process has been a good example of how to properly engage Aboriginal people in decisions that affect them and their communities. The numerous community consultation sessions, as well as the guidance provided by the all-Aboriginal reference group, has ensured that the review of the act has been undertaken in an open and informed manner.

Finally, there has been the completion of two new APY lands family wellbeing centres at Amata and Pukatja, with a third at Mimili due for completion in July-August. The services delivered through these centres aid in the healing and the welfare of significant numbers of young people, families and communities experiencing a range of physical, emotional and relationship difficulties. We also expect to deliver a range of new and important projects over the next 12 months, including a South Australian Aboriginal languages interpreters and translators policy framework and action plan, which will complement a national framework for Indigenous interpreters; implementing a statewide infrastructure plan for regional and remote Aboriginal communities in South Australia; and finalising legislative reforms for the Aboriginal Heritage Act and the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act.

We are also working hard, in partnership with the commonwealth and Northern Territory governments, to lay the foundation for a 12-month cross-border interpreter trial program in the APY lands, which will begin in the next few weeks. This intergovernmental project will reform longer-term service planning in South Australia as well as provide opportunities to implement the soon to be finalised national and South Australian interpreter policies. I am confident that the groundwork that we have laid this year for this project and many other key policy and service delivery areas will pay dividends into the future.

This is a complex portfolio and, to achieve results, we need to work closely with and listen to Aboriginal people and their communities and their organisations. We also need to work cooperatively and in partnership with both the commonwealth and local governments, as well as a wide range of service delivery and advocacy bodies. There are some important initiatives that we are working to progress; for example, the place-based work in Port Augusta and northern Adelaide, the development of a regional partnership agreement for the APY lands, and the exploration of a regional governance or regional authority model. I am ready to take questions, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. Leader of the Opposition?

Mr MARSHALL: No opening statement, Madam Chair.

The CHAIR: Thank you; we much appreciate that.

Mr MARSHALL: My first question is with reference to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 100. In fact, they are all coming from either page 100 or 101, so I am happy to give that reference for all of my questions.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Thank you, leader; that helps.

Mr MARSHALL: That makes it a lot easier. My first question relates to the funding for the APY Executive Board. This year's budget highlights that there will be an additional sum of money paid to the APY Executive. Can you tell me whether this is a one-off grant or is it expected to lead to a permanent increase in the amount of funding the government provides to the APY Executive each year?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My understanding is that this is one-off additional funding.

Mr MARSHALL: Can the minister outline to the committee how this additional funding will be used—what specific programs or projects this additional funding will be used specifically for?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The advice I have is that it will be used for assistance in change management processes and delivering on the legislative requirements of the act and to ensure that appropriate internal management and financial systems and controls are in place to improve corporate governance and accountability. For instance, it may well go to being utilised for having someone in from KPMG to assist in the accounting programs, for example; it may well be utilised for training in terms of governance matters.

Mr MARSHALL: Are you suggesting that KPMG and training will form part of that additional money?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am just suggesting that those are examples of what it could be used for.

Mr MARSHALL: I see. Can you tell the committee whether any of the money will be used to establish an APY office here in Adelaide?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My understanding is that that is a possibility we will entertain, but there would need to be a good rationale for accepting that.

Mr MARSHALL: Are you suggesting to the committee that an additional, I think, \$564,000 is allocated to the budget this year but that at this stage it is not known whether any of that will be applied to an office, and it is not known if any of it will be going to KPMG or for training? How did you arrive at the \$564,000? It seems like an extraordinarily specific number, given that we have only a couple of examples of how it may be utilised.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that it was arrived at considering potential budget outlays for a finance officer (salary, for example), salary for the general manager, salary for a policy officer, and also some infrastructure outlays (for example, updated or new IT equipment).

Mr MARSHALL: Thank you. How much money, in total, will APY receive from the government this year to administer the act?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I can advise the committee that in 2011-12 the budget for the APY is \$1,157,226. In 2012-13 the budget increased to \$1,368,766 and in 2013-14 the budget is projected to be \$1,824,480.

Mr MARSHALL: Just for clarity, does that come out of the line Grants and Subsidies?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is yes.

Mr MARSHALL: I would like to ask some questions regarding both the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act and the Aboriginal Heritage Act. Can the minister update the committee on the current time frame for introducing legislation to reform the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act 1966?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My intention is to introduce the ALT into parliament this calendar year.

Mr MARSHALL: Can the minister outline what outstanding issues, if any, need to be resolved before the legislation to reform the act can be introduced into parliament?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The short answer is that we are considering the responses from the community consultation. It is worth realising that we started this process in December 2012, I understand. There were a number of meetings with Aboriginal communities and other key stakeholders commencing on 11 February and held across the state until 15 March 2013, which is when the consultation period ended. The reference group was appointed, including a number of notables, and their job was to participate in community and other consultations including:

- provide advice on planning and engagement;
- provide a link between the legislative review team and DPC-AARD with key Aboriginal organisations to advise on draft legislation; and
- review the issues relating to planning.

As I said, the report is currently being prepared, summarising the issues resulting from all that consultation, and that will be presented to me very shortly. Additionally, of course, a good audit will need to be done in terms of the property holdings of the ALT, but that can happen concurrently.

Mr MARSHALL: Can the minister clarify for the committee when he thinks consultation on the review of the act began? Is December 2012 correct?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised a draft bill for the repeal of the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act 1966 and the re-enactment of new legislation was released for public consultation in December 2012.

Mr MARSHALL: With respect, can I point out that, in your own government's budget documents going back to 2008-09, you state that you commenced a review of the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act some time in that 2008-09 year so, in fact, your review has already been going for at least five years. It is a bit disturbing that you think that it has only been going for less than a year.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Just to clarify for the honourable member, this consultation was on the new legislation. It is not the review: it is a consultation on the new legislation.

Mr MARSHALL: Can the minister outline to the house why, five years ago, you were highlighting that consultation on the review had begun? What have you been doing for five years? Every year, between 2008-09 and this year, we get the same highlight, the same target, which basically says that you are reviewing the lands trust act and you are reviewing the Heritage Act, and we never seem to get anywhere.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The honourable member seems to be failing to acknowledge that we have actually got draft legislation. Is he actually suggesting that we proceed with draft legislation without consulting communities? I think he probably is not. The draft consultation commenced, I am advised, in late 2012; it is now 2013, and my advice is that I will be tendering that legislation to parliament this calendar year.

Mr MARSHALL: Assuming the legislation is passed, what additional funding, if any, has been allocated to support the proposed changes to the Aboriginal Lands Trust Act? Specifically, I am referring to the establishment of the commercial development advisory committee which the government is proposing.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr MARSHALL: It is Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 101. I am asking whether it is in the budget. The government is proposing to introduce the legislation by the end of the year. I think it is a reasonable question to ask whether there is money being set aside for the establishment of this new advisory committee they have called up in their draft legislation.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is—and apparently I have not advised this publicly previously so you are in for a scoop—that, in December 2012, cabinet approved an adjustment of the DPC-AARD budget to allow \$2.5 million of the total \$7.6 million allocation for Aboriginal

heritage reforms to be applied towards the implementation of approved Aboriginal Lands Trust reforms. In 2012-13, that totalled \$600,000; in 2013-14, that will be \$612,000; in 2014-15, \$624,000; and in 2015-16, \$636,000.

Mr MARSHALL: Does any of that specifically relate to the establishment of this—I think you were referring to it in your draft legislation as the commercial development advisory committee.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I do not have a breakdown of the figures here but I can say that the amount I just read into *Hansard* is, of course, additional to the current base grant funding that they receive.

Mr MARSHALL: Minister, I am sorry, but does this body already exist, does the commercial development advisory committee already exist? I thought this was what was planned in your draft legislation.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that it is an existing board under the ALT but there is no existing authority that you have referred to.

Mr MARSHALL: That is my question, and it has been for some time now: is there any money set aside to meet this new committee's work?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that the current board will continue to exist under legislation but there will be an economic board which will be a subset of that board to work on activities that will allow economic advantages.

Mr MARSHALL: In your pre-budget announcement on 3 June you said that there would be \$3.6 million to cap, close and replace landfill sites. On the budget paper that we are looking at the moment, Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, the dollar amount is \$1.6 million, not \$3.6 million. Is that because there is \$1.6 million this year and then over the subsequent two-year period there is \$1 million in each year, for example?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The honourable member is correct.

Mr MARSHALL: You said earlier in your introductory remarks that AARD's role has been refocused toward policy advice and away from service delivery functions. Why has the funding not been provided to a department or agency with expertise in managing landfills, for example?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that it was our intention to transfer responsibility but we are currently going through a negotiation process to determine who shall be the lead agency.

Mr MARSHALL: So, indeed, that role of the landfill capping project may actually move to another department soon?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Outside of AARD, that is correct.

Mr MARSHALL: I have some questions with regard to the APY task force. What is the total budget of the APY task force in 2013-14, and has all of the money in this budget already been allocated for specific programs or projects?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that total funding for the APY task force statewide is \$6.101 million of state funding and it has been allocated.

Mr MARSHALL: So, the entire 6.101—

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Sorry; that is for 2012-13.

Mr MARSHALL: So, what is it for 2013-14, because that is what the question was, and how much of that budget has actually specifically already been allocated versus how much remains unallocated at this point in time?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that in 2013-14 funding of \$6.248 million has been allocated, and you could expect the funding distribution will be similar to that in 2012-13. If you would like I can give you a breakdown of the 2012-13 funding: substance misuse rehabilitation facility, \$1.077 million; swimming pools maintenance (Mimili, Amata, Pipalyatjara), \$482,000; families and communities, community services (aged, disability, young families, homemaker programs through DCSI and youth programs), \$2.355 million; environmental health program through SA Health, \$360,000; rural transaction centres through DPC Services, \$289,000; food security strategy through DPC-AARD, \$490,000; APY projects and programs through DPC-AARD, \$823,000; and depreciation on staff housing, \$225 million.

Mr MARSHALL: Just for clarity, that was the 2013-14 allocation?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: No, sorry, it was 2012-13, and a similar amount of money has been allocated for 2013-14. You can expect with food security that the allocation will be in a similar vein.

Mr MARSHALL: So, if in 2012-13 \$490,000 was allocated to the food security project and it is about the same the next financial year (the one we have just come into now), how much of the food security allocation will be spent on the market garden program?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: For the APY lands garden program, the APY lands food security strategic plan 2011-16, the year 2 evaluation report released in April 2013 recommended that the existing APY lands gardens program be consolidated and included in the stronger educational focus. An amount of \$2,468 I am advised was spent for hardware, netting infrastructure for the garden beds. The current year-to-date expenditure for gardens is \$17,783, comprising—

Mr MARSHALL: We are only two days in.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: That is 2012-13. An amount of \$14,955 consists of wages paid to local residents, \$360 for seedlings.

Mr MARSHALL: With respect, my question was about what will be spent on the market program this current financial year, not what was spent last year.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that we will be transferring to another department, the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, \$40,000, for the garden program.

Mr MARSHALL: So the garden program is being transferred out of AARD into DCSI with about \$40,000, which is in the budget for this financial year? Two days in you will transfer that budget to another agency to deliver the program—is that correct?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: No, DCSI will be overseeing the food security strategy, as I outlined in my introductory remarks, but DECD will be getting the \$40,000 because, as I also said, we will be transferring the garden program to an educational focus, supporting DECD and the development of school gardens.

Mr MARSHALL: For clarity, the money remains within AARD, but DCSI will deliver the food security program and DECD will be doing the garden program?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Essentially that is right. The amount of money that will be transferred to DECD was \$40,000 for the garden and food security program. DCSI will take over all responsibility for food security.

Mrs REDMOND: Referring to the description and objectives at the top of page 100 of Volume 4, there are a series of statements that the department is to drive coordination and implementation of policies for Aboriginal affairs across government and develop strategies to improve service outcomes for Aboriginal people in, amongst other things, remote areas of South Australia. Does the department have any understanding or any figure on exactly what the government as a whole, through all its departments, services and agencies, actually puts into the APY lands on an annual basis?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is yes, we do. We have recently gone through an exercise with the commonwealth government to arrive at the state total spend, and we are currently compiling that with the commonwealth expenditure.

Mrs REDMOND: Will that be made publicly available?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My expectation will be yes.

Mrs REDMOND: Any idea when?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I cannot give you that answer, I am afraid; there are other things happening in Canberra that might have an interesting wrinkle on the delivery of that.

Mrs REDMOND: Is the minister able to give us an indication as to whether it might be before the end of the year, for instance, when events in Canberra should have settled somewhat?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: That would be my hope.

Mr TRELOAR: I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 4, page 100 concerning the description and objectives of the department. Can you outline what the government is doing to address alcohol and drug abuse amongst Aboriginal people living in the state's regional centres?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that we have developed responses for various regional areas in the state, including Port Augusta, Coober Pedy and Ceduna. They are similar in breadth, and I will give you some examples in respect of, perhaps, Ceduna.

As you know, a coronial inquiry was conducted into the deaths of six Aboriginal people aged between 33 and 43 years who died in the vicinity of Ceduna between 2004 and 2009 from various medical conditions linked to alcohol consumption. A further two Aboriginal deaths occurred in similar circumstances in 2011; however, these were not included in the inquest.

The Deputy State Coroner released his findings in the report now known as the Sleeping Rough Inquest report on 11 November 2011 and he made recommendations for all tiers of government. There are ongoing concerns about the continued abuse of alcohol by a small number of Aboriginal people in the West Coast region of South Australia and the impact of this behaviour on their safety and wellbeing.

SA Health led and coordinated an immediate across-government response to the Coroner's report, I am advised. Identified agencies developed action plans to address the recommendations. DPC-AARD acknowledges the findings of the Coroner's report and is committed to working with all tiers of government and community services to address the problems associated with alcohol misuse.

On 1 March 2012, the Hon. Jenny Macklin MP (Minister for Indigenous Affairs) announced a \$20 million Closing the Gap initiative—Breaking the Cycle of Alcohol and Substance Abuse in Indigenous Communities. This commonwealth initiative provided \$4.3 million in funding over three financial years—2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14—to develop and implement alcohol and substance abuse management plans in key communities including Ceduna, Yalata, Koonibba, Oak Valley and Scotdesco.

SA Health provided funding to relocate the sobering-up unit to the Ceduna District Health Services building and extend service provision to 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The unit was operational from 17 December 2012 and has a capacity of 20 beds, and is operated by Ceduna/Koonibba Aboriginal Health Service. SA Health funding has enabled the purchase of a new mobile assistance patrol bus and an extension of the service to 24 hours, seven days a week.

The Ceduna hospital has implemented a service to transient Aboriginal people via the Drug and Alcohol Services South Australia Ceduna Day Centre on a weekly basis by the Better Care Team who provide chronic disease management, out-of-hospital services and health checks. This service commenced in September 2012 and, to date, they have undertaken 289 health checks, I am advised, and have made 25 referrals to local GPs.

Housing SA has funded Centacare to provide a homeless outreach team in Ceduna. This service began operation on 2 April 2012. DASSA opened the Ceduna Day Centre on 16 March 2012. The centre provides support to people living in Ceduna and surrounding districts who are experiencing problems caused by substance misuse.

DASSA is partnering with the Aboriginal Health Council of South Australia to deliver a three-year Aboriginal Alcohol Prevention Project through to June 2014 to build capacity in the Aboriginal community to manage and prevent alcohol related issues.

Ceduna District Health Service also implemented a range of ongoing strategies to provide improved and more culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal people, including a step-down unit, increased employment of Aboriginal staff, improved Aboriginal community engagement and increased use of ngangkari (traditional healers).

The Ceduna Aboriginal Corporation is the lead agency for the West Coast Regional Alcohol and Substance Misuse Action Group, comprising representatives of key stakeholder agencies and organisations. It has developed an action plan to address drug and alcohol issues within the West Coast community. Consultation included local Aboriginal communities and homelands. The action plan has been circulated recently for feedback and comment prior to implementation of the multifaceted plan. Most recently, at my request, the CE's Group for Aboriginal Affairs agreed that DCSI should be the lead state government agency responsible for service planning and coordination in Ceduna.

On 21 June minister Macklin announced a number of initiatives designed to address alcohol and substance abuse in the town and surrounding areas. These include:

- \$190,000 to SANFL to run its Active Communities program;

- \$150,000 to the Ceduna Aboriginal Corporation to employ a youth coordinator;
- \$100,000 to the Koonibba Aboriginal Corporation for the employment of a community engagement officer;
- \$160,000 to the Catholic diocese of Port Pirie to improve coordination of services to rough sleepers;
- \$140,000 to Ninti One for a local community awareness and education program; and
- \$125,000 to Ninti One to explore a number of program options, including undertaking consultations to determine whether income management would be a useful tool for that community.

Mr TRELOAR: Supplementary if I may, Madam Chair, or are you still going minister?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: No, I am done.

Mr TRELOAR: Thank you, minister, for outlining a great number of action plans and programs. How does the government intend to measure the effectiveness of these programs?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that each of those programs that I have mentioned have funding agreements with the commonwealth and built into those funding agreements are evaluation processes, so they will be part of the regular business of each program.

Mr MARSHALL: My question relates to the Grants and Subsidies line on page 100 under Expenses. The budget for the last financial year for grants and subsidies was \$4.459 million. The estimated result for that year was \$3.569 million. Can the minister outline to the house what was budgeted for that was not delivered?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that the decrease in expenses predominantly reflects the reprofiling of funding associated with the Aboriginal Heritage Act and Aboriginal Lands Trust Act from 2012-13 to 2014-15 and 2015-16.

Mr MARSHALL: What specific expenditure would be associated with the Aboriginal Heritage Act?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that a key component of the expenditure was for the provision for the employment of Aboriginal parties as representatives of heritage bodies for specific areas of the state to consult with and represent the interests of all traditional owners.

Mr MARSHALL: I am still not sure what that is: it is \$1 million worth of expenditure that was going to be paid to whom that has been, essentially—as you referred—reprofiled, but I gather what you mean is delayed by a year? If it is going to be ongoing, as you have indicated, what will we be spending \$1 million on per year in relation to the Aboriginal Heritage Act?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I apologise because I did not hear the honourable member just then as I was getting an explanation for the previous point. My advice is that we have moved \$1 million out of the 2012-13 budget year and split it up between two of the out years—half, \$500,000—because of the delay in getting the legislation before the parliament.

Mr MARSHALL: I understand that but my question really is: who is that money going to be paid to and for what services?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that I do not have that level of detail with me and I will have to take that question on notice and come back to you with an answer.

Mr MARSHALL: Thank you. How many full-time equivalent staff did AARD have at the end of the financial year on Sunday? How many does the minister envisage will be in AARD on 30 June next year?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I refer the honourable member to page 100. At the bottom of the chart you will see FTEs as at 30 June with actual budgeted and estimated results.

Mr MARSHALL: Is this 30 June 2013 or 30 June 2014, in the first column?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: If you look at the chart, it goes from 2011-12 actual on the right-hand side through to 2013-14 budgeted.

Mr MARSHALL: So my question was: what will it be at the end of the year? There is no column for that.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is, again, looking at that table, at the end of 2013-14 the FTE equivalents at 30 June will be 43.7.

Mr MARSHALL: In other words, to answer my question, on Sunday it was 48.6 and in a year's time you are going to lose 5.1 staff members out of AARD, roughly.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Yes, just with the proviso that the figure you are referring to in the column is an estimated result; but, otherwise, generally you are correct.

Mr MARSHALL: I suppose I would have envisaged that, given you have announced a pretty substantial reorganisation of the department, taking a lot of service delivery roles out and moving into other agencies, there might have been a significantly lower number, but you are saying just five for the year. Is that correct?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The answer to that question or statement from the honourable member is that the staff are being outposted to line agencies. They will still be on AARD's books, if you like. Whilst money has been transferred to other agencies to conduct the business that will be put into mainline agencies, the staff who will be transferred will still be AARD staff. They will be outposted into other departments like DPTI, DCSI, etc. I think we have indicated that that situation will last for 12 months in the first instance.

Mr MARSHALL: How many AARD staff are going to remain in AARD, versus the ones who are seconded out to other government departments?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that they all will be AARD employees, given my explanation a moment ago. Five will be outposted into the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion.

Mr MARSHALL: Thank you. Is AARD planning to establish any new positions as part of the refocusing of its role and, if so, what are these new positions and what is the estimated cost of those in this budget?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My advice is that we are not planning any new positions at this moment.

Mr MARSHALL: Can I ask a question about the Mintabie township? Again, I am wondering whether any of the grants and subsidies or the task force money contained on page 100 is allocated towards issues particularly around drug and alcohol abuse at Mintabie.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: A slightly difficult answer. We are supplying funding to support the APY, as we discussed earlier. Part of that will be to finalise the licensing requirements at Mintabie. I am advised also that we have funding in DPC-AARD for a stores compliance and education officer, and that role will be part of our plans for this financial year. My advice is that we have had trouble filling that position, but the funding is there and this year we will be looking to delivering the outcomes in a different manner.

Mr MARSHALL: Sorry, minister, what was the title of the position?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It is a stores compliance and education officer.

Mr MARSHALL: Is there any role there to do with alcohol or substance abuse at Mintabie and has the government any funding going to that area for that program?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: My understanding is that there is not direct funding for that particular title but, again, I come back to our funding to APY to finalise its licensing agreements at Mintabie. APY Executive has also introduced by-laws, I understand, so that it is permissible to consume alcohol within Mintabie only at the hotel or at special licensed events. So, some of the funding provided to the APY Executive is for this purpose, but it is not separately itemised, if you like.

Mr MARSHALL: So, at the moment, you do not have somebody in this role, but the funding remains and you are seeking to find somebody. Is the minister aware of the media coverage that exists regarding the practice of book-ups at Mintabie and does the government have any program to address this issue?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: In short, I think that it will be addressed through the licensing issues at the stores. As some members would know, the 21-year statutory lease on the Mintabie township to the Crown expired on 1 October 2002. Since that time, the APY Executive Board has provided a series of interim lease extensions to allow sufficient time for a new lease to be

negotiated. A new lease was signed in April 2012, and the legislation to support the new arrangements was proclaimed on 1 July 2012, I am advised.

Under the new arrangements administered by the Department for Manufacturing, Innovation, Trade, Resources and Energy, commercial licences will be issued following approval by the APY Executive. Conditions of these licences aim to eliminate inappropriate and/or illegal commercial and credit practices within the Mintabie township. For instance, some stores are known to use book-up, as the honourable member asked, or informal credit, which allows customers to purchase goods or services and pay the store or trader at a later time. In some circumstances, credit is extended if a customer is prepared to leave their key card and PIN number, which significantly increases opportunities for theft and fraud and unfair or unconscionable conduct.

Licence restrictions will also restrict motor vehicle sales and business conduct, including credit practices, and the use of petrol other than Opal fuel. As I said earlier, the APY Executive has introduced by-laws about alcohol consumption.

Going back to the earlier point about the stores compliance and education officer, I did say that we are having trouble filling that position. What I hoped to convey was that we will creatively look at ways that we can get the outcomes we are after through other processes. We are planning to have discussions with relevant agencies in order to identify possible options in lieu of the stores compliance and education officer position, but utilising that funding to get the outcomes we are after.

The CHAIR: Minister, what is that position for? Is that for the Anangu or for the white community in Mintabie? I am not quite sure what the position involves.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I suppose the position is there to supervise the regulations and licensing conditions that would be placed on the stores by the APY Executive. So it is a compliance officer role.

Mr MARSHALL: How long has that position been unfilled?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: It was advertised in November 2012, so approximately eight months. I am reminded that some of the difficulties and complexities in filling this position and settling the role of this officer are because we have to do it in partnership with the commonwealth government and also the APY Executive. That has caused some difficulties there.

Mr MARSHALL: How long was the previous incumbent in that position? Have there been any previous breaks in service?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: That position is a new one, so there has not been a previous incumbent.

Mr MARSHALL: One of the highlights in the budget is the conversion of the Amata Substance Misuse Facility into a family wellbeing centre. Can you advise the cost of that conversion, and where that appears in the budget?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I am advised that in September 2011 the state and commonwealth governments announced that three family wellbeing centres would be constructed in the APY lands. The family wellbeing centres, located in the Mimili, Amata and Pukatja communities, bring together suites of family support programs and other services that previously operated from less than perfect facilities.

The services for the family wellbeing centres are provided by the Department for Communities and Social Inclusion, Country Health, the Department for Education and Child Development, and some non-government service providers funded by both the commonwealth and state governments. The lead agencies responsible for each centre include DCSI for Mimili, Country Health for Amata, and DECD for Pukatja.

The family wellbeing centres steering committee, chaired by the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation Division, has provided oversight of the project. Its membership comprises representatives from the commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, DECD, Country Health, DCSI and the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure.

The Pukatja and Amata family wellbeing centres are now completed, and were handed over to the responsible agencies on Monday, 8 April 2013. The Mimili centre is still under construction, with completion planned in late July/early August 2013. The original completion dates for the three family wellbeing centres ranged from mid-2012 through to December 2012. Delays in

completing the centres were principally caused due to tender prices for the scope of works required by the agencies exceeding the project budget, and for Mimili a protracted community consultation to finalise a suitable site.

The total budget for the three family wellbeing centres is \$5,418,465 which consists of \$5,217,000 from commonwealth funding, \$4.5 million from FaHCSIA (originally allocated for a new courts and administration centre), \$717,000 from interest earned on the \$4.5 million, and \$201,465 from DECD for the Pukatja centre.

Mr MARSHALL: But my question was: how much did it cost to convert the Amata Substance Misuse Facility into the Amata Family Wellbeing Centre?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I do not have that level of detail with me at the moment, so I will have to take that question on notice and bring back a response.

Mr MARSHALL: While we are on this topic, what was the actual role of AARD in this? My understanding is that these are now not under the auspices of the department so you have it as the main highlight for the year. What was the role of AARD in this process of setting up these family wellbeing centres?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: Essentially, the role of AARD was one of coordination. AARD was responsible for negotiation with the commonwealth. We also chaired the family wellbeing centre steering committee and also, of course, were responsible for coordinating the negotiation with the APY. Most importantly, I understand in terms of these budget matters, AARD was the holder of the money.

Mr MARSHALL: I have a final question on—

The CHAIR: You can have one more question, member for Norwood.

Mr MARSHALL: My final question is regarding regional dialysis. There has been more media coverage recently regarding the provision of renal dialysis, infrastructure and service delivery on the APY lands. Can the minister update the committee on this situation and whether any negotiations have taken place with the commonwealth regarding that? What money has the commonwealth government put on the table, and will the state government be matching it and contributing to provide this important service on the APY lands?

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: The answer is no. This is a matter that is the responsibility, quite squarely, of the Minister for Health in another place.

Mr MARSHALL: We would like to read the omnibus questions.

The CHAIR: I need to clarify that with you. Are you prepared to accept the omnibus questions that were asked at the start of the day as part of this? Our understanding is that the omnibus questions cover all portfolios.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: That is my understanding but, if it is any different, I am happy to take them on notice, in any case.

The CHAIR: Are you happy with that, leader?

Mr MARSHALL: Yes, thank you.

The CHAIR: Thank you very much, everyone. It has been a very long five days. I particularly thank you and your advisers today, minister Hunter. I also especially want to thank our clerks, who have spent many hours sitting here with us and certainly helping me when needed. They get paid for it, but I wonder whether it is worth it. Also, I would like to thank the chamber staff for the work they been doing. Minister, I am sure you would want to thank all of your advisers: I bet they have spent weeks getting ready for today.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I do, but I will just ask whether you have closed the line before I do that.

The CHAIR: I have not closed it yet. There being no further questions, I declare the examination of the proposed payments for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and administered items for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet completed.

The Hon. I.K. HUNTER: I thank the committee for the spirit in which we conducted the affairs today. I enjoyed it immensely and would be very happy to come back and do it again tomorrow. I thank all of my staff—departmental and personal—for the immense effort that goes into preparing the agency for estimates. Whilst I am very pleased to do it, I am sure there is a huge

amount of resources in the department which could be better utilised. I am very happy, next time, just to take a letter with questions on it and we can have the day off, but I will leave that to others in another place to determine a better way forward.

The CHAIR: Thank you, minister. I lay before the committee the draft report.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: I move:

That the draft report be the report of the committee.

Motion carried.

At 16:04 the committee concluded.