

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 28 November 2002

The **SPEAKER (Hon. I.P. Lewis)** took the chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

ROSE FESTIVAL

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I move:

That this house commends the South Australian Tourism Commission for the outstanding success of the recent 2002 Adelaide Rose Festival and congratulates the organisers, competitors, volunteers and other participants, including the South Australian Police and ambulance services and other agencies, and calls on the government to continue funding support for the Adelaide Rose Festival in future years to build on this success.

The house should be aware that the history of the rose festival goes back some time—and I am delighted to be here this morning talking about roses on this beautiful Adelaide day. Adelaide has one of the most favourable climates and locations in the world for roses. It is a world renowned site. We have the potential to build in this state a globally competitive international festival if we continue to build on the success that we have already achieved.

This idea was conceived by the former Liberal government, and I commend and note the presence here of the former minister for tourism, the member for Morialta, who was very much a key player in getting this event going. I also commend the former premier, John Olsen, and our former colleague in another place, the Hon. Legh Davis MLC, who was also pivotal in establishing the event. But, in fact, it goes back as far as 1993, when Geoff Walls, Agent-General for South Australia, approached Adrian Greenoak, the world renowned creative director of rose festivals and an international expert, to discuss whether or not an event similar to that which is conducted at Hampton Court Gardens in the UK could be held here in Adelaide.

We wanted an event which was part of the city and which was special. We wanted an event which involved landscape artists and nurserymen, and which was really a benchmark event for horticultural expertise—and, after all, members may not quite appreciate that the horticultural industry is worth \$5 billion per annum to the Australian economy. The whole business of horticulture, nursery production, and so on, is a massive industry in this country, and it sits well with the wine industry, which is worth \$3.2 billion to the Australian economy. So, we have there almost \$10 billion of economic turnover and, of course, this rose festival is such a good fit with that economic endeavour.

The royal event at Hampton Court (which is, as I mentioned, perhaps the premier event globally) was very much the benchmark when the Adelaide Rose Festival was originally conceived. The 2002 event (being the second event) has already climbed up the scale in terms of its quality and standards to be on the same pegging, if you like, as the royal event at Hampton Court.

The 2002 Adelaide Rose Festival (and, no doubt, there are many people here, and possibly even in the gallery, who visited the event) was held at Botanic Park from 31 October to 3 November, from about 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. It was quite affordable: entry for an adult was about \$12 and, for children, much less. This event could not have been conducted without the outstanding effort that was put in by the South Australian Tourism Commission and especially

Australian Major Events. There are a number of people there who deserve particular congratulations, and they include Belinda Dewhurst, the head of AME, and her entire team, which formed part of that very vibrant and active group called AME who, of course, made it all happen on the day.

There was also a number of outstanding sponsors, and I mention SA Water, the Adelaide City Council, Channel 9, Malaysia Airlines, Yates, Skycity, Interflora, Pewsey Vale and there were others. Without those sponsors, this event simply could not become a reality, and we need to continually remind ourselves in this place of the importance of these corporate sponsors to such major events and the opportunities that these sponsors open up for South Australia in terms of jobs and economic turnover.

As I mentioned, the creative director, Adrian Greenoak (who lives in Crete but who is British), is a premier expert in the business of roses. There was plenty to see and, as creative director, I think he designed a most fabulous wine and rose event. The Adelaide City Council rose pavilion was the centrepiece of the set-up at Botanic Park, and it provided many inspirational gardening designs and landscaped rose gardens for the thousands of people who attended the festival to see. There were a number of new rose creations, one of which was the Tatiana rose, which was named after Tatiana Grigorieva, who was at the launch. The Premier was also there launching the creation of that new rose, along with me and others. That was a great part of the festival of the rose event. Of course, there are other varieties of rose—the Sir Donald Bradman rose, the climbing Cardinal rose, and various others. The sweeping lawns of the Botanic Gardens were transformed into a magical landscape of individual designs and there were, of course, extensive nursery displays. There was a floristry and flowers pavilion, which was hosted—or sponsored, if you like—by Interflora. This was brimming with displays by leading florists and, of course, there were plenty of garden accessories to see.

The thousands of people who attended this event spend thousands of dollars in building up their own gardens, and buying plant and equipment to make it happen. So, really, this was an opportunity for small businesses, and so on, to showcase what they do. There were also regional garden tours outside Adelaide to surrounding districts, and this is an important potential growth area in the rose festival in terms of future vision. Parking at Botanic Park is not ideal; however, there were plenty of other options close by and a very efficient bus service that delivered people to the site. I will not run through the exhibitors because time does not permit, but just about anybody who is anybody in South Australia and nationally was represented at the Rose Festival.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I wasn't.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I note that the Attorney is desperately interested in this subject, and so he should be. I hope he attended because it was an outstanding day. I hope he rode his bike down and around the rose pavilions, because the event also provided an opportunity for the horticultural media to gather in Adelaide. I attended, on the Friday evening, an outstanding awards evening during which horticultural media expertise was recognised by their peers and a number of awards were given out, and I commend all of those involved in organising for that fabulous horticultural media to get together here as part of the Adelaide Rose Festival.

Botanic Park is a really good venue for this sort of event but, as I will outline later, there may be scope to consider alternative locations in the years ahead. Of course, there was

a speaker seminar program from Thursday through Sunday, during which people in the industry had an opportunity to hear from global experts about rose and horticultural matters. There was an entertainment program and it was also an opportunity for food and wine outlets to set up their stalls within the Botanic Park, and to turn it into a wine and rose festival, if you like. There were plenty of things for children to do—face-painters, all sorts of things—and it just typified that incredibly successful approach that Adelaide has to running these festivals and events and it really did do South Australia proud.

I have mentioned the food and cooking, which was first class and which involved a lot of local Adelaide restaurateurs, as well as the Adelaide produce markets, mushroom growers, all sorts of small businesses, and other food and wine suppliers, and brought them into the event, which was, of course, a wonderful synergy. As I mentioned, there were a number of associated events which included the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra's popular *Al Fresco* concert series at Carrick Hill. In fact, on this same weekend, the French Festival was held at Carrick Hill, which was an unfortunate alignment because I went to both events and they were both fantastic. It would be nice if they were on separate weekends so that people could go to both. Of course, the Botanic Garden restaurant was open as was the Art Gallery, Ayers House Museum and all those cultural institutions along North Terrace for visitors to add-on to their visit to the Rose Festival.

What does the future hold for this event? The opposition is calling on the government to continue to support this fabulous event with its funding and with AME and the fabulous expertise contained within AME. We have a concern that the government may be planning to cut the funding to this event. We hope that is not the case. We note that the Adelaide Rose Festival is biennial and that \$500 000 was allotted in the financial year 2002-03, but we have a serious concern that there may be no future funding provision for the event. We call on the government to explain what its future plans are for the Rose Festival because, indeed, it has the potential to grow into a very significant global event. In fact, a future vision is needed for the festival.

As I mentioned earlier, it may need a home. It may be time to ask whether the Botanic Park location is adequate, given that it has to be set up and then pulled down. It may be that there is another venue within the parklands that could be adapted for the Rose Festival where some permanent horticultural fixtures could be established, some permanent plantings perhaps, some more substantial developments that are in character with the parklands and add value to the parklands, but which also enable the biannual Adelaide Rose Festival to fit around the parklands more completely. In a way, it is a shame to see all those lovely stands and horticultural plantings and so on temporarily established and then pulled down. It could actually add a lot of value to the parklands to give the Rose Festival another permanent home, perhaps in the South Parklands, and there are a number of other locations. We would encourage the government to talk to the creative director and others about that possibility.

The event also has the potential to be advertised more effectively through European festivals and *Gardening Australia*, or at other shows like the Hampton Court Flower Show and the Chelsea Flower Show, or in Japan where there are several flower festivals. There is also the opportunity to rebrand it as an event to include flower and landscaping more completely, to become, in effect, an Adelaide garden and rose

festival, rather than just an Adelaide rose festival, so that its appeal is broadened, it involves more small businesses and so that it opens more commercial opportunities.

The Royal Horticultural Society now operates Hampton Court. South Australia, through Australian Major Events and its other partners in this event, has an opportunity to establish an equivalent reputation. There was a bit of controversy from Professor David Stephens, who made some critical comment about the way the Rose Festival was laid out, and I encourage that: it is fabulous to have critical comment. Let us have a bit of controversy about our Rose Festival, and get a debate going. Overall, the Rose Festival was an outstanding testament to the capabilities of the Tourism Commission and AME, the police and emergency services. All the volunteers involved did a fantastic job. It is a stunning event. This is the second one we have held and it has the potential, as I have mentioned, to grow into an even bigger and better event, which actually has an extraordinarily broad appeal. It is not loud or noisy; it is not racing cars, but it is actually an event that has the potential to reach out to tens of thousands of Australians, internationals and interstate visitors. I urge the government to support the event.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

TOURISM PLAN

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I move:

That this house—

- (a) congratulates the State Tourism Plan Review Leadership Team and the South Australian Tourism Commission on the release of the draft South Australian Tourism Plan 2002-07, commenced under the former Liberal government;
- (b) regrets the current government's lack of interest in the plan evident from its poor launch and promulgation of the plan and an inadequate time frame for submissions; and
- (c) notes the failure of the current government to contribute anything new in the way of ideas and strategy towards the plan.

I rise to commend this motion to the house. It congratulates the State Tourism Plan Review Leadership Team and the South Australia Tourism Commission on the release of the draft South Australian Tourism Plan 2002-07, work for which was commenced by the former Liberal government. The motion also regrets the current government's apparent lack of interest in the plan, evident from its poor launch and promulgation of the plan—and I will talk about that in a moment—and the inadequate time frame provided for submissions to be returned.

We also note the failure of the current government to contribute much, or, in fact, anything that I can see which is new in the way of ideas or strategy towards the plan. Of course, that is not surprising because the Labor Party went into the last election with no plan for tourism, no policy—I think it warranted a few lines buried somewhere in a general statement—but it really had no shadow spokesperson for tourism at that time, and really no ideas on what on earth it would do, if ever it fell into government. So, it is not really surprising that they have been caught on the hop. However, they have had the advantage of inheriting an outstanding Tourism Commission that is headed by an outstanding professional in Mr Bill Spurr and with a very capable and deep stretch of talent right through that organisation. I am sure that the minister, who I note is in the chamber, has benefited enormously from that expertise and has enjoyed their wise counsel.

The minister has also inherited what I think is a very effective policy framework for tourism and a very effective set of issues that were under way. I note that the minister has continued with almost all the plans and strategies of the former government. I commend her for that and for not dismantling too much of the program except, of course, for the minister's failure in cabinet to win the money needed to ensure that the tourism program was a success. I am referring particularly to over \$16 million of reduced funding over last year that will be provided in 2002-03: cuts to strategic advice; cuts to tourism business development and tourism infrastructure; cuts to tourist marketing; and cuts to event development.

The tourism budget has been savaged, and I wish the minister well in budget bilaterals as they begin towards the end of this year and early next year. I hope that she is able to carry the day more effectively in cabinet on behalf of tourism and win some more money for the beleaguered industry, which is still suffering and trying to recover from the events of 11 September, the Ansett collapse, and all that has followed.

Getting back to the draft South Australian tourism plan, I would like to put it into context: first, the Labor Party had no policies, as I have mentioned; secondly, the Labor Party saw fit to slash \$16 million of expenditure from the tourism budget; and, thirdly, this tourism plan was developed within the context of the federal minister's 10-year plan for tourism, which was still under way. Quite frankly, we would like to see the South Australian submission tabled in parliament so that it can be scrutinised. Presumably, we have had an active role in helping to contribute to that federal 10-year vision. So, that is the context within which this five-year plan has been developed.

I now want to talk about the process. A very capable group of people have put this five-year plan together, headed by Bill Spurr (the CEO) but also including Linda Bowes, David Crinion, Richard Davis, Sally Hawker, Jane Jeffreys, Graham Pfitzner, and Leanne Muffet. I note that an extensive range of organisations and individuals have been consulted in the development of this plan, and that is why we as an opposition welcome the plan. We think that there is some ownership there from the industry. The group of people who have put together the plan have obviously given it a bit of thought; there has been quite a bit of consultation, and they are to be commended.

We have some comment to make on the strengths of the five-year plan, and we also have some constructive comment to make on areas where we think that it can be improved. What does stand out, certainly at this point, is that the government appears to have been completely hands-off in terms of any involvement in the process. Maybe that is a good thing, considering that the government did not have any policy or plans when it was elected and does not seem to have any even now. However, it would have been nice to see the minister and the government more excited about the plan and more actively involved in helping to promote and launch it.

This plan was signed off on 10 September, and it mysteriously arrived in people's letterboxes about a week later. We still do not know who did and who did not get it. I have had travel agents and other people in the tourism industry ringing me and saying, 'We hear that there is a plan around; where is it?' An undisclosed list of people received copies of the plan, but there was no media release at the time, as far as the opposition is aware; there was no promulgation; and there was no big launch.

When minister Hockey launched his 10-year plan, he chose the occasion of a significant tourism conference here in Adelaide. In front of an entire audience, he promoted and announced the 10-year plan for tourism that the federal government had put together, and he encouraged everybody to get involved in contributing to it. As I have mentioned previously, our Minister for Tourism was not at that launch, because she was too busy, although it was probably the most significant federal government announcement for tourism of recent years.

By contrast, the launch of the South Australian five-year plan for tourism was an absolute whimper: there was no spectacular launch; there was no effort by the government to focus people's attention on it; it was simply quietly secreted out for comment. Further, it was signed off on 10 September, and it probably arrived in people's mail boxes about 17 September. It is a pretty significant document—probably the most important tourism strategic document for the next five years—and how long did people have to reply? They had until the 30 September. The government said, 'We will send it all around the state; we want you to all examine it; this is the most important bit of strategic planning; this is the government's view for the future. By the way, will you please respond within about a working week? If you happen to be an association, that doesn't matter; go and consult with your 200 members, get them all together and have meetings and discuss the pros and cons, and get your answers in by 30 September.'

Needless to say, the opposition had a few words to say about that on radio. Then, lo and behold, the minister decided, 'Gee, I had better do something about this.' So, on Wednesday the 18th, the minister put out a media release. That is terrific! The horse had already bolted. The minister said, 'By the way, I'd better tell people that my government's vision for the future which, by the way, I've not had much to do with, but it is out there—I'd better tell people that my vision is out there. I had a dream; I'd better tell people about it.'

So, after the opposition brought it to people's attention, and tourism operators were getting calls from the opposition and the media saying, 'Have you seen the plan?', the government finally decided to tell people of its existence. I think that the process was a little shoddy and could have been better handled. There is a lot of good stuff in this plan; it is actually a very good piece of work. To that extent, I commend the government for allowing it to proceed. Indeed, it should be widely promulgated and widely contributed to. I can only hope that the government extended the deadline: I do not know if it did. I can only hope that it did so, and that people were not cut off and denied the opportunity to comment because they did not get their responses in by 30 September.

Perhaps when the minister responds to this debate, we will hear further on that. I encourage the minister to respond, because I have moved over the course of the year a number of motions in relation to tourism, and I do not think the minister has contributed to even one of the motions I have moved in relation to tourism. The minister can correct me if I am wrong.

The opportunity of private members' time is there for the government to get actually involved in a debate and for us to get into some policy issues. So, I encourage the minister, at some stage between now and 2006—or certainly before the end of this session of parliament—to please respond to some of the motions that are on the agenda.

In relation to the content of the five-year plan, I commend the group of people who have put it together. It has a number of very excellent propositions. I think that it is a very logical framework, and the way the paper is presented makes it very readable. The description of the outlook for tourism is fairly realistic. It may not fully recognise the problems we are having with air travel at the moment, but it identifies them and recognises that there are serious challenges. The discussion on target markets is very good, as are the discussions on positioning and branding, industry challenges and the vision for the future.

The various objectives are listed—and there are many, ranging from enriching the wine and food experience through to things such as positioning South Australia as the gateway to the Outback, developing a balanced program of events and festivals, celebrating the state's arts and culture, encouraging Aboriginal tourism, capitalising on the state's sporting infrastructure and developing niche markets, etc.—all those are very sensible initiatives. The objective of promoting South Australia as a drive destination is another excellent initiative. I congratulate the government on its launch of the drive campaign, which is another initiative of the former government that was planned for some time and funded in our budget. I congratulate the government on going ahead with it and not cancelling it. I will not read them all, but the objectives there are very good.

The main point that I would make is that we need to be careful that we do not try to be all things to all people. We have a limited amount of money to spend and a limited amount of resources. What we have to do is focus those resources in a way that brings the most people to South Australia. We could ask ourselves what will promote people coming to South Australia. The principal theme in this is wine and food tourism, and I recognise that; it is a principal attractor. Wine and food tourism is a principal jewel in our crown, but on its own is it enough to attract international and interstate visitors to come here? The reason Queensland is a very successful tourist destination is that it has largely built on its promotion of the Barrier Reef, as the Northern Territory's success was achieved through its development of Kakadu, and as New South Wales has done with its development of Sydney as a destination. South Australia calls out for the development of a genuinely iconic destination—or two—for people to visit.

As well as wine and food tourism, we have the Outback and where the Outback meets the sea. The paper focuses upon the Outback—I recognise that it is certainly a feature—but where the Outback meets the sea is a theme that could be developed. Thirdly, Kangaroo Island as a unique destination is on a par with Fraser Island and Kakadu as a destination that really stands out, particularly to internationals, ahead of some other destinations which we South Australians love dearly but which may not be as prominent. Some strategic aspects to the plan could be further enhanced over time but, generally, it is an outstanding bit of work. I commend the tourism commission and the team that put this together. I regret the way in which the government managed the process of promulgating and debating the thing, but it is an excellent bit of work for the future.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): I am a generous and warm hearted person, and I feel that I have given the member for Waite some freedom, because I understand he is inexperienced and I understand his grief. I understand how tragic it must be to be the fifth

choice—not the first choice of his party, but the fifth choice. He waited in line for the others to fall upon their sword before he took up the tourism portfolio. The tragedy is that he may be experienced in unarmed combat, but his history in tourism is rather slim, unlike my own. The problem for him is clearly manifold. As we know, he has had trouble understanding the budget, and we have heard some extraordinary figures. I appreciate—

Members interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The minister has the call and to the best of my knowledge listened to the member for Waite in silence. She is entitled to the same courtesy.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I understand his grief, because he has never actually worked as a minister during budget time. He clearly has had difficulty understanding the figures. He does not understand that project funding runs out or even that biennial events are impossible to fund in their off year. We took him aside and had time with our CEO to explain the budget process simply, at a level that I thought he might have comprehended. We sent written explanations for the budget lines, yet he has still been unable to understand the substance of our budgetary process or the accuracy of the figures which he constantly gives but which are generally entirely inaccurate.

His other problem is that he has never been in place during the period when a five year plan has been developed. The first in 1980 set the scene and, by Minister Hockey's statements, we are the best organised state in terms of planning. We put infrastructure investment, business development and regional development ahead of iconic structures, which Minister Hockey has admitted are a waste of time. I understand that the member for Waite's back bench thinks we can save the wine centre by having pensioners' buses going there daily, and that is a novel way of responding, but I think we have had enough iconic destinations in this state.

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Well, you might go through *Hansard*. I was quite touched by it: I thought we would have a pensioner led recovery, but it may take more than a couple of pensioner buses to bail out the icons that the last government left us—and there are many under-used, over-funded icons of incompetence.

The most interesting aspect of the member for Waite's brief management of that portfolio (I do not hold him responsible for very much, because he was not there very long) is that I do not believe he could have read the act under which the SATC was set up. Had he done so, perhaps he might have known that it is incumbent upon the minister and the board to sign a performance agreement. When this government was elected and I was made minister on 6 March it was fascinating to delve back through the records and work out what had and had not been done, and I was requested to sign a performance agreement. You might ask me whether I signed it, and I would have to say no. And why did I not sign it?

I did offer to sign a prospective performance agreement, which would have been valid from April to June, and that might have been a very valid thing for me to do, but I was not prepared to sign a retrospective agreement. Since the five stars of the Liberal government's tourism portfolio had failed to sign one, why should I bother to retrospectively endorse their planning policy? In fact, I chose not to sign in retrospect on crown law advice and, if the member for Waite chose to read the annual report, he might find that recorded. There was no performance agreement for that year, because the minister

and all his predecessors in that glorious position had failed to sign a performance agreement.

In respect of the five year plan, I have to say that it was one of the most extraordinary consultative developments, but my hand was clearly upon the document. Unlike the member for Waite, I have an obsession with detail which may perhaps be my undoing, because I do read documents, over and over again. I have read each iteration and have been highly consulted on the matter, as have the 40 regional focus groups, the 10 themed groups for arts, youth, ecotourism, Aboriginal tourism, local government, transport and state government agencies as well as the in-house workshops for all the stakeholders. Currently, we have not launched the plan. The reason we have not launched the plan with an extravagant fiasco like the opening of the wine centre and all the wonderful launches that the last government loved, such as Bring Them Home launches that meant nothing, is that we believe in substance and achievement, not wine and extravaganzas and expensive singers.

We have not launched the plan because it is a draft plan. It is not completed. One does not launch the final draft until it has been finalised. If one would like to think of the problems in the planning, there was not only no performance agreement but also no strategy. It was business as usual—like the five previous ministers. There is now an intense focus on achieving outcomes. If one wants to look at the iconic inbound flights to the Northern Territory, it might be interesting to know that we have more tourists coming to South Australia than the Northern Territory, and even more inbound flights coming here. We have 2 900 inbound seats per week, and we have a natural disadvantage because we are a difficult state to reach. There are 180 000 inbound seats per week on the east coast, so to pretend that an iconic destination, such as the wine centre, can be created and that the cargo cult will solve our problems is nonsense.

The previous government was so intent on not signing a performance agreement and having big parties that it may not have noticed that, while lauding the major events and wonderful functions, such as the rose festival, it had never compiled an annual calendar of events. AME, ACTA and the Convention Centre all had a calendar, but they were not consolidated. Perhaps they were commercial-in-confidence; who knows? When we actually compiled the calendar, what do you think we found? We found lumping great gaps with nothing happening. That is the level of management and that is the problem in the forward seven-year plan. There are whole months when the city is closed. We are actually smart enough to find the gaps because we have a consolidated calendar—and we are working on a calendar for forward events.

Interestingly enough, we have this dysfunctional set of organisations, such as ACTA and AME, that are not entirely focused on the fact that they are bringing tourists to South Australia. For example, the World Congress in Adelaide was attended by the richest, most powerful people in the world—champions of the universe. They came with their money and their expense accounts, yet what happened on the Friday evening? They flew home. Because they clearly do not know what the festival is, what the Naracoorte Caves are and what the Barossa Valley is, they will not book a return flight anywhere beyond the last day.

Similarly, AME is a fascinating organisation. The Tour Down Under has been running for five years. Members who have been to the Tour de France would know that the Tour de France is followed by hundreds of men, sweating in lycra

suits, who are amateur riders. Do they come to South Australia? No: because we have never marketed Tour Down Under as a tourism event. There is a dysfunction and a disconnect between the glossy, glitzy events and what we are there for, namely, core business such as bodies in beds, seats on aeroplanes and tourists coming to South Australia. If members opposite want a credible plan, they might well look at the tourism commission's plan when it is launched—which is when it will be finished and when I am happy with it.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I move:

That standing orders be so far suspended as to enable the Controlled Substances (Cannabis) Amendment Bill to be taken into consideration forthwith.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Hanna): I have counted the house and, as an absolute majority of the whole number of members of the house is not present, ring the bells.

An absolute majority of the whole number of members being present:

Motion carried.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES (CANNABIS) AMENDMENT BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 5 June. Page 520.)

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): I rise in support of the bill, which removes cannabis plants grown by artificially enhanced methods, such as hydroponics, from the expiation scheme under the parent act. The original scheme established in 1986 was justified on the basis that personal use of cannabis should not be dealt with in the court system but, rather, offenders should be able to expiate offences for possession or cultivation of small quantities of cannabis for personal use. It was never intended that offences involving the possession or cultivation of cannabis for commercial purposes would be expiable. There is now evidence to suggest that the expiation scheme is being abused and that the cannabis trade is encouraging this abuse. The scheme is being used for commercial cultivation. The expiable number of plants has already been reduced to one.

The next step is to deal with the problem of hydroponic cultivation. I think it would be true to say that no-one who supported the 1986 amendment would have contemplated the level of hydroponic cultivation we are seeing today. Hydroponic plants reach maturity in a shorter time than soil grown plants. Hydroponic plants are not necessarily dependent on sunlight and can be grown indoors under lights all year round. I understand that a hydroponically produced cannabis plant is capable of producing about 500 grams of cannabis. Cannabis grown hydroponically is also likely to be stronger. Hydroponics also has risks. Strong lights and equipment, often hidden in confined spaces such as cupboards or roof cavities, can ignite a fire.

The main active ingredient of cannabis is tetrahydrocannabinol delta nine (THC). The THC level varies between different types of cannabis. The highest concentration of THC is in the flowering head; the lowest is in the leaf. The level of THC also changes with the stages of development so, if a

plant is picked late, the THC level is less than it would be if picked in its prime. The method of cultivation, including hydroponics, can immensely increase THC levels.

In the USA, the University of Mississippi has been conducting a research project on behalf of the National Institute of Drug Abuse. The project examined the analysis of 35 312 samples confiscated in the United States of America over 18 years. Since 1992, the potency of confiscated marijuana samples has continuously risen, going from 3.1 per cent in 1992 to 4.2 per cent in 1997. Tests on the THC level of cannabis samples by the New Zealand government over the past two decades found the average concentration of THC in all cannabis samples indicated a gradual rise from 3 per cent in 1991 to 4.47 per cent in 1997. Recently, the National Drug and Alcohol Centre at the University of New South Wales looked at whether the THC content of cannabis had increased in Australia. This was done in response to claims that there has been an increase in THC content of up to 30 times over two decades.

The researchers, Wayne Hill and Wendy Swift, found that the THC content of cannabis had not been systematically tested in Australia during the two decades. They looked at the published data on THC content collected by the government analytical bodies, laboratories, and police and health departments in the mainland states. Their research showed that in 1997 a small number of cannabis seizures from the states were tested and showed a THC content between 0.6 and 13 per cent. I also advise that the mean THC content of samples tested by Western Australian police between March and May 1996 was 3.8 per cent for all samples and 6.4 per cent in the samples of heads. The researchers also refer to a test in the New South Wales government laboratory where a sample of compressed hydroponically grown heads from South Australia was analysed and found to have a THC content of 15 per cent. They suggest that media publicity about the THC content of single samples such as this can create a false impression that these are typical levels.

In Canada, the Senate Special Committee on Illegal Drugs found that changes in the THC seemed to be owing to techniques for selecting more powerful strains and that cultivation in greenhouses and hydroponically have made it possible to achieve THC concentrations of 15 per cent or more. However, it also found that, although all specialists agreed that the maximum active ingredient concentrations have increased over the past 20 years, opinion is divided on average concentrations in cannabis available on the market. It concluded that the main change has been in maximum concentrations obtained as a result of sophisticated cross breeding and cultivation methods but that average concentrations have not significantly changed over the past 30 years.

Given this background, it appears to me that THC concentrations are rising, particularly where cannabis is grown using more sophisticated cultivation methods such as hydroponics. In addition, there is increasing research suggesting the harmful effects of cannabis. Jurisdictions world wide are still grappling with the cannabis problem. In July 2002, the United Kingdom Home Secretary announced that cannabis should be reclassified from a class B to a class C drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act. Under the proposal, possession of cannabis would have the same illegal status as steroids or other prescription drugs such as tranquilisers that have been illegally obtained. The Western Australian government has also recently looked at changing the way in which minor cannabis offences are dealt with. It has supported an infringement notice scheme for people caught

with small amounts of cannabis for personal use. However, it did not support the inclusion of hydroponic cultivation of cannabis in the infringement scheme. I support the exclusion of hydroponic cultivation from the expiation scheme. I think it is a sensible measure, so I am prepared to support the bill.

The SPEAKER: The member for Heysen.

Mrs REDMOND (Heysen): Thank you, Mr Speaker.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Now for a left-wing contribution!

Mrs REDMOND: I am rising to support the bill, in spite of the comments of the Attorney. I indicate that I personally have never tried any form of marijuana, except by accident one night where I slept in a room where people had been smoking marijuana. I ended up so sick—

Members interjecting:

Mrs REDMOND: That was my one and only experience of passive smoking. I was nearly hospitalised the next day I was so ill. So, I stayed well away from it. However, I come from that generation of people who grew up believing that there was no harm in the stuff, that marijuana was a non-harmful thing in which we could safely indulge. In fact, in my young days we were encouraged to hold the view that it was, indeed, less harmful than either alcohol or tobacco, both of which were used by the adults in the community in which I was not then an adult. My views on that have changed over the years, largely as a result of my experience in legal practice.

Although my experience in legal practice was relatively limited in the area of criminal law, I continued to find that—even in my practice in Stirling where most of the people who came to see me had a fairly good socioeconomic background—when I had incidents of criminal law involvement, they tended to be young people probably from what you would describe as good homes but who had become involved in criminal activity because of their involvement with cannabis. As I observed this over a period of years, I noticed more and more that a number of these young people not only had some peripheral involvement in criminal activity but they sometimes progressed to harder drugs. More importantly, I began to note that there were people who were exhibiting signs of having psychosis as a result of their involvement with regular and sometimes quite heavy use of cannabis.

Having observed that over a period—and it was, of course, only anecdotal evidence; I had not read anything in particular about the use of the drug that would indicate a change of the medical evidence from what I had always understood to be the case, that it was a relatively harmless drug—I then discussed it with a number of magistrates who worked in the Youth Court. They confirmed my anecdotal observation that many young people not only ended up in peripheral criminal activity, usually of a relatively minor kind, but also were increasingly exhibiting signs of psychosis. So it did not really come as any great surprise to me when I began to read more about this area to find that, indeed, there are quite significant harmful effects from the use of this drug.

As the Attorney previously pointed out, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) is the ingredient that makes this drug quite harmful. With regard to the quite significant health factors that result from its use, I refer to an article that appeared some years ago in a *Reader's Digest* magazine which states:

There are 10 000 medical studies documenting the harmful effects of cannabis. It is damaging to the cardiovascular, respiratory and immune systems. Alcohol is quickly expelled from the body, but THC—

that is, the active ingredient in cannabis—

can lodge in fatty tissues for several weeks, perhaps months. There's four times more tar in a cannabis joint than there is in a cigarette, so all the cancerous side effects of smoking are multiplied.

More importantly, the incidence of psychosis can increase. Research indicates that cannabis can cause severe psychosis within six months of daily use and there are numerous examples of quite significant accidents occurring in communities both in the United States, here and in Europe where, after the event, the accident is found to have been related to the presence of significant indicators of THC in the bloodstream of the person who was found to be responsible. So we have these quite significant general health effects and the much heightened increase of psychosis. The average percentage of schizophrenia in the normal population is something like 17 per cent if you have one parent who suffers from it and it jumps up to 47 per cent if you have two parents with schizophrenia. It jumps up significantly again—and I do not have the figure—if you have been indulging in the smoking of marijuana. It is quite significant in our society.

I have completely reversed my view from the view I had as a teenager or young adult. There is also evidence to suggest that this stuff can cause problems for mothers and the transfer of the THC component in mothers who are pregnant. The studies show that their babies may have shorter gestation periods, higher risk of birth defects, low birth weight and, potentially, leukaemia. Another important issue with all of this is that in the last few days we have been discussing road safety measures in this state and it was mentioned by a number of members on both sides of the house in the course of that debate that the road safety measures we need to look at will involve necessarily not just taking alco-testing into account but in fact testing for the presence of cannabis or other drugs in the bloodstream.

There is also significant evidence to show that there is a reasonably high correlation between use of marijuana and people moving on to harder drugs. There is certainly nothing to suggest that marijuana use itself automatically leads to harder drugs, but equally it is true that the evidence that has been gathered indicates that very few people end up on hard drugs as the first step. They actually move through a process and a high percentage of people who get into the harder drug scene have got there from the path of initially being involved with marijuana. The anti-social and criminal behaviour that it can lead to is a significant issue that this legislation will help address.

As the Attorney indicated in his comments on the matter, when the laws were originally drafted to allow us to have people who just had an expiation offence for growing marijuana for personal use and a limit on the number of plants, they did not contemplate hydroponic growing. One plant grown hydroponically could fill an average room. Not only do you get an increased quantity, but the increased intensity of the presence of THC is of concern and on that basis the introduction of this bill is a positive measure—one that we should have taken some time ago, and the member for Mawson may have introduced this bill earlier. I support the bill and hope that it progresses rapidly through the parliament so we can introduce this legislation as quickly as possible and get away from the idea that cannabis is not a harmful product in this community.

Mr SNELLING (Playford): I add my support this morning to this bill and commend the member for Mawson for bringing it to the house. As has already been pointed out,

due to the refinement of strains of cannabis plants, the concentration of THC and therefore the strength of cannabis is far greater than it was back in the 1970s when use of cannabis grew rather exponentially. The strains of cannabis we are now dealing with are of far greater strength, particularly when you add the refined strains to the technology of hydroponics, where you add again to the strength of the cannabis. So the proposals of the member for Mawson to refine our system of expiation for the personal use of marijuana is a very good idea.

As the member for Heysen has already pointed out, there is a clear link between cannabis use and psychosis, particularly the onset of schizophrenia, as well as various other mental and physical illnesses. When the expiation system was first established, it really was envisaged that people caught in possession of a small amount of marijuana or growing up to 10 plants would be people who would grow or be in possession of marijuana purely for personal use. As technology has changed, those laws have quickly become completely obsolete and 10 plants could be grown and could provide hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of marijuana in a year.

The police for many years have been arguing for a change to the number of plants that could be grown because clearly people were growing their 10 plants using hydroponics, which resulted in enormous plants, clearly for the purposes of trafficking as part of a criminal syndicate. They would be raided by the police and they could only be given an expiation fee of about \$50. So you had people who were making hundreds of thousands of dollars from growing marijuana in their home, or in a home rented specifically for that purpose, and selling it. All they were risking from a police raid was a \$50 fine. It is clear that our laws are way out of kilter with the offences being committed. I am sure most members here would not think that trafficking in any drug should be expiable with such a small fine.

The member for Mawson is proposing to take out all hydroponically grown marijuana from the expiation system—a wise thing to do—because it has become clear that South Australia has become the marijuana capital of Australia and it is high time that our laws be refined. I have some sympathy with not clogging up our courts with cases of people caught with small amounts of marijuana, clearly for personal use. I think our courts probably have better things to do. However, to have people growing large amounts of marijuana, clearly with the intention of trafficking in the drug, and escaping an appearance in court and due punishment with an expiation fee is quite ludicrous. I commend the member for Mawson for bringing forward this bill and commend the bill to the house.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I, too, support this bill and commend the member for Mawson for introducing it as a private member's bill. This is a continuation of the previous government's approach to becoming tough on hydroponic equipment, whereby the police were able to confiscate hydroponic equipment that was used for the growing of cannabis. The Attorney has outlined the history of expiation notices for cannabis, which goes back to 1986 when Dr John Cornwall, Minister for Health in the Bannon government, introduced the expiation notice for cannabis. I must say that it is always good to talk in hindsight. I must admit that the intentions of the then—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Why is it that MPs can't open their mouth without saying 'I must say' and 'can I say'? Count them up every day in this place.

Mr SCALZI: I am well aware that the Attorney-General is a much better speaker and understands the English language better than I: I accept that. But going back to the intentions of the then government, it was really to unclog the court system, and the knowledge that we have today on cannabis was not available then. There is no question of that. It is similar to the problem with tobacco. In the past we did not know about all the harmful effects of tobacco and its association with cancer, but we know today that 19 000 deaths are attributed to tobacco smoking.

There is no question that cannabis has a lot of the ingredients of cigarettes plus the tetrahydrocannabinol substance that we are finding is really the potent chemical that has most of the harmful effects. So, cannabis has the harmful effects of cigarette smoking plus.

I cannot understand how we got into the mentality that cannabis was a recreational drug. I can understand the graduates of Woodstock thinking that and their supporters looking for answers in the foggy woods but, thank God, in this day and age we are more objective and, hopefully, research more rather than bringing in measures that will cause us problems in the future.

And, I question our approach to poker machines. Whilst at the time the move was intended to prevent people going to New South Wales, we are now finding that poker machines are causing us so many social problems. I do not believe that marijuana is a recreational drug. In some ways it can be seen as a 'wreck-a-generation-al' drug.

Mr Hanna: Why else would people take it if it wasn't recreational?

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You think they take it out of duty?

Mr SCALZI: As a schoolteacher for 18 years, I saw first-hand what happened to students' attitudes and their results, both academically and in sport, when they got involved with smoking marijuana, so I think I can talk from experience. Last year, when members of parliament spent the day with community groups, I spent my day with the schizophrenic society, talking to health care workers in that area, and again I was told that there is a link between the use of cannabis and the precipitation, if not the cause, of some of the psychological and health problems that a lot of young people are experiencing. So, we do have the information now.

I believe that there are three main reasons why this bill should be supported and the member for Mawson commended. First, we have no doubt that hydroponic technology enables growers to produce marijuana at a greater rate than it would be outside, and with the potency of THC. We know, as the Premier put out in his press statement, that a single hydroponically grown plant has been estimated to produce about 500 grams of dried cannabis with a market value of \$3 000 to \$4 000, and that hydroponic cultivation allows for three or four crops a year.

There is no question that there is abuse of the expiation notice system. The abuse occurs in relation to outside-grown cannabis but it is most acute for hydroponically grown cannabis, because it gives people the opportunity to have great amounts, to take advantage of the system, and to have a network of distribution, which really helps criminals in this area to promote the so-called recreational drug amongst our young people, and I commend the government for taking action to do something about it.

There is no question that this increases criminal activity. We had to pass measures that enabled the police to confiscate hydroponic equipment, so the problem has been there.

Secondly, we are now aware of the harmful effects of cannabis; and, thirdly, there is the risk to persons and property because of the potential to have fires in those places where cannabis is grown artificially. I am sure that the member for Colton would agree with me about the risk when you use so much power. I am sure that when they put in the equipment they do not go to the local electrician who is going to give them an okay, and they do not put in the Clipsal safety switches. Their aim is to grow as much marijuana as possible, distribute it and make money.

So, they are the three main reasons: the increase in criminal activity (there is no question that it does that); the harmful effects that we well know now; and the risk to person and property due to the fire risks. I am aware of some landlords who have been caught and who thought that they have just leased their houses, and the next thing they know they are growing marijuana artificially. Also involved is the use of electricity for such purposes, when we know the increasing costs of electricity. Obviously, the expense is well covered by the increase in profits of these illegal activities. Given the statistics and the increasing knowledge that cannabis is associated with the risk to illness, physically and psychologically, I believe that we should have a closer look at the whole marijuana debate. I know that this proposal still allows for one plant to be grown outside, and that it is still the attitude of some people that it is a recreational drug. I believe that, in the future, statistics will show its harmful effects, and that this may be a great cause for concern for society.

Time expired.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I rise in support of this bill. I am somewhat angered and a bit emotional about matters such as this. Sir, you and I both raised this matter at least 18 months ago. We brought into the house the same rhetoric exactly; the same point which you, Mr Speaker, and I made, first in our party room—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Let's keep it nice. I didn't criticise you.

Mr VENNING: If the member listens, he will realise that I am being very apolitical here. This matter was raised in our party room, and it received some support to bring it into this house by way of two private member's motions under your name, sir. It was debated in this house. It annoys me that, when certain people raise issues in this house, the person is judged more than the issue. If the Attorney-General or the Premier had brought it in, it would have been more important. Just because it came from backbenchers, it did not have the clout that it deserved. It was as important then as it is today.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr VENNING: I am supporting the bill. I am just saying, sir (as you might also wish to say in a few minutes), that this issue should have been picked up two or three years ago, because it was a serious issue then just as it is now. I knew what was happening. I have read things in the *Advertiser* that I said two years ago. I agree with everything that the Premier said in this house on Tuesday, but one should look at the trouble, the hurt and the pain that have been experienced since the matter was first raised in this house. It was obvious what was happening.

Adelaide is the drug capital of Australia. Why? Because of this. Hello, hello! We have seen the light! But why did it take so long? When members of parliament—irrespective of whether they be Labor, Liberal, Independent, Democrat or whatever—raise issues such as this, why do those issues not get a speedy passage; why do they not get traction? Because

members are judged more than the issue is. We did a lot of work, sir, and you were involved, particularly in relation to discussions with the Democrats, who had a policy of 10 plants per person. I was in favour of a zero policy. The Liberal Party (which was then in government, of course) compromised and came back to one plant per person. As the Premier correctly said two days ago, one plant per person, using hydroponics, can certainly raise a lot of money for the individual—in fact, it can be a real family business.

I raised this matter in the house two years ago and it did not get up. It was brought to my notice that families in my electorate (so it must happen in everyone else's electorate) were parts of syndicates of various families which worked for a certain company that were given the seed, given the instruction—given everything—to grow the product, and they split it 50:50.

Mr Koutsantonis: What did your premier say then?

Mr VENNING: The member should read *Hansard*. The premier was very supportive. But it was judged that one plant was better and the expiation notice, I think, was to continue. That has been totally rorted. I am angry that I could not convince the powers that be—be they government, opposition or both. In the end, it was a vote on the voices, and the whole issue has been one of confusion.

I know the Attorney-General's private thoughts on this matter, and I support and appreciate that. But why is it that, as a parliament, when the issue was raised, everyone agreed, the heads nodded and nothing happened? Then, all of a sudden, the Premier stood up in this place and raised the issue. As you know, sir, we brought up this matter, and there was a debate between then police minister Brokenshire and me about whether it should be zero or one plant. I know that the member's private thoughts were probably that it should be zero, but he went for one because that was the compromise position. I opposed it, and I still do. But I certainly agree with this motion today—better late than never, you might say. However, I just wonder why issues such as this cannot break the political barriers, the so-called divide down the middle of this place, and get traction.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: We've done that today.

Mr VENNING: You have; that is right. As the Attorney-General says, they are doing it. But what about the 2½ years in the interim when this issue was first raised? We knew that we were having problems.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You were in government, not us.

Mr VENNING: It was a conscience vote. Members can read *Hansard* and see what people said two or three years ago. Members should read what people said. Although I know that some members were not here then, they should obtain a copy of *Hansard* and read what people said—what I said and what the member for Hammond said. If they have a look, they will see that it is quite clear. They should then read what the Premier said on Tuesday. I do not like hypocrites, and I endeavour not to be one. As we all know, if one does not have a good memory, one should not start furrphies. Certainly, I have difficulty, and I get a little cross and emotional about things such as this. But at last we are in agreement here; I think that every person will agree with respect to this measure. But surely it should have been picked up at least when I and the member for Hammond raised this matter with the government, and it should have received total support then. At last it is here, and I certainly support this bill.

The Hon. R.B. SUCH (Fisher): I support this measure. I also commend the Premier and the government for having the courage and willingness to support a measure introduced by a member of the opposition. I think that that (and many other examples similar to this) reflects very well on the Premier and the government. I am not trying to score any brownie points, but I do not believe that we should hold back when someone does something that is based on goodwill and is designed to improve the welfare of the community. It does not matter who initiates it: the important aspect is that it is implemented. I commend the member for Mawson for what he has done, not just now but also previously, in trying to advance this issue, and I am pleased that we now have support within the parliament to address this matter. Clearly, the use of hydroponics is linked to some elements of criminality in our society. I believe that there is a very significant economic subculture dependent upon hydroponically grown cannabis in this state. I do not believe that that is something that we should promote, encourage or allow.

Another important aspect (which has been highlighted to me by someone in this place who has a record of working in the area of fire prevention and treating fire) is that there is a significant risk to the community in terms of fires which are caused, and which have been caused, by the use of hydroponic equipment to grow cannabis. I do not know the precise statistics, but I am aware that the incidence of fires caused by this sort of equipment overloading circuits in houses and in other premises is quite significant.

All in all, I think this is a good measure. It will help to promote the health and wellbeing of our community and, to that end, I commend the opposition—and, in particular, the member for Mawson—and the Premier and the Attorney for working together in the best interests of the people of South Australia. It is something that I would like to see happen on a more frequent basis both inside and outside this house.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): I rise to support this bill. It is a sign of maturity from the government that we have not done what would have been churlish and childish, that is, not to support the member for Mawson's bill and introduce our own identical bill as government business. We have done the right thing by recognising a bill which is important and has merit and which has been introduced not by the Labor Party but by an opposition member. This government is big enough to accept that and say, 'We support this bill.'

On a number of occasions, when I travel throughout my constituency—as I imagine the speaker has throughout his electorate—people say, 'Why can't the two political parties just work together? Why can't you find some common ground and work together? Do you have to disagree on everything?' I often try to explain to them that we do agree on a number of issues and that there is bipartisan support. However, those things are not reported, because they are not interesting or newsworthy—

An honourable member interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Especially in the last parliament. I know that I am getting a bit off track here but in the last parliament we supported over 95 per cent of government legislation, and that is in stark contrast to the first eight months of this government in the other place. I do not want to make any reflections on the other place, but we have not had the same level of bipartisanship that was enjoyed by the former government.

Today, the government has said, 'Just because it's not our idea does not mean that it is not a good idea.' We are big enough to say that, and I am happy that the Premier is big enough to say that. When we had ideas in the last parliament, the former premier would not support private members' business and use government time and resources to get something up: it would redraft an identical bill, introduce it in government business and take the credit for it. However, this government is bigger than that, and we will not go down that path.

I found some of the remarks made by the member for Schubert quite offensive, because this parliament is different. This parliament is about working together. We made mistakes in the last parliament, and we have admitted those mistakes. The former government had eight years to do something about the issue of hydroponics and did nothing. In eight months we have done something straightaway. So, if anyone on the other side of this chamber doubts the resolve of this government to act in a bipartisan way and be tough and crack down on people who break the law for their own profit and who perceive, through quirks in the law, that they can get away with it, they are wrong. If something is not our idea but someone else's, we are not afraid to embrace it. Some of the hypocrisy thrown at us for supporting the private member's bill of a Liberal frontbencher—a former minister—is outrageous.

Mr Venning interjecting:

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: I take the point made by the member for Schubert, because he is an honourable man. I understand that he is passionate about this issue, and he wants to see it resolved. I know that he championed it in the last parliament. I believe that the government deserves a little credit for this, and so does the member for Mawson.

In the last parliament, I never heard the former premier acknowledge the support of anyone on the opposite benches—not with the Alice to Darwin rail link; not with Mitsubishi; not with Holden's; not for supporting the cap on poker machine caps—in relation to one issue. The member for Schubert should check *Hansard*, and tell me the last time that the former premier stood up in this chamber and said to the opposition, 'Thank you for your support.' Not once did the former premier do that. We took seriously our role as an opposition. We took our role in opposition constructively, but we were called 'whingers and whiners'. Who is whingeing and whining today about the government supporting a Liberal backbencher?

Ms Chapman: We're not.

Mr KOUTSANTONIS: Well, you could have fooled me from some of the remarks I have heard. The former government was in power for eight and a half years and no action was taken. We are in government for eight months, and we are criticised. It is a bit rich. I congratulate the Premier and the member for Mawson on this bill, which has my full support. I hope that it has a speedy carriage through the house, and I look forward to hearing the remarks of other members.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): I congratulate the shadow minister for being persistent with this matter in bringing it again to the house, and I certainly thank the government for coming on board and allowing the progress of this very important matter. I have considerable sympathy for the comments made by the member for Schubert. Some of us feel very strongly about this matter and, as by the member for Schubert pointed out some 18 months ago, we were very

disappointed that the parliamentary process thwarted what I believed then—as I do now—to be a very good piece of legislation from becoming law in South Australia. So, I certainly support and commend this bill.

In relation to the contribution made by the member for West Torrens, I point out to him that, in a debate in this chamber within the last few days, when I spoke about the road traffic laws in South Australia, I pointed out that statistics coming out of Victoria showed that what we euphemistically call 'recreational drugs' rather than alcohol seemed to be a greater problem leading to road accidents in that state. I made the comment that South Australia was well known as the marijuana capital of Australia, and that received howls of derision from those opposite. I just want to point out the hypocrisy that has occurred between the debate of a few days ago and what we are doing here now.

I think the member for West Torrens wants to be a little more circumspect when he abuses the now opposition (the former government) and understand that nobody in this place—least of all the Premier and the government—are beyond and above playing politics, because a hell of a lot of it has occurred. As I have said, I have a huge amount of sympathy for the points made by the member for Schubert. I think it is disgraceful that this matter was not dealt with some 18 months ago. I will conclude my remarks there, because I know that the shadow minister wants to wrap this up today. It is hoped that it will not only have a rapid passage through this chamber but also through the other place.

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): I will not take too much of the time of the house, but I want to emphasise the need for drug control whether it be—as we heard at the Drugs Summit—the whole gamut of illicit drugs or, in this case, marijuana. I am old enough to know that the reputation of marijuana has changed over the years. It is one of the most widely used so-called 'recreational drugs' (and I use that term very hesitantly) available. The fact is that its effects on the human body are quite disastrous and long lived, and I will talk about those in a minute.

I know that as a student and going to parties people offer you a joint. I can state on the record that I have never smoked marijuana or inhaled marijuana as a secondary smoke. I have seen the effects of marijuana on both people and, I must say, animals. We owned a property on the river at Wellington where people apparently decided it was a great place to grow small pots of marijuana along the river and lake edges. Some of our cattle got in there and ate the marijuana plants. They looked like they had been out on the turps; they were really drunk.

Even in ruminant animals, where it is a secondary effect, there is a significant effect. It is a very potent plant: the drugs combined in marijuana are very poisonous. I have seen people feed their dogs marijuana cookies, and it is distressing to see dogs who have no idea where they are when they have come into the clinic. I actually saw one little dog stand on its back legs and pirouette round and round for five minutes. This little dog just had no idea.

People laugh about it, but it is a tragedy that people think that marijuana is such a harmless drug—that it is not a problem at all. They think, 'Just get into it and away we go.' It is a very toxic drug, and I will outline why in a few minutes.

I will provide a little of the history of marijuana. I had a look at the worldwide history of marijuana, and apparently the first cultivation of *Cannabis sativa*—the actual plant—

dates back thousands of years. In fact, Chinese records date back to 28 BC, so it has been around for a while. Apparently, traces of THC have been detected in a three thousand year old Egyptian mummy, so not only the Chinese but also the Egyptians were into it. Cannabis is perhaps the most recognisable plant in the world, and that is saying something. Hashish, which is more powerful than marijuana (which I understand is the chopped up leaves) is made from the resin of the cannabis flowers. The potency of marijuana over the years is something that we really need to deal with, because I understand that hydroponic marijuana is far more potent than the marijuana that used to be around when I was a student and I suppose when the Egyptian mummy was around 3 000 years ago.

The potency levels in marijuana have gone up 25 times since the 1960s, according to the information I have gathered. I understand that Mexican marijuana seeds were brought into the Mallee and that they were contaminated with broom rape seeds, so people going out there with their marijuana farms may have been responsible for the introduction of broom rape into the Mallee. Certainly, the level of THC in some of the Mexican marijuana can be 15 per cent, which makes it probably 100 or 200 times more potent than the marijuana that was around a few years ago. According to information I have here, 71 million Americans over the age of 12 admitted they had used marijuana in the last 12 months. I do not know what the figure is in South Australia, but I am certain it would be quite staggering, because people think it is quite a harmless drug; they think they will just get a bit high on marijuana and it does not bother or affect them.

Marijuana contains over 100 chemicals which are inhaled or ingested, whether people eat it in cookies, as were fed to the dog I mentioned, or whether they smoke it, but THC is a very potent chemical compound compared with other psychoactive drugs. An intravenous dose of 1 milligram can produce serious mental and psychological effects, and it takes seconds to work. Cannabinoid receptors in the brain that are affected by THC affect short-term memory, coordination, learning and problem solving.

I will read a little out of the *Medical Journal of Australia* about the way some of the chemicals work on the human body, including comments by the two authors, Gabriel Nahas and Collette Latour, as follows:

The recreational smoking of products derived from Cannabis sativa, mainly its resin (hashish) or the chopped flowering tops of the plants (marijuana), has become trivialised in western industrialised countries since 1960. . . In addition to THC, more than 60 other cannabinoids have been identified in cannabis. . . Among them are alkaloid derivatives of spermidine, sterols, terpenes and flavanoid glucosides. . . Under the influence of heat, cannabinoids rapidly decarboxylate. At 200°C—400°C aromatisation of the cannabinoids occurs. Some 150 polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons have been identified in marijuana smoke and the proportions of the higher molecular weight compounds, particularly the carcinogen benzo[a]pyrene, are greater in marijuana than in tobacco smoke. . . Other constituents of marijuana smoke include phenols, phytosterols, acids and terpenes. In other respects the smoke of tobacco and marijuana is similar. Toxic substances such as carbon monoxide, hydrogen cyanide, and nitrosamines are present in equivalent concentrations in both smokes and the 'tar' yield is also similar.

THC and other cannabinoids are very fat soluble and have a half life of eight days in fat. It therefore takes one month to completely eliminate a single dose of THC, which is stored in liver, lung, spleen and fat. Less than 1 per cent reaches the brain or the testis. Consumption of cannabis more often than once a week will result in storage of THC in the body. THC is a polar compound which is slowly metabolised—

it is also a popular compound, unfortunately—

into more water-soluble, non-psychoactive metabolites, of which 80 have been identified to date. The bioavailability of THC is 20 per cent when inhaled and 6 per cent when ingested.

The article goes on:

In addition, THC and its metabolites cross the placental barrier and are transferred to maternal milk.

So, just like smoking normal tobacco, smoking marijuana will affect babies in utero. Later, the article states:

Cannabis extracts are mutagenic in standard in-vitro and in-vivo tests. THC and other cannabinoids also impair DNA and RNA synthesis in cell structures and inhibit the primary immune response and resistance to herpes simplex virus in rodents. Such properties account for the toxicity which has now been reported in man.

I will read a bit more, concerning marijuana and road accidents:

Chesher et al reported in 1985—

so, way back then we knew about this—

that THC was 4 000 times more potent than alcohol in producing decrements in performance of subjects studied under controlled conditions.

It has been known for a long time that drug driving, let alone drink driving, is a very dangerous occupation. The article goes on:

It is well established that marijuana smoking can trigger an acute psychotic episode in schizophrenics.

That is without doubt. The article states that the incidence of psychotic episodes was six times greater in users of marijuana than in people who did not use marijuana. The article continues by stating that the ability of cannabis to induce long-lasting mental disturbances is epidemiologically documented. Having just read that, I would think that that is enough to convince any sane person that using marijuana is not the way to go. I support the bill before the house. I am very pleased to see that it is getting bipartisan support. As a new member of this place I think it is great to see that politicians can work together for the better of South Australia. It is good to see that the member for Mawson has finally achieved his goal, and I wish him well in proceeding with this bill.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): I compliment the member for Mawson for his consistent and persistent presentation of this amendment to the parliament. I think it is fair to say that it is a small but effective part of the modern management of the consumption, trading and dealing in drugs. It is only a small part, and I wish to address some comments as to where else we might look to contemporise the need to manage this important issue in the community. I commend the member for Mawson for having the courage to bring the matter to the house. From listening to the debate today it appears that on both sides of the house members have taken different periods of time to reach a level of enlightenment in coming around to supporting the member for Mawson's approach to dealing with this matter. Frankly, I do not really care how long they have taken or on which side of the house they have been. It seems that it has caused some concern in the past. What is important today is that the member for Mawson has presented his bill and, although it is now some months later, nevertheless, the issue has advanced up the agenda. It appears that it now has bipartisan support, and I am pleased to see that.

I do not think there is any doubt that many members sitting around the house are old enough to appreciate that the comments made today as to the status concerning consumption of cannabis and its ill effects or otherwise are different

from the views expressed in earlier decades. Clearly, 20 or 30 years ago a number in the community took a different view as to the level of harm. Now in 2002 we have clear medical evidence and research before us to confirm the harmful and deleterious effects on the human body of cannabis or its products when consumed in quantities. Much has been said of the physical effects of this drug, and the identification of the extended concentrations of THC in this drug have been detailed today. I will not traverse those, but I highlight that it is now also common knowledge, with the research to support it, that depression, particularly in younger women, is at an advanced level as a consequence of the taking of this drug over a sustained period. We must be forever vigilant in ensuring that we protect younger people against that. The research tells us that it is something to which younger women are particularly vulnerable.

It is also clear that, in the contemporary assessment of this issue, the whole industry of drug production has been enhanced by the use of hydroponic equipment. It is no accident that we have heard over some years now that South Australia is a drug capital of Australia in this area of drugs. We might not have reached that in other drug areas, such as amphetamines, but cannabis seems to be something we have been particularly good at producing, consuming and trading in. Therefore, in my view it is no accident that South Australia has some 90-odd hydroponic shops in operation in this state, and that ought to be a clear indicator to anyone who is consciously looking at what the modern situation is.

In my own political career—and I am not about to jump into the well of discussion about use or abuse at any personal level—at a professional level, the criminal law, in particular aspects in relation to drug use and prosecutions, is something in which I did have an interest and which formed part of my practice. In the early 1980s it was not uncommon for there to be detection, particularly in rural areas in South Australia, of large operations growing cannabis plants, usually next to a natural water source, and often with private generation of electricity, frequently underground. The opportunity to detect and identify, even using satellite technology, was something that was developed alongside the way in which this industry grew. It was something that could be attended to with sufficient funds and police force numbers.

But like so many industries, it moved on to ensure it reached another level. Hydroponics is a method by which they have been able to come out of vegetated, reclusive areas of South Australia—not to say they have been eliminated there at all—to now enable very significant operations within metropolitan areas to produce high amounts of production. In my own electorate of Bragg I was informed on the weekend of a raid on a house—I understand owned by the local council—which had been tenanted. The obvious lack of people going in and out of the house initially was followed by a flurry of activity, and this alerted the police. As a result, a residential property in the eastern suburbs of Adelaide was found to be full of plants, all able to grow secretly with the use of hydroponic equipment.

The industry is rife, and it is no surprise to me that we see trucks leaving this state on a daily basis laden with produce that will be sold and, I suspect—and I can only suspect at this point—returning into our state with other drugs, such as amphetamines, and so on, to introduce another dangerous and deleterious substance to our children and the people of this state. There has been some conscious effort to deal with management of the prosecution of these matters. We have heard that in the 1980s the expiation notice was introduced,

which was an initiative at the time to allow a person to grow 10 plants without attracting a criminal offence.

During the course of the last government, notwithstanding some comment of inaction, apparently, after several attempts—but I have to check *Hansard* to identify exactly how many—there was a development to produce a circumstance where today people are individually able to grow three cannabis plants for personal consumption. Of course, that is if there is only one person in a household. If there are two people in the household, they can grow six plants. A mature cannabis plant, I think on the current market, can produce an income of about \$1 500 per plant. If there are two people in a household, and they can grow six plants hydroponically, they could have an income of about \$9 000.

It is hardly surprising that this is an industry with some attraction. Obviously, it is quite easy to make a considerable amount of money, and it is probably fair to say that it all will be tax free. I suppose the GST means there will be some tax on the other end when the money is spent, but it is fair to say that the current law, with the aid of hydroponics, can still provide an environment in which there can be a very substantial growing and trading in a very lucrative industry for those involved. The current situation is that if a person is caught growing three plants, or fewer than three plants, in order to cover the personal consumption acknowledgment and acceptance in the community, then there is a fine of \$150 and no criminal record.

Today's measure, if it passes this house and the further processes, then in some small way it will help to deal with the modern management of this difficulty. I urge those members considering these issues to look also at the question of search of vehicles in respect of being able to detect and detain. At present, if a police officer forms a genuine belief a person is in possession of drugs, then there can be some search of that person, but of course having the capacity to identify to form a suspicion makes that somewhat more difficult. I do not think there is any doubt that, in relation to this drug, transport is the issue.

Time expired.

Mr MEIER (Goyder): I echo the comments made by so many other members in the debate today. At long last we are getting close to a zero tolerance policy; certainly with hydroponically grown marijuana plants it is zero tolerance. We now have a situation where people in the community are allowed to grow one plant per person. Mr Speaker, I know you would probably fully support the zero tolerance on the hydroponically grown plants. If my memory serves me correctly, you probably supported zero tolerance on any marijuana plants. I have a slightly different view. I have some sympathy to enable people to have one plant, so we cannot be accused of saying, 'There's no freedom left for people.'

However, I recognise that, in relation to growing one plant non-hydroponically, four people in a family could grow four plants—but we will have to tackle that down the track. This is a major step forward. I thank the shadow minister for bringing forward this bill. I thank the government for supporting the bill, and I thank the Attorney-General because I recognise he has considerable influence within his own party.

In relation to the Attorney-General, I was staggered to see the photograph in the paper today, which is about four years old and which is attached to an article that appears to be today's article. What has happened to the *Advertiser*? It has dug up a photograph that is four years old, and it does not

even identify it. Those members who were not around four years ago probably do not realise it is a photograph which is four years old. It should at least acknowledge that the photograph was taken back in 1995 or 1996.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: 1998!

Mr MEIER: It is outrageous what our one paper is doing in this state. While I would prefer to see one of our people as Attorney-General, we are not in government and I give full credit to the Attorney-General for what he has done not only in this area but in so many other areas—and don't you let them get you down with articles like this.

In relation to the bill, there are so many negatives with marijuana. In a visit to some of my health centres about three or four years ago, I asked, 'Why have mental health problems gone out of all proportion?' My memory from 25 or 30 years ago is that we had mental health problems but they were few and far between. We did not have specialists in the area out in the country, but people within my electorate are now calling out for extra mental health professionals. One health person in the hospital said, 'John, you should appreciate that most of these mental health problems are as a result of drug use, and marijuana is the key drug use.' So we have to pay an enormous price for drug misuse.

Road rage is another classic case—and evidence shows this—as so much of it is due to drug use. Drug use also causes problems in schools. We are hearing more and more about kids in schools who are basically uncontrollable. In just this last week I heard an example of one student who must have one SSO with him the whole of the day. The SSO walks around with, stays with and teaches this student, one on one. That is just outrageous. In my opinion, it is pretty obvious that that student had parents who would have both been on drugs—indeed, the child might even be on drugs, too. How can we continue to afford that sort of thing, and it is as a result of drug abuse? I would like to say so many other things. I support this bill and am delighted that it will be bipartisan. I thank the government for its bipartisanship in this matter and wish the bill a speedy passage through the house.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I commend the member for Mawson for bringing the bill forward and congratulate the opposition for its willingness to agree to the bill. We are in this position today because of decisions made in the 1980s to liberalise drug laws in regard to marijuana that led to the establishment of South Australia as a manufacturing house for illicit drugs—a business that has now been taken over by outlaw bikie gangs and other organised crime. The parliament should reflect on this occasion at its mistake in the 1980s at initially liberalising those drugs laws. It has delivered a catastrophe to many young South Australians and to South Australian families. We should never let that happen again.

We now have an opportunity to fix the situation with regard to the hydroponic manufacture of marijuana. As Chairman of the Select Committee into a Heroin Rehabilitation Trial, let me just say that this is simply one step along a very lengthy road. Frankly, we have to be very careful that we in this house do not delude ourselves about the challenge ahead. The approach so far from the parliament and from the government this year seems to be to create new laws to lock up more people and to use the legislative process to try to solve the drug problem. We can lock them up in double or triple the quantities we are locking them up today, but we will not solve the problem until we are prepared to invest a

significant amount of money in other approaches. Those other approaches include a significant increase in the investment we make in treatment programs, particularly in the extension of the methadone program, and looking at alternative therapies to get people off the street and into treatment so that they can be rehabilitated. You can keep locking them up, but they will keep coming out.

We heard from the CEO of corrections during the heroin rehabilitation trial. He began his evidence by saying that 98.7 per cent of the people in his care would be somebody's neighbour one day soon. They will all get out and they will all reoffend. Unless we cure the addiction, we will not solve the problem. We can introduce this measure today—and I fully welcome and support that—but, frankly, we are puffing into the wind if we think it will make one iota of difference in a real sense, unless it is matched by an investment by the government into new treatment and education programs, and into new programs in the corrections department to ensure that prisoners and others in the care of corrections have access to rehabilitative treatment options designed to get them off drugs so that, when they are released, they do not reoffend.

The heroin rehabilitation select committee came up with a list of programs that need to be implemented, and they were to cost \$33 million; some of them were capital works and some were recurrent annual programs. It was money that needed to be spent in 1998, and it certainly needs to be spent today in 2002. When we get serious about the drug problem, we will start to make inroads. We are constantly reminded that over 70 per cent of street crime, break-ins, bag snatches, burglaries, and so on, are committed by people who are addicted to drugs. They are out of control. In most cases they cannot help themselves. Unless we get them into treatment and on the road to rehabilitation, all the legislative initiatives we create in this parliament, all the new laws we invent and all the new people we put in gaol will simply add up to nothing and we will go nowhere.

I therefore urge the government to look seriously at the recommendations of the Drugs Summit and to genuinely make an investment in dollars, time and people into education, treatment, police and corrections so that we have in place the preventive, corrective and resource infrastructure to make a serious inroad into the problem of addiction. This is one small step in the right direction.

Ms BREUER (Giles): It has been an interesting morning to see members opposite so wound up about this subject. We have had talk about psychotic episodes, dogs twirling around on hind legs and cattle lowing in the fields—I would like to know whether or not they inhaled. We have also had discussions about THC and all sorts of scientific evidence. There is no secret about my feelings on marijuana. I hate the drug, and I have spoken about it on many occasions in the past. It is a real scourge on our society, and I hate what it does to young people.

However, I really think we can get a bit too caught up on this. I have never heard so much doom and gloom in one morning. Most people who smoke dope are quite law-abiding ordinary, young people. They would laugh at the sort of sensationalism we have heard this morning. They would think that this is a joke, because it does not have that sort of effect in their lives. Most of them are recreational smokers, and they have a smoke a couple of times a week, perhaps on the weekend, or they might have a smoke every day. However,

it does not totally interfere with their lives. We can get too caught up about this.

I am more concerned about other drugs in society. I am more concerned about things such as speed and ecstasy. These drugs are the real problems. This is where we should be directing more of our efforts in the future. I am very happy to see this legislation go through. However, we also have to look at these other issues, and realise that most of these other drugs are causing the problems with our young people.

We have heard a lot in recent times about young people going out and having their drinks spiked. I shudder every time my daughter goes out now. She is only 16 years old. She does not go to pubs, but she goes to a few parties and sees friends. If she is a bit late home, I think, 'What's going on?' I have visions of her lying dead in a gutter somewhere because they are the sorts of things you think about with young people, because we just do not know what is happening out there anymore. I know that she would be smart enough now not to smoke dope, but I cannot guarantee that somebody will not slip something in her drink. This really worries me, as it does many people. We hear so many stories about young people who die and about young people who go to nightclubs and these sorts of things happen to them.

I am very aware that at pharmacies, particularly in my town (and I presume in other places), there is a continual trail at weekends and on nights of young people going in and buying syringes. These are not diabetics, but they go in and buy one or two syringes. Why are they buying these syringes? Most of them are not heroin users—although there are some—but are buying syringes to try these other recreational drugs such as speed. That is the big scourge in our society. We can talk as much as we like about marijuana—and it does cause problems—but these other drugs are far more insidious and frightening for the young people.

We have so many problems in our society nowadays. I suppose it is easy to get oneself worked up on something like this. Often we make it sound silly. As I said before, if a lot of young people read and heard about these comments they would laugh at us, because they would not see it in that sort of light. So, we should not get too caught up with marijuana. Probably it is one of the safest drugs around. If your child is going to smoke dope, I would be far less concerned about that than if they were going to try some of these other drugs. We have to be careful about what we say if we want to make ourselves credible to young people. There has been a lot of discussion in the past on whether to legalise marijuana: I do not agree with that because, if we do, we are saying to people that it is okay because it is legal—just as we say, because it is legal, that it is okay to drink alcohol and make yourself legless, okay to smoke because it is legal and okay to go out and play the pokies and spend all your money because it is legal. If we make drugs and marijuana legal we are saying the same thing to young people.

We should not get ourselves too caught up. It is a terrible drug, but let us look at these other things. It is easy for young people to get hold of speed and ecstasy. They want to get into it, and apparently it is quite easy for them to get heroin, although it is a lot more expensive. We need to think about how these other drugs are sold, who is selling them and why they are selling them, instead of worrying as much about somebody who has a couple of plants in their backyard.

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): I rise reluctantly to contribute in this debate. I support the initiative brought in by the member for Mawson. I acknowledge that the government has at least

suspended standing orders to debate it, but I place on record that this is a most serious matter yet is put into private members' time when the government could easily bring it on in its own time, and to limit our speaking time to 10 minutes—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: How churlish!

Mr BRINDAL: I do not care what the Attorney says. I want to make a point. The point I make to the Attorney is that—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: I have sat here and listened in silence and I ask for your protection, Mr Speaker, from the Attorney as I would like to make some serious points. This whole thing stands as an indictment on the well intentioned but not so well meaning consequences of what we have done in this place over the last number of decades. I remember—and you were here, sir, and may be able to correct me—that at one stage expiation notices were given for 100 plants.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: 10 plants.

Mr BRINDAL: I think it started at 100, then went to 10 and then three, although I stand to be corrected.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: It's all down in *Hansard* that you are completely wrong by a factor of 10.

Mr BRINDAL: I do not pretend to be as perfect as the Attorney. I have tried marijuana and been to places where some of the Attorney's magistrates will offer you—

Members interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: I have been to a place where a magistrate offered me marijuana with a cup of coffee. It was some time ago and that is a fact. I have been to places where academics have offered me marijuana. That, too, was some time ago.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Is the magistrate still on the court?

Mr BRINDAL: I honestly do not know. Many people highly placed in our society have or do smoke marijuana and I know that to be a fact. I do not think it is right. A student I used to teach smokes marijuana almost daily and I am desperately worried for him because it is having a serious effect on his health. There is something very wrong: he is a youngish man in mid-30s, perhaps heading towards 40. I was one of that generation that thought that there was not much harm in the drug and we now find that there is.

It disappoints me that we went down the track of thinking we were going to solve this problem by banning the drug. All we have done at every step—and I hope this step starts to address it—is make it worse. We have a thriving industry in this state because of the attitude we first took to marijuana. If there is a problem for our young people, it is partly our fault because, rather than go out and educate and invest money in research, we simply thought we could ban it and that would be the answer. I agree with the members for Giles and Waite that if our young people and middle-aged people are to be encouraged away from marijuana it is through education, through understanding and not through legislation alone. Legislation—prescription of moral standards by this legislature—is never seen to work and will not. The only thing that will work is people understanding that marijuana can and will be harmful to them in the same way as is alcohol and cigarette smoking.

The Attorney can say what he likes. I am worried and disappointed that this matter cannot be canvassed at greater length in the time available to us in government business, but I support the measure because hydroponic growing of marijuana has become a network of criminality. It was a method by which people, rather than growing it by the broad

acre in electorates like yours, Mr Speaker, and getting caught by camera surveillance, can now grow it quite safely in houses with very little risk—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: What about fire?

Mr BRINDAL: —safely in terms of the law—and probably make it a lot easier than this place ever intended it to be. I support the measure and thank the member for bringing it in. I will not add more because I find the Attorney tiresome this morning.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I will not hold up the house long. I congratulate the member for Mawson for addressing this measure and acknowledge the government's joining in his view. There is a long history of my involvement in this legislation: I was lucky enough to be the State President of Apex in 1986 when the then minister for health (John Cornwall) came up with the brainwave to bring in expiation notices for marijuana offences. Apex discussed it at its state convention, held at Murray Bridge that year, and decided that we would oppose the measure. I had the joy of going to Dr John Cornwall's office at about 9 o'clock one night, only to be told that, in the view of Apex this was the wrong measure, then we were naive (a couple of other words were used before the word 'naive'), and with that the then minister for health got up and walked out. The Vice President and I were sitting there for some 10 minutes in the ministerial office with no-one else there and the security guard came in and let us out as the minister for health had gone.

One does not have to be a Rhodes Scholar to work out that the parliament would eventually address this matter. In 1986 when the measure was introduced it was always going to end up with the parliament reversing this measure to at least where we are today. It was always going to be the case that, once you introduced the expiation scheme and 10 plants, it would be abused by criminal elements; it was as obvious as the nose on your face. It was the Labor Party reform in 1986 that drove this but, of course, members opposite deny that. They are now basically saying that the argument then was right. Society has paid a big price, I think, for that policy over the years. I come from a view that many of the mental health problems we now see exhibited throughout society are a direct result of some of the liberalisation of drug laws in this state over the last 15 years or so.

I am pleased that the member for Mawson had the courage of his convictions to drive this reform through. As he knows, I have strongly supported this measure every step of the way. It is an unfortunate part of South Australia's history that we went down this path. I am pleased that the parliament is going to support the measure and get it through, because I think anyone who reflects on the last 15 years of this policy could only come to the very sad conclusion that it has been an absolute negative for the state of South Australia. I think the member for Mawson has done a great job.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I will be brief with my comments because I know that the shadow minister, the member for Mawson, wants some time before 1 o'clock to wrap things up.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: To address the member for Unley's allegations.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: I don't need to go there, Attorney. I want to congratulate the shadow Minister for Police, the member for Mawson, for bringing this bill to the house. Obviously, it is a very important issue, and it has been the substance of debate over many years here in the parlia-

ment. I noted the member for Schubert's comments earlier on. I confirm what the member for Schubert said and also the matters that he raised concerning the member for Hammond. As members of the house might recall, I worked for the member for Schubert for a number of years and was well aware of his stance on cannabis and its cultivation, etc.

I want to touch briefly on two points: the facts on health issues in regard to smoking marijuana (cannabis) and also the criminal activity that comes from the cultivation of this drug. It is no surprise to members that cannabis is the most widely used illicit drug in Australia. Looking at some statistics going back some years, one sees that half a million people in Australia were using marijuana.

Heavy use of the drug has been linked to cancer, respiratory diseases, psychiatric disorders and birth defects in the children of users. Those who smoke it in their early teens are at a higher risk than are non-users of progressing to harder drugs. There have been more than 10 000 medical studies documenting the harmful effects of cannabis. It is damaging to the cardiovascular, respiratory and immune systems. Alcohol is quickly expelled from the body but THC, the active ingredient in cannabis, can lodge and stay in the fatty tissues for several weeks, perhaps months. There is four times more tar in a cannabis joint than in a cigarette, so all the cancerous side effects of smoking are multiplied.

Some research indicates that cannabis can cause severe psychosis within six months of daily use. A survey in Perth of psychiatric hospital admissions found that 40 per cent of males and 21 per cent of females had used cannabis in the previous week. Other facts relating to health issues on the consumption of cannabis concern the cancer causing effects of smoking the drug. The symptoms of airway obstruction have been clinically documented in controlled experiments performed on young people who smoke marijuana every day. These symptoms are surprising, because acute exposure to THC dilates the bronchi. Microscopic examinations of bronchial biopsies taken from heavy users of hashish in the 20 to 26 year age group show squamous cell hyperplasia, the precursor of lung cancer in tobacco smoking, so it is suggested that chronic marijuana smoking will develop into cancer. Moving on quickly, I want to talk a little about the criminal activity involved in this.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The honourable member for West Torrens is not only behaving in a disorderly fashion by interjecting but he is also out of his place. The member for Kavel has the call.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: As has been explained in the house previously, with the hybrid vigour of plants these days you can grow a plant hydroponically to maturity within three or four months. You do not have to be a mathematical genius to work out that if someone is able, and it is an expiable offence, if they have three plants and they grow every three or four months, they can get a crop of nine to 12 plants. We know that people in groups such as outlaw motorcycle gangs syndicate this activity, and it is known that a vast increase in home invasions have come from these syndicates because the plants are due to mature and be harvested. There is a knock on the door and a home invasion is perpetrated; the plants are stolen and the police are called. The health issues and the criminal activity are the two issues that I want to cover. I could speak at greater length, but I want to draw my comments to a conclusion to allow the shadow minister to make his comments. I certainly support the bill, and I commend it to the house.

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): I will be brief, given the time. Everyone has had a good chance to put their points on the record. I think that this is a good day for the parliament and, indeed, a good day for South Australia because, clearly, we have a major concern with respect to the growth of illicit drugs, particularly hydroponic cannabis. An intern has written a document for me which is entitled, 'Is cannabis a gateway drug to further illicit substance use?' It is a very good document, and I will talk more about that in time. The document clearly confirms my fear; that is, that hydroponic cannabis use, in particular, is a gateway to further illicit drug use, and that only reinforces the reasons why I have introduced this bill.

I want to acknowledge the Attorney-General's contribution, in particular, because both he and I have had exactly the same view on this matter for a very long time. I congratulate and thank all colleagues on both sides of the house for their support in getting this bill through, and I encourage all members in the Legislative Council to pass this bill next week, so that the police can get on with the job of really cracking down on the hydroponic cannabis growers, the networkers—those people who choose not to work the overtime (or, indeed, sometimes not even to take on a job) but, rather, who network within their districts and then cause major problems in our community through the use of illicit drugs, particularly hydroponic cannabis. Of course, the other great effect of this measure is that I believe it will be the tool the police need to really get stuck into outlaw motorcycle gangs. So, it is a good day for the parliament, and a good day for South Australia. A lot more work is still to be done when it comes to combating illicit drugs, and I will talk more about that in the future. I am delighted to see this bill being passed by our colleagues in the parliament today on a bipartisan basis in the interests of the South Australian community.

The SPEAKER: My own desire in this instance, given that I have only a minute or two available to me, is to make it plain that I commend the member for Mawson for what he has done. I further commend the Attorney-General and government members for their bipartisanism, which clearly demonstrates that the government does see itself as an inclusive government and committed to support good ideas, regardless of where they come from. I further commend members for the manner in which they have conducted this debate fearlessly, and according to their own inclinations.

May I say for myself, however, that the harmful effects of the substances contained in this vegetable material have been well documented since the studies of the mid 1970s in Suffolk County on Long Island in New York. There was a reluctance on the part of governments elsewhere in the world to duplicate some of those studies, and some of the work that was done then still has never been followed up in epidemiological studies, for what I believe were politically correct and, therefore, quite nefarious and improper reasons.

There is one thing I would say, in addition to the sort of remarks made by the member for Giles, to anyone who might read them and think that the matter is not serious. In plain terms, can I say to the fellows: if you want to rot your rocks, smoke pot. And I say to the young women of this world: if you want to addle your eggs, go and smoke pot. Because that is exactly what you are doing. Anyone who thinks otherwise is a bloody fool. The evidence is incontrovertible. It is worse than the effects of weedicides and pesticides of the kind that we were using in the 1960s and 1970s. There is no doubt about the fact that, if we ever use genetically modified

organisms, it ought to be to get rid of marijuana by putting in there a gene that would cause enormous headaches to anyone who was close approaching the point of dependence should they choose to smoke it, and release those seeds free.

Bill read a second time and taken through its remaining stages.

[Sitting suspended from 1 to 2 p.m.]

SHOP TRADING HOURS

A petition signed by 84 residents of South Australia, requesting the house refrain from passing legislation to extend shop trading hours, was presented by the Hon. P.F. Conlon.

Petition received.

SAME SEX RELATIONSHIPS

A petition signed by 93 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to support the passage of legislation to remove provisions from all state legislation which discriminates against people in same sex relationships, was presented by Ms Bedford.

Petition received.

TEACHING SCHOLARSHIPS

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN** (Estimates Committee B, 6 August).

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: As was announced in the July state budget, the state government has funded a scheme of scholarships for students from the country who wish to train as teachers, and to return to teach in government schools.

Applications for country teaching scholarships are currently being received. Up to 95 scholarships are available. Students who have grown up in a country area, and have applied for a place on a teacher education course at a South Australian higher education institution, are invited to apply. The scholarships, worth up to \$10 000 each, will provide students with financial assistance for travel, accommodation, books or HECS.

Starters on the four-year undergraduate courses and on the shorter postgraduate courses, and, this year, students part way through their training, are all eligible to apply.

Students offered a scholarship will be required to undertake that, if they do not successfully complete their teacher education program and/or do not complete a minimum of two years teaching in a country government school, they will pay back all of the scholarship. I will reserve the right to waive, defer or vary that obligation if the student's circumstances so justify.

Together with the country Incentives which we included in the enterprise bargaining agreement, these scholarships demonstrate the government's commitment to attracting and retaining high quality teachers in our country schools.

SNAP PROGRAM

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN** (Estimates Committee B, 6 August).

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: Say No and Phone, or SNAP, seeks to use music to promote an anti-drugs message to young people. Their promoters organised a series of concerts at the Entertainment Centre from 20 to 23 August 2002.

Promoters were advised that they could market the initiative directly to schools while making clear that it did not have government endorsement.

Various government representatives provided the promoters with advice about running the event, including the DECS Drug Strategy Team, and SNAP promotes the Alcohol and Drug Information Service (ADIS) phone line for advice and counselling to address drug related issues.

Schools were informed of the relationship between SNAP and government to assist them to make an informed decision about taking students to the concerts.

Government assistance was sought but both the former and current governments decided that SNAP offered an unevaluated, if appealing, strategy and that various other student focused initiatives were being implemented such as the Rock and Roll Eisteddfod and the DECS Drug Strategy.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Speaker (Hon. I.P. Lewis)—

District Council of Elliston—Report 2001-2002—Pursuant to section 131 of the Local Government Act 1999.

By the Premier (Hon. M.D. Rann)—

Commissioner for Public Employment, Office for—South Australian Public Sector Workforce Information—Report June 2002

By the Minister for the Arts (Hon. M.D. Rann)—

Adelaide Festival Corporation—Report 2001-2002
South Australian Film Corporation—Report 2001-2002
South Australian Museum Board—Report 2001-2002
State Opera of South Australia—Report 2001-2002

By the Treasurer (Hon. K.O. Foley)—

National Wine Centre of Australia—Report 2001-2002

By the Minister for Environment and Conservation (Hon. J.D. Hill)—

Royal Zoological Society of South Australia—Report 2001-2002

By the Minister for Local Government (Hon. J.W. Weatherill)—

Local Council By-Laws—
District Council of Tatiara—
No. 1 Permit and Penalties
No. 2 Moveable Signs
No. 3 Roads
No. 4 Local Government Land
No. 5 Dogs.

STATE PROTECTIVE SECURITY BRANCH

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I rise to advise the house and the people of South Australia of the creation of the State Protective Security Branch of the South Australian Police Force. The State Protective Security Branch will incorporate the Security Intelligence Section, and the Emergency and Major Events Sections of South Australia Police. This was a strong recommendation of a review into South Australia Police's counter-terrorism and state disaster responsibilities by Police Commissioner Mal Hyde that has been conducted over the past month. The government has decided to act swiftly to the recommendation to ensure that this new security branch is up and running as soon as possible.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The new branch will provide enhanced management and coordination of security intelligence, emergency management, and event management. The definition of the word 'protect' is to defend or guard or shield from attack, injury or danger, and that will be the primary task of this new branch. Our preparedness to deal with and prevent the threats that are so much a part of our life today will be significantly enhanced. Some of the benefits of the new State Protective Security Branch will be to:

- better coordinate and consolidate the links between the counter-terrorism and state disaster operations of the police;
- maintain existing and establish and strengthen working relationships with public and private utilities—that is very important—to heighten the protection of critical infrastructure. It is vitally important, now that so many of the utilities have been privatised, that anti-terrorism arrangements cover these new arrangements;
- provide for a coordinated response—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: If members opposite do not want us to fight terrorism in a coordinated way, they should say so. I am very surprised at the interjection. To continue:

- provide for a coordinated response covering critical infrastructure, consequence management, security intelligence collection and VIP coordination; and
- develop a research capacity in South Australia for counter-terrorism.

The State Protective Security Branch will be headed by an officer at the rank of superintendent who will be assisted by two inspectors. Three additional positions will be required: one inspector; one senior constable; and one senior sergeant. The State Protective Security Branch will cost nearly \$1.6 million per year but, owing to efficiencies that will be created as a result of better use of resources, the budget impost will be approximately \$300 000 per year.

In the upcoming budget process, the government will consider further capital equipment provision to enhance the capacity of these officers to undertake the very important job for the safety of our community. I can now assure the community that the government is providing the highest level of protection against potential terrorist threats in the history of this state. I would also say that it is vitally important that there be maximum cooperation between the states and the federal government against the threat of terrorism. We have met with the Prime Minister and we have formulated and signed an agreement, and that is why it is vitally important that the South Australia Police be upgraded to counter this threat of terrorism. I believe that this new section will significantly enhance South Australia's capacity to deal with threats of terrorism, and I look forward to bipartisan support.

NATIONAL WINE CENTRE

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I urge all members to read the annual report of the National Wine Centre of Australia and the Auditor-General's Report, particularly those members opposite who have been supporting the wine centre so strongly in recent times.

GOVERNMENT, BANKING SERVICES

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I rise to inform the house that contract terms have been agreed for the provision of future banking services to government. Late last year the former government gave approval for the Department of Treasury and Finance, on behalf of the South Australian government, to issue a request for proposal for all banking related services currently covered by the government's existing whole of government banking contract. This included transaction banking, merchant facility and purchase card services.

For a number of years, the Reserve Bank of Australia has provided transaction banking services to the government. In addition, in recent years the Reserve Bank has provided merchant and purchase card facilities to the government through subcontract arrangements with the ANZ Banking Group and American Express respectively.

The government's existing agreement with the Reserve Bank, which was entered into in April 1997, is due to expire at the end of the year. With the existing banking contract coming to an end and with the government having not tested the banking market for nearly five years, it was considered appropriate that a competitive process, via a request for proposal, be undertaken. The process was intended to establish best banking practices and relative costs for government agencies. The request for proposal process was advertised nationally during the week commencing 8 April 2002 and was managed by the Department of Treasury and Finance and overseen by a steering and evaluation committee comprising senior representatives from the Department of Treasury and Finance and agencies. The request for proposal was developed in consultation with government agencies and the Crown Solicitor's office, and the process was conducted in accordance with the government's procurement policies, including the endorsement of the State Supply Board.

Following assessment of the proposals received by the evaluation committee and with the formal approval of cabinet, I can announce today that contract terms have been agreed. The contracts are for terms of three years with an option for the government to renew for a further two years if desired. The successful tenderer for the provision of transaction banking services for government is the Westpac Banking Corporation.

The successful tenderer for the provision of merchant and purchase card services to the government is the ANZ Banking Group. Westpac's and ANZ's proposals were considered to provide the best value for money banking and related services to government. Both Westpac and ANZ provide comprehensive transaction banking and merchant and purchase card services, respectively.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge the professional services and support that have been provided to government agencies over many years by the Reserve Bank of Australia and American Express. It is anticipated that the transition of services to the new providers will begin immediately and will be completed as soon as possible. The government looks forward to working with Westpac and ANZ to implement the new arrangements and to facilitate the continued use by government agencies of efficient and effective banking practices. I thank the house for listening so closely to my statement.

SHACKS

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: An article on page 28 of today's *Advertiser*, entitled 'Shacks soon to be freehold', relates to perpetual leases but incorrectly refers to shack sites. As members would know, they are separate issues. I am pleased to inform the house of a new process to resolve the ownership status of shack sites for many South Australians. I have been invited on a number of occasions by members to answer questions on this issue.

The issuing of freehold titles for shacks currently on crown land has taken too long. Work towards improving the process began under the former government. In 1994, a Shack Site Freeholding Committee was established to review all shack sites on crown land. Freehold was offered to 1 664 crown lessees in over 100 coastal and Murray River locations. These offers were meant to be settled within three years. However, it has taken longer to work through the queue. This has caused distress to many lessees who expect quicker action from government—and many of them have contacted my office in the eight or nine months I have been the minister responsible.

What I am announcing today is consistent with the process of the former government. However, it will deal swiftly with the backlog of applications for freehold. About 560 shack sites have been granted freehold. However, an additional 640 have been approved but are caught up in the system. I have approved additional staffing to help move the backlog of lessees and deal expeditiously with new applications. This process will see most eligible leaseholders transfer their shack sites to freehold by 2004-05.

Today's announcement is also good news for the remaining shack lessees on crown land who are eligible to freehold. For the 100 shack lessees with lapsed applications for freehold, the government will extend for a period of six months the option to pursue freehold. After this time the sites will automatically be reaffirmed as life tenure, if the freehold option is not taken. The same window of opportunity will be available for the 360 shacks which are suitable for freehold but for which there has been no application in the past.

However, there are 260 shack sites that are not suitable for freehold, many for health and safety reasons. For those shacks that are currently under contract, the freehold price will not be altered. For those shacks that are not yet under contract, the freehold price will be determined by the current market value of the property. This improved process will strike the balance between giving eligible lessees certainty through freehold and selling crown land at reasonable value.

EDUCATION, HIGHER

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I am pleased to inform the house of an historic partnership between the state government and South Australia's three universities that will help shape strategic directions for South Australia's higher education, economic and social development. The decision to establish a new Higher Education Council follows a number of reviews and wide-ranging discussion relating to the higher education sector in South Australia. In 2000, the state government commissioned former federal education minister, the Hon. John Dawkins, to review Education Adelaide. At the same time, SA Business Vision 2010 commissioned a review of the higher education sector in South Australia.

Both reviews were critical of the then state government for having no strategic role in the development of the higher education sector in South Australia. Both proposed structures for the government to better use its funding of universities in South Australia to help universities coordinate activities which assisted strategic priorities for the state. The federal government's innovation strategy and the current federal

review of higher education have provided opportunities for the government to work more strategically with universities in the state. While some of this work has been guided by a whole of government working party, there is no formal mechanism for ensuring that state government departments coordinate their involvement with the universities or that this effort supports the state's strategic priorities.

Formalising a mechanism has begun with the establishment of the Premier's Science and Research Council to better coordinate and develop the state's research and innovation effort. This process will now be furthered with the establishment of a higher education council involving the three universities and the state government. It follows the recent report on higher education by the Economic Development Board, and the government is pleased to receive positive input from the Economic Development Board, which has examined reform options for South Australia's higher education sector. I am delighted with the decision to create this historic council in line with the EDB's report. The higher education council will:

- set priorities for the state government in relation to the development of the higher education sector of the state;
- foster institutional and cross-sectorial cooperation and collaboration;
- provide a forum to develop state responses to national initiatives in higher education;
- advise the government on higher education legislation reform; and
- provide a forum to link higher education initiatives to the state's economic development and social inclusion agenda.

Establishment of the council is in recognition that every South Australian has an interest in ensuring a stronger higher education system. As Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, I will chair the council, and the members will be the Vice-Chancellors of the three universities and the Chief Executive of the Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology, as well as the Chief Executive of the Office of Economic Development. The council will receive expert advice from other sectors with an interest in South Australian higher education. I welcome and acknowledge the full support of our three universities in establishing the higher education council, which will provide a platform for regenerating the relationship between government and the universities to improve the quality and delivery of higher education in South Australia.

QUESTION TIME

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): Why does the Minister for Environment and Conservation get directly involved in determining FOI matters given the claims made by the Deputy Premier yesterday? Following questioning from the opposition yesterday, the Treasurer was today quoted as stating:

This government kept itself at arm's length from departmental FOI officers.

However, in response to a recent FOI application to the Department of Environment and Heritage, the opposition received a letter from the minister rejecting elements of the departmental FOI request.

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): As the leader would know, ministers in their own right are FOI officers. As I said, as the member would know—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I'm sorry. If the opposition doesn't understand how the FOI rules operate, I am sure we can get a briefing for them—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I recall at one stage signing off an FOI letter on advice from my officers. I cannot remember exactly the content of that request. However, I was prepared some advice on a particular FOI matter, and I signed off as the senior FOI officer.

Mr CAICA (Colton): My question is directed to the Minister for Administrative Services. How many FOI applications from members of parliament have there been this year compared to last year?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Administrative Services): To put the question in context, on average there were 51 applications from MPs each year since the FOI legislation was first introduced in South Australia in 1992. In 2001-02—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Just so that you can understand the nature of the answer. In 2001-02, there were 48 FOI applications from MPs, and that is the most recent year which, of course, involved the lead-up to an election. Since March this year, there have been more than 140 applications—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: If I might assist those members opposite, that actually extrapolates over 12 months to something of the order of a 411 per cent increase. Despite this remarkable increase in the volume of applications, bearing in mind that many of them are incredibly vague requests, agencies have been working extremely hard to provide the information. It has meant that we have actually had to hire additional staff. Of course, consistent with the commitments that we gave to you, sir, and to this place—

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: Consistent with the commitments that we gave to this house and to you, sir, in the compact, we have resisted the temptation to apply the \$350 limit to MPs in relation to their requests. Some of these requests would indeed run into many thousands of dollars, yet we have resisted—

The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Newland will enable me to hear the answer, even if she does not want to.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We have also resisted the urge to apply that aspect of the act which relates to rejecting an application on the basis that it involves an unreasonable—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: We are getting to that. We have resisted the temptation to reject the applications on the basis that they would involve an unreasonable diversion of agency resources, another basis upon which many of these applications could have been peremptorily dealt with. But we know what would have happened if that had occurred: there would have been more shrieks from members opposite. So

we have been diligently working through these applications. It has no doubt led to a diversion of resources, and the question the deputy leader asked yesterday has meant that some applications have not been dealt with as quickly as we would have liked.

But what needs to be said is that one particular application covers 830 documents involving some 4 000 pages, and it is estimated that about 1 500 hours of work will be involved in determining exactly what information can be released according to the act. Unfortunately for those in the Public Service who have to carry out that task, there is a legal obligation to examine the material. It simply is not a question of going into a filing cabinet, emptying it out and sending it to the opposition.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Bright.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: It is a question of going through each of these documents carefully. To enlighten members opposite about the nature of this task, in the Department of Treasury and Finance there were 31 FOI applications from MPs between March and August this year and just eight applications from members of the public. The cost of processing those applications is around \$190 000. A substantial proportion of that sum involves the obtaining of Crown Solicitor advice about certain aspects of the documents. I will explain in more detail why. It appears that the opposition, or somebody, has provided incorrect information to the *Advertiser*, which this morning wrongly reported that a document it published was a report—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for West Torrens will desist in future from eating grumpy grumble beans at lunchtime.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The document reported in the paper as being blacked out—the one the member opposite was holding up before—was said to be the report on the commercialisation of research and development within the Department of Primary Industries. In fact, the document was a tender bid by Technology Commercialisation Group that included the TCGs methodology and innovation in providing commercialisation services. The nature of this needs to be explained. The tenders were invited in this matter on the understanding that confidentiality of business affairs would be maintained. That document was exempt under the schedule under the act and PIRSA made a decision to release the document but in part excluded it. That is the analysis the FOI officer went through for very good reasons. For those opposite to be promoting this as some basis upon which we are holding information secret is simply appalling. It would render the business of government unworkable if we could not engage in relationships with private sector companies without providing them with that degree of confidentiality.

The other point that seems to be lost on members opposite—and it is evident in the question from the Leader of the Opposition to the Minister for Environment and Heritage a short time ago—is that there is a distinction between FOI officers and the role they play and the role ministers play, except in circumstances where the minister is the agency. It needs to be understood that when a department is processing an application, an FOI officer within the department is the officer who makes the decision about these matters. It would be difficult for members opposite to understand that because they routinely had their chiefs of staff and other agents acting on their behalf, intervening in the affairs of FOIs. We maintain and act in accordance with the spirit and letter of the

act, which means that FOI officers carry out their task without undue influence from the executive arm of government.

From time to time we may be asked—and indeed the legislation obliges us—to express an opinion about the public interest in certain circumstances. We indeed take that responsibility seriously. No doubt when the Minister for Environment and Heritage in a proper case was asked to comment, he did so in writing. When there is a request for FOI information concerning a ministerial office, there is an FOI officer within the ministerial office who is appointed—in some cases it could be the minister or be delegated—and they deal with requests in relation to the minister's office as a discrete agency. Let us end this absurdity about so-called political interference in relation to FOI applications.

The legislation that governs this act is being faithfully applied by the new government. Members will recall that there was one clause in the compact they refused to sign, namely, that they would be prepared to abide by the spirit of the Freedom of Information Act. It is very apparent why they chose not to sign that because in government they abused the FOI legislation and in opposition they do the same.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! During the course of that answer a piece of paper, which has a lot of zebra stripes across it, was handed around the opposition benches. If I see that piece of paper improperly displayed on any news service tonight, there will be serious consequences for that particular channel. I warn the member for Unley, the member for Schubert and the member for Morialta for engaging in that deliberate display against standing orders.

QUESTIONS, REPLIES

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light): In the spirit of open and accountable government, will the Minister for Transport advise the house when he will be providing answers to questions asked during question time? On at least 24 occasions this year the minister has been unable to answer questions asked of him. Only about six times has he fulfilled his commitment to come back to the house with an answer. For example, on 15 August this year I asked the minister about ruling out placing an additional levy on the registration of cars with bull bars and he responded, 'I am not aware of the particular detail of the matter that the shadow minister raised but I am happy to bring back an answer to the house.' I have had no reply.

On 19 August this year, the member for Morphett asked whether the government is continuing with the program of the previous Liberal government to refurbish various Trans-Adelaide rail cars. He responded, 'I will take that on notice.' No answer has been provided.

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Transport): This is a very serious question: I wish the member for Davenport would not try to make me laugh. I do not know whether the member for Light's figures are accurate. I suspect they are not, because the information with which I was provided yesterday by the member for Flinders, once I checked back in the office, was not accurate, so it may well be that this is in a similar category. I guess it highlights a couple of things: it is a big portfolio and it is a very popular portfolio. I welcome the questions asked by the opposition on a range of issues in relation to their electorate and invite them to keep asking the questions.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): My question is directed to the Deputy Premier. What has the Department of Treasury and Finance done in relation to the FOI request by the Hon. Mike Rann, received by the Department of Treasury and Finance on 3 March 1998?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I referred briefly to this question yesterday and asked my office to do a little bit of checking for me yesterday afternoon. I would like to walk the house through a little story, because it is very important: it puts into context the hypocrisy of members opposite.

On 3 March 1998 the Department of Treasury and Finance received from the Hon. Mike Rann (as Leader of the Opposition) two FOI requests concerning electricity. The request was for a whole series of documents relating to the valuation, sale, lease, etc, ETSA, Optima Energy, and papers on the National Competition Policy. The departmental files show the history of reviews of this request by the former Treasurer, his officers, his chief of staff and the former premier's chief of staff.

On 9 September 1998 an officer of the Department of Treasury and Finance provided advice to the former treasurer and asked for direction. By minute dated 29 September 1998, I am advised that the Crown Solicitor observed that it was not possible to process the remainder of the application in the absence of a response from the former treasurer, who, I am advised, did not provide his response to the minute of 9 September 1998 until 1 November 1998. Further advice was provided by the Department of Treasury and Finance by minute dated 21 December 1998. On 26 December 1998 the former treasurer gave approval to the approach of dealing with the response that had been recommended by Treasury. And the saga goes on. For the next eight months or more, folders were reviewed, advice was sought and the request remained on foot. By minute dated 30 August—now it is 1999—to the former treasurer, the Crown Solicitor said:

I note that the time limit for dealing with the request pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act 1991 has long expired and I am not aware that any of the time frames discussed in our June meeting have been met.

That is the Crown Solicitor to the former treasurer. He then goes on to advise the former treasurer:

As I have previously advised, your agency has a statutory obligation to comply with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 1991, and to make a determination. . . I would appreciate if you would inform me of the progress. . .

and so on. In about September 1999, the former treasurer seems to have decided that one final determination should be made on the whole request rather than dealing individually with aspects of the request. I am told that the next file note is not until 4 July 2000. The file shows an advice from the Crown Solicitor's office outlining the current status of the applications and the tasks to be completed. Minutes were sent to interested parties in November 2000, and further advice was sought from the Crown Solicitor. Another lull seems to have occurred until March 2001, when a folder was provided to the Department of Treasury and Finance. Finally, on 29 May 2001, a minute was sent to the former treasurer, attaching copies of all documents recommended for release, except for one folder, which was folder number nine. I am advised that the advice on folder number nine was provided by minute to the former treasurer's chief of staff and the then premier's chief of staff from the Treasury FOI officer dated

31 August 2001. Advice was then sought from third parties about commercial confidentiality.

Then, guess what happened: by March 2002, the department sought advice as to whether it was still necessary to comply with the request. On 2 July 2002 the designated freedom of information officer from the Department of Treasury and Finance wrote to inform Premier Rann that, as he was now in government and had access to the documents in his capacity as Premier, his application would not be finalised. What a bunch of hypocrites! For three years you stopped it, you did everything you could to frustrate it, and the poor FOI officer in Treasury finally wrote to Premier Rann and said, 'Mike Rann, you are now in office. You can look at the files yourself.' Do not give us any of this nonsense about FOI. Members opposite deceived. They deliberately withheld documents from the public. The former treasurer did that and the former premier's office did that. You withheld deliberately from this parliament documentation relating to the sale of ETSA because you were too embarrassed about the deceit that you put on the community in 1997, and to come into this chamber and cry crocodile tears about FOI—you were the great deceivers of this parliament—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: —you were the great—

The SPEAKER: Order! The Treasurer will recall that on more than one occasion I have drawn the attention of the house to the necessity not to use the second person pronoun, because that is directed to the chair. I suspect that, in this instance, the Treasurer is not admonishing me—he had better not be. I will have something further to say about the matter when the Treasurer has finished his answer.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Thank you, sir. I apologise. Members opposite were the great deceivers of this parliament; the great deceivers of this state. Do not come in here, I say to members opposite—

Mr BRINDAL: Sir, I rise on a point of order—

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: —with this nonsense about FOIs. You kept everything secret from the public—

The SPEAKER: Order!

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Members opposite kept everything secret from the public, sir; I apologise. I simply say—

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley has a point of order.

Mr BRINDAL: Sir, I believe that, in answering the question, the minister may not stray into the area of debate. I believe that the Treasurer is doing so, and I ask you to rule on the matter.

The SPEAKER: It is an interesting point. I am not compelled to admonish the Treasurer for the manner in which he has set about defending the government's position on FOI, although, to the extent that it seems to me that the Treasurer is engaging in debate, I uphold the point of order. I think that the Treasurer has well and truly answered the question. I will make the observation that I intended to make at the conclusion of his answer, which is now, and that is: by quoting advice provided by any agency to a minister in the manner in which the Treasurer has done sets a precedent. It is perhaps not what I would have seen at the time I concluded a compact with both the Liberal and Labor Parties as one of the conventions that I would want to have broken.

Advice given to a previous government ought not be disclosed by its successor whether in circumstances intended to clarify a matter in the interests of the government against its opposition or, in the contrary case, to justify a decision

that a government minister may be making, and it is unwise to do that. However, having said that, I think it is a matter of opinion for the government itself and, naturally, I would expect the government, from this point forward, to be consistent about that, and never suggest to me or the chamber that it is improper to reveal the advice given to it by its advisers on any matter, favourable or unfavourable, to either side of the parliament.

QUESTIONS, REPLIES

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): My question is directed to the Minister for Local Government. Notwithstanding the matter of the FOI backlog, in the spirit of open and accountable government, can the minister advise the house when he will be providing answers to questions asked during question time? On at least six occasions this year, the minister has been unable to answer questions asked of him directly, and on no occasion to date has he fulfilled his commitment to come back to the house with an answer. On 13 May, I asked the minister how many building approvals were stored within councils, and he responded:

I thank the honourable member, and I will take it on notice and bring him back a reply at the earliest opportunity.

I have had no reply. On 13 August this year, the member for Newland asked the minister, in his capacity as Minister for Administrative Services, whether he had any plans to close regional building maintenance services. He responded:

I will, however, undertake to analyse in detail the proposals to implement the budget and to bring back a detailed answer to the member.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Local Government): I must say that I do not recall that many questions being outstanding. Indeed, in respect of the first matter, I am almost certain that an answer has been provided, but I will check that. I apologise to members opposite if the information has not been provided in as timely a fashion as they expected, and I will do better next time.

SCHOOL RETENTION RATE

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): Does the Minister for Education and Children's Services agree with the federal education minister's reported comments that staying at school is not that important? The federal education minister is on record as saying:

One of the things I would caution people about is this idea that says, 'Look, the ambition is that 90 per cent should complete year 12.'

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services): It probably will not surprise members of this house, knowing my passion for the education of South Australian children, to hear that I do not agree with the federal minister's stance on this matter. Today, the federal minister, the Hon. Brendan Nelson, became many South Australian parents' worst nightmare, with a federal education minister telling South Australian children that it is just not that important to finish school, because indeed it is.

The South Australian government's clear focus is on encouraging as many young people as we can. In fact, we want all young people to finish their schooling and training in a clearly articulated pathway into their future. We are putting a lot of effort into improving school attendance rates; we are putting a lot of effort into encouraging those students to get a better and full education. We have just increased the

school leaving age for next year, as a very important signal to South Australian children of the importance of getting a good education. To have a federal minister come by and undercut our efforts is unhelpful, to say the very least. We know that all the evidence indicates that there is a very strong link between poor formal education and long-term unemployment and social dislocation. That evidence is clear: the more skills you have and the better your education, the more opportunities that are available to you.

Members opposite talk about apprenticeships, and I am glad they raise that. It is very important that we create many appropriate options for these young people. It is industry itself that is saying to young people, 'We require of you more skill than we have required in the past.' It is industry itself saying to young people—

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Which industry says that?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: The member for Davenport asks which industry says that. The car retail industry, for example, is saying, 'Do your apprenticeship, but do it at school.' We can do that in modern day education. It is saying, 'We want you to be more highly skilled; we want you to have better skills in terms of using computer technology.' They are saying to young people, 'We want you to stay at school.' So, for the Liberal Party to come out and say it is not that important to finish school is really undercutting opportunities for young South Australian people. That is the whole point about this.

Let us just look at the Liberal Party's record. Just 10 years ago, in 1992, over 90 per cent of our young people were completing year 12. Today we have a situation whereby at some of our schools only one in two students finishes high school. That is shameful, and the Liberal Party is sitting over there saying it does not matter. Well, of course it matters, and that is exactly what is pushing the federal education minister. He is under pressure to provide more university places; he is under pressure to provide more funding for public education, and that is why he is saying, 'Well, if they're not there we don't have to fund them.' That is his answer to the pressure on him to provide more funding. That is not the approach of the Labor Party.

The Labor Party in this state strongly believes that the key to a young person's future is education and, no matter what the knockers do over there do to undercut that drive, we will ensure that as many young people as we can—

The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Newland will come to order.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: We will ensure that South Australian young people have every opportunity to complete high school.

PAROLE BOARD

Mr BROKENSHIRE (Mawson): Will the Attorney-General advise the parliament whether the government intends to take over or change the role of the Parole Board and, if so, will it accept responsibility for those who re-offend? In recent weeks the Law Society and the Parole Board have both been critical of the government's decision not to accept recommendations of the Parole Board.

The SPEAKER: Can I say, before the Premier answers, that is an interesting observation but unnecessary to make the question clearer. It is a classic illustration of the kind of thing that is not an explanation to a question.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I am delighted to answer this question. I honestly appreciate Dorothy Dixers from the opposition. It is absolutely true to say that the Law Society in this state on a number of occasions has condemned me and my government for our strong stand on law and order and our strong stand against crime. The particular incident relating to the Parole Board goes back to April this year when I announced that Executive Council had rejected a request by the Parole Board for the release of two notorious murderers, Watson and McBride. We made that decision to keep Watson and McBride locked up where they belong, and we made that decision in the public interest of South Australia. Whether or not the Law Society likes it, quite frankly, I do not care.

I read today in the newspaper that a group of cowardly lawyers have attacked the Attorney-General of this state by putting out a leaflet condemning the Attorney-General, but they refused to put their names to it. Who would want to be defended by the likes of these lawyers who do not have the courage of their convictions—or perhaps the convictions of their clients—to actually affix their names to their criticism? If I upset the lawyers in this state and if I upset the Law Society in this state, because I speak on behalf of the people of this state about the need for a strong stand on law and order, then so be it. My message to the Liberal Party is this: if they want to side with the Law Society against our tough stand on crime, then they will stand condemned in the eyes of the people of this state.

SOLAR ECLIPSE

Mr SNELLING (Playford): My question is directed to the Minister for Tourism.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! I cannot hear the member for Playford.

Mr SNELLING: My question is directed to the Minister for Tourism.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for Newland.

Mr SNELLING: What are the details of assistance provided by the government to help meet the organisational challenges posed by the forthcoming solar eclipse?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): The solar eclipse has generated considerable scientific and general interest, and I know that the member for Playford is a keen follower of astronomical events. The interest has occurred both nationally and internationally, the lure being that there are relatively few places on earth where the eclipse can be experienced in populated places. During this eclipse the only places in South Australia that will be conveniently located, except in the Outback, will be Ceduna and Lyndhurst.

The SA Tourism Commission has taken the lead agency role and committed considerable resources to ensure that the towns of Ceduna and Lyndhurst are able to cope with the anticipated influx of tourists' seeking to experience the relatively rare phenomenon of a total 100 per cent eclipse. Planning for this event commenced some time ago and SATC from its own budget has allocated \$100 000 to assist in the coordination of the event and the management of media covering the experience. Aside from SATC's contribution, in September this year cabinet approved additional funding of \$600 000 to assist Ceduna and Lyndhurst meet the impact that was expected and to have the ability to deliver basic

services in regard to power, water and effluent disposal in these towns.

Some \$220 000 went to assist the upgrading of the common effluent system in Ceduna; \$210 000 for the provision of information and infrastructure at designated eclipse centre site line sites; and \$170 000 for other services or works, including rehabilitation post the event. Several allocations of money have already been approved from this last budget line, including \$8 000 to ensure adequate water supply to Glendambo; \$15 000 for the promulgation of public safety information through the Department of Human Services—and it is worth noting that there is no safe way in which to observe by direct vision an eclipse and the experience must be had in an oblique manner; and \$10 000 for the provision of a back-up generator service in Ceduna.

Contrary to some suggestion floated recently in the media, the South Australian government has been aware for some time of the event and the organisational challenge posed by the forthcoming eclipse. In fact, it would be true to say that the ancient Egyptians knew that there would be an eclipse in Ceduna on 4 December and, from the time we took office on 4 March, we have been making every effort to plan safely for the event.

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the acting Minister for Health.

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: You are the acting Minister for Health? Good! Will the acting minister ask the Minister for Health to have the public hospitals review their procedures for dealing with suspected meningococcal cases and, in particular, err on the side of caution by holding suspected cases for observation rather than discharging the patients? On 15 November, a mother took her 2½ year old son to their GP because he had a high temperature and a rash on his stomach. The doctor wrote a referral letter to the Women's and Children Hospital, raising the question of a meningococcal rash. The mother and child arrived at the hospital at about 11.30 a.m. The boy was seen at 12.15 p.m. and had a chest X-ray, but no blood sample was taken. After about one hour—at about 1.15 p.m.—the boy was sent home with his mother. The child still had a high temperature. They arrived at about 2 p.m., but by 3.15 p.m. his temperature had risen to 42 degrees and the boy started convulsing. The mother called an ambulance, and the boy was rushed to the Women's and Children's Hospital. The child was kept overnight, a blood sample was taken this time and, fortunately, the child was discharged the next day without meningococcal disease. The mother now has an ambulance account of \$530 and is still distressed by the premature discharge of her son on 15 November.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): Although I am not the acting minister, I will take the question. The Minister for Health is attending a council of government ministers on health, as the former minister would be aware. I understand that is where she is today. I will happily get an answer for the member. I am advised that there is a possibility that the member for Torrens has already written to the Minister about this issue. We are seeking clarification on that. I will be happy to get a considered response and provide it to the house at the earliest opportunity.

RADIOACTIVE WASTE

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. What is being done to raise public awareness about the dangers posed by the transportation of radioactive waste to the commonwealth government's proposed national radioactive waste repository to be located in Northern South Australia?

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): This morning the Friends of the Earth organisation began its Nuclear Freeways trip from Adelaide to Sydney to raise awareness about the threat to regional communities by the commonwealth government's proposed national radioactive waste repository. I support this idea. I met the people going on the trip and gave them a letter of support, which reads, in part:

Congratulations for taking action to spread the word of South Australia's opposition to the establishment of a national radioactive waste repository in this state. The South Australian government is concerned about the danger to regional communities posed by the transportation of radioactive waste and believes each state should take care of its own radioactive waste.

I hope this education tour will help the commonwealth government and the other states realise that South Australians do not want the nation's radioactive waste stored in their state or moved along their regional roads. Transport SA has warned that there are significant risks associated with the potential routes, particularly those that run along watercourses, which are vital to this state, such as the River Murray.

I am yet to be convinced that the commonwealth government has adequately prepared for the impacts of any potential spill of radioactive waste material while it is in transit from the other states should the repository be developed in our state. It takes only one mistake, one road crash, and we will have to ask our communities to deal with the radioactive waste incident. We cannot afford to take the risk, and the state government will be doing everything it can to send that message to the commonwealth.

SCHOOLS, FLEURIEU PENINSULA

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the Minister for Education give an undertaking that the construction of the schools and TAFE college at Victor Harbor and Port Elliot, to cost \$20 million, will be part of the 2003 budget and not further delayed by the unfinished review? In July this year, construction of three schools at Victor Harbor and Port Elliot, including a new TAFE college, was deferred pending a short six-week review. Then the review was promised to be completed by the end of November. After four months, I understand that the review is still not finished. Last night at the Victor Harbor High School presentation night, concerns were raised with me that this further delay may be a deliberate attempt to push these projects past being considered for the 2003 budget.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Minister for Education and Children's Services): As I have stated many times in written correspondence and in answers to similar questions in the house on a range of capital works projects, the 2003 budget will be announced at the time that the 2003-04 budget will be announced. It is not my intention to go out and willy-nilly give undertakings about sizes of commitments in the capital program in the 2003-04 financial year. That has not been the practice in the past, except for last year, which happened to be an election year, when the former Liberal government

made pre-announcements of what would be in the 2002-03 budget and the 2003-04 budget. That was an unusual step and one that created a lot of discontent in communities, raising expectations that work that was never going to be done would be done.

To the member for Finnis, who claims that his government was so pure on the issue of capital works, I say this: some \$124 million was underspent that had been approved by this parliament to be spent on capital works. That could have built an awful lot of Fleurieu Peninsula schools. I say to the member for Finnis also: the state Liberal government was in power for eight years and did not do that work, so to come in here and say that this backlog is the fault of this current government is ridiculous—quite plainly ridiculous. As I have said many times, the 2003 budget will be announced at the time of the 2003 budget.

I gave an undertaking, and it was in the 2002-03 budget, that \$500 000 has been allocated to the Fleurieu Peninsula schools, and that money has been dedicated to be spent on the projects on the Fleurieu Peninsula. The 2003 budget, let me say one more time, will be announced midway through 2003.

INSURANCE, INDEMNITY

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): Does the Minister for Local Government have any further information about the question asked by the member for Unley on 13 May this year?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Local Government): I thank the honourable member for his question. Members may recall earlier in question time today that the member for Unley sought to make a point about my tardiness in responding to questions and suggested that I had not provided a reply to a question he asked 13 May 2002 concerning building indemnity insurance. In fact, the answer was supplied on Wednesday 29 May 2002. It appears in *Hansard* some 16 calendar days after it was asked.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is directed to the Minister for Administrative Services. Will he admit to the house that the increase of FOIs made by MPs this year represents approximately only 1 per cent of the total number of FOIs received per year? The minister's own department in its annual report revealed that 9 427 FOIs were received last year, so the increase of less than 100 to which the minister refers represents less than 1 per cent.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Administrative Services): I thank the honourable member for his question. It gives us the opportunity to explain something about the FOI legislation. The point he makes is one of the sillier ones I have heard made in this house. It has always been the case that the most contentious aspect of FOI applications, especially under the previous government, were those made by MPs concerning the executive. That was always the political issue. Indeed, in its own Legislative Review Committee report in the upper house it was concluded that the applications for personal information, which make up the lion's share of applications and amount to the issues the honourable member seeks to draw on when he comes up with this percentage, work well and effectively, and there are no substantial issues with them.

It was always a question of the secrecy of the executive. The last government clothed each of its FOI applications in

layers of secrecy. When the former opposition leader, the present Premier, sought to obtain simple information about polling concerning SA Water, he had so many hurdles to jump that he had to get the member for Mitchell to go to court on his behalf to seek to puncture through those layers of secrecy. There were ministerial certificates and assertions of cabinet secrecy, when in fact they were simply being attached to cabinet documents and run through cabinet in order to clothe them in secrecy. That has always been the issue concerning FOI applications. The controversy has always arisen around MPs seeking to gain access from the executive.

We have introduced a range of measures which members opposite have stalled in the upper house and which seek to reverse a whole range of ways in which that secrecy can be maintained, but ultimately it is a question of culture. We have introduced a new culture of openness. Members opposite are drowning in documents they have never seen before.

WEST LAKES BOULEVARD

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light): My question is directed to the Minister for Transport. Will the minister clarify for the house exactly what he means by 'returning Frederick Road intersection to its pre-bus priority lane configuration', and does it mean that the bus priority lane will therefore be demolished? On 20 November 2002 the Minister for Transport stated in the house that as a result of safety concerns he instructed Transport SA to address the impact that the bus priority lane on West Lakes Boulevard has had. As a result of the investigation, the Frederick Road intersection will now be returned to its pre-bus priority lane configuration.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Transport): I thank the member for Light for his question, which I am delighted to answer. With the bus priority lane on West Lakes Boulevard, the previous government put in place a heavy piece of infrastructure to cater for buses on about 22 days a year to run down a dedicated path in catering for public transport on AFL football days. That is not necessarily a bad thing because we would all want to promote public transport and, if you can find a better way of getting large volumes of people to an event of that nature, that is a good thing.

The negative component to a project of that magnitude is that they chose to put down a heavy piece of infrastructure whereas we could have achieved the same outcome without any infrastructure. The member for Enfield asked me quite correctly a couple of weeks ago: what is the government doing about that? What we know, both from opposition and also from our short time in government, is that that heavy piece of infrastructure that was laid down by the previous government at a fairly significant financial commitment—I think over \$3 million, although the figure may not be precise—caused significant safety problems for people in the region. The government has undertaken to return the corner of Frederick Road and West Lakes Boulevard to its pre-existing stage, before that heavy piece of infrastructure was laid down.

That means that as traffic is coming towards the corner of West Lakes Boulevard and Frederick Road from a westerly direction, we have replaced the right-hand turn lane so that motorists can now use that as it used to be before the infrastructure was laid down to achieve the bus priority lane. It will enable traffic to turn right into Frederick Road as it used to, to get the flow going. A similar type of capacity also exists from the other way. That will overcome one of the

major safety problems that have arisen as a result of the heavy infrastructure put in place by the previous government. A lot of this could have been achieved without doing it with that heavy infrastructure.

The member for Light asked whether this means that it is going to be demolished. The answer is no, because the heavy infrastructure that is in place stays in place, but obviously there have been some modifications to it to enable motorists to turn right off West Lakes Boulevard into Frederick Road. This will make the situation much safer for local motorists and will be a better outcome for everyone.

ROADS, OLD BELAIR

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): Will the Minister for Transport advise the house how he is addressing the issues raised by Mitcham council, road safety auditors Murray F. Young and Associates, and residents of Mitcham about the cuts to funding for the Old Belair Road upgrade? Shortly after coming to office the government advised Mitcham council and residents that works planned for the Weemala Drive/McLaren Street/Old Belair Road intersection had been downgraded to cut costs. The local council, safety auditors and residents have expressed the view that this action will result in danger and possibly fatalities at the site.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Transport): This project has been included in works that have been done. Realignment of council roads was deleted from the project due to council access and safety issues. Council issues could not be safely accommodated in the original scheme. The current scheme can accommodate any future works undertaken by the council. Council and some residents are unhappy with the current scheme for Weemala Drive. So, the project became fully operational on 4 November this year. Transport SA officers have attended a public meeting that has been arranged by the council, and issues associated with this have been discussed. An independent safety audit indicates that the works are acceptable and do meet appropriate standards.

PORT LINCOLN COVE MARINA

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): My question is also directed to the Minister for Transport. Further to my question to the minister on 21 October, can the minister advise what progress has been made to transfer the Port Lincoln marina berths, particularly that of Mr Andy Sevelj, now that he has visited the site, spoken with the council and received further information from me about Mr Sevelj's transfer? I have been advised again by the conveyancer that, while there is no impediment to the transfer of the berth belonging to Mr Sevelj, this matter has been delayed for approximately six months, which has caused considerable anxiety.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Transport): I thank the member for Flinders for her question, and I would be happy to obtain a detailed response for her.

LOCHIEL PARK

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Will the Minister for Urban Development and Planning rule out any housing development at Lochiel Park? During the election campaign, the Premier categorically ruled out any development of Lochiel Park. He stated:

We intend to save 100 per cent of Lochiel Park for community facilities and open space, not a private housing development, as the Liberals have proposed.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Urban Development and Planning): The honourable member has asked the same question on a number of occasions. I think that what he must be seeking is a different answer. The member, of course, has adopted a number of different positions in relation to this matter. But we have had a consistent answer, and I refer the member to the record, where he will see that the Minister for Government Enterprises, who has responsibility for this matter, has supplied numerous detailed answers.

Mr SCALZI: Mr Speaker, I wish to ask a supplementary question. Will the minister rule out housing development at Lochiel Park?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: If the member did not hear me on the last occasion, I said that he has asked that question in a number of different forms to the Minister for Government Enterprises, and the Minister for Government Enterprises has supplied a detailed answer on each occasion. I refer him to the record.

OPERATION MINOTAUR

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): My question is directed to the Minister for Tourism, representing the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. Can the minister inform the house of the outcomes of exercise Minotaur, the national foot and mouth disease simulation exercise that was undertaken in September this year? Can the minister particularly inform the house the expected impacts of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease on the economy of South Australia?

Exercise Minotaur was conducted by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Australia, and consisted of a simulated outbreak of foot and mouth disease originating in Queensland. The exercise was conducted during the week of 9 to 13 September this year, and was aimed at increasing the awareness of the many complex and serious issues that would arise if there was a major national animal disease emergency in Australia. The hypothetical outbreak of foot and mouth disease in exercise Minotaur began in pigs and cattle on a farm in Beaudesert on the Gold Coast hinterland in Queensland. I am told that, by the end of the exercise, only Tasmania and Western Australia were completely disease free.

The Hon. M.D. RANN (Premier): I am very pleased to answer this question. I took part in Operation Minotaur, because I thought it was important for the Premier of the state, as the Chair of the Emergency Council of cabinet, to go through such a simulation, which went for about a week, and which involved all other states. I can report that much, although not quite all, of the information is accurate. We were incredibly successful: because of the actions taken through simulation by this government, we were able to stop the simulated spread of foot and mouth disease into South Australia. The way it worked was interesting. We had meetings of emergency council of cabinet that included senior police officers and others. We were briefed on a regular basis by the Chief Veterinary Officer of the state as the menace headed towards us. Of course, it involved a whole range of things (the simulated appointment of police officers as veterinary inspectors; the stopping of traffic movements across borders; the ordering of ships not to leave; the ordering of ships to turn round and return to port) that could come up, including communications between the various tiers and agencies of government.

I have been advised that South Australia was particularly well regarded in this exercise both in the way it was conducted and the way in which the most senior people in the state were involved and, indeed, in the decision-making processes that took place. I can also advise that there were observers from other states and, I am told, other nations. Press releases were being issued and, because we did not want anyone to think there was a real foot and mouth outbreak in Australia, we had to inform trading partners internationally what was going on. Indeed, there was a great deal of interest from scores of overseas nations about how Australia would cope if once again (it has happened in the past) Australia was infected.

An honourable member: When?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: From memory, it happened in 1872. I will have to check that, but that is my memory. I think that it occurred in Victoria. Certainly it was in the 19th century; it was not the 20th century. As the honourable member is a vet, and God forbid we should have such a crisis, I know that he would be one of the first to volunteer his services as an inspector, and I would certainly volunteer to swear him in.

The point of the matter is that this was a serious exercise that was conducted seriously and, of course, it highlighted some deficiencies nationally in communications, and that is what it was all about. Australia handled this simulated outbreak extremely well, but we can always do better. But let us remember that the impact on Australia of a real outbreak of foot and mouth disease would be absolutely catastrophic to the sheep, cattle and pig population. A number of things came into account: for instance, the impact on alpacas and a whole range of animals that one would not normally think of—

An honourable member: Feral pigs.

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Yes, feral pigs is another area. Of course, my close friend the former secretary of state for agriculture had the misfortune to be the minister during the foot and mouth disease outbreak in Britain, and I was able to—

The Hon. K.O. Foley interjecting:

The Hon. M.D. RANN: He is now Minister for Work and Pensions and has a budget of about £100 billion a year and has, I understand, about 400 000 people working for him. Hopefully, we are prepared both in the preventive sense, in the detection sense, and in the operational sense to deal with such a threat.

Essentially, we are talking about what we talked about today when it came to counter-terrorism measures: we have to be prepared. We cannot pretend that we live in isolation. I thank the honourable member for a very sensible question.

HF RADIO SYSTEM

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mrs PENFOLD: I believe that I was misrepresented during question time by the Minister for Transport when he claimed that my question yesterday regarding the HF radio was inaccurate. I refer to the point of the correspondence to the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. John Anderson, as

Minister for Transport and Regional Services. It is true that I received a copy of the correspondence, but it was not from the Minister for Transport: it was from the *Port Lincoln Times* which wanted me to comment on it. According to all my records, I have not received a copy of the letter from the minister's office nor the response from the Deputy Prime Minister referred to. Briefings have been rare and inadequate. In regard to the first one with the minister's staff person and a departmental person, the information provided on that occasion was not from them to me but from Bill Berkhuisen in Port Lincoln on speaker phone and me to them.

MARIJUANA

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

Mr BRINDAL: In my contribution in private members' time this morning in respect of the matter raised by the member for Mawson, I asserted at one stage that the figure of 100 plans applied. This was roundly howled down at the time by the Attorney-General. I draw the attention of the house to *Hansard* of 1 March 1990 at page 514, where the Hon. Graham Ingerson sought to reduce the then government's penalties for the major crime of trafficking. The penalties that then applied provided—and I quote from *Hansard*—that it had to be in excess of 1 000 plants, in excess of 100 kilograms or in excess of 25 kilograms of resin. The Hon. Graham Ingerson sought to reduce that to 100 plants, 2.5 kilograms of cannabis resin or 10 kilograms of cannabis. I quoted that figure this morning. It was enacted as the law, and it appears in our statute volumes. The Attorney-General claimed that there was never such a time in the history of this legislation; I claim that is wrong.

The SPEAKER: Order! The house will note grievances.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I want to make some comments with regard to the Stevens report and some of the recommendations therein relating to the industrial relations system.

Mr Hanna: It is a good report.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The honourable member says that it is a good report. I note that he is the only one on that side that says it is. Most people on that side have a different view from the member for Mitchell about industrial relations, and they are hoping that the honourable member will not get his way in caucus. I understand that there has already been a very interesting debate within the caucus on this report. We look forward to the member for Mitchell contributing to the debate when it finally gets here some time in the next year.

Today, I want to make some comments about the government's attempt through the report to sideline the Employee Ombudsman. It is interesting that recommendation No. 188 basically is an attempt by this government through the report to sideline the activity of the Employee Ombudsman. The Employee Ombudsman, of course, provides a service to employees, whether they are union members or non-union members, for those who want to have the Employee Ombudsman take on certain industrial matters on their behalf if the individual chooses to use that service rather than use the service of a union.

In his report, Mr Stevens has recommended, in essence, that if a union represents a certain area or workplace the employee actually gets no choice other than to use the union to negotiate on their behalf. It is clear where the battle lines will be drawn in relation to this matter. The Stevens report and the Labor Party, through this report, are clearly saying to employees that they do not believe in individual choice. They are saying that they want to make employees use the unions to negotiate various matters and deal with various industrial matters on the employee's behalf whether or not the employee wants them to. So, it is interesting that the government is taking what I believe will be a backward step.

The previous government did not always agree with everything that the Employee Ombudsman said, but we always respected the role. We respected the fact that it is the individual employee who should have the choice whether they use the Employee Ombudsman to deal with a matter that affected them or to do it through the union; that was their individual choice. That was their individual choice, but this government is already starting to nail its flag to the mast in relation to industrial relations issues, because it will not come out and rule out this recommendation and say, 'That's just a nonsense; won't adopt that recommendation.' It will try to use it to increase union membership. We all know that, if a rule is put over an enterprise that negotiations must be through a union, if you are a non-unionist the first thing the union will do to you is sit you down and say, 'Here's the union application form; why don't you be a good lad and join the union?' It may well be that the employee does not want to use the union to do the negotiation or handle industrial relations issues on their behalf. It may well be that the employee is happy to use the more independent service of the Employee Ombudsman. This recommendation is nothing more than a favour for the union mates of the ALP. It is all about increasing union membership and having more delegates at the ALP convention, because ultimately that is where it leads.

There will be some issues for the employees out there in their relationship with the Employee Ombudsman. We think it is unfortunate that so early in its term the government has taken the view that it will try to sideline the work of the Employee Ombudsman and try to restrict employees' choice of who represents them in certain matters. There seems no logic to it. Why in this day and age would a government seek to restrict someone's choice in relation to industrial relations matters? Why in this day and age would a government say to someone that the government knows best and they must negotiate through a union? Since when has the government known best, and why should people be forced to negotiate or deal through a union if they do not want to? We put on the record that we have concerns in relation to that recommendation. We are bringing it to the attention of the various industry groups, because we think it is one of the more significant recommendations. It is tucked away so that you suddenly find it at recommendation 188. We are making an issue of it now so that in the consultation process people will make clear to the government that they will not have a bar of it.

EDUCATION, COMPARISONS

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): This afternoon I was very pleased to hear the response of the Minister for Education to my question relating to the comments made by Dr Brendan Nelson, the federal education minister. In my opinion, it is

either ignorant or irresponsible of Dr Brendan Nelson to make comments that in any way discourage young people from seeking to achieve their absolute best, and I consider that the Prime Minister should sack him for making those comments. The minister for education shows no understanding of the barriers faced by young people in families that have no experience of university education, when he makes these comments that can give rise to people saying, 'See? The minister says that you shouldn't be struggling. The minister says that it's silly to stay at school, and that I can get on okay without it.'

I have here some figures that show something about the value of struggling and going to university and what it does in the long run. Members have probably heard of some recent publicity indicating that, overwhelmingly, university graduates are in employment within four months of their graduation. There is no 20 or 30 per cent youth unemployment for those young people. If we look at the recent census figures we can see something about the connection between university education and income. I have here a table which I seek leave to have incorporated in *Hansard*.

Leave granted.

Source: ABS 2001 Census Data
Basic Community Profiles
By Electorate
(Provided by State Parliamentary Library)

	REYNELL (30,189)		BRAGG (30,199)		DAVENPORT (29, 212)	
	TAFE	UNI	TAFE	UNI	TAFE	UNI
Type of Educational Institution attended	F/T	P/T				
	228	356	181	1,494	211	1,666
	574	225	383	723	531	699
*Total	808	584	568	2,229	745	2,371
	2.6%	1.94%	1.88%	7.38%	2.5%	8.11%
Post school qualification 15 yrs+	1,078		7473		5190	
(Bachelor Degree and above)	4.5%		29.89%		21.8%	
Unemployment Rate	9.4%		4.5%		5.5%	
Weekly Income over \$1,000 by sex (employed persons)	MEN	WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN	MEN	WOMEN
	707	135	3,638	1,600	2,376	729
	6.19%	1.09%	31.75%	11.6%	20.69%	5.8%
Total	3.5%		20.74%		12.88%	

* Includes variance for 'un-stated' responses in census

Ms THOMPSON: This table uses the figures from the 2001 census to look at some of the experiences of people in Reynell, Bragg and Davenport. At census time in Reynell 808 young people were attending TAFE and 584 young people were attending university. That is, 2.6 per cent of the Reynell population were attending TAFE and 1.9 per cent were attending university. In Bragg, 568 people or 1.88 per cent were attending TAFE and 2 229 or 7.38 per cent were attending university. In Davenport 2.5 per cent or 745 were attending TAFE, and 8.11 per cent were attending university. I also include in the table some information about post-school qualifications for those over 15, and this relates to people who have university qualifications. In Reynell it was 4.5 per cent, in Bragg, 29.89 per cent and in Davenport, 21.8 per cent.

Let us look at some of the outcomes of that qualification base. The unemployment rate in Reynell was 9.4 per cent, in Bragg it was 4.5 per cent and in Davenport it was 5.5 per cent. Let us look at another outcome: weekly income over \$1 000. In Reynell, 707 men and 135 women struggled, worked hard for many long hours and used their skills to obtain an income of over \$1 000 a week. That was 6.19 per cent of men and 1.09 per cent of women. In Bragg, 3 638 men and 1 600 women, or 31.75 per cent and 11.6 per cent, earned over \$1 000 a week. In Davenport 2 376 men and 729 women earned over \$1 000 a week. One would have to be very dim indeed not to recognise that there is a connection between that education level, the unemployment level and the income level. Education does not explain it all—we know that—but it explains an awful lot of it. I have great respect for people with TAFE qualifications; they assist us in our daily lives, but we need a fair share of all the wealth; we need our

young people to have access to that fair share.

Time expired.

DAVIDSON, Mr G.S.

Mr VENNING (Schubert): I note your rise from staffer to speaker, Mr Acting Speaker; well done. I join with all members in expressing my condolences to the family of the late Senator Gordon Davidson, particularly his wife of 50 years, Patricia. Gordon, who was a Senator for South Australia in the federal parliament for more than 20 years, died last Monday, and it was a great shock to us all. He was a true friend of many in this place, particularly me and my family, and no doubt yours, sir. He was very much larger than life—a true blue Liberal and an absolute, thorough gentleman. His funeral is tomorrow at 9 o'clock in Scots Church on North Terrace.

After over 20 years of debate, discussion and planning, I was thrilled to acknowledge the announcement that a deep sea port would be built at Outer Harbor with support from the new state government. As most members would be aware, I have been a staunch supporter of a new deep sea port at Outer Harbor for years, and earlier this year I spoke several times in the house about the urgency of confirming its future for South Australia's grain growers. The big winners in all this are South Australia's grain growers, after various groups had put forward the options of Mypony Point and Port Stanvac (born, I would say, out of frustration at the lack of action). Industry disputes between AusBulk, the Australian Wheat Board (AWB) and the Australian Barley Board (ABB) certainly caused problems.

The South Australian Farmers Federation has also been involved in the negotiations behind closed doors, having supported the push to develop the Outer Harbor site. One thing I am really pleased about, especially as I declare that I am a shareholder of all three, is the commonsense approach shown by AusBulk, AWB and ABB to jointly own and operate the grain terminal, with the details needing to be finalised.

It has been very quiet since 27 September, when the Premier announced or reannounced this initiative and the new arrangement. I hope that the three groups can get together, because it has been very quiet, and come up with a formal agreement very soon. I will observe the progress—or lack thereof—and I fervently hope that we have a result before this house returns in February; otherwise, I will have to raise the matter again. If the government has to call in a mediator, I think it would be a good idea—and the sooner, the better. I know these negotiations can be difficult and complicated. I was happy that AusBulk would have 50 per cent of operations, and the Australian Barley Board and the Australian Wheat Board would each share 25 per cent. As soon as that arrangement is formalised, the better—and I hope that is not holding up progress of the whole project. I look forward to its coming to fruition.

It is predicted that by 2005 three of our major wheat export markets—Iraq, Iran and Yemen—want 90 per cent of their grain transported by panamax vessels. As a result, we have a short time in which to complete the project, that is, by harvest 2005-06. The development details include construction of a berth pocket and a new grain wharf to a depth of 14 metres by 2004; a world-class facility at a cost of \$24 million at berth 8, alongside the container wharf; and a \$109 million redevelopment paving the way for future development at the terminal with expansion of the vehicle export facility, shifting of livestock facilities alongside the grain terminal and the upgrading of wine export facilities. Passenger and tourism berths will be upgraded as part of the expansion capabilities, and there will be improved container export capabilities. It will also include the development of new infrastructure for a mineral sands export facility and woodchip exports.

I look forward in the not too distant future to the ongoing developments as a result of the dredging of Outer Harbor, the building of the new grain berth and terminal, and the third river bridge crossing. A lot of development is planned but, unless we get it moving quickly, I cannot see the 2005-06 deadline being met. If it is not met, we will lose so much potential. So much of our market could be lost to competitors and so much goodwill that has been built up over many years could be lost, and the grain industry and other industries that use this port will suffer. If we do not want Port Adelaide to become a backwater, we must get on with it very quickly. I agree with the Premier's reannouncement, and I remind the house that Premier Olsen first announced it. We should get on with it. If we do not, all sorts of other things will come into play and cause further confusion.

DEFENCE PROJECT

Mr O'BRIEN (Napier): On 26 June this year the Howard government gave in-principle agreement to the purchase of a new generation jet fighter known as the joint strike fighter, or F35. The agreement with US defence corporation, Lockheed Martin, is worth \$12 billion, and it will be the largest purchase by an Australian government since Federation. The F35 will ultimately replace our F18 fighters and

F111 strike bombers. While a purchase of this size is news in itself, it could—and I stress 'could'—have significant ramifications for the South Australian economy. When George W. Bush awarded the contract to Lockheed Martin last October to build the F35, it was the largest single defence contract awarded in US history. The contract envisaged Lockheed Martin's building up to 6 000 strike fighter aircraft, not only for the US but also for its allies.

In what one commentator as described as a 'stroke of genius', the Pentagon attached a shrewd marketing ploy to its plan. Any country that wished to purchase this new plane could also help to build it, as long as it said yes to the purchase before 15 July this year. Washington argued that joining the design phase of the F35 would spread the benefits of this massive project around the globe. Australia took up the opportunity offered by the Pentagon at an upfront cost of \$300 million, signing on 26 June. The significance of this deal to South Australia could be enormous. We vigorously promote South Australia as the nation's defence industry state, and defence stands alongside wine, cars and grain as the key economic drivers of our state.

At Edinburgh Park, the state government has established a defence technology precinct. One of the first tenants will be BAE Systems Australia, who will be headquartered in the precinct. The location of BAE Systems Australia at Edinburgh Park offers South Australia a great opportunity to participate in the United States' largest military project and Australia's largest government expenditure. BAE Systems is one of four major participants in the Lockheed Martin F35 team, along with Northrop Grumman, Pratt and Whitney, and Rolls Royce. BAE Systems is responsible for the design and integration of the aft fuselage, horizontal and vertical tails, and the wing-fold mechanisms for the carrier version of the aircraft. Tom Burbage, Lockheed Martin's Executive Vice President and F35 program general manager, has said:

Australia has a strong and well-established aerospace industrial base. We know the Australians manufacture very high quality, cost competitive products, and we expect them to compete effectively within the F35 program's best value criteria.

South Australia has a major opportunity to seize a significant portion of the nation's part in this staggeringly large project. The aircraft itself could carry our industries to the leading edge of aerospace and defence technology. The aircraft, which will incorporate stealth technology, will be built in three versions, one of which will incorporate the technologies of the Harrier STOVL program. It is described as fulfilling the US government's requirement for a new generation of transformational weapons.

Australia's largest government expenditure could create enormous employment opportunities in our northern suburbs. Lockheed Martin employs 125 000 people worldwide. A small fraction of this level of employment would have a profound impact on the economic fortunes of our state.

EDUCATION, FLEXIBILITY

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Today I wish to speak about the comments by the Minister for Education and the member for Reynell, and the misrepresentation of the federal minister's statements in relation to education. In the *Advertiser* today, an article states:

Speaking at the launch of a \$4 million program to assist boys in schools, Dr Nelson warned that the rising rates of suicide, depression and university drop-outs suggested young people felt crushed by the weight of expectation they could not meet. 'It is time we started to take a reality check on the pressure we put on young people,' he said.

I think both the state minister and the member for Reynell have done a great injustice today. I believe they fail to understand the difference between schooling and education. School does not have a monopoly on life's education. There is no point in increasing the retention rate at school but having people in the community feeling marginalised and not part of the system. No-one questions that we should encourage people to do their best to attain higher education.

Tertiary education should be available to all. Everyone should have equal opportunities. Some students are definitely not suited for university education. I speak from experience as a teacher of 18 years. Everyone should have an opportunity, and I return to my point that there is a difference between schooling and education. I stand here as someone with a tertiary education. My mother received grade two primary education and grade three primary education in another country. However, my father and mother are both highly educated.

Members opposite who have spoken have an elitist view of education. Education is a lifelong process. It is about getting the best out of life. Those opportunities should be available for all. We know (the member does not have to refer to suburbs) that, if you complete tertiary education, your income capacity will be greater, along with all those other things that the honourable member has talked about. However, to keep students at school in a system that is irrelevant to them is really an injustice. You have to be flexible. If students feel left out, then find other programs and give them time to find something meaningful and come back. The opportunity should always be available.

When talking about schooling we should not simply play with statistics. South Australia's retention rate of people coming back into part-time education at TAFE is not what government members are espousing. As I said, there is a difference between schooling and education. It is no use having students in a classroom if they will not participate. It is no use giving them a certificate and then not a job. It is no use if they complete year 12 but feel a failure. I will quote the federal minister who, in talking about one of the reasons, said:

I strongly suspect why four out of 10 university students drop out is that they are there because someone else wants them to be there. Education is about getting people to do what they want, not what other people want them to do. You can see how people fail when you push them according to someone else's expectations. We should encourage people to realise their own and not another's potential.

HIV/AIDS

Ms BEDFORD (Florey): World AIDS Day is a time to remember those who have died and to learn more about HIV/AIDS, and care about the 40 million people world-wide who are living with this condition. There are an estimated 12 700 people living with HIV in Australia, and about 2 600 living with AIDS. About 450 people per year are infected with HIV. At the end of 2001, there had been about 6 174 deaths from AIDS. HIV stands for human immunodeficiency virus. It is primarily transmitted in blood and via unprotected sexual contact or shared injecting equipment. HIV is the virus that can cause AIDS.

World-wide, HIV infection occurs mainly through heterosexual contact. In Australia, 80 per cent of HIV infection has occurred via unprotected sexual contact between men. Acquired immune deficiency syndrome

(AIDS) is not a single disease: it is a spectrum of conditions that occur when a person's immune system is seriously damaged after years of attack by the human immunodeficiency virus. HIV is the virus that can cause AIDS. The terms HIV and AIDS are not interchangeable. It is important to remember that a person who is infected with HIV does not necessarily have AIDS. However, all people with AIDS have HIV. HIV damages the body's immune system and renders the body vulnerable to other diseases and infections—its symptoms are most commonly symptoms similar to those of any chronic viral infection. During advanced stages of HIV infection, a person may develop any number of opportunistic infections considered to be AIDS defining illnesses.

HIV was first isolated in Paris in 1983 by Dr Luc Montagnier. HIV belongs to a group of viruses called retro viruses known for their capacity to copy their genetic blueprint on to the genes of a person's cells. Unlike influenza viruses, which are spread through coughs and sneezes, HIV is transmitted through blood and through unprotected sexual contact or sharing injecting equipment and also through breast milk. Antibodies to HIV were detected in blood samples dating back to 1959. In 1981, the US Centre for Disease Control published the first scientific paper on the epidemic in a report of a rare cancer, Kaposi's sarcoma, detected in a small number of gay men. The UNAIDS 2002 Report on the global HIV/AIDS epidemic reported that by 2001 AIDS had become the most devastating disease humankind had ever faced. Globally last year there were more than five million new infections, which means that a total of over 40 million people are now HIV positive. Since the first clinical evidence of AIDS was reported in 1981, more than 20 million people world-wide have died.

In Australia, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has largely been contained through early intervention and groundbreaking education and prevention programs. However, there is still a need for continued vigilance. New HIV infections are still occurring. In South Australia in 2001, HIV infection was diagnosed in 45 individuals. Of these, 14 individuals acquired their infection overseas and a further five were likely to have acquired their infection interstate. Since HIV became a notifiable disease in 1985 until the end of 2001, 807 individuals have been diagnosed with HIV infection, and 334 have been notified as AIDS cases; 247 people with HIV/AIDS have died. Approximately 600 people are currently living with HIV/AIDS in South Australia.

After 20 years of epidemic there is evidence to suggest that people are becoming complacent and less receptive to the messages of safe sex practices. Although most people maintain these practices, research shows that changes are occurring in sexual and social behaviour in Australia. In view of these increasing numbers, there appears to be a greater need for independent advocacy to ensure that services remain responsive to the needs of a wide range of HIV positive people.

AIDS Awareness Week and World AIDS Day, the health promotion initiatives organised by the joint United Nations programs, aim to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS throughout the world. The theme for this year's AIDS Awareness Week campaign is 'HIV/AIDS doesn't discriminate, people do.' 'HIV Figures 3,' the 2002 report of the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, found that discrimination is a major concern for those living with HIV/AIDS. The campaign aims to discourage Australians from discriminating against those living with HIV/AIDS and to offer support and understanding to those infected or affected by the virus. In

South Australia, an important part of the week's activities is Red Ribbon Day. There will be a picnic at the end of the week to mark AIDS Day in South Australia. The courage of HIV/AIDS sufferers cannot be understated as with the support of their loved ones they face their disease and go about their daily lives. I hope that, when the day comes for us to come face to face with our mortality, we are able to be half as brave.

WEST BEACH RECREATION RESERVE

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Urban Development and Planning): I move:

That this house, pursuant to section 13(7) of the West Beach Recreation Reserve Act 1987, grants its approval to the West Beach Trust granting a lease or licence for a term of up to 50 years over each of the areas within the reserve within the meaning of the act identified as 'BB', 'Y' and 'Z', respectively, in the plan described in the General Registry Office numbered GP 496/1999.

I will briefly explain the purpose for that motion. The parcel of land concerned is located next to the marina. This land has been designated for commercial purposes to support the marine services industry. Under the previous version of the West Beach Recreation Reserve Act 1987, the West Beach Trust was able to enter leases on the reserve for up to 10 years, with ministerial approval required for leases exceeding this duration. The former minister gave her approval for the trust to enter leases up to 50 years on this particular site on 21 August 1999. To date a number of businesses are operating from the site that have been granted leases of approximately 40 years under this approval.

The term of the lease is usually determined by a negotiation between the potential lessee and the trust, depending on the quality of the structure intended to be constructed by the lessee, after giving due consideration to allowing the lessee to gain a commercial return from the investment in the structure. It should be noted that, under the terms of the lease, at the end of the lease period the ownership of the structure returns to the trust so the trust can order the lessee to remove the structure. Under the revised act, which was brought into effect on 1 January 2002, the trust is required to seek the approval of both houses of parliament for lease terms in respect of reserve land exceeding 20 years; ministerial approval is required for terms exceeding 10 years—hence the current motion.

The trust is now seeking to reinstate the approval from the previous minister to enter leases of up to 50 years duration on this particular site to allow the trust a certainty in negotiations with potential lessees on the remaining sites within the commercial area. The extended lease period is considered necessary to allow a potential lessee to generate significant return on their investment, that is, to recoup facility construction costs.

Dr McFETRIDGE secured the adjournment of the debate.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Urban Development and Planning): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the house be

extended beyond 5 p.m.

Motion carried.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

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

(Continued from 21 November. Page 1958.)

The CHAIRMAN: This examination relates to the Deputy Premier, Treasurer and Minister for Industry, Investment and Trade. The time set is 45 minutes.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I refer to Part A, page 69 of the Auditor-General's Report. Will the Treasurer explain the \$193 million in savings under the heading, 'Contingency Provisions', and detail what that means? In particular, does it mean that \$193 million of the \$967 million in savings is just a reduction in the contingency provision in the budget?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: There were certainly adjustments to contingency in headroom.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I take that to mean reductions.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We manage our budget better. We are much more disciplined.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I refer to Part A, page 45. The Auditor-General noted the following:

There are considerable risks inherent in the budgeted result, particularly with respect to the achievement of planned savings.

Can the Treasurer confirm that one of the reasons for the deliberate refusal by the government to answer estimate questions to detail the \$967 million in budget savings is that Treasury has advised the Treasurer that they are not convinced that the government has been able to identify actual savings of \$967 million, and will the Treasurer also confirm that agencies have been allowed to include increases in revenue, that is, fees and charges, etc., as part of their savings target?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will do my best over the next 41½ minutes to be as pleasant as I can and not refer to your appalling budget history. What I will say is that the savings that we have identified will be achieved. Those savings are budgeted and documented, and they will be delivered.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I will just repeat the second part of that question. The Treasurer might have missed it in his reference to being polite. Will the Treasurer also confirm that agencies have been allowed to include increases in revenue, that is, fees and charges, as part of the savings?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We have had the budget estimates, so this is about the Auditor-General's Report—but my recollection would be that there are some small revenue measures. I think the crown lease issue that is now being resolved in the parliament would be one, as would one or two other issues. The point there being—and I accept that your next question will be, 'Will what the parliament is going to approve in respect of crown leases alter some of those numbers?'—obviously there will be some adjustments on those numbers because the parliament will not be passing what the government initially intended, so that number will be adjusted appropriately, but there is a small component in there, yes.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Now that you have raised the crown lease issue, if the parliament passes something different from what is in the select committee's report, will the environment portfolio then have to make up the difference between what the parliament approves and what is currently

in the savings target?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: As tempting as that may be, it will simply be an adjustment to the budget.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: A budget surplus?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: A number of options are available to government, headroom or contingency being one. It will be a hit—

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: It would not be environment, though?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No, I would not think so.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I refer to Part A, page 70. Does the Treasurer agree with the Auditor-General's view that:

It is unlikely that the level of savings required to meet the fiscal target can be achieved without also making savings in health and education.

The background of this question is that the government is on record a thousand times saying that health and education will not be touched, and the Auditor-General has raised a view that it is unlikely that the level of savings required to meet the fiscal target can actually be achieved without also making savings within education and health.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Again in reference to that earlier question concerning crown leases, I will double-check in terms of exactly how we will account for the fact that the parliament will not be passing the crown leases, so I will give you a definitive answer as to whether or not it is an adjustment to the department, a hit to the bottom line or taking it from contingency, because we have not as yet seen the final format of what the parliament will be providing. Once we get that, I will be happy to give you that complete answer.

As to the reference to the Auditor-General's Report on page 70, again we have made no secret of the fact that we have set ourselves a very difficult task in terms of the budget savings requirement. It is not easy; it is very difficult. However, we are confident that it can be achieved. We know it will not be an easy task, but we are half way through the financial year and I am confident that the savings expectations will be met from within government as it relates to health and education again. We have made clear that it is about reprioritisation and restructuring of expenditure levels in health and education in terms of the areas within those portfolios, and we are redirecting funds from what were your government's priorities to what are our government's priorities in health and education.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Treasurer did not quite answer the question, which was whether he agrees with the Auditor-General's view that 'it is unlikely that the level of savings required to meet the fiscal target can be achieved without making savings in health and education'. Is the Treasurer guaranteeing that he can meet his fiscal targets and that they can be achieved without also making savings in health and education?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I have learnt in this business very early—perhaps in part thanks to the member opposite—that guaranteeing things in politics is a big ask. We are confident that we will meet our objectives. I am certain we will do so, but I am not about to provide guarantees. The fiscal framework put in place by this government will be achieved. Over the course of four years, I am confident that you will see a budgetary outcome that will be a first for this state, namely, balance on both accrual and cash measurement—certainly the first for a very long time. That is the four-year strategy of this government, and I am confident we can do it.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Given that the Treasurer will not guarantee, will he then rule out making savings in health and education as part of the government's strategy to meet its fiscal target?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I have learnt very quickly in this job that in ruling things in or out one has to be cautious because behind every question from the member opposite potentially lurks a trick—that is a compliment. There are ways in which we can reprioritise expenditure within both the health and education portfolios, where we can shift money from what were your priorities in government to what are our priorities in the health and education portfolios and free up money to be spent elsewhere within those portfolios. That is good, prudent management by a government and I am sure the honourable member's government would have done that to a limited extent when it first came to power in the early days. It is not an unreasonable thing for governments to do and we are doing it.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Will the Treasurer confirm that his officers have already asked the departmental officers in health and education to develop a savings plan in case the government cannot meet its fiscal target from outside health and education? Are officers already working on a plan just in case?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: In my view the member is straying somewhat from the intention of these formats in his questioning, but I suspect I probably did to a fair extent when I was sitting over there, so one should not be too churlish.

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Maximum mayhem. As to whether I have asked Treasury officers to develop plans, I would be concerned if there was not consistent dialogue between my Treasury officers and officers within agencies such as health and education with regard to achievements, plans and all sorts of bureaucratic exchanges that occur between agencies. One would hope that occurs, as it is the normal course of business of the Department of Treasury and Finance.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I refer to part A on page 37. At budget time the Treasurer estimated that there was some \$322 million underexpenditure by government agencies in the year 2001-02. Has the Treasurer now received any further advice from DTF that the underexpenditure from government agencies for 2001-02 was actually higher than the \$322 million? If that is true, will he provide a detailed breakdown of this new total, and does he accept that this will improve the reported budgeted result for 2001-02?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: That is a good question and I am happy to take it on notice and provide an answer at the earliest opportunity. It is a very good question.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I refer to part 1 on page 83. Prior to the election the Labor Party promised that it would not increase the debt levels of the state with its financial policies. The Labor budget also committed to ensuring 'no growth in DIT from ongoing operations of the general government sector'. Will the Treasurer confirm that he has had discussions with the Economic Development Board members about breaking this promise by increasing debt to fund increased capital works expenditure? If so, will the Treasurer assure the house that this will not be another case where he claims to have the moral fibre to break his promise?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I would be disappointed if the opposition chooses to politicise the Economic Development Board. No doubt in regular briefings between the Economic Development Board and the opposition this matter was

raised. In its finance paper the board makes comment about public debt levels in terms of its views.

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I have discussions with the Economic Development Board often and I know that the board's chair, various of its members and the Office of Economic Development talk regularly with the opposition. The member would be fully aware that the Economic Development Board has a view on this matter. I have made very clear that I have no passion for expanding public debt to provide for the running of government. The great challenge I have is not whether I increase debt but whether I get the cost of government in balance with our capacity to pay for it.

When we came to office there was a large structural imbalance. Notwithstanding the sale of ETSA and debt reduction, the government was still spending well in excess of our capacity as a state to pay. The great challenge for me is to get zero net lending or a balanced budget on accrual measurement. That is my task, and one does not achieve that task if one does not rein in recurrent expenditure. The issue of debt as it relates to public infrastructure is an issue debated widely and commonly among many people. We are looking at public-private partnerships, which is a way of providing increased infrastructure expenditure using private and not public debt, and there are various ways of providing the infrastructure needs of our state that can accommodate the ever growing demands on infrastructure provision. As the member knows, this is a matter that the Economic Development Board itself has discussed with me, and it is a fair point for members of the Economic Development Board to have. Whether that means that that is what the government will do is a different matter.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Treasurer raises the issue of selling ETSA, and the state still, in his view, spending more than the government had the capacity to pay. Is it the Treasurer's view that if ETSA had not been sold the state would be in a far worse position, spending more than the state had the capacity to pay?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I do not want to give advice to my friend and political opponent. We came into this house together. He was a minister well before I was, but in opposition I learnt that one should not always look back but should look forward. At times in opposition I think I looked back to much, although not too far because it was not a pretty picture, certainly in the early years. We could debate ETSA until the cows come home—we have done that one a fair bit. It is all about the future and the positive agenda of this government.

The CHAIRMAN: I remind members that we are looking at the Auditor-General's Report and not canvassing world peace or other matters outside the Auditor-General's Report.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: If I cannot ask questions about world peace I will throw this one away and go on to the next question! In relation to Part A, page 50, can the Treasurer confirm that a significant factor in the predicted improvement in the budget over the forward estimates period is due to a significant reduction in the proposed capital expenditure program compared to 2001-02 and 2002-03, and will the Treasurer provide details on the proposed capital expenditure program in each of the forward estimate years?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Again, that is a good question and a very fair question, and one that requires some consideration by government before we respond. I am happy to take that question on notice and provide a considered response to the honourable member.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Does the Treasurer agree with the Auditor-General's view in Part A, on page 39, that the claimed \$396 million accrual deficit for 2001-02 would have been significantly lower if the budgeted dividends from SAAMC and SAFA had not been deliberately excluded from the budgeted result? The Auditor-General's Report states:

On the other hand, had the distributions been received from the financial institutions as budgeted, the South Australian result may have looked significantly better against the other states.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The shifting of dividends is something that opposition members have attempted to make political mileage from because they were well versed in the practice. It was something they did with much vigour for the eight years in which they were in government. They shifted dividends every year to give the appearance that their budgets were close to balance. One of the things that we encountered on coming to office was that we had to shift expenditure from one year to another; we had to shift dividends to match that expenditure. That was an adjustment we had to make and that, to a large extent, addresses the point that the honourable member is making.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Can the Treasurer just confirm that what he is trying to explain is that the dividends that were shifted matched the expenditure dollar for dollar?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: That is not what I said. What I said was that expenditure was transferred from one financial year to another and it was appropriate that dividends be transferred to match that expenditure. I did not say it was dollar for dollar: I said it was a part of that movement.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The question was not about past practice, because the Treasurer in his previous answer stated that he does not want to go backwards and look at what previous governments have done. The question was: does the Treasurer agree with the Auditor-General's view about that issue? It was not about what the previous government had done. The question was whether the Treasurer agreed with the Auditor-General's view when he stated:

On the other hand, had the distributions been received from the financial institutions as budgeted, the South Australian result may have looked significantly better against the other states.

Does the Treasurer agree with that view?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I do not think that whether I agree or disagree with the view is important at this point. The Auditor-General is the independent financial watchdog of government and, whether governments agree or disagree, it is an opinion that should be considered appropriately. It is the opinion of the Auditor-General, an officer for whom members on this side of the house, certainly, have respect. I repeat that a certain amount of dividends were transferred to match transfers in expenditure. It was not the whole sum but a reasonable portion of it.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Can the Treasurer update the house on his proposal to purchase the Reserve Bank building?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will get confirmation on this, but I understand that the state government will not be purchasing the Reserve Bank building, since someone else put in a higher bid. As I said, I will obtain a full answer for the honourable member.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Is the minister considering new accommodation options for the Office of Economic Development and, if so, what are those options?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We are always considering the options available to government in a variety of areas. Office accommodation for various agencies is a matter consistently before government.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Is the Treasurer prepared to seek some advice specifically in relation to the Office of Economic Development and to ascertain whether the government is considering new accommodation options for that office, and will he come back to the house on this matter at the earliest opportunity?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: What I do not want to do is have too many questions taken on notice so that I have officers spending hours having to research the answers, along with the hundreds of hours of work they are having to do for the opposition's frivolous FOIs. You may not know, but the former minister for industry would know, because he was not able to make a decision on it, that the Centre for Innovation, Business and Manufacturing has a lease on a property at Woodville that expires in the latter part of next year, which will necessitate a new location for that activity. The honourable member's government, from memory, was looking at a collocation to a greenfields site of that facility, the South Terrace part of the Centre for Innovation and the Small Business Centre.

We have said that we have to address that accommodation need for the Woodville facility. We are in agreement with the opposition's view that it would be good to collocate the two elements of the Centre for Innovation as one and we are looking at what that may mean for the Office of Economic Development, which is currently housed in Terrace Towers. That is a matter we are currently considering.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I will narrow it down a bit. Is one of the options that the Treasurer is considering the collocation of offices located in South Terrace office accommodation and Port Road accommodation with offices currently located at Terrace Towers on North Terrace? If so, will the minister assure the house that there will be no increase in costs associated with the move?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will repeat myself: yes, we have to find a location for the facility at Woodville. I think the decision to consider shifting the South Terrace operation to be collocated with the Woodville operation was a good suggestion by the honourable member's government. We are looking at whether, if we are going to do that, we should collocate all Office of Economic Development agencies on one site. We are going through the numbers with that. I can assure the house that, as the Treasurer of this state and someone who is driving government efficiency and saving very hard, one of the requirements will be that it be at least cost to government and that it will be a move that is not significantly detrimental to the financial position of the government.

It would be wrong for me to shift public servants and offices around the city if I were only adding to the recurrent costs in a significant and material way: that will not occur. If we do it, it will be because it is cost effective and a sensible policy decision.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I assume that answer relates to all portfolio areas in relation to accommodation, about being cost effective, etc?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: You asked me about the Office of Economic Development and that is what the answer related to. If you have another instance, please feel free to ask me and I will consider that one.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Some might interpret that answer as giving other agencies more flexibility than your own. I am sure that other ministers will be grateful for the gap. On page 37 of Part A there are a number of headings with no detail in the A-G's Report, and the Treasurer may need to take this on

notice. I do not want to put his officers to too much work, given their other duties, but the Treasurer may wish to come back to the house with an itemised breakdown of the following headings and figures: timing and data revisions, \$189 million; cost pressures, \$127 million; savings measures, \$22 million; operating initiatives, \$13 million; and headroom supplementation, \$20 million.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: At the bottom part of that page and over the page there is quite some detail as to what they are. I think it is quite self-explanatory. I do not think I can add a lot more. I think that a fairly comprehensive answer is contained at the bottom of page 37 and over onto page 38.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: So, when the opposition asks for a detailed breakdown of cost pressures, and it is \$127 million on page 37, and there is no detailed breakdown at all (there is a three line explanation to a \$127 million line item), does the Treasurer believe that the public is meant to be able to understand what is included in the \$127 million? We are seeking a detailed breakdown of the items that make up that \$127 million so that not only the public but also members of parliament can gain a greater understanding of what is involved in that figure. You could roll out that argument for each of the figures. However, a three line explanation for \$127 million does not give us enough explanation. That is why I offered the Treasurer the opportunity to take the question on notice and get his officers to come back with an item by item breakdown of how those figures are made up.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We will have that, but it is awfully historical and, I have to say, a tad embarrassing for the member. As I said, increasing cost pressures was the subject of much debate. A lot of it was those things that the former government left out of its mid-year budget review update during the election campaign. If one reads the paragraph under 'Increasing cost pressures', one sees that it includes the enterprise bargaining agreement which was negotiated during the year and which had not been finalised at the time of the original budget.

Although allowance was made in the 2001-02 budget, finalisation of the negotiations resulted in costs above the provision allowed for. That was the whole debate: whilst you had a provision for enterprise bargaining, you had nowhere near the quantum of money in it that was required. I would have thought that the explanation there was fairly self-evident with respect to increasing cost pressures. However, I am happy to take the question on notice and obtain a more detailed answer. As I said, I think it will just further embarrass the member, because it was the last budget of the former government, which was a pretty sloppy effort.

Mr Koutsantonis: It was a ripper, that one!

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: We will see the answer when it comes. I refer to Part B, Volume 2, page 386. Does the government intend to continue with the current overseas office arrangements in the USA, or does it intend to establish another office on the West Coast of the USA and, if so, at what cost?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: That is also a good question, because the former government, from memory, in reaction to the Labor opposition, announced, after we did, that putting some form of presence in the United States would be a good thing to do, and I think it was right. We have looked at whether or not the office established by the former government in New York is sufficient, whether we should have an office on the West Coast, or whether we should have more resources. We have not advanced that thinking, to be honest. There is now, of course, a new Minister for Trade, so he will

be consulted. My recollection is that we are at the point where we are reviewing the operations of our trade offices, and we are not necessarily of a mind that we should have one on the West Coast. But we have not finalised those discussions.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Will the minister indicate when he and the CEO of the Office of Economic Development will have ensured that all senior executive positions in that office have been filled by permanent appointments?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We are working through the issues of the restructuring of the department following the work undertaken by former treasurers Dawkins, Baker and Mr McKay and, once those reforms are in place, the public will be advised.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: It is nice that the public will be advised eventually, but can the Treasurer give us just a hint? Is it three months away, six months away or 12 months away? What time frame is the Treasurer looking at, as minister, to fill those positions?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: A reasonably tight time frame and one that will allow due consideration of the requirements of the government to be considered and appropriate implementation to occur.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Well, that clarifies it beautifully. I will not pursue any further queries. Obviously, the minister is not going to let on with respect to timing. In relation to Part A, page 82, does the Treasurer agree with the Auditor-General that 'any projects successfully implemented under Partnerships SA are not likely to be included in capital expenditure'? The Auditor-General continued:

In my view, there is a risk that the issue will continue to exist, with the primary fiscal target set by the government being the GFS net lending (borrowing), a measure that includes the up-front capital cost of an asset purchased by government.

Does this mean that, if a private-public partnership (PPP) builds a \$50 million swim centre, the up-front costs of the \$50 million will impact on the GFS net lending borrowing measure in the first year?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The issue of PPPs and how they are considered by the Auditor-General is a difficult question for government. It was one that confronted the member's government and one that is confronting our government. It is about the ability to successfully and appropriately transfer the risk. The ability of government to transfer the risk affects the decision making of the Auditor-General as to whether this is an off balance sheet transaction or an on balance sheet transaction. If it is an on balance sheet transaction, it impacts on the GFS. If it is off balance sheet, it is the payments to service the PPP arrangement that impact. Hypothetically, with respect to a swim centre, I do not know.

What we are having to do with a number of these projects we are assessing is see whether or not there is sufficient risk transfer to allow the project to be off balance sheet. If it is not, one of the reasons for doing a PPP is eliminated. So, the Auditor-General (as do, I am sure, all Auditors-General) takes a very tough line on this, and ensures that the appropriate accounting standards are adhered to. We are going through the process now, as the member's government would have done, of working through which of these projects will be successful PPPs and will meet the appropriate risk transfer to be judged to be off balance sheet.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Has the government, in its first nine months, deliberately sidelined the important Industries Development Committee of the parliament, and how many offers of assistance to industry have been made by the new government that should have been referred to the IDC?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: One thing that I would not do is sideline the Industries Development Committee of parliament, because I am proud to say that I was a member of that committee for eight years. In fact, my officer here was with me for four of those years as senior officer from Treasury, and we had many an interesting meeting. I am not about sidelining the Industries Development Committee, but I think what you are seeing is a change in operation of the new Labor administration from the former Liberal administration when it comes to industry assistance. We are simply not offering companies the level of money or the number of projects that was the case in the past. Notwithstanding the offer of assistance to Mitsubishi, there have been very few projects that I, as Treasurer and Minister for Industry, have been prepared to support which hence would require the IDC.

There is a distinct change in style in providing assistance as between this government and previous governments. I know that is causing a few raised eyebrows around the place, but I make no apology. This government will have a drier and more conservative line when it comes to the provision of assistance for the industrial sector of our economy. It is our view that it is time for perhaps less assistance than more. We will have to sit back and judge whether or not that was sustained over the four years. However, in the first eight or nine months, I simply have not been approving many projects. That is not to say that they have not been forthcoming, because the department is working diligently, but it is a significant change in style.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Treasurer may want to take my next question on notice and come back to the house in due course. The Treasurer has said that he has approved very few projects, but he has clearly approved some. Can the Treasurer advise the house how many have been approved—I do not need to know the names—since the government took office?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The honourable member may choose to criticise me for this, but my initial advice (and we will check in case it is not absolutely correct) is that there have been two approvals since this government came to office. I think that one was approved during the caretaker period; I am not sure whether both were approved, but I will check that.

The Hon. I.F. Evans: Your advice is both.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am not going to take advice from officers with such distance, but I will get the honourable member a detailed answer.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I can clearly see that it is two.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: It is a question of whether or not they were during the caretaker period. I understand that the honourable member has been briefed on Mitsubishi and one other. I will get a considered answer. The bottom line is that there have been very few. The honourable member may well criticise me for not offering assistance to many more companies. However, that is the difference between a prudent Labor government that wants to encourage business to do it themselves as best they can—create the environment, get the fundamentals right, get the balance sheet of government right—and business should flourish, as distinct to the former government, which had a sloppy approach to fiscal management, sloppy budgetary approach and handed out money, dare I say, a little too freely. I do not think that encouraged good economic activity, or as good as it could have been. You have to have that entrepreneurial spirit in the business community, and I think that, unless we are a little drier on that front, it will not happen quite so quickly. That is just my view, and perhaps that is a slight philosophical difference from the view

of members opposite. If the answer requires further information, I will get it for the honourable member.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The Treasurer can provide that information in due course; I do not need it today. Will the Treasurer confirm that when the new government started its term of office in March no departmental CEOs had a bonus payment option as part of their remuneration package? Can the Treasurer also confirm that no current CEOs have a bonus payment option as part of their remuneration package?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will get that information about the number of companies provided assistance properly clarified, because I do not believe that those decisions were taken in the true caretaker period. I just want to put that on the record, as trying to give advice on the run is not good policy, and I will provide the honourable member with a considered answer on that matter. I am not sure whether my earlier comments to the honourable member were totally correct.

On the issue of bonuses, we will take that on notice and provide a considered response. The former government did like performance bonuses: there is no question about that. I have been trying to make a few adjustments in that area, at least in relation to one case.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: Will the Treasurer provide the analysis prepared by South Australian Treasury officers for all government showing the impact of the GST and the intergovernmental agreement on all states for the period up to about 2010; and, in particular, when does South Australia go positive from the IGA and by what amount (Part A, page 59)?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will have that clarified as to which year it is. Some recent advice indicated that the date is either 2006-07 or 2007-08, but I will get a considered response for the honourable member. As it relates to the specific details the honourable member has requested, I will consider whether or not it is appropriate for the government to provide it. I am sceptical about what money we will get, in a positive sense, from the GST.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I refer to Part B, volume 3, page 1144. In 2001, one employee—presumably the Under Treasurer—was paid a TEC package in the band of \$250 000 to \$599 999, whilst in 2002 that employee was paid in a band of \$280 000 to \$289 999. What is the current TEC of the Under Treasurer, and has the Under Treasurer received any salary increase since March of this year?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I will take that on notice, because I do not have the answer. I hope that there is not innuendo in that somehow the salary of the Under Treasurer has been increased by the new government for any other reason than what would be the normal salary movements allowed for under his contract. I will take that on notice and provide a response to the member. The contract currently provided to the Under Treasurer, to the best of my understanding, is the current one written by your government, and this government would simply be allowing adjustments to be made in accordance with that contract. To be certain, I will get the honourable member a detailed answer and respond when we can.

The CHAIRMAN: This examination relates to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. The time set is 30 minutes. I point out to members that the times are maximum and they are not compelled to take their full entitlement. That is a bit of friendly guidance. I will not call

on each question round, so I will let the member for Bragg ask her questions and the minister respond.

Ms CHAPMAN: The report of the Auditor-General for the year ending 30 June 2002 in relation to the Department of Education, Training and Employment, as it was then known, commences on page 60 of Part B Agency Audit Reports Volume I. For the sake of brevity I hope I will not need to keep repeating the whole volume I refer to. On page 61 under the subtitle 'Extract from Independent Audit Report' on page 61 there is reference to a process or practice, where the auditor reports:

As disclosed in Note 2(b) to the financial statements, the department has concluded that the financial data of the other non-corporate operational units was not considered reliable at this time. Accordingly, the financial statements do not include funds generated by other non-corporate entities as required by Australian Accounting Standard AAS 24 'Consolidated Financial Reports'.

He goes on to state:

... I am not in a position to assess whether principles of financial statement preparation and accounting policies have been consistently applied by the other non-corporate operational units. Accordingly, I cannot attest to the reliability of the financial data of the non-corporate operational units outlined in Note 32 to the financial statements.

What action, if any, has been taken by the minister to include the funds generated by other non-corporate entities as required by the Australian Accounting Standards to which I referred and, if not, not?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I am advised that the entities referred to by the Auditor-General are schools and that, in the past, information referring to the schools' financial statements was not incorporated. However, the department has taken action to incorporate that by way of a note—I think it is note 32—and there is a reference to that in that paragraph. I believe the auditor has commended the department for taking that action. In respect of the financial statements and financial accountability requirements of schools, the member and all members would note that, as part the recent review of Partnerships 21 and the report that was tabled in response to that, I indicated that a particular focus of mine over the coming months would be to ensure that the department put in place better financial accountability mechanisms right throughout the department and certainly incorporating schools. The member is right to point to a section of the report that indicates that more improvement could be made in respect of the financial statements of schools, but I hope the house will note that there is progress along those lines and that has been noted by the auditor. It is the strong intention of the current state government that we take further action to improve our whole department's financial accountability and financial reporting and all the systems surrounding our financial management practices.

Ms CHAPMAN: As the minister quite appropriately points out on the same matter, these other bodies are schools, but they also include pre-schools, long day care centres, neighbourhood houses, toy libraries and child parent centres. In addition to the schools she has referred to, has any action been taken over what procedures these non-corporate operational units are to undertake to improve their accountability? If so, from when will that be effective? Has it only just started or will it be effective from 1 July 2002?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I am advised that the department's discussions with the Auditor-General have been with the sentiment that the reason why the focus has been on schools in the first instance is that schools are the major portion of those reports and that those other entities—pre-

schools, child-care centres and other sites, if we could refer to them in that way—being a much smaller portion of the finances of the department, have taken a secondary focus. However, I repeat the intention and commitment of the state government to ensure that our financial management practices, our financial reporting and our accountability systems right throughout the department are improved.

Ms CHAPMAN: What is the date of implementation? Will it be effective from now or from 1 July 2002?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I am advised that the aim of the department is to get the schools to be the major portion of that in the next financial statement.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to page 62, in relation to employee expenses. If I am reading this correctly, in conjunction with page 64 notes on this matter of targeted voluntary separation packages, under 'Employee expenses' there appears to be a significant increase in the payments from \$29.8 million to \$44.2 million in the 2000-01 year. To what does the minister attribute the rise in that total payment?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: The member has highlighted an important point, and that is that under the previous government \$44.2 million was spent on targeted voluntary separation packages. I point out to her that all that expenditure occurred in the last calendar year, in the first six months of the 2001-02, so it was under the previous government and not this one. I will explain what that was. Essentially, it was packages targeting teachers. I know the member was not in parliament at the time, but she may recall the public outbursts surrounding those packages, because they were offered at a time in the school year which would have meant that those teachers (and the majority of them were in schools) would be leaving schools in the lurch for the final term of the year.

The honourable member may recall that, as the then shadow minister, I raised a concern about this matter and, as a result of the public outcry surrounding it, those packages were adjusted so that those teachers remained in schools to the end of the financial year. However, as the honourable member is trying to imply some cause for these packages onto the current government, I must inform her that all those packages were under schemes that were in place in the lifetime of the former government. I agree with the honourable member that it is a significant amount of money to retire out teachers for the last half of the 2001 calendar year.

In contrast, the department recently circulated to schools an information bulletin outlining the fact that TVSPs, although being offered by the state government, would not be offered to school staff. That signals a different approach for this financial year from that of last financial year, where there was an expenditure of \$44 million—a considerable amount—for targeted voluntary separation packages.

Ms CHAPMAN: In relation to that \$44.2 million, which you say was exclusively in the first six months of the financial year under issue, how much was for teachers and how much for other staff?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I have to take the question on notice, but I believe it was the vast majority. I will get back to the honourable member on the categories of teachers, but they certainly took up the majority of the \$44 million. Some of that amount was for lecturers because at that time the department did incorporate the TAFE sector. I do not have the figures with me at present, but I will get the information for the honourable member.

Ms CHAPMAN: Given the minister's indication that TVSPs will not be offered to school staff—I take that as

being teachers—what is the estimate of the budget for TVSPs for the current financial year?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: We are not offering any packages to school staff, so I expect no expenditure there. However, the honourable member would be aware that some staff changes are occurring in the department at present. Some executives have left the department, and I think probably two of those executives would have had some separation payments. Obviously, there will be some separation moneys in this financial year. However, that will be largely determined as a result of the consequences of changes which are currently occurring in the central office.

Ms CHAPMAN: Page 62 refers to supplies and services. It is indicated that, of the \$383.5 million that makes up this total expenditure, some \$87.1 million in the 2002 year was spent on minor works, maintenance and equipment, but \$91.5 million was spent in the previous year. To what does the minister attribute this decrease?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: It is not a significant amount of money and there are fluctuations from year to year. I will come back with an answer as to what that decrease was. On these sorts of issues, it could be timing of payments or a range of things. I do not have the information with me, so I will come back with an answer.

Ms CHAPMAN: In the past few months the minister has announced payments for maintenance in schools. Will the minister identify what extra amount has been made available in this financial year for school maintenance in the minor works category?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: At the risk of my memory leaving out some money, there is an extra \$2 million on maintenance over what the former Liberal government budgeted and expended. There is an additional \$17 million over three years, roughly in equal proportions—I have to check the exact figure—for maintenance works. The honourable member will recall that I recently announced that over 50 school toilets are being upgraded out of the \$17 million. I am possibly forgetting some other money, but that is at least two portions of additional money.

Ms CHAPMAN: In relation to the risk fund (page 64), which is required to operate as detailed, the department as at 30 June 2002 had a \$6.1 million outstanding liability for fire claims yet to be finalised. How much of that is still outstanding?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I know there is a good news story to report on this, because I have had that information. I do not have the list in front of me, but a great number of works, which were attributable to fires dating back several years, had not been done by the former Liberal government. Essentially, almost all those works have now been started or started and completed by the current Labor government. There is a good news story to tell. I just wish that I had the list with me today so that I could read it into *Hansard*. Alas, I do not have it with me, but it is a significant list. As I say, they date back a couple of years when the former government was in office, and some of those projects have been either started or started and completed under this government.

Ms CHAPMAN: I note the minister's indication, but my question was: how much is still outstanding? Given her previous answer, the minister may not be able to provide the information today, but I ask that the information be provided.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I can provide that information.

Ms CHAPMAN: In relation to some capital operations, which have been referred to by the Auditor-General in his report, the Australian Science and Mathematics School

(pages 66 and 67) had \$3.1 million spent on it from its \$14 million project. On what has that been spent and at what stage is the project at present?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I must say that the member for Bragg really does know how to lead with her chin. The one thing I was sure of in this debate was that there would not be any questions on the science and maths school. Why was I sure of that? I was sure of it because I believe it is an embarrassing story for the former government. The Australian Science and Mathematics school started out as an \$11 million project. It was the major announcement two years ago in the capital works program of the former government, but it was not even started in that financial year.

It was only on the eve of the election earlier this year that the former minister ran out to Flinders University campus—where, of course, the ASNS is being built—and turned the first sod. I am quite surprised that the honourable member has raised that issue, because it is certainly an embarrassing story for the former Liberal government. As to exactly what that \$3.1 million has been spent on, I will have to come back to the honourable member with a response. Obviously, it involves planning work, but there is construction involved. I am pretty sure that all the work has been tendered, but I might not be correct on that. It is certainly well progressed under the Labor government.

Ms CHAPMAN: Has the Oak Valley Aboriginal School been completed?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: Yes, it has been completed. Again, leading with one's chin again, that is a story of significant delay after delay by the former Liberal government. I would appreciate the honourable member continuing in this vein, because she could refer to the \$124 million of underspending by the former government.

Ms CHAPMAN: Perhaps I will not need to continue in that vein, because \$34 million was underspent in the year in which the minister had control. Page 68 states that assistance from state funds totalling \$87.2 million was paid to non-government schools during 2001-02. Needs-based funding forms part of two components of funding in this area, and they are as determined by the advisory committee on non-government schools. The eight elements needed relate to: special needs students, School Card, non-English speaking background/Aboriginality, fee remission, boarding, isolation of schools, interest subsidy and index of disadvantage. Has any change to this funding criteria been implemented since 30 June 2002 and, if so, what are the financial consequences? If there are consequences, what is an estimate of the increase or decrease that will apply?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: What is not clear from the paragraph to which the honourable member refers is whether this is just operating funding or operating and capital. For the sake of being absolutely sure about my answer, I will consult the advisory committee. However, I do not believe that there has been any change to the criteria for allocating operational funding on those bases.

Ms CHAPMAN: Does the minister propose to change any requirements in relation to the two components?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: What two components are you referring to?

Ms CHAPMAN: I have referred to the needs area, but the average annual enrolment is also a factor that is taken into account. I had not addressed that. I was assuming that there would not be any change to that, but there may be. Does the minister's intend to change the funding formula, taking into account those two funding criteria?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: It is my understanding that the non-government sector is strongly committed to the balance between needs-based and per capita funding. In that sense I do not have an intention at this time. I meet regularly with both the Catholic education representatives and representatives of the independent schools sector. So, if there is something that they intend to put to me, I am sure they will come forth. I meet regularly with them. However, at this stage, my understanding is that they are very supportive of that balance.

Ms CHAPMAN: In relation to the statement of financial position, page 80 (note 14) categorises several different accounts in which the funds are held. I note that in 2001 the balance was \$71.717 million; and in 2002, \$79.442 million. The note indicates that it seems in all the sources of funds that there is a significant increase in each of those areas, most particularly in the special deposit accounts with the Department of Treasury and Finance. What is the minister's understanding as to why there is so much money in the bank as at 30 June 2002? Why is this money being held there? Why has it not been spent or otherwise? Further, how much money is in the bank? What is the aggregate of those accounts now?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: This is substantially due to accrual provisions. The member must be aware that part of this impact is due to the fact that the current government had to put into the department of education, training and employment, as it was then called, \$42 million to cover the black hole left by the former Liberal government. That was \$30 million to the DECS portion of the then department of education, training and employment. The other \$12 million was due to something that has been talked about many times in this house, that is, the section of the department that now resides with Minister Lomax-Smith, and that was due to user choice. So, I am surprised that the honourable member has not taken that into consideration, because \$42 million is a large amount of money to have to plug into the 2001-02 financial year to cover the mismanagement of the former Liberal government.

Ms CHAPMAN: I take it that you will provide the balance of the aggregates of those accounts as at present. I am happy for it to be at the end of November. That might be easier if you get monthly accounts.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: Exactly what is the member for Bragg asking?

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to page 80, cash assets. There are three ways in which money is held on account for you to spend, as per the budget—or as you wish, I suppose. They are: special deposit accounts, as 30 June 2002, \$77.430 million; cash at bank on hand, \$1.711 million; and section 21 deposit accounts, \$300 000. I would like to have the total, and I am happy for that to be as at 30 November given that you are taking the question on notice.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: Certainly.

The CHAIRMAN: The time has expired for the examination of this part of the Auditor-General's Report.

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to the state of the committee.

A quorum having been formed:

The CHAIRMAN: The committee will now consider the Auditor-General's report in relation to the Attorney-General, Minister for Justice, Minister for Consumer Affairs, and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. The time set is 30 minutes.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: In relation to the consumer affairs portfolio, which I have always believed is one of the more interesting portfolios that the Attorney-General holds, I refer to page 419, and under 'Objectives of the Attorney-General's Department' there appears an itemised list of four outcomes, one of which is a community in which fair trading for consumers and business is a priority. Has the government altered policy relating to this particular objective?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Yes, we propose to do a couple of things. One is my announcement yesterday that we are having a review of the Residential Tenancies Act. Soon after I came to office, I asked the tenancies branch of the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs to prepare a discussion paper on the Residential Tenancies Act. My experience in opposition and as a local member was that many people, particularly small landlords (and by that I mean landlords who have only one or two rental properties), are dissatisfied with the Residential Tenancies Act, as are some agents who act on behalf of those landlords. They criticised the act on the basis that its provisions are exploited by deadbeat tenants who repeatedly use the full extent of the notice provisions under the Residential Tenancies Act to avoid paying their rent, and then either leave the premises damaged or simply leave the premises and let the landlord try to recoup the rent arrears through the bond. The bond is not really there for that purpose and often the bond is not sufficient for that purpose. Often the bond has been provided by the Housing Trust or some third party in any event. So, that is the principal concern of small landlords.

In my electorate, a number of migrants of Greek, Serbian or Italian origin use a rental property as their superannuation and do not tend to consult the agencies which keep lists of bad tenants. So, these small landlords are quite vulnerable to exploitation by tenants who are well versed in the Residential Tenancies Act. That is one of the areas that the review will be looking at.

By the same token, we will also be looking at whether the most vulnerable tenants who reside in boarding houses, lodging houses, mobile home parks or caravan parks should be covered by the provisions of the Residential Tenancies Act. It is the feeling of the parliamentary Labor Party, and this certainly applied when we were in opposition, that these people are not adequately protected by the laws that currently apply to their situation. So, we will be looking at whether the Residential Tenancies Act should be expanded to embrace those tenants who I think are the most vulnerable tenants of all.

The Hon. D.C. Kotz interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I am quite prepared to let the consultation period run for as long as is necessary, for a number of months, but I do want tenants and their organisations, and landlords and their organisations, to have a good look at the discussion paper and propose ways of improving the law. It was raised with me recently that some landlords were inappropriately using their right of access to tenants' homes, namely, doing inspections at a time when they knew that the tenant would be at work, for instance. There have also been complaints that the letting agencies are asking for information of an intensely personal nature that could not possibly be related to a legitimate landlord interest.

One thing that was canvassed in the discussion paper was section 90 of the Residential Tenancies Act. I am quite fond of section 90 of the Residential Tenancies Act, because the authors of it were Ralph Clarke, former member for Ross Smith, and me. We moved it with the cooperation of the

Liberal backbench against the wishes of the then Attorney-General and Minister for Consumer Affairs (Hon. K.T. Griffin), and section 90 allows third parties, namely neighbours, to apply to the Residential Tenancies Tribunal for the eviction of a tenant on the basis that the tenant has interfered with the quiet enjoyment of their home or has used the tenanted property for an unlawful purpose. Anyone who has any experience in serving their constituents, being responsive to their concerns and doorknocking them, as I know the member for Newland does but the member for Bragg does not, would know the importance of section 90 to their—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The member for Bragg says that she probably does not have tenants in her constituency. I am sure she does, if only she would get out from that first floor office and go out and meet them.

Ms Chapman: It is on the ground floor.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: You have moved to the ground floor now, have you?

Ms Chapman: About 15 years ago.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Good. I opened the paper a few weeks ago to see a House of Assembly advertisement on House of Assembly crest referring to an 'Inquiry into real estate practices in South Australia' and I was pleased to learn that the member for Enfield was doing a one man inquiry on his own initiative into the practices in the real estate industry. One issue about which he and I are concerned is vendor bidding at real estate auctions. He will report to me quite soon on the changes he thinks need to be made to our regulation of the real estate trade.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: Thank you for the fulsome answer.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You asked.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ: I asked about policy and I think another question, but you did not get to it. It is my understanding that the Real Estate Institute previously handled complaints against members of the industry. Can the Attorney-General tell me why the government has intervened in this practice?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: The government did not have an opinion one way or the other on whether it was appropriate for the Real Estate Institute to field complaints about real estate agents. After all, the only punishment the Real Estate Institute could impose on agents who are not complying with the rules was to suspend or expel them from membership of the organisation. Not all real estate agents are members of the Real Estate Institute, but the institute brought to my attention that it was doing this job and that it wished to be funded by the government to do the job in future. I considered that request, but decided not to fund the Real Estate Institute to field complaints. Instead, I said that these complaints should be dealt with by the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs as it was the bread and butter work of that office and should not be done by a private organisation.

So the Real Estate Institute I think has referred its files to the Office of Consumer and Business Affairs and we are acting on those complaints. I think that is the preferred outcome rather than the taxpayer paying an organisation of real estate agents to regulate real estate agents. I do not think the public would have confidence in that arrangement. If the government paid for that, we would be paying for it from the Agents Indemnity Fund, and it seems that the principal purpose of the Agents Indemnity Fund is to compensate members of the public for losses suffered at the hands of real estate agents and conveyancers and, in particular, to pay those

who can establish an entitlement to recompense arising out of the collapse of Growden's organisation. That is the first call on the fund.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to part B, volume 2, page 410, and to the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund. The Auditor-General will note that the payments through that fund totalled \$9.9 million for the year ending 30 June 2002. This was higher by \$2.3 million or 30.263 per cent on last year. During the same period the number of claims paid rose from 1 046 to 1 177—an increase of 131 claims or 12 per cent. To what does the Attorney attribute the rise in payments and how much was in the special deposit account at the commencement of the financial year, and what was the balance at the year end?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Alas I do not have an adviser with me, but I will endeavour to get that information for the member for Bragg and shall be cheerful about so doing. I do not think there has been any important change of policy with the change of government in the way the Victims of Crime Fund is handled, but if we have not already we will be proclaiming the Victims of Crime Bill and will be increasing payments to lawyers who handle victims of crime claims, because much of the work done in that area is very close to being pro bono work. It is done way under value and I think those practitioners who have been good enough to work in that area—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:—including the member for Bragg. A pay increase is on the way for them.

Ms CHAPMAN: It was only \$10 000 maximum when I used to do them. I refer to page 411 and to the criminal injuries fund again. The Attorney-General will note that the outstanding unrecovered debt owed by criminals on whose behalf payments have been made to victims stood at \$46.6 million as at 30 June 2002. What action does the minister intend to take to recover this outstanding debt or does the minister agree that it would be better to write off the debt?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: It is important that criminals who owe money to their victims and whose debt to their victims has been paid by the state of South Australia should be pursued by the state for the rest of their life. I would be most reluctant to write off the debt. I have the view that it should be treated rather like a HECS scheme and that the state of South Australia should wait until such time as the criminal is back in gainful employment or has otherwise come into some money to pay that amount. The scheme works so that in any victims of crime case the state of South Australia is the first defendant and, if we know we can identify the criminal, that criminal becomes the second defendant. So, the state of South Australia pays, but then tries to take action to recover the money from the second defendant.

Normally the second defendant will be a man of straw, that is, someone without assets, but just because a second defendant is without assets in the years immediately following the crime or trial does not mean that we should write off the debt. My view is that the public of South Australia expects the state to pursue the criminal in the years afterwards in the hope that some money can be recovered. We also know from a survey of victims of crime that such victims would be happier if they got a smaller amount of money that they knew came from the criminal than they would with an amount from the state of South Australia.

Ms CHAPMAN: Accordingly, what action is the Attorney taking to recover the outstanding debt?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I will take that question on notice.

Ms CHAPMAN: I refer to page 578 in relation to the Electoral Districts Boundaries Commission. This page records that the cost of conducting the state election was \$6.7 million. This exceeded the original budget of approximately \$1.2 million. Whilst I congratulate the Electoral Commissioner on his excellent performance and that of his staff during the 2002 election campaign, will the minister explain the reason for this expenditure beyond the budget?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Isn't it delicious that we have a change of government and the member for Bragg is asking me to detail misdeeds of her party's government, namely, the previous government? My advice is that the previous government was warned that the State Electoral Office required \$1.2 million extra in order to undertake the 2002 state election. The previous government refused to allocate sufficient funds. The State Electoral Office then spent almost exactly the amount it had requested, rather than the amount budgeted, and my view is that the previous government should be criticised for not allocating sufficient funds to run a general election.

I know that the members of the previous government did not want to have a general election: they did not want to comply with the constitutional requirement, so they put it off as long as they possibly could and, indeed, ran in office considerably more than four years, waiting until almost the last moment that it was constitutionally permissible to have an election. Having done that, they failed to fund the State Electoral Office properly. That is the reason for the overspend, and I thank the member for Bragg for highlighting the misdeeds of the previous Liberal government.

Ms CHAPMAN: On page 405 the Auditor-General states:

... no financial statements in respect to the Department of Justice have been prepared.

He also notes that the department 'does not have a staffing structure' and the fact that since July 1999 appropriations by the Attorney-General's department, Courts Administration Authority, Department for Correctional Services, Police Department and State Electoral Office have been provided by the Department of Justice. Does the government intend to retain the Department of Justice structure in the future and, if so, what advantage does the Attorney-General see in retaining the structure?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Yes, we will be retaining the structure, and I will ask my department for a report on the advantages of so doing and share it with the member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: I turn to page 495 on the Computer Information Systems (CIS) Environment. The third paragraph from the top of that page indicates that at the time of the Auditor-General's Report a review by audit into the security policies and user arrangements relating to the CRIMCASE and FATE systems was 'at a stage of finalisation.' The Auditor-General stated that the outcome from this review will be communicated to the Courts Administration Authority. Has the minister received this report and, if so, what does it say? In those circumstances, what action does he propose to take to implement any of its recommendations?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I do not recall receiving that report, which is not to say that it is not available, and I

will take the questions on notice and respond to the member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: In relation to page 424, how many payments were made out of the Second-hand Motor Vehicles Compensation Fund during the year under review?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I do not have that information with me but will obtain it for the member for Bragg.

Ms CHAPMAN: That concludes the questions that I have in relation to the Attorney-General.

The CHAIRMAN: The committee will now examine the Auditor-General's Report in relation to the Minister for Tourism, Small Business, Science and Information Economy, and Employment, Training and Further Education. The time allotted is 30 minutes.

Ms CHAPMAN: Mr Chairman, I draw your attention to the state of the committee.

A quorum having been formed:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I move:

That the time for moving the adjournment of the house be extended beyond 6 p.m.

Motion carried.

Mr BRINDAL: I need a little bit of guidance. I know that questions have to relate to the Auditor-General's Report, but do they have to specifically be on financial loans or can they be matters canvassed in the report?

The CHAIRMAN: As long as they relate to the report; but primarily the focus is financial.

Mr BRINDAL: I notice from page 53 of the financial statements of the Construction Industry Training Board that there is an accumulated surplus. From memory, and the minister can correct me if she wishes, the accumulated surplus is \$5.1 million. The minister will probably say, and I acknowledge, that this was a construct of the dying days of the Bannon/Arnold Labor government, but it has worked particularly well. A levy is taken from people when new building works are undertaken over a certain value, and that money goes into the training of the industry.

It is a model, I think, for other industries, that the minister should be looking at, in terms of replicating it through other sectors. However, I am not concerned: it is good financial management that they have a surplus of \$5.1 million. I ask the minister what, if anything, she can do, or intends to do, with the board in regard to the surplus, because I do not know that in an area such as training, where everyone is scrambling for money, it is necessarily a good thing to carry a surplus forward. That would suggest that they could either undertake more training or that they were collecting more money than they needed, or a number of other things. Will the minister comment on the Construction Industry Training Board surplus?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I can see the point the member makes about having large reserves that could be dissipated in various ways. The Construction Industry Training Board has been active in various ways—not just in training, of course, but also helping young people in secondary education. A recent program was Doors to Construction, which I think is another way of getting young people into the trades by giving them an experience of a trades operation for short periods of time whilst they are still at school. But I will certainly take up the matter that the member raises and discuss it with Mr McKay, who is the chair of the CITB, and

consider how we might constructively deal with that rather large asset, and I will get back to him.

Mr BRINDAL: I ask the minister to pass on my compliments to him. It is very nice to have at least one area of government where you can question on having a trading surplus rather than be asking why the deficit exists. With respect to the matter of deficits, I note that the TAFE institutes are one of the audited entities of the education department—or of the previous department, now split off under this ministry. I also note that the Auditor-General is very careful to say that, therefore, the non-institutional components (I think he calls it), that is, the school entities and all sorts of other things, are treated as third person entities because he could not audit their books. But that is not so for TAFE. It states in here that, therefore, TAFE institutions are fully audited and fully accountable through the audit process. That being the case, can the minister explain why the budget figures for this year cut the TAFE budget, when the minister has recently announced the parlous financial condition of four TAFE institutes, given that, as these accounts are fully audited, the minister would have probably had almost regular knowledge of the deteriorating situation within the TAFE sector?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I think one of the grave errors that was allowed to occur over many years was the submergence of TAFE accounting within the general DETE structure. I think that the minister would have faced the difficulty of untangling money from its budgeting system. Although I have a member of staff here, I think he would agree with me that the disentanglement of those accounts has been quite difficult. I think it is only now, with time, that the numbers have become perfectly clear, although it was apparent from very early on in this government's life that there was a fundamental problem with TAFE budgets.

In terms of cuts, it is fair to say that all departments suffered a savings task, and that was brought about by the state of the budget after the election. We had no choice: there was no money. The cuts to education were minimal—less than other departments in some cases—and we tried to protect the TAFEs as best we could from the savings task required across the whole of government because of the budgetary situation that we found after the election.

Mr BRINDAL: I understand what the minister is saying. Perhaps one of the less desirable features of trying to make education a seamless entity from preschool right through to just before you die, with whole of life learning, was that entanglement. I acknowledge that. But, despite past mistakes, we now find ourselves with accumulated debt within four institutes of \$17.2 million. Will the minister ensure that the Auditor-General conducts probity audits into the affairs of TAFE? I make no allegations, but the minister will be aware (as am I) of some extraordinarily bad practices that have been alleged in the daily newspapers. There was an allegation of 60 per cent of some moneys going on administration of overseas junketing to recruit, or for various probably laudable purposes that, in fact, did not pay off. I am not saying that they hold water: hopefully, they do not. But I think the minister will acknowledge that, if they do, something should be done about it. If they do not, the very good and dedicated people who are really being slandered, by implication, deserve to be cleared, and I think the way to do it would be to have the Auditor-General look at the accounts. Will the minister do that and, if not, why not?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I think the situation that the member partially describes is not of our making. This has been a build-up over several years—

Mr BRINDAL: I acknowledge that.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I think that, in retrospect, the competition that was forced on the TAFEs and the lack of tools and skills to deal with a different modus operandi is really partially at fault for these operating anomalies. I am not convinced at this moment that the Auditor-General needs to audit the TAFE functions. But we have instigated a series of investigations using Treasury staff. We are drilling down through all the operations, both offshore and onshore, the fee for service activities and the number of consultants and the amount of travel expenses being paid. I think the matters that the member raised were present before the election, and I think that it cannot entirely be suggested that this is a new phenomenon, and any activity with the Auditor-General might well have occurred before the election as well.

Mr BRINDAL: I am not suggesting that it is an entirely new phenomenon and, I think, had I been aware of it before the election, I would have asked the Auditor-General to go in there and have a look; hence my question. I put to the minister that, while it is fine to send in Treasury officers, the appropriate officer for financial accountability answerable to this house (and lauded when your leader was in opposition by the Leader of the Opposition as the person entirely appropriate to be seen as the independent umpire to check the finances) is the Auditor-General. While I do not in any way question the Treasury officers' veracity, or the minister's veracity in asking Treasury officers to do it, the minister will fully understand that, if it is done by Treasury officers, the ability of the opposition to then gain information is perhaps not the same, because it is departmental servants of the ministry of the executive government conducting the affairs. It will, therefore, not be seen to be transparent, and we will possibly have nasty, horrible opposition shadow ministers standing up and accusing the government of covering up or putting in unnecessary FOIs to try to obtain this information.

I put to the minister that, if the Auditor-General came in, the opposition would be satisfied, the government would be satisfied, people who need exoneration would be exonerated and, where there is blame, the blame would be laid. And whether it was before the election or after the election, even if we were apportioning blame, what matters is not necessarily who was in government: what matters is what we can do to fix it. I fully understand. I do not expect that the minister will be personally responsible for something that happened in an institute miles from this place. She cannot be. She bears the symbolic responsibility under the Westminster system. But it does not matter whether it was when I was minister or when she was minister: it needs fixing in a transparent, accountable way, and the Auditor-General is the appropriate person to be involved. So, I ask again whether the minister will at least look at calling in the Auditor-General or whether or at what point in Treasury's deliberations would it be necessary to call in the Auditor-General if any malfeasance or bad practices are discovered?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I am sorry, but I had the temerity to blame the previous government, and I had already apportioned blame. The honourable member's suggestion is one that I will take on board and examine how we might involve the Auditor-General.

Mr BRINDAL: I will conclude with this question, because I know that my colleague is very anxious to get right

into the minister over tourism and innovation. In the previous line of questioning of the Minister for Education and Children's Services, the matter of a black hole was raised and the matter of an exposure that arose out of user choice: I think it was an exposure of some \$14.2 million—

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith: \$12.1 million.

Mr BRINDAL: Sorry, \$12.1 million. From my reading of the Auditor-General's Report, I understand that user choice, regrettably for all governments—whether it is your government or our government—in essence, is an open-ended arrangement to which we are bound by dint of almost a contractual arrangement with the commonwealth. If trainees present themselves and have the qualifications, they are offered user choice. I was critical at Ministerial Council because the user choice went with the person. While I do not mind people being trained, it entirely ignored the training needs of the state or of industries or of anything else. If someone wanted to do cosmetology, I wanted to do iridology and someone else wanted to do theology, we all received user choice funding even though neither the state nor the commonwealth might have thought that was a desirable training outcome when its dollars were being used—but that is the system. We are then victims of our own success. If we get more trainees, it costs more money, and if we get more trainees than we budgeted for, we have a deficit. The \$12.1 million so-called black hole is a measure, is it not, of the success of our training program in the last 12 months?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Yes; the point the honourable member raises about the blunt instrument of user choice and the demand driven way in which the money is spent is quite true. I am looking at various means of finding how there can be a greater congruence between the needs of the state and the wishes of the students and looking at different ways we might manage that. I think that it is quite complex, because there are about 800 recognised apprenticeships and traineeships. So, to actually have differential costings or some kind of carrot to drive people into different areas is quite complex, and there is an equity issue about how you would deal with industry.

The other opportunity perhaps is to look at the way the conditions apply to apprentices. I know that in the first rush of enthusiasm the number of contracts of training was very high, and there was a question whether or not there was an element of roting in that some businesses had almost 100 per cent of their employees registered under contracts of training as apprentices.

I actually went to a graduation ceremony where I was the youngest person in the room. I was quite shaken, because normally at graduation ceremonies you see mums and dads, grannies and aunts. These were clearly employees who had been employed by that industry and that organisation for many years. That is at the tail end of what the honourable member has rightly said was put right by preventing prior employees getting contracts of training.

What appears to have happened without any credit being due to me is that that enormous blowout seems to have plateaued and been replaced by a slight dip. The probable reason for the plateauing is that there was a huge bolus of people, some of whom were already employed, who were taken on as trainees; they had gone through the system and now the numbers are slightly falling. I would not like to say that that means the financial pressure is off us, but it would appear that we may have reached a steady state whereby every man and their dog is under some contract of training

over the past four years, and we may just be going down slightly.

Although the numbers are not altogether clear, and the honourable member would understand how slow and inflexible the reporting system is, we appear to be in for less of a shock this year than last year. We are still monitoring the progress and hoping that we can stay within budget. The honourable member is quite right: it is demand driven not necessarily on people's needs but on people's wishes, and it is open-ended. However, it was the deal you signed up for, I think. I am pleased that the honourable member recognises the problems in trying to budget for it.

Mr BRINDAL: If the minister was minded to look at either some form of the CITB, which already exists in this state, or the New Zealand Fishing Industry Training Council model, I am reasonably sure that my party and my party room would be quite supportive of the minister in coming to a new paradigm. The New Zealand training fishery is a very good one, because the New Zealand government puts in \$1 and the industry puts in \$2, and there is a contract written that does all the training needs of the industry for a year. The industry is pleased because it gets \$1 subsidy for every \$2 they put in; the government is pleased because it gets \$2 for \$1; and the training needs right from skippers to deckhands to fish cleaners are all met, and training is therefore done on a needs of industry basis—an ITAB-type basis. I thank the minister for her answers to my questions, and I thank my colleague. If the minister is minded to look at that, I will talk to my party, and we would be mindful of training that meets the needs of South Australia.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I thought I might start with Science and Information Economy, although I note that Mr Spurr is here, and I am sorry to hold him up. First, I appreciate that the minister has taken over well into the financial year; and, secondly, some restructuring has been going on to create the new department, which I understand is taking some time and effort. Can the minister advise the status of BioInnovation SA and Playford Capital under her department? How is the minister treating them for the purposes of audit and accounting? Are they agencies, to be audited as agencies, or are they to be shown in some other way?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I am glad that the honourable member has asked me that question, because I was thinking as I sat here that I could not find them in the Auditor-General's Report, and that must mean that they are accounted for in a different manner. I will take that on board and get back to the honourable member. The honourable member is quite right: they are not in here. I think they have annual reports, but for some reason I have not found them in the Auditor-General's Report as an entity.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I thank the minister for her forbearance. I notice that the minister is mentioned as Minister for Science and Information Economy under Premier and Cabinet, and I note the Office of Venue Management in that section but no other agency. The minister is again mentioned—

The Hon. J.D. Lomax-Smith: Could the honourable member help me with the page number?

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: The portfolio is Premier and Cabinet, and encompassed in that it mentions Science and Information Economy. I am looking at the table of contents, and I note that in there is the Office of Venue Management which, of course, falls under Tourism. There is no agency there that I can see that comes under Science and Information

Economy. In Volume III of the agency reports the table of contents also lists the Minister for Science and Information Economy, but I cannot see any agencies there. That made me want to ask you about Bio Innovation SA, Playford Capital and the Playford Centre, because I think the same thing happened when the budget papers were accounted for separately in notes as an administered item.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: Obviously, we restructured, and my portfolio fell within six previous portfolios. IEPO was within DAIS, and tourism fell within Premier and Cabinet because, if you recall, it was a junior ministry under the protection of the Premier and Cabinet's office, so the Office of Venue Management and all the parts of the Convention Centre, Entertainment Centre and SATC fall within Premier and Cabinet. As I recall, Bio Innovation was part of PIRSA. It may have been part of Premier and Cabinet; with the passage of time, I am not sure where it used to be. It has been transferred from Premier and Cabinet, as was the Small Innovation Unit.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I gather that it will all be resolved in the next budget papers and audit report, so I will not pursue any questions on Playford Centre or Bio Innovation SA. I point out to the minister that a new Executive Council ministry had been formed called the Minister for Tourism and Innovation, and we were in the process of restructuring those items you mentioned into one portfolio but, for obvious reasons, we had to leave that until after the election rather than disrupt everybody. So, we were moving to do what you are doing now, so I commend you for that.

I move on to tourism and note the presence in the chamber of the CEO; it is very good to see him here. I am now looking at the top of page 724 in relation to the SATC under 'Internal audit related activity'. I must say that I take some responsibility for the next few questions, having been the minister for part of this period. I was working on some of these issues myself, so I appreciate some of the points made by the Auditor-General. In particular, the Auditor-General has noted that there was a need for the commission to implement a formal program of internal audit activity utilising the risk management plan as a basis to perform such activity, and in the audit follow-up there was some interaction with the commission. What action has subsequently been taken to ensure that that internal auditing process is in place?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: The matters raised had been identified, as you point out, and the commission had to work further to develop three areas from the government's financial management framework. These areas have been worked on. The risk management plan was implemented by SATC's engaging a consultant to provide expert advice and assistance with the implementation of a risk management framework. Each area within the commission has been assessed, including AME, policy and planning, infrastructure, corporate services and marketing, and systems are being implemented to ensure that regular risk assessments are continued.

The background work for the risk framework is now complete, and a formal framework will be presented to the chief executive and the internal audit committee in December for approval. In terms of the internal audit related activity that the honourable member described, the internal audit committee adopted a term of reference in September 2002 to provide a strategic approach towards reducing risk in the commission. This formal approach assesses the required elements of the financial management framework. Financial management

policies and procedures have been updated with policy and procedure manuals as well.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: You may have already answered my next question, which concerns financial management policies and procedures. That is the very next category on page 724, where the auditor notes that there was a need for the commission to finalise its policies and procedures manual, but you have just made reference to that. So, we will just move on, unless you feel the need to add anything.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I will add one more detail. As you say, the Auditor-General's Department raised issues to do with non-compliance with elements of the Treasurers's financial management framework, and an external contractor will be engaged in December to ensure that each element of the commission's policies and procedures conforms to the requirements of the financial management framework, so we have started to implement and work on those areas.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: By way of a supplementary question, I ask about the process in place for oversight in regard to overseas travel. In a way, I am sharing something with you, in that in the short time I was minister I felt there was a need to tighten up the approvals process for overseas travel, and I think I instituted a process of ensuring that the itinerary came to me so that I could at least establish where people were going and what they were doing, because I felt there was a need to tighten it up. Unfortunately, because of the election, I did not really get a chance to get into it as far as I would have liked. What management processes are in place to ensure probity in that area?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I agree with the member for Waite. I was also made uneasy by the near daily requests for approved travel, and I implemented a system whereby each travel activity had a budget and each travel request had a plan, a purpose and a report that came back on the achievements of the trip and, furthermore, that there should be an annual budget that was transparent and visible within our system and that a plan for the year should be formulated that I could sign off on. Clearly, untoward circumstances arise from time to time, and I think that perhaps two or three trips in the past six months have been extraordinary, unplanned trips because of unusual circumstances or opportunities. Certainly, when an opportunity arises—

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: When opportunities arise, as have arisen recently, it would seem remiss because it had not been budgeted at the beginning of the financial

year. The most recent event was a CEO making a trip to China, because there is a market in China for trips to South Australia, and we are working together with educational opportunities to have edutourism. I think there is a major opportunity for us by combining the higher education and Education Adelaide portfolios and the good offices of the CEO and SATC.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I commend you for that. I will ask a final question. On page 728, under 'Intangible assets', the auditor makes reference to goodwill and intellectual property arising from acquisition of the Christmas Pageant, and it also mentions the World Solar Challenge. Are you able to tell me what is the value of those assets, and can you give us an indication as to whether or not the government will be continuing to budget to support both of those events in the future?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: I like the suggestion that any government would cancel the pageant. It would be an ignoble act. But to request the value of the pageant I find a charming proposition. I might put to the honourable member that it is priceless. In terms of the world solar challenge, it is budgeted for this year but forward budgeting is yet to occur.

Progress reported; committee to sit again.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Tourism): I table a ministerial statement on freedom of information made by the minister in another place.

SITTINGS AND BUSINESS

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I move:

That for the remainder of the session the Clerk be empowered to deliver messages to the Legislative Council and the Speaker to receive messages from the Legislative Council when this house is not sitting.

Motion carried.

CONSTITUTION (MINISTERIAL OFFICES) AMENDMENT BILL

The Legislative Council agreed to the bill without any amendment.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6.55 p.m. the house adjourned until Wednesday 4 December at 2 p.m.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**Tuesday 26 November 2002****QUESTIONS ON NOTICE****EDUCATION PROJECTS**

98. **Ms CHAPMAN:** Why have the four key education projects at Victor Harbor and Port Elliott been deferred, what criteria were used for assessment, who undertook the review and were the sites visited as part of the review?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: I have an obligation to ensure that the capital works budget is spent in a manner that will provide maximum benefit for all students. The government has delayed a start to these projects to give us time to ensure that we get the best possible outcome for the southern Fleurieu communities. An allocation of \$500,000 this year will ensure that progress on the projects continues.

Since taking office, I have reviewed the investment program focusing on a re-examination of priorities to ensure current facility needs are met and to confirm appropriate planning had occurred to

support proposed projects. I sought advice from the department in relation to works priorities, given that the former government's list of works was formulated over 12 months ago. In addition, I sought specific briefings on a number of projects still in the planning stages to assess the adequacy of the plans to best meet the education needs of students and achieve value for money.

That work has resulted in a comprehensive list of projects, incorporating those which are new, those which have been brought forward, and those that have been deferred. No project has been cancelled.

The government is contributing nearly \$9 million extra towards capital projects and upgrades in schools and preschools than the previous government had planned to spend in its 2002-03 capital program.

The capital works program for the next financial year will be announced at the time of the 2003-04 state budget.

SCHOOLS, OAK VALLEY ABORIGINAL

118. **The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Who organised and sent out the invitations to the opening of the new Oak Valley Aboriginal School, how many Education Department officers attended and who selected them?

The Hon. P.L. WHITE: The planned opening of Oak Valley Aboriginal School on 1 November 2002 was postponed due to the death of a prominent member of the Oak Valley community.

The Oak Valley School, community and Maralinga Tjartuja office prepared a list of people that it wished to invite to their community to help celebrate the official opening of their new school.