

**HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY****Friday, 24 July 2015****ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B****Chair:**

Mr L.K. Odenwalder

**Members:**

Hon. P. Caica

Mr T.S. Bell

Mr S.J. Duluk

Mr E.J. Hughes

Mr D.G. Pisoni

Ms D. Wortley

*The committee met at 10:00**Estimates Vote***DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, \$2,654,287,000****ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT, \$244,596,000****Minister:**

Hon. S.E. Close, Minister for Education and Child Development, Minister for the Public Sector.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr T. Harrison, Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms J. Riedstra, Deputy Chief Executive, Resources, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr C. Vetere, Acting Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms J. Johnston, Chief Education Officer, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr T. Ryan, Chief of Staff.

**The CHAIR:** This is a relatively informal procedure and, as such, there is no need to stand to ask or to answer questions. I understand that the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition have agreed on an amended timetable.

Changes to the committee membership will be notified as they occur. Members should ensure the Chair is provided with a completed request to be discharged form. If the minister undertakes to supply information at a later date, it must be submitted to the committee secretary by no later than Friday 30 October to be published during the sitting week of 17 November.

I propose to allow the minister and the lead speaker for the opposition to make opening statements of about 10 minutes if they wish. There will be a flexible approach to giving the call for asking questions. A member who is not a part of the committee may ask a question at the discretion

of the Chair. Questions must be based on lines of expenditure in the budget papers and must be identified, identifiable and referenced.

There is no formal facility for the tabling of documents; however, documents can be supplied to the Chair. All questions are to be directed to the minister not the minister's advisers; however, the minister may refer questions to advisers for a response. Television cameras will be permitted to film from both the northern and southern galleries.

I now propose to open the portfolio Education and Child Development, so I welcome the Minister for Education and Child Development and her advisers. I declare the proposed payments open for examination and I refer members to Portfolio Statement Volume 2 and now I call on the Minister for Education to make a statement if she wishes and to introduce her advisers.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I would like to make a brief opening statement. Prior to doing that I would like to introduce the advisers I have with me. On my far left is Jayne Johnston and next to her is Tony Harrison. On my right is Julieann Riedstra and behind me are Tim Ryan and Carmine Vetere.

This government is proud of its record in education. We have invested more in education every year since we came to office and this year is no exception. The budget for Education and Child Development for 2015-16 is \$3.354 billion. This is a total funding per student of \$15,575 a year, which is double the level it was in 2002.

We believe in providing world-class services and facilities for children and families from birth right through their education so that children have the opportunity to reach their full potential. This budget continues our work in fulfilling our education commitments and includes significant investment in early childhood and school facilities.

Since 2005, South Australia has been developing a network of children's centres for early childhood development and parenting for children from birth to aged eight, and their families. Delivering on our election commitment, we are increasing the network of centres to 47 and expanding services in existing centres. The budget contains a \$50 million investment in new early childhood facilities, as well as school upgrades in Adelaide's north, south and west. This includes our \$7 million investment in revitalising Fremont-Elizabeth City High School.

We are also continuing to honour our commitment to the full six years of the National Education Reform Agreement, known as Gonski, with \$229.9 million in additional funding across the full six years. This state budget recognises that investing in our children is one of the best investments we can make for our future. It demonstrates this government's ongoing commitment to ensuring South Australian children get the best start in life.

**The CHAIR:** Does the member for Unley have an opening statement?

**Mr PISONI:** I will go straight to questions, if I may. Minister, I would like to take you first of all to your ministerial office and the ministerial office resources, which is Volume 2, page 13, where you have a budget of 11 staff. However, a full version of those staff who are allocated to your office is circulated to ministers and government members but not to opposition members of parliament. With this figure of 23 staff, could you advise how the additional 12 staff are funded?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I understand this is a question that is asked of most, if not all, ministers and that there is distinction between what is recorded in the Agency Statements and the number of bodies on the ground. The 2015-16 budget for the Minister for Education and Child Development's office, as set out by DTF, is \$1.706 million with an allocation of 11 FTE, and there has been no change to the number of FTE employees between 2014-15 budget and the 2015-16 budget. I will take on notice the detail of the number of people in the office and where their funding comes from.

**Mr PISONI:** I also want to get a breakdown on the total expenses for school education of just under \$2.8 billion. In your opening statement, you referred to an average amount of just over \$15,000 per student allocated. Are you able to advise how much of that average amount per student is spent on school, staff and services within schools; in other words, the money that is allocated once the overhead for head office is removed?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am advised that the \$15,000 is based on the total expenditure, as you have identified, and so we will take on notice breaking that down further.

**Mr PISONI:** If you are doing that, can we get some comparisons for last year as well?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, I am able to do that for the previous year as well.

**Mr PISONI:** You have FTEs as of 30 June for the 2015-16 budget at 19,488. Are you able to advise how many of those are placed in schools?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I can give you a partial answer now, because we are able to identify who is allocated to the Education Act workforce as opposed to the Public Sector Act workforce and the Children's Services Act workforce.

**Mr PISONI:** Does that mean that those who are hired under the Public Sector Act do not work in schools?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No, they may do, so that is why I am trying to—and some from the Education Act may be working in head office in order to help all schools rather than their own school. If you would like those figures, I can give them. This is FTEs and it is as at the last pay day, dated June 2014. The Education Act workforce is 23,541; the Public Sector Act workforce is 3,070 and the Children's Services Act workforce is 1,875.

**Mr PISONI:** The Children's Services Act, they would predominantly work in the early childhood centres, would they?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That is correct; predominantly.

**Mr PISONI:** Are you able to outline your TVSP targets for next year and over the forward estimates?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We have not yet set specific TVSP targets.

**Mr PISONI:** Have you received any direction from Treasury?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We have received no direction on TVSPs. We have our budget to manage.

**Mr PISONI:** Okay, so the budget amount for 2014-15 is \$19,289 in school education. That is moving to \$19,488 for 2015-16. Where will that growth come from? Considering that enrolments in the schools over the last 10 years have declined and just in recent years have remained stagnant, with only differences of 100 or so, where are those additional school education staff going?

**The CHAIR:** Member for Unley, which line and page are you on? Where are you looking at?

**Mr PISONI:** Where we have been talking about all the time. There has been no shift; it is page 21.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We are quite unashamed about the fact that we are spending more on schools, more on education. The way in which that is then treated, the increase in the budget, is allocated as an FTE estimation in the budget.

**Mr PISONI:** Okay, so there is an actual figure of 19,758.6 FTEs in 2013-14 and there was a budgeted amount to finish 2014-15 year on of 19,289. What was the estimated result; again it is an increase on the actual amount of 2013-14, when in effect there was a budget to reduce that amount by 500. Could you explain what has happened there?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Given that this is a movement that has occurred year on year in, it appears to be the way in which the figures are managed, so I will ask Ms Julieann Riedstra to give you a more detailed answer on how that works.

**Ms RIEDSTRA:** In relation to the FTE figures, they represent movements in the FTE cap through the financial year, so as programs are rolled out in schools, as this is program 2, adjustments will be made through the financial year as the program is implemented as a staffing measure, for example. As we roll into next financial year we return to our cap or base of FTEs, and as movements occur through the financial year again, those changes will be reflected in the estimated result.

**Mr PISONI:** Do those numbers include employees on leave without pay, so those who might be working elsewhere but have not given up their permanent status?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am advised that the actual is a paid point in time, so people who are being paid at that point in time.

**Mr PISONI:** So how many of those people are on leave with full pay?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will take that on notice as it is not available to us here today.

**Mr PISONI:** Can we have a breakdown of the reasons why they are on leave with pay?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will provide that to the extent that we are able to provide that.

**Mr PISONI:** We do not need to know who they are. And you will also provide the numbers who are on leave without pay as well, in other words, they are working elsewhere but have not relinquished their right to return?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will take that on notice as well and provide it to you.

**Mr PISONI:** How many TVSPs were offered in 2014-15 and how many were accepted?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am able to give you figures for two financial years: for 2014-15, I am advised that 88 employees were separated, and as at 22 June 2015, 16 employees have been separated.

**Mr PISONI:** Were any of those who accepted separation packages on leave without pay?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will come back with that detail.

**Mr PISONI:** Also the number who were on leave with pay, if we could have that number?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will come back with the breakdown that we are able to give.

**Mr PISONI:** Could you also advise whether any of those who were offered or received separation packages had gone through disciplinary processes or, alternatively, were in the process of going through disciplinary processes or had been advised that they would be going through a disciplinary process?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** To the best of our database's capacity, we will provide that to you.

**Mr PISONI:** Is it also possible to have a breakdown of the number of teachers in high schools and the number of teachers in primary schools? I do not know whether you have that figure now or whether you will need to come back with it.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** In absolute terms for 2014-15, is that what you are asking? How many teachers in primary schools and how many teachers in high schools?

**Mr PISONI:** Yes.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We do not have that with us; we will also take that on notice.

**Mr PISONI:** Could I also have in actual number terms the levels at which teachers are paid at, including those who are on the top level.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** To the extent of our database we will provide that information to you.

**Mr PISONI:** Are you also able to advise how many teachers have been removed from schools and working elsewhere in the department for reasons that there were concerns raised about either their performance or their behaviour, or they had been put on leave with pay for that reason?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** To the extent of our database capacity, I am always happy to take those kinds of specific questions on notice, but I would like to expand a little because there could be an implication taken from the question that there is a view that management of poor performance with teachers is to remove them from the school but to continue to employ them. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that we have taken high-performing teachers and the obverse, the management of poor-performing teachers, very seriously.

In saying that, I would like to make it clear that I do not believe that there are many poor-performing teachers but you cannot pretend that there are not any. What we have been at pains to do is support principals in their management of staff.

As the member would be aware, we recently made an announcement about ways in which we would make that a simpler and more straightforward process, and a more well-supported process for principals, whereby in the identification of the teacher not performing to the extent that the principal wishes them to, that we are providing support through having people come into the classroom and observe the performance of the teacher, and also support to the principal in an HR sense—a human resources management sense—recognising that principals have so many jobs to do. They are not only the lead teacher and the chief educator for their school but they are also in some measure running a business; they are running an organisation.

So we have offered the support of the HR assistance to guide through the process of the management of the teacher should it reach the point where separation is required, and we have also undertaken, once the documentation is prepared with that assistance, that that will be managed expeditiously in central office. We are very eager to see an increase in the overall standards of teaching generally, and specifically the good management, the firm management of poor performance.

**Mr PISONI:** Are you able to provide for the 2014-15 year, the number of teachers who have either started or been advised that they would be going through a performance management review?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We do not have the numbers with us, so we will provide that.

**Mr PISONI:** Also, last year were there any teachers who were terminated after a performance management review?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It has occurred; I will get you the precise number.

**Mr PISONI:** As part of the changes—and I welcome the announcement that I heard you make—will there be any requirement to make any changes to the enterprise bargaining agreement, particularly with regard to the personal advisory committees, for example?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The arrangements which I have discussed and which you have indicated your support for do not require a change to the enterprise bargaining agreement; they are able to be undertaken under the existing industrial processes.

**Mr PISONI:** One of the issues that has been raised with me by a lot of teachers is the 'must' clause with regard to face-to-face teaching time in the enterprise bargaining agreement. My understanding is that prior to, I think, the 2012 enterprise bargaining agreement the word 'may'—with regard to payment of overtime—was changed to 'must'.

That caused a flurry of concern amongst primary school teachers and there was quite a bit of media at the time, a couple of years ago, I think. It was interpreted that teachers who, for a very long time had been sitting having their lunch in the classroom for 10 minutes prior to the playtime at lunchtime, that that was considered as face-to-face teaching time. Consequently, once the word 'must' (about being paid overtime) replaced the word 'may'—this is the feedback I have had and I am just asking for clarification—it gave principals no opportunity to accept teachers who wanted to volunteer that face-to-face teaching time.

As we know, teachers are very dedicated and they enjoy the kids and they enjoy their work, and so we saw in many primary schools a reduction in the school day of 10 minutes a day. I am asking you, minister, whether any consideration has been given to looking at changes in the EBA that would actually encourage the vast majority of teachers who want to give everything they can to their students to be able to do that without it being a default position where the department must fork out the money.

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** While the minister is thinking about the answer, what line is this one? I am trying to follow it.

**Mr PISONI:** I am not taking questions from you, Paul, I'm sorry.

**The Hon. P. CAICA:** No, I know that. I am just asking—

**The CHAIR:** Order! Member for Colton, order! Perhaps you could just remind us which one—

**Mr PISONI:** We are talking about school education and full-time staff.

**The CHAIR:** You are talking about the FTE line; that is the link you are drawing.

**Mr PISONI:** They all have a cost. They have to be managed.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Is the discussion concluded?

**The CHAIR:** Minister, you have the call.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Members will be aware that we are currently going through the enterprise agreement negotiations. I am not minded to canvass matters that are being discussed in that process in this public place, so I will not be answering questions that relate to the enterprise agreement.

**Mr PISONI:** I know that in other states school service officers can qualify to have duty of care. I am asking whether the department has done any work on seeing whether that could happen here in South Australia? What it means, of course, is that yard duty can be done by school service officers and school sport can be conducted by school service officers. It is done in private schools, it is done in schools interstate, but I understand there is some resistance here by the Australian Education Union to allow school service officers to have that duty of care, despite the fact that they qualify for that position, and to be recognised through their salary or some other way for the additional responsibility.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Given the attraction between considerations about that and the enterprise agreement negotiations, I will not be canvassing that matter either.

**Mr PISONI:** Thank you. Could I take you now to the education and early childhood development staff in the budget. I will just see if I can find that page.

*The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:*

**Mr PISONI:** Thank you. There has been a staff reduction in that area. Last year I think we saw that there were about 40 staff, this year I think it is down to 17. I am just wondering if you are able to explain the mechanics of how that worked, whether it is a shift from one area to another or—

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am wondering if we could be more precise about which page you are looking at. We are happy to wait.

**Mr PISONI:** Yes, I do not think it is 16. I will find it.

**The CHAIR:** Can you give us an exact line?

**Mr PISONI:** The Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board, this is on page 41, the cash flows. You can see the estimated budget there was \$3.9 million, the estimated result, and the estimated budget for this year is \$1.956 million. I think I saw somewhere else in the budget papers that that also had a reflection on staff numbers, which would make sense because we are looking at half the amount of money from one year to another. Are you able to explain what has happened there? It relates to school education because the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board registers schools and also registers for schools to have the capacity to have foreign students.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** If the member for Unley is okay, we would rather hold this for the administered items so that I have a different set of advisers here to respond to that question.

**Mr PISONI:** Alright, we can go back to that then. I would like to get some explanation on some revenue items in the Budget Statement paper, page 53 and then page 55. There is a line that refers to school revenue; the estimated amount for this year is up \$2 million from the budgeted amount but it grows from that figure to nearly \$138 million in the forward estimates over the next four years. Are you able to advise where that revenue comes from?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The increase for the 2015-16 budget for school revenue, when compared to the 2014-15 estimated result, is due to the standard indexation of 3.1 per cent. We also

note that this is a budget figure, and the actual school revenue collection at each school for school fees could be based on a standard fee or higher, if schools are successful in polling their school community, as well as other actual revenue. The school revenue line includes the following: revenue items received by schools, materials and services charges, subject charges and other student charges—for example, school camps and excursions are all included.

**Mr PISONI:** That money does not go back to the department: it stays with schools—

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That is correct.

**Mr PISONI:** —and the schools report on that—

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That is correct.

**Mr PISONI:** —and that is how you achieve that. Schools revenue, on page 55, which is a lower figure—the estimated result is \$34.5 million—what is that made up of?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** If you turn the page to page 56, at the top it says that the schools revenue includes fundraising and canteen revenue, excursion fees. So in my previous answer I should not have said excursions; that was not included in it. It is out of school hours care fees and commonwealth grants that are paid directly to the schools.

**Mr PISONI:** So those out of school hours care fees, have they reduced since the government encouraged outsourcing? I think they were always able to but they were discouraged; now they are encouraged to outsource out of school hours care. Are schools still earning an income from outsourcing that? What impact has that had on schools? I imagine most of them that actually chose the outsourcing were losing money; that is the experience I have had as a parent.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** My understanding is that where an out of school hours care service has been provided other than by the school itself, the standard arrangement is that the site is rented out to that service, and therefore there is revenue that comes to school from the rental.

**Mr PISONI:** Who determines, first of all, what the rent is? Who manages the tender process for that and who evaluates the tender process and awards the successful tender? I know there is a list that the department has approved for those participating in the process, but I would like to know whether it is a school decision or whether it is a department decision.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Schools make the decision on which provider they wish to enter into an arrangement with. We do provide a panel so that there is a suite of offerings for them to choose from. I sign the contract as the minister because it is a legally binding contractual relationship and I hold that delegation, but it is on the advice of the school and the decision that has been made by the school.

**Mr PISONI:** With regard to school uniform contracts, who makes that decision?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Again, that is essentially a school decision. We do assist with the tender process and I sign the contract, again, in that legal capacity, but it is a school-based process.

**Mr PISONI:** Is that a policy decision, that it is a school-based decision, or is that something that is required by regulations or the act?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is our understanding that it is a policy decision. We have a school system in South Australia that is towards the autonomous end of the spectrum. We endeavour to allow schools to make decisions that relate to their own school community as much as possible.

**Mr PISONI:** I did find a reference to the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board on page 13, outside of administered items, that piece that I was looking for that refers to the staff numbers. Obviously, I had seen that previously and that is why I was planning to ask questions on this matter in this part of the process.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Thank you for locating that. Your question about the number of 40 now makes sense to us. The variation is essentially due to the 2015-16 state allocations under the National Quality Agenda for Early Childhood Education and Care and has yet to be determined by the commonwealth government; hence, the 2015-16 budget does not yet reflect a salaries and wages budget. The commonwealth has indicated funding for programs to at least 2017-18.

**Mr PISONI:** Concerning the process for the review of school registrations, there is a report that is available online, 15 February, that has a snapshot of where all the states are with their quality rating process as of 31 December. South Australia's portion of the services for quality rating is at 27 per cent compared with states like the ACT and New South Wales at 58 and 59 per cent, the Northern Territory at 66 per cent, Queensland at 47 per cent, Tasmania at 61 per cent and Victoria at 61 per cent. The only other state at 27 per cent is Western Australia. Was there a delay in allocating funding to the early childhood registration board and was there any delay in the registration process in South Australia?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We are in the process of commencing that work and we are behind where we would like to be; I believe we are over 30 per cent now. But we have been working in the last few months very hard to increase the rate of assessment.

**Mr PISONI:** Was the funding provided by the department in August last year?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** What I would like to do is hold an answer to that question until we have the admin items towards the end of this session so that I can have the board itself assist with that.

**Mr PISONI:** And that work is being done by contractors; is that right?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is being done by the board employees, as I understand it. But I will wait—

**Mr PISONI:** There was not a contract let?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** —for the board to come and answer that question in more detail.

**Mr PISONI:** I take you to the review of schools, their registrations. I refer you to the Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act that came into force in 2012.

**The CHAIR:** I am sorry, member for Unley, what budget line are you looking at?

**Mr PISONI:** This is the Education and Early Childhood Services Registration and Standards Board which says you had 40 employees.

**The CHAIR:** You are talking about the board.

**Mr PISONI:** There are two areas: the endorsement of a registration with approval to enrol full fee-paying overseas students. There is this requirement in part 1 of section 49:

If the board is satisfied on application under this section that a registered school has satisfied the requirements set out in the regulations for the purposes of this subsection...

Minister, I have tried madly to find the regulations the board must use in order to do this. I have had several people in authority also looking for those regulations and it appears as though those regulations do not exist.

The other problem we have is with section 54, Review of Registration, which of course is very important in situations like, for example, the Islamic College. I understand the board had an oral briefing from crown law this month saying that, yes, registrations can be reviewed but that because there are no regulations it is subject to challenge.

I am just wondering if you can first of all explain to the committee if there are regulations that enable the board to approve the enrolment of full fee-paying students, endorsement of registration, and also regulations that specifically relate to the review of registrations. I understand that registrations were automatically given at the time of the act being proclaimed, but the review process is at risk because of the lack of regulations.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Again, this is firmly in the area of administered items, being the business of the board rather than the department. So, while I am happy to have heard the full question, we will come to you and bring you—

**Mr PISONI:** The regulations are the responsibility of the department, minister.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No, they are the responsibility of the minister and the board, not the department.



**The CHAIR:** The minister has indicated she is happy to answer your question as fulsomely as she can when her advisers arrive.

**Mr PISONI:** This is Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 21, Program Summary Expenses Income. In this case it is page 21, but we could look at various other sections—Supplies and Services on page 16 also, Early Childhood Development, and also Schools on page 21. I have had a lot of inquiries about school cleaning contracts and how since there have been increases in the penalty rates for cleaners—I think they kick in at 6pm and stay there until 6am.

Prior to those changes, schools were managing their cleaning contracts with cleaners coming in after hours. Was there any adjustment made to school budgets for cleaning when the increased penalty rates came about? If not, is the minister aware whether there has been a direction, or are principals now bringing cleaners in during school hours in order to avoid those penalty rates?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Schools are fully funded for cleaning within normal hours, ending at 6pm. We are unclear about the start time; we will confirm that. We think it is 7 in the morning, but we will confirm the start time. Given that the standard school day is significantly shorter than that, and given the capacity for schools to have various spaces empty even during their school day, I believe that that is a reasonable approach to fund them for that to occur. Some schools may choose to fund a different arrangement, but that is their decision to make.

**Mr PISONI:** So who drafts the tender documents and who decides who gets the tender for a school?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** There is a standard set of tender documents and there is the capacity within that to allow variation from the specific requirements of the school. The school can ask to have that included and the central people will facilitate that variation in the document.

**Mr PISONI:** Are schools responsible for the variations, or do they have to request those variations and have them approved by the department?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is not a matter of approval from the central office; it is a matter of the schools choosing what they want to have in there.

**Mr PISONI:** Have schools been told that areas that may have been included in previous contracts cannot be included in new contracts or new tender documents, for example outside areas or under cover play areas that might not have walls, or things like that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Given that we are getting into the fine detail of what appears in tender documents, I will ask Ms Julieann Riedstra to give you some of that more operational-level detail.

**Ms RIEDSTRA:** There is certainly a standard arrangement for cleaning and a standard set of documents. As each school works with the procurement area on their particular area, we work through things like whether they have two-storey buildings, the amount of outdoor area and toilets they have, and those sort of things. Schools can ask for particular variations to the contract, but I would not be able to answer the question in a general sense, it would have to be more on a school by school basis.

**Mr PISONI:** Are you able to advise what the total cleaning bill is for government schools here in South Australia for this year, what is the budget for next year and what was the budget in 2013-14?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We do not have it with us at the moment. It is likely that we can provide it before the end of this session, in which case we will, otherwise we will take that on notice.

**Mr PISONI:** Again referring to page 21 and Program 2: School Education, relating to FTEs, or the second paragraph of your objectives. There is quite a bit of concern about the proposed changes to the IMS, about which I have been contacted from both parents and those associated with the IMS. Are you able to advise the committee how many FTEs are in the Instrumental Music Service?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I can give you a rough number, and we will seek to confirm more precisely before the end of the session. The rough number is around 100 staff—about 80 teachers and around 18 administrative support staff for the service.

**Mr PISONI:** Can we have the budget as well?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We believe it is around \$10 million, but again we will seek to confirm that before the end of the session.

**Mr PISONI:** A number of parents and those in the IMS received a letter that went out by Anne Millard to parents, headed 'Proposed new model for delivery of instrumental music education in South Australia'. The consistent criticism that came to my office was that it does not really explain what the changes will be. However, there are concerns that the changes will see more students doing music without any additional funding. Is there a plan to increase funding for the IMS in order to implement the changes that Ms Millard advised parents were coming through?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, I am a parent of an IMS student also, so I received the letter for consultation. There is a consultation process being undertaken at present following a fairly extensive review of different ways in which music can best be taught to the most students possible, so that consultation is being undertaken at present and we will review what people's reactions to that are, but it is with the goal of improving music tuition.

**Mr DULUK:** Minister, in regard to IMS, can you confirm what roughly the FTE will be for the year going forward under the new proposal—IMS FTEs.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As you aware, we are confirming the current FTE, but we are not proposing to reduce the FTE through this process.

**Mr DULUK:** What about through any other process to reduce the FTEs?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Sorry, I did not mean to use that as a qualifier. This is not about reducing FTEs in music; this is about better provision of music teaching.

**Mr DULUK:** So through this process there will be no reduction in IMS FTEs?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That is not what we are looking to do at all.

**Mr PISONI:** Will there be any expansion of contractors being used to provide the service, or businesses that provide music to schools?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The use of private providers is not part of what is being discussed in the consultation process. It is about the instructors who are on our staff and the best use of their skills and their capacity to teach. One of the challenges that the review is responding to is, where a student does not show up for the day, the teacher drives out to the school anyway and spends a lot of time not teaching, so the goal is to tackle that problem.

I would like to re-emphasise that we are in a consultation phase and nothing has been finally determined, and we are interested in hearing other thoughts that people have about different ways in which music could be taught, in addition to the options that are being put forward through the consultation phase.

**Mr PISONI:** So the use of private providers is not ruled out? Is that what you are saying—that that is something you will consider?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The teaching of music is done in a variety of ways through our school system and there are hourly-paid providers that are contracted through schools—

**Mr PISONI:** Parents pay for that, though.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** —paid for by parents. That is separate and in addition to what we are looking at which are the staff who we deploy through the IMS.

**Mr PISONI:** Yes, but I am asking whether there will be contracted teachers under the banner of IMS or whether they will continue to be departmental staff.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That is not the intention, and that is not what we are looking at.

**Mr PISONI:** So you are ruling that out; is that what you are saying?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Where I am not wanting to mislead is that we have a complex way in which music is offered through the school system. So the experience of a parent with kids in school is that they might have one learning a particular instrument through IMS and another learning through an hourly-paid instructor that the school has arranged because that is the way they are doing that particular instrument.

So for a parent there is a diversity of ways in which they might experience their children learning music, but this review and the consultation that we are going through is not about taking the 80—and we will be precise about that number, but around 80 instructors—and changing the circumstances under which they are employed industrially. It is about getting the maximum value out of the very important role that they are capable of playing in teaching students music.

**Mr PISONI:** Can you just clarify this for me: we are parents who paid for our daughter to do piano at Unley High and Unley Primary, but I never thought that was part of the IMS program.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No.

**Mr PISONI:** So those who are paying a fee at the moment are not using the IMS and anyone who is using the IMS is not paying a fee; is that correct?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes. I am in the same circumstance as both my children do piano through an hourly-paid instructor, and one of them is doing an IMS instrument on top of that so it is the same sort of experience. They are separate services. The hourly-paid is arranged essentially through the school and the IMS is a central offering. The review is looking at the IMS, not at the hourly-paid.

**Mr PISONI:** But what I am asking is: are any fees charged to parents whose children use IMS now?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Not for IMS, no.

**Mr PISONI:** Will that be the case under the new model?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** There is no proposition that this is about charging for something that is not currently charged for.

**Mr DULUK:** Under the proposed IMS changes, will students who are currently at schools that do not have a performance ensemble still be guaranteed access to those ensembles externally throughout the process after the change?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am going to turn to the chief executive to talk a little bit more about the detail of what is proposed through the review process.

**Mr HARRISON:** If I can go back a little bit, I guess I am talking probably in excess of 12 or so months ago, it was brought to my attention that the reach, in relation to the capacity of children being subject to tuition through the IMS, had the potential for improvement, not only in numbers but across the categories of schools: categories 1 to 7.

The statistical information provided to me suggested that there was a weighting towards the category 4, 5, 6 and 7 schools and not so much the disadvantaged schools—the 1s and 2s—which raised a concern for me as to an equity basis in relation to the IMS teachers and educators, but it also was an issue in relation to down time owing to travel. There were some missed opportunities when there was not good coordination between schools coordinating the availability of children, facilities and locations with that of the IMS staff, and the overall cost in relation to travel budgets and so forth.

It seemed like it was a reasonable proposition to have a review of the IMS, along with a number of other internal reviews for different business units within the department. I personally met with most of the IMS staff in December 2014 as we announced the review process, and it was as recent as June/July, in the last couple of weeks, that I also met with most of the IMS staff to announce a proposal to move away from a two-hub deployment model, north and south, into a special focus school deployment model with an outreach program.

That is subject to consultation and I can say that, as recently as 8.30 this morning, I was actually talking to an IMS teacher who is looking to put forward a design of a hybrid model on the current model and what the proposed concept high-level model is. On Wednesday night I spoke to an IMS educator for 45 minutes in relation to their individual concerns and ideas and I spoke to an IMS teacher last week in relation to their concerns and also new design ideas as well.

The reason I say that is that we are very much enlisting the IMS educators to be part of the new design process, whatever that does look like, and I have been labouring the point for many months now (since December last year) that there is no agenda in relation to what the new model should look like. There are no decisions in relation to what the new model should look like but there is a sense, for me and also IMS teachers, that there are opportunities to improve the efficiency of how those 80 teachers are utilised, the reach for students, and ensuring that we actually have the equitable situation across categories of schools.

We certainly appreciate that there are some limitations in relation to the reach because there are 80 IMS teachers and obviously we have in excess of 500 schools across metropolitan and country locations, so we have to be pragmatic and sensible in relation to what can be improved in this particular area.

However, I reiterate the point that there are no agendas here to actually fix a particular model. There are certainly no decisions made by me or the review team or in discussion with the minister with respect to what the new design should look like, and we strongly encourage the IMS group of teachers to actively participate—as many of them are—in the consultation process and the new design.

It was also Tuesday morning that I made a school visit to Rose Park Primary School. I generally visit at least a school each week. I actually met with the music coordinator from Rose Park who also provided me with some feedback in relation to some ideas that should be taken into consideration with the new design model. Some of those, can I say, seem to be very sensible as well.

So, I guess if I can finish on that point, just to stress that this is extensive consultation, looking for improvements for service delivery. That is really where it is positioned at the moment and over the coming weeks and months and, hopefully, starting for January 2016, we can actually land an improved service delivery model for the IMS group.

**Mr DULUK:** I suppose, through you Chair and minister, my concern or query is especially with a student who may be doing, say, stage 1 performance music through an IMS provider and there is no guarantee that next year that student may be able to do stage 2 music performance because there will not be the ensembles happening. What guarantee is there that a student who has decided to take a stage 1 and 2 performance music path, that when they roll up to do stage 2 next year they will actually be continuing that?

**Mr HARRISON:** We can guarantee that. That has been factored into the consultation deliberations, that we must ensure that continuity for students in those positions that you have just described, particularly for stage 1 and 2. We think it is absolutely essential to make sure that we maintain that continuity for that purpose. This is not about undoing largely current arrangements for the reach for children currently, or ensembles for that matter, it really is about the future, for not only next year (2016) but for many years into the future where we can ensure that we are getting the best value, parents are getting the best value and children are getting the best value, in relation to those very specialist teachers that we have available in our system.

**Mr DULUK:** So, minister, you can guarantee that no student doing stage 1 performance, especially, will be disadvantaged next year through the IMS proposed changes?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, I can.

**Mr PISONI:** Just on that same topic. I do not know whether you have the numbers now or whether you need to bring them back, but two queries: how many students are IMS students in the government system, and do you measure the length of time that they are in actual fact students? As you know, lots of kids try—

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Give it up.

**Mr PISONI:** —and the challenge, of course, is to keep them performing because it is a terrific thing for them. Do you measure whether the average time is two years, three years, or whether it is seven years? Do you have start-ups at the beginning of the year; the number at the end of the year? How many who start, perhaps, in year 3 and are still in the IMS program by year 7? Do you keep those records?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Currently, we teach about 7,500 students in a year, that is around the reach of the service. The evidence is that within a year about 20 per cent of students will discontinue learning.

**Mr PISONI:** Every year, did you say?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Within a year about 20 per cent will stop.

**Mr PISONI:** That is not bad, actually, hanging onto 80 per cent of them in the first year. That is pretty good.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I have a figure here but I am questioning quite what it means. It does not pass my initial scepticism, which is that from one year to the next 50 per cent of students stop tuition. That needs unpacking. That does not intuitively make sense.

**Mr PISONI:** You think that is a bit high?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It must be an average overall of the year, so it might be that great stopping that occurs in high school, around the mid-year range of high school, when academic studies can become a preoccupation or other interests, so it may not be particularly meaningful. I would like the opportunity to see what the metrics are that sit behind that. I can also give you—

**Mr BELL:** It could include the year 12s who are finished, so they are not taking it up next year as well.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** If it does then that would be extremely distorting, would it not? Yes. So, I would like to interrogate that figure a little more. I imagine the 20 per cent is not too inaccurate. I now have more precise figures on the FTEs involved in the IMS service. In the 2014-15 budget 81.3 FTEs are teachers and 5 FTEs are in admin. For the 2015-16 budget 81.3 FTEs are teachers, which is staying the same, but only 1 FTE is in admin. We are being a bit more efficient in how we run it.

**Mr PISONI:** Finally, are you able to advise how many of those 500 students are in the ensembles?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The 7,500 students—

**Mr PISONI:** No, how many of the 500—how many students did you say there were?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is 7,500.

**Mr PISONI:** Of the 7,500 students, who are in the ensembles?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We do not have that here. If we have it we will provide it in due course.

**Mr PISONI:** If I could take you to the Budget Statement paper, page 135, under education there is a budget item of \$30 million for transport of students. I suspect that is the school bus program.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will confirm if there is more detail, but my understanding is that it is not only the bus service but also the travel allowances provided—

**Mr PISONI:** That could also be, what, taxis for disabled children and that sort of thing?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will confirm what sits within that.

**Mr PISONI:** Can we have it broken down, if that is okay? We would be happy if you could bring that back, if you have how much is for the bus service, etc. That would include the bus service, though, wouldn't it?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We are willing to break that down, we can provide that to you. Because it is at the highest level we need to be clear about which part of the education act it covers.

**Mr PISONI:** Does it include the school bus service though?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It certainly includes that; it is what else it might be that we need to confirm.

**Mr PISONI:** I would like to ask a question on that. The review that was promised on the school bus service, is it still the government's view that the review would not recommend an expansion of the service or an increased budget for the service?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The way in which the review was established by my predecessor was that it was to be done within existing resources; it was a review about the efficiency of the current deployment of resources and its reach within that envelope.

**Mr PISONI:** And that review is due when?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am uncertain whether a date was given by my predecessor for the completion of the review. It has been some time, as I have indicated in parliament. I saw a draft that I did not feel was sufficiently robust, and I have asked for some more work to be done.

**Mr PISONI:** The FOI officer in your department advised me that there would be a redacted review, or a revised or executive version of the review, available in August. I would like to see the—

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am not sure why an FOI officer would have a view about when a review would be completed.

**The CHAIR:** The minister need not comment on telephone conversations that you may or may not have had.

**Mr PISONI:** No, it was not a telephone conversation.

**The CHAIR:** Okay.

**Mr PISONI:** The budget seems very flat. It was an estimated result of \$29 million this year, and the budgeted amount was \$30 million—

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We are still talking about the transport figure?

**Mr PISONI:** Yes. Are we seeing fewer students using the bus service now than what there were five years ago or are we seeing the same number of students, or more students?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I do not have the detail with me. I can say that our understanding is that there are fewer students using the service than five years ago, but we do not have the detail to give you.

**Mr PISONI:** Is that because there are fewer students in government schools in regional South Australia?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It would be impossible to draw that inference, given that it is about eligibility, therefore where the student lives and the structure of regional communities. The diminution of families on smaller holdings in the farming community and larger holdings with fewer staff is probably part of the explanation as well, so it would be difficult to draw a firm inference from that figure.

**Mr PISONI:** It is my understanding that South Australia is the only state that does not offer the transportation service to non-government schools. I asked the parliamentary library to see if they could find out what was happening in other states around Australia. I am just asking if you could advise the committee why it is that here in metropolitan Adelaide students who go to non-government schools are entitled to student discount on the bus. They are treated no differently to students who use government schools; however, those who use non-government schools in regional South Australia are not provided for in the school bus system.

We understand that if there is room on the bus they can use the bus, but we also understand that there are a number of buses that came into use under recent contracts where there has been

growth, for example, in the non-government sector in Clare, where there were fewer students using government schools and so the bus was actually smaller because the tender documents only calculated government use. Are you comfortable with that policy which is a policy that treats non-government school students differently to government school students only in the regions when it comes to transport?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** On your first question on a comparison with interstate, we could not confirm that. We do not have the comparative data here.

**Mr PISONI:** Is it available? Is it kept?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No, it would be a case of doing the investigation that you yourself are doing through the library service. The question of how we treat students is that we, in fact, treat all students the same in regional areas. If they are eligible they are able to be taken to the nearest or the appropriate government school, irrespective of which school they choose to go to.

**Mr PISONI:** Yes, but metropolitan students can actually catch the bus to their own school. They do not have to catch it to somebody else's school.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Transport has a concessions policy that is applied, as in all places in the world, I imagine, based on age and so on.

**Mr PISONI:** It has the effect of treating government and non-government students in exactly the same manner, but you are comfortable with that policy? You do not have any plans to change that policy?

**The CHAIR:** The minister's comfort really is not at issue. You are saying that the Minister for Transport administers that particular policy.

**Mr PISONI:** No, I am sorry, you are wrong about the Minister for Transport. School buses are not the responsibility of the Minister for Transport.

**The CHAIR:** I am sorry. I misunderstood the minister. I beg your pardon.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Concessions.

**The CHAIR:** Concessions.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Concessions in the metropolitan system, of course, are the responsibility for the Minister for Transport. You are quite correct, Chair. The point is that there is a review being undertaken at present on the school transport policy.

**Mr PISONI:** But, of course, your attitude to this would be important in any review, so I am asking whether you think it is fair and reasonable that those students whose parents choose a non-government school in regional South Australia cannot use the department-provided school bus service when there are other department-provided services available to non-government schools, when students who are in government schools have access to that service.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** While the review is being undertaken I will not give a personal view. However, I want to clarify also that a further distinction for students in the country regions is that the school bus service that we provide to all students to the appropriate government school is free as opposed to metropolitan students, where there is a transport concession.

**Mr BELL:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 25. I want to spend a little bit of time looking at performance indicators, and of great concern to me are a couple of areas. One is the table with the percentage of year 3 students achieving the national minimum standard in reading and the percentage of year 5 students achieving the national minimum standard in reading. These two bands really stood out for me.

In particular, of grave concern are Aboriginal students. In the percentage of year 3s achieving the minimum standard we have seen a drop from 76.7 per cent down to 69.6. Of course, when you compare that with all students, which is 91.8, it flags as a major issue. I am wondering if there is any explanation why it is such a dramatic drop, even though many of these are trending down—which is also a concern—and what programs may be in place, particularly for Aboriginal students?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** NAPLAN is a standardised test that has its uses and its limitations. Its predominant use is that it is a standard test; it gives us the opportunity to expose all students to the same test and the same marking and, therefore, we are able to see where each student in each cohort in each school sits. Its limitations are ones that I have canvassed publicly previously, both as education minister and also as a parent.

It is important that the results of individual children are not overemphasised either in the school or within the family context. There are numerous reasons why any particular student might do well or badly on any particular test on any given day. It is also a circumstance of testing that suits some students more than others, and this is true of all of Australia. It is not about the comparative result but it is just a word of caution about an over reliance on NAPLAN for understanding what our students are learning and how students are performing.

There is a particular issue with NAPLAN at present prior to its going online, which is the delay between the testing that occurs in the second or third week of term two and the results which come out in term three. That means that feedback for a particular student's progress is extremely limited for that year.

With that as a context we are concerned about the results that we see in NAPLAN. It does matter to the education department; it does matter to the education system. There are numerous activities that are occurring at present which are aimed at improving the way in which the basics are taught and the basics are learnt—and by 'basics' I am using that as a shorthand way for describing literacy and numeracy. Literacy includes both writing and reading comprehension, and spelling and language 'conventions', as grammar now appears to be called. So, that involves the way in which they are taught, the way in which they are learnt, and the results that are at least partially reflected through the NAPLAN system of testing those.

I will, I think, turn shortly to the lead educator in our department, Jayne Johnston, to give some more detail about the ways in which we are addressing those. It has just been drawn to my attention, though, that there was a drop in reading for both year 3 and year 5 results from the previous year to this year across Australia, which suggests that something has happened in the test process that has affected everybody. The extent to which that explains it is, I am sure, arguable, because people love to argue over figures, but it is nonetheless worth noting.

You, quite rightly, have a particular focus on the results for Aboriginal students. We are extremely concerned to increase the education result for Aboriginal students. I was very pleased to see that South Australia leads the nation in preschool attendance by Aboriginal students. It is extremely important. It is something to be very proud of through that system, and we are also increasing the number of Aboriginal students who are completing their SACE.

When I talk to school students, I talk about the three things that really matter: they need to go to school, they need to attend school; they need to finish school, they need to finish with their SACE; and they need to do their best. One of the parts of the analysis we have done on the results in NAPLAN is that the leading tail, the top tail, is not doing as well as it could be. So, while we focus on all students, and we particularly focus at the disadvantaged end to make sure that any disadvantage with which they come into the school system is addressed, we also need to pay attention to stretching students. Do your best—it is not good enough if you can just pass; if you can do better, do better. They are the three messages I promote.

I would like to turn to Jayne Johnston to give you some of the very good initiatives that have been taking place to focus the attention at the school level—from the principal down to the teacher level, and within the partnerships that we have established—to really lift the literacy and numeracy standards.

**Ms JOHNSTON:** As the minister has said, we are very concerned to ensure that every child and young person in South Australia gets the best education possible, and their foundations in numeracy and literacy are absolutely critical. We have introduced a standard of educational achievement for South Australian government schools and part of that is in relation to NAPLAN, where we have set the standard not at the national minimum standard but at one band above. We have introduced that this year. Our schools are now monitoring their student performance in relation to that standard.



The standard also includes a number of other measures, and this year we have introduced to all schools progressive achievement testing (PAT) in reading and mathematics, which is a test that has been designed by the Australian Council for Educational Research. It is an Australian test; it is normed and there are tests for all years from year 3 through to year 10. Many of our schools were already using PAT-M or PAT-R, the maths or the reading, and they have very much welcomed now that we will be able to provide that to all our schools so that they can monitor more closely. The NAPLAN is every two years; this will give particularly our school leaders and teachers the opportunity to monitor student progress more closely over those years using an external test, which again is important to add to the judgements teachers are making about student progress on a day-to-day basis.

We have a series of other supports. We have 180 schools which have been trained in the use of QuickSmart, which is an intervention strategy for students who have, for whatever reason, missed some of those basics in numeracy in the early years. I am an ex-maths teacher; I know exactly what happens. They lose their confidence, so building the confidence of the children in those basic skills is really important. With QuickSmart, we are seeing some remarkable results around not only building their skills but also the confidence to be able to be challenged in their numeracy learning and their mathematics learning.

We have a new program that we are calling ResultsPlus, which is a deliberate commitment to improving literacy and numeracy. We are focusing that at our partnership level with our school leaders to increase their understanding of what the evidence tells us about what makes a difference in terms of intervening and improving literacy and numeracy but, more importantly, the 'plus' part of ResultsPlus is critical. We are increasing the focus on problem-solving skills and the engagement of learners because we know again from our evidence, as the minister mentioned, that we need to be pushing all our students, particularly those at the highest levels, to stretch their understandings and to build that breadth of basic skills.

We also have a Great Start website, which is an award-winning website focused on parents. On that website, we have a large range of resources that parents can access. We have averaged around 20,000 hits each month since its launch in November 2013, so those resources have been specifically designed to support what is happening in classrooms so that parents, particularly in those early years, can be part of the partnership around improving literacy and numeracy.

We have increased the focus for our schools through our accountability processes. We have introduced for every school an external review which is really focused on their data and performance and being able to work with schools to find those things that are really working and to identify those, but also to help those schools that maybe are not getting the lift in their performance about what they can do—that is every four years. For partnerships, every year each partnership is part of a performance review. Again we are focusing particularly around some of the performance data to drive the conversations at the partnership level.

I lead those conversations with the school leaders and the preschool directors. I think we have done 24 and there are two happening today, so 26 by the end of today across our 60 partnerships; we will have them all done by the end of the year. The feedback I am getting from our school leaders is that it is helping them to start to identify what some of their colleagues are doing that is really making a difference, and we are able to share our best practice much more consistently than we have in the past.

**Mr BELL:** I do not like to use the words 'poor performing', but prefer 'underperforming', but are schools that are struggling tracked by the department, and does it go down to an individual student level, where you can see that year in year out, this intervention either has or has not had any effect?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** There are two kinds of review we are undertaking: there is the partnership review, which is the collective of schools at the different levels, including preschools, and then there is the individual external review of an individual school. If I can speak briefly about the partnership review, I attended one fairly recently, and the data is forensic in what is provided for each school, and the principals for the most part are very impressive. They know who is in year 3 and who

is in year 5 who was in their year 3 two years earlier. So, that tracking is happening, and I can only imagine we will continue to do more of that very detailed tracking.

I am interested not simply for NAPLAN 3, 5, 7 and 9 but also for SACE completion, tracking each individual student: have we made sure that we have given every student the opportunity to count what they can count towards that SACE completion?

**Mr BELL:** Particularly Indigenous students.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Well, every student, but particularly Indigenous students, particularly students who have complex family lives.

**Mr PISONI:** Minister, can I take you to your objectives on page 21, Volume 2, to ask a question about school-based apprenticeships. Are you able to provide the number of students that were in school-based apprenticeships last year, and do you have any way of monitoring and can you report on how many of those school-based apprenticeships lead to paid full-time apprenticeships?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will take that on notice and that is partly because we want to make sure we are giving accurate information: what is held centrally, what is held in schools, what is held through the SACE board, so we will do that work and provide that to you.

**Mr PISONI:** Certainly. I would like to ask questions about specialist behavioural staff. This is Volume 2, page 12, objectives, again. How many specialist behavioural workers are currently employed by TAFE either as permanent employees, casual employees or alternatively contractors?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** You didn't mean to say TAFE just then, did you, you meant schools.

**Mr PISONI:** I beg your pardon. I am still recovering from yesterday's estimates.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will do our best to gather that for you and I think there is a question of the centrally-supported staff who we can account for, and the staff that are employed through the schools, and I do not think that 'behavioural staff' is a title that we use so it would be about staff supporting students with various forms of disability and/or behavioural management, which can cover a range—

**Mr PISONI:** Perhaps you do have 'behavioural schools'; you do not call them that but you do have 'behavioural schools' and if I could have, perhaps, the number of students in those schools, and whether there is any spare capacity in those schools.

In the Budget Statement Paper, which is Budget Paper 3, there is mention of the new city high school and I just want to ask questions about that if I may, minister. I thought I heard in media reports that your expectation was that in 2019 the school would open for only year 8s and 9s; was I correct in hearing that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The way in which the department will run the school is to do a progressive enrolment, so start in its opening year in 2019 with the first year or two of school and then allow it to build up through the years.

**Mr PISONI:** So how many students will be there in year 8 and 9 in 2019? What would the capacity be?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Given that it is a 1,000 student high school, the expectation is that it will be a couple of hundred in each of those first two years, so 400 for 2019 across year 8 and year 9 roughly.

**Mr PISONI:** Do we have any other school zones that share schools in South Australia?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No, I do not believe that we do. Not every school is zoned. Where schools are zoned, they have their own zone. At present we have what we are calling a 'catchment' for Adelaide. We will go through and process to determine zoning within that catchment for the two schools.

**Mr PISONI:** Okay, so I was under the impression that that was actually the expanded school zone. I think that is the language that the previous minister had used, but that is not a school zone that is a 'catchment' now?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I think the reason that I am trying to use two different terms is that when we are ready for the new school to open it will have a zone that is dedicated to it, as opposed to a zone that is dedicated to the other Adelaide High School. At present we have the amalgamation of two, and I am calling that a 'catchment' because the delineation between the two is yet to be determined.

**Mr PISONI:** So the claims that were made prior to the election, that students living in the announced zone—which you are now calling a catchment area—would be able to go to either school, will not be the case when the school is open?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is important to distinguish between zoning and enrolment policy. The enrolment policies will be determined, so students quite frequently go to a school that they are not zoned for but that the enrolment policy facilitates. I suggest we allow that process of delineating zone and also determination of enrolment policy to work through.

**Mr PISONI:** Will the enrolment policy enable those parents, who were told prior to the election that they would be in a zone for both schools, to choose the school in which they wish to send their child?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** There will be a process for determining enrolment policy and we will watch what that process comes up with, as all schools do.

**Mr PISONI:** Yes, we understand that, but I am trying to see if there will be a difference in what will happen in 2019 from what was promised before 2014. What was promised before 2014 was that those living in the expanded zone would be able to go to either school.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will confirm what the commitment was and we will meet our commitment.

**Mr PISONI:** If we accept that the commitment was that parents could choose either school, who determines it? If a parent wishes to choose Adelaide High School but Adelaide High School does not have room, what rights do the parents have to insist that the child goes to Adelaide High School?

**The CHAIR:** We are slightly veering off appropriations, member for Unley. Can you just remind me of the budget line that you are looking at?

**Mr PISONI:** This is Budget Paper 3, and there is a specific reference to a new city high school and the new city high school has a zone that is shared with Adelaide High School.

*The Hon. P. Caica interjecting:*

**Mr PISONI:** It is page 30 on the bottom, Paul, the last dot point.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will allow the consultation process for determining enrolment policy to go through and see what it comes up with, review what commitments we have made and align them.

**Mr PISONI:** But a shared school zone is not going to work, is it—two schools sharing one zone?

**The CHAIR:** You clearly do not have to answer that question.

**Mr PISONI:** It doesn't happen anywhere else.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The way that you have articulated it I do not believe happens, and I am happy to be corrected if it is the case in another two schools. As I said, there are schools that have no zone and therefore effectively share the students around them, and there are many students who go to schools out of their zone, for various reasons to do with the enrolment policies of those schools. We will allow that to work through for those two schools and make the decisions from that.

**Mr PISONI:** Has there been any work about closure of any schools where those who are in the new zone would have otherwise gone if the new school was not built?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** There is no work that I am aware of relating to the closure of schools. We do have, as you would be aware, an amalgamation policy: that is voluntary amalgamation where

schools may be interested in amalgamating either with another same level school—so high school to high school or a primary school and a high school—to manage the resources within a community, but nothing has come to me to suggest that there is a prospect of school closure.

**Mr PISONI:** Amalgamation, has there been any discussion on amalgamation of schools?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** There is constant discussion about where amalgamation might work. I imagine that occurs largely within the school community, within the governing council of that school, and I would not necessarily be aware of it.

**Mr PISONI:** Thank you. I am happy to move to administered items now, Mr Chair.

**The CHAIR:** Thank you, minister, thank you to your advisers. There are a couple of changeovers, I imagine.

#### **Departmental Advisers:**

Ms J. Riedstra, Deputy Chief Executive, Resources, Department for Education and Child Development.

Dr N. McGoran, Chief Executive, SACE Board.

Mr C. Shakes, Director, Office for Non-Government Schools and Services, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr C. Vetere, Acting Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr P. Claridge, Registrar for Non-Government Schools and Services, Education and Early Childhood Services Board of South Australia.

Mr T. Ryan, Chief of Staff.

**The CHAIR:** Yes, minister.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will now return to a question that was asked previously about the registration board.

**The CHAIR:** Yes. Could I just get you to quickly introduce your advisers and then go to that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** On my far left I have Chris Shakes. I also have Julieann Riedstra and Neil McGoran, who is the chair of the SACE Board, sitting next to me. Behind me still is Tim Ryan, also Paul Claridge and Carmine Vetere is still there. If I can return to the question that was asked previously about the registration and the existence of regulations in order to facilitate reviews of school registrations. There are, as I understand it, no regulations at present. The board is currently actively considering what regulations it might wish to recommend be enacted.

**Mr PISONI:** My understanding is that regulations are proclaimed at the same time the act is proclaimed.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Not always.

**Mr PISONI:** There are regulations proclaimed for managing early childhood, but there are no regulations proclaimed for the school review process. Can you advise why there has been a three-year delay?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Clearly, that pre-dates my responsibilities and I am not going to speculate on the reasons.

**Mr PISONI:** But you have advisers with you there, minister.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is not the case that regulations are always brought in at the same time as an act. It is currently under active consideration and it will come to me for consideration in due course.

**Mr PISONI:** The fact that regulations are referred to in the act and yet the regulations are not there to—

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The provision for regulation is often within an act. The decision about when a regulation is then constructed and gazetted, if that is the correct term, is a separate one.

**Mr PISONI:** My understanding is that the board cannot be satisfied that a school no longer satisfies them and hence the board cannot remove the endorsement. This is for students, registration for students, for schools to take foreign students. The way the act is written, if a school—this is with regard to section 49(1)—is deemed not fit to have foreign students anymore, they actually require the regulations to deal with that.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I have not received advice that regulation is required under those circumstances. Having had it raised by you here, I will seek that advice.

**Mr PISONI:** Are you also able to confirm whether the board was briefed by crown law, advising them that the review of schools could be challenged because there are no regulations, as per the act?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am not going to talk about crown advice, whether or not it has been obtained and not about what it might or might not contain.

**Mr PISONI:** Have you been advised whether some of the issues in dealing with the Islamic school are because of the lack of regulations, as required by the act?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The advice I have received from the board is that there is sufficient scope under the act to do the investigation of the circumstances of the Islamic College.

**Mr PISONI:** The question was about the review. According to the act a review can change the terms of a registration or it can remove a registration, but my understanding is that in order for the board to do its work it needs the backup of regulations—which are not there—for any review, any change to the conditions under which the school is operating.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We need to distinguish between a review, which is something that is anticipated after five years of registration, I believe, versus investigation of a particular concern that has been raised. The board is undertaking an investigation of the Islamic College, as the member would be aware. You have inquired about the circumstances of a review and whether or not they require regulation, and I have indicated that the board is actively considering regulation at present to recommend to me.

**Mr PISONI:** Are you sure about the five years?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No; I am sorry. That is a figure that has been thrown around, but it is not required in legislation.

**Mr PISONI:** I could not find it in the act.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** You are correct; I apologise.

**Mr PISONI:** I would like to move on just quickly. Could the SACE board define what subjects it describes as STEM subjects in South Australia?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The SACE board would define STEM subjects as those relating to mathematics, science and technology.

**Mr PISONI:** Would it define business enterprise technology, accounting, business and enterprise, communication products, information processing and subjects like that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Those subjects are defined under the heading 'Business, Enterprise and technology' as opposed to STEM. I must say that at first blush they sound like they have a lot in common as well, and the more students studying those subjects the better.

**Mr PISONI:** But they are not STEM subjects?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** But they are not defined as STEM subjects.

**Mr PISONI:** The details that the SACE board has provided the Strategic Plan, those that produce the Strategic Plan updates, show that there has been a significant drop off in ATAR pass marks in chemistry, physics and maths, and that is what is used as the term STEM. Can the minister explain why the target that was set in 2003 to increase passes in STEM subjects by 15 per cent to 2010 has been pushed out now to 2020, and in the latest update the advice to the people who put the Strategic Plan together is that it is unlikely to be met?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** When it comes to the enrolment numbers for those subjects, when you are talking about ATAR as opposed to—

**Mr PISONI:** ATAR pass marks are the benchmark that the Strategic Plan reports on every year and the latest update showed again another reduction compared to the previous year. It has the number of students back in 2003 as 3,973 students who obtained a pass mark as their ATAR and in 2013, which are the latest figures available, it was 3,522. It says that the figures are provided by the SACE board.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** You are, I understand, looking at the SASP target and the report. The SACE board does not use the term 'ATAR pass mark' so if we turn to the SASP, I understand that the target ATAR is to increase by 15 per cent the numbers of students receiving an ATAR or equivalent in at least one of mathematics, physics or chemistry by 2020 and that we are at present on track to reach that. You have specifically asked about a change in that target.

**Mr PISONI:** The original target set in 2003 was 2010.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am unaware of the history and I can look at that, but I have no personal knowledge of that at all.

**The CHAIR:** That being the case, in accordance with the agreed timetable, the committee stands suspended until 13:00.

*Sitting suspended from 12:02 to 13:00.*

#### **Membership:**

Ms Sanderson substituted for Mr Pisoni.

Ms Chapman substituted for Mr Duluk.

#### **Departmental Advisers:**

Mr T. Harrison, Chief Executive, Department for Education and Child Development.

Ms J. Riedstra, Deputy Chief Executive, Resources, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr E. Scheepers, Deputy Chief Executive, Child Safety, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr C. Vetere, Acting Chief Financial Officer, Department for Education and Child Development.

Mr T. Ryan, Chief of Staff.

**The CHAIR:** Welcome back. We are continuing with education and child development, moving on until 1.45pm to care and protection, as agreed, then we will close this particular line. Does the minister have a statement in relation to care and protection?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I do have a brief opening statement. I would also like to introduce my advisers. On my immediate left is Tony Harrison, the Chief Executive. Etienne Scheepers is on the further left, Deputy Chief Executive, Child Safety. On my right is Julieann Riedstra, Deputy Chief Executive, Resources. Behind me on my right is Carmine Vetere, the Acting Chief Financial Officer, and next to him is Tim Ryan, my Chief Of Staff.

Every South Australian child deserves the chance to go as far as their efforts and talents will take them. For our state's vulnerable children, it is imperative that they have the support they need so that they do not get left behind. That is why we have implemented significant strategic reforms and have made enormous financial investment in this key area. The annual budget for child protection has increased from \$90 million when we came to office to more than \$340 million in this previous year, and we are continuing our investment in protecting children, supporting families to look after their children safely and providing out-of-home care when homes are not safe.

The 2015-16 budget includes more than \$50 million over four years for a range of reforms to improve and widen services for children at risk or in care. We are investing in recruiting, training and supporting new foster carers so more children who cannot live with their families can have the benefit of a stable home environment. We are investing in reuniting adolescent children in out-of-home care with their families where it is safe to do so. This initiative will focus on teenagers who want to return home to families who are no longer at risk, delivering support to ease the transition on both sides.

We are also investing in strengthening families so that children can remain safely living at home. Through this budget we are expanding the Positive Parenting Program, which offers support and training to help at-risk families develop parenting skills so that they are better equipped to provide a safe and secure home for their children. This budget also makes provision for future growth of children in care, with an allocation of \$31 million over four years.

Having said all that, I am in no way implying that everything works perfectly in the child protection system in South Australia—you do not instigate a royal commission into something that is functioning perfectly. The royal commission was instituted by this government to improve its systemic response to ensuring the safety of children at risk of harm, including those who have been removed from their families and placed under my custody. There has been, and will continue to be, a focus on improving the system in any way possible.

There are two truths when dealing with statutory child protection. One is that no error is able to be tolerated, because we are talking about a child's life and a child's future, but at the same time we are dealing with human beings. We are dealing with humans who are making judgements, and also the human beings who are the parents or carers of the children, and whenever you are dealing with human behaviour and judgement error is inevitable. These two incompatible realities confront the system, the children we are entrusted to watch over and the workers who, I am sure, spend most of their waking hours replaying and questioning their judgements on a daily basis.

In spite of this we must strive to be better, to improve our processes and work together to achieve the best possible outcome for the most vulnerable members of our society. Child protection is a collective problem, and we must take collective responsibility in finding the solutions.

**The CHAIR:** I understand, member for Adelaide, you are the lead speaker and you do not have a statement?

**Ms SANDERSON:** I do not.

**The CHAIR:** Would you then like to go straight to some questions.

**Ms SANDERSON:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, otherwise page 28 which states that the 'key objective is redesign'. Can the minister outline reports prepared by the Families SA Redesign program on the Child Abuse Report Line: Workload Analysis and Productivity, and will the minister table these reports?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** There is a lot of work going on in terms of operational and policy reform within this portfolio, and there is specific work occurring to improve the performance management of the CARL line and the unit that runs it. I am not clear on the particular report that you might be seeking. There are a number of internal working documents that are going towards the considerations made by the unit, so I am not in a position to table anything.

**Ms SANDERSON:** I believe it was called the Workload Analysis and Productivity Report, and it was performed by the Families SA Redesign team.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Thank you; having that title, I will look into it and make a determination about its appropriateness.

**Ms SANDERSON:** If you do find the report, the question would be: what has been undertaken to address the findings of that report since the report was handed down? Will the minister also table a report produced after a visit in 2014 by her department to study similar operations interstate as the South Australian CARL line—I believe it might have been Victoria and New South Wales—and can the minister outline the main recommendations of this report and whether the recommendations have now been implemented?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That work was undertaken prior to my becoming the minister; I am not familiar with the particular document that you are referring to. I will investigate and make a determination about whether I wish to table it.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Can the minister clarify what is the status and future of the Families SA Redesign program?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I have a briefing here, and I think it is probably worthwhile just reading it out to give you the full position. The Families SA Redesign program is charged with making a fundamental change to the foundation, approach and delivery of child protection services in South Australia. I can report on a number of key Redesign achievements to date. Families SA offices have been restructured to invest in a more specialised approach to better meet the needs of children, families, and carers. This is based on the foundation that safety and the wellbeing of the child is the first and foremost consideration at all times.

A new case management practice model, solution based casework, is also being implemented. SBC strengthens casework practice by promoting greater engagement with families and carers. By using SBC, workers will be able to help families focus on patterns and actions that create threats to child safety, and keep families accountable for making the changes needed to create safety and reduce risk to the child.

Dr Dana Christensen, the SBC developer, has been assisting Families SA to implement the model. All Families SA care and protection staff are being inducted, with staff currently working through an SBC certification process. Dr Christensen delivered initial training in SBC to 21 of our funded non-government partners, involving 180 of their workers in September 2014.

The redesign has also developed new procedures to support family preservation and unification, to better work with vulnerable families to increase their ability to care safely for their children. In the coming 12 months, we will be establishing a linking families team in the Families SA call centre, to assist in diverting children at the point of notification. The team will respond to children and families who are assessed as being at a lower level of child protection concern and includes initiating partnerships with community agencies.

Other system improvements to come from the redesign include new procedures for assessment and support, and procedures to improve how children under my guardianship are cared for. The redesign of our child protection system was embarked upon as a long-term change agenda. To ensure that it is on the right track, I have asked for an evaluation of the Redesign program and the outcomes achieved to date, to assist my department to focus improvement efforts across the statutory child protection system.

**Ms SANDERSON:** I understand there are 10 projects included in the redesign, and I heard you mention the solution based casework and the restructuring of the offices. Then there was assessment and support. Is it possible to get each of the others listed so I know what their names are? Or table it?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will provide that to you in due course.

**The CHAIR:** While we are on that, member for Adelaide, I have been advised that the committee has no power—and indeed has no right—to request the tabling of reports. The minister can answer questions about reports and she can give you as much information as appropriate from reports, but the actual tabling of a report is not appropriate for the committee. I am just clarifying that for you.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Thank you. But you can bring it back to the house?



**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will take that as a question on notice and give you a response with a list of the 10 areas, if there are indeed 10, as you have articulated.

**Ms SANDERSON:** What has been the cost of Redesign in the past 12 months, and the total so far?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** There is a Redesign project office, and I will return with a response on how much we are spending on that. Obviously, in redesigning there is a lot of operational expenditure that you might think of as redesign because the work is being done differently to how it was done previously, but in terms of the actual effort by that project team, I can provide that to you later.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Great. Thank you.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** Mr Chairman, may I just ask a question on the redesign before it is moved on?

**The CHAIR:** Certainly.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** This morning I received an FOI response from your department indicating there were no documents in existence in relation to any report from GK Corporation, who were appointed at a cost, according to your annual report, of \$73,194 to assist in the redesign and restructure of Families SA. Do I take it from that that there is no report in existence?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am unable to answer that question. I have obviously had nothing to do with an FOI determination. I will have a look and if there is something I will take that question on notice and respond to it.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** I appreciate that you are not directly involved in the FOI application, but this is in your annual report. This is money that has been paid in the last financial year to GK Corporation. Particularly as you have the chief executive sitting next to you, can you confirm whether that company in the consultancy simply provided assistance in the meetings and attendance, and did not provide any report at all?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The advice I have is that there are no reports. If that changes I will let you know, but that is the advice I have been given.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** I would certainly be seeking that, even if there was no final report, if there was correspondence setting out any indication, other than presumably their invoice for the payment of \$73,194 or advice in respect of the redesign or restructure, I would appreciate it if that could be looked at and provided, if appropriate.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes.

**Ms SANDERSON:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30, activity indicators, the child abuse report line: what are the total notifications made to CARL and the breakdown of CARL between the phone notifications and the e-notifications for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 years?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The reason for the discussion here is that we want to be precise about what we mean by 'notification' versus phone calls and e-CARL, and so on. I am happy to return with a more detailed response to give you greater clarity. Essentially, in the audited year that we have, which is 2013-14 and which is the one that appears in the annual report, there was 19,578 screened-in notifications, that is, notifications that met the standard of precision about the capacity to identify the child, and so on, to become a notification. I have advice that there were some 13,000 e-CARL contributions, but they would not have all have been screened in, I imagine.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Are you able to get the actual details back to me? Last year I had the total contacts, so the actual communications, and then there were the total notifications, which was higher because some might refer to multiple children in the one contact, and then there was a breakdown of the phone and computer contacts.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That is right. Rather than risking going astray here, I will get you an accurate table.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Thank you. What is the waiting time experienced by notifiers to the CARL line, and the breakdown of those times now for during the day and after work, as for the critical line? I believe there is a special line for some of the mandatory reporters.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The breakdown of hours of the day when the calls are made, I do not have with me, and I will provide to you. The average wait time in 2014-15, we understand to be 20 minutes and 16 seconds.

**Ms SANDERSON:** That is an increase from the last time which was 16 minutes 47 seconds, and prior to eCARL being implemented, it was around 9 or 10 minutes, so what is the minister doing to reduce these waiting times?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As canvassed earlier, we have been looking at the way in which CARL is operating and we are continuing to look at ways in which we can improve it. At present a call and record pilot program is being considered as a means of increasing the capacity of CARL and reducing the wait time for callers. The pilot will operate for three months with regular monitoring and reviews conducted to measure outcomes. It is proposed that 10 dedicated call and record phone agents will be employed between 7am and 7pm on Monday to Friday, which we understand to therefore have optimum coverage during the highest call rate times.

**Ms SANDERSON:** So there are no plans—I believe in last years' estimates the plan was to hire at least 10 more staff as a way of getting that timing down. Have they been employed?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, they have.

**Ms SANDERSON:** And the times have actually gone up even though there are 10 more staff working there. Are all of the staff required to have a driver's licence in the Child Abuse Report Line call centre?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** At present people working on the Child Abuse Report Line are required to have a driver's licence because they may at any time be asked to be deployed into the field. However, I am aware that you have raised a particular matter of a woman who does not have a driver's licence due to a disability, and that she did not even apply for the job because she saw that that was required. We are currently going through the process of determining how we can be more cognisant of the fact that people with disabilities are perfectly capable of doing good work within the social work field within the department.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Great, thank you. I believe a year or so ago you actually bought the call-back facility that goes with CARL, and I am not sure if that is now what you are calling 'the pilot', but I believe the call-back facility—I was wondering whether it has been operational at any time in the past because I believe it was already trialled; and why the problem has not been rectified or if this is a completely different program now that you are looking at?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** This is a different program; this is not about using that facility.

**Ms SANDERSON:** So the one that was purchased a while ago has failed, it did not work, it did not do what it was supposed to do?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As I understand, just so we are clear, the idea of a call-back facility is that while you are on hold, the automated message might say, 'If you press a number then your number will be captured and someone will ring you back.' I have occasionally had that while on hold for various organisations. We do not use that facility in our system, and there has been a judgement made that that is not going to enhance the capacity to receive notifications.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Are all calls made to the CARL line recorded so that they can be listened to again?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, as I understand it, that was a new facility that was introduced last year.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Great, thank you. What is the total number in percentages of the notifications and the breakdown in their tiers 1 to 3, for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 years?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I can give you the 2013-14 because that is the one that has been audited and produced. There were screened in notifications, 19,578; tier 1, 1,156; tier 2, 14,310; and tier 3, 1,466. There was also what we call NOC, the notifier concern, and that is 22,048.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30, Performance indicators, children in out-of-home care. How many children have been placed in motel-style accommodation, including rented rooms, cabins, holiday homes, caravans, or apartments and the like, extending beyond one night in the 2013-14 year and the 2014-15 year?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I do not have the figure for extending more than one night. I will endeavour, if we hold that in an accurate way, to provide that to you as a later response. The way in which we divide up where children in out-of-home care are cared for is between foster care, kinship care, residential care, independent living for the older children and commercial care. The commercial care, I believe, is the one that you would describe in those terms, although I do not think it is confined to being in motels and caravan parks. For the 2013-14 year the most recent audited figures we have, 68 children are listed as having been in there. I would add that it is something that we are working on reducing.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Is it possible, minister, when you bring back the numbers, to find out how many of those children had stays greater than 30 days in the 2013-14 year and the 2014-15 year, how many children had stays over 60 days for the same time period, the average age of the children and the youngest child to be placed in such accommodation, as well as the average cost of this accommodation per child per night?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am informed that we should be able to provide that level of detail. If our database has limits then I will explain that in the response.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, Highlights, point 1, commenced new recruitment. The target for the 2014-15 year was to finalise 360 full-time public sector employees in residential care. That has not been achieved. I am wondering why that is and when you plan for that to be completed.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That was in residential care, you are asking specifically?

**Ms SANDERSON:** That is right, the 360 FTEs.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As this is a staff management and recruitment process, I will invite the chief executive to respond in detail to that.

**Mr HARRISON:** You would be aware, as you have alluded to the fact, that we have set ourselves some targets in relation to recruitment in the two main categories, residential and youth careworkers, and social workers as well. We commenced an intensive recruitment process before the end of the current financial year and we received in excess of 1,300 applications for residential and youth careworkers, and we received in excess of 400 applications for social workers as well.

We instigated dedicated human resource project teams to actually advance a selection process in accordance with the enhanced recruitment selection processes, in accordance with the recommendations out of the audit that was done through that hired process, which was publicised in the media last year. It is a very robust, intensive process now to consider suitability, including aspects of psychometric testing and interviews with organisational psychologists.

Since January we have advanced the number of selections, gone through induction programs and appointed people to vacancies that we did have. Right at this moment, through the months of July, August and into September, we will be bringing on in excess of 100 more new employees across those fields of social work as well as residential youth careworkers.

It certainly is our intention to continue intensive recruitment programs in both of those two fields as we lead up to the end of this calendar year. I would expect that, despite the fact that we have had some delays and some of those delays have been caused because of industrial disputes and also the ramping up to the higher standards of recruitment processes, we are very committed to ensuring that we get to our full establishment as quickly as we can. Also, the positive nature of that will be that it will enable us to minimise the reliance on commercial care in those accommodation

types that have been referred to and have greater success in relation to placing children with next of kin care, foster carers and, to some extent, still rely on residential care as well.

**Ms SANDERSON:** So, how many would currently be employed so far in residential care, and could you please list the qualification groupings?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will return with those details.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Given the government is investing in 100 extra foster carers and that residential care is seen as the worst type of care for a child and the most expensive, costing around \$225,000 a year per child, why is the minister still planning to lock in an extra 360 full-time workers, leaving no flexibility in the system?

**The CHAIR:** That question did contain a lot of extraneous comment, so I will let the minister be flexible with her answer.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The logic behind having more people employed in the residential care area is to improve the quality of care being provided to the children who are there. There are, as you know, a variety of kinds of kids who are in residential care and for some of them foster care is an unlikely future, for a variety of reasons, including availability of willing foster carers for that age of child, or the sex of the child, but particularly the kinds of challenges that they bring with them given their history. So, what we are doing is devoting more staff to working with those kids to provide them with the kind of therapeutic care they need. We are also wishing to increase the knowledge base and the competence of the staff and, therefore, are allowing full time for training, which again requires us to have more staff to cover all of the shifts.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, Highlights number two, 'Improved statewide residential care facilities.' Can the minister please outline what improvements have been made to the residential care facilities and why there has been no mention of new structures, as was listed in the previous year as a target? To give some background: in November 2011, Grace Portolesi, the minister at the time, promised to close the six oldest residential care facilities after being called to do so by the Guardian for Children and Young People. This was to be a rolling closure between 2013 and 2016 and replacement with new facilities. There is nothing in the investing expenditure summary. Can the minister update the house as to where this program is currently up to and if it will be completed, as promised, by 2016.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I can bring the member and the committee up-to-date that we have closed Lochiel Park, Campbelltown and Enfield in 2014 and as of May 2015 have closed the Regency Park community unit. We have recently, in February, opened a new facility at Morphett Vale—I have visited it twice; forgive me for forgetting the suburb's name—and we have provisioned a further \$4 million to develop another facility.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Will these new facilities that are being built house no more than three children per unit, as requested by the Guardian for Children and Young People?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The one in Morphett Vale is divided into three wings, each of which can house four children. That opened in February. For the further facility for which we have \$4 million, although the specifications are yet to be approved, it is my view and my preference that it would be constructed as separate but related houses of three to four children, such as the one we visited at the older facility; a series of houses where there is a shared space for kids to play but they were more home-like. That is my preference.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Budget Measures Statement, page 17, and the royal commission into the state's child protection system. A press release of 15/08/2014 named Justice Nyland as royal commissioner, and said that Commissioner Nyland had been asked to complete her inquiries and provide her report to the government within 12 months. My question is: when was the minister first aware that the royal commission was to be delayed and would not be reporting in August 2015, as originally announced?

**The CHAIR:** Member for Adelaide, it is my understanding that this question is within the bailiwick of the Attorney-General.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** It is the minister's office.

**The CHAIR:** Well, that is my understanding. Is that your understanding, minister?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That's right; he administers it and also, as the Minister for Child Protection Reform, has the primary relationship with the royal commission.

**The CHAIR:** Yes; so any questions—

**Ms CHAPMAN:** I have a question on the matter, particularly as the—

**The CHAIR:** Is that a question for the Attorney-General or—

**Ms CHAPMAN:** Page 28 of the Agency Statement states that, 'The department is focussed on ensuring that the most vulnerable children and young people at risk of abuse, neglect and disadvantage are protected from harm.' Given the Attorney-General's evidence to Estimates Committee A on Tuesday this week, in which he confirmed that Ms Nyland's report would now not be presented until next year, has the minister sought any interim report on the question of the appointment of a commissioner for children?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I have not sought an interim report to that effect.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** Will you, now that it has been made clear by the Attorney-General that her report is not going to be available until next year?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will contemplate that; I will take that seriously and think about it. However, my initial response is that the question of a commissioner for children, and the role that individual might play, would not be easily detached, conceptually, from the shape of child protection that the royal commissioner might be contemplating. In her response to my initial request about whether this was a matter that I ought to proceed with or whether it would be something she would have views about, she indicated that there is a way in which child protection can be organised.

I am sure every state and jurisdiction has slightly different ways of doing that, but to take one conceptual element out of that and look at it in isolation might be difficult, even for the person who is looking at the whole system. However, I will contemplate your question.

**Ms CHAPMAN:** I just mention this: if you look at Estimates Committee A evidence from the Attorney, he indicated that he has not sought any interim report but would welcome one if there were any interim issues that the commissioner thought would be helpful. To paraphrase his words, it would enable him to, sort of, get on with that aspect more quickly. As you know, there is already legislation before the parliament and you have indicated—I suppose not unreasonably—that you would obviously inquire of the commissioner's recommendations, given her charter.

However, given that, and given the Attorney-General's indication on that, I note your indication that you could make that consideration and, we would hope, make that inquiry. Then Ms Nyland can let you know whether she thinks it is a matter on which she can give you advice. We look forward to hearing it.

**Ms SANDERSON:** You indicated in the house that you were waiting on the commissioner's report before bringing back the legislation for the children's commissioner, so is it the case that you will not be bringing back the children's commissioner bill for another year?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Pending the discussion that I have just had with the member for Bragg and also will continue to have with the Attorney-General, should there be an interim report, whether requested or simply produced by the royal commissioner that would enable a piece of legislation to proceed, then I would duly proceed. Irrespective of whether I make the inquiry, I feel very much in the hands of the royal commissioner in the way in which she wishes to structure her recommendations to the government.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Given that none of the staff mentioned by Coroner Mark Johns in regard to the Chloe Valentine case were disciplined on the basis that it was a systemic issue, it is imperative that the children's commissioner is brought in as soon as possible. We cannot afford any time really—

**The CHAIR:** This is not a forum for impromptu speeches, member for Adelaide. Do you have a question?

**Ms SANDERSON:** Is there a guarantee that we will get some movement as fast as possible on introducing a children's commissioner because we have had since—

**The CHAIR:** Is there a question?

**Ms SANDERSON:** Yes, an assurance.

**The CHAIR:** You are seeking an assurance?

**Ms SANDERSON:** Yes. Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 30, Activity indicators, guardianship. What is the breakdown of child adoptions in South Australia for Australian children and international children for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 years, and how many were under the guardianship of the minister?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will have to take that on notice.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Thank you. How many children were placed under the guardianship of another person, OPG, in 2014-15?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am able to give you a response to the previous question about adoption. For 2014-15, as I understand it, there were 15 local adoption orders made. They were broken into three categories: two infants, one step-parent and 12 intercountry. OPG is an awkward title for something that is actually a really important step for children who are under the guardianship of the minister and having that guardianship transferred essentially to their long-term foster parent or kinship carer. There are currently 112 children who are under those orders. As I understand it, 52 per cent of the children are living with foster carers and 48 per cent are living with relatives. Was your question specifically how many were put under those orders in the last year?

**Ms SANDERSON:** Yes, that was my next question.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** In which case I will take that on notice. There are 112 currently under those orders. As to how many came onto that in the last year, I will return with a response for you.

**Ms SANDERSON:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 28, FTEs. Has the government finished recruiting the additional 10 psychologists for Families SA to overcome the shortage that was delaying the vital assessment of children in need? I refer to November 2014 when this was brought to light.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The advice is that that process has concluded and in the main has been finished. I think the difficulty is that there is always the chance that there is a vacancy that has then come up, but the process of appointing them has been gone through.

**Ms SANDERSON:** That being the case, has the department now worked through the backlog of assessments that was being experienced due to the shortage of psychologists?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Do you have some more precision about what you mean by assessments? Assessment of?

**Ms SANDERSON:** I imagine child protection calls to the line and the children who have to be assessed by psychologists. Apparently there was a backlog due to a lack of staff.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Psychologists are involved, as I understand it, with family assessment and individual assessment of children who might be under guardianship already, but require some guidance on what kind of support they require and then, of course, you have the assessment of children who are with their families but may have had notifications made against them. It is difficult for us to give you a clear answer, but nonetheless the appointment process has taken place.

**Ms SANDERSON:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 2, page 29, highlights—develop, trial and implement. Can the minister explain why there has been a delay of one year for the trial and implementation of new procedures and processes for the assessment and support, and protective intervention hubs and teams? The previous year it was indicated as a target, but this year it is back there and 'developed' is the only part that has been achieved, rather than the implementation and trial.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am not trying to overanalyse the question, but the 'develop, trial and implement new procedures and processes for child protection services' is something that ought to always be happening, but it is particularly acute at present and is occurring through the redesign process. Once we have the recommendations from the royal commission, that will also guide those procedures and processes. Specifically, with the hubs, as we have said, we have constructed those hubs and we have already developed the procedures for them in the last year.

**Ms SANDERSON:** It could simply be that you have reworded it to remove the assessment and support that was put in as a target. The highlight is not the same wording as the original target, that is all, but it could be that I am looking for the missing words.

**The CHAIR:** It could be or it could not be. That is a comment and, with that, I declare the examination of the proposed payments to the Department for Education and Child Development and Administered Items for the Department for Education and Child Development completed. Thank you, minister, and thank you to your advisers. We are moving on to the public sector.

**DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET, \$75,551,000**  
**ADMINISTERED ITEMS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF THE PREMIER AND CABINET,**  
**\$1,879,000**

**Membership:**

Mr Marshall substituted for Ms Sanderson.

Mr Knoll substituted for Ms Chapman.

Mr Speirs substituted for Mr Bell.

**Minister:**

Hon. S.E. Close, Minister for Education and Child Development, Minister for the Public Sector.

**Departmental Advisers:**

Mr K. Winter-Dewhirst, Chief Executive, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Ms E. Ranieri, Commissioner for Public Sector Employment.

Mr P. McMahon, Chief Operating Officer, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr S. Woolhouse, Chief Finance Officer, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Ms J. Ellis, Manager, Statutory, Office for the Public Sector.

Ms T. Lynch, Project Officer, Briefings and Parliamentary Services, Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Mr T. Ryan, Chief of Staff.

**The CHAIR:** Welcome to the Minister for the Public Sector. We are looking at the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in part, \$75,551,000, and Administered Items for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet in part, \$1,879,000. I declare the proposed payments re-opened for examination and I refer members to the portfolio statements, Volume 3. I now call on the minister to make a statement if she wishes and to introduce her new advisers.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will introduce the people sitting around me. On my right is Erma Ranieri, who is the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment. On my left is Kym Winter-Dewhirst, the Chief Executive of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, and on his left is Phil McMahon,

who is the Chief Operating Officer. I have a brief opening statement to make about the Office for the Public Sector and Government Services Group. The government is committed to ensuring that both people and businesses thrive in South Australia. Our public sector serves this vision through establishing a strong culture of service excellence and a productive working relationship with communities and business.

We continue to strive for improvements in our public sector. We have established the Office for the Public Sector to support the work of the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment and implemented changes in the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, focusing on removing duplication and waste.

We have implemented a number of initiatives that are helping us build a modern public sector which works efficiently and effectively and welcomes innovation. Change@SouthAustralia continues to build on its strong foundations, particularly in its 90-day projects. Over the last three years, 63 projects have been completed, including:

- analysing the benefit of nurses in government schools;
- developing strategies to increase Aboriginal representation in the public sector; and
- improving road transport for the agricultural industry.

Many more 90-day projects have been completed by agencies working with their partners. One of the key tasks for 2014-15 was to fully review and revise the code of ethics, the code of conduct employees are expected to uphold to ensure the integrity and professionalism of our public sector. The revised code is now effective for all public sector employees. A leadership development strategy for public sector executives continues to be implemented, offering programs specifically designed for chief executives, such as Fast Start Induction for new CEs and round-table discussions facilitated by experts in the field.

Our public sector is being revitalised with the recruitment of young South Australians through our Jobs4Youth SA initiative. In its first year, 188 trainees were recruited of whom 54 are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and six with a declared disability. 76 per cent of the young people recruited are on track to complete their traineeships, and recruitment has begun for the 2015 intake.

Easing the way for people and businesses interacting with government is a key priority. Over the past six months we have delivered a number of initiatives, many harnessing digital technology, that are improving government services for citizens. One of the most significant initiatives is our open-data agenda: a commitment to unlocking data held by government agencies so it can be used by people and businesses and in classrooms. Opening up this data can create new opportunities and significant economic value by empowering citizens, supporting research and engaging developers in the creation of digital applications and improving business efficiency.

This year we hosted the national award-winning Unleashed open data competition, which attracted more than 200 competitors across South Australia with access to over 700 open data sets. The Location SA Map Viewer, which we launched recently, is an innovative online tool which provides a window to a range of government spatial data for people, business and industry.

We also launched SA Performs through sa.gov.au, providing a single online location where customers can access government performance information on everything from customer wait times at Service SA centres to the proportion of government invoices paid on time. In our accounts payable services, we continue to exceed world class benchmarks. More than 97 per cent of payments have been made within 30 days across the shared sector agencies, easing the way for business to work with government. Our efforts to smooth the way for South Australians using government services is continuing through the Service SA online program. This program will make 95 per cent of transactions available online.

Working with the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure, five new transactions are already online including obtaining registration certificates and bulk registration renewals. The five services are expected to bring more than 200,000 transactions online over the forward estimates. Over the next 12 months, an additional 13 transactions will become available online to South Australians, rising to 19 by 2018. We are seizing the opportunity to shape South Australia as a state



where both people and business prosper. A modern, efficient and innovative public sector will play a vital role in achieving this vision.

**The CHAIR:** Does the leader have an opening statement?

**Mr MARSHALL:** No.

**The CHAIR:** We head straight into questions then.

**Mr MARSHALL:** My question references Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 173. The total expenses for the 2014-15 year ended up quite significantly over budget, in fact, in excess of \$2 million over budget. Can you explain to the committee what the reasons for that unbudgeted expenditure were?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** This matter has been canvassed fairly extensively in another committee in the other place, but I can give some clarity for this committee. As part of the election commitments, the government announced that it would rationalise public sector renewal and review functions within government, and that that would save \$2.9 million per annum and 15 FTEs. A two-stage strategy to achieve this commitment commenced in April 2014. Approximately \$900,000 per annum was saved in the first stage through the redeployment and separation of staff, and changes to accommodation ICT, and a further one-off \$400,000 was achieved in 2014-15 due to one-off recoveries for the financial year.

The remaining \$1.6 million savings were not achieved within the Office for the Public Sector in 2014-15, but were managed at the departmental level for that period. However, as a result of two TVSPs and the abolition of an executive position in June 2015, further ongoing savings of approximately \$400,000 have already been achieved for 2015-16. The Commissioner for Public Sector Employment is now working with the chief executive of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to address the residual savings target.

**Mr MARSHALL:** When you mentioned that there was a change in premises, was there any cost associated with this transfer to new office arrangements?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No, there was not.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Can you explain to the committee how this overexpenditure was funded, whether it was another allocation from Treasury or in fact whether or not it was just dealt with under the DPC budget?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As I indicated, it was managed within the DPC budget allocation.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Ms Ranieri told the Budget and Finance Committee on 9 June this year that the budget savings task for her office in 2014-15 was \$2.148 million. Is that still the case? If so, how is it consistent with the 2015-16 budget of \$12.2 million in expenditure, actually only \$1.2 million higher than the \$11 million budget for 2014-15?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am advised that the savings are factored within the budget but that there is also an increase in one-off expenditure, which I listed at the top of page 174, such as expenditure for the establishment of government reform programs, payments associated with employee separations, variations to corporate expenditure allocated across programs and expenditure to administer the Jobs for Youth SA initiative.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Is there in fact an ongoing budget savings task for this year?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, there is.

**Mr MARSHALL:** And what is that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is the remaining \$1.6 million that I mentioned in the rather longer answer to the first question relating to this matter.

**Mr MARSHALL:** So there is a \$1.6 million savings budget from what top line? The \$12.2 million or—?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The savings are represented within the budget as it is printed here. It already has that saving allocated to the area.

**Mr MARSHALL:** So when we look at the \$12.2 million, you are currently operating at \$1.6 million above the \$12.2 million and so by removing the \$1.6 million that is how you are going to get down to the \$12.2 million?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Correct.

**Mr MARSHALL:** What do you plan to cut to deliver that \$1.6 million cut this financial year?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The Commissioner for Public Sector Employment advises me that she is finalising the ways in which that will be addressed. She is looking at an organisational restructure, which will result in excess positions. She is looking at the reform of the human resources management model across government and potentially introducing a cost-recovery component within the work undertaken on behalf of other agencies, but none of that is finalised at this stage.

**Mr MARSHALL:** What sort of cost recovery opportunities are there? What could you bill other departments for?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I would rather not canvass that in detail, given that the commissioner is still contemplating those options and will work through with agencies as to what is a reasonable approach.

**Mr MARSHALL:** What is the value of that cost recovery in the total \$1.6 million savings target?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The plans are not at that level of specificity at this stage to be able to separate out that component. It is one of the options before her as she resolves how she will meet her savings target.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Suffice to say that the number one issue that you suggested would deliver the \$1.6 million saving was reorganisation of the staff, but when I look at the reduction in staff that is envisaged for the year, it is going from 70.1 full-time equivalents to 68.2 FTEs. That will hardly deliver a huge component of your \$1.6 million, or does the 68.2 FTEs remain current or has there been some further revision of the FTE requirement within the agency post the publishing of this budget?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am advised that the savings, as they are already factored in, are reflected in the level of FTE printed in the budget.

**Mr MARSHALL:** So, when you outlined your answer to the \$1.6 million saving and you said 'staff reorganisation', in fact there is really no substantial staff reorganisation and that the main issue is really just cost recovery from other agencies?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The estimated result of 70 FTEs is only an estimated result. The actual for how many staff are there at present is not yet in the budget because there is the lag between the estimated result and the actual. When the figure comes down to 68 that will assist in delivering the \$1.6 million saving.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Yes, it will slightly. With regard to income, what makes up the \$3.9 million fees, fines and penalties under this agency?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is primarily comprised of workers compensation and injury management.

**Mr SPEIRS:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 173. Clause 4.1 of the standard CEO contract states that the salary allowances, monetary benefits and non-monetary benefits are specified in schedule 2. Schedule 2 of Mr Kym Winter-Dewhirst's contract makes no reference to a \$35,000 per annum payment for a private motor vehicle lease and an extra two weeks annual paid leave for professional development. Can you explain that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** You may wish to hold over that question for the Premier, because I am not the administrative minister for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, which is the employer of the chief executive.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Although the Office of the Public Sector does manage chief executive obligations and contracts, and I am aware that the commissioner has recently conducted a review of

chief executive salaries across the nation, so I would put it to you that that does fall within your purview.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I think there is a large distinction between the role that the commissioner plays in overseeing general policy and also managing contracts, and administrative responsibility for a department and the chief executive, and I am not going to make comment on another minister's responsibility.

**Mr KNOLL:** I suppose he is only sitting next to you, but that is fine. Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 173, Ms Ranieri, in evidence to the Budget and Finance Committee, said that an additional or ex gratia payment was made to Mr Grant Lupton in terms of his termination over and above the normal requirements in the termination provisions of his contract. Can I ask what the amount of that additional payment was?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will ask the commissioner who made that decision or is responsible for the direct employment of staff to answer that question.

**Ms RANIERI:** Firstly the decision was not mine; I was acting on behalf of the emergency services minister and, in fact, in discussions with Mr Lupton who was looking for changes to his career, and was looking to get out, it was actually a discussion around career transitioning, so the payment that was made to him was an agreement for career transitioning services.

**Mr KNOLL:** Can we ask how much that payment was?

**Ms RANIERI:** I will take that on notice because I have not got the exact figure but I will certainly give that to you.

**Mr KNOLL:** No problems. On the same line, similarly, additional payments were made to Dr Gemmell and Mr Fred Hansen on their termination, and can we ask again what the additional amount paid was?

**Ms RANIERI:** I was not the commissioner at that particular time but I will certainly take that on notice and give you that information.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Minister, I do want to return to my previous line of questioning, given that Mr Winter-Dewhirst's contract was offered to him by letter through the commissioner. Can you explain why the additional payments that I mentioned before, being the professional development and the \$35,000 for the vehicle, were not revealed in schedule 2 of Mr Winter-Dewhirst's contract?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I return to my point that chief executives are appointed by the Premier and they are appointed to a department which has a minister who is administratively responsible for that department and that is not me in the case of Mr Winter-Dewhirst.

**Mr SPEIRS:** You are correct; the contract is between the Premier and the individual who is the chief executive, but the offer of the contract was made by the commissioner and I do have a letter to that effect. I am wondering if there was a mistake made in the writing of that contract, given that these were not stated in schedule 2?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I can make no comment on that. I have no knowledge of the contract and I am not the contracting minister.

**Mr SPEIRS:** You may wish to seek advice from the commissioner on that, given that she wrote the letter which offered the contract.

**The CHAIR:** I am sure the minister can make up her own mind about that and I think she has answered the question.

**Mr KNOLL:** I refer to the same budget paper, Volume 3, page 173. The Commissioner for Public Sector Employment, Ms Erma Ranieri, appeared before the Budget and Finance Committee on 9 June this year and gave evidence that Mr Kym Winter-Dewhirst, CEO of the department, sacked an executive within the first year of their contract only for that person to be then re-employed soon after as an executive within SAFECOM. Can we ask what the cost of that termination was? Was it between \$200,000 and \$300,000? Can we get an exact cost of that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As I understand it, the executive to whom you are referring is not one who was employed within my area of responsibility within DPC. I make no comment about the conditions for that individual; administratively the responsibility is elsewhere.

However, as the Minister for the Public Sector, I think it is a reasonable question to ask when you see that someone has stopped working and the remainder of their contract has been paid out under the terms of the contract and then they commenced employment. Therefore, I have asked the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment to do some exploratory work on ways in which that might be managed differently.

There are contracts that people have and management decisions are made about whether those contracts might conclude earlier and whether the terms of that contract require some payment. That person remains an employable person of talent and experience, presumably, and may well be offered a job elsewhere, and there is nothing to prevent them doing that. It is very different from the circumstances of accepting a TVSP.

Nonetheless, given the appearance of a legitimate question being asked about whether we could manage things better, I have asked the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment to have a look at the processes that might be employed to see whether executives are able to be moved around rather than immediately have their contract terminated when their work is completed in that particular area.

**Mr KNOLL:** And when you say 'have a look at', does that come as a formal part of some sort of review? Do we expect there to be a directive from the commissioner across government or do you expect—

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will allow her to consider—not allow her; she is the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment and I do not control her in that sense, but I look forward to her contemplating what the options might be. When she is ready to discuss that with me we can talk about whether she wishes to turn that into a determination.

**Mr KNOLL:** Is there any time frame on that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I have not set a time frame but I know that the Commissioner for Public Sector Employment is a very hard and speedy worker in general.

**Mr SPEIRS:** This is also from Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 173. Minister Hamilton-Smith has advised the parliament that Ms Julie Barbaro, who was a ministerial adviser in his office, has been appointed as Acting Chief Executive Officer of Defence SA. What was the total salary package negotiated for Ms Barbaro?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Again, I would urge you to direct that question to the relevant minister.

**Mr KNOLL:** The same budget line: the commissioner has recently issued determination 7, which states that when an employee is declared excess they must be offered a TVSP and has 12 months to find a new job which commences from that point. Is it correct that the government has received a letter from the PSA dated 12 May 2015 raising concerns that some agencies were declaring employees 'surplus to requirements' and not using the term 'excess'?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am advised by the commissioner that the correct terminology is, indeed, 'excess'. There may well have been a letter, and we can look back at that, but we are not aware of any particular problems with the way that determination 7 is being adopted.

**Mr KNOLL:** Following on from that, did Ms Kate Stephens, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development, contact the PSA endeavouring to clarify the position to understand the issue?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It would be helpful to me if I could understand what the question is really about. Whether someone in the office phoned someone in the PSA may or may not have happened—it could have—but is there a particular issue that you are trying to raise in the context of the agency statement that I can help with?

**Mr KNOLL:** Obviously there is a difference between the use of the word 'excess' and the use of the word 'surplus' and that has different connotations within this environment, and the PSA potentially has issues around the difference between that terminology. We are just trying to understand whether or not those issues have been resolved.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am not aware that there is a crucial distinction in the use of that terminology. I have regular meetings—actually regular meetings—with the PSA that are established a year in advance, and that has not been raised with me. I am happy to have a conversation with them to ensure that we are not on divergent paths, if that is what your concern is. However, it is not something that has been raised to my level and I would be surprised if there was anything that was not able to be fairly easily defined and worked through.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Just on that, minister, is there a requirement to offer a TVSP if a member of the Public Service is declared surplus?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Rather than repeating what I am being told, I will ask the commissioner to run through very briefly for you the process that is used under determination 7.

**Ms RANIERI:** It is probably important to take you through the process. Determination 7 is actually, by its nature, quite specific. One of the things that I wanted to highlight is that once organisational changes occur, a very important part of the process is consultation.

So, before anyone is declared excess we go through that process and people are made aware of what that actually means for them. Once that has happened, and if there is major reform, as the commissioner I have established a committee where we will hear what some of that reform is. It is only after all of those processes that someone is formally declared excess and they receive a letter. Once that has happened a TVSP is put on the table for them—only when they receive that letter declaring them.

**Mr MARSHALL:** So, there is a preliminary stage to the declaration of being determined excess, which would trigger, under determination 7, an automatic offer of a TVSP.

**Ms RANIERI:** Yes, that is right.

**Mr MARSHALL:** And that immediate proceeding declaration is one of: 'You are surplus and we are going to then look at your case and determine whether indeed that means that you will be offered a TVSP and be determined excess.' Is that correct?

**Ms RANIERI:** Yes.

**Mr MARSHALL:** How many people have currently been determined surplus, at the moment?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As at 30 June 2015, there were 39 excess employees in the public sector.

**Mr MARSHALL:** And surplus?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We are not clear about the distinction and why both terms are being used. We use the terminology 'excess' and there are 39 employees who have been declared excess.

**Mr MARSHALL:** The commissioner has just outlined that there is a process that at some point a department will determine that somebody is surplus and then there would be a committee that met to determine whether they were indeed technically excess, which would then trigger, under determination 7, an automatic offer of a TVSP. So, really what I am trying to work out is how many people are sitting in that predetermination pool?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We do not have numbers of people from various agencies who might be in a predetermination pool. We can endeavour to bring back a response if we have that data, but what we know are the ones who have been declared excess.

**Mr MARSHALL:** What triggers a referral to the committee that determines whether they are excess? Is it a referral from the department chief executive?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will ask the commissioner to give you that detail.

**Ms RANIERI:** I am getting confused with the surplus and excess. What agencies generally do is look at the organisational changes and, in effect, positions that are no longer existing. For someone to become excess there is no longer a position.

So, we are looking at positions, not individuals. Once the positions have been identified as no longer existing it is only at that point that I get that reported to me. Then, we get to the committee and we are given an overview of the consultation that actually occurred in the agency and a table of the positions that are no longer required and what that means for the agency, but prior to that, I do not have that data; it is only once they are moving to declare them excess.

**Mr MARSHALL:** What is the time frame between the department identifying people and your agency declaring them?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Prior to it being in the commissioner's hands, and therefore the committee, it would vary between agencies and how they manage that process.

**Mr MARSHALL:** But when they come to you?

**Ms RANIERI:** It can vary. If all the processes in relation to the determination were met it can be very quick, they move quickly to declaring someone excess and they move on the process. If, in fact, I believe that there are elements of the determination that have not been covered—for instance, consultation or some clarity around things, and I am in constant communication with all the relevant unions in relation to any concerns they might have—I may ask for some further elaboration on what agencies are doing before they move into that next, more formal step.

**Mr MARSHALL:** So of the 39 public servants who were declared excess last financial year, how many have been advised to you, or you are currently considering, for determination as to whether they are excess or not?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Of the 39, 22 are managed by the Commissioner's Determination 7 and 17 are covered by the Commissioner's Guideline.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Sorry, I did not catch that. So 39 have not been declared, 39 are still being considered?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is 39 that have been declared as excess and are being managed.

**Mr MARSHALL:** How many are under active consideration by your agency?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Do you mean prior to—

**Mr MARSHALL:** Correct.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** So in addition to the 39—

**Mr MARSHALL:** Under current consideration.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The commissioner's office is aware of only the 39. None have been brought to her attention that have not yet gone into the 39. What you are asking about are the ones who are being considered but who have not been declared; there aren't any in that category at the moment. There may well be in the agencies that they are contemplating, but they are yet to pull the trigger for the commissioner—

**Mr MARSHALL:** So the agency has not been advised by any department that they have excess staff that are waiting on the agency to declare them excess under Determination 7?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The commissioner is kept informed by agencies about organisational reform they are undertaking that may well almost inevitably result in declaration of some positions as excess, but there are no individual positions currently in front of the commissioner that are not yet in that 39 that have been officially declared. She is kept up-to-date in general terms.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Were there any rejected last year? Were there 39 applications and 39 determined excess or were there 48 presented and 39 declared?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** In order to be absolutely accurate we will take that on notice, and make sure that our response is accurate.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Is there a budget or a forecast for the number of excess determinations to occur this financial year?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** A budget for managing FTE levels is not held by this agency. That would be the responsibility of each individual agency.

**Mr KNOLL:** On the same line, once a Determination 7 has been made and that 12 month period commences, and at the moment we have got 39 people, do those 39 people stay and work within their departments or is there a specific place they go, or is there a variety of options pursued?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** They remain attached to their department.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Just going back to the previous terminology question around the words 'excess' and 'surplus', for the purpose of the relevant HR policies, do those words have different meanings?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Not to my knowledge, but what I am going to do, having had this raised by you, is go back and seek more detailed advice to make sure that I have that level of detail and, if necessary, to provide greater clarification I will return with a response.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Is it possible that some chief executives are using the word 'surplus' as opposed to 'excess' in order to potentially circumvent their obligations under Determination 7?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I would by no means speculate that chief executives are doing that.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 173. Do any current office holders in the PSA hold substantive fallback positions within the public sector?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Do any which officers, sorry?

**Mr SPEIRS:** Do any current office holders within the PSA hold substantive fallback positions within the public sector?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I understand that yes, that is the case.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Are you able to outline what those substantive fallback positions are and in which particular departments?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I do not know the extent to which that is confidential personnel information, so I will take that on notice and see what is appropriate to provide. What I can provide, I will provide.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Has Ms Ranieri been involved in any discussions with negotiating returns to the Public Service at levels different to the substantive fallback positions in the public sector?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am not sure that asking about discussions that are being undertaken by an officer is appropriate within an agency statement review.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Absolutely because it goes to the work and the business of the commissioner.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** What is the suggestion you are making?

**Mr SPEIRS:** I am asking if the commissioner has had any discussions in terms of negotiating between those officers who are in the PSA who have substantive fallback positions. I am asking if the commissioner has been negotiating whether they might return to the Public Service at a different level in terms of pay from what that substantive position is.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am certainly unaware of any such discussions. A worker who is on leave without pay and contemplating returning to a position would primarily be the responsibility of the agency employing them. I have no idea which agencies we are talking about, so it is very difficult for me to give you a response.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Does a policy exist around such circumstances as to what would happen if someone wanted to return to a position that was different to the position that they had left in terms of the pay grade?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am just referencing my own experience of having occasionally taken time out, whether that is for having children or undertaking another job for a period of time, and

the negotiation that occurs in returning because things change all the time and positions change also. I would regard that as being something that is negotiated with management within the conditions of the act and not something for which I, as the Minister for the Public Sector, have any direct responsibility for facilitating.

**Mr SPEIRS:** So the commissioner does not have a policy around this?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am not aware and my adviser is not aware of any determination or policy that goes to what you are asking. There are practices around return to work, but we can have a look at the documentation to see whether there is anything that fits what you are asking about.

**Mr KNOLL:** Has Ms Ranieri recently commissioned a report on CEO salaries in SA and a comparison of those salaries with those paid in other jurisdictions?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, I understand that she has. I am yet to see anything as minister.

**Mr KNOLL:** So it is difficult for us to understand the results of that report at this stage.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** That is right.

**Mr KNOLL:** Was a consultant employed in the commissioning of the report and, if so, at what cost?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, I am advised that there was a consultancy for some \$48,000.

**Mr KNOLL:** Can I ask which consultancy firm undertook the work?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As I understand it, it was Mercer.

**Mr SPEIRS:** I would like to move to Sub-program 9.1: Shared Services SA in Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 169 under Description/objective. In relation to Shared Services SA's role in delivering cost-efficient corporate and business services, can the minister provide an update on the quantum of savings to be achieved through this Shared Services SA program?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, I can. From 2014-15, Shared Services has continued to exceed its savings targets. By 30 June 2015, the Shared Services initiative will have achieved \$352 million in cumulative savings. Full details of the savings achieved can be found on page 12 of Part A of the 2013-14 Auditor-General's annual report.

**Mr KNOLL:** I refer to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 170, Targets 2015-16. The second dot point relates to the implementation and rollout of the new CHRIS 21 platform. Can I ask what the cost of implementing that rollout has been to state government agencies?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I will take the detail of the cost on notice as we do not have that with us, but I am happy to produce it. I will just add that the transition to the updated version is planned to begin in October of this year.

**Mr KNOLL:** Has that October date been consistent across that project or does that October start date involve some slippage on previous targets?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I am unaware of any slippage. October has been the date we have been working to for some time and we will get final approval for that to proceed shortly.

**Mr KNOLL:** Obviously it is in the budget papers as something that we are going to roll out this year. Has there been an increase in the cost or a change in the cost of the implementation of the rollout over this period leading up to its commencement, or has the budget line remained the same?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I think that should become clear once we are able to give you the specifics of the project line, but there has been no call for extra money. We are managing it within the budget and we will provide the specifics of how much that will be.

**Mr MARSHALL:** I have a question regarding Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 174, and in particular workers compensation. Have any claims been made under the government's firefighter presumptive cancer compensation legislation?



**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We do not have anything that suggests that any claims have been made, so we can look and see if our database holds anything of use, in which case I will return to you with a response.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Some 18 months ago, the government provided actuarial advice in the order of something like \$17 million of cost per year. Are you suggesting there has not been one single claim in the past 12 months?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I simply do not have any information here. We are, of course, talking about workers compensation for public sector workers rather than WorkCover, which is run by the Attorney-General.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Yes, although when we asked the Attorney-General the same question he said to refer the question to you, that you would know the answer.

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will take it on notice and we will confer between the agencies and see what we can come up with for you.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Can you outline to the committee what the workers compensation performance function is?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, the role of the public sector workers compensation performance function is to manage the whole-of-government data system for workers compensation claims, to conduct independent external third-party audits of agency safety and workers rehabilitation and compensation performance, to provide analysis, monitoring and publication of performance outcomes, and to drive improvements across the public sector. It should be clear it is simply about public sector workers compensation, not across all of South Australia.

**Mr MARSHALL:** So, in fact, who is responsible for claims made by firefighters then? Is it the Attorney-General?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It would depend on who is employing the firefighter.

**Mr MARSHALL:** But it is not you?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We will take that on notice and sort it out for you so that you have a clear answer across the agencies.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Who was looking after workers compensation performance before this year? Was your agency looking after it last year as well?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** As I understand it, the unit itself has been in existence for some time doing work on behalf of agencies. From memory, in the past, larger agencies conducted some of that themselves internally, but now these are centralised; but even now it is not fully centralised.

**Mr MARSHALL:** Fully centralised into your agency?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** Yes, it is not quite fully centralised but it is a—

**Mr MARSHALL:** Does the government operate, essentially, as self-insured and so, therefore, would it be operating under the same arrangements that the legislation has envisaged, with no further payments being made after two years?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The technical detail of how workers compensation is operated within the public sector I will take on notice and provide an answer to you.

**Mr MARSHALL:** How many public servants would you currently have who are subject to a claim where they are not at work and would be in this period of two years before their employment support ceases?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I do not have that information here. We will see what data we hold and can provide in response to you.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Minister, I take you back to Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 169. Has there been any discussion about moving Shared Services out of DPC and into another agency?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** No, I have never had that discussion; no-one has raised that option with me.

**Mr SPEIRS:** That is not an option on the table at the moment?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is certainly not a live option that I am aware of, no.

**Mr KNOLL:** Minister, there has been a \$4.4 million decrease in expenses due to a budget transfer reflecting the transition of ICT-related services between Shared Services SA and DPTI. Has the actual cost of this service changed between Shared Services SA and DPTI?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I think the order of estimates does not help you here, because as the service has transferred from us to DPTI, you would need to ask DPTI what they are spending on it now.

**Mr KNOLL:** Why is DPTI no longer using ICT services from Shared Services SA?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** It is a decision that is made by that agency. They are not the only one that presumably is big enough to think that they can run it themselves. Some agencies have decided that they are happy to stay; others have retained that service themselves.

**Mr KNOLL:** Are there other agencies intending to discontinue ICT support and, if so, which agencies and do we understand a timeline for that?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I understand that similar discussions are now taking place with the Attorney-General's Department, so it is possible that they will also make that decision.

**Mr KNOLL:** Obviously, the idea behind Shared Services in the beginning was to bring economies of scale in the public sector together to deliver cost savings. Are those cost savings undermined by different agencies then moving away from using Shared Services, and does that change the underlying cost structure on a per head basis or on a unit basis to the remaining agencies?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** I would just like to give further detail to the previous answer. In fact, in addition to DPC, the only agency remaining is AGD, so it looks like if they go it will just be us looking after ourselves. That is all consequent on the decision not to proceed with tranche 4. There is not a great scale that was existing that has been taken away. There was a decision made not to proceed with tranche 4.

**Mr KNOLL:** Just to finish off, are there any particular capabilities which exist within departments which do not exist within Shared Services and which justify the reallocation of these functions? Is there some sort of increased functionality? I am trying to understand the rationale behind why some agencies have transferred out. Is there increased functionality which the departments are going to be able to undertake, which Shared Services was unable to undertake and which may have impacted on their decision to move across?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** The challenge is that there was not really a transition in the first place and then the decision was made not to proceed with tranche 4. I have been a public servant for a number of years and I know that there is always the complexity and consideration between what is best done in a centralised way and what is best done close to the individual business units, and I can understand the challenge with ICT.

You do not want to disaggregate ICT from your business. If you do not have it fully integrated, then you are not doing your business nowadays. At the same time, it is always important to at least test whether there are more efficient ways of undertaking things. These are matters of judgement, and that is the judgement that has been made.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Moving to sub-program 8.1: Office for Digital Government in Budget Paper 4, Volume 3, page 165, under highlights. Dot point 3 under highlights says that the Office for Digital Government has completed a range of cross-government ICT procurements which will deliver major cost savings to government over the next five years. Briefly, what procurements does this refer to and what are the quantifiable projected cost savings to government over the next five years?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We have not brought with us the detail of those ICT procurements, so I would rather take that on notice and give you a proper answer in due course.

**Mr SPEIRS:** Thank you, minister. Further to that, what measures are being put into place to prevent the type of cost blowouts observed in other government ICT projects?

**The Hon. S.E. CLOSE:** We need to distinguish between ICT procurements that are done cross-government, which are done by this Office for Digital Government, and those which are conducted by individual agencies.

Some of the ones that you may be referring to—or all of the ones that you may be referring to—are conducted by individual agencies. In those circumstances, the Office for Digital Government offers advice and sits on the board or the committee that is steering the project, but does not control the procurement process.

**Mr SPEIRS:** I understand the omnibus questions have not been read in, so I regale those gathered with my accent as follows:

1. Will the minister provide a detailed breakdown of expenditure on consultants and contractors above \$10,000 in 2014-15 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 2014-15, please provide the number of public servants broken down into heads and FTEs 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 the financial year 2014-15, for all departments and agencies reporting to the minister, what underspending on projects and programs (1) was and (2) was not approved by cabinet for carryover expenditure in 2015-16?

4. Between 30 June 2014 and 30 June 2015, will the minister list the job title and total employment cost of each position with a total estimated cost of \$100,000 or more—(1) which has been abolished and (2) which has been created?

5. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, please provide a breakdown of attraction, retention and performance allowances as well as non-salary benefits paid to public servants and contractors in the years 2013-14 and 2014-15.

6. For each year of the forward estimates, provide the name and budget of all grant programs administered by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister and, for 2014-15, provide a breakdown of expenditure on all grants administered by all departments and agencies reporting to the minister listing the name of the grant recipient, the amount of the grant and the purpose of the grant and whether the grant was subject to a grant agreement as required by Treasurer's Instruction 15.

7. For each year of the forward estimates, provide the name and budget for each individual program administered by or on behalf of all departments and agencies reporting to the minister.

8. For each year of the forward estimates, provide the name and budget for each individual investing expenditure project administered by or on behalf of all departments and agencies reporting to the minister.

9. For each department or agency reporting to the minister, what is the budget for targeted voluntary separation packages for the financial years included in the forward estimates by year and how are these packages to be funded?

10. What is the title and total employment cost of each individual staff member in the minister's office as at 30 June 2015, including all departmental employees seconded to ministerial offices and ministerial liaison officers?

**The CHAIR:** Sadly, we say goodbye and thank the Minister for the Public Sector. I thank her advisers for their time today.

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, be adjourned to committee A.

At 14:48 the committee adjourned until Monday 27 July 2015 at 9:00.