

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Wednesday 24 October 2001

The SPEAKER (Hon. J.K.G. Oswald) took the chair at 2 p.m. and read prayers.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT: MEMBER FOR COLES

The SPEAKER laid on the table the report of the Auditor-General on the response to the allegations made by the Hon. J.L. Hall on 4 October 2001 in relation to his inquiry into the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium project.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Premier): I move:
That the report be published.
Motion carried.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Hon. G.M. GUNN (Stuart): I bring up the 35th report of the committee, on South Australian government overseas officers, and move:

That the report be received.
Motion carried.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Premier): I move:
That the report be published.
Motion carried.

LEGISLATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): I bring up the 30th report of the committee and move:

That the report be received.
Motion carried.

QUESTION TIME**LIBERAL PARTY DOCUMENTS**

Mr ATKINSON (Spence): My question is directed to the Minister for Police. Can the minister confirm the statements by the State Director of the Liberal Party that police were called in last week to investigate who leaked sensitive Liberal Party fundraising documents that were anonymously circulated to members of parliament? The leaked documents set out the Liberal Party's fundraising plan and named industry fundraising conveners, including Mr Bernard Booth for real estate, Mr Tony Johnson for the legal sector, Mr Rob Gerard for manufacturing, and Mr Peter Hurley for hospitality. The documents name over 150 corporate donor targets and show that the Liberal Party expected to get donations of \$100 000 from the Adelaide Bank, \$200 000 from Santos, and \$150 000 from Gerard Industries.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Police and Correctional Services!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Police has the call.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): In answering the honourable member's question, I want to say, first, that just as I as Police Minister, fortunately, am not responsible for the actions of people such as the Leader of the Opposition and the member for Spence, I am also not responsible for what any person in any other place or organisation may or may not do when it comes to calling in the police. What is interesting about this is that I understand that all that information is readily available to both the Liberal Party and the Labor Party at any time. It is great to see the number of people in this state who want to get behind the Liberal Party because they know there is hope for the future with the Liberal Party. Of course, the Labor Party hates that—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Spence!

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Spence!

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: —because the only main money that they can ever get—

Mr Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Spence for ignoring the chair.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: —is not from those people who know that the Liberal government generates jobs and economic opportunities for the future of South Australia and Australia, who know that the Liberal Party is the generator, and who know that the only way forward is with the Liberal Party. Of course, the Labor Party gets a little upset when they see something that I understand is publicly available anyway and they want to beat it up. I say to the member for Spence: can you tell me whether the Hon. David Cox through the union movement has been given \$150 000 to try to beat Dean Hersey, who will knock him off when the federal election takes place on 10 November?

SALINITY AND WATER QUALITY

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Will the Premier inform the House of the latest progress within South Australia of the national action plan for Salinity and Water Quality?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Premier): I thank the member for MacKillop for this important question. In his electorate this is one of the major projects under the national action plan. Earlier today, the Minister for Water Resources and I joined federal Minister Robert Hill to announce a further \$15.1 million of commonwealth funding for South Australia under the national action plan. This speaks for the credentials of both the federal government and the state Liberal government. After years of talking about the environment and lots of rhetoric, what we have seen is that this federal government through the NHT inquiry and now the national action plan is doing something about the environment that is meaningful. It is putting money in there that will make a real difference. It is about on-ground works, not just policies and committees or whatever.

I think that Senator Hill and Senator Truss and all their colleagues need to be congratulated on their level of commitment, which is far beyond what we have ever seen before. This is real money and it is a lot of money. As I said, NHT has been a magnificent program. It has changed the culture out there and empowered a lot of community groups to get out and do things that actually make a difference, whether that be in revegetation, bush care, coast care or whatever. The

national action plan is perhaps more targeted. We are looking at salinity and water quality which are two of the major issues that we now face in Australia. They are complex issues that need to be addressed with large licks of money.

In South Australia we have led the charge nationally on this issue. We pushed for the future of the Murray and other waterways to be taken to the highest level. The former Premier championed that and got it onto the agenda of COAG, which was a bit of a first, and he was able to push for a commitment from the commonwealth and all the states, and out of that we have seen the \$1.4 billion national action plan delivered.

We were the first state to sign up to that agreement, which shows our level of commitment compared to that shown by certain other states, particularly the Labor states. We were the first to receive federal funding to put the plan into action, and this is another area where we are forging a better future for South Australians, particularly with respect to the Murray River. Others have talked and dithered, but we have actually delivered on this.

Today's announcement means that important works on the ground can improve Adelaide's drinking water and land practices, and help conserve our natural heritage. It will not only help save the Murray River but also improve productivity in the South-East, around the Murray River, and in many other areas of the state. For instance, \$2 million will go towards the rehabilitation plans for the Lower Murray dairy flats irrigation area, which is an extremely important project. It is one concerning which, if we were at all exposed over the years, we have done a terrific job with our irrigation systems further up the Murray River. We have led Australia totally in the rehabilitation of those systems. The Lower Murray swamps area has been a complex problem and a lot of work has been done there. We are about to start making a major change to the way in which we irrigate in that area, looking at the efficiency of water use and at how much water is used and what is put back into the river. There is no doubt that will lead to increased productivity and a good environmental outcome.

Another \$1.5 million will help to fence off and protect water catchments in the Mount Lofty Ranges, on Kangaroo Island and in the northern agricultural districts. We have also allocated \$4 million towards mapping the state's worst affected salinity areas, and some aerial mapping techniques are now making an enormous difference to the way in which we are able to establish where the problems are so that we can address them. We are funding natural resource management groups so that local communities have input and a direct say in how they can improve and protect their environment and livelihood. There is no-one better than the producers in local communities to drive environmental issues.

This is another historic step for South Australia and the nation. The national action plan for salinity and water quality is a landmark achievement and we are leading the way in its implementation. I think this is a terrific step forward for the Australian environment, and the federal government has shown enormous leadership in relation to this issue. It has not been a matter of rhetoric but, rather, one involving ground works for which people have been waiting for decades.

GERARD, Mr R.

Ms HURLEY (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): What discussions has the Premier had with Mr Rob Gerard in recent days; and will the Premier confirm to the House

weekend reports that the decision to appoint the Minister for Human Services as Deputy Premier was made because a prominent Adelaide businessman promised a \$300 000 Liberal Party campaign donation contingent on the Brown appointment?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come back to order.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Premier): I thank the deputy leader for the question, because it provides me with the opportunity to point out that being associated with Rob Gerard in South Australia is a good thing. Rob Gerard is a person who does an enormous amount for South Australia. He leads many charity bodies and raises a lot of money, whether it be for the Olympics, the Royal Adelaide Hospital, or a range of other things. I have seen Robert twice in the last week, first, at a Business SA dinner where we had a quiet drink together and a little chat about the pleasantries of life and how in this day and age it is important to run charitable foundations. I saw him again at the reception for our new Governor-General on Saturday evening at which he, the Governor-General and I had a lovely discussion. The Governor-General could probably tell you if there was any political nature to that discussion, but I assure you there was not. I have spoken to Rob Gerard, but there has been no political discussion whatsoever.

MURRAY RIVER

Mr VENNING (Schubert): Will the Minister for Water Resources inform the House whether there are any implications for South Australia following the release of the document, 'A Snapshot of the Murray-Darling Basin River Condition', compiled by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission?

Mr Conlon: There'd bloody well better be!

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL (Minister for Water Resources): I thank the member for Schubert for his question and I assure the member for Elder that there certainly are implications. The first thing to say about the snapshot is that it does not necessarily tell us anything new, but it collates together a picture that, at best, is depressing and at worst is dismal. In fact, the sections concerning our part of the river system, from Lock 11 to Lock 3 in South Australia, from Lock 3 to Wellington and from the Meningie Lakes to where the Darling joins the Murray, are parlous indeed. In fact, South Australia controls—

Mr Conlon: How long do you reckon it will take?

The SPEAKER: Order! Interjections are out of order. The minister will ignore them.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am not sure how long the Murray River is. The fact is—

Mr Conlon: Is this answer going to be as long?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I think that, from the top of my head, Ms van Wisse swam about 1 200 kilometres; so, that would appear to be the length of the main branch.

Mr Clarke: How far is Echuca from Unley?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Spitting distance. I return to the question because this is a serious question for this House. The only indicator on which the South Australian section of the river performed adequately was in salinity. The only reason we performed adequately in salinity was as a result of the leadership of the previous Premier, the work of the current Premier, and the leadership in this area by the Minister for Environment and me on the Murray-Darling

Basin Commission—the inception works that we have already undertaken. Unlike the bleating of the shadow minister opposite, this government has been getting on with the job and is putting in place concrete achievements towards saving this river.

The fact is that environmental flows and salinity are but two aspects. If one looks at the snapshot one can see that it puts together a series of indicators for riverine health which include factors such as wetlands environment on the sides of the river, vegetation, macro-invertebrates and micro-invertebrates, fish species, turbidity, the movement of sand along the base of the river (which is a rising problem and one which will get worse because the sand is already mobile), and a number of other factors. We are working on salinity. Again, the federal minister, Senator Hill, has provided national leadership—

Mr Conlon: He's a great mate.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The honourable member opposite says, with some irony, that he is a mate. In terms of the river and South Australia we are at one. I think that when Senator Hill spoke about 4 000 gegalitres needing to be saved at a cost of \$2.6 billion spent over the next 15 years Senator Hill was not speaking for South Australia and he was not speaking for me as Minister for Water Resources: he was speaking in the national interest to preserve something that is basically quintessential to the survival of this nation. It might interest members on this side of the House—even if it does not interest members on the other side of the House—to know that 6 per cent of the entire rainfall of this nation is caught and flows to the sea through the Murray-Darling Basin.

Mr Lewis: Is that all?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Yes. The member for Hammond asks, 'Is that all?', but he would not perhaps be surprised to know that 50 per cent of the water usage of this nation is drawn from that basin. On the one half it is 6 per cent of our possible collection and on the other side it is 50 per cent of our use.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: It is. You do not have to be a genius to realise that the Murray-Darling system is under stress. In addition, the commonwealth government has recently announced an additional 70 gegalitres of environmental water to come down the Murray River system from the corporatisation of the Snowy scheme. When we say we need 4 000—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: The member for Elder shows his ignorance. He has just asked the shadow minister what environmental water is. If you want to aspire to government, come downstairs where the shadow minister and I will give you a half-hour lesson on it. Environmental water is that water which—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: —needs to flow from the headwaters or source right to the sea so that wetlands, the environment and the estuarine mouth can be kept free and in an ecologically sustainable condition. I will help the honourable member afterwards. I will not detain this House any longer, because those who sit opposite clearly are interested only in sideshows.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Let me just finish by assuring the member for Peake of one thing: after none of us

is here, after business involving the previous Premier and the previous Minister for Tourism is long consigned to the fish and ship shop in which the honourable member will be working, the people of South Australia will still need their water and the Murray-Darling system.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I beg your pardon?

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: That's not very nice.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Peake will come to order.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: In the last two days I have been variously described as a goose, a snake and a pig. Given the way this place is going, I will have completed the whole zoo by the end of the day. After this sideshow is over, the Murray River and the waters of the Murray will still be of vital importance to this state. The Murray River is the main game. This government—through the previous Premier, the current Premier, the Minister for Environment and myself—is providing leadership, and we will continue to do so in spite of the people opposite.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT: MEMBER FOR COLES

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Does the Premier accept the statements the Auditor-General made in his report today that, in attacking the Auditor-General on her resignation, the member for Coles was 'not speaking from her own recollection of events but reconstructing a story'? The member for Coles claimed that the Auditor-General had advised her in a telephone conversation that she had no conflict of interest and that she had relied on that advice. The Auditor says that at no time during her examination on oath before this inquiry did she refer to a conversation with the Auditor regarding conflicts of interests. In fact, the Auditor-General specifically quotes:

Over a five month period Mr Hall's legal advisers made submissions of 130 pages of detailed legal and factual analysis of the text of my report. In addition, they made further representations by way of correspondence. However, this fundamental issue was not mentioned, and this in itself is telling.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Premier): I refer to the first part of the question regarding whether I accept what the Auditor-General has said. In South Australia we have free speech. These two people are working from recollections of what happened a long time ago. If you are trying to line them up—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart has asked his question.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I support the right of free speech. The member for Coles—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Mitchell! The chair is determined at least to let the Premier be heard.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The member for Coles had every right—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Spence.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The member for Coles had every right to make the statements she made in her defence. It is then up to the Auditor-General to have his say, and that is what he has done.

DIABETES

Mr CONDOUS (Colton): Will the Deputy Premier tell the House how the state government is helping South Australians with diabetes?

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Premier): I thank the member for Colton for his question, because diabetes is one of the emerging significant diseases within our community. In the last 20 years, the incidence of diabetes has approximately doubled. We know that about 42 000 South Australians are now diagnosed with diabetes. We also believe that another 42 000 people approximately have diabetes and, as yet, have not been diagnosed. The risk to those people through diabetes is very significant indeed if it is not appropriately treated, particularly in terms of bringing on heart disease and related problems, and stress. It is very important that people are effectively diagnosed for their diabetes and effectively treated.

We have taken up diabetes at both a national and state level and it is a national and state health priority. It is very important indeed that we improve the education of people within the community about diabetes, because it is a disease where some action can be taken, and of course those who need it can take insulin.

A debate has been occurring for some time over the fact that we provide free needles and syringes for people who are drug addicts. I am prepared to stand and argue that case any day. Members only have to look at the incidence of HIV and AIDS within our community compared with the communities that do not provide free needles and syringes for those with injectable drug habits: it has been a very good outcome publicly in terms of minimising the spread of HIV and AIDS within the community.

However, there has been an ongoing argument that people with diabetes who need to inject themselves once or perhaps up to four or five times a day have had to pay for their syringes. The Federal Government has been subsidising the syringes to a certain extent. A box of 100 needles and syringes would normally cost \$25. The federal government has been providing a subsidy to reduce it to \$8, and \$5 for those on pensions or part pensions. However, that argument still continues. Therefore, as part of this year's budget the government has made a decision to provide free needles and syringes—

Ms Stevens interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: No, it has been resolved. The government has made a decision to provide free needles and syringes to diabetics within the community. The 42 000 people suffering from diabetes will be thrilled with this news indeed. It is part of our strategy to more effectively deal with diabetes within the community. Therefore, both the state and federal governments are now contributing towards the cost, and we have free needles and syringes for all diabetics within the community. This is at an estimated cost of \$258 000 for a full year for the South Australian government. Very importantly, it meshes in with the initiative being taken by GPs and the divisions of GPs in the community in terms of their strategy on diabetes. The needles and syringes are being distributed by Diabetes Australia—

Ms Stevens interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I am not quite sure to what the member for Elizabeth is objecting. Is she objecting to the fact that, once again, the government is responding to a health need of the community and doing it very effectively indeed? Is she complaining that we are doing it? If she is objecting—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! There are too many interjections.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: —I will formally acknowledge her objection. Perhaps the honourable member might like to give a grievance after question time supporting this initiative of the government. Diabetes is an important disease. It is especially important in the Aboriginal community, because 9 per cent of the indigenous community of South Australia is known to have diabetes. For those in the indigenous community over 60 years of age, the incidence runs up to about 23 per cent, so one in almost four has diabetes. It is a disease on the increase and the government is now responding to this initiative. At the last health ministers' meeting, we asked the federal government to pay the entire cost. The federal government turned it down, so the South Australian government has now stepped in to make sure that all South Australians with diabetes are able to access free needles through Diabetes Australia.

For those in country areas, I make the point that needles will be distributed by Diabetes Australia through the post, and it expects to have a series of subagents available throughout South Australia, as well. From late September this year, those free needles have been available through Diabetes Australia.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT: MEMBER FOR COLES

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Does the Premier's defence of the member for Coles' right to free speech extend to defending comments which, if made by the member for Coles outside this House, may amount to criminal defamation? Today in the Auditor-General's special report—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr FOLEY: It is a quote, sir.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Hart will resume his seat. Members on both sides would understand that it is a sensitive question and I expect silence on both sides while we hear the question and the reply.

Mr FOLEY: Would you like me to repeat the question, sir?

The SPEAKER: No, I would not.

Mr FOLEY: Page 4 of the Auditor-General's quite extraordinary special report to this House today states:

In my opinion, several of the matters in Mrs Hall's ministerial statement of 4 October 2001 would, but for the privilege of parliament, constitute criminal defamation within the meaning of section 257 of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act.

Do you support and condone your minister?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Premier): The member is going right into hypotheticals. The statements made—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! That is enough.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The statements made were under parliamentary privilege, and he knows that. We would like to test a lot of things said in this place. A lot of things are said in this place that we would like to test outside the House. I stand by the member for Coles and what you have ignored is that those statements were not made out on the steps; they were made under parliamentary privilege.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The House will come to order.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I include the member for Bragg and the member for Stuart.

SALINITY AND WATER QUALITY

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): Will the Minister for Environment and Heritage outline to the House the environmental benefits arising from today's very welcome announcement of a \$15 million salinity and water quality package? This announcement surely would be welcomed by all South Australians and, in particular, I would like the minister to provide some examples of community based volunteer projects and the environmental benefits they will deliver as a result of this package.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Environment and Heritage): Today's announcement is good news for the environment and I congratulate the former Premier, the current Premier and other ministers who have had a part to play in taking up the issue at COAG and with the Murray-Darling Basin Commission. If this government is badged by anything, it is badged by its fight to save the Murray and the strong stand it has taken Australia-wide to bring attention to the plight of the Murray. As a community and a government, we are really pleased that the federal government has backed us and today's announcement of the national action plan money is a great win for South Australia long term. We all know that the state of the Murray has occurred over many decades, not overnight, and it will take long-term investment over many years to fix it. The fact that this government has put it on the national agenda and fought so hard to get significant funding is a very positive thing. We were the first state to sign, and we were the first state to get money. It is a credit to the government that we have gone out there and fought the fight and won significant environmental benefits long-term for the state.

The Premier mentioned earlier, as part of the \$15 million announcement today, the \$2.18 million upgrade to the Lower Murray dairy flats. We all know that has been a difficult issue for the state and the industry. The fact that we now have funding of over \$2 million to upgrade something like 250 inlets to deal with the issue can only be a positive thing, because that is an area that needed to be dealt with, and the government has not walked away from what is a complex and difficult area. We have dealt with it and we are very pleased that the federal government has backed us in and assisted with funding of \$2 million to deal with the dairy flats in the Lower Murray.

Funding of approximately \$1 million has also been allocated towards accelerated salt interception schemes. We all know how successful the schemes have been, and the fact that another \$1 million has been allocated to salt interception is a positive environmental outcome for the state.

I know that the members for MacKillop and Gordon have an interest in the salinity fight in the Upper South-East. Something like \$3 million has been allocated to help to continue to fight salinity in the Upper South-East, which, of course, from a national parks viewpoint, will help enhance the wetlands of the Coorong National Park and the Tilley Swamp area, and that will be a positive thing. The Tilley Swamp is an important wetland that is used as a pooling site for discharged water before it flows into the southern lagoons of the Coorong. As members would know, the Coorong is listed under the RAMSARC convention as a wetland of international significance.

Ultimately, there will be a structural adjustment that will result in the creation of a Tilley Swamp wetland reserve and, indeed, an expansion of the wetland area, and that will be a positive for the South-East. It is part of the salinity program,

of which I know the local members are well aware. Certainly National Parks and Wildlife have already expressed an interest in land between the Coorong and the wetland system to extend the Coorong National Park and to help link the park with the wetland system. So, we see that as one of the very positive outcomes in the South-East as part of the salinity management in that area.

There are other community projects. I know that the member for Heysen has always had an interest in the community involvement in environmental programs. He is involved in many in his local area of which I am familiar. One of the local programs that may be of interest is the riparian zone and biodiversity restoration and conservation through the Inman River Catchment, which is, I guess, one of dozens of community projects.

Ultimately, it is a local project that is designed to repair the Inman River catchment area. The Inman River is of high regional importance that has suffered substantially from such things as river bank erosion and other problems. So, the Inman River catchment group has been awarded some \$60 000 to address it at the local level. About 11 kilometres of fencing, 24 hectares of revegetation and removal of exotic trees and weeds from a 50 hectare area is part of that project. That is just one example of dozens of projects that are now available at the community level.

I think the very important thing about these projects is not only the immediate environmental outcome but also the benefit of educating the community about the importance of their on-land actions and what can result from that. I think there is a far better educated generation coming behind this generation who understand the effects of their actions on their own or community land. It is these sorts of projects that not only deliver environmental outcomes but also educate people about the importance of the environment, and their on-ground programs are one of the real benefits.

There are also other projects such as native grassland management in the northern agricultural district. Members might recall that we established the first conservation reserve—the Mokota Conservation Reserve—for native grasslands. This grassland project was about native grassland management. They are trying to set up a grazing management example where an area of native grasslands will be managed with grazing. They will be able to see how the different management techniques affect the native grasslands.

What that ultimately means is that they will be able to use those management techniques in the national parks that have native grasslands or on private property where there are heritage agreements and therefore get a better spread of native grasslands and better protection and still manage grazing. That is good for both an environmental and a primary industries outcome in terms of that aspect. There are many on-ground examples in relation to the national action plan funding that has been announced today. As a government we are pleased that the federal government has backed us up. I think the federal government should be congratulated for its commitment to the Murray in particular. This is a vision and a long-term aim to continue to rehabilitate the Murray, and we are happy to work in cooperation with the federal government on the projects and the announcement.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT: MEMBER FOR COLES

Mr FOLEY (Hart): My question is directed to the Premier. Given the Premier's willingness to stand by the

member for Coles, can he explain how the comments of the member for Coles on 4 October could possibly be true, and is it now not necessary for members of his government to tell the truth?

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. The member for Hart has imputed improper motives towards a member on this side of the House

An honourable member: All members.

The Hon. G.M. GUNN: —to all members—which is contrary to standing orders. I ask for an unqualified withdrawal and apology.

The SPEAKER: I uphold the point of order and ask the member to withdraw.

Mr CONLON: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, what is required to be withdrawn?

Mr Scalzi: Why stand up if you don't know what you are asking?

Mr Conlon: You've got to know what you want withdrawn.

The SPEAKER: Order! The chair does not want to embellish the issue. The whole House heard the remark across the chamber and the inferences against the member for Coles. The chair is of the view that it is not appropriate for the chamber and asks that—

Mr FOLEY: I asked whether or not it was necessary for any member of this government to tell the truth. What is wrong with that?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: On a point of order, Mr Speaker, I do not believe that the standing orders give a member the right to debate a ruling of the chair.

The SPEAKER: Order! The explanation that the member gave the chair, as I recall it, was not the words that the member used in his question.

Mr FOLEY: I will repeat the question, if I may. Given the Premier's willingness to stand by the member for Coles, can he explain how the comments of the member for Coles on 4 October could possibly be true, and is it now not necessary for members of his government to tell the truth?

The SPEAKER: Are you asserting that those are the words that you used the first time?

Mr FOLEY: Absolutely, sir, they are right here.

The SPEAKER: I will check the record later. On the basis that the words are the same, I will allow the question.

Mr FOLEY: The Auditor-General's Report shows that never at any time before 4 October did the member for Coles raise her allegations with the Auditor-General, nor at any time did her legal advisers raise them over five months and with 130 pages of written submissions.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. My understanding of the question is that the member for Hart, in essence, asked whether it is not now necessary for members of the government to tell the truth. There is a clear implication in his question that members on this side of the chamber in the past have not been telling the truth. Accordingly, I ask that that imputation be withdrawn forthwith as it is not parliamentary.

The SPEAKER: The view of the chair is that this is one of those very fine debating points. I think it is in the interests of all that we proceed and move on.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Premier): It is a bit like yesterday. I marvel at the way that some members set themselves up as judge and jury. The member for Elder—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. I remind members on my left that waving around reports is

prohibited under the standing orders, which prohibit displays. If you do not want to go outside for an early afternoon tea I suggest that you discontinue the practice.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Yesterday, we had the member for Elder wanting to be judge and jury and to make decisions on things that were just evidence of not finding.

Mr Hanna interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for Mitchell!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: What I heard was the member for Hart trying to say that, because the member for Coles had not raised something during the course of the investigations, it is therefore not true. I do not know the logic of where he is going.

Mr Hanna: It was malicious.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier will resume his seat. The member for Mitchell is on his last warning. If he puts up one more display, he will be named on the spot.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Thank you. To claim that a member has not told the truth because something was not raised during the inquiry is taking about six jumps ahead of oneself. I do not know what gives any member of this House the right to make that sort of assumption and to accuse another member of actually not telling the truth.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Minister for Water Resources!

PORTS CORP

Mr MEIER (Goyder): My question is directed to the Minister for Government Enterprises. In the light of his announcement last week about the sale of Ports Corp, will the minister detail to the House the benefits to South Australia of the sale of Ports Corp?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I thank the member for Goyder for his question.

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order, sir. The issue of the sale of Ports Corp was well canvassed in the media last week. I ask you, sir, again to take heed of the ruling of the Speaker of the Scottish parliament with respect to ministers' answering in the House questions which have already been given wide publicity.

The SPEAKER: Order! I know the member for Ross Smith appeals to my Scottish ancestry every time he raises this point of order, but I do not concur with my colleague the Speaker of the Scottish parliament on this occasion. We will set our own standing orders for South Australia.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Thank you, sir. I thank the member for Goyder for the question, which does allow me to explain the benefits of the sale of Ports Corp, and I acknowledge his support and the interest of his electorate in the outcome of the sale. The sale or lease of Ports Corp to Flinders Ports is an outstanding result for South Australian exporters. It provides an outstanding opportunity to help our environment, and it is an outstanding result for South Australian taxpayers. That is a series of very positive benefits.

In relation to the taxpayer, the sale will benefit the state to the tune of \$186 million. Included in that will be \$130 million in cash plus a \$3 million interest bonus which we received thanks to currency fluctuations. Very importantly, it will also mean that Flinders Ports will provide \$52.8 million for dredging and construction of a new berth for

panamax sized grain vessels at a new terminal at Outer Harbor. Of the divestment proceeds (\$131 million in cash), \$100 million will be spent on salinity and water quality outcomes for the Murray River. This dovetails beautifully with the announcement earlier today by the federal and state governments that we will receive an initial \$15.1 million from the federal government under the seven year national action plan for water quality and salinity.

That is real money—\$100 million from our proceeds and \$15.1 million from the federal government. It is real money to be spent on real problem issues which, hopefully, and expectedly, will provide really positive outcomes. It is a very practical response to the plight of the river. Importantly also, getting back to Ports Corp, which was the import of the question, the divestment of Ports Corp means that at last South Australia, or Port Adelaide, will be able to accommodate fully laden panamax sized grain vessels.

The importance of this is that our farmers—from the sale-related benefit alone—will receive of the order of \$6 to \$10 per tonne of grain across the wharf. Given that we have, first, experienced a number of tough times in the rural sector in the past 15 years and, secondly (and pleasingly), experienced some record years recently (and long may that continue), there will be a substantial benefit to South Australian exporters—for example, our farmers—through that money. I know that they will then tend to spend that money wisely and, in fact, improve their efficiency and then improve their exports.

Flinders Ports, the new lessees, is working already, I believe, on a concept plan to see the deepening of the grain port. Flinders Ports will provide its plan to us to review as soon as it is available. In addition, and very importantly, Flinders Ports has identified that, on an annual basis, it will review the business case for deepening the container terminal for panamax, and possibly post-panamax, vessels; and, as soon as the business case stacks up, Flinders Ports will, in fact, be deepening the channel and providing appropriate berthing facilities there. This is all part of an outcome of a vision for the port to be part of an integrated efficiently managed transport chain.

We wanted to make sure that, between the export gate—whether that is the farm gate, Mitsubishi, South Australian wine exporters, or whatever—and the consumer there was as much efficiency as possible. Obviously, Flinders Ports is able to provide that, with Adsteam and Egis bringing worldwide experience to the South Australian operation. The application of that experience and expertise which the consortium provides will, we are sure, provide exactly the sort of efficiencies that will ensure that the South Australian ports in general are at the cutting edge of the industry for many years to come, with all of the flow-on benefits that will be provided from that outcome.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT: MEMBER FOR COLES

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Does the Premier accept the Auditor-General's statement that the member for Coles made false claims and made them maliciously when the honourable member told the House on 4 October that the Auditor-General had concealed a conflict of interest of one of his informants? At page 7 of his report tabled today, the Auditor-General states:

This is the first time I have heard of any such claim from Mrs Hall. In substance Mrs Hall has alleged that I have conspired with

a person or persons unnamed in a deliberate breach of my public duty. I categorically deny that I have breached my public duty in any way. Mrs Hall does not provide any details regarding this matter to enable her claim to be tested. The only conclusion open is that her claim is false and that it was made maliciously.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Premier): It is very selective, as we have seen—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The honourable member just read a quote and inadvertently left out a sentence.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Two sentences?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, members on my right!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The omitted sentence states:

Mrs Hall is not privy to the internal processes of my inquiry.

The honourable member deliberately left that out.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Premier has the call.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I was accused yesterday of not reading the whole report. The honourable member just left out a sentence absolutely deliberately.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: Yes; good heavens!

Ms Hurley: What is the effect of that sentence?

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: It has an effect like everything else. The opposition continually quotes selectively.

Mr Conlon: Then read it all.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Foley: Read the whole report, if you like.

The SPEAKER: Order! I warn the member for Hart. The Premier.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The member for Hart has made an art form of selectively quoting. Yesterday I was accused of not having read the whole report. Has anyone on the opposition benches read the Auditor-General's report on the Hindmarsh stadium? If they did, did they or did they not then come in and mislead the House? I have heard from about six members opposite that the cost of building the Hindmarsh stadium was \$41 million.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the Minister for Police!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: The claim constantly made was \$41 million. If members read the Auditor-General's report, they will see that that is not correct. It is selectively quoting as we just heard. The actual cost was \$20 million-odd and can be found in appendix 3 of the report. The \$41 million that they selectively quote time and again as the cost encompasses a whole number of things, including the cost of running the tournament. If the opposition wants to raise points and be fair and pick up on what the parliamentary process is all about, at least let them quote the whole—

Mr FOLEY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. I know the Premier has great difficulty trying to defend the member for Coles.

The SPEAKER: Order! What is the point of order?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! Members on my right will remain silent so that I can at least hear the point of order.

Mr FOLEY: The question was not about the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium and its cost but it was about your member for Coles and what she said about the Auditor-General.

The SPEAKER: Order! I bring the Premier back to the question.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I will wind up, sir. Once again, the member for Hart has questioned the right of the member for Coles to use parliamentary privilege in this place, and the right of the Auditor-General to reply.

PETROL RATIONING

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): In the course of the reviews that he has been undertaking of the petroleum restrictions and rationing that occurred on the weekend included in 17 to 21 October recently, has the Minister for Minerals and Energy determined how much extra fuel was sold during that period over and above the weekend before and the same third week concerned in October last year, and has he determined the disproportionate disadvantage there was in consequence of that blanket restriction to \$25 for people who lived in and had to commute from country areas to the city and where they do not have access to public transport? Would he, in the course of his review, consider those implications and make notes of how to avoid such discrimination against country people in future?

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Minerals and Energy): I am rather surprised by the rather unusual question from the member for Hammond, particularly as he was the first caller whom I had to my home telephone after restrictions were introduced. In fact, the member for Hammond rang me on two occasions: it was about 7.30 a.m. and then about 7.40 a.m. The honourable member wanted me to explain the conditions of rationing, because he was concerned that, as a member of Parliament, he might not be able to undertake his duties and he wanted to know what special considerations could be provided for him. I advised the member for Hammond that, as he is a member who represents the area surrounding Murray Bridge, he would have ample opportunity to buy petroleum product because that area was not subject to petrol restrictions. Indeed, I spoke to the member for Hammond since and he indicated that, while he was also concerned about his travelling within the city as part of his Public Works Committee duties, he could have access to petroleum product.

In relation to the review that has been undertaken, I advised in the House extensively yesterday the nature of the review that is being undertaken. I have also advised in the House and, indeed, publicly that until we have accumulated accurate detailed data on the effects of the restrictions it is difficult to be able to talk about the volume of petrol that was sold or may have been sold. What I can tell the member for Hammond though as an example is that the General Manager of Liberty Petroleum in South Australia (which as members would be aware is a company with a number of outlets throughout metropolitan Adelaide) advised that there certainly was a rush on petroleum product in their service stations on Monday and Tuesday, that people were taking in whatever they could lay their hands on to fill—jerry cans, small tins and so on—and that had the restrictions not been introduced he believes that Liberty dealerships would have totally run out of petroleum product on Wednesday. Other companies had also agreed that on Monday and Tuesday (before the restrictions were introduced) they had people

bringing a variety of containers into service stations to fill and that there was a need to do something.

No concern has been expressed by any company of which I am aware about the need to introduce restrictions, but rather the purpose for the review which I have in place in so far as retail outlets are concerned is to be sure that the right amount of petroleum restriction was supplied; in other words, \$25 is an appropriate amount of fuel or should it be a lesser amount. The purpose was also to look at the six hour trading blocks to which trading was restricted to see whether it should be for a longer period on future occasions; and also to examine the effect of no petroleum product being available on the Saturday and a guesstimate of what that would have meant based on data from previous sales if restrictions had not been lifted on Sunday.

The Motor Traders Association will have a further meeting with all the other players within two weeks and it will be collecting data from its members and others whom it surveys. That data will then be used to make a determination for what changes need to be made to the petrol rationing system which has been in place for many years under both this government and the previous Labor government to determine whether there might be better ways of doing it. If the member for Hammond finds that he requires more information, he has already demonstrated that he knows my home telephone number and he is welcome to call that at any time.

AUDITOR-GENERAL

Mr FOLEY (Hart): Does the Premier have full confidence in the Auditor-General; and does the Premier have full confidence in the integrity and independence of the report delivered to parliament today by the Auditor-General? Does he have your support?

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Premier): We voted on this a couple of weeks ago and the government voted—

Mr Foley interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Hart will come to order!

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: —confidence in the Auditor-General.

TAFE INSTITUTES

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Education and Children's Services advise the House on how well South Australia's TAFE institutes are currently responding to the education and training needs of our young students?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): TAFE institutes in South Australia are leading edge. In fact they are more than that: they are innovative and responsive to the needs of South Australians. They are national leaders and they are winning national awards. One such institute is the Onkaparinga Institute of TAFE, which has just won a national award for outstanding achievement in tourism training. This award, Australia's top award—I repeat, the top award—is testimony to Onkaparinga's commitment to providing creative tourism programs that meet our state's tourism needs.

In new wine studies and viticulture courses in the Barossa, students surrounded by the very wineries they are likely to be employed by. This approach puts our institutes at the

top level of any in Australia. We know that TAFE graduates find employment at the rate of 83 per cent, which is significantly above the national rate of 76 per cent. Furthermore, 87 per cent of employers in South Australia rate TAFE's performance as highly satisfactory compared with the national figure of 83 per cent.

The government is listening to employers and providing students with relevant training that they need to succeed in life. In fact, the recent National Centre for Vocational Education Research survey revealed that, in the 10 key areas of employment outcome covered by that survey, our TAFE system exceeded the national average in eight out of those 10 key areas. That is an indicator of the excellent service and the excellent work that our TAFE lecturers and staff at TAFE institutes give to our students and to employers. One might well ask what is the opposition's policy on TAFE in this state.

The Hon. D.C. Wotton: Do they have one?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: That is a very good question from the member for Heysen because students don't know, employers don't know and lecturers don't know.

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: The shadow spokesperson doesn't know.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Exactly, the shadow spokesperson doesn't know. Who does know, because it does not appear as though anybody knows? That is typical of the Labor opposition—no plans, no pathways, no policies—and they are not the people to be leading education in this state.

NATIVE TITLE AGREEMENT

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Minister for Minerals and Energy): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement. Leave granted.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW: I am pleased to inform the House today that, on Tuesday night, a historic native title agreement was signed in Parliament House. This building was chosen as we felt it presented a fitting location to sign such an important document. The document that was signed was Australia's first multi-tribal, multi-company native title agreement. We—the state government, the petroleum companies involved and also the Aboriginal peoples involved—are confident that this will be a template for future native title agreements around Australia. I was delighted that my colleague the member for Flinders could also be present to witness the signing of these important documents.

In total, 238 contracts needed to be signed to form part of this agreement, and they involved a number of important groupings. They involved the Edward Landers Dieri people, the Yandruwandha/Yawarrawarrka people, the Wangkangurru/Yarluyandi people and seven different exploration consortiums including Australian Crude Oil Incorporated, Stuart Petroleum, Beach Petroleum, Strike Oil, Australian Gas Fields Limited, Liberty Petroleum Corporation, Tyers Investments Pty Ltd and a consortium of Beach Petroleum and Magellan Petroleum.

These agreements make it possible to allow \$45 million worth of new petroleum exploration over 11 new exploration licences to occur in the Cooper Basin. It is important that this agreement be viewed carefully by other companies to see what can be achieved in native title. The agreements not only

cover the exploration phase but also provide for the development of any discoveries should exploration be successful, which all parties involved believe it will be.

I take this opportunity, formally on the record of the parliament, to congratulate the native title claimants, the companies, the government officers, parties and legal representatives involved. I also take the opportunity to pay tribute to an individual, Mr Parry Agius of the ALRM, whose involvement has been significant in assisting this agreement being reached. He has been a true champion on behalf of Aboriginal peoples and an advocate that this Australian first could happen.

Hundreds of hours went into reaching this agreement, and extended over a period of some 1½ years. The agreements have been made possible through the goodwill of all parties involved: the Aboriginal peoples, the companies and the government officers. It is one of the most satisfying things I have ever been involved in as a member of parliament—to be in a room with Aboriginal peoples from three different tribes drawn from all around Australia, people of all ages who could see the advantages of this agreement for their peoples.

I am confident that, in the future, as the Aboriginal peoples draw benefit from this agreement, there will be a dawning of a new era in opportunities for them. Some of the elders excitedly told me about scholarship opportunities in trust they want to establish for the future education of their children to give them an opportunity to further themselves to the extent of their natural abilities, and that presents opportunities that they have never had before to this extent. I am confident that it will provide them with enormous opportunity to develop new leaders amongst their peoples as young people mature into adulthood.

My colleague the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs has provided some very important advice throughout this process. I pay tribute to her leadership in her portfolio, particularly to her officers for making this possible. These agreements are important not only for the reasons already outlined but also because they establish processes to protect Aboriginal heritage before and during field operations and to provide payments for interference with the enjoyment of the native title rights of the native title claimants, and that is a very important breakthrough.

It remains a fact that it is not possible to undertake business in Queensland because of the way its government is administering native title. It remains a fact that the South Australian government has demonstrated that it can process native title claims more expediently than can the Northern Territory or Western Australia or, for that matter, any other state. We now have an agreement that forms the potential template for future indigenous land-use agreements. If that becomes a reality, it means that with future native title claims both Aboriginal claimants and companies need only look at the template and, if they agree, a process that has taken years—and is still without finalisation in a state such as Queensland—may be possible in the future in just a few months, or better, and that is a huge step forward for everyone involved.

It is a shame that the significance of the moment and the significance of this agreement has not yet received the full media attention it deserves. However, I am confident that over time, as representatives of our nation's media become aware of the significance of this complex set of legal agreements, it will be acknowledged that it really does represent a way forward. I look forward to advising the parliament of the many millions of dollars that come into our

state: beyond the \$45 million in exploration, there will in the future be hundreds of millions of dollars in production from this area alone, let alone the further 15 areas in the Cooper Basin that will now go through this process, the further 16 areas that are waiting after that and the many minerals claims that can also be processed in this way. It was indeed a fine signing ceremony and a fitting tribute to the Aboriginal peoples, the government and the companies, and a fitting result for the people of South Australia.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

Ms WHITE (Taylor): I want to inform the House about developments earlier today when the federal Leader of the Opposition outlined an investment that will provide additional investment of more than \$1 billion over five years to Australian schools. It is a plan aimed at reducing class sizes and providing additional literacy and numeracy teachers in the most needy Australian schools—and it goes much further.

Before I do that, I want to address something that was raised by the Minister for Education in the last question of question time today when he referred to the issues of TAFE spending and achievements in this state. I reiterate his congratulations to the Onkaparinga Institute of TAFE for the award that it was meritoriously given—and deservedly so. I also acknowledge the very fine work that all eight of our TAFE institutes contribute to this state through the training and further education needs of citizens. However, I want to contrast what has been announced today on behalf of a federal Labor government with what this state Liberal government has in store for TAFE. What the minister did not tell this House is that we have the highest TAFE fees in the nation. TAFE's competitiveness and ability to compete is slipping because of the lack of investment in TAFE by this government.

I want to talk about the \$10 million that has been withdrawn from TAFE over the last three years. The eight TAFE institutes have had to take a whack of over \$10 million to their budget from this state Liberal government. This state Liberal government's plan for TAFE is to go further down the privatisation line to corporatise TAFE. It plans to take these eight TAFE institutes—or seven alliances—and turn each institute into a separate statutory corporation run by a board of management. It aims to deregulate TAFE courses and fees. We already have the highest TAFE fees in the nation. This government's answer to the challenges facing the under-funding and under-investment by itself in this important resource in this state is to just go down the corporatisation track.

At a time of unemployment when we need to be offering courses in those very areas of skill shortages, this government's response is to deregulate courses. It is exactly the wrong approach, because it forces institutes to compete with each other and to operate as and behave like private training providers interested only in offering courses that turn a profit. Our TAFE infrastructure is important to the future of this state and the training of our skills needs. This government has the wrong plan; it is a familiar plan that we see from this government all the time. The first step is corporatisation; the next step is privatisation. Why? The minister has said it himself: it is so that TAFE institutes—

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire: We are not privatising TAFE institutes.

Ms WHITE: You are corporatising TAFE, minister. It has been the history of your government to corporatise and

then to privatise. The same steps have been seen over and over again. You have not learnt. It is driven by an ideological belief in competition—

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I call the Minister for Police to order.

Ms WHITE: Thank you, sir. I want to outline some of the policies released today. They are policies that will give disadvantaged schools in Australia an average of \$1 million each over four years by establishing education priority zones in communities where education results need to be improved, where too few students are finishing high school to year 12 level, going onto university, starting apprenticeships or having further education or training. The total investment will be \$430 million over five years, and that is expected to fund about 50 zones over that five year period and covers about 640 schools. It will help to improve the results of more than 200 000 children.

Funding of \$100 million over five years is to be allocated to additional early learning places delivered through local primary schools to communities that lack adequate pre-school services. There is an investment of \$50 million over five years to create the learning gateway, which is an internet portal.

Time expired.

The Hon. D.C. WOTTON (Heysen): I bring to the attention of the House a matter of concern that relates to my electorate and, I am sure, to other electorates as well, and that is the problem associated with excessive exhaust brake noise created by some freight operators using defective or illegally modified exhaust brake systems. I have brought this concern to the attention of the parliament on a number of occasions and, indeed, to the attention of the minister responsible. A number of people in my electorate have expressed concern about this issue and taken various actions as a result. One of those people is a Mr Peter Loveless of Crafers, who has researched this issue and written numerous letters to the state minister, the federal minister and me and, I am sure, to other members of the House as well.

I want to refer to a number of issues, the first of which relates to legislation, because the Department of Transport SA advises that excessive exhaust brake noise exists in the Crafers/Bridgewater area in particular—and that is just one area about which I am concerned—but that it is a national issue. A code of practice for the use of exhaust brake systems is being addressed, so we are told by the National Road Transport Commission. However, we are advised that its introduction may take between one and two years. That is far too long because of the concerns that are being expressed by so many people. Transport SA, the Environment Protection Authority and SA Traffic Police officers, when resources permit, conduct blitzes and examinations of stationary freight vehicles. These officers are restricted in the action they can take because there is still no legislation to determine an acceptable decibel level for vehicles using exhaust brake systems whilst in motion.

One of my particular concerns regarding this matter is that, for many years on the South-Eastern Freeway—if I can use that as an example—signs were displayed asking vehicles passing through high-density residential areas on this section of the highway to recognise the problems that can be caused to residents in that area. When the new highway went through those signs were removed. So, at present no signs are displayed to indicate to operators that their vehicles are

passing through high-density residential areas on this section of the highway.

I understand that the Transport Minister, Di Laidlaw, on departmental advice, has rejected the use of signs requesting freight vehicle operators not to use their exhaust brake systems in residential areas. If the offending operators were observing the speed limits and using gears, they would need to use the exhaust brake systems only in an emergency and not as a means of controlling a speeding vehicle.

Together with many others, I have had the opportunity to look at what happens interstate. I had that opportunity only last month in New South Wales where I found that there were speed cameras affixed to bridges, speed signs restricting trucks to 80km/h in 100km/h zones in hilly terrain, permanent radar signs and policed sections of road and, in particular, signs requesting trucks to restrict exhaust brake noise in built-up areas.

Once again, I plead with the Minister for Transport to reintroduce these signs. They may not have any legal status, but at least they may help to remind drivers of these vehicles of the necessity to recognise the concerns and problems that are being experienced by people who live in these built-up areas. It is not too much to expect. It would only be a small matter for the minister to address, but I ask the Minister for Transport to have these signs erected as a matter of urgency for the benefit of all of the people who live in these areas.

Ms BREUER (Giles): First of all, today, I would like to congratulate our new Premier. Because of his close connections to my part of the state, I was pleased to see that of all the members opposite he was selected. We consider that he is one of our own in that part of the state, so we are pleased to see that he is the Premier because I believe he has the interests of our part of the state at heart. However, yesterday when the Premier answered a question about strong improvement in the South Australian economy I interjected because I get very depressed with this government's continual beating up of how well we are doing in regional South Australia. It spends a lot of money on features in newspapers telling us how well we are doing in regional South Australia. There are parts of South Australia which are doing very well—and I am pleased to see that—but I ask the new Premier to look at those parts of South Australia which are closest to him: Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla. The Premier said:

The member for Giles interjects, and I well and truly acknowledge that Upper Spencer Gulf has done it harder than any other area of this state over probably the last 20 years, and we need to do something about that. Nothing has happened for a long time, but at last Upper Spencer Gulf has some hope. We are not quite there yet.

I certainly do hope there is some hope for us. The Premier spoke of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway. This has certainly provided some benefits to our part of the state but it has not solved our problems. I get a little tired of people, particularly in Adelaide, telling me how well we are going to do out of the Alice Springs to Darwin railway. It has certainly provided a lot of work for contractors and One Steel, which is dear to my heart, but it has not been the major boon for Port Augusta which people in this part of the state expect it to be. Port Augusta has received many cuts over recent years such as the cuts to railways and ETSA, etc., so it certainly has made them come alive again.

The Premier mentioned yesterday the magnesium project in Port Pirie. This project is very important to Port Pirie and our part of the state. Where is it at? The federal government still has not committed to it. Will it or won't it? This is a

question that we keep asking ourselves in Upper Spencer Gulf and the Upper Spencer Gulf city regions: will it or won't it? Mostly, we have to answer that it won't. For many years we have had plenty of projects in respect of which we have asked, 'Will it or won't it?' but the answer is usually 'won't'. The Premier mentioned yesterday the Aurion project in Whyalla, which is very promising. I was pleased to go there recently and look at the developments. We believe that it has great opportunities, but it still has not happened: will it or won't it?

Shipbreaking was also mentioned yesterday by the Premier. For the past three years I have been hearing about the shipbreaking project in Whyalla but it has not moved on. I am still getting the same reports as those from three years ago. I held discussions on this with the Premier when he was the Deputy Premier. Where are they at? They tell us that Deutsche Bank has involved Synchrolift and a number of other huge companies in this, but nothing has happened for three years. They have talked about a feasibility study, but nothing has happened.

I believe that this shipbreaking project could have potential for the Whyalla region, but I also think that potentially it could be an environmental disaster. The shipbreaking industry is starting to take off, but the movement in the Spencer Gulf only changes over every 20 years, so if there was a disaster there the whole of the aquaculture industry in Spencer Gulf down to Port Lincoln would be affected. No shipbreaking industry in the world has ever proven to be clean, so why would this one be any different? Where are they at? What is happening with shipbreaking? I get very cross with prominent members of our community who keep telling us how well we are doing. They do so because, just like the position concerning this state government, it is in their interests. One of the great benefits of country life is community life and the social life, but there are hard core problems of unemployment in these areas, and those problems are not solvable at this stage. We must not wear rose-coloured glasses; we must acknowledge this problem and get the government to acknowledge it and move on. We have enough problems with the media downgrading us, so we need to fight this too.

Time expired.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I want to pay a tribute to a friend of mine, John Olsen, the former Premier of this state. I thank him for all he has done for South Australia. I am sure that every member of this House will join me. I also thank him for what he has done for my electorate and the support he has given me as a member of parliament. I remind the House that he followed my father into this place as the member for Rocky River. I had the honour of following him in here as the member for Custance 11 years ago.

I am very much aggrieved by what has happened and I respect the very difficult decision that Mr Olsen had to make. I hope he decides to remain a member of this place, because I feel he has so much more to offer. To John, Julie, Kathy, Kent and Tara, and Ben, I wish you all the best for the future. You will always be very special, valued and respected friends of ours, and I hope that our association will continue.

I also wish to congratulate the new Premier, the Hon. Rob Kerin, and add to the words of the member for Giles. I am lucky enough probably to be the member who knows Rob Kerin as much as any member in this place because he came from Crystal Brook. We have known each other since we were little lads together.

Rob's family originally owned a grazing property at Bundaleer near Jamestown. In 1955, when Rob was 18 months old, the family sold that property and bought a farming/cropping property at Crystal Brook and moved there. Maurie and Molly Kerin, his parents, are well known, well liked and very respected people throughout the Mid North, particularly in 'the Brook'.

Maurie and Molly have been friends of our family since they arrived. They are very active in the community. My father Howard and Maurie were very close. My father was the zone director of bulk handling and Maurie was the local agent. It was here that people learnt of the attributes of this family, particularly Maurie. If members met Maurice Kerin, they would understand Rob's personality and his capacity. I have never heard anyone criticise Maurice, so Rob has had very good training.

My office was speaking to his father yesterday, when Maurie said that Rob was described as a quieter, gentler kind of lad; where other boys were more rough and tumble Rob was always a theoretical, thinking type of boy. He was a great thinker who would work everything out in his head before acting—and we can see that here today.

Rob is a member of a large family and has three brothers and four sisters. His brothers are Kevin and Peter (whom I know well), and Michael, and his sisters are Christine, Liz, Rosemary and Pauline. They, too, are very active in the community. Peter took over running the family business, Kerin Agenices, when Rob entered parliament in 1993. Rob completed all his primary schooling at Crystal Brook and attended Sacred Heart College for his secondary schooling. He attended the University of Adelaide, where he studied for an economics degree.

Rob married Cathy Karey in 1978, and we all knew them both very well. They, too, have a large family of four lovely daughters—Lauren, Hayley, Caitlin and Hannah. I think Hannah is about eight or nine years of age. I also note that Rob is a new grandfather, so certainly life goes on.

Rob played football for Crystal Brook B grade. He was a very rugged and determined player and used his weight well. He was a great team player. Both he and I were never going to make the local area side, but he was a very valued member of the Crystal Brook Football Club, and he played then like he plays now: he always played the ball and never the man. He was always very fair, and there would not be a person in this House who would not say he is still that today. One can draw direct comparisons between this and his political life.

John Kerin, the past president of the United Farmers and Stockowners, who passed away a number of years ago, was Rob's second cousin, and John Kerin, the past federal minister—Labor, I might say—is also a distant relative. I understand that Rob's great-great-grandfather migrated to South Australia from Ireland in the 1850s and settled in my electorate of Kapunda where the family was well known.

Rob, you have done your family and your community very proud. As a person who was born and raised in Crystal Brook, I am aware of that, and my family and the community wish you all the best, as indeed my late father would have done. We all are certainly behind you.

Mr CLARKE (Ross Smith): Like other members, it is the first opportunity I have had to offer my congratulations to the new Premier. Even though he is in a different political party from me, nonetheless, I wish him well in his task. I congratulate the member for Schubert for standing by his mate. When you are down on your luck, it is always nice to

have a mate who will stand firmly by you, and I congratulate the member for Schubert for standing by his mate. I might add, however, that I well remember when the seat of Custance was abolished in the last electoral distribution the agony that the member for Schubert was going through as to which of his colleagues he was going to jump which seat for.

Mr Venning: Not true.

Mr CLARKE: Oh yes, that is all part and parcel of the rich tapestry of politics. But the member for Schubert had the Midas touch and miraculously he appealed to the Electoral Boundaries Commission and Schubert rose out of the ashes: the phoenix arose out of the ashes, and he did not have to take on his good mate—the now Premier—for the seat of Frome. That would have strained the bonds of friendship just a little too much—and I know a lot about that.

I want to say something also about what the member for Heysen had to say about the use of exhaust brakes by trucks. He was hoping that the Minister for Transport, in the area about which he was talking, would put up signs extolling to truck drivers the virtues of not using exhaust brakes in built-up areas.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

Mr CLARKE: Well, they do not care about it; the member for Peake interjects quite correctly. Signs are displayed all along Hampstead Road, Grand Junction Road, Main North Road, South Road, and elsewhere, 'Please do not use exhaust brakes,' but truck drivers will use the exhaust brakes always, whether or not it is in a built-up area, because it is cheaper for them to do so. What we should do is what the New South Wales government has done for some time, that is, bring in a law that provides that in built-up areas, if you use exhaust brakes, you get a fine. A quick way to a truckie's heart and mind, in particular, is through the hip pocket—like most of us.

I did ask two years ago, on behalf of the long suffering residents of Hampstead Road—and, no doubt, Fullarton Road and elsewhere—that not being able to use exhaust brakes in built-up areas be mandatory. Unfortunately, the minister was deaf to my plea on that occasion, but I will take up the matter again following further representations from constituents along Hampstead Road.

I also canvass the issue of bikes, particularly that section within Transport SA that wants to make every road a bikeway or a bike path—whichever way it is described. Members can see from my physical design that I do not use bikes a lot. I am not opposed to it—

Mr Venning: We should!

Mr CLARKE: —and I should—but when they are contemplating putting a bikeway along Prospect Road between Grand Junction Road and Regency Road that will cause a lot of grief to local businesses in that area. While I fully support the minister in her agreement to my representations on behalf of the local community for a pedestrian crossing opposite the Bi-Lo shopping centre in Blair Athol (and I agree with her about the installation of pedestrian refuges and turn-right refuges for various cars, and the like), there is still a plan afoot to put in bike lanes.

Already I have received a number of representations from local businesses that if a bike lane is put in there, particularly when it is a no-parking area between the early hours of the morning and late in the afternoon, small businesses will suffer considerably because they rely on that passing trade for the bulk of their business.

I believe there is ample opportunity for bike riders to use other roads that run parallel, for example, to Prospect Road

if they so wish, but there are just some roads where the use of bike lanes is unsuitable. However, I do know that, within some sections of Transport SA and elsewhere, there are bike zealots, and I think that that can cause problems with respect to local businesses.

Time expired.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): As members would know, ministers do not get much time to contribute to the grievance debate. It is nice when we do get a chance, because our electorates are equally as important to us as are the electorates of other members in this House to them. On the last occasion I had a chance to make a grievance debate I talked about the McLaren Vale heritage trail but I did not have time to finish my remarks. I want to talk specifically now not only about the technology that is being provided to the heritage trail and the opportunities that we will see growing with tourism in my electorate of Mawson as a result of this but also about a fine brochure, which I know people will not throw away when they finish the trail.

It is a brochure which they will keep and about which they will talk to their friends. The person who put all the effort into that brochure and who continues to put in an enormous effort is Mr Malcolm Harrington. He was ably supported by his wife, Helen, who was back home supporting the rest of the family and doing the other jobs while Malcolm spent so much of his time committed to ensuring that this project is the success that it is today. Indeed, it is a success.

I have named many other people and I apologise to any whom I did not include in *Hansard* but who were involved in this fine project. However, I know that Malcolm Harrington had an enormous input into this brochure. It is a very good brochure and well put together, and it includes magnificent heritage photographs. It is interesting to see how people brought their wine grapes into Hardy's Tintara at McLaren Vale around the early 1900s compared to how it is done today, and it is also interesting to see that some of those buildings are still in existence.

The other point I would like to raise is that Keith Conlon from *Postcards* recently visited to film a special feature on the McLaren Vale/Willunga wine and tourism region. I know that he was particularly impressed with the McLaren Vale Heritage Trail, as was my colleague the Hon. Alexander Downer, who also made a special visit to look at this particular project.

As a result of the committee's initiatives, in addition, as I said, to Mr Malcolm Harrington's efforts, we now see the City of Onkaparinga adopting the basic design of the interpretive signs to develop other opportunities for tourism in the great city council of Onkaparinga. We have many excellent attributes in the southern region. Our best attribute, however, is one about which I talk regularly and I will continue to talk about it, namely, the community commitment in the south. Without that commitment we would not have the economic growth that we have seen lately in terms of great sport and recreation opportunities and the healthy lifestyle and good environment. Our people are certainly our greatest resource. Of course, our young people are a particularly important resource because they are our future.

I believe—and I say this regularly—that we have fantastic opportunities for the future as a result of the commitment and the strategic and positive way in which our young people are conducting themselves and growing with the rest of South Australia. I would particularly like to congratulate the

Woodcroft Primary School girls' soccer team, which won the SAPSASA shield this year. Mr Stassinopoulos, who managed that team, also put in an enormous effort. Those young girls in the Woodcroft Primary School soccer team very much deserve to be congratulated. It was a triumphant SAPSASA knockout, and the soccer championship trophy winner was the Woodcroft Primary School girls' soccer team. It is a trophy that is richly deserved.

The Woodcroft Primary School is on a growing roll. It is still only a young school but it is a great school that has great curriculum outcomes. It is well run by the principal and staff and the children have a great attitude to school and enjoy all the time that they spend there. I would also like to congratulate the students from the Woodcroft Primary School who competed in and won the Division 1 SAPSASA District Day. It was a fantastic effort. At that stage the ovals were pretty wet, and the children did not have a chance to do a lot of training, having had, I think, only about four or five days when they could train on the ovals because of the wet winter. I would also like to congratulate them for doing a fantastic job in winning the division one SAPSASA District Day as an athletics team for the Woodcroft Primary School. Mr Joy did a great job in supporting them.

SELECT COMMITTEE ON GROUNDWATER RESOURCES IN THE SOUTH-EAST

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE (Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services): By leave, I move:

That the select committee have leave to sit during the sitting of the House today.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: AUSTRALIAN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS SCHOOL—FINAL REPORT

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

That the 158th report of the Public Works Committee, on the Australian Science and Mathematics School—Final Report, be noted.

The Australian Science and Mathematics School is a joint venture of the Department of Education, Training and Employment and the Flinders University that will establish a senior secondary school for years 10, 11 and 12 students at Flinders, where teaching and learning will be driven by interaction between university scientists and educators, teachers, students, industry and the community. The estimated cost is \$14 million, on completion of which the university has agreed to provide \$400 000, as well as access to a significant amount of facilities. Students will be involved in research projects in business, industry and the university sector.

Flinders will provide mentorship, management and access to university and industry staff resources, and students will have access to specialist programs and facilities. Programs for work placement and industry-based research and projects supported by industry personnel will also be negotiated. The curriculum will be based on developments in all learning areas with a particular emphasis on mathematics and science and will be shaped by interactions between traditional academic fields and emerging areas of knowledge, especially within science. The school will have a charter to interact with

the whole school education community, and its collaborative links will support the growth of networks.

Access to the school will be greatly different from that involving other secondary schools. It will be unique. It is novel. It will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and for 48 weeks out of the 52 weeks every year to ensure that there is increased flexibility for all students and other user groups. It will be accessible on-line 24 hours a day. The key feature in the school's design is flexible spatial arrangements so as to provide a range of learning settings suitable for groups of varying sizes and configurations. Indeed, it is the first genuine attempt I have noticed at something like the Summerhill experiment of 20-odd years ago in the UK, which was so outstandingly successful—although the Summerhill approach to education let students learn throughout the primary and secondary schooling years at their own rate and do the things they chose to do.

It was found that they achieved, by late adolescence, levels of understanding in their poorer subjects equivalent to those of the best students in the formal school system, as I recall, and outstanding understanding and results in those subjects in which they had considerable aptitude; and the level of understanding of knowledge as well as capacity for reason they achieved was much greater. They are my opinions, not the opinions I express on behalf of the committee, although they may be shared by all members of it.

The South Australian Secondary Principals Association supports the project but has expressed reservations about the way in which DETE will manage the impact of the new school on existing public school campuses, especially in the surrounding suburbs, and also the systematic support with regard to funding and teacher numbers that will be provided to the schools affected. In some measure I do not share the same anxieties as they do, or other members of the committee may, about that matter. The proponents have assured the committee that funding issues will be overcome and that the new school fully intends to work closely with other schools to achieve win:win outcomes. The committee understands that there is widespread support for the establishment of the Australian Science and Mathematics School from the secondary and tertiary sectors, as well as from industry and business, and as well also from allied organisations such as the Technology School of the Future and the Open Access College. There has also been interest from other government schools wishing to form alliances and partnerships. Clearly, it is already having something of the desired effect that it was intended to have when the proposition was first mooted.

The major aims of the project are, in the first instance:

- to revitalise interest and increase senior secondary participation rates and successes in courses and careers associated with science and maths;
- secondly, to revitalise and reform mathematics and science teaching by providing world-class professional development programs; and
- thirdly to forge significant links with industry and higher education where educators, scientists and technologists work with students as mentors and as project leaders.

The expected annual income from sponsorship and from professional development, as well as from the sale of curriculum materials and other income, we are told will increase from \$250 000 in 2003 to \$500 000 in 2012. The interim governing board has identified a further target amount of \$1 million which will be sought through sponsorship for the provision of enhanced specialist equipment and information and communications technology.

The project has a higher net present value cost than other options but has enumerated five benefits. They are:

- the school will be more marketable because it is on a university site;
- university expertise in relevant fields will be made available to the school;
- students will be able to utilise facilities owned by the university such as the Lincoln Marine Science Centre, the National Tidal Facility and Airborne Research Australia;
- improvements in teaching and curriculum standards will be achieved; and, finally,
- there will be greater numbers of South Australian students with superior levels of education in maths and science as a consequence.

In spite of the committee's evidence to get the proponents to provide it with a present net value which included the additional benefits that would accrue to the gross state product, the proponents were unable to do that in any satisfactory manner. I personally feel that such an indifference to our inquiry for that evaluation is an inadequate response on the part of any agency, including this agency. It is possible to quantify those benefits, and more effort must be made by the public sector seeking investment of scarce capital resources in such capital works to more fully and accurately evaluate the benefits in dollar terms that accrue to the community and measure them in terms of the benefits that accrue to the state's gross domestic product in consequence of the expenditure of the capital on the project they propose, rather than just rely upon rhetoric to win the argument, as it were, and to win the hearts and minds of the public in the process for a commitment of the funds to those projects.

The committee is told that a new campus will provide the most suitable medium to encourage a new culture, a new teaching methodology called a pedagogy (not a word I like but it is apparently part of the jargon in this day and age) and new ways of organising and managing the school. It is also told that there are immense difficulties in achieving the required degree of change in existing schools, existing cultures—that is, cultures of teaching within the schools and cultures of interaction between those people on the campus (meaning the professionals and teachers as part of the professional group, and the students)—buildings and modes of organisation.

Furthermore, a key aim is integration with the state's universities, and the proponent has stated that there is no existing school within close proximity of Flinders University that would achieve the aims and objectives of the Australian Science and Mathematics School through redevelopment of that school on its existing campus.

The school will commence operation in 2003, with an enrolment of 225 students in years 10 and 11, growing to 450 students by 2005 in the three years 10, 11 and 12. Up to one-third of its student enrolment will be full fee paying international students in the longer term, and I commend that. I strongly applaud whatever efforts the department is making to advance the marketing of what we have in South Australia in that way, and to do it at a price which the market will stand rather than simply full cost recovery. Damn it! We are in business in this state to make ourselves more prosperous, and if we in the public or the private sector have something we can offer for a price that will enable us to make a profit and deliver in competition with any other supplier of the product or service anywhere else in the world, then we should do it at that price, and to do it on the basis of full cost recovery in my judgment lacks a sufficiently professional approach to

marketing. I urge the department to review its policy in that regard to enable it to do that; they are my personal views.

I continue with the committee's views. This will be supplemented by conferences and interaction with Flinders University staff, as well as courses that will result in the school periodically supporting a larger population than 450 students. The committee understands that the school's admission policy will ensure equity in access procedures for all secondary senior students. A scholarship—full-time or part-time—program is to be developed through sponsorship.

The committee suggests that the Australian Science and Mathematics School should provide appropriate representation to industry interests in its governance structures in the future in order to engage these groups and thereby increase the opportunity to attract sponsorship funds for the school. The interim board of the Australian Science and Mathematics School has needed to focus upon developing the Australian Science and Mathematics School building and has not yet proceeded to detail curriculum or professional development planning.

The issue of school governance needs to be addressed urgently, and the school must rapidly develop a governing structure to accommodate both a school governing council under P21 and the University Council. The committee recommends to the minister that the governing board of the Australian Science and Mathematics School should include a representative from the South Australian Secondary Principals Association and also from the Innovation Science and Technology Council of South Australia. The committee also suggests that a formal agreement for involvement in the working parties, particularly any related future governance, be entered into with these or similar bodies. In addition to that, I do not mind the notion of elitism and providing for high achieving students the opportunity to achieve.

However, I do believe that the methods of assessing aptitude and ability to date, both for entrance to university as well as to performance of understanding of what has been learnt at secondary level, have failed to determine who has the best aptitude, and other tests could be used. I do not mind if those tests are developed in consequence of the experience which we have as a society and which arise from our adoption, our embracing, the concept of the Australian Science and Mathematics School. I believe that we should encourage the most outstanding students whom we can discover by whatever criteria we measure it at this time to go to that school, along with any other students who may go there, and I would encourage the school to encourage students who do not have the aptitude to study maths and science and do well to leave the school to go and do something else at which they may be better.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I am very pleased to be able to speak on this matter, and in so doing note that I understand that the proposal for the school resulted from a series of seminars conducted by Flinders University some years ago at which they were discussing some of the new innovations in science and technology. Flinders was holding seminars for local council members, business schools and members of parliament to talk to them about some of the exciting developments in science and technology, and also airing some of the issues that are involved if we as a state are to be successful in competing in these areas. One of the areas concerned is nanotechnology. Since that time Flinders has established a degree course (I think it is) in nanotechnology.

The then Dean of the School of Science and Mathematics was worried that there are not sufficient students succeeding in maths and sciences to fill the available university places, and without excellence in filling those places the state will not be able to hold up its head in terms of science and mathematics and the innovations that are occurring. We will not be able to hold up our head, and we certainly will not be able to lead as indeed we would like to lead. This is a state that is well able to lead in various fields of science and research. We are a population large enough to develop excellence but small enough that we all talk to each other, and in so many of the emerging fields of science being able to bring together people from different disciplines is a key to success.

As a result of these seminars, it was suggested that there was a need for the development of a school of science and mathematics so that young people, and indeed older people, too, could excel in the area and, in particular, so that teachers could become more comfortable with teaching in the emerging areas of science and maths. These areas develop so quickly, particularly in science, that, even if they were graduates only five years ago, there are such developments that their professional qualifications require upgrading; and, for teachers who have been around for a while and who have excellent skills in teaching, they need refreshment courses to bring them up to date with some of the emerging fields in science so that they in turn can enthuse their students. Flinders University suggested to DETE, as I understand, that they look at how they might jointly work on the development of this proposal.

I say at this time that I am very proud to have been a member of the council of Flinders University for 10 years. During that time I worked with many of the people engaged in this project on being able to develop both excellence and equity. We do not see that the two are conflicting. I was pleased to see in much of the evidence given by people from the university that they are very aware of the need to bring excellence and equity together. They are particularly looking at ways of reaching students who may not be interested in the way in which the education process is currently structured, getting to them at an early time and being able to bring them into the Australian Science and Mathematics School so that they, too, can participate in the challenge of maths and sciences and work in the collaborative way that it is proposed much of the work in this school will be undertaken.

I definitely want to congratulate Flinders University and all those within that university, particularly the Vice-Chancellor Professor Anne Edwards and Professor John Rice, for their drive in getting this so far and their commitment to excellence and equity in science and mathematics. This is not an easy school to look at in terms of just what its role is because, as we were listening to the dialogue, the school, as well as educating young people in the normal manner, has to look at the development of curriculum and the professional development of teachers, as I said, to enable them to keep abreast of developments in maths and sciences and enthuse their students across the state, and it also has a role in teacher training. One of its advantages in being located in Flinders University is that Flinders is an important educator of our future teachers and is involved in the professional development of our excellent existing teachers.

We could see that it was necessary to be quite clear about how we could determine whether this school has been successful and whether indeed it is setting itself up in a way that the building that we were approving would be used to its

best advantage. This was particularly necessary as other specialist schools such as the Brighton School of Music, Marryatville School of Music, the physical education schools and the SHIP schools have all involved the designation of an existing school as a specialist school.

This process of designating one school as being specialist always gives rise to some anxiety in surrounding schools, which are very well aware of the fact that, if they lose some of their numbers, the ridiculous nature of some of the systems operating in the education department at the moment can mean that the loss of one or two students also means the loss of one or two teachers, and hence the ability to offer a wide curriculum to other students and to give them the individual attention they need.

Schools do become anxious about a designation of a specialist school, and the establishment of a completely new school for maths and sciences gave rise to a number of anxieties in surrounding schools, because they are concerned about the impact that it could have on the education they can offer their students.

This matter was explored by the committee with the proponents. We had the benefit of advice from Sue McMillan, the President of the South Australian Secondary Principals Association. Ms McMillan supported very much the concept of the new school, but was well aware of the fears that surrounding schools might have. As a result, the DEET proponents did give us some assurances that there would not be an adverse impact on surrounding schools. It will be difficult for them to monitor this, but I am sure that the surrounding schools will ensure that it does not happen. There is also complexities in the delivery of the school curriculum in that the maths and science school will be focusing on just those subjects, and the wider curriculum will be delivered by the surrounding schools which may or may not be alliance schools.

This raises a range of issues about who should deliver what part of the curriculum, how students will get there, the transfer of funds that might be involved in this process and the general impact on the surrounding schools. Listening to some of the local principals as well as to Ms McMillan, as I have done, has given rise to a recommendation that a representative of the Secondary Principals Association should be involved in the governance of the new school as soon as possible. The proponents were not quite sure about that because they were looking to develop an overarching governance body to cover both the school, which will be run under P21 and have a P21 governing council, and its other responsibilities in relation to the university. They are looking at the principals being represented there. However, it is our very firm view that there needs to be a formal arrangement very quickly (and I hope it is already in place) to involve the Secondary Principals Association.

Similarly, we would like to see some involvement of the Innovation, Science and Technology Council, which seems to be the body that the government sees as representing it and driving the innovation, science and technology agenda in this state. It seems important that it be part of the development of this school.

Time expired.

Ms STEVENS (Elizabeth): I put on the record my support for the proposal for the Australian Science and Mathematics School at Flinders University. The need for improved outcomes in science and mathematics, teaching and learning, is undeniable and, over recent years, it has become

increasingly obvious through a whole range of different studies that we have a significant gap to overcome in producing students from our secondary schools, from our school education process, who move into the tertiary sector in order for them to achieve the standards in science and mathematics that will lead to jobs in value added industries in science and technology, the defence industries, biotechnology, information technology, and so on. Right across the state this has been acknowledged.

Last Friday, I was with the member for Hammond and a whole lot of other people at the launch of Edinburgh Parks at Salisbury, which is the result of significant commonwealth, state and local government collaboration in a defence-IT-engineering cluster. Interestingly, in an informal chat over coffee, I was talking with staff from DSTO who again raised with me that one of the major issues for them is the lack of appropriately trained staff and access to staff in science, engineering and infotechnology. They pointed out that this seems to be an ongoing problem of being able to gain access to highly trained graduates in these areas. So, the need for us to improve our effort in this area is undeniable.

The concept of special interest schools such as the one that we are looking at today has been around in the Education Department for a long time. The last school of which I was principal, the Fremont-Elizabeth City High School, is a special interest music school and has been for a number of years. It was also an Engineering Pathways school. There have been other labels and other sorts of special interest schools such as girls' schools, sport schools, special language schools and SHIP schools, as the member for Reynell mentioned. In varying degrees, these schools had mandates to serve their existing populations, and often they had special entry requirements and the ability to attract students from a long way out of their zones. They had a mandate to serve the existing group of students, and they also had a wider mandate to spread expertise across the system. That was the concept, but the success or otherwise of it was variable. It is an interesting exercise to analyse how well that is done and whether the establishment of special interest schools delivers those outcomes.

The committee was given a very enthusiastic presentation at Flinders University in relation to this particular project. The proponents were very enthusiastic about what they were putting forward, and it was quite clear that a great deal of excitement and energy was put into making it a reality. The school has a specific maths and science focus. I recall from the submission that the methodology will have a student-centred approach, a project-based methodology, a connected curriculum and the development of a thinking curriculum. Interestingly, while I was reading that, I was thinking that these are the very things that all schools are expected to provide in the programs they put before their students. So, in some ways, this is not necessarily a great divergence from what we expect from all schools, but with this school it is within a maths and science focus.

Admissions to the school will be by application and interview and will focus on ability, interest and motivation in careers and courses in mathematics, science and related technology. We were also told that significant numbers of fee-paying students will be attracted to the school. The concept is a good one and, if it is able to be implemented in its entirety, it should mean that there will be a centre of excellence in the south, on the campus of Flinders University, which relates closely with the university and with surrounding schools in relation to the other parts of the curriculum that

will be provided for students attending the school. It will also mean an extensive training and development in-service program for teachers and students across the state to link into various degrees of time.

In order for this to become a reality, many practical issues need to be resolved. For example, in relation to students and the balance of their curriculum, students will have to travel from that school to surrounding schools. Just that very exercise means a very close degree of cooperation between schools in locking timetables together and arranging travel. As a former principal of a high school, I know that moving students from one school to another and locking in timetables together is no mean feat and requires quite a deal of coordination and cooperation.

My colleague has mentioned the Public Works Committee's recommendation that the governing council seek membership from a representative of the South Australian Secondary Principals Association and the Innovation, Science and Technology Council. We believe that is very important in balancing the needs of this school in relation to the wider community and, particularly I think, in relation to surrounding schools and the concerns of surrounding schools that, if we have an elite school such as this focusing on developing specialist skills, there may be a drag of students from surrounding schools. As a result, subjects which only now attract small numbers of students may disappear entirely from the curriculums of surrounding secondary schools. This is always a concern when you have a specialist school with the ability to pull students away.

All those issues will need to be weighed up and carefully considered; otherwise, we could find ourselves with one school offering a very extensive science-maths-technology curriculum for a few students who can get there, while surrounding schools have their curriculum offerings in those very same areas significantly reduced. They are the sorts of practical implementation issues that will need to be carefully handled.

I wish the centre well. I believe that we need to be innovative in our actions, but we also need to make sure that we deliver the outcomes right across the state. I think there is a particular need to look at primary school level, because that is where we need to start some of the work in science. Primary schools, of course, are where we have a great dearth of teachers with the required skills and the required facilities to enable an effective science curriculum to be implemented. I support the project and wish it well, and I look forward to watching these outcomes.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE secured the adjournment of the debate.

ENVIRONMENT, RESOURCES AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE: ANNUAL REPORT

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I move:

That the 45th report of the committee, being the Annual Report, 2000-01, be noted.

This year has seen the committee undertake a larger than usual number of inquiries that involved numerous site visits, particularly in relation to the ecotourism industry. The committee has been impressed with the level of interest shown by the public and the goodwill extended to the committee. The cooperation of ministers and their departments has also been greatly appreciated.

In essence, this year's annual report is a summary of almost all the committee's investigations. Notably, it is probably the most comprehensive annual report prepared by the committee and clearly demonstrates the scope and volume of work undertaken. This afternoon, I will briefly outline the work of the committee over this past period, commencing with the inquiry into native fauna and agriculture.

We all know that native birds are an integral part of our unique environment, and 165 years of agricultural and pastoral development, including the clearing of native vegetation, has had a dramatic effect on the numbers and behaviour patterns of some native fauna in this state. The committee found that there is considerable concern within the community regarding the impact of native fauna on agriculture, and the methods being used to manage these interactions.

Of the many methods used to control birds, the use of audible bird scaring devices is amongst the most controversial. Clearly, there is a need to place more stringent controls on their use. Not only is the effectiveness of their isolated use questionable, but also their impact on communities is often a source of neighbourhood conflict. There needs to be better understanding of the complex interaction of agriculture with native species. Only through improved data collection and the introduction of mechanisms which ensure that growers acknowledge their responsibility can the full impact of agricultural development on native fauna be determined. The committee concluded that there is no single solution to managing native fauna. There needs to be an integrated management approach that includes all stakeholders, and it must be treated as a regional issue and not just, as often happens, by isolated and individual landowners.

The second inquiry was into urban trees and arose from a plan amendment report prepared by the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning. The fact that the temporary protection of significant trees in the suburbs (as provided under the Metropolitan Significant Trees (PAR)) ceased at the end of July 2000 was of considerable concern to the committee. Councils have always had the means to protect significant trees by amending their development plans. Despite some local governments expending considerable cost and effort, there was not one local government with additional urban tree protection policies established within the prescribed time. This would have left a large number of trees within metropolitan Adelaide unprotected as at the start of the 2001-02 financial year. This situation could have presented an opportunity for the removal of trees, resulting in the loss of valuable assets that the legislation was designed to protect. The committee report recommended that the Minister for Transport and Urban Planning further extend the interim controls, generally for a period of a further six to 24 months.

I am pleased to report that the minister, in her letter to the committee dated 6 September 2001, advised that the regulations under the Development Act had been amended temporarily to protect trees with a circumference between 1.5 metres and 2.49 metres diameter, and South Australian indigenous species over 4 metres in height, to 30 June 2002. Councils covered by the controls include Unley, Mitcham, Norwood, Payneham and St Peters, Prospect, Burnside and Adelaide.

The inquiry into ecotourism is perhaps the most significant that the committee has undertaken in recent times. This inquiry arose as a result of concerns regarding the impact of tourism on ecologically sensitive land, the methods being used to deal with managing the issue, and limited recognition

of South Australian ecotourism in the 2000 Annual National Tourism Awards. This inquiry was timely because the year 2002 is to be both the International Year of Ecotourism and the Year of the Outback.

We received submissions from numerous groups, spoke to in excess of 50 regional people, and numerous witnesses appeared before the committee. Familiarisation trips were undertaken throughout the state, from as far south as the Naracoorte Caves to the northern and western boundaries of South Australia. This inquiry confirmed the significance of tourism to South Australia. Ecotourism is the fastest growing sector of world tourism. In particular, there are outstanding opportunities to develop South Australia's natural assets in a way that promotes economic and community development, whilst protecting and enhancing natural assets for current and future generations. Since the closing of the reporting period, the committee tabled both its interim and final reports on ecotourism. The committee looks forward to the response from the relevant ministers on the recommendations contained in the latter report.

During the reporting period we also commenced a substantial inquiry into smart communities. The term 'smart communities' is a reference to the post industrialised society where economic activity and social exchanges centre on the way in which knowledge is created and retrieved to the extent that would determine the character of our occupations and work. Smart cities are about not just the provision of IT infrastructure but about strategically connecting and marketing packages of services and resources offering land, quality of life, an educated and skilled work force, competitive advantages and a wide range of associated benefits.

Adelaide has many obvious competitive advantages and resources over both other states and other countries. There is a great deal of good news to be reported, and the committee will use this opportunity to raise industry profiles and community awareness. With Adelaide hosting the World Congress on Information Technology in 2002, this inquiry is indeed timely.

The committee is currently focusing on an inquiry into urban development. We believe that the key to sound urban development is addressing the complex interactions that occur in the advancement of urban social, environmental and economic goals. The recognition of these interrelationships is the cornerstone to holistic urban development, and a planning process that takes all these factors into consideration is vital.

Only recently—in fact, last week—the committee hosted an urban development forum at which individual stakeholders presented and discussed their views on the issues and opportunities that face South Australians. Our view and that of the participants is that this event was a resounding success. We may build on this success by making such forums here a regular feature of the way in which the committee conducts its inquiries, expedites the processes and further enhances public involvement in the political process in South Australia. I take this opportunity to thank the Speaker, the Hon. John Oswald, for allowing us to use the Assembly chamber for this event. Not only was it great to hear all the keynote speakers, but the experience of participating in the debate in this chamber was unique to many of these people who would not normally get such an opportunity.

The committee has a broad charter. It investigated almost every matter that was brought to its attention. For the most part, I will not go into these, but I would quickly like to touch on the issue of the Sellicks Hill caves—an issue that does not

seem to want to go away. The committee was led to believe that there would be a genuine attempt to ascertain the extent of the remaining caves. We were disappointed to hear that there is no intention to ascertain whether any of the caves system remains. We appreciated the advice of the Minister for Minerals and Energy that companies that do not comply with the new legislative provisions that protect such natural assets would be vigorously pursued. This annual report contains a number of recommendations that hopefully will heighten the industry's awareness of its obligations under the Mining Act.

We took considerably more evidence this year than in the past on planning amendment reports. This report contains a precis of our deliberations and findings. I urge those members who are interested in planning to take the opportunity to read them, as PAR examinations are a very important part of the process.

The 2000 Annual Conference of Environment and Public Works Committees was held in Darwin. Site visits there centred on the new port facilities at East Arm Port. Significant rail approach work to the facility had already been put in place in anticipation of the final approval for the Alice Springs to Darwin railway link. These conferences provide an ideal forum for members personally to meet with interstate colleagues who have similar interests without the pressure of party politics coming into play. Incidentally, next year South Australia is scheduled to host this annual conference, and we are well placed to showcase our state to our interstate counterparts.

This year we also took the opportunity to undertake site visits that were relevant to the committee's inquiries. I am pleased that members of the committee made so much of their time available to conduct what seems to be an ever expanding scope of interest and workload of this committee. I remind the House that all except one of the members of this committee live outside the metropolitan area, a couple in the far corners of the state. The committee meets every Wednesday. We do not just meet when the House sits. It is a big commitment by members, and most of the time there is a 100 per cent roll-up. I respect them for their commitment.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

Mr VENNING: The member says that they get paid for it. I know members who get paid who do not attend at all. Certainly, we are paid for it—

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I won't name them here. We know who they are.

Mrs Geraghty: Why not?

Mr VENNING: One of the members is not here. We meet right through, and we probably are the most regularly meeting committee. During my recent visit to the United Kingdom, I visited the new parliaments of Wales and Scotland. I was introduced to their committee system, and I must say that I was most impressed with the way they were set up. Ministers are appointed to these committees not as presiding members, and they are expected to attend regularly and contribute to the committee process.

All legislation is passed through the committee system before it is introduced into parliament. Also, all legislation that is non-contentious goes straight to a special house and goes straight through. Why waste the time of the parliament arguing legislation with which no-one disagrees? Surely, we can learn from that, if nothing else. I am convinced that the full potential of our committee system is not being realised,

and I would support any proposal to introduce a similar system here.

Once again, I am proud to be able to report that another year has passed without a dissenting report being tabled. I know that I say this every time, but I am very proud of this record. Since the government does not have the numbers on this committee, clearly that is a reflection on the resolve of members to focus on the issues. I wish to thank the many ministers with whom we have worked, particularly the Hon. Diana Laidlaw who, for 97 per cent of the time, agreed to the wishes of the committee, and she always responds very promptly. I also thank the Premier in his primary industries portfolio and Minister Evans.

I extend my sincere thanks to the members of the committee: the Hon. John Dawkins MLC; the Hon. Michael Elliott MLC; Ms Key MP, the member for Hanson, who is present—it gives me faith in my belief in fairies because there are good members of the Labor Party; Mrs Maywald MP, the member for Chaffey; and the Hon. Terry Roberts MLC. We extend our gratitude to the staff of the committee for their commitment, particularly Mr Knut Cudarans, our secretary, as fearless and tough as ever—if you can harness this gentleman you will certainly get a lot of work and capacity—and Mr Philip Frensham, our research officer. It must be noted that since Philip joined us our work rate has certainly lifted. I hope that after March 2001 the work of this committee will continue. The ERD committee of the forty-ninth parliament is arguably the best since its formation in the late 1980s. I commend the report to the House.

Motion carried.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE: HEATHFIELD WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I move:

That the 159th report of the committee, on the Heathfield Wastewater Treatment Plant Environment Improvement Program and Upgrade—Final Report, be noted.

It has been a long time coming, but it is here at last. The Public Works Committee has examined the proposal to apply \$8.9 million of taxpayers' money to implement the Heathfield Wastewater Treatment Plant, which was commissioned in 1981 and which is located off Brick Kiln Road at Heathfield in the Adelaide Hills. The sewer drainage area for the plant comprises the townships of Crafers, Piccadilly, Stirling, Aldgate and Bridgewater. The waste water that enters the plant is primarily domestic sewage, but some winery waste is discharged into the sewer network as well. The plant also accepts septic tank sludge which is tankered to the plant by private contractors and is currently discharged directly into the sludge lagoons. About half of the residents within the township areas served by the Heathfield Wastewater Treatment Plant are connected to the sewer system at present.

The Adelaide Hills sewerage program is in progress to complete the sewerage networks of these townships, if only to protect water storages downstream in the Onkaparinga Valley, as well as, of course, what would otherwise become very unacceptable levels of unhygienic septic water run-off into the stormwater system and ultimately down Sturt Creek.

In 1994-95, monitoring programs were undertaken to assess the impact of the treated waste water from the Heathfield Wastewater Treatment Plant on the river ecosystem and its environment. These monitoring programs have indicated that there are elevated nutrient concentrations downstream of Heathfield Creek. Notwithstanding these

concerns, the Australian Water Quality Centre monitoring report indicated that the natural watercourse section of Sturt River from Pole Road to the start of the concrete lined drain section is one of the healthiest streams in the Mount Lofty Ranges catchment area. That is a consequence of the Heathfield Wastewater Treatment Plant doing its job well.

The proposed project will upgrade the treatment process at the Heathfield Wastewater Treatment Plant to significantly reduce further the nutrient levels in the disinfected treated waste water discharged to the environment in that river system. A small component of the project will be to increase the hydraulic capacity of the plant to accommodate the current ongoing extensions to the sewer systems served by the Heathfield plant.

The preferred option, on which this proposal is based, is to continue to discharge treated waste water to the Heathfield Creek and to upgrade the existing plant to a biological nutrient removal process to reduce the level of nutrients in the treated waste water and to upgrade that hydraulic capacity to accommodate the increasing sewage inflows from the continuation of the Adelaide Hills sewer scheme where it is now being extended, as well as being relied upon by urban infill as vacant land which has been zoned for human occupation in greater density is now being taken up.

The key elements of the upgrade work include screen and grit removal, a septic tank waste receival facility, an odour control program, the modification of the existing biological reactors and clarifiers, the use of an ultra-violet disinfection system, the upgrading of the sludging system, the use of alum dosing, replacing the present blower system, and the capitalisation of the potential of reused water in the plant—let me make it plain that what we mean by that is making best use of the idea and the notion of re-using that water, wherever and whenever possible, for irrigation—and to maintain the existing sludge lagoons.

The proposed project is being undertaken for compliance purposes to meet SA Water's obligations under the Environment Protection Act. The project is not being undertaken for the purpose of generating additional revenue: only a cynic would think that and we are not cynics, are we? The capital cost of the project is estimated at \$8.9 million excluding the GST and forms part of SA Water's overall environment improvement program. The estimated cost is based on the completed concept design and incremental operating costs of \$146 000 per annum at the full design capacity has been included for the upgraded plant. The financial evaluation indicates a net present value loss of around \$10 million and benefit/cost ratio of less than one, being in fact 0.36. The economic evaluation indicates a net present loss of \$5.8 million and a benefit/cost ratio of 0.66.

I still must complain that there is insufficient effort made by agencies to properly evaluate the benefits which do accrue from the installation of these works. No attempt, for instance, is made to quantify the consequences for public health. If we did not do this work, what would be the epidemiological consequences of failing to do so? In other words, how many more people would fall ill in consequence of the poorer health from which everyone would suffer if the work was not undertaken? There must be greater rigour in our assessment of the value of these works. Where no attempt is made today and no plan is made to begin to attempt tomorrow to evaluate those consequences—and that was just an example I gave—then we will not be able to rigorously determine the priorities we should ascribe to proposals to construct public works where there is more work that we could do than there are

dollars to do it. Agencies have to recognise that is not good enough because there will always be contention in the future that one job, one work, one item of capital expenditure received the funds because either the minister was better at arguing it in cabinet and in the party room or Caucus of the day, or it sounded like a good idea at the time—neither of which are adequate.

Ms Thompson: Like the soccer stadium.

Mr LEWIS: Yes, it sounded like a good idea at the time.

Ms Thompson: Like \$100 million on the Convention Centre instead of \$55 million.

Mr LEWIS: I agree with the member for Reynell. The project will be financed through SA Water and funded through annual community service obligation payments which have been included in the government's forward budget estimates and appropriations. Accordingly, the project, they say, will not impact on target contribution levels and borrowings. In other words, it will not change that but it is still there.

Time expired.

Debate adjourned.

UNCLAIMED SUPERANNUATION BENEFITS (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council with a message drawing the attention of the House of Assembly to clause 7, printed in erased type, which clause, being a money clause, cannot originate in the Legislative Council but which is deemed necessary to the bill. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

This bill seeks to amend the *Unclaimed Superannuation Benefits Act 1997*, to ensure the State's unclaimed superannuation legislation remains complementary to the Commonwealth's *Superannuation (Unclaimed Money and Lost Members) Act 1999*.

The *Unclaimed Superannuation Benefits Act 1997*, provides that trustees of superannuation funds and approved deposit funds registered in South Australia shall pay any unclaimed benefits to the Treasurer of South Australia. Unclaimed benefits are those where the person has reached the age for payment of the commonwealth "Age Pension", and the trustee of the fund is unable to pay the superannuation benefit due to having lost contact with the member. The Act was specifically introduced to complement Commonwealth legislation. If the State does not have legislation that is complementary to the Commonwealth legislation, unclaimed superannuation benefits must be paid to the Commonwealth Commissioner of Taxation.

In October 1999, the Commonwealth repealed the superannuation and retirement savings account unclaimed benefit provisions incorporated in various Commonwealth Acts, and consolidated the provisions in the *Superannuation (Unclaimed Money and Lost Members) Act 1999 (Cth)*. To enable the States and Territories to continue to receive unclaimed benefits, the Commonwealth legislation provided a transitional period to allow the States and Territories to amend their legislation to reflect the Commonwealth changes. The Commonwealth's transitional period contemplates State and Territory legislation being amended by 31 December 2001.

The bill proposes a series of amendments which will ensure the Act continues to reflect the requirements of the Commonwealth's *Superannuation (Unclaimed Money and Lost Members) Act 1999*, and therefore ensure unclaimed benefits continue to be paid to the State Unclaimed Superannuation Benefits Register. The bill also proposes that the provisions of the Act be extended to included retirement savings accounts which are also covered by the Commonwealth legislation.

The State Unclaimed Superannuation Benefits Register kept in Treasury and Finance, held in the order of \$0.5m at 30 June 2001. Most of this money is in respect of former employees of the State Government.

The proposals contained in this demonstrate South Australia's commitment to working in co-operation with the Commonwealth and the other States and Territories to provide complementary legislation in respect of unclaimed superannuation benefits and retirement savings accounts.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

Clause 2: Commencement

These clauses are formal.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 3—Interpretation

This clause amends definitions used in the principal Act. The Commonwealth legislation has been re-enacted as the *Superannuation (Unclaimed Money and Lost Members) Act 1999* and these amendments are required because of that change.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 4—Application of Act

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 5—Statement of unclaimed superannuation benefits

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 6—Payment of unclaimed superannuation benefits

These clauses change references in sections 4, 5 and 6 of the principal Act to "trustee" to the term "superannuation provider" or "provider" used in the Commonwealth Act.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 7—Treasurer to refund certain amounts

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 9—Discharge of liability

Clause 9: Amendment of s. 10—Superannuation provider not in breach of trust

These clauses make similar changes to sections 7, 9 and 10 of the principal Act.

Ms HURLEY secured the adjournment of the debate.

WORKERS REHABILITATION AND COMPENSATION (MISCELLANEOUS) AMENDMENT BILL

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises) obtained leave and introduced a bill for an act to amend the Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1986. Read a first time.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

There are three significant issues covered in this Bill:

- Amendments in relation to claims for lump sum compensation and noise induced hearing loss;
- Amendments to the size criteria for exempt employers; and
- The introduction of legislative provisions to prohibit certain conduct relating to promoting workers compensation claims for profit and business services.

With the exception of the introduction of anti-touting provisions these amendments are administrative and I will deal with each of them in turn.

Lump sum compensation and noise induced hearing loss

One of the major components of the South Australian WorkCover scheme is the provision of compensation for non-economic loss. In the past few years a number of judicial decisions have changed the way claims for lump sum compensation are calculated and the circumstances in which a worker would be entitled to compensation.

In 1999 the Supreme Court of South Australia handed down a decision in the case of *WorkCover Corporation & Anor v Perre* [1999] SASC 564. This decision invited attention to the inconsistency between s31(2) and s113 of the *Workers Rehabilitation and Compensation Act*. Section 31(2) and the Second Schedule of the Act combine to presume that the disability of noise induced hearing loss is caused by 'any work involving exposure to noise'. However, s113 of the Act provides that, subject to proof to the contrary, noise induced hearing loss is taken to have arisen out of employment in

which the worker was last exposed to *noise capable of causing noise induced hearing loss*.

The conflict highlighted by the Supreme Court is that Schedule 2 of the Act, as applied by Section 31(2), specifies 'any work involving exposure to noise', while Section 113(2) specifies exposure to 'noise capable of causing noise induced hearing loss'. The Court determined in favour of the scheme under Section 31(2).

The effect of the *Perre* decision is that a worker may be compensated for noise induced hearing loss where they can demonstrate they have noise induced hearing loss and can also demonstrate an exposure to noise at work. This has the result that a worker could be compensated even where only minimal exposure to noise is demonstrated. By way of an extreme example, a worker who works in a library where some minor construction work has taken place, but plays in a rock band at night, could currently claim for noise induced hearing loss where they can prove a loss and an exposure to noise at work.

The purpose of the amendment is to allow for compensation to be paid only where there is exposure to noise capable of causing noise induced hearing loss at work. The purpose of this amendment is not to establish a threshold or a strict evidentiary requirement but to provide a reasonable test as to when a worker may be compensated for noise induced hearing loss.

Amendment is also sought to rectify a problem arising from the decision of the Workers Compensation Tribunal in the matter of *Mitchell v WorkCover Corporation and MMI Workers Comp. (SA) Pty Ltd (T.W. Ingham and Sons Pty Ltd)* [1998] SAWCT 60. The decision in *Mitchell v WorkCover Corporation* concerned the operation of section 43 of the Act and the application of Regulation 25 of the *Workers Compensation and Rehabilitation (General) Regulations 1999*.

Section 43 of the Act provides that where a worker suffers a compensable disability, the worker is entitled to compensation for non-economic loss by way of a lump sum payment. In accordance with s43(2) of the Act, the lump sum is a percentage of the prescribed sum (set annually) determined by reference to Schedule 3 of the Act. Regulation 25 provides a specified formula for the discounting of s43 lump sum payments where a worker received multiple lump sum payments for non economic loss.

Prior to the decision in *Mitchell v WorkCover Corporation*, section 43 was interpreted such that lump sum payments made in accordance with that section were only discounted by the formula in Regulation 25 where multiple injuries, and hence multiple lump sum payments, arose from the same trauma.

In *Mitchell v WorkCover Corporation*, the Workers Compensation Tribunal determined that all previous disabilities compensated in accordance with s43 of the Act should be considered when applying Regulation 25.

The effect of this judgement is that workers with entitlement to multiple lump sums for multiple injuries are receiving reduced Section 43 payments because of the application of the regulations. The purpose of the relevant amendment is to ensure that the principles of Regulation 25 only come into effect where two or more injuries arise from the same trauma.

The decision of the *Workers Compensation Tribunal in Cedic v WorkCover Corporation /MMI Workers Compensation (SA) Ltd (Modular Furniture Pty Ltd)* [2000] SAWCT 54 highlights a further issue associated with lump sum compensation, relevant to s43(7a) of the Act. For consistency the same principle as that outlined above in regard to the *Mitchell* decision should be applied to arrangements for payments of supplementary benefits under Section 43(7a) of the Act.

Section 43(7a) provides that if the amount of compensation to which a worker is entitled under section 43(2) is greater than 55 per cent of the prescribed sum, the worker is entitled to a supplementary benefit equivalent to 1.5 times the amount by which that amount exceeds 55 per cent of the prescribed sum.

In the matter of *Cedic v WorkCover Corporation*, the Workers Compensation Tribunal interpreted s 43(7a) of the Act to mean that previous disabilities (for which the worker has received lump sum compensation under section 43 of the Act) are considered in the determination of an entitlement to a supplementary benefit.

This interpretation provides that a worker may be entitled to a supplementary benefit if previously compensated disabilities combine to exceed 55 per cent of the prescribed sum. Take for example a worker who has previously sustained 3 separate injuries and has received lump sum payments in respect to those disabilities equal to 15 per cent, 25 per cent and 10 per cent of the prescribed sum. This worker then sustains a further injury resulting in the payment

of a lump sum equal to 10 per cent of the prescribed sum. The interpretation of the Workers Compensation Tribunal in *Cedic v WorkCover Corporation* would result in the fourth injury being compensated by way of a section 43(2) lump sum equal to 10 per cent of the prescribed sum and the payment of a section 43(7a) supplementary benefit as the total of all previous section 43 payments at 60 per cent exceeds 55 per cent of the prescribed sum.

This interpretation appears to be inconsistent with the intention of Parliament when this legislation was introduced in 1992. It was intended that a supplementary benefit would be paid to a worker severely injured in a workplace incident. These amendments were enacted at the time that common law rights were removed from the Act in order to implement a benefit structure that fairly compensated severely incapacitated workers. The current interpretation does not seem consistent with that objective.

Amendment to both Section 43(7a) and Clause 5 of the Third Schedule will be sought to ensure that only disabilities arising from the same trauma event are considered in the calculation of lump sum compensation. The requirement for these amendments arises as a result of the decisions in *Mitchell* and *Cedic*.

Amendment to Section 44 of the Act will also be sought to ensure that previously compensated disabilities that do not arise from the same trauma event are not considered in the calculation of a lump sum payment upon death. It is considered that the proposed changes are consistent with original intent of the provisions.

In respect of all these changes to lump sum compensation and hearing loss provisions, the intent of the amendment is to return the administration of the scheme to the situation that existed before each of the court decisions.

Exempt employer size criteria

The proposed amendments to Section 60 relate to the size criteria for exempt employers in the WorkCover scheme and are intended to provide a more practical and precise size test for exempt employer status. It is proposed that the test for exempt employer status be changed from one based on worker numbers to one based on remuneration. If the proposed amendments are passed the government intends to establish a regulated formula based on the current 200-worker limit to transfer to a remuneration limit using average weekly earnings figures. By doing this, the Government will ensure that the overall effect of the size limit will not change.

With changing employment structures in today's society more workers are working either casually or on a part-time basis. This could mean that the 200-worker limit can be easily met with less than a 200 full time equivalent workforce. It has generally been accepted within the WorkCover scheme that the current limit should relate to an equivalent number of full time workers. The proposed introduction of a remuneration limit therefore will provide a more suitable measure without changing the existing structure of the exempt employer scheme.

Further to this, the proposed amendments will allow more effective monitoring of exempt employer compliance with size criteria. WorkCover Corporation regularly collects information on remuneration from South Australian employers for levy purposes however it has no need and limited ability to collect regular information on worker numbers. With these amendments the Corporation will be able to monitor and apply the size limit more effectively.

The proposed amendments also provide some clarification of the requirement for exempt employers to maintain the criteria for registration as an exempt during the course of their exempt status. This will ensure that once exempt status is granted an employer must remain at or above the minimum requirements for registration in order to remain an exempt employer.

Prohibited conduct in relation to claims

The Bill also includes the introduction of a proposed Part 4A of the Act that will prohibit certain conduct (commonly known as 'touting') relating to workers compensation claims for noise induced hearing loss or any other kind of claim prescribed by regulation.

While this practice is believed to have subsided in South Australia there have been periods where significant touting has taken place, particularly in relation to noise induced hearing loss. While claims lodged by workers as a result of activities by these organisations are legitimate, such organisations have previously misled potential claimants with regard to entitlements and the requirements of lodging a claim. These organisations have also taken commission of up to one-third of the value of a workers compensation claim.

Similar experience in both New South Wales and Victoria has led to the introduction of legislation in those jurisdictions to combat

this type of activity. The amendments drafted for South Australia have been based on provisions implemented in interstate.

This legislation is only intended to operate in the extreme circumstances similar to those that occurred during the significant increase of hearing loss claims in the mid 1990s. It has been thought prudent to pursue these amendments now as similar activity may occur again with hearing loss claims or another type of claim identified for claims promotion.

The proposal does not seek to reduce a workers access to support in lodging a claim for workers compensation, such as support from a lawyer or union official. Local legal practitioners have been specifically excluded from the operation of the proposed legislation (except where their activities relate to those of an agent) and union officials do not fall within the ambit of the definition of 'agent' within the Bill.

The Bill prohibits two forms of conduct in relation to claims under the new Part 4A. These include the making of false or misleading statements or unsolicited personal approaches in order to encourage a person to make a claim for compensation or to use a particular service for which some form of payment would be made. It also establishes provisions to enable WorkCover Corporation to investigate and take remedial action in order to enforce the provisions proposed in the new Part 4A.

The introduction of this legislation does not reduce a worker's right to access legitimate assistance in the making of a claim for workers compensation and does not discourage the making of claims. These provisions protect workers from potentially exploitative practices that may inhibit or reduce an injured worker's access to compensation.

Explanation of clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

This clause provides for commencement of the measure on a day to be fixed by proclamation.

Clause 3: Amendment of s. 43—Lump sum compensation

This clause amends section 43(7a) so that the amount of compensation in relation to which the supplementary benefit is calculated includes all entitlements for compensable disabilities resulting from the same trauma.

Clause 4: Amendment of s. 44—Compensation payable on death
Paragraph (a) inserts the term 'fatal disability' in section 44(1).

Paragraph (b) amends section 44(1)(b)(i) so that the lump sum received by the spouse of a deceased worker is reduced by the amounts received by the worker in respect of any related disabilities.

Paragraph (c) makes the same amendment to section 44(1)(c)(i)(A) in relation to the lump sum received by a dependent child of the deceased worker.

Paragraph (d) amends section 44(4a) so that the Corporation's discretion regarding the amount of the lump sum paid to an orphan child of the deceased worker is limited to a specified amount, less the amounts received by the worker in respect of any related disabilities.

Paragraph (e) inserts an explanatory note about section 44(4a).

Paragraph (f) inserts proposed new section 44(20), which states that disabilities are related if they result from the same trauma.

Clause 5: Insertion of Part 4A

This clause inserts proposed new Part 4A, comprising proposed new sections 58D to 58L. This Part sets out the prohibition against service providers ('agents') touting for business in connection with claims.

58D. Definitions

Proposed new section 58D introduces definitions of several terms used in the Part.

58E. Prohibited conduct by agents

Proposed new section 58E describes the types of conduct that an agent is prohibited from engaging in ('prohibited conduct'). Section 58E(1)(c) permits the types of conduct to be expanded by regulation.

58F. Offence of engaging in prohibited conduct

Proposed new section 58F states that an agent who engages in prohibited conduct is guilty of an offence, punishable by a maximum penalty of \$10 000.

58G. Consequences of prohibited conduct for recovery of fees

Proposed new section 58G(1) states that an agent who engages in prohibited conduct cannot recover fees for services from clients who were induced by that conduct to use those services.

Proposed new section 58G(2) states that a client is presumed to have been induced by such conduct if it occurred, however the presumption is rebuttable.

58H. Recovery of fees by legal practitioners etc.

Proposed new section 58H states that a legal practitioner or other person who provides services cannot recover fees for those services where he or she knew or should have known that prohibited conduct induced the client.

58I. Legal practitioners and agents can be requested to certify as to prohibited conduct

Proposed new section 58I allows the Corporation to require an agent or legal practitioner to provide a certificate disclosing whether prohibited conduct was engaged in, in relation to a claim. Failure to provide a certificate carries a maximum penalty of \$10 000.

58J. Power to restrict or ban agents who engage in prohibited conduct

Proposed new section 58J(1) allows the Corporation to direct that an agent is prohibited from acting for any person in relation to any claims or classes of claims.

Proposed new section 58J(2) states that an agent who is given a direction must have engaged in prohibited conduct on more than one occasion, and must be allowed a reasonable opportunity to make submissions to the Corporation.

Proposed new section 58J(3) requires the direction to be written and given to the agent and proposed new section 58J(4) states that an agent who contravenes a direction is liable to a maximum penalty of \$10 000.

Proposed new section 58J(5) prohibits an agent who contravenes a direction from recovering fees for anything done in relation to that contravention.

Proposed new sections 58J(6), 58J(7) and 58J(8) create and define the right of a person aggrieved by a direction to appeal to the Tribunal.

Proposed new sections 58J(9) and 58J(10) relate to the power of the Corporation to withdraw a direction.

58K. Duty of claimants to comply with requests for information about agents and legal practitioners

Proposed new section 58K(1) allows the Corporation to require a claimant to provide it with details in relation to the services used in connection with the claim.

Proposed new section 58K(2) provides that a failure to comply with the requirement carries a maximum penalty of \$5 000.

58L. Recovery of amounts paid

Proposed new section 58L states that a person who pays fees that were not able to be charged because of this Part can recover those fees as a debt from the person to whom they were paid.

Clause 6: Amendment of s 60—Exempt employers

This clause amends section 60 in the following ways:

Paragraph (a) substitutes sections 60(1) and (2) with proposed new sections 60(1), (2) and (2A).

Proposed new section 60(1) permits an employer or a group of employers that is eligible for registration as an exempt employer or a group of exempt employers to apply for registration as such.

Proposed new section 60(2) differs from the current section 60(2) in that it only applies to employers (not a group of employers), and it states that an employer is eligible for registration if the aggregate remuneration paid by the employer for the benefit of its workers exceeds a certain amount (the 'qualifying amount').

Proposed new section 60(2A) makes the same amendment in relation to a group of employers, currently dealt with in section 60(2)(b).

Paragraph (b) substitutes section 60(5). Proposed new section 60(5) differs from section 60(5) in that the registration of an exempt employer or group may be revoked or reduced if the employer or group ceases to be eligible for registration under section 60.

Paragraph (c) inserts proposed new section 60(9), which defines the terms 'qualifying amount' (see proposed new section 60(2) and 60(2A)) and 'remuneration'.

Clause 7: Amendment of Sched. 2

This clause amends Schedule 2 so that the type of work that gives rise to the presumption described in section 31(2) is work involving exposure to noise that is capable of causing noise induced hearing loss.

Clause 8: Amendment of Sched. 3

This clause amends clause 5 of Schedule 3, so that the regulations may prescribe principles governing the entitlement of a worker in respect of two or more disabilities to which the Schedule applies and that arise exclusively from the same trauma.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

WEST BEACH RECREATION RESERVE (REVIEW) AMENDMENT BILL

Second reading.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I move:

That this bill be now read a second time.

I seek leave to have the second reading explanation inserted in *Hansard* without my reading it.

Leave granted.

The West Beach Recreation Reserve, administered and managed by the West Beach Trust, is a key metropolitan wide recreation and tourism facility which:

- (a) provides metropolitan-wide sporting facilities and is an important venue for State and national competitions; and
- (b) forms part of the Coastal Park and the Metropolitan Open Space System; and
- (c) provides caravan and village tourist accommodation which is of metropolitan importance, as well as being important to coastal centres like Glenelg.

This wide variety of services makes the West Beach Recreation Reserve a sporting, cultural, recreational and tourism facility of State and regional significance.

The West Beach Trust is a body corporate established under the *West Beach Recreation Reserve Act 1987*. It was established by the State Government in 1954 to maintain and administer the West Beach Recreation Reserve. While the existing Act has provided good guidance to the Trust, it is considered that the Act needs to be amended to provide for the best ongoing development and maintenance of this vital State asset.

As part of the State Government's National Competition Policy obligations, the West Beach Trust was subject to legislative review in 1998.

As a result of this review, a steering committee was established in May 1999 to examine the means by which the recommendations of the review could be implemented. The committee was chaired by the then Chief Executive of the Department for Transport, Urban Planning and the Arts, Mr Rod Payze, and consisted of representatives of—

- the West Beach Trust;
- Department of Treasury and Finance;
- Crown Solicitor's Office;
- the Office for Government Enterprises; and
- Planning SA.

This committee concluded that the prime role of the Trust was to deliver sporting, recreation, tourist and cultural services in an efficient manner but in a public reserve environment. This Bill has been drafted as a result of the recommendations of the committee and sets out a legislative framework for the efficient operations of the Trust, ensuring that the West Beach Recreation Reserve continues its role as a publicly accessible sporting, recreation, tourism and cultural facility.

The benefits of the proposed rationalised legislation include the following:

- A clear statement of the role of the West Beach Trust with emphasis on the sporting, recreation, tourism and cultural role of the Reserve.
- A clear statement of the services to be delivered by the Trust through a Charter and Performance Statement.
- A requirement for the board of the Trust to prepare a Strategic Plan and a Business Plan to enable the Trust to plan with confidence for the future (to be approved by the Minister).
- A board consisting of people with experience pertinent to the roles, functions and performance agreements set out in the Bill.
- The general updating of the Act.

In addition to the consideration of the matter by the steering committee and within Government, the detail of the Bill was referred to a Select Committee of the Legislative Council after its introduction in another place.

The Committee called for and received a number of submissions on the Bill and some amendments were then recommended by the Committee in its Report. The Government was pleased to support all of the recommended amendments.

The major provisions of the Bill are discussed below.

Functions

While the Trust's existing functions of the administration and maintenance of the West Beach Recreation Reserve are preserved in the updated legislation, it is proposed that the State-wide significance of the Reserve as a sporting, cultural, tourism and cultural facility for the benefit of all South Australians be emphasised.

While the existing Act specifies that the designated area of the Reserve cannot be sold, the Bill contains safeguards if a leasing out of the Reserve is proposed which would significantly change the way in which part of the Reserve is to be managed. The Bill contains a clause (*see* proposed new section 13(5)) requiring the Minister to:

- publish a gazette and newspaper notice of a proposal to sell any part of the Reserve, or grant a lease or licence over the Reserve, or a part of the Reserve which would result in the Trust transferring its responsibility to administer the Reserve;
- publish such notices at least two months before the proposed transaction is entered into; and
- provide a written report on the proposed transaction to the Economic and Finance Committee of the Parliament.

Furthermore, on the recommendation of the Select Committee, the Bill has been amended so as to provide that *all* leases or licences for a term exceeding ten years (but not exceeding 20 years) must be approved by the Minister. Furthermore, if the Trust proposes to grant a lease or licence for a term exceeding 20 years, then it must first obtain an approval granted by a resolution of both Houses of Parliament.

Finally, *all* leases or licences will be required to be consistent with the Trust's strategic and business plans (*see* below).

Financial Accountability Provisions

The Bill does not make the Trust subject to the provisions of the *Public Corporations Act 1993*.

However, the Bill contains provisions which require the Trust to prepare a Charter and Performance Agreement, to be approved by the Minister. This provides an accountability framework for the board where both commercial efficiency and community service requirements are clearly set out.

The Bill also contains the requirement to prepare a Strategic Plan and Business Plan, also to be approved by the Minister responsible for the Act.

Certain other provisions of the *Public Corporations Act 1993* have also been adapted and specifically applied to the Trust.

Board Membership

While the current Trust has progressively improved sporting and tourism facilities and upgraded the environmental management of the sand dunes, it is recognised that the management of this vital asset will need to be steered by a Board that has financial, tourism and recreational as well as local government expertise. The importance of environmental protection and management has also been recognised.

Therefore, the Bill contains board membership provisions which provide for appropriate relevant professional experience on the board of the Trust.

As a result of recommendations of the Select Committee, the Trust will now be constituted by three persons drawn from panels nominated by the adjoining councils, plus four persons nominated by the Minister. A person nominated by a council or selected by the Minister will need to have qualifications or experience in at least one of the areas specified by the Bill. Council nominees will not necessarily need to be members or employees of the councils.

Other membership provisions of the Bill to note are—

- all appointments will be for a period of up to 4 years;
- the Board will include at least 2 women and 2 men;
- the Bill includes transitional provisions allowing for the disbanding of the existing membership and the formation of a new board.

Conclusion

I commend the Bill to all Members and ask that it receive their prompt attention. I reiterate that this is not a Bill to replace the *West Beach Recreation Reserve Act 1987* but a refinement to sections of the Act to best prepare for the action needed to ensure that the reserve remains a jewel in Adelaide recreation, sporting and tourism crown.

Explanation of Clauses

Clause 1: Short title

This clause is formal.

Clause 2: Commencement

The measure will be brought into operation by proclamation.

Clause 3: Substitution of s. 4

It is appropriate to enact a new set of definitions in view of the contents of this measure. It is intended to make it clear that a reference to 'land' may be taken to include land which is covered (or may be covered from time to time) by water. The definitions of the 'Reserve' and the 'Trust' are also to be updated.

Clause 4: Substitution of s. 7

The Trust is to continue to have seven members appointed by the Minister. However, the composition of the Trust is to be altered.

Clause 5: Amendment of s. 8—Conditions of membership

A member of the Trust will now be appointed for a term of office not exceeding four years. Other consequential amendments are to be made.

Clause 6: Amendment of s. 10—Disclosure of interest

The amount of the penalty that may be imposed for a breach of section 10(1) is to be updated.

Clause 7: Amendment of s. 11—Procedure at meetings of the Trust

It is proposed that the Trust be able to conduct telephone and other forms of electronic conferences. Resolutions will also be able to be made by written response, facsimile transmission or other electronically transmitted written communication.

Clause 8: Amendment of s. 13—General functions and powers of the Trust

The Reserve is to be administered and developed in accordance with the strategic and business plans of the Trust. It will also be recognised that the Reserve is of State-wide significance. The land that the Trust is not to be able to sell will be the land bounded in black in the map contained in the Schedule. In addition, if the Trust proposes to sell other real property, or to enter into a lease or licence that effectively means that the Trust is no longer to administer the Reserve, or to enter into a partnership, joint venture or other profit sharing arrangement, the Trust must gain the approval of the Minister and two months notice of the proposed transaction must be given in the *Gazette* and a newspaper, and a written report provided to the Economic and Finance Committee.

Furthermore, any lease or licence for a term exceeding ten years (but not exceeding 20 years) will be subject to the approval of the Minister. Any lease or licence for a term exceeding 20 years will require the approval of both Houses of Parliament. Any lease or licence will need to be consistent with the Trust's strategic and business plans.

Clause 9: Insertion of new Division

The Trust is to perform its commercial operations in accordance with prudent commercial principles and use its best endeavours to achieve a level of return consistent with its functions. Non-commercial operations are to be performed in an efficient and effective manner consistent with the requirements of the Trust's charter.

The Trust is to have a charter prepared by the Minister after consultation with the Trust. The Charter will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Minister will also, after consultation with the Trust, prepare a performance agreement for the Trust. This will also be reviewed on an annual basis.

The Trust must also prepare a long-term strategic plan and a business plan.

Clause 10: Amendment of s. 16—Dealings with money and borrowings

The Trust will not be able to borrow money without consulting the Minister and obtaining the approval of the Treasurer.

Clause 11: Amendment of s. 18—Power to advance money, to act as guarantor, etc.

A proposal of the Trust to lend or advance money or securities will require the approval of the Treasurer.

Clause 12: Substitution of ss. 20 to 23

Sections 20, 21, 22 and 23 are to be revised.

New section 20 will deal with approvals given by the Minister or the Treasurer under the Act.

New section 21 will relate to the imposition of rates, duties, taxes and other imposts, and tax equivalence requirements.

New section 22 will relate to the issue of whether the Trust should pay a dividend (or interim dividend) in any financial year.

New section 23 will require the Trust to keep a register of leases and licences granted by the Trust over the land bounded in black in the map in the Schedule.

New section 23A will revise the penalty for damaging property of the Trust. It will also be possible to impose an expiation fee in an appropriate case.

Clause 13: Amendment of s. 25—Regulations

It will be possible, by regulation, to regulate, restrict or prohibit the launching or movement of boats on or within any part of the Reserve covered by water. The penalty for a breach of the regulations, and the amount of any expiation fee, are to be revised.

Clause 14: Amendment of Schedule 1

Schedule 1 is to be revised.

Clause 15: Further amendments of principal Act

It is proposed to make certain statute law revisions.

Clause 16: Transitional provision

Current members of the Trust are to vacate their offices.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

Consideration in committee of the report of the Auditor-General.

(Continued from 23 October. Page 2469.)

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open the examination of the expenditure items for the Minister for Education and Children's Services as well as the items for the Minister for Water Resources, Minister for Employment and Training and Minister for Youth. Before I ask for any questions, I would ask members who are asking questions to identify clearly the sections of the Auditor-General's Report from which the questions emanate because, as was pointed out last evening, it is important that the matters that are addressed in this time that is set aside are those associated with the Auditor-General's Report relating to past expenditure. The member for Taylor.

Ms WHITE: I will be questioning Minister Buckby for, roughly, half an hour, and my colleague the member for Hanson will then question Minister Brindal. I commence with the Auditor-General's statement of financial performance for the year ended 30 June 2001, and also include this year's budget papers at page 9.25 (that same statement of financial performance). Last year's and this year's budget papers show that for the 2000-01 financial year the government budgeted for an operating deficit of \$28.2 million.

At page 202 of the Auditor-General's Report (the statement of financial performance) and page 204 (output class schedule), the department's expenses and revenues for the year ended 30 June 2001 state that the deficit for the year totals \$97.7 million. First, will the minister address this discrepancy between the budgeted operating loss for the 2000-01 financial year of \$28.2 million and the Auditor-General's statement that the deficit for 2000-01 was \$97.7 million?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: In answer to the honourable member's questions, the budget expectations of all agencies are still totally cash based. The accrual numbers that are incorporated into budget papers are indicative only and are based on the previous year's numbers. The real accrual numbers are, obviously, calculated at the end of each year. Major differences in what the member for Taylor has identified in this year's figures include a higher amount of capital cost considered to be operating expenditure, and that was \$35 million when it was fully evaluated for the financial statement.

In addition, the amount for supplies and services was increased over the figures in the budget papers, mainly by a higher level of payables recorded, which was \$49 million; and the employee expenses by the higher levels of accruals

for employee entitlements of some \$20 million. While you make an indicative estimate of what the budget will be, it is only at the end of that year that we can then account for the real costs and, obviously, you will end up with some sort of difference there.

Ms WHITE: I accept that explanation as to how the situation occurred, but I just want clarification from the minister. Is it correct that the budget for this last financial year (2000-01) had a deficit of \$97.7 million? That is what the Auditor-General's Report states. Will the minister clarify that that is the case?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: It is relevant to note that the budget papers projected a cash balance as at 30 June of \$69.7 million and the final outcome, as reported in the Auditor-General's Report, was a cash balance of \$71.7 million which, of course, is a good result. In terms of the \$97.7 million compared to the \$70.8 million last year, the bulk of the difference is reflected in the reduction of cash that was part of the approved budget for 2000-01 and, from memory, in his budget speech the Treasurer indicated that that would be the case.

The original budget for 2000-01, as published in May 2000, shows an improved cash run down of \$25.68 million. The final result, in fact, was a run down of \$17 million, that is, from \$88.5 million to \$71.7 million; and the rest of the net movement of other items in the balance sheets includes receivables, payables and employee entitlements, as I mentioned in the earlier answer.

Ms WHITE: The minister has confirmed that there is a budget deficit for the 2000-01 financial year of \$97.7 million. This year's budget papers show a commitment to reduce the operating loss essentially to zero. The budget states \$139 000, to be exact—so reducing the operating loss. Minister, you have a \$97.7 million deficit. How will you achieve that this current financial year?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: We need to be clear of the difference between cash and accrual accounting. The operating budget—the accrual budget—is a \$97.7 million deficit, but that is only the operating deficit. As I mentioned earlier, the cash balance we are talking about as at 30 June was \$69.7 million and the final outcome reported in the Auditor-General's Report was \$71.7 million. So, it actually went up in terms of that. We must be clear that this is not a budget deficit. We are talking about an operating deficit, which is an accrual accounting figure. That is quite different from a budget deficit. The cash balance is the other figure of which we must be aware.

Ms WHITE: I return to what was predicted in this year's budget papers: that we would have an operating deficit of \$28.2 million. I understand the difference to which the minister has referred. The prediction was \$28.2 million and it came in at \$97.7 million; is that correct?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The figure of \$28.2 million is correct, but that is all based on estimates. As I explained by way of answer to the honourable member's first question, when all the figures come in at the end of the year we can say, 'Here is the actual accrual figure.' So, \$28.2 million was the estimate, and when the final figures have come in it will be \$97.7 million.

Ms WHITE: The minister just alluded to the fact that page 203 shows that he has a cash balance of \$71.7 million as at 30 June and an operating deficit of \$97.7 million. He also has a commitment in this year's budget to wipe out the operating deficit and to run that down to a balanced budget. How will the minister do that?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Where did the member for Taylor obtain her information that there would be a zero operating loss this year?

Ms WHITE: From this year's budget papers.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The operating loss though?

Ms WHITE: Yes, I believe so. The statement of performance (page 9.25 of this year's budget papers) stated that the operating result would be minus \$139 000. I am saying that that is essentially negligible in the context of the budget. For this year the budget papers said that a \$28.2 million deficit was predicted, and that would be wound down to a balanced budget.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The figure of \$139 000 to which the member referred is an estimate for the 2001-02 budget. That is only an estimate and, as with last year's estimates, it undoubtedly will be different from our estimate. We look more at the actual cash balance. The figure of \$139 000 is an accrual. As we have seen from last year, that is quite different from when the final figures come down. They are the estimates that we made at that point. The better figure to look at is the cash. That figure enables you to see how your operating budget is going, because it does not include the accruals. Accruals include such factors as depreciation and a number of other things. That figure will undoubtedly change, just as this last year's figures changed. However, our cash budget provides a better review, and we would look to be performing along the lines of that cash budget.

Ms WHITE: Your prediction for the operating loss was \$28.2 million for this year, and your operating result came in at a \$97.7 million deficit. Are you saying that your operating result for this current financial year could come in at a \$100 million deficit? Is that the implication? You said that \$139 000 target for this financial year would vary. Are you saying that it could vary by \$100 million?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: We are not agreeing with that; I am not saying that at all. I am saying that the estimates we have made in the budget are just that—estimates, made on the best knowledge that we have at this stage. When the accounts are finalised and reviewed at this time next year, we will then see how close those estimates have been. According to our operations for this year, the \$139 000 is what we estimate our accrued budget will be.

The CHAIRMAN: The chair reminds the member for Taylor again that we are dealing with matters that come out of the Auditor-General's Report relating to past expenditure.

Ms WHITE: The Auditor-General's Report (page 204) shows that the total cost of services for education was \$1.9 billion. In 2000-01, the budgeted figure for the cost of those services was \$1.707 billion—a difference of some \$224 million. So, that is an increase in costs of \$224 million in this last financial year. Are you carrying that over into this financial year? How will you get the budget to balance at the end of this financial year if your costs have blown out in this last financial year by \$224 million? How will you meet your commitment to come out with a balanced operational budget?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The figure that the honourable member is using of \$1.707 billion does not include normal wage increases and those sorts of expenditures that will increase during the year. As the member well knows, we had a 4 per cent increase in teachers' wages, and obviously expenditure will increase because that was not included in the 2000-01 budget. Those increases will flow through, and obviously at the end of the year the figure will be higher. As I am advised, on page 9.25 of the budget papers the member

will see that we had an estimate of \$1.802 billion, which included those wage rises, and so that is where the difference occurs.

Ms WHITE: At the time that the minister estimated that this last financial year would come in at a cost of \$1.8 billion, he also set a budget for next financial year at \$1.8 billion, but we find that between that time and now his costs came in at \$1.931 billion. What does that do to the minister's budget estimates that he presented to this House earlier this year? There is a difference of over \$100 million.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The \$100 million can be explained. As I said earlier, the major difference (\$100 million) is made up of a higher amount of capital costs considered to be operating, which was \$35 million when it was fully evaluated for the financial statement. The figures in the budget papers for supplies and services were increased mainly due to a higher level of payables being recorded (\$49 million), and employees' expenses were increased by a higher level of accruals for employee entitlements of \$20 million. In total, that is \$104 million. That is where the difference occurs between the two figures.

Ms WHITE: I can quite clearly see where the difference is. My point is that this is a difference of \$100 million since the formulation of the minister's budget for this current financial year. According to the Auditor-General's Report, the minister has an operational deficit of \$97.7 million, which exceeded his predictions at that time. How will the minister meet that increased impost, which is a significant impost, in this financial year?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: We are required to perform within our cash budget and, as I reported earlier, a note in the budget papers projected a cash balance at 30 June of \$69.7 million and the final outcome was \$71.7 million. We are required by Treasury to perform to that cash budget and our figures suggest that we will perform to the cash budget we have been given this year as expected.

Ms WHITE: On 27 September this year, in response to a question I asked the minister, he confirmed that he had implemented a 2 per cent saving across his department. In a subsequent *Advertiser* article dated 1 October, the minister was reported as saying that that amounted to \$30 million. Is that figure correct?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I think we are getting off the subject, because this question is about this year's budget, not the Auditor-General's Report, but I am prepared to give an answer to the member. The 2 per cent saving is on head office directorates only, and on checking that figure that would amount to \$1.9 million. It would not be a \$30 million saving, because it is not on regional areas: it is only on head office directorates.

Ms WHITE: I was just clarifying something that was reported. I refer to page 197 where the Auditor-General's Report reveals that since the minister's government came to power—that is, since the 1994-95 financial year—there have been over 3 000 TVSPs in education at a cost of over \$200 million. I want to focus on the TVSPs over the last three financial years. The Auditor-General's Report shows that over the last three financial years there have been 698 targeted separation packages in education at a cost of \$56.6 million. However, that is more than the number disclosed in the 1998 budget papers presented in May 1998 in which a reduction of 90 to 100 teachers was revealed by the Treasurer.

Indeed, that was confirmed by the minister, when he verified the leaked document that I had obtained entitled

'Department of Education, Training and Employment Budget Strategy for 1998-99 to 2000-01', as authentic. It listed a cut of 90 full-time equivalents to save \$2.5 million in the first year and \$4.4 million in the second and third years. We have gone from the budget strategy which was subsequently revised and confirmed in the commission in April last year from 90 to 100 full-time equivalents over that three year period to a situation which has been revealed for the first time by the Auditor-General's Report; that is, there have been 700 packages over the last three years with half of those occurring in this last financial year, that is 351, at a cost to government of \$30 million. I understand that was the bulk of the Public Service packages for this last financial year. How many of the 351 packages were teachers or support staff in schools?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I will have to take that question on notice; I do not have that level of detail here. I would need to check that figure to give an accurate answer to the member for Taylor, but my advice is that the majority would be teachers or support staff in schools.

Ms WHITE: We know that the minister's department is offering TVSPs for this financial year. How many will there be; and of those how many will be teachers and support staff in schools?

The CHAIRMAN: The chair takes the point that the minister has raised. We are now referring to this year's budget again. This investigation is not about this year's budget: it is about the Auditor-General's Report and past expenditure.

Ms WHITE: Will the minister guarantee to provide the House with an answer to that question?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I can obtain an answer for the member.

Ms KEY: I refer the Minister for Employment and Training to page 185 of Part B, Agency Audit Reports, Volume 1. I refer to Related Party Disclosures—Directors of the Construction Industry Training Board. Amongst other points, under 'Transaction with Director-Related Entities', paragraph 16.2(b) states:

During the year training funds were allocated to associated entities of the Directors of the Construction Industry Training Board. Such transactions were within terms and conditions no more favourable than those available on similar transactions to other parts.

Can the minister explain what that means? Further, can the minister say whether the Mr Richard McKay who is identified as the Presiding Member of the Construction Industry Training Board is the Richard McKay who is identified in the fundraising plan of the Liberal Party of Australia (SA Division), which I found in my pigeonhole? That person is identified as one of the corporate donor targets for the Liberal Party in 2001-02. Shown is the name of business, Adelaide Bank; contact, chair; category, banking; convenor, Dick McKay; and expected target \$100 000. So, my two questions are what paragraph 16.2(b) means and whether this Richard McKay is the same person.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I take some personal objection to the tenor of the second part of the question.

Ms Key: Is it the same person?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am not quite sure. I know Mr McKay and he is a gentleman of the highest integrity. I know him mainly from his association with the training board and in his capacity as chair of the training board. I do not think anybody in this chamber has ever questioned his capacity to do what he does on the training board and to do it well. As for his political associations, and as for his

capacity to be a donor to the Liberal Party, for all I know Ms Stephanie Key may well be a donor of the Liberal Party.

Ms Key: I was asking a question.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I understand. What I am trying to explain is that, under the rules of the Liberal Party, I do not know who the donors are. I am not told who the donors are, nor do I inquire. I presume the very reason the honourable member has asked the question is that it would be quite improper for me to have a duality of association with someone who, on the one hand, is chairing a board for me and who, on the other hand, may be a significant contributor to my party. It could well be the same person. I simply have no knowledge and I cannot stand and say that it is or is not he; it quite possibly is.

My point is that his capacity as chair of the CITB is acknowledged as being exemplary and exceptional, not only by what I would call employing interests on the board but also by the union representatives. I have never heard anybody question Mr McKay in this role and I would say—

Mr Foley: We are not.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I do not know. I am saying that, if that was the implication, I think it is the wrong implication. It could be the same person; I do not know. As to the honourable member's reference to paragraph 16.2 (and I will correct this explanation if it is wrong), my understanding is that, because some people on the board are employers, and therefore might employ trainees, if somebody on the board is given a trainee or a set of conditions, it could give rise to allegations of impropriety, of looking after yourself and your mates and of not looking after the rest of the industry. The note, I think, says that the Auditor-General has carefully checked this matter and has satisfied himself that, where any director on the board has a benefit from the CITB fund—

Mr Foley: This is the A-G that Joan Hall thinks is politically motivated.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I am answering the member for Hanson's questions, and I find her much more preferable to answer than the member for Hart. That is my understanding of the explanation.

Members interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: If there is any variation to that, I will report to the honourable member.

Ms KEY: I note this statement on page 189 under 'Audit Findings and Comments':

Issues raised with the department include weaknesses in procedures and internal controls with respect to the State office's sundry debtors system, purchasing and accounts payable functions and the Office of Employment and Youth (Government Youth Training Scheme).

It then goes on to talk about TAFE. Can the minister comment on that? In saying that, I notice that one of the organisations that is funded under the budget line that the minister is responsible for is the Youth Affairs Council of South Australia, and the *Advertiser* makes the point in the survey that they have recently completed—and this strikes at the heart of both the youth and employment portfolios—that six in every 10 respondents living in South Australia said that they did not plan to live their adult life in South Australia, with nearly 70 per cent believing that they had better employment prospects outside the state.

I also note that the chair of the minister's Youth Plus, Miss Weckert, will also be leaving the state because she

cannot find suitable employment here. I believe that she is going to Victoria. Can the minister comment on that?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I find the honourable member's questions usually very straightforward, but I am not sure what she has just asked me. Is she asking me to comment on why young people are leaving South Australia?

Ms Key: Yes.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I do not know what it has to do with the Auditor-General's Report, but I will do so with pleasure because it will fill up some time. The fact that our young people are leaving this state is a worry. I think that the member for Hanson is a mum. Have you got children?

Ms Key: I am not sure what it has to do with this.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: It has to do with the point I am about to make. No parent, grandparent, brother or sister likes to lose family; it is important to us all. On the other hand, the world is increasingly a global village. That is just a fact. We have always had opportunities but, increasingly, those opportunities exist for young people who no longer see themselves confined just to the city of Adelaide or even the state of South Australia. Our young people seem to pick up quite readily and go off to Sydney, Melbourne, the Gold Coast or wherever for a few years. As the member for Hanson knows, increasingly they are not limited to the shores of Australia. We have young people who graduate and then do some graduate work in Nepal or Africa, especially those with a humanitarian mind, or they work for the peace corps—they do all sorts of things all around the world.

It worries me, as a parent and a South Australian, but I do not think that we can fetter our children. Leah Weckert is an exceptional young woman. I believe from a conversation I had with her that it is not certain whether she will go to Melbourne, but I will not divulge confidences. However, I will tell the member for Hanson in private what Miss Weckert has been offered in terms of a job. I am a minister of the crown and, if I had been offered what Miss Weckert had been offered as a starting salary in a job, I would be there tomorrow. Because she is an exceptional young woman, she has been given a very good offer.

Increasingly, Brown & Root, Kinsmen and a whole lot of companies in South Australia think nothing of grabbing our brightest and best and offering them a post in New York, London, etc. I am concerned that we are losing some of our brightest and best, but should I as a South Australian say that any South Australian deserves less than the best they can get wherever they are in world? If we are honest, we cannot deny them.

I know a young man (I know his mum because she goes to the same church as I) who is a professor of international law at Oxford University. He will never come back to Australia; he simply cannot, because international law is practised in the Hague and he is at a level beyond which Australia can offer him employment. So, I wish him well. I would hope—and this is the point of bringing them home in those sorts of campaigns—that a lot of our young people go away for the adventure, excitement, experience and sometimes the adrenalin rush. When that is over and they are just that little older—28, 29 or 30 years or whatever—and are thinking of having a family and settling down, and not wanting to be out all night every night living the high life, then perhaps South Australia is a good place—not a retirement village—to come back to and raise kids and prosper. They will come back as better people. So, the answer is that, yes, I am concerned, but would I try to put up barbed wire fences at the borders? The answer is no. We live in a

changing world and we have to acknowledge it, even though there might be some sad bits to it.

Ms KEY: I refer the minister to page 190, under the heading 'Office of Employment and Youth', which states:

A review of the monitoring activities over National Training Wage payments for traineeships revealed that there was:

- the need for improvement over the management processes of applications for suspension of training contracts;
- a need for improved management of the monthly claim form returns from host agencies that certify the accuracy of claims and validity of indicated participants.

It goes on to talk about some of the issues relating to the employment and youth training wage program. Will the minister outline the checks and balances that he may have put in place in that area?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: This is an area that has worried me for a long time. We are dealing with people's lives and we want to ensure that they are dealt with expeditiously and fairly. At the same time, the honourable member will hang me out to dry if she finds that my department has made a mistake or not properly accounted for public moneys, as would any member of this House, from whichever side they may be. That creates a tension. On the one hand, public moneys need to be properly accounted for. Public servants are diligent and hardworking and they set up processes that most of us in this House might see as laborious and unnecessarily cumbersome. I do not imply any disregard for the Public Service, but sometimes they also tend to build form on form on form. By the time you have filled out form 301(b), which was based on an 1890s form in the first place, it is not exactly relevant to today. All I can tell the honourable member is that we have noted these things and we are constantly trying to improve the system.

I think that at one stage the honourable member raised the issue of people applying for recruitment in government traineeships or perhaps government graduate traineeships. They were interviewed, their names put on a list and they never heard from us again. We have tried to institute a monitoring policy that says we will keep in contact, so that every few months we will let them know. These traineeships are in the same category. If the member wants a more specific answer I will follow up on it. However, I can assure her that these comments have been taken on board and we are trying all the time to improve the process to make it simpler but, at the same time, we must ensure that we do not discount accountability in the process.

Ms KEY: The reason I raised the previous matter is, as I have already quoted, on page 189, referring to 'Audit findings and comments', which states:

Issues raised with the department included weaknesses in procedures and internal controls with respect to state office's sundry debtors system, purchasing and accounts payable functions—

I presume that this is mainly within Minister Buckby's portfolio—

and the Office of Employment and Youth. . . training scheme.

If I am reading it correctly, there seem to be two mentions in this report about the processes and procedure. I am pleased to hear that the minister will follow up on these areas. I think it is a concern, especially when a lot of members, particularly House of Assembly members, receive complaints from not only trainees and apprentices but also their parents on a regular basis.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I thank the member for acknowledging that I have said we have tried to do something about this issue. What I think the member and I are talking

about is, 'Let's get it better.' We have taken the specifics of the Auditor-General and we will try to get it better. I am sure that, if there is a change in government and the shadow minister is the minister, she will try to get it better, and I will sit there and say, 'Well, have we got it well enough yet?'

Ms Key interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Yes, but I doubt that we will, but we are trying. While the shadow minister was talking, I was reminded that in a couple of other areas she has pointed out ways that we could improve and we have actually put those improvements in train. So, at least as we move towards the election we have a slightly better system than we had previously. It is probably not perfect, but we will work in the next parliament to make it that bit better because, at the end of the day, systems are about helping people and not about people serving systems.

Ms WHITE: I have one more question for the Minister for Education. Page 204 of the Auditor-General's Report lists output classes and their total cost of services. Will the minister explain why the child-care output, which budgeted a \$30.7 million cost, came in at \$35.6 million?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The answer is along similar lines to those previously discussed. Our budget was \$1.8 billion; when the final accruals were completed and calculated it came out at \$1.9 billion. So, that means that all sections right the way through the department will be affected. It will be part of that \$1.8 billion to \$1.9 billion.

Ms WHITE: Will the minister detail that increase in cost for child-care? What was it specifically due to? There is \$5 million out of a \$30 million cost.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I do not have that level of detail here, but I undertake to get an answer for the member.

The CHAIRMAN: The time for the consideration of these lines has concluded. I now ask the committee to move to consideration of the lines for the Minister for Environment and Heritage, the Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing, for which a limit of 30 minutes has been determined. Are there any questions?

Mr HILL: In relation to two significant features identified on page 295, will the minister explain the second dot point that refers to cash assets increasing by \$22.5 million to \$73.5 million, which it says 'is due mainly to accrual based appropriations deposited in a special deposit account with the Department of Treasury and Finance'? Will the minister explain why that sum of money is sitting there? Is it some sort of bucket of cash that he is saving for the election campaign or does it have some other purpose? What is that money to be used for?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I am advised that the department's cash balance increased by \$22.5 million to \$73.5 million as at 30 June 2001. The increase is largely due to the accrual appropriation of some \$21.7 million received by DEH. These funds are held in a special deposit account with the Department of Treasury and Finance. Substantial restrictions over these funds are applicable and use of the funds requires the Treasurer's approval.

The cash flow statement reflects an increase in the cash balance during 2000-01 of \$22.5 million compared to a net increase of \$8 million during the previous year. Material changes during the year supporting a \$14.5 million change include a decrease in payments of \$10 million; a receipts increase of \$1.5 million; and an investing activities decrease of \$3 million. The reduction in payments is mainly attributed to a reduction in grants and transfers as a result of the transfer of the water function to the Department for Water Resources.

Mr HILL: The minister did not actually say what that money will be used for. He did say that he needs Treasury approval to spend it, but what kind of program outcomes are planned for that sum of money?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The accrual appropriation is the difference between the budgeted depreciation expense and the department's capital investment budget. Essentially, the cash amount sits there until you get Treasury or cabinet approval, because if you spend it ultimately it will have some effect on the budget bottom line. You can only use it if the expenditure is reflected in the forward estimates. You cannot use it as you suggest and just go out and spend it prior to the election because it would not reflect accurately the forward estimates. It is the expenditure associated with the cash balance that needs the approval of cabinet to be spent.

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: No, not necessarily. You would have to get the specific approval of the Treasurer/Cabinet to touch your cash reserves beyond agreed budgeted levels, as do all ministers. All agencies that have cash balances need to get that approval, because it is built into your forward estimates or your forward accounts. It is not a treasure chest that you can go and raid. Ultimately, it is reflected in your accounts.

Mr HILL: I refer to page 296. Under 'Audit Findings and Comments' there is a general heading of 'Financial Management Framework' and a number of subheadings: financial management framework implementation, audit committee, internal audit, risk management and strategic planning. I think it is fair to say that there are comments by the Auditor under these headings which are perhaps not as critical as they have been in the past but they still raise some issues of concern that the processes that the department uses to manage its finances (the auditing process and the risk management process) have been in a state of what one might call flux for the last two or three years. I gather from reading the comments of the Auditor that things are getting closer to being finalised. Can the minister give assurances that by the next audit these processes will have been sorted out properly and can he indicate how confident he is about the processes that he currently has in place?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: We will continue to progress them to their natural conclusion. Whether that is exactly 12 months I will not commit to, but it is the intention of the department to continue to work through those processes as it has been in relation to the comments made by Auditor over the last couple of years.

In relation to the financial management framework implementation, for the honourable member's information, in March 2001 a project was initiated to review the implementation of the financial management framework. An interim progress report was presented to the DEH Audit Committee in June 2001 detailing each component of the financial management framework and summarising DEH's compliance within the gaps identified by the review to date.

The department has undertaken significant activities relevant to the implementation of the financial management framework in 2000-01. This includes such things as the establishment of the prudential management branch and the DEH audit committee; development of the DEH corporate governance framework; endorsement of the DEH risk management strategy; and a review of the implementation of the financial management framework, which is still in progress. Also, the audit committee will provide oversight to the future implementation plan for the financial management

framework. The audit committee itself is chaired by the Chief Executive of DEH—so it has senior endorsement—and it includes senior executive representation from within DEH and the South Australian public sector generally. The committee has met on three occasions during the last 12 months.

The role of the committee includes: to provide leadership to the department through the recommendation of internal control measures; to review and monitor the development and implementation of a risk management strategy and the application of risk management principles in the department; to review departmental compliance with financial management framework, the Treasurer's instructions, accounting policies and the various standards; to consider any matters relating to the corporate governance of the department; to review, approve and monitor the department's internal audit plan; and to review the findings of the Auditor-General's Department and manage responses to these where appropriate.

The internal audits are endorsed and monitored by the audit committee managed by the prudential management branch and are currently outsourced to contractors. During 2000-01, the DEH audit committee has provided oversight to a number of internal audit review activities, such as: accounts payable review, procurement process review, post-implementation review of GST, and ATO GST compliance review. During the next 12 months an internal audit plan will be developed in conjunction with the DEH risk management plan. I can go on further if the honourable member wants me too.

Mr HILL: We can come back to that. I have a few other issues. I do not know how long the minister's statement is on that, but it might take up my remaining 22 minutes. I refer to page 299 of the report—the valuation of fixed assets. The Auditor refers to a fundamental accounting error of \$36.9 million. He later goes on to refer to a total fundamental error of \$42.2 million, \$5.3 million of which relates to the Gawler and Flinders Ranges National Parks. Perhaps the minister could explain how the department got it so wrong and what he and his department have done to make sure that they get it right in future.

Ms Key: Are they up or down?

Mr HILL: It is an accounting error. I don't think they lost anything.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: We should clarify for the member for Hanson that it is an issue of wrongly depreciating some assets. In actual fact they were over-depreciated. Ultimately, we have therefore a higher value of asset than once thought. The member for Kaurna could have said that it was a positive transaction rather than a negative transaction.

The audit has recognised that there is an issue in relation to the asset base and related depreciation resulting in adjustments to the value of \$42.2 million being reflected in the 2000-01 financial statements. We need to understand—I think I commented on this last year if I recall—that about 30 000 assets are recognised. They were recognised for the first time in 1998-99. It appears from the briefing note that previous governments had not recognised them. I do not quite understand why that would be, but they were first recognised in 1998-99, as I am advised. There are 30 000 of them. They were basically undertaken to make sure that we had accurate levels of data and methodologies used to determine the useful life of assets and to ensure that they were realistic.

Under accrual accounting principles, the extent of the useful life of assets determines the rate at which the con-

sumption of an asset or the depreciation expense is calculated and charged to the operating cost of the agencies. We need to bear in mind, of course, that this charge is a non-cash expense. The independent valuers reviewed the rate at which the department had depreciated its roads, tracks and trails and found that these infrastructure assets had depreciated at a rate which was in excess of their actual decline in value. Hence the DEH operating result in the previous years had been understated due, I guess, to the unrealistic depreciation rate used. An adjustment of \$36.9 million was therefore required to correct depreciation expenses in prior years to ensure that a more accurate rate of depreciation of assets is applied in future years.

This correction has the effect of increasing the surplus from ordinary activities for the 2000-01 year which, in turn, will reinstate the true equity value, or the net asset position, of DEH. Recent amendments to the accounting standards now require that material corrections relating to the prior reporting periods are to be accounted for explicitly within the statement of financial performance as 'a fundamental error'. When the member uses that term, we should recognise that it comes out of an accounting standard rather than involving some drastic mistake in that sense.

Prior to the changes to the accounting standards effective 1 July 2000, transitional provisions under the accounting standards allowed for amendments to be made to asset values where practical problems or inaccuracies were detected after the first time recognition of the assets, with these adjustments being made direct to equity in the statement of financial position.

During the review process it was also identified that assets located in the Gawler and Flinders Ranges National Parks had not been accounted for in the initial first time recognition process of the 30 000 assets. The member would be aware, of course, that Gawler Ranges National Park was opened only in the past 12 months. The records of the department have therefore been corrected to reflect these assets with a further adjustment of some \$5.3 million. Hence the amount of adjustments resulting from the review totalled some \$42.2 million (around 9 per cent) of the \$459.5 million asset base.

Given the non-cash base nature of these transactions, there is no detrimental impact on the department's operating budget; rather, these adjustments now ensure that consumption of assets, as reflected by the annual depreciation expense and written down asset values, are more appropriately taken into account in future financial statements.

Mr HILL: I refer now to the section on accounting for crown land. I guess the audit is reasonably critical of the department for the way in which that is accounted for. It makes the point that audit follow-up in 2000-01 revealed that there has been minimal progress with recording and valuation of crown lands. The report states:

Consequently [similar to previous years], the Independent Audit Report to the financial statements has again been qualified with respect to the completeness and valuation of property, plant and equipment included in the schedule of administered items.

I know there is a huge issue with the appropriate accounting for crown land. I assume that is to do with the diverse nature of the land that is held by the department and problems with valuing it, but can the minister let us know what he has in train to ensure that audit is satisfied in the future?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: This is an interesting issue for government in that the Auditor-General has issued a qualification with respect to the property, plant and equipment

component of the schedule of administered items. 'Administered items' means that it is essentially an item involving the agency on behalf of government. It may actually impact on some other agencies. From that point of view, it becomes a far more complex problem than if it rests singly within one agency.

Again, we are dealing with something like 30 000 individual assets, or 27 000 titled land references and some 2 800 parcels of reserved land. So there are about 30 000 parcels of land across government that we are dealing with in this particular issue. As I understand it—and the officers will correct me if I am wrong—one of the central issues is the underlying database, the LOTS system, which is essentially managed by DAIS. The accuracy of some information and the matter of keeping it up to date—and this is not a criticism of DAIS but, rather, an observation—creates some issues for us as the administering agency. We have had significant discussions with DAIS, as I understand it, about the issue.

Our officers have now gone to the Under Treasurer to raise the issue as a whole-of-government issue that needs working through. We are hopeful that over the next 12 months we may be able to progress the matter further. Ultimately, that will be a matter for the government to decide once the agency receives further advice. Of course, the necessary verification of valuation of these tenures is a huge labour intensive program. Members can imagine trying to go back to re-establish 30 000 titles of land and getting them appropriately valued. It will require not only significant financial resources but also significant time to do that if that is the decision that is made.

In addition, ongoing procedural framework needs to be developed and implemented to ensure that future transactions actually adhere to the new framework. In order to clarify it further, as I understand it from the briefing this morning, they are not certain that some titles have not been duplicated, so it may be accounted for in two different agencies. As governments restructure the public sector and as ministers change, where the land actually rests sometimes gets confused, and with 30 000 titles members can probably understand that; so, it may be duplicated. Some valuations may not have been updated for some time and, therefore, some lease values that then rest off that initial valuation may not reflect the current value. It becomes extraordinarily complex in that sense to resolve overnight.

I am pleased the agency has had discussions with DAIS and that they are now taking it up as a whole-of-government matter. I think this issue will be a matter of discussion for some time between ministers and opposition spokespersons, simply because of the sheer number of titles that need to be dealt with; and there are policy questions for government about how defined we need to be with the 30 000 titles compared with the private sector where there are ongoing commercial transactions. Certainly, there are transactions but, because it is always within government, it can be treated slightly differently. That is a question for government to consider and it is probably one of the questions that government will face over the next 12 months. How much do we amend what is already there?

Mr HILL: I appreciate the difficulty that the minister has described. It may be that a proper cost benefit analysis suggests that we do not worry about it because, if we are spending all the resources of the Department for Environment, Heritage and Aboriginal Affairs chasing up who owns the land and how much there is, we cannot spend money on national parks; so, there is not much point. Clearly, there is

a criticism by the audit of what is happening with the land services group section. The audit states:

It has been almost four years since the government directed that LSG be transferred from DEH to DAIS and agreement with respect to important aspects of the relationships and responsibilities has still not been achieved.

I find it rather extraordinary that after four years this section of government is still in an unclear state.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Minister for Environment and Heritage): I move:

That the sitting of the House be extended beyond 6 p.m.

Motion carried.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: In response to the member's question in relation to the land services group, as part of the October 1997 restructure of the government agencies, the functions and the budgets of the assets, liabilities and data of the land services group were transferred from the former Department of Environment and Natural Resources to the Department of Administrative and Information Services. Notwithstanding the functional transfer, the portfolios have continued to operate in much the same manner including the sharing of IT infrastructure, networks, data and business support for accounts and receivable functions within DEH.

Shared IT assets have been identified as DEH assets; thus, accounting risks associated with running a shared function model have been eliminated. On a similar basis, accounts receivable functions are entirely managed by DEH and all credit risks associated with this activity is carried by DEH. Given the ongoing interrelationships, the separation of the Land Services Group necessitated the documentation of the final negotiated transfer position, respective roles and responsibilities and the development of formal service level agreements relating to the systems maintenance, data usage, information services, accounts receivable and the revenue collection activities.

As a result of the lengthy delay in finalising all the required agreements, the chief executives of both portfolios have intervened in the matter to expedite the completion of the three outstanding agreements. The deputy chief executive officers and other senior management staff external to the day-to-day functional operations from both portfolios have also met on several occasions to negotiate the principles within the agreements in order to truncate the agreement development process. We expect the completion of all agreements by 31 October 2001.

Mr HILL: My final question relates to waste depot levies (page 300). The report states:

Audit reviews over the past few years have commented that a structured mechanism was not in place to ensure that the information accompanying waste levy receipts is reflective of the underlying waste disposal at licensed waste depots.

That is a fairly serious charge, I guess. Clearly, DEH has done some things. Will the minister tell the committee what he has done and whether or not it is likely that audit will still have this complaint next time?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: We hope that what we have done will certainly not attract the same comments from audit in future as in previous years. The EPA staff have now informed all waste depot licensees of their responsibilities regarding the payment of the waste levy and are now enforcing compliance with these responsibilities through the regulations to the Environment Protection Act. Two officers engaged in early 2001 have now completed their initial task, which comprised

becoming familiar with the legislation and ensuring that all licensees affected were aware of their obligations.

They have now moved on to the implementation of the regulations through auditing the returns and ensuring that volumetric surveys are undertaken. Initial volumetric surveys required have been completed—or are in progress—for all depots. Volumetric surveys are required to be completed by the 11 waste depots. Eight depots have completed these surveys and three have the process under way and expect to have these initial surveys completed by the end of October 2001. Eleven weighbridges licensed pursuant to the Trade Measurement Act have been approved by the Environment Protection Authority.

Two exemptions have been issued which allow licensees to use other approved methods of estimating waste received. Also, new computer software is being written that will assist with the administration of the levy received and reconciling the monthly waste returns with weighbridge documentation and volumetric surveys. This software will be in three parts: data receipt and entry (which will obviate the present system of multiple entry of data); reports in tabular format; and reports in graphical format. This software will enable the ease of interpretation of data and the establishment of trends and identification of any errors or unusual events.

Mr WRIGHT: If time permits, I have a couple of questions about recreation and sport. I have been advised that Mr Simon Forest is currently on long service leave. I understand that he was requested to take long service leave and I am not sure when he is due to return to work. I would be interested in hearing from the minister as to whether Mr Forest was requested to take long service leave and, if that was the case, what were the reasons; what is the future of Mr Forest and, if he leaves, who will replace him as CEO of the Office of Recreation and Sport?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I seek clarification from the chair as to whether that is an appropriate question given that we are examining last year's accounts.

The CHAIRMAN: I am not sure whether the member for Lee was in the chamber at the time, but I did indicate very clearly, as I did yesterday from the chair, that we are dealing with matters relating to the Auditor-General's Report with respect to past expenditure and not other matters dealing with current or future expenditure.

Mr WRIGHT: Are salaries not past expenditure?

The CHAIRMAN: If the honourable member can refer to a point in the Auditor-General's Report from which he is seeking clarification, yes, they would be; otherwise they are not.

Mr WRIGHT: Page 305 of volume 1 of the report refers to salaries and wages and other employee-related expenses.

The CHAIRMAN: As long as the matter that the member for Lee wishes to raise is historical, that is okay.

Mr Clarke: Certainly, long service leave has to be. One must work 10 years before one is eligible for long service leave.

Mr WRIGHT: I have asked my question.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I will seek clarification from the CEO and come back to the honourable member.

Mr WRIGHT: Will the minister guarantee that Mr Simon Forest will return as CEO of the Department of Recreation and Sport?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: We have four minutes left, as I understand it. The member for Lee can go on a treasure hunt, if he wishes.

Mr WRIGHT: 'Yes' or 'no'?

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I cannot guarantee that any of my officers will be there tomorrow. They live their individual lives and they may choose to do whatever they wish with their lives. How can any minister guarantee that anyone will be there? I could get knocked over by a bus tomorrow; I cannot guarantee that I will be here. That question simply cannot be answered. We have four minutes left, if the honourable member wishes to go on a treasure hunt, I can talk about all sorts of treasures for four minutes. I am saying to the honourable member that I do not think that this is the place for these sorts of questions.

To my memory, the Auditor-General does not raise any issues in relation to that matter. If one takes the standard that the honourable member is applying to the questioning, one can essentially ask a question about any public officer, and I do not know whether that is necessarily the role of this committee. Any public officer is on the payroll. It is up to the honourable member that I do not know whether this is the appropriate forum for the opposition to raise that sort of question if it is not raised in the Auditor-General's Report.

If the Auditor-General had raised an issue about a particular officer's performance or decision, I think that might be fair game. From memory, I think I have 1 300 full-time equivalent officers. They are all on the payroll. It is up to the honourable member. He must set his own standard. I just think that he needs to think through the strategy about where he is heading with this; that is all.

Mr WRIGHT: The minister can nip this in the bud very quickly. In all probability this will be the final question. I will ask a two-part question, which is pretty simple and straightforward.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! Does the question that the member for Lee is going to ask relate specifically to the Auditor-General's Report?

Mr WRIGHT: Indeed, it relates to the same section to which I have already referred.

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly, the last question that was asked by the member for Lee did not relate to the type of questioning which was currently before the committee and which related to the Auditor-General's Report. However, the member for Lee can ask his question.

Mr WRIGHT: Did the minister request Mr Forest to take long service leave and does the minister have full confidence in Mr Forest?

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The chair will not allow that question.

Mr Clarke: The first part you have got to allow.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The chair will not allow that question to be asked. If the member for Lee has another question he has time to ask it.

Mr WRIGHT: Sir, will you not even allow the first part of the question, even though it is historical?

The CHAIRMAN: No, because it does not relate specifically to issues raised in the Auditor-General's Report.

Mr CLARKE: I rise on a point of order, sir.

Mr Wright: That is a nonsense; it is an absolute nonsense.

Mr CLARKE: When you are dealing with issues of long service leave they are an accrued liability, which is subject to the Auditor-General's purview. Long service leave is not eligible to be taken until you have worked 10 years.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! In this consideration of the Auditor-General's Report we are not talking about financial matters generally: we are talking about issues that have been

raised in the Auditor-General's Report specifically. The time for the examination of the Minister for Environment and Heritage and Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing has concluded.

[Sitting suspended from 6.10 to 7.30 p.m.]

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to the state of the committee.

A quorum having been formed:

The CHAIRMAN: I declare open the examination of the line for the Minister for Water Resources. The member for Kaurna.

Mr HILL: I refer to page 1132, volume III, with reference to 'Significant features'. Under the heading 'Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water Management Board', I note that the operating result was a surplus of \$598 000 and in the previous year there was a deficit of \$672 000. That seems to indicate to me that something like \$1.3 million was unspent. Will the minister explain why that sum of money was unspent in that year?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Commitments totalling \$1 552 000 were carried forward for projects, including watercourse management, pollution prevention grants to councils, irrigation best practice, and best practice in pesticide use.

Mr HILL: The word I used was 'why', not 'what'.

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I believe that in a previous life the shadow minister was a political adviser to the Minister for Education, so he would know that money is committed in the budget for projects, which very rarely are not started but often are not completed. For example, in relation to my employment portfolio, the money committed for trainees has to be budgeted and quite a large sum is carried over because it is actually a salary commitment into the next year. In this case, it is just projects which were under way, either not completed but budgeted for, or which had been slower in their completion. As the shadow minister knows, school construction is a classic example. It is budgeted for, and half the time construction commences about a year after you thought it would.

Mr HILL: I hope that is the case. I refer to the pie diagram on page 1133. I note that 48 per cent of the year's expenditure was on community education and involvement. Does the minister agree that that seems a rather large proportion of the annual budget for the catchment board, and will he explain how that money was expended?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Yes, I do agree that 48 per cent seems to be a large percentage. However, all the budgets of the catchment water management boards go to and are approved by the Economic and Finance Committee. However, in the committee's examination of the previous catchment water management boards budget, I noted that the committee had some concern about expenditure that was classified as community education and involvement. We, in fact, have made an effort to have a much more coordinated approach and the shadow minister will hear about that shortly; when he does hear about it I am quite sure he will accuse me of pork barrelling. So, when he does that I will remind him that he has pointed out the need for a better approach to education when it comes to catchment water management boards.

Mr HILL: If the minister is suggesting that he will combine at least part of these education budgets and run a television program to promote better use of water, I would

not necessarily criticise him. However, if he includes himself in those advertisements, I would accuse him of pork barreling. I refer to the pie diagrams on pages 1142 and 1143 (and I must say that pie diagrams are useful in examining at a glance what money is spent on). I daresay that, although they do not all use pie diagrams, all the other catchment board accounts use different headings to describe what happens. I think it would be much more useful to me, and probably to the general community, if common headings were adopted by the catchment boards in their reporting so that one board could be compared to another. Has the minister considered this, and will he take it up with the boards to ensure that in future reporting that occurs?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: When I looked at this matter, I noted that some had used pie diagrams, and I agree with the member that they are a very useful analysis tool, because they give you at a glance a share of expenditure. Some of the boards did not, and I thought that was a pity because I found the figures much easier to glance at and absorb in the pie diagram form. As the member has said, some have different headings. I have raised this matter with my officers, and we are looking to address it. I agree with the shadow minister that every board should report not necessarily in exactly the same format but in very similar formats. We could provide an exemplar or something like that saying that we prefer a pie diagram that is divided into these categories. It would be helpful to the board, and I think we would have absolute cooperation. It is just a matter of doing it. The answer is that I was aware of the criticisms that the honourable member is making, and we are putting in train a mechanism that we hope will make it better next year.

Mr HILL: It is not on criticism but, rather, an observation because obviously the boards go about their business in their own ways and have developed their own protocols, but over time it would be sensible if we could work out some consistent ways of reporting so that we can say, 'That board spends 20 per cent on administration and that one spends 10 per cent. Why is that so?'

I refer to the Patawalonga catchment board on page 1151. I note that the cash assets of that board have been consistently over \$1.5 million over the past five years and are currently about \$2.2 million. That seems to be a rather large cash reserve (if that is what it is) or cash asset for a board which has a budget of only a couple of million dollars each year. How can a body exist with cash reserves of equivalent to its annual collection?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: That is a matter on which I asked for an explanation. I am told in answer: expenditure commitments to the value of \$1.170 million on approved projects to be carried forward. The projects include wetlands, trash racks, rural riparian works, flood studies and grants for pollution prevention and development. This is an important part: the balance of \$1.029 million is, in the main, to be directed towards the catchment management board's commitments to the Morphettville wetlands project.

There are two things. First, for a major project such as Morphettville wetlands, the catchment management board's commitment, added to the state government's commitment and the relatively small commitment from the commonwealth, is \$2.3 million. Obviously, the cash is best managed by carrying some forward from one year into another year. I understand that, and I am sure the shadow minister understands that. Notwithstanding that, I have said to the boards that I do not want boards accumulating surpluses for the sake of being in a secure financial position. As far as I am

concerned, all our electors—and the member for Taylor has come in and this is an area that interests her—pay catchment management board levies. They pay them for expenditure on works. The board budgets. No board should budget for a surplus. They should budget for the works that are needed and for no more money. So long as they can explain the carryover, I do not mind but, as I said, as a matter of principle carryovers for their own sake are not part of the budget. They should reduce the levy if they do not need the money.

Mr HILL: In the case of this board, it has been consistently between \$1.5 million and \$2.2 million over five years. It is almost holding in reserve the entire budget that it accumulates. It would be like the minister's department having \$60 million in cash reserves. It just does not make any sense at all. I have made my point and the minister has addressed it.

I turn now to the issue of salaries. I note that the executive officers or CEOs of the catchment boards uniformly are paid over \$100 000—I think between \$110 000 and \$120 000 each year. They have budgets of \$2 million to \$4 million. They have a staff of maybe six to eight people. They run a board. I understand they are complicated and difficult jobs, but the salary seems disproportionate to the range of responsibilities they have. I compare it with a secondary school principal with a staff of 100 and 1 000 students who is paid \$70 000 or \$80 000 a year. I also compare it with the minister's department which has, as I note from the records, a budget of \$60-odd million and only five staff paid over \$100 000. Here we have eight catchment boards, collectively less than \$20 million, who have eight staff on \$100 000-plus. How do you justify that, minister?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I do not. The shadow minister raises an interesting question. To the best of my knowledge and belief, I do not set the salaries. I think they are set by the board. I am not quite sure how they are set. I will find out and I will give the member an answer in detail. The shadow minister may be able to work out relativities about who is worth what in this world: I cannot. I find people doing the most bizarre jobs in all corners of government, in private enterprise and in sport. Wherever you go you find someone earning a salary which you might consider a large salary and think, 'Why does person A get \$80 000 and person B get \$120 000?'

I have no justification for it except to say that I do not set the salaries. I will find out how they are set. The people about whom we are speaking, in the main, are people of exceptional quality. Kathryn Bellette, for whom I have the greatest regard, has recently resigned as CEO of the Onkaparinga board and gone on to an even better job, so she is probably earning more money than she was there. The lady who has taken over from her, Dr Jill Kirby (I am sure the shadow minister will meet her), is absolutely exceptional.

Generally speaking, the boards are led at executive officer level or people of that sort of quality. It may well be that the reason for setting salaries at that level is the calibre of person that needs to be attracted to the position. Certainly, the people whom we have got are of a calibre to be worth that sort of money. How that money is set and why, relative to someone else, they are getting it, is a matter that I cannot answer. I will attempt to further clarify the situation for the shadow minister. I would also say that were he and his party to be successful in the next government I would be interested to see how he then might handle this matter. Having established a benchmark and having inherited the benchmark, it is not easy to say, 'Well, you are all earning \$120 000; I think principals

in secondary schools earn only \$80 000 so perhaps you should take \$90 000.' It is not the sort of thing in an industrial workplace that people generally accept with great alacrity.

Mr HILL: It seems to me that the minister just noticed this matter for the first time, and I must say that I noticed it for the first time when I was reading through it. I was struck by the sum. I have to say, too, that the executive officers or CEOs of the boards I have met—and I have met many of them—are terrific people and very skilled, but whether their skill level justifies the salary they are getting I think has a question mark over it. I know the officers of the minister's department in senior positions are highly skilled as well. They seem to me to have quite onerous responsibilities.

The Hon. M.K. Brindal interjecting:

Mr HILL: That is true. All those things are true but, given the relatively small budget, it may be the kind of skill base or skill mix you require to run those boards is such that you have to pay relatively high salaries.

I now refer to another issue to do with payments, that is, to the members of the boards. These are quite comfortably paid boards compared to a lot of government boards. Generally, members get between zero and \$10 000; I suppose the average pay is around \$5 000. The presiding officer gets \$10 000 to \$20 000. I do note on page 1165, which relates to the Murray River catchment board, one member of the board, who is obviously a departmental employee, gets nothing; six get between \$1 000 and \$9 999; one gets between \$10 000 and \$19 999; and one gets between \$20 000 and \$29 999. Why do we have a couple of boards where a much greater benefit is given to at least one of the members?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: All the salaries paid to members of boards and committees and, incidentally, to presiding officers of boards and committees are at the determination of the Commissioner for Public Employment. Generally, we submit to the Commissioner a job descriptor, if you like, both for the board member and for the presiding member, which gives some notion of the size of the board and the sorts of duties that will be involved. The Commissioner then assesses the remuneration, both for board members and for presiding members.

I presume that a couple of them are larger than others because one of our boards, the River Murray Catchment Management Board, is a much bigger board with quite a large financial responsibility by comparison with other boards. I would expect that the Commissioner would assess the chair of that position as having a need for a higher remuneration than the other boards.

Mr Hill: Is there a deputy chair?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Yes, I think there is, but I will check that. If that is wrong, I will come back to the honourable member. With respect to the last question, I want to make two comments: first, the officer with me has pointed out that the \$120 000 is in fact a package. I am not disagreeing with the previous answer: I am just saying that it is a package. I do not know what a car is worth now, but I am told \$25 000 to \$30 000, and superannuation is in there as well. In response to the member for Taylor's interjection, I am absolutely sure of the loyalty of my officers to me as minister. I am equally sure that if the shadow minister is ever the minister he will have their total loyalty, too.

If you can stand up in opposition until you win government and say to me that you have a leak from my department, I will be very disappointed because I do not think you will get one.

Mr HILL: I am glad to hear that the water resources department does not leak; it sounds quite poetic. With respect to the Murray River, the minister said that there are additional funds because it is that much more difficult. I point out to the minister that, in part, the audit findings and comments on page 1159 state:

Audit observed that there was room for improvement in the level of the internal controls, particularly in relation to documenting policies and procedures and independent checking over certain activities.

I know that the minister has replaced the board. Was that because of that audit comment? Will the new board be able to address these concerns, and is the minister confident that this area of omission will be corrected?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I point out to the shadow minister that on page 1159 of the audit findings and comments the response from the board satisfactorily addressed all the matters raised. The Auditor-General is thorough; the honourable member knows how thorough he is. What can typically happen is that the auditor will say, 'I do not like this procedure. I think that procedure is a bit slack.' He invites comment and the comment is often, 'We fixed it up. You have told us what to do, you have told us the way you want it done and we have fixed it up.'

I think that in this case that is what has happened and, if it is not fixed up to the satisfaction of the Auditor-General, a qualified audit could be conducted. The fact that the Auditor-General does not qualify the audit suggests that the problems he raised are in fact fixed. With respect to the new board, though, I am sure that the shadow minister will be pleased to know that I had a meeting with the presiding officer, Mr Parish, roughly a week ago. Mr Parish is delighted with the board. He says that he believes that it will be an exceptionally good board and that it will work very well.

I have included a young person on the board, as I think the shadow minister knows. I asked specifically about her because I put her there to give her a bit of experience so that she might learn what being on a board and committee was all about. Mr Parish said that she will be a very good member. She is already asking questions and, because she is not prejudiced (as some of us who approach middle age are) and has no fixed views, Mr Parish said that she is asking really good questions. She is a valuable member of the board. Geoff Parish said to me that he thought this would be a very good, very workable board and that it would deliver for the river. I was pleased with that. I therefore believe that, while these things are fixed up, the new board will deliver in an even better way.

Mr HILL: I refer to page 1184 as it relates to the department. I found it interesting that under 'Audit Findings and Comments' in relation to the commentary on general financial controls, audit comments on the fact that in the past financial systems of both DEH and PIRSA were used. I think that, to some extent, they are still being used. No, I am told they have been transferred. The department now has its financial services run through DAIS. Is that a satisfactory system? Would it have been better to do it through DEH or PIRSA? Why was DAIS chosen?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: I will tell the honourable member because he might be in charge of the budget one day and he needs to know this. When we set up the department rather than, if you like, doing it the old way, which is get yourself a personnel section and the payroll—

Mr Hill interjecting:

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Yes. We tendered it. In fact, three departments tendered, and that in itself is wonderful. I cannot divulge figures but one should see the difference in tender. You ask three departments to do identical work and you would have thought you had asked for the difference between a Rolls Royce, a Mercedes and a Sigma. There was a profound difference in the quotes. We believe that our department got a very good deal from DAIS. In fact, we benchmark against ourselves in that we ask the question: if we did it ourselves, how much would it cost us? DAIS, by bulking its work with ours, is saving money, I presume, because there is a bigger through-put.

It is saving us, it is not unfair to say, between \$500 000 and \$1 million conservatively. That was the cheaper quote; so, we are quite pleased with the arrangement. I think that it is a limited tenure. It is to be reviewed every two years which means that, in two years, you can play one against the other and get the cheapest price again, and that benefits the department.

Mr HILL: I thank the minister for recognising that I will be in a position to do that. I refer now to page 1185 and the issue of fixed assets. There is some criticism of the way that fixed assets have been assessed. Will the minister identify how that issue has been addressed and whether he is confident that, by the next audit, that will be under control?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: In answer to my last question, I was using 'you' in its general and plural form. I could have used the royal 'we' but, being a humble person, I did not. In terms of audit recognition, the Auditor-General's qualifications related to a range of assets created under acts which are the responsibility of the Minister for Water Resources. These assets were not transferred to the Department of Water Resources when it was established in February 2000. In fact, being a relatively new department, we are recently informed by the Crown Solicitor that there are other assets for which the Minister for Water Resources must by law be responsible and which it had not been clear previously were the responsibility of the Minister for Water Resources and could be the responsibility of none other.

There are things that we thought, perhaps, could be controlled by DAIS, which in our crown law opinion tells us must be the prime responsibility of the Minister for Water Resources, even if the minister then delegates an agency the powers to operate and maintain, and those sorts of things. However, the responsibility rests with the Minister for Water Resources. The assets about which we are talking include all the structures on the Murray River, including the locks, the weirs, the evaporation basins, the drainage channels—everything that is a work; and metropolitan drainage assets, including the linear park.

Most of these assets are currently managed by SA Water. The management of assets is, of course, a specialised function requiring a high level of expertise and it is not widely available within government. The potential takeover of responsibility for the assets has raised the issue of whether such a role is appropriate for the Department of Water Resources without creating a whole new arm that we do not currently have.

We are an unusual department that does not want to grow itself like topsy and just keeping adding to the staff. The department has been established primarily as a policy oriented agency focusing on how to best achieve the outcomes in water resources management rather than having expertise in the management of assets. There is a need to resolve whether the interests of government are best served

by the Department of Water Resources taking over the responsibility or whether the services would be better provided by others on behalf of the minister and the agency.

The issue is being discussed with the interested parties, that is, Premier and Cabinet, and SA Water. The Auditor-General has been kept informed of the discussions, and he has acknowledged this in his report. While the issue of responsibility is being discussed, preliminary investigations have commenced to identify some of the assets that may be involved in a transfer. In particular, there has been some work to identify the drainage assets in the lower Murray swamps which will be part of the major rehabilitation project and the metropolitan drainage assets. The shadow minister might note that one of the salinity programs announced today was in connection with the lower Murray swamps.

These investigations have revealed that an extensive due diligence process will be required in each of the areas. The information immediately available suggests that there are significant gaps, particularly in identifying legal tenure over property. Accordingly, any transfer of assets is likely to involve a lengthy investigation. I conclude by saying (and the shadow minister might not be totally surprised at this) that it is almost frightening when you ask who owns something—especially something that might have existed for 100 years—and you are often not quite sure of the answer. So, you send officers scurrying and, after weeks of investigation, they come back and say, 'We weren't aware, but A owns the land, B owns the cement structure and C owns the door on the thing.' It can often be a frightening mixture. The good thing is that we are getting these things sorted out. They have plodded along for 100 years, but if anything went wrong it is a moot point about who is responsible.

Ms WHITE: With regard to revenue, fees and charges (pages 1187 and 1193), in how many instances in the Northern Adelaide Plains area is the minister prosecuting for recovery of fees?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: Within a day or two I expect to make a statement to the House on a matter specifically related to the member for Taylor's question. I would therefore rather not share that information at present, because it involves some legal process. I know that at least one gentleman from the Northern Adelaide Plains tampered with the headwords on his meter. He was involved in a legal process, but he failed to appear in the court. I believe that a warrant has been issued on that gentleman. That is as much as I know. I do not know whether the warrant has been served or what the result of that will be. So, I know of one gentleman who has tampered to his meter and who is subject to prosecution.

Ms WHITE: Is there not more than one?

The Hon. M.K. BRINDAL: To my knowledge, no. I will relate a case to the member for Taylor in a few days. I have just revealed that there is a second case, but to the best of my knowledge nobody else has been prosecuted. If that is wrong, I will let the honourable member know. I do not ask for monthly, bimonthly or trimonthly information as to who we are getting and how much they owe. As far as I know there are no live prosecutions except the two that I have indicated.

The CHAIRMAN: Order! The time for the consideration of the lines dealing with the Minister for Water Resources has concluded. The Minister for Government Enterprises and Minister for Information Economy is now under consideration.

Mrs GERAGHTY: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to the state of the committee.

A quorum having been formed:

Ms WHITE: With regard to targeted separation packages, will the minister detail which jobs went?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Does the honourable member have any specific area in mind? I am happy to provide detail.

Ms WHITE: Across the minister's departments.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I am not quite sure where the Auditor-General raises that issue in relation to my departments. However, I am happy to look through the report and provide the relevant answer if there are issues. If there are no issues there, I am happy to speak with the honourable member and determine later whether it is appropriate.

Mr WRIGHT: I refer to volume 1 (page 117), which deals with the South Australian Totalizator Agency Board. I know that, given the developments with regard to the sale of the TAB, the changeover will occur next year. What is the remuneration package of former CEO, who I think was Mr Geoff Pitt for the financial year 2000-01?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The totalisator board notes to and forming part of the financial statements are provided. I refer the member to Volume 1, Part B, page 130, paragraph 19 which is headed 'Executive's Remuneration' and which states:

Total remuneration package received, or due and receivable. . . The number of Executive Officers whose remuneration package from the economic entity falls in the following bands:

The highest of those bands is \$280 000 to \$289 999, with one executive. I am confident that is Mr Pitt. If the member wishes me to get more specific detail, I am happy to do it, but that is the band into which his remuneration fell.

Mr WRIGHT: I was also presuming that that was to be the case. I am happy with that. The minister may be able to answer this question directly or he may need to get some advice. Was any part of Mr Pitt's remuneration based on the turnover of the TAB?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I will have to get the final detail for that, but I do not believe that it was. The reason why I do not believe it was is that, as the member for Lee knows, the turnover for the TAB has gone up dramatically in the last two to three years, whereas the profit has not. As the minister responsible, I was concerned at one stage to ensure that there was not a push to increase turnover so that people's remuneration would increase whilst, at the same time, not having due course—and looking at costs within the TAB—so in fact the profit was not of concern to them in their final remuneration package. I will need to come back with the formal result, but it is my clear understanding that I was relieved of that anxiety some time ago and I am happy to report back later.

Mr WRIGHT: I am delighted to hear the tenor of the minister's answer, because I support that to the letter. I am happy to await that further information, but I am pleased to hear that and I agree with the sentiments exactly, because the minister and I both know that, if that was the case—and it does not sound as though it was, which is good—it is a recipe for disaster—

The Hon. M.H. Armitage: That was my understanding.

Mr WRIGHT: Yes, I understand. The minister will come back to me with the additional detail. As I understand it, Mr Pitt's role as CEO has finished, even though the Queensland TAB is not taking over until (I think) 21 July 2002. Beyond what the minister has already drawn to my attention in regard to his band, is there any detail on his final payout figure?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Firstly, let me correct what I believe is a misunderstanding. I think the member said June 2002—

Mr Wright interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: For what it is worth, I believe the member said 'June', but it is January and it may even be early January rather than later. The member for Lee is probably aware that the only reason for the time delay between signing the contract and settlement was to ensure that the computer systems talk to each other, and that was thought to be somewhere around a six months' time frame. I am happy to get back with some detail. I do not have it immediately to hand. I am aware it is a very large sum of money because of the band that Mr Pitt was in. However, I am able to tell the member for Lee that the former chief executive officer of the South Australian TAB got exactly what was provided for in his contract, not one cent more. It is a lot of money, but it is directly in relation to what his contract and payout clauses indicated.

Mr CONLON: I refer to Volume 1, page 144. It seems to me unusual for a government authority system of corporate ownership (which results through a complicated corporate chain), the ownership eventually of a company in Indonesia which operates, as I understand it, under Indonesian law and operates by audit of a registered auditor in Indonesia. First, can the minister tell me whether there is any precedent for this sort of corporate ownership of a state government authority of corporations overseas to be audited by overseas auditors?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The substance of the question is whether there are any other such arrangements—

Mr Conlon: Precedent.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Precedent, that is what I mean. I will have to check whole of government and get back to the member for Elder, but what I am able to say is that the reason that these subsidiaries are being audited by an Indonesian audit arrangement is that the Auditor-General in South Australia was not prepared to do them, but this arrangement has his sign off. This has been arranged with the Auditor-General's agreement.

Mr CONLON: The minister has explained to me why it is audited there; that is, the Auditor-General does not particularly want to do it and he was prepared to sign off. Can the minister explain why he has a chain of corporate ownership which to me looks similar to something you would see in the private sector which would normally be about avoiding liability to parent companies? What was the reasoning behind creating this, I have to say, unique system of ownership of companies for a state government authority?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I have been informed that it is an Indonesian requirement that the company would have two owners and, accordingly, the two-owner company has been formed, merely so that the arrangements could comply with the Indonesian law, if we were going down this path, which we obviously were. It is also factual that the opportunity to do similar sorts of things using the expertise within SA Water is a possibility, and it was felt that there may be opportunities later. As the member for Elder knows, we have always believed that private sector involvement in these sorts of ventures is a possibility, so there would be the possibility of selling some of the companies. The prime answer to the question is that it has been solely to comply with Indonesian legislation.

Mr CONLON: I note in this regard that thankfully, finally, the bizarre West Java venture has been fundamentally

divested from the state government and handed over to the private sector. Can I have the minister's assurance that we will not see this corporate structure being something into which further taxpayer funds are poured into speculative ventures?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: May I say, coming from a former government that invested the South Australian taxpayers' money in scrimber—what a great success that was—coming from an opposition that invested large licks of the taxpayers' money in insurance companies in the Bermuda Triangle; coming from an opposition that invested large amounts of the taxpayers' money that could have been spent on health, education, police and so on, but instead of that invested in South African goat farms at Gawler; and coming from such a party which destroyed the economy of South Australia, that question takes the cake.

I return to the question of speculative investment on the theme that I regard the question as almost a joke. It is a fact that, just as the government wanted from its West Java exercise, there are now South Australian companies that will be involved in providing the services, utilising our government-to-government relationships. What we now have also is the great opportunity for the government-to-government relationships to be active in a regulatory sense, and we also have an opportunity for income to flow to South Australia on a fee-for-service basis. That company, which has been set up in Indonesia, will remain for those purposes. It is, let me say, a matter of some great hide that the opposition would talk about speculative investments.

Mr CONLON: I will follow up this point, but the first thing I will say is that I was not around at the time. The minister has demonstrated that he is entirely like the Bourbons of France: he has forgotten nothing but learnt nothing. Before I move on from this point, I would like to bring the minister back to his responsibility rather than his excuses. Will the minister concede that over \$7 million has been spent in West Java, and will he please tell us when we will get a return on that money or even when we will get the \$7 million back?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The question continues the fallacy which began—

Mr Conlon: When are we going to get that back?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: No, let us address the question. The question continues the fallacy or the fantasy which started in question time following the Economic and Finance Committee on a Wednesday some six or eight months ago, when the member for Elder bounced in here and said, '\$10 million wasted.' At least he has the good grace today to come back to \$7 million spent in West Java. However, what he forgets is that there has been an answer in parliament already, quite deliberately identifying that the amount of money spent in West Java is much less than that.

Mr Conlon: How much less?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I do not have the exact figure with me because it has been provided before.

Mr Conlon: You don't know.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I do not have it with me but it is many millions of dollars less than \$7 million, and I look forward to reiterating the answer which I have already given. The member for Elder may choose to look back through the estimates of this year, I believe, because I think I insisted that a question be asked so that the record could be put straight and so that this fantasy about \$10 million, \$7 million, and so on, could be put to rest.

Mr Conlon: How much is it?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: As I have indicated, the exact amount I do not know, but I am telling you it is many millions of dollars less than this continually blown-up figure. However, I do give the member for Elder credit. He is coming back from the original blown-up figure, and I give him credit for that.

Mr CONLON: I want the minister to answer the second and most embarrassing part of my question. Can he give any sort of time line as to when we will recover our money from West Java—next year, the year after or five years? When will we recover the money?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: As has been made quite clear in previous answers—but I reiterate it for the benefit of the member for Elder—McMahon Services has taken over the contract. I am informed that it is in West Java or operating with West Java at the moment. Immediately it starts operating, we get a flow of 6 per cent of revenue, so that is when the money comes back.

Mr CONLON: Assuming that there was some business plan for this whole thing, assuming that you understand what McMahons are doing, and assuming you have some idea how much money they might make, so you know what 6 per cent of it is, how long does the minister estimate it will be before we recover our funds?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I am unable to give an exact answer to that. The point at issue from the South Australian perspective is not just the return on the government funds. From the South Australian perspective, what is important in exercises such as West Java is that many South Australian water industry businesses are producing services, producing goods, writing software programs and making switches, etc., for the people who are operating in West Java. As I have indicated, there will be a flow of money when McMahon Services begins to earn their revenue stream, in addition to the job creation and payroll tax and so on that is paid externally. The expenditure in West Java—

An honourable member: No fudging now, Michael.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: No, there will be no fudging. I will answer your specific question about the expenditure in West Java. I have been informed that it is \$2.18 million.

Mr CONLON: The minister has given answers and the Economic and Finance Committee has been given answers that indicate a larger expenditure than that. I think the minister should check his briefing notes.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: No; you had better check the question. The question was: how much money has been spent in West Java? The answer is \$2.18 million.

An honourable member interjecting:

The CHAIRMAN: Order!

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: If the question had been, 'How much was spent on the Indonesian work—preparing work, looking at business cases, working through opportunities for the private sector, and so on'—but that is including money expended in Australia, paying South Australian workers going to—

Mrs Geraghty: That is pedantic.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: It is not pedantic at all—South Australian white goods operators, buying from local delicatessens and so on—the answer to the expenditure in Australian component is \$2.91 million. But that is not wasted money; in fact, I contend that none of it is. The member for Elder maintains that all this money has been wasted, but it has clearly not been. The expenditure in Australia is \$2.91 million; the expenditure in Indonesia is \$2.18 million;

the expenditure on Tanjung Priok is \$.25 million; and the total West Java expenditure to 30 June, including nearly \$3 million expended in Australia, is \$5.35 million. That is exactly the information that I provided to the estimates committee. It is a far cry from the \$10 million blowzily, carelessly and malevolently inflated by members of the opposition, and it is a long way even from the position that the member for Elder got credit from me earlier from saying \$7 million. The answer is that the total expenditure is \$5.35 million, \$2.18 million of which was expended in Indonesia.

Mr CONLON: I can only say that Martin Homer-Smith up the back is saying, 'I am not doing very well.' Have a look where you are sitting, fellow! The minister's answers simply expose what we have found all along: every time we ask you for a figure, it changes. You know full well that the money expended in Australia was expended for the purposes of the Java venture. It was not expended to supply a single service or a single good in South Australia from a government authority. In my humble opinion, it was money that was wasted on a venture that will not see a return for South Australia. Will you at last concede that we may never recover that expenditure?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The member for Elder makes some fundamental errors. For him to say blithely that money spent perhaps on training South Australians in writing business plans, or on ensuring that computer plans for distribution of water, which is completely transferable, of \$2.91 million expended in South Australian wages (not expended in West Java) is wasted is extraordinary. As I have said, it was expended in Australia; it has built up skills and expertise in South Australian people. To me—

Mr Conlon: You could spend it on race horses in South Australia.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: You have mentioned race horses. We did not spend it on \$80 million worth of stud horses, which is what your lot spent the money on in the State Bank. Not only did you buy goats but you had a stud farm in horses, for God's sake. What a fantastic investment! When your business is going broke, what a wonderful investment. You beaut! We could have spent this money on race horses. We spent this money on gaining expertise for South Australians, which is completely transferable. Your lot wasted it, and you say that we might have put it on the race horses. What a joke!

Mr CONLON: I do not want to engage the minister in this further, because it seems to be causing him to go towards the sort of hysterical Joan Hall-type behaviour at the moment. I want to ask a final question about Schlumberger. The excuse or explanation that you offered for what the Auditor-General identified as the demonstrated failure of Schlumberger to meet its contractual obligations was that the Auditor-General did not have the right information. Does he have the right information now? Are you confident that if we asked him for a report he would change his opinion now?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I do not believe that if we asked for his opinion now he would change his report, as we speak. However, the facts are these: Schlumberger provided appropriate reports, in their mind, on two occasions that did not meet the requirements from SA Water's perspective of the provision of the relevant information. Earlier this year, Arthur Andersen combined with Schlumberger to present a report that would provide the relevant information. That was presented—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: All I can say is that Schlumberger maintains that when the report is independently verified it will certainly contain enough information for the Auditor-General then to alter his opinion. At the moment, the report is being reviewed independently after which stage it will come to SA Water. I understand that will happen in a month or so, at which stage, given that it will be independently verified, SA Water will make a judgment and bring to me a recommendation according to that judgment.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: That is an extraordinary comment given that I have indicated that this report will be independently verified. Arthur Andersen is independently verifying this report.

The CHAIRMAN: The time has concluded; there will be no further questions.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The point that I make is that if this report, which is independently verified, identifies that Schlumberger has met its requirements, that will obviously be fine from the government's perspective. If it is not, the member for Elder need have no worry, because I remind him that on this occasion last year the opposition questioned me about another contract where, in fact, I had put the contractor into default. So, I have no compunction about putting people into default if they do not produce the goods. But I have no reason to suspect at the moment that Schlumberger's report will not be fine, as independently verified.

The CHAIRMAN: The time allocated for the investigation of the lines associated with government enterprises and the Minister for Information Economy has concluded. Questions may now be asked about the lines for the Minister for Police and Correctional Services. Are there any questions of the minister?

Mr CONLON: Minister, I think a couple of years ago—it may not have been you but, rather, Iain Evans, the former minister—the formation of the Emergency Services Administration Unit was announced. As I recall, its first annual budget was about \$750 000, although I am prepared to be corrected on that. It was going to make administrative savings in emergency services. At page 519, the Auditor-General has raised some serious questions about the administration. In particular, in the second last paragraph, the report states:

... Audit considered that both the board and ESAU struggled to implement a sound internal control framework and that there was a general lack of coordination in implementing the same.

What steps has the minister taken since these findings to address the problems identified by the Auditor-General?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: When one has a transition to bring together a lot of things, one has to work through that transition. Some weaknesses were identified in the transition between ESAU and the CFS, in particular, in previous reports. The Auditor-General has acknowledged and recognised the work that has been done to address some of those issues. The report states:

In particular, Audit considered that both the board and ESAU struggled to implement a sound internal control framework and that there was a general lack of coordination in implementing the same.

Well, that is right. I acknowledge that. Price Waterhouse Coopers did look at that. They worked through that during the financial year relevant to this report. All the processes have now been completed and, at the moment, they are being implemented. There will always be a situation such as that. I report that ESAU and the CFS board are working extremely well together, but we did get Price Waterhouse Coopers to

work out due processes for the ongoing workload between the two services.

Mr CONLON: Minister, you would have to concede that it is not simply an ordinary pointing at difficulties on this occasion. The Auditor-General did offer a qualified opinion as a result of this. Would the minister assure me that the problems with controls identified here are not going to lead to a blow-out in the CFS budget for this financial year? Can he assure me the CFS budget is on track this financial year and that there will not be a substantial and material blow-out in it?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: We are actually talking about the Auditor-General's Report for the year ended 30 June 2001, so we are talking about historical reporting.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I acknowledge that there were some issues around transition. In fact, I have done that publicly everywhere. I have nothing to hide. I want to deliver a better opportunity, and that is what we have delivered. Was the question whether there were any problems with the budget of which I am aware for the CFS this year?

Mr Conlon: Yes.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: Well, my answer to that is that the CFS budget for 2001-02 is a record budget. In fact, it is very close to \$40 million. We are four months into that budget. My understanding is that the budget is in order in relation to the \$40 million record budget that it has this year. It depends on what happens in the season. Last year the CFS budget was tracking well without as much as money as it has this year, but then we had some serious fires, and that put pressure on the budget. What we have in the fund overall are some contingency funds for 'out of the ordinary' fires. Those funds are not handed over to any particular service. We are trying to accumulate a contingency fund, which I think is important. I understand it has not been there before in emergency services.

If we get a major situation, as I have said to the board, for example, another three or four Kangaroo Island type fires this year, even with a record budget, the board and I would have to look at the Emergency Services Fund to see whether we have to pull any contingency money. But, based on a normal year with an increase in its budget to a record spend, I am not aware there will be any problem with the budget at the end of the year.

Mr CONLON: The minister is saying that controls are fixed; that unless there are some extraordinary items, as he understands it to this point in time, there is no danger of a blow-out in the CFS budget, and that they are on track with the budget that has been allocated. Is that what the minister is saying?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I am saying that the CFS has a record budget of \$40 million this year, and my understanding is that, given that there are no extraordinary concerns, it will come within the \$40 million budget. I must say that is operational and capital, so total budget is about \$40 million. Given that there are no extraordinary cost factors over the fire risk season (and I hope there is not—and I am sure the shadow spokesperson hopes there is not), we do have a massive fuel—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I do not know that will be the case—not if I have anything to do with it. We now have a big fuel load facing us; there is no doubt about that. We have contingency backup but, as long as I am minister in these portfolios, I will not be handing contingency over to

any agencies because it could be that it is flooding, earthquake or any other requirement. It is important in the longer term that we build up a good contingency fund for emergency services.

Mr CONLON: I am happy with that assurance, and I warn the minister now that I rely on it. The minister would know that I have made no secret of the fact that I have concerns about the emergency services administration unit. I have said that quite openly. We consider it a new level of bureaucracy. At page 521, the Auditor-General states that expenses from ordinary activities increased by \$4.7 million, that is, 15 per cent. In itself, as part of the overall budget, that would be large. He also states:

A large component of these increases reflects the increase in employee entitlements of \$1.7 million to \$5.3 million.

Does this not indicate that a large share of extra funding into the emergency services has been soaked up by employees and the bureaucracy?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: First, I put on the record, given that my colleague has made comments about ESAU, that people love to have throw-away lines. The shadow spokesperson has picked up from a few people who—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: You probably could use that line in the future. We all could use it. The point is that ESAU has been attacked by some people.

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: No, it is not 'nearly all'. When you are a minister you have to listen to all the people as best you can and make assessments from there, not just listen to the selective few. When you are having transition—and I have to get this on the public record—and breaking new ground, about one-third of the people will embrace it; about one-third will oppose it; and the other third, generally, will sit in the middle and wait to see whether or not it is good. That is fair enough; I have no problem with that. ESAU came in with big expectations, but it was not a build-up in bureaucracy. I have had people, including the Hon. Ian Gilfillan from the Democrats in the other place, making the sort of allegation that ESAU cost \$7 million a year to run. That is just not right. The increase in the cost of running the new Emergency Services Administration Unit directly was never to be any more than approximately \$1 million. In fact, this year—now that it has been there for a few years—the budget allocation to ESAU is approximately \$500 000.

All you are doing is shifting across the costs for the salaries when you bring people, who are scattered all over the agencies, into one area and setting up departments to deliver. One has to look only at people I commend, such as Darryl Regan. I challenge anyone to go out into volunteer land and ask them whether they have not seen great improvements in terms of volunteer management support across all the agencies, including the poorer cousins, such as the SES and surf life-saving which, prior to this, lived on the smell of an oily rag.

In order to give my colleague opposite plenty of time to ask questions, I will not go into that too much more. The honourable member raised the point about the Country Fire Service, referred to at page 521, which does talk about additional money being spent on employee entitlements. A significant number of additional people have been employed in the Country Fire Service. Some of them are contract. There are 10 working through the GRN roll-out. That is important

because the fact is that the CFS personnel need as much training with the GRN as they can get. SAPOL can drive the GRN perfectly.

That is fair enough because SAPOL is working with it every day. It is different for volunteers, because you might train them and then they are not near that radio network again—particularly at this time of the year—maybe for weeks. In fact, 10 people have been allocated to provide that training but that will cease by the end of next year when the roll-out finishes. I have explained to the honourable member that the roll-out will be completed by the end of next year. There have been some other increased positions in the CFS. I am looking at that situation together with the increase in positions that has occurred indirectly through ESAU.

The indirect issues are things like the volunteer support officers and the business support officers who were requested by the volunteer sectors of the agencies themselves, particularly the CFS. In fact, the CFS volunteers are saying to me that they would like to see more volunteer support officers and more business support officers. I have told the CFS that, because there has been some growth, I want to see that those paid people are delivering for the volunteers. If they are building up more of a bureaucratic empire in the CFS, ESAU or anywhere else, I will go in hard on that because I want the best delivery to the volunteers.

I have a passion for volunteers, and they know that. I work closely with them, having been one for 25 years. If the people who are being paid in terms of these increased employee entitlements are delivering, I am happy; but if they are starting to build up a bureaucracy—and I am sure that the honourable member will support me—I will go in and say, ‘No, that is not on’, because that is not where the money should be spent. I am looking at that at the moment.

Mr CONLON: I am pleased. I must say—and I would not say it about many ministers in this House—that I do not think the minister is the greatest minister in the world but I do think he genuinely tries. I do think that he would like to see the money going operationally and not to bureaucracy. I do, however, believe that it is not the case at present and I do think that the Emergency Services Administration Unit has proved to be more about creating a bureaucracy. I say, minister, that I think you have difficulties with hostilities between people in the organisation.

I say that you have very serious difficulties with the levels of satisfaction of the service provided to the volunteers by the Emergency Services Administration Unit. I certainly have heard many complaints in that regard. The minister would recognise that it is a very large increase in employee entitlements from \$1.7 million to \$5.3 million in a volunteer service. Will the minister explain the components of that increase in employee entitlements and indicate how many will be directly assisting operations, how many of those are in administration and how many are involved in a roll-out of a radio network?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: I can tell the honourable member that, with respect to the radio network, my understanding is that 10 are on contract until the end of next year and then their employment ceases. At the moment I cannot tell the honourable member about the rest, but what I can tell him is that I have told the CFS and the Acting Chief Executive Officer of Justice that I want to see specifically what these other positions are for. In fairness to ESAU, if those positions are duplicated because one agency wants to try to keep more autonomy—which is not in the best interests of delivering the best possible dollar outcome for volun-

teers—rather than working through an integrated opportunity of delivering better risk management, better occupational health and safety, better volunteer management support, and those sorts of things, I will not wear that.

I am glad that my colleague opposite has basically shown bipartisan support tonight and indicated that he would support me if I make some tough decisions in that respect. One must also remember that there are some separations between the CFS and me as the minister. That is the act at the moment and I have no intention of changing that. I commend the CFS board for its good work but I have asked to see the business cases or the work that is being done to develop those extra employees to see whether ultimately, as minister responsible for the fund, I am satisfied that those people are placed in the right positions; and, if they are not, we will have to look at that, because we should not be duplicating or building up a bureaucracy.

We are not building up a bureaucracy with ESAU, even though some people want to run that line because it suits them. If members do not believe me, they should talk to the 5 000 SES volunteers who are absolutely committed to their work because they can see the results. Do not just go and talk to a small percentage of the CFS volunteers but get out there and talk to the 17 500 who can see the benefits right across the state.

Mr CONLON: Minister, please give me forbearance because this is not directly related to an item on the page but I have been, as I am sure the minister has been, contacted by the volunteer ambulance service in South Australia in regard to volunteers’ medals and the decision of the service not to—

The Hon. R.L. Brokenshire interjecting:

Mr CONLON: No, the country ambulance volunteers—fund the volunteers’ medals. I am disappointed in this decision but recognise that it is not ours directly to control. Is there anything we could do to remedy that situation?

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: I am glad that the honourable member has raised this matter because this is the International Year of the Volunteer. I will put on the record that my opposition colleague agrees and that this is bipartisan. I also put on the record that my opposition colleague would have to say that if one looks right around Australia at the moment—and I cannot talk internationally—one will find that this Liberal government right now—

Mr Conlon interjecting:

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHERE: —has delivered more for volunteers than any previous government in this state. I know that because at the AFAC conference in Darwin and the other volunteer conferences in New Zealand, and more recently in Canberra, people said, ‘Let us adopt what the South Australian government is doing for volunteers.’ I put that on the public record and I thank the honourable member for that opportunity. If the honourable member wants to ask me a question further on it tomorrow I would love to go into more detail. Returning to that specific point, CASAC (Country Ambulance Service Advisory Committee), I understand, opted not to take up the option for the volunteer medal.

Personally, I would like the committee to revisit that decision and, if it is prepared to do that, I am happy to work through—and I know that the member opposite will support me on this—the same sort of proposal as we have done with all of the other volunteers. This year it is very important that we leave a lasting legacy for volunteers and that they have that medal. The SES, CFS and Correctional Services have it, and some of the other agencies are picking it up. If CASAC

did say in the end that it wanted that medal, I would be happy to ensure that it was available to it.

Mr CONLON: I am disappointed that the minister used that opportunity to make a Liberal Party announcement. I asked the question because I thought it might assist—and I know that we cannot direct those people—if people knew from the proceedings of parliament tonight that both the minister and I believe that the relevant authority needs to revisit that decision. I place on the record that I recognise it is its decision to make, but I think it should revisit it. I would appreciate it if the minister would say the same thing.

The Hon. R.L. BROKENSHIRE: I thank the honourable member for that. I am certainly bipartisan on most things, and I am definitely bipartisan on this. I am sure the following words will be supported by the shadow spokesperson: without the approximate 2 000 ambulance service volunteers in rural and regional South Australia, we would be in diabolical trouble, given what would happen to the budget if we did not have them. I thank the honourable member for his bipartisan support.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN (Mr Snelling): That closes the time for questions to the Minister for Police, Correctional Services and Emergency Services. I now invite questions to the Minister for Local Government and Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

Ms KEY: I want to ask a question about the Local Government Disaster Fund, although I am probably straying from the report as this matter is not directly referred to in it. As has been discussed with the minister earlier, a number of issues have been raised—particularly by the regional councils—about the future of the fund. I refer to a letter I received from the City of Whyalla with regard the state government fund and its future. Will the minister outline the latest report on what will happen with the Local Government Disaster Fund and, if there are any new arrangements, what those arrangements may be?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I have no problem in picking up this issue and discussing it with the member. There have been obvious discussions over many months with the LGA and with councils. The very question that the honourable member just asked me was clarified in a 2½ page letter presented to the Local Government Association AGM. I could not be there myself, so the Chief Executive Officer of the LGA (John Comrie) paraphrased the letter that I had sent to the gathering at the AGM. Since then, there has still been some concern from councils across the state, so I can understand the member's letter from the Whyalla council. I have also written to different Messenger presses because of concerns that have been expressed by different councils across the state relating to this fund. I am quite happy to put the issue on record tonight for the member.

It is important that we talk about the background of the disaster fund. It was a fund that was established in 1990, and that was in the aftermath of the Ash Wednesday bushfires. The financial institutions duty surcharge was implemented at that time to provide the necessary funding to meet the substantial liabilities (and I am sure the member would recall this) of the former Stirling council arising from the fire and to provide funding to meet future disasters in our local government areas. These liabilities were met over the period 1990-91 to 1995-96. Since then, the calls on this fund have been quite modest. The Liberal government has, without exception, approved every recommendation for expenditure from the fund made by the Local Government Disaster Fund

Management Committee, which is a joint state-local government committee that administers the fund.

The cessation of the financial institutions duties (FID) marked the end of a period during which the flow of funds into the Local Government Disaster Fund from the FID surcharge substantially exceeded the calls on the fund. A very large balance has accumulated in that fund, and it currently totals some \$40 million. An actuarial report done last year advised that interest earnings on this balance would be sufficient to meet calls on the fund consistent with those which we have experienced over recent years.

The LGA put out a circular also on 29 September this year advising councils because of the questions being asked as the Local Government Disaster Fund was under review at the time. That circular, which was 38.9, stated information to councils because they believed that councils had a very different view regarding where the money belonged in the state's finances. It clarified it by saying in the circular:

It needs to be recognised that this is state money, generated for local government related purposes, and is accounted for in the state balance sheet.

Regardless of the cessation of FID as a tax, it had certainly become necessary and most appropriate that we had the whole of the fund taken under review.

So, to facilitate such a review, the Local Government Disaster Fund Management Committee commissioned a major report which was entitled 'Future Issues'. That report was completed in January 2001, which of course is this year. It contained a number of important recommendations, including a variety of options for the state and local government to consider covering future sources of revenue for the fund. The report was provided to the LGA President, to the Treasurer and to me in late January 2001.

At this stage, I understand that the LGA has not provided a copy of the 'Future Issues' report to councils, nor consulted with councils about their views on the recommendations and the opinions that were included in that report. Indeed, the written material made available to councils recently about the disaster fund does not appear to mention this report.

However, with regard to the question of further consideration of the future funding requirements of the fund, the Local Government Disaster Fund Management Committee supported the recommendation in the 'Future Issues' report that a joint state-local government decision on this aspect be delayed until the results of a comprehensive study on possible disaster prevention mitigation works, which was commissioned by the management committee, was available. The disaster prevention mitigation study was completed in August 2001, and that was sent to the LGA President, the Treasurer and me. I am aware that the LGA has made that study available to councils and has since sought council feedback on that report.

Following a further recommendation by the fund committee, I have forwarded the disaster prevention mitigation study to the Minister for Water Resources so that the joint state and local government review of the catchment management subsidy scheme can actually consider that study. This approach is intended to enable a basis for discussion and agreement between local and state government on priorities and, therefore, possible funding arrangements. If funding arrangements for large-scale disaster prevention mitigation works did not involve a significant call on the disaster fund, there may be no need to consider alternative funding sources for the fund, particularly given the substantial investment income that will continue to be received by the fund. This

conclusion is supported by the earlier actuarial report on the disaster fund in 1999.

Given the delay in completing that study, the disaster prevention mitigation, I wrote to the LGA President on 26 June 2001 suggesting that there were interim arrangements for the operation of the fund pending an agreement about ongoing arrangements. Until four days ago, I had not received a reply from the LGA, but considering that this information has been circulated to councils and to the LGA since their AGM, then it perhaps prompted their memory that a response was required. However, the letter that I sent made it very clear that the government supported the disaster fund continuing, which is the most important point, and that the fund would continue to retain the investment earnings.

I wrote to all the councils in June 2001 advising of this decision. The interim arrangements were outlined in my letter of 26 June 2001 to allow sufficient time to fully explore a range of options for the future of the fund, and further assurances were subsequently provided in a letter from the Premier to the LGA President in July 2001. The interim arrangements that I proposed would allow the disaster fund committee to operate successfully and in exactly the same way that it has over the past 11 years. The LGA has suggested that the state government has somehow diverted income of approximately \$6.5 million from the disaster fund, but the fact is that the FID legislation supporting the arrangement that was made has been revoked.

It should be quite clear that neither the state government nor the Local Government Association was in a position to consult about future funding needs of the disaster fund until the study was completed and we had received the recommendations and suggestions from the series of reports looking at disaster prevention mitigation. The status at the moment is that we are still waiting on advice from the Minister for Water Resources regarding the end result of his review. In relation to the minimal call on this fund over the years, we also have to turn our minds to whether the fund can still be used for disasters. Of course it can. There is a tremendous amount of money available, and remember that the fund will be continued to be used.

The other question that really needed to be discussed amongst ministers with different responsibilities in different areas of the state was not whether we should necessarily be looking at disasters after they have happened and therefore calling on the fund, but whether we should be looking at prevention methods that might be able to support a reduction in possible disasters, whether or not it be related to floods. That really was the thought and the thrust of having this prevention disaster mitigation review undertaken.

That is where we are at the moment. I know my answer has been long and I am sorry for that, but I think it was necessary to give the member the whole picture.

Ms KEY: Thank you, minister. I hope that we do not have any other sorts of pestilence for which we have not prepared considering that we have had fruit-fly, locusts and goodness knows what else. My other question relates to the Aboriginal Education Development Branch. The Hon. Terry Roberts in the other place asked a question of the minister who has responsibility for your area in that place on this issue. Considerable concern seems to have been raised by the Public Service Association on behalf of its members and also the Australian Education Union about the long-term future for this organisation.

I know that the minister is not the Minister for Education and that this is probably something that I may have been able

to ask Minister Buckby, but I ask whether the minister would be prepared to respond to the question considering the concerns in the community, particularly the Aboriginal community, on this important issue—and I am not expecting a reply tonight. If that is the case, can I outline the concerns that our shadow minister (Hon. Terry Roberts) has raised?

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: My answer to the honourable member is that I certainly have no problems at all. As the member has rightly pointed out, it is the responsibility of the Minister for Education. However, I do have interests and responsibilities in the Aboriginal area across the board, so if she wishes to put the content of the question on notice, I will give her a guarantee that I will seek an answer from the minister and respond as soon as I can.

Ms KEY: Thank you very much, minister; that is greatly appreciated. First, the question that has raised the most concern relates to the future of the programs being conducted at the Aboriginal Education Development Branch situated at 221 Wakefield Street. One of the other questions is: does the rumour that the branch is earmarked for closure have any support? Is it a rumour or is there some program either to relocate or close that facility? In conjunction with that, some concerns were raised about the role and the function of the Aboriginal Education Development Branch in regional and remote education: what are the further plans in that area.

There is a specific question which I do not claim to fully understand. However, the community and the Hon. Terry Roberts have been asking some questions about the government's position on the role, function and future of the Aboriginal Education Development Branch Director's position. They are the major points that I have been asked to raise with the minister, and I thank the minister for undertaking to get back to the Hon. Terry Roberts, the shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, on those issues.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I just add that I am quite happy to take those questions on notice. I am not aware of any of the matters to which the member has referred, so I cannot assist even with a comment or two. I am happy to take the whole list and to talk to the Minister for Education. I hope, as the member does, that this is not the case. We have spent considerable money on many different programs right across the board in Aboriginal education, including advisory committees, education boards and so on. Aboriginal people have been appointed to these boards and have worked exceedingly hard and exceedingly well with government to give us good advice on where we need to look at more flexible programs in terms of how we deliver to Aboriginal people. As I do not know the answers to those questions, I am happy to take them on notice and bring back a reply as soon as possible.

The ACTING CHAIRMAN: That concludes the committee's examination of ministers on matters contained in the Auditor-General's Report for 2000-2001.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Mr Acting Speaker, I draw your attention to the state of the committee.

A quorum having been formed:

WEST BEACH RECREATION RESERVE (REVIEW) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading (resumed on motion.)
(Continued from page 2495.)

Ms KEY (Hanson): The opposition has considered this bill, having participated quite actively in the select committee

that was set up to look at the West Beach Trust and the arrangements that need to be put in place with regard to its structure and functions. Although there was some debate behind the scenes and before the select committee about a number of areas with regard to the trust's operation, the ultimate recommendations and the bill that is before us have been supported. I also understand that, as a result of requirements under the national competition policy principles, it was necessary to look at a number of areas concerning the operations of the West Beach Recreation Reserve Act 1987.

It is my understanding that this has been a very successful venture on behalf of South Australia. It has been operating since the 1950s, and I know that, having had parts of the West Beach Trust land in the electorate that I have had the honour of representing, the area of Hanson, this has been a destination for a number of families, from interstate and from South Australia, and it has also been one of those places where tourists have not had to be millionaires to enjoy its facilities and recreation aspects.

The West Beach area was heralded in the past as a place for people to go, particularly families without a lot of money, and have a good, safe holiday, and it offered a lot of different activities. From my reading over the years about West Beach, I know that Broken Hill people were particularly enamoured with going to West Beach, as they were with going to Fort Largs, which is where I was raised. Our beaches were valued as being second to none as good family venues, but I would not say that they were good surfing beaches. Indeed, having been brought up in the area, I know that they are not good surfing beaches, but they are good for boating and fishing. I note that the yacht club, now the Adelaide Shores Yacht Club, has certainly used the area and, having been fishing there myself, I can vouch for—

The Hon. M.H. Armitage: How did you go?

Ms KEY: Very well. I remember in those days going out to get pots, and I recall the various fish that we used to catch. South Australians can be well proud of that area.

One of the concerns which I need to raise, and about which I will ask the minister during committee, arises over the responsibilities that the West Beach Trust has had over the years. It was identified in the most recent annual report of the trust for 2000-01, which was recently tabled in this parliament. When looking at the year in review, under 'Environmental conference', page 3 of the report states:

The trust, as caretaker of one of Adelaide's last remaining sand dune remnants, investigated the desire to conduct an environmental conference to particularly focus on the metropolitan coast and gulf waters. Both investigations led to the . . . government's Office of Coast and Marine who have previously conducted conferences and were willing to undertake that task again.

So, a number of initiatives have taken place as a result of that environmental conference, and the first two-day conference, which had the support of the Seaside Councils Committee and the West Beach Trust, took place in March. That enabled the discussion of a number of issues to do with coast care, and I understand that there were a number of interstate guest speakers.

I am also pleased to say, particularly having responsibility for the youth portfolio for the Labor Party, that the creation of a regional skate park facility has been a wonderful initiative. I was preselected very late in the piece in 1997, but I remember the first house that I doorknocked before the last state election. The young people in that house said that they wanted some decent facilities near West Beach. They wanted a water slide, but it might take a bit to deliver a water slide

at West Beach, and it is not something that I would campaign for. However, I have to put on record that I absolutely hate Magic Mountain, despite the fact that my nephew works there. Nonetheless, Magic Mountain stops more condominiums being built at Holdfast Shores, so, while it is there, I love it. I have to say that I would hate to see anything like that down at the Henley, Grange or West Beach area. I am sure the member for Colton would support what I am saying, and I note that he is nodding in agreement.

The other important issue is that, over a period of time, various board members of the West Beach Trust have taken up a number of responsibilities with some zeal, as have the workers who have been attached to the area, to make sure that the West Beach area is one of the best examples of tourism in South Australia. I know also that the West Beach area has been nominated for a number of awards over the years.

One of my concerns (I will not go into it again here other than to mention it in passing) is with the issues that have been raised by people in the area about the Adelaide Shores boat harbour. I hope that the minister will answer some of those questions in committee about sand replenishment. As a person who uses West Beach on a regular basis, I find it quite distressing to see the trucks going up and down the beach in the sand replenishment program, and there are some real concerns about the build-up of sand, certainly on the south side of the boat harbour, and the need for dredging. I noticed on page 28 in the preview for 2001-02 in the West Beach Trust annual report that there is a whole section on sand dune rehabilitation and the need to try to protect the coastal native vegetation in the area.

The sand dune group really needs to be commended and, although the program is limping along, it is certainly an attempt to ensure that the native grasses and plants in the area are looked after, and also to ensure that some semblance of the sand dunes remains. I also note the concerns that have been raised about sand management in the area.

The report talks about the dredging and trucking of sand which is expected to continue on an annual basis. I would say that it would have to be more regular than annually. The trust will monitor the beaches under its care and control to ensure minimisation of storm damage and the replenishment of sand, where appropriate. In their annual report, the trust says that the dredging, trucking and sand placement is having an impact on the tourist guests of the trust's holiday village and caravan resort. The trust is continuing to seek a review of long-term options for sand replenishment to the beach and dredging of the West Beach boat harbor. So, I ask the minister to consider that issue. I know that at different times he has made reports in this House, but I have to say that this is an area of ongoing concern. Secondly, I think it is really important that we clarify once and for all, and certainly with this legislation, who will actually pay for the sand management in this area. I understand from the different councils that there is some concern about whether this is something that will eventually be taken up by the Charles Sturt and West Torrens councils. Although I have not consulted with the Holdfast Bay council, I am sure that it would have a similar concern.

Issues have also been raised with regard to the Patawalonga seawater circulation system, better known as the Barcoo Outlet. A number of us have quite violent concerns about the establishment of this outlet. I think the debates have already been covered in this House about whether the Barcoo Outlet—which may be a good thing for the Patawalonga—is of any service to the people who live in West Beach, Grange

and the Henley area. I do not believe that those questions have been adequately answered at any stage. There has been a senate inquiry and a whole lot of issues have been raised about whether the Barcoo Outlet will, in fact, destroy the beach and the seagrasses and, obviously, make a real impact on the biodiversity of the coast in that area. I do not believe that those issues have been adequately addressed at any time.

In saying all that, I think it is important to focus on the positive side of this legislation. I believe the review of the trust itself has renewed interest in the area, and it has probably made people with responsibilities rethink what those responsibilities are with regard to the West Beach area. I am heartened by reading the annual report. It sets out both a strategic master plan and a master plan for the future. As the local member, I would have been interested in being involved in the consultation that has taken place with the development of those plans. For some reason, state members—certainly I and I understand the member for Peake—have been left out of that consultation process. I do not know whether the federal member for Hindmarsh has been involved. I am sad to report that I certainly have not been consulted, and I think that is an oversight on the part of the council.

One of the other issues that has been raised with me a number of times is not only about the Barcoo Outlet but also about stormwater and its re-use. Because of the culverts that go out into the sea, it is really important that this issue is addressed. Different catchment boards, particularly the Torrens and the Patawalonga, have made comments about the opportunity to re-use the stormwater. I know that the West Torrens council has done considerable research to try to make sure that all that water does not flow out into the sea but that we look at the re-use program. I think that some very good suggestions have been made by the West Torrens council about using that water to water some of the green areas, particularly some of the developments that we are hoping to see around the Adelaide Airport and also the west side of the parklands. I am concerned that that does not seem to have got very far. However, to be positive, there does seem to be in the planning strategy for metropolitan Adelaide some areas of planning that will look at trying to ensure that green areas are developed in the west as much as possible, that the regional sporting and recreational activities are looked at and that there is an upgrade of facilities in addition to the boating facilities for that region.

In summary, we support the legislation that is before us. There are concerns about environmental considerations that I have raised. They may just have to be an area where the current minister and I will have to agree to disagree, because so far I have not heard any explanations that satisfy my concerns and certainly not those of the constituents I represent. Overall, I think this is a positive piece of legislation, and rather than carp on—as we are always accused of doing by the government—I commend the bill and look forward to hearing some answers to questions during the committee stage.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I support the bill. As a person who has been involved with the West Beach Trust for many years—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr VENNING: Absolutely; this is the story. The West Beach Recreation Reserve is a key metropolitan-wide recreation and tourism facility. It provides metropolitan-wide sporting facilities and is an important venue for state and national competitions. I know that because my daughter, who

plays A grade hockey, plays hockey there. Incidentally, we are very pleased that Port Adelaide, of which she is captain, won the grand final a few weeks ago. The West Beach Reserve forms part of the coastal park about which the member for Hanson has spoken very capably. I know that she is very passionate about the area, and I share that passion. It also forms part of the metropolitan open space system, and it provides caravan and village tourism accommodation, which is of metropolitan importance, as well as being important to coastal centres such as Glenelg.

The West Beach Recreation Reserve provides a wide variety of services providing a sporting, cultural, recreational and tourism facility of state and regional significance. I also noted the comments by the member for Hanson about the new skating park facility, which I have not seen, but I certainly will be having a look at it. I will also join in her campaign for the water slide. Since Marineland has been closed, a lot of people say that they miss it and that we really do need an aquatic centre there. I think it would be a very good project for the future. So, I am happy to help the member for Hanson achieve that goal, because I often walk on the beach in the morning and I could keep a good eye on it.

The West Beach Trust was established by the state government in 1954 to maintain and administer the West Beach Recreation Reserve—

Mr Koutsantonis: By Tom Playford.

Mr VENNING: Yes; it was opened by Tom Playford; that is correct. I understand that the existing act has provided good guidance to the trust, but it is considered that the act needs to be amended to provide for the best ongoing development and maintenance of this vital state asset.

As part of the state government's national competition policy obligations, the West beach Trust was subject to legislative review in 1998. I believe that the national competition policy can take matters a little too far. I oppose most if not all of it, because as a policy I think it has passed its time and is causing a lot of problems. When we assess legislation such as this, we need to be mindful and ask questions such as: are we really achieving what is for the best? Sometimes we can go too far with the national competition policy and its objectives, which has happened in the past. If we lose sight of what we are trying to achieve, I question why we are going with this policy. I raise that with this House.

The proposed rationalised legislation includes the following benefits: a clear statement of the role of the West Beach Trust with emphasis on the sporting, recreational, tourism and cultural role of that reserve; a clear statement of the services to be delivered by the trust through a charter and performance statement; a requirement for the board of the trust to prepare a strategic plan and a business plan to enable the trust to plan with confidence for the future (to be approved by the minister); a board consisting of people with experience pertinent to their roles, functions and performance agreements set out in this bill; and the general updating of the act.

While the trust's existing functions for the West Beach Recreational Reserve are preserved in the updated legislation, it is proposed that the statewide significance of the reserve as a sporting, recreational, tourism and cultural facility for the benefit of all South Australians be emphasised. While the existing act specifies that the designated area of the reserve cannot be sold, the bill contains safeguards if leasing out of the reserve is proposed, which would significantly change the way in which part of the reserve can be managed.

I first visited West Beach Caravan Park in 1969 with my young family. We were caravanning. It was a great caravanning rendezvous then—and it still is. The park in those days was and today still is one of Australia's top caravan parks. We used that facility up until 1991.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

Mr VENNING: A premier caravan park, as the member for Peake corrects me. In fact, we bought a house a few houses up the road from the park, so I can see it every morning when I am here in Adelaide. Certainly, I have kept a very close eye on this.

I was involved in a heated debate many years ago when they were establishing the golf course. I questioned whether it should be built there because it was open space. This golf course was to be a private golf course. That area has been like the parklands of Adelaide—always under threat and scrutiny. We had some battles in those days but we had some very good fighters, including the late Geoff Virgo and Mr Murray Hill, who was a Legislative Councillor. He was the minister involved with this. Certainly, it goes back a long way.

I always took a keen interest in the management of the park. The manager in those days was Mr Phil Bouveng and his late wife, Robyn. Mr Bouveng now lives in Kapunda, where he has a very successful security business. Another manager in those days was Mr Gill, who I believe is still involved in some capacity. I can recall in those days being removed from my favourite spot in the caravan park, which was booked each year. I contacted the minister, Murray Hill, about my problem and he investigated it and we got back our site. We kept that same site for over 10 years. Subsequent ministers, especially the late Geoff Virgo, ensured that we had no hassles.

I want now to talk about what the member for Hanson said regarding sand management. The sandhills in the caravan park reserve have always been irrigated and have always had plenty of green cover on them, and there is never any sand coming off them. Why can we not irrigate the sandhills along the foreshore? It is sewerage water and the sewerage main goes straight past there. Why can we not irrigate the sandhills with the same water? When the wind blows along there, the houses get sandblasted. But, if we can water the sandhills in the caravan park to keep the sand off the caravans, why can we not water the sandhills along Seaview Road to keep the sand off the houses? I could never believe it. Some people say that if we water feral grasses will grow. Yes, they do, but feral grasses hold the sand together. I could never quite work that out.

I also note the member for Hanson's comments about sand replenishment. I see vehicles moving and the movement of sand, but I believe that a lot more sand is piled up there at the moment than was ever previously there. Whether they are piling it there for a rainy day, I do not know, but certainly there is a lot of sand there. I think that we would go right through summer with very little sand movement at all with the amount of sand there.

I have contacted the council and been along to several meetings about sand management. I question the activity of the local council in relation to the sandhills because they are very precious there. I have to admit that when I first moved there and bought my house, I thought that the first idea would be to get rid of that sandhill out the front because then I could get a better view. But I have now worked out that that is a very important part of the ecology and that they are a very important part of the region and I will do all that I can to maintain those sandhills. I can never work this out—back on

the farm, we had soil retention but the same rules on the farm do not seem to apply to sandhills because to keep sandhills stable from the wind, you have to keep them smooth and grassed and keep them intact. But those sandhills have all got ruts right through them where people run through them, which is an activity that is not happening as much now that they are fenced. I believe that people are generally now more responsible and they do not race through those hills just anywhere. Those walkways should be filled in and levelled so that the wind does not whistle through the walkways and pick up the sand and cause the problem that it does at present.

I look forward to working with the local councils and residents in the future to protect those hills. But I still ask the question, 'Why can't we irrigate them with the sewage water so that there is more grass to keep the sand where it is supposed to be, and that is on the beach.'

The West Beach Trust has been a very important part of our state, particularly here in Adelaide, and it is a great open space. Long may it be just that—open space.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the House be extended beyond 10 p.m.

Motion carried.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (Peake): The member for Schubert was right about a lot of things that he said. One point that he made was that Sir Thomas Playford established the West Beach Trust and the suburb of West Beach. The people of West Beach have been very loyal for the last 40 or 50 years to the party that established their suburb.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: About 40 years. The atrocities that this government has committed upon the people of West Beach for the last four to eight years have, I think, slowly turned the tide. I believe that in 1993, the Liberal Party candidate in West Beach achieved 75 per cent of the two-party preferred vote in that area. In the federal election of 1998, Steve Georganas achieved 40 per cent of the two-party preferred vote. So, our vote went up nearly 15 per cent. Now, of course, I will be the next test at West Beach in 2001, maybe 2002, and we will see how we go. Unfortunately, a lot of members will not be here to debate that afterwards.

I will just talk about some of the indications that the people of West Beach have been abandoned by the government that they have been so loyal to for the last 40 years. One of those reasons is the Barcoo Outlet. One of our greatest beaches has been destroyed. The member for Schubert was right in saying that West Beach is a great holiday destination for South Australian families. South Australian families have enjoyed coming to West Beach, and enjoyed the great beaches close to the city, and the caravan park.

To my mind, the Barcoo Outlet has basically destroyed West Beach. We are told that at low tide, the outlet will be only one metre below the surface of the water. This is from the Patawalonga Catchment Board. I am told that the boat ramp has been very popular—and it is very popular amongst our fishing community. The sand replenishment, that the government promised us would only cost \$250 000 per year, with, we were told, only about 80 truckloads a year, is now costing the government \$1.7 million, according to a reply from the minister concerned to a question in the upper house—\$1.7 million.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Well, pull me up. The government has sorely let down the people of West Beach in terms of the quality of the beaches there. The member for Schubert is absolutely right when he says that South Australians love going to West Beach. The residents who have purchased properties at West Beach and who are trying to protect the residential values of those properties, as well as protecting their way of life that they enjoy, are under threat as a result of this government's mismanagement.

Another important issue about the way in which this government has ruined West Beach—or is ruining West Beach—is that it has insisted on extending the airport runway. When the government extended the airport runway it closed off stormwater outlets that were used to clear out stormwater that was collected in the upper catchment areas. As a result of the state government's trying to save money on the airport extension there was no adequate stormwater management and, therefore, if we have a one in five year rain event some streets of West Beach flood; in a one in 10 year rain event half of West Beach floods; and in a one in 25 year rain event the whole suburb is under water. Some residents keep sandbags in their garages because their streets regularly flood, and it is a real disgrace. The people of West Beach deserve better than that.

Mr Williams interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for MacKillop may interject inanelly—a word that his former leader liked to use quite often—

An honourable member: He is out of his place.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: He is also out of his place. Cross benches, middle bench, back bench—he is not sure where he has to be.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: It is so hard to keep up. One minute they are on the front beach; one minute they are Premier, the next minute they on the backbench or they are sulking in the corridor. Then there are the former formers. The member for Elder said yesterday that if the member for Bragg was demoted any further he would be sitting in the corridor, but that is another issue.

Ms Key interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Like the shifting sands of West Beach. The government has changed West Beach for ever, and it has changed it in the way in which families enjoy their summer vacations. It has changed it in a way that affects land values and property values of the hard-working citizens and retirees of West Beach. People have worked hard to buy a coastal property to enjoy their retirement near the sea. Other people are raising their young families near West Beach. Those people have chosen a certain way of life near the seaside and have paid for that way of life through their hard-earned money and their mortgages only to have a government ruin it because it will not adequately spend money and research stormwater management properly.

The West Torrens council has been arguing that the stormwater problem has been specifically caused by the state government. The state government is saying, 'No, stormwater management is the clear responsibility of local councils.'

Mr Williams: Yes, it is.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The member for MacKillop interjects, 'Yes, it is.' That is true but the stormwater problem has been caused by the state government. It is not an act of God: the stormwater is not being allowed to flow because of the airport extension.

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The honourable member does not know what he is talking about. He would not know where West Beach is.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: What should have happened during the planning of the airport extension was that the worst case scenario should have been adequately catered for so that stormwater could flood into the Patawalonga. It does not happen. What happens now is that, because of the slopes of West Beach (the height of West Beach to the height of the airport), and the way in which the drains (which are fairly old) in West Beach and Brooklyn Park are built, the water backs up into West Beach. The extra development that is occurring in the western suburbs means that, of course, flooding is a greater risk.

I am told that it will cost about \$7 million to rectify and the cost grows every year as the work is left unfinished. It is something that will have to be left to the new Labor government to fix because this government will not, of course, do anything about it. The opposition supports the bill. We have problems with parts of it, however. The Adelaide Shores boat harbor and sand replenishment is something about which we are very concerned. We are concerned about the blow-out in the cost of sand management. We were promised only \$250 000 per year. That figure has blown out to \$1.7 million, and that figure was given in response to a question asked only this week.

One of my former high school teachers was a member of the West Beach Trust and he always told us the virtues of the trust and the good work that it did. I hope that this new and clear strategy statement and business plan will help the trust and the new board to manage West Beach properly into a recreational area that all South Australians can enjoy.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE (Minister for Government Enterprises): I thank all members for their contribution. It is an important bill which amends an important piece of legislation about—as a number of members have identified—an important area of South Australia. I look forward to the committee stage.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clause 1.

Ms KEY: If the area is called Adelaide Shores, why does this legislation refer to the West Beach Recreational Reserve? Can the minister explain the consultation process that was put in place with regard to the naming of Adelaide Shores?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: My understanding is that the legislative name is the West Beach Recreation Reserve; that is what it is legislated to be. The popular marketing name has become the Adelaide Shores area, but it is legislatively known as the West Beach Recreation Reserve, and hence the West Beach Recreation Reserve Review Amendment Bill. This reflects the legislative name.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Does it mean that in future it will be marketed as Adelaide Shores, or as West Beach?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: My understanding is that the caravan park and surrounding areas—the reserve—are marketed as Adelaide Shores.

Clause passed.

Clauses 2 to 6 passed.

Clause 7.

Ms KEY: Would the minister explain the membership of the trust and say why the City of Holdfast Bay is one of the representatives?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: That was one of the original councils forming the West Beach Trust area. It contributed £20 000 in 1954. It is an immediately adjacent council. It seems reasonable, given that it was such a major contributor in the first instance and it is not separated by a huge distance, that it would be a contributory member of the trust.

Clause passed.

Clause 8.

Ms KEY: With respect to the amendment to section 13, 'General functions and powers of the trust,' I want some clarification from the minister, mainly so that it appears in *Hansard*. My understanding, from the briefing that I received this morning, was that it would be very difficult for a development to be built on the West Beach Trust, because a number of checks and balances have been put in place in the legislation, which I think is a good and positive thing. Proposed new subsection (4) provides:

Despite any other provision in this act, the Trust must not sell any of the land bounded by the bold black lines in the schedule.

My understanding from reading this is that, in fact, there is an opportunity for leasing, but that the leases are in two categories: one is less than 10 years and one is less than 20 years. In the case of more than 10 years, the minister needs to be involved in the process: in the case of 20 years, there needs to be a resolution on the part of both houses of parliament. Also, a written report needs to be provided, with notice to the Economic and Finance Committee of parliament. If someone has a development proposal—for example, a private firm—or if, in fact, the Crown, or the government, wants to build a building—for example, a resort—in the middle of the golf course, what would be the process and the checks and balances in that area?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: The bill requires the trust to provide a 10 year master plan. Those sorts of things, à la resorts in golf courses, would obviously have to be part of those plans. So, in the first instance, they would be identified in that plan. In relation to the specific developments, I am advised as follows. If, for argument's sake, one of the bodies that utilises the playing fields, or whatever, wanted to build a changing shed or something of that ilk, that would be standard development procedures—as with a softball club, or whatever it might be. If the West Beach Trust wanted to build something slightly bigger and more grand, or if it wanted to build anything, in fact, it would be a Crown development under section 49 of the Development Act. And, obviously, if there were to be a grander plan, governments of either persuasion have in the past—and, I dare say, will in the future—make major development status for those sorts of things. However, in the first instance, there are standard planning applications, Crown developments and major developments.

Ms KEY: In an earlier contribution I mentioned the annual report of the West Beach Trust for 2000-01. On page 2 there is mention of a land use master plan. I obviously support strategic planning and master plans. It says that the master plan will be distributed during September 2001. As the local member, I am concerned that I have not seen that master plan and was not involved in that process, and nor were the members for Peake and Colton. If adequate community consultation was conducted over the past year—as it supposedly was—I would have thought that state members would be involved in that consultation process. As I said, I do not really expect the minister to necessarily comment on that; I

would just like to express strongly my concern that we were not deemed fit to be part of that process.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Whether or not the member for Hanson was deemed fit by the West Beach Trust is something for which I take absolutely no responsibility. However, as I indicated before, that management strategy/management plan is in the legislation and it will obviously identify any of the major ravages which seem to be the intent behind the member for Hanson's question.

Clause passed.

Clauses 9 to 11 passed.

Clause 12.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I refer to proposed new section 23A—'Damages, etc., to property of the trust.' It provides that a person who, without the authority of the trust, damages or destroys any property of the trust, or removes any property of the trust is guilty of an offence. The maximum penalty is only \$2 500, with an expiation fee. In the western suburbs a crime wave is affecting the areas of Torrensville, Thebarton and Mile End, and that is spreading to areas of the trust. This is happening because a lot of construction is going on and a lot of the lights are not functioning there. The police are not patrolling the area as much as they would like because the trust area does not have the residential build-up of the West Beach area. That \$2 500 maximum penalty or the expiation fee of \$210 is not an adequate deterrent for young offenders. Is that based on something out of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act, or just something the minister has made up?

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: Obviously, I will answer the honourable member's question, but I am still not sure that this is not in clause 13 rather than in clause 12. However, the point at issue is that the penalties that are reflected in proposed new section 23A, the question that the honourable member is asking whichever clause we are talking about, are the present legislation. This was enacted in, I think, 1987 as a penalty of \$2 000, so it was felt appropriate to reflect the sorts of penalties now applicable for penalties that were \$2 000 in 1987, that is, \$2 500, and the expiation fee has been added. So, this is not a new penalty. All we have done is add a standard amount for penalties of that type.

If the honourable member feels that it is not adequate I am happy to relay that to the minister responsible and we can look at it, but it is not done with any malice aforethought. It was literally just adding to the penalties already in the legislation.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: The minister is not required to reply to this unless he wants to. I think that the penalty might not be sufficient, but that is for the minister and the shadow minister to discuss. I am a regular attender of the Neighbourhood Watch meetings in the West Beach area. There are two very good areas in West Beach with members of Neighbourhood Watch, and they tell me that a lot of the crime generated within West Beach is generated from property damage that occurs in the trust area. People often go there in their cars, or they will graffit and damage property, and a lot of people have felt that there is no real penalty because hardly any of them who do the damage in that area are ever caught, because it is so badly policed.

The minister might want to consider that and speak to the shadow minister. He does not need to reply. I am sure that he wants to do the best thing, but it might not be enough. Perhaps just the expiation fee could be increased.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: I accept it totally. We will see what can be done. I accept the reaction of the honourable

member's constituents. As I said, this is nothing more than reflecting the penalties for the present, and I will relay the honourable member's reaction to the minister.

Clause passed.

Clauses 13 to 16 passed.

Schedule 1.

Ms KEY: I want to ask a question about the Barcoo Outlet. I note that the Barcoo Outlet is not actually identified on schedule 1, which is my first question, but while I am referring to it I would like an understanding of who is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of the Barcoo Outlet when it actually starts operation, and how under this schedule the workers that are responsible get access to the Barcoo Outlet.

The other part of my question, I suppose, is that I have raised concerns with regard to the sand replenishment issue and would like the minister to tell the House who has responsibility and who will be paying for the sand replenishment, dredging and basic sand management in the area, while we are on this particular map.

The Hon. M.H. ARMITAGE: In relation to the Barcoo Outlet, I am not aware of why it is not depicted on this particular map but, if it were to be depicted in its final state, it would be nothing more than dotted lines, in essence, in this area, because it goes under the sandhills which, as we speak, are being replenished and so on. Indeed, I visited the Barcoo Outlet in its nearly final phase a couple of weeks ago. I would be very happy to arrange for the member for Hanson to have a tour of it if she likes. It will be opened in the near future. As the member for Hanson knows, it has received engineering awards for its clever construction.

The answer to the question, 'Who will be responsible for this piece of engineering which will ensure that the Pata-

walonga becomes seawater and appropriately supports marine life again?' is the Minister for Water Resources. The next question was, 'Who is responsible for the sand management?' We inserted a section in the Local Government Act, and I believe it is section 886bb (or something such as that), which refers to sand management at West Beach relating to the Adelaide Shores boat facility. That is the responsibility of the Minister for Environment and Heritage under the Coast and Marine Branch of his department.

That branch gets its input partly from an advisory board. The West Beach Trust has a member on that advisory board. The work on sand replenishment, which is something that has gone on for as long as there have been jetties in South Australia—there is nothing new about sand replenishment, as I have said to the House on about 500 occasions before—is the responsibility of the Department of Transport. I think the final question related to the cost and who pays for it. It is a Treasury appropriation to transport.

Schedule passed.

Schedule 2 and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

LAND ACQUISITION (NATIVE TITLE) AMENDMENT BILL

In committee.

(Continued from 4 October. Page 2417.)

Remaining clauses (2 to 31) and title passed.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 10.20 p.m. the House adjourned until Thursday 25 October at 10.30 a.m.