

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY

Thursday 23 June 2005

The SPEAKER (Hon. R.B. Such) took the chair at 10.30 a.m. and read prayers.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Mr SNELLING (Playford): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Mr SNELLING: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee A and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): I bring up the report of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the report be received.

Motion carried.

Ms THOMPSON: I bring up the minutes of proceedings of Estimates Committee B and move:

That the minutes of proceedings be incorporated in the votes and proceedings.

Motion carried.

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

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): It would be a serious matter were the opposition to oppose the appropriation of moneys to a government, even if that government has grasped power rather than gained it legitimately through the ballot box.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Elected, squire.

Mr BRINDAL: The Attorney-General claims that his government was elected. If he can show me where, according to law in South Australia, his party gained 50 per cent plus one of the two-party preferred vote, I would be very surprised. In fact, his party gained under 50 per cent of the vote, and the Electoral Act actually provides that the party that gains over 50 per cent has a reasonable chance of governing. We are not in government, despite gaining over 50 per cent of the popular vote. So, in that instance—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You have to add Karlene and Rory.

Mr BRINDAL:—I was going to say that—because of a unique combination of circumstances and because of the exercise of the Independent vote of a number of people, the Labor Party is currently in government.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Hammond said, 'It was no different in the last parliament.' However, in the last parliament, we had over 50 per cent of the vote and we were in coalition in government. For the member for Hammond's erudition, I am not bemoaning the fact that the Labor Party is in government. I am just saying that the Labor Party was not elected to government.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: What a sookie, sookie, la, la.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member will come back to the substance of the bill.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: You are sookie because we gave you a hiding at Unley Oval.

The SPEAKER: And the Attorney will not interject.

Mr BRINDAL: I am quite sure that Hansard, having recorded the interjection of the Attorney-General, 'Sookie, sookie, la, la,' those people who read *Hansard* will find that interjection quite interesting in that it says something of the Attorney's erudition and maybe his level of education as well. It sounds like he did not get out of the kindy! Nevertheless—

Mr Hanna: Rancorous in defeat, smug in victory.

Mr BRINDAL: Yes—

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley!

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Mitchell interjects, and his interjections are well worth listening to because the member for Mitchell and the member for Hammond have an investment in this place, unlike the Attorney. The member for Mitchell and the member for Hammond are a little like the pig and the hen when it comes to contributing the breakfast bacon and eggs. The two sitting on the cross benches have made a profound contribution: the other one makes just a passing contribution. If the Attorney likes to think about it, he is the chicken and they are, perhaps, the bacon. On the matter of the estimates, I think—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: So, after three minutes we have actually got to the estimates.

The SPEAKER: Order! The house will come to order, and the member for Unley will address the bill and not be distracted by interjections.

Mr BRINDAL: On the matter of the estimates, a number of issues concern me and my colleagues and also, I am sure, independent members in this place who will all add their contribution to this important debate. The matter I find most vexing is that of this government's attention latterly to public works. In the first three years of this government we saw a dearth of initiation of public works; now, while one would not quite describe it as a plethora, it is almost as if, realising that the clock is ticking towards the next election, the government is aware that perhaps it should do something—and anything will do.

In that context and on behalf of many electors in South Australia, not just the electors of Unley, I protest at some of the government's inappropriate appropriations in terms of public works commitments.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Such as?

Mr BRINDAL: I intend to give 'such as' examples, as the Attorney asks. First and foremost is retaining the concept of opening bridges for the third river crossing. For the member for West Torrens to go on public radio—and I hope all members opposite listen to this—and seek to justify it as the AAA bonus to the people of Port Adelaide is, I think, an insult to every other electorate in this place. If the Treasurer of South Australia has \$70 million in bonuses to give the people of his own electorate, then the people of Unley want \$70 million, the people of Adelaide want \$70 million for a project and, I am sure, the people of Hammond, Newland, and every other seat would like a similar \$70 million.

If the member for West Torrens was speaking for this government, and if that is the way this government applies \$70 million, something is very wrong. There is, and was, no evidence before the Public Works Committee that that \$70 million was well spent. The member for Hammond, in his capacity as a previous chair of the Public Works Committee, was most concerned with a number of projects—I can

remember the Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium, the fitness centre at Memorial Drive and the Wine Centre as probably the three most important. As chair of the Public Works Committee, and as part of that committee, the member for Hammond rightly questioned some of those expenditures. However, I put to this parliament that—whether those projects were right or wrong, whether the expenditure was correct or excessive—that is the province of the Public Works Committee to critically analyse.

I note that since the last election the Premier has come out lauding that Hindmarsh Soccer Stadium that he was so quick to condemn before the election, and he now claims that we did not spend enough money and that it is not big enough. Well, help! There is a level of hypocrisy shown there that I cannot believe. However, I believe that it is recognised by the soccer community.

However, in this case, we are asked to commit an additional \$70 million for a project for which there is no proof of any discernible benefit. One group, namely, Urban Construct, appeared before the committee and said, 'If we do not have opening bridges, we will lose money for our residential development.' Already, sir, I put to you that, by having the concept of a third river crossing, which we all support on the committee, Port Adelaide is thereby made a much more desirable precinct for redevelopment. Urban Construct will, by the nature of the construction of any roadway or train track across the river at a third point, benefit greatly from a public policy decision. That Urban Construct could appear before a committee of the parliament, and say, 'Sorry, we are not benefiting greatly enough. You spend another \$70 million from the public purse, and we want opening bridges because'—

Mr Lewis: Did you ask them how much they contributed to the Labor Party's campaign fund?

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Hammond asks if we asked how much they contributed to the Labor Party's campaign funds. No; we did not ask that.

Mr Lewis: That was a bit naive of you.

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Hammond chastises me for being naive, and I probably have been over 15 years, but I would say that there have been one or two times when he might have been a bit naive, too. We are all guilty of that on occasions. Nevertheless, Urban Construct, when questioned—and the member for Hammond would be interested in this—could not quantify how much money they would lose, even though they said that they would lose money if the bridges were closed or, indeed, how much money they would gain if, in fact, the bridges were opening.

With 10 metres between mean sea level and the bottom of the pavement of the bridge, as the member for Hammond would realise, you can get a cruiser equivalent almost to the height of a three-storey house underneath without opening the bridges. The only things that will not go through are yachts. Because you cannot sail, generally, when the motoring time down the Port River out to the gulf is often in excess of an hour, one wonders why you would bother mooring a yacht in front of your house, motoring it for an hour, only being able to get through in the morning and night, to North Haven when, if you moor at North Haven or the Royal Yacht Squadron, you can merely get in your car and drive for 10 minutes and be at sea a good 40 or 50 minutes before you could by keeping the yacht in the Inner Harbour.

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Hammond says that it is a concrete price on vanity, if I am paraphrasing him, and that may well be the case. The point is that, if Urban Con-

struct wants to sell its mariner sites or its housing for a premium—I am a Liberal; I do not mind the money that they can get—it is called the market. I do object, though, when this parliament—

Mr Lewis interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: Yes; I object when this parliament and the people of South Australia are asked to pay for it. We are being asked to pay \$70 million that we do not need to pay because the Deputy Premier of South Australia has got up and said to his electors, 'We are going to spend \$70 million more on'—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: Let's be clear on this. If you get in, you will stop them.

Mr BRINDAL: I will be as clear. The Attorney asked me to be clear. I will be as clear, Attorney, as you were, but the difference is that I will keep my word. The first act of a Labor government was going to be to reopen Barton Road. We were sick of your telling us how the Labor government would immediately reopen Barton Road. Either the member for Adelaide has got the Attorney by a particular part of his anatomy or he has no authority in his own party room. As for my position on Barton Road, let me be unequivocal to the Attorney. If I get the privilege of representing the people of Adelaide, it will never be opened, because I saw—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: I will tell that to the Ovingham people.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney is out of order.

Mr BRINDAL: If the Attorney does—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: We have a very good mailing list in Adelaide.

The SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney is out of order.

Mr BRINDAL: If the Attorney does, he had better tell it to the people in Ovingham out of his personal pocket, not out of his electorate expenses, because, of course, it would be illegal for him to go sending letters into somebody else's electorate.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: No; we walked them in with volunteers, something that you are not familiar with, Chucky.

Mr BRINDAL: I might not be familiar with volunteers, but I am familiar with the costs of printing and photocopying being done illegally out of an electorate office.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member needs to come back to the substance of the bill.

Mr BRINDAL: I will be unequivocal, both on Barton Road and on the bridges.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: And on the bridges?

Mr BRINDAL: Yes; it is the position of the Liberal Party of South Australia that we cannot justify the additional \$70 million to have opening bridges.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: So, you will stop it?

Mr BRINDAL: Yes, personally I will vote against it. I will vote against it in the party room. I will vote against it in this parliament and, at present, that does not put me in an incongruent position with the rest of my party.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: When did you change your mind on Barton Road?

Mr BRINDAL: In terms of Barton Road, I have watched the previous member for Adelaide passionately argue—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Attorney will be warned in a minute if he keeps interjecting.

Mr BRINDAL:—for the retention of Barton Road in its current form; that is, closed. I have watched the attorney fulminate and promise and then deliver nothing, so I am quite sensitive to the fact that if my electors do not want some-

thing, then I have a right to deliver to my electors what they do not want.

The other matter that I want to touch briefly on, by way of criticism, is the precipitate extension of the trams, yet to come before Public Works. I point out to this house that, while I concurred in the Public Works Committee's report on the trams to Glenelg, a failure of the entire study was that no alternative was looked at. It considered only how much it will cost to replace the trams. The Department of Transport never looked at cheaper alternatives for rapid transportation routes to and from Glenelg, given that we have a predicated transport corridor, and that evidence was never presented to the committee. Now, not only are we locked into a trans-system which is probably more expensive than more efficient and faster alternatives—an O-Bahn down to that part of the world, for instance, could bleed off on the major roads and provide relief to traffic congestion—we now have a government that is locking itself into destroying the character of King William Road as we know it and running the tram to nowhere in particular, without consultation.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: So, you are against the tram?

Mr BRINDAL: The Attorney says, 'You are against the trams.' If he goes out there and quotes me as being against the trams, I will make sure I sue him. I am not against the trams: I am for consultation, and I am for this city enjoying the character and beauty that it has, without it being mucked up by a knee-jerk reaction of the Premier or a couple of his ministers.

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson: So, how does the tram get from Victoria Square to North Adelaide? Great separation!

Mr BRINDAL: I want to assure myself, on behalf of the electors of Adelaide, that it needs to go to North Adelaide, or the Railway Station or anywhere else. That is what I want to do first, and then assure myself that the expenditure is warranted.

Mr Lewis: It needs more rigour.

Mr BRINDAL: The member for Hammond says it needs more rigour, and I absolutely agree with him. The point is that lately we have had torrential rains and flooding in Adelaide again.

Mr Lewis: And in Murray Bridge.

Mr BRINDAL: And in Murray Bridge, as the member for Hammond says. It would cost a minimum of \$160 million—that is the figure put out by the government to fix flooding in suburban Adelaide. If you take those two projects, with \$70 million for the bridge, and pay attention to the most efficient transport system to Glenelg, you can easily come up with far in excess of \$160 million. So, while people's houses are flooding in Adelaide and the government is bleating that it has no money, it is wasting money profligately by not giving due attention and due diligence to the budget application of capital works. I would not mind the opening bridges, the tram, or everything else if every problem in Adelaide is fixed, but thousands of residents are at danger of flooding and this government is saying that it is all too difficult. It is not too difficult to apply money to change a tramline. It is not too difficult to have an extension to God knows where for no apparent reason—

The Hon. M.J. Atkinson interjecting:

Mr BRINDAL: It is not too difficult to have an opening bridge, but far too difficult to protect people's properties. A procession of governments have locked in to urban infill without due diligence for the effects of stormwater run-off. It is quite provable from the Patawalonga catchment study that the footprint of flooding in this city has increased

because of government policy; and that, the Attorney will note, is probably contributory negligence and could stand this government to huge compensatory costs. The government is trying to run away from it and trying to hide from it because the answer is not sexy. The answer is not something you can hold up and say, 'Whoa, aren't we good?'

The answer is not a backdrop for the Premier, as he did at Adelaide Airport, an airport for which he has paid nothing, to walk along telling the people of South Australia how good he was with the budget. That is a con. This government is a con. This government does not apply money properly. This budget is a disgrace. How a Labor Party can sit opposite and espouse this as a Labor budget which is socially just, I do not know. In the time available to me, I have not even been able to address the government's inattention to social justice issues which it claims is at the core of its party—not mine. The Labor Party claims to be the crown prince of social justice and what has it applied in this budget? Absolutely nothing, because the same Attorney-General who sits there and behaves churlishly and carps with semantics, has the whole Labor Party under his pall. He is the Father Christmas of the right and he will see that no decent socially just policy emanates from that policy so long as he is dangling the strings. It is not a Labor Party and it is a pale imitation of a Liberal Party.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member's time has expired.

The Hon. D.C. KOTZ (Newland): Over the past two weeks, members of parliament have sat in budget estimates committees seeking answers from government ministers to their questions on the state government budget—questions that are the prerogative of members of parliament representing the tax-paying public of South Australia as they seek to demystify where the billions of taxpayers' dollars are spent by government. In my 15½ years in this parliament, I do not believe that I have experienced such a dismal lack of knowledge on budget matters displayed by ministers of the Crown who have responsibility for the portfolios of government; ministers who believe that their uninformed opinions on an issue or budget specifics should be acceptable answers to this parliament, instead of factual information which is unadulterated by what can only be described politely as waffling dribble; ministers who waste the time allocated to members of parliament to ask questions by taking on-the-floor briefings from ministerial advisers, while we wait in limbo for the minister to verbally interpret these silent briefings some time later, rather than the minister allowing their advisers to answer questions of which they have knowledge, when it is quite obvious to those awaiting their pearls of wisdom that the minister has not got a clue about the subject matter; and ministers of the Crown who cannot perceive their own status in the role of government, and instead reflect the cartoon caricature dockside bully boy, personal attack, pejorative comment and violent verbal displays intended to intimidate, all of which is highly unbecoming behaviour by those who hold one of the highest offices in this state.

However, the worst inanity pursued quite diligently by all Labor ministers is a state of denial. Ministers, who have now presented their fourth state budget—and with only months left of their four-year term in government—deny any responsibility for the major issues of concern to the people of this state—major issues created by Labor ministers and their utterly incompetent management of the portfolios that

they hold. Portfolios such as health, police, justice and education have been plagued by funding cuts since the Labor government came to office in 2002. The Labor government ministers deny responsibility for any of today's problems in any of those areas. The Labor government prefers to play the inane blame game, whereby a previous Liberal government 'must have caused all these problems'. What odious nonsense, and only the most mediocre of minds could extrapolate an ounce of truth from such a wilful untruth.

We have Labor ministers who have determined the policy direction for the state under the leadership of the Premier for the past four budgets and who have been the decision makers on every dollar spent in each of those four budgets, on every service to be provided to the public and our communities in each of those four budgets. They have spent over \$40 billion of taxpayers' money over those four budgets, providing the Labor government's policy direction for the state.

The opposite side of decisions on budget expenditure is, of course, the decision to cut budget expenditure—and this is one area where this government is certainly an expert. The Liberal opposition knew from the Labor government's first and second budgets that hundreds of millions of dollars were cut from all portfolios. The budget papers were somewhat unclear on just how many hundreds of millions of dollars were being resumed by the Treasurer and exactly what services would be cut. The Treasurer and ministers denied that massive cuts had taken place. The untruths were discovered when hospital beds were closed. The cancer clinic nominated for Flinders, with money in those first budgets, was cancelled, although we have now seen this government come out and attempt to gain some form of kudos for its overly late establishment of a wonderful piece of infrastructure that should be operating now, rather than still waiting to be initiated. Infrastructure projects, either new buildings or maintenance programs in schools, were deferred. Police recruiting courses were cut. Crime prevention programs—successful as they were—no longer had any funding. Mental health issues and disability funding hit an all time low. That is the tip of the proverbial iceberg in terms of the amount of programs cut across the board; and I do not have time in this debate to identify the hundreds of programs across the state that felt the wrath of this government's efficiency savings, which was the new Labor phase for 'slash and burn'.

The point of these comments is to highlight that the Labor government's slash and burn technique created the issues faced by the Labor government today. It is now playing catch-up, which also creates greater cost pressures on this and future budgets. Although the Treasurer denied any slash and burn technique to his earlier budgets, in these estimates committees the Treasurer found a moment of truth when he advised the Leader of the Opposition that he had cut \$900 million from the first budget and \$750 million from the second budget. That is \$1 650 million (or \$1.6 billion) over two years which has been removed from the provision of essential services and which has helped to create the undeniable detrimental impact plaguing this Labor government and its incompetent ministers—whose only answer to significant problems is to throw up their hands in despair and declare their area of responsibility as 'well and truly stuffed'. That is hardly a visionary response from a minister of government.

This year the Labor government has \$2.2 billion more at its disposal than the last Liberal government had in its last budget in 2001-02. That amounts to some \$42 million more a week. However, instead of underpinning future growth, nothing of lasting consequence has been initiated by the Rann

government as we look through the budget papers. It claims that it has provided \$1.5 billion in tax cuts, but the most significant cuts will not occur until late 2009-10, which will be the last year of the next government's term. Land tax will raise more money next year from the very people to whom the government claims to be providing relief.

In 2004-05, the government underestimated revenue by \$461 million. The windfall could have been invested in infrastructure or services for South Australia but, instead, the government and its ministers took their eye off the ball. Blow-outs occurred throughout the Public Service and other areas, and now we have an extra unbudgeted 1 842 public servants. I do not think that any member in this place has any problem with the growth of public servants, but 1 800 extra people in a single year speaks more about ministerial mismanagement than it does about providing a better and more effective Public Service.

The additional costs of public servants over the budgeted figure added some \$184 million of expenditure to the state payroll. If that money was available to spend on country roads, it would clear up the maintenance back log in a single year instead of the proposed 20 years it will now take at the current rate of spending. Stash and cash is a skill of this government. The Treasurer has hidden further funds (as was earlier stated) by underestimating revenue at the beginning of the year and then using the funds to meet the budget blow-out at the end of the year.

In 2002-03, the government underestimated revenue by \$528 million; in 2003-04 by \$794 million; and another \$461 million in 2004-05. That is a slush fund of over \$1.8 billion over three years. The big question is: where has it gone? What has South Australia to show for it? What does this budget provide for the next year leading us into an election to show the people of South Australia that this government actually cares for them and that it thinks about the needs of the state? The answer is: almost nothing, of course. The money has been used to cover up blatant mismanagement and ministerial incompetence.

I already stated in a previous contribution some of the examples of government waste, so I will not add to it in this contribution. The problem is that the Rann government has no concept of how to make South Australia a better place. It has a strategic plan about which we keep hearing from time to time, but it is unwilling to measure the success of that plan by any form of assessment. This is unprecedented tax revenue with no control being exercised over how these funds are to be allocated. Instead of being used for the benefit of all, those soaring tax dollars are being diverted to increasing the number of public servants or are slipping through the government's fingers because of shocking financial management. We have a crisis in health, education and justice which is not being addressed.

The crisis in health has been highlighted over the past couple of years by members of the opposition. The average wait for all classes of elective surgery in South Australia is now the worst on record. This is according to statistics taken by the state government itself. Compared with 2002 when the Rann government came to office the average wait for urgent surgery is now 30 per cent longer; for semi-urgent surgery it is 44 per cent longer; and it is 43 per cent longer for non-urgent surgery. That is an absolute disgrace, yet we hear ministers of this government continually telling us that they are doing it better than when the Liberals were in office.

How do they explain that when none of the figures support their argument. They are doing it far worse, because never in

the history of this state have we seen such numbers being added to waiting lists in our hospital system. Disturbingly, there has been a significant deterioration in meeting the national standards for all forms of surgery. The latest elective surgery bulletin for the March quarter shows that these figures are the worst in our state's history. There are still more than 11 100 people on the waiting list for surgery at the end of March and through access to freedom of information we have discovered that a further 3 700 people are queuing to get onto a waiting list.

The latest elective surgery bulletin (again for the March quarter) proves that surgery waiting lists are still at near-record levels. This government is deliberately trying to artificially manipulate waiting lists by restricting access to medical specialists and therefore limiting the number of people who can be placed on a waiting list. With people aged more than 70 years waiting for longer than 3½ years just to see a specialist to go on a waiting list, this reflects the sad lack of humanity of the Rann government. The health minister boasts that there have been more procedures done, but that is only because they have been pushing through the cheaper operations and deferring the much more expensive hip and knee replacement operations to another list. Indicative of what appears to appeal to this government when making decisions on surgery is the fact that the cost of almost 15 eye procedures is equivalent to one hip replacement.

I will now turn to education. Since 2002, capital works budgets throughout the school system have been slashed by 50 per cent. The government's education budget reveals that the annual allocation for capital works has been slashed by half since Mike Rann came to office. In 2001-02 under the former Liberal government \$97.4 million was allocated to capital works for the rebuilding and redevelopment of our schools across the state. This year that figure has been slashed to \$47.6 million, almost all of which is to continue existing works.

Worse still—if we look further into the budget we find that it reveals \$12.4 million in school capital works funding that was not spent last year. That is an absolute disgrace, considering we already have a capital works maintenance backlog of between \$250 million and \$300 million. Only a small amount of money in this year's budget is to be spent on proposed new works this year. I can give the examples of moving the Aldgate kindergarten to its new site and doing some work on the Bellevue Heights Primary School.

Education is being squeezed by this government, and students and teachers in classrooms throughout South Australia are paying the price through appalling conditions. Even the teachers' union observed after the state budget:

This government is being particularly tightfisted when it comes to public education. It's time the Rann government backed up its promises to the education sector with the necessary funding to ensure schools are up to scratch and are a suitable learning and working environment.

As an example of a further disgrace, when you look further into the budget figures presented by this government, they show that money raised by parents and school canteens is now being used by the state government to inflate education revenue in the budget papers. Money from parent fundraising in school communities and income from tuck shops has been included in the budget papers in revenue and expenditure estimates for 2005-06. In fact, just under half of the \$114 million included in the revenue and expenditure section of the budget estimates is made up from school canteens, fundraising by the schools and the hire of facilities by the

schools. The total amount of spending on education proudly announced by this Treasurer largely comprises money raised by parents and school students. The government claimed an 11.1 per cent increase in expenditure to schools but, once that \$114 million is disposed of, we see that it is just 6.1 per cent.

Time expired

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): The estimates committees process can be either very enlightening or like a visit to a dentist and having teeth pulled. I thank the public servants who came and, where they were allowed, offered full and frank advice. I cite the example of Chief Justice Doyle when he gave some full and frank opinions on the state of repair of the Supreme Court and some of the court buildings.

Estimates committees is not a process in which members can just beat up on the government. Rather, it is a process to examine the expenditure of the taxpayers' money. If the ministers are not able to answer questions at the time, we have to understand that. If a complex question is involved, we do not expect them to be a font of wisdom, and certainly we would encourage allowing the public servants who came and assisted at the table with the ministers to answer questions.

Yesterday, in the Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation examination, Mr Buckskin and Ms Mazel were not able to voice their own opinions: their opinions were voiced through the minister. That is probably procedurally correct, but in other estimates committees the departmental officers at the table were able to elaborate on answers, and in this respect I gave the example of Justice Doyle, whose evidence was full and frank. In the area of volunteers, Mr Temple-Heald, the acting head of the Office of Volunteers, attended and, although I am not sure that he was prevented from speaking (I would not say that), it would have been nice had he been able to answer questions.

I will raise now two areas that I had hoped to raise in estimates, but time ran away from us, involving the Department of Recreation and Sport and the Office of Local Government. I refer to the disaster that occurred at Karoonda. I was at Karoonda last Friday morning, talking to the Mayor, the council CEO and some of the volunteer emergency services workers, whom I congratulate on the job they have been doing. It would have been nice to receive answers to my questions (and I hope the minister is listening or that the advisers read this) about the issues raised at the time regarding the football club at Karoonda. The football club at Karoonda has suffered severe damage. I am not an engineer, but it was my understanding that the structure may have to be demolished and a new facility built.

I hope the government recognises that this is a community centre of great worth and that it continues to offer more support than it already has, bearing in mind that the football club is the emergency evacuation centre for that community. At the moment, with damage to the hospital and to the CFS shed, St John Ambulance and the football club, there is a dire situation there that needs to be rectified as soon as possible. I recognise the government has been helpful and offered support there. We will need to make sure that support continues.

A lot of damage has been done across other areas of the state over the past few days that will amount to many millions of dollars, and emergency funding may be available. The mayor of the council asked me whether the state government would refund or replace the money taken out of council budget to pay overtime wages in cleaning up this disaster. The employees of the council were working a lot of overtime

to clean up, as they had to on the West Coast. It would be nice if funds were able to be taken out of the State Disaster Fund to make up for that shortfall in the Karoonda council.

Some issues were raised in the past few days and during estimates about the facts and figures shown in budgets. My first encounter with this was on my first estimates committee last week on the Office of Volunteers. I asked a question about the reduction in spending between 2004-05 and 2005-06 on supplies and services and was told that there has not been a reduction. If you look across the budget papers, it is \$377 000 in both years, and that is correct in this year's budget papers. However, if you go back to last year's budget papers, it is \$464 000. If you go back two years ago, it is \$647 000. It is not what is shown in here. The last two years show \$377 000. I do not know what is going on here.

This has happened in a number of my portfolio areas, and a number of other shadow ministers have picked up the same alterations. It is excused as being an accounting treatment or a carry-over. It is an unusual way of treating figures when in last year's budget on page 1.14 you state supplies and services at \$464 000, yet in this year's budget papers at page 1.14 it is \$377 000. There is quite a difference—\$87 000. What is going on? I cannot explain this, as I am not an accountant (I am boasting, not apologising): I am just a normal bloke who wants to look at the budget figures and see what is being spent and see that the taxpayers are getting value for money. When the parliamentary secretary said I was wrong, I was not wrong. If you look at last year's budget papers, it is there. I am not sure what is happening, but I would love an explanation.

Other figures for not only volunteers but also other portfolios vary as well. If you look at this year's budget papers they look reasonable, but if you get out last year's budget papers and those from two years ago and start comparing those budget figures, there are big differences. Those differences are quite alarming—millions of dollars in many cases. With the Office for Volunteers, the state government has reduced its funding by \$949 000 over three financial years, using not only this year's budget papers but also last year's budget and that for the year before.

The state government originally budgeted \$2.369 million in 2002-03 for the Office of Volunteers, and now it has only budgeted \$1.4 million—almost half. The budgeted expenditure for the Office of Volunteers has eroded each financial year: \$2.369 million in 2002-03 to \$1.983 million in 2003-04 and \$1.787 million in 2004-05—or is it \$1.4 million that is shown? For the same financial year (2004-05), two different budget figures have appeared in two different budget papers. Last year the state government said that it budgeted \$1.787 million in 2004-05, and this year it said that it budgeted \$1.4 million in 2004-05. Which is it? It is not a small discrepancy; it is a difference of \$376 000. It is a lot of money, and it is a large difference as a result of a change to a supposed accounting treatment. How many grants would volunteers receive for that \$376 000? How many volunteers have missed out on grant money because of this change? Is it a discrepancy; is it an accounting treatment? What is it? I need to get answers on this, because it relates not only to this portfolio; this accounting treatment has been used in a number of portfolios.

The amount budgeted by the state government for grants and subsidies through the Office for Volunteers has also declined from an actual amount of \$535 000 in the 2002-03 budget to a budgeted amount of \$461 000 in the 2004-05 budget and to \$454 000 in this year's budget 2005-06. That

is \$81 000 less over three financial years. Volunteers are receiving \$81 000 less than the government gave in 2002-03. Although the actual amount that was spent on grants and subsidies in 2003-04 was \$490 000, the government has budgeted only \$454 000 for grants and subsidies in this year's budget. That is still \$36 000 that our hardworking volunteers will not receive this financial year.

Again, the amount the state government has budgeted for employee entitlements within the Office for Volunteers has significantly reduced since 2002-03, when the government actually spent \$1.06 million on employee entitlements. The actual amount of money spent on employee entitlements for the 2003-04 financial year was only \$490 000, which is a decline of \$570 000 over the previous year. Likewise, in the 2004-05 budget papers, employee entitlements was budgeted at \$857 000. However, in this year's budget papers for the same year (2004-05), the figure was \$857 000. That figure was revised down to an estimated result of \$589 000. Today the Office for Volunteers is receiving just over \$1 million less in employee entitlements than it was receiving in 2002-03.

The cut to funding for the Office for Volunteers has nothing to do with carryovers, as the parliamentary secretary said yesterday in the media. We are comparing apples with apples. We are not being Con the Fruiterer here—however, there is a bit of a con going on! What is presented in the budget figures are actual figures in estimates. The parliamentary secretary is wrong. The cut of \$376 000 is not a carry-over: it is a reduction in expenditure as a result of cutting employee entitlements and grants. Frankly, I do not believe all this about overheads and the accounting treatments. All it seems to be coming down to is the fiddle factor. If what Mr Bodzioch said during estimates is correct, and these discrepancies are as a result of changes to accounting treatment on overheads across government, what other departments have been affected? I invite the Premier to give the opposition a full brief.

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): I wish to address three matters in relation to the Appropriation Bill and the important information that comes to light during the course of the estimates hearings during which we and, of course, the parliament have an opportunity to examine the financial accounts for the 2005-06 budget and ancillary financial matters that relate to that. I have a number of areas of responsibility on behalf of the opposition. One of them (and this is the first matter that I wish to address) is population. During estimates the minister for population (Hon. Kevin Foley) did not present for examination. On his behalf, as occurred last year, the Premier presented to answer questions on this matter. Because of the absence of the minister with respect to this issue (which has been raised before), the Premier took control: not only did he answer in estimates but also the chief of staff in relation to this matter is in the Premier's office.

At this stage, I am not aware of any meeting, decision or press release that has been issued by the minister responsible for population. Nevertheless, there are a couple of matters in relation to that examination that I wish to raise. The first is that I asked the Premier about the alarming trend of interstate migration out of South Australia to other states. I asked the Premier about the net figure, which is a figure from August to August (in this case the published results to August 2004), which was a net loss to South Australia of 3 067 persons. That is, if there were some 5 000 people who had moved out of South Australia, and 2 000 people moved into South

Australia as their place of residence, we have a net loss of 3 000 South Australians. That was an increase from the previous year when the outflow was 2 188 persons. It is an alarming problem.

When I asked the Premier what he was doing about this issue, especially as states such as Queensland, Western Australia and even Tasmania are having a population net increase in relation to South Australia, he proceeded to spend what must have been no less than 10 minutes providing the committee with information about overseas migration, notwithstanding the fact that the question had nothing to do with overseas migration. Every state in Australia has enjoyed a migration increase, and the Premier acknowledged the work of the Hon. Amanda Vanstone and the change of rules that permit South Australia and Tasmania to enjoy benefits over other major states and capital cities. Having wasted time in relation to that issue, the Premier said the following in relation to interstate migration:

It is true that the latest ABS data, which has been published, shows that there is a net interstate migration outflow of 3 717 persons during the year to December 2004.

So, when he gets into the committee, the Premier actually tells us of another 700 net by the time he gets to December 2004. He qualified it by saying:

We have to make some adjustment in the following year to test that that information is correct.

So, here he is giving more updated information which is a worse scenario than what has been published in the report. He continued:

Nevertheless, the 2004 annual loss continues to be much less than the losses experienced in the mid-1990s during the previous government, where the net loss to interstate was as high as 8 000 per annum as at December 1995.

What gall to appear before the committee and speak of the interstate exodus out of the state in the mid-1990s after the single biggest financial disaster that this state had faced with the State Bank collapse. Of course they were running out of the state in droves between 1990 and 1995, because they had lost their jobs and businesses had collapsed.

The State Bank disaster took a decade to even start to scratch the surface of recovery for this state as we came into this century. The gall of the Premier to tell the committee his excuse for the increasing outflow from this state under his watch is to go back to 1995 and expose a position that this state faced at that time, which had not been faced since the beginning of the last century, which, of course, was when the last State Bank disaster occurred, and, of course, as we all know, we had a Labor government at that time. It was the same rules: they take over banking; they think they are bankers; they go into the business of banking; they crush the bank; they absolutely suffocate the investors; and the state pays the price. The gall of this Premier to come into our committee and give us an explanation for the exodus out of the state under his watch by referring to a State Bank disaster period is just laughable.

The next aspect that we go to on population with the Premier, which was the second question, arose out of the fact that, in June last year, the Premier admitted that he said the target was to have 2 million persons in South Australia by 2050. He published that, but that day he admitted that he had not done one bit of research. He had listened to others, and he had made it up. However, last year he told the committee:

I can reveal today a major announcement that a group chaired by Dr Adam Graycar is looking into these matters.

Well, that was some comfort a year ago. So, this year, in the light of what the Premier said, I asked:

Has the report been prepared by the group chaired by Dr Adam Graycar; who is on it; at what cost; and, if you have done the report, will you table it?

Of course, the Premier started to answer but seemed to lose it a bit and, in fairness, he said that he would hand it over to Dr Adam Graycar. He is the bunny in all this who has to take the fall, because this is a committee that has not done anything—not one shred of research—to test whether a population target of 2 million people by 2050 is economically and environmentally sustainable, whether it is a good target, or whether we need more or fewer people. Some of the recommendations from the population summit, held here in 2003 and attended by eminent people from all around Australia, were that you need to set some targets if you are to follow through this issue and arrest the decline of population, and you need to do the research. The summit also made some recommendations about who should do the research, how it should be done and what needed to be done. That was excellent, but the Premier has not taken a scrap of notice.

When under pressure last year and when under pressure this year, he said, ‘Well, we’re going to have a major announcement. We’re going to have a group to do this.’ Do you know what he did? He came to the committee this year and confirmed that no research had been done, but he had now set up another group. He says that, in relation to population, wants to build a closer relationship with the Australian government. He says that leaders of the group will include Greg Hunt, Mandy Keillor, Michael Hickinbotham, Fiona Roche, Mal Hemmerling (although the Premier qualified that he is yet to be confirmed), Karen Lablack and Dr Adam Graycar. He said:

This group will make a series of recommendations to government by the end of 2005 about how the implementation of the policy can be driven forward.

That is great, but I make the point that we have still not yet done the primary work to identify whether or not it is even a sensible target, let alone identify policy initiatives that might achieve it. As I explained, Dr Adam Graycar gets to carry the can during estimates. He said that they had:

... held a planning meeting in the cabinet office with planning officers in each of the departments to work through the demographic numbers, the implications for their agencies in meeting the two million target, and the planning requirements that each agency would have to go through. We are preparing a very rigorous set of projections.

He further stated:

We are expecting by about August to have a whole series of local area projections that will give us the composition of the two million population, according to the target, by small areas, and doing the small area analysis is very hard, but very strategic and very important.

By the time we got to the end of the exchange on this issue and having confirmed that not one shred of actual research has been done, Dr Graycar stated:

The government, in launching the population policy, has decided to reach the two million through a set of policy initiatives.

That is logical once you have set the target. He further stated:

To take that into account, there are land use planning issues, water issues and infrastructure issues, and all are being addressed with the working party. . .

Again, no research has been done on how they might achieve it. Dr Graycar continued:

The answer basically is that any targets can be set and then one adjusts the policy levers to do it.

That is what actually happened here. On the important issue of population, with this state already having the most aged population and its experiencing the greatest rate of ageing, we face a serious and important issue of policy. The Premier has handed this to a member of his staff, but they have not done the work. They have not applied for the funding, and they have not done the research. They have not even got on with the job of identifying what is economically and environmentally sustainable for this state and whether the target they are starting to work on in relation to policy is even right. To delegate that shows a complete lack of understanding of the importance of this issue.

Another matter I want briefly to address is the issue of education, in particular, public education. I made some comments about this matter during estimates. However, I think it is important to identify that, unlike the government's attempt to present its position as being one of continued commitment to public education, there is a division of this government's responsibility, which has seen the greatest extent of cost shifting I have seen in a department in the short time I have been in this place. There has been a lot of public debate about cost shifting in health care, for example, between state and federal governments, such as medical patients using hospital facilities, etc.

According to the government, it is estimated that approximately 10 000 fewer students were enrolled in South Australian public schools in August this year (this fact is set out in the budget papers) than we had at the end of 2001, when this government came into office. That is a staggering reduction—that is 2 000 fewer students each year in our public schools. Where are they going? It is important to recognise that we have a diminishing number of children, so fewer children are coming into our schools. However, the overwhelming majority of those children are being enrolled in low-fee independent schools.

This is not a criticism of independent or Catholic schools, because our side of politics believes in choice. However, this exposes the fact that there is a substantial reduction in our public education system, and the government, which is drowning in money (receiving \$2.2 billion more this year than the last Liberal government did in its annual budget), has failed to deal with the education issue. Here is the government's opportunity. It does not have patients lining up at hospitals, with a waiting list that is increasing by the day.

The number of enrolments in public schools is on the down slide, so here is a golden opportunity for the government actually to spend a bit of money. But what does the government do? It comes into this place and, through the Treasurer initially and then through the minister during estimates, says, 'Aren't we great? We are now spending more dollars per student in our public school system than ever before.' You do not have to be Einstein to work out that, of course, it is. The government has a reduced overall education budget (and I will come to that in a moment), because we have so many fewer children. That is not difficult to understand.

One other thing I want to say is that it is not the opposition saying that this is a scandalous abandonment of the children in our public school system. The AEU(SA) President, Andrew Gohl, has also made a number of statements, one of which is as follows:

The state coffers are healthy enough to enable tax cuts as an election sweetener, yet the government has abandoned its promise to invest in public education.

How clear is that? He makes it abundantly clear that this government's approach to public education is unacceptable. On 26 May he also said, specifically on the budget, that, 'I think this government is being particularly tight-fisted when it comes to public education.' Let us look at the facts. When the previous education minister (who I know was present) was in opposition she argued the importance of keeping the 25 per cent of the total budget spent on public education by the South Australian government at 25 per cent. As opposition representative at the time she asked questions in estimates, and as minister she maintained that—or very close to it—and that is to her credit. However, this year the government has presented graphs which suggest that 25 per cent, or thereabouts, is still being spent on education if you add up all the funds that relate to that area.

The truth is that in the 2005-06 budget, \$2.2658 billion is being spent on education by the department. That represents 21.2 per cent of the total budget estimate: that is, \$10.670 billion which is now spent by the state in government operational expenses for the 2005-06 budget. So, we are actually seeing a slashing of the share of the South Australian budget that was for education down to 21.2 per cent this year. Here is a golden opportunity, when there is less cost for fewer children—and we still have formulas that relate to numbers of children in schools although they have fiddled around the edges of them, but, essentially, funding and eligibility for teachers and the like still rests on the student numbers—for them to start to clean up the massive backlog in maintenance. Instead, in terms of maintenance, they have now dropped from budgets of \$97 million in the 2001-02 budget down to \$47 million in the 2005-06 budget.

We are talking about a few hundreds of thousands of the project being spent in this year. The minister says it is because we have taken higher education out and put it somewhere else—that is right, but at best they have budgeted \$15 million for higher education. They have done so again this year, but one has to remember that they did not actually spend most of it last year and so we have massive slippage in the higher education area. We have it in the schools as well, but to come back with that excuse is almost laughable.

The other incredible thing is that the minister says, 'We will have School Pride: we have cut down capital works because we have spent \$25 million on School Pride.' Well, let me place on record that School Pride is painting the front fence, it is doing essential maintenance in the front of the school, it is putting up a brand-new sign with a beautiful state government logo. An amount of \$25 million when they have written correspondence to the minister (and to me) begging him to reconsider the allocation of those funds. They want to pretty up the schools that will be polling booths on 18 March next year, and that is an absolute disgrace.

Time expired.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): I would like to make some comments in relation to this debate following the Estimates Committee process, and I would like to open my contribution by talking about WorkCover. It is time that South Australia woke up and realised that WorkCover is in trouble—there is no doubt about that, given the budget estimates hearing that we had this week.

Mrs Geraghty: I sat in that part of estimates and listened.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The member for Torrens says she sat there and listened. That is true, but she did not hear all the facts because the minister gave us a total of 45 minutes for what is one of the state's biggest corporations. The minister made an opening statement, there were three dorothy dixers and then there were 25 minutes of opposition questioning.

When you look at what is happening with WorkCover I think that South Australia should be worried about it, as should the business community, because the unfunded liability in WorkCover is now approaching some \$700 million. When this government took over the unfunded liability was around the \$60 million to \$70 million mark. That is a huge growth in unfunded liability.

There comes a point in time when even this government has to put its hand up and say that it is responsible for something. It is responsible for WorkCover. The board, which was put in place by this government, is managing WorkCover, and WorkCover is in trouble. Approaching a \$700 million unfunded liability is a great cause for concern for this state. WorkCover is saying to the business community, 'Don't worry. The government put up the levy rates for WorkCover as soon as it came into government, and we only have to keep them in place until 2013; then we might have WorkCover under control.' I suggest that WorkCover will actually have to look at putting up its rates even higher to try and bring its unfunded liability under control.

WorkCover is in trouble and South Australia needs to cast a close eye over what is happening at the management level within that organisation. The levies will remain at the inflated rate until at least 2013; that is what we are told. That is a powerfully long time for this state to have to pay an inflated WorkCover rate because of the mismanagement of this government. This government is responsible for WorkCover. It has blown out under this government's watch, under this minister's watch. If you ask the minister what he is doing, the answer is that he does not know what he is doing. South Australia has a problem with WorkCover. It is about time the business community woke up and started asking questions of the WorkCover Board to find out what is happening within WorkCover.

In South Australia, we have WorkCover levy rates that are double that of Victoria. Why is it that, under this government, the WorkCover levy rates are double that of Victoria? Why is it that this minister sits there and accepts that, under this government, the WorkCover levy rates will be double that of Victoria until 2013? If the South Australian business community does not wake up and start asking questions of the WorkCover Board to find out what they are doing to address the WorkCover levy rate and the unfunded liability, we are going to have a bigger problem in future years than we already have now. To give you an indication of how bad the state government is going, the liability in relation to the Public Service has blown out to \$308 million (25 per cent) over the past two years. If you combine the public sector unfunded liability with the WorkCover liability, we are talking about a \$1 billion unfunded liability.

Why is it that under this government the unfunded liability for the public sector has blown out by 25 per cent in two years? Not even this government can blame the previous government for what has happened in the past two years, because it has happened under this minister's watch. The Public Service unfunded liability has blown out by 25 per cent over the past two years. When you ask the minister and look at the facts, WorkCover has not done audits of the Public Service. Surprise, surprise! They are out there auditing

the private sector, and what are they doing about auditing the public sector? The answer is precious little.

What is happening in the public sector? The public sector unfunded liability has blown out by 25 per cent in the past two years—a figure now of some \$308 million. You have to ask why that is occurring. Why is this minister so lazy as to allow the public sector not to be audited? Where are the processes within government to make sure that the public sector is being audited so that the liability costs to the taxpayer, through the Public Service, are brought under control? Essentially, the government is an exempt employer—it manages its own claims. However, an auditing process is undertaken. This government has taken its eye off the ball. It is essentially saying, 'Don't worry about the Public Sector. We'll just manage that.' Well, it is not managing it. It has blown out by 25 per cent or \$308 million over the last two years, and the private sector is saying, 'Whoopee-do! We only have to wait until 2013, and we may be able to reduce the levy rates.'

We have a problem with WorkCover in South Australia. The business community needs to wake up, the cabinet needs to wake up, and cabinet needs to start asking this minister what the hell he is doing to try to bring WorkCover under control. They sneak in at 6.30 at night in the estimates committees, when all the media has finished reporting for the day; they give a lousy 30 minutes—or 45 minutes less the opening statement and less dorothy dixers, so, 30 minutes—to the opposition to ask questions, and they are trying to hide what is a big problem for the state—a \$700 million unfunded liability sitting there in WorkCover.

The business community and the media need to start asking more questions of the board, of the management, and, indeed, of the minister, about what is happening. Every time you go out and make a media comment about WorkCover, the WorkCover board pops up and provides the answer. You do not see the minister. People need to start asking the minister what he is doing to bring the unfunded liability under control. How is it that it has blown out to nine to 10 times the figure in 3½ years? That is a disgrace, and this minister needs to be held accountable for it.

Other issues raised during estimates were interesting. The government made a lot of play about making the EPA more independent. Of course, Mr Speaker, you and I know that the EPA has been independent from the day that the act was brought in. What the government has done, essentially, through the OneSteel process, has shown where its colours are because, during the estimates committees, it came to light that, in the OneSteel indenture agreement that is being negotiated, guess who is negotiating the environmental outcomes? Not the EPA, not Paul Vogel—

The Hon. P.L. White interjecting:

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: And the member for Taylor says that is a good thing. It is not the EPA, but good old Jim Hallion from PIRSA. We all know that Jim Hallion is a well-known environmentalist right throughout the public sector—it is one of his great credentials—but what skills and qualifications does PIRSA have as an agency to negotiate the outcome on a red dust issue at Whyalla, you would have to ask. The responsibility for this has been transferred from minister Hill to minister Holloway, so it has gone from the environmental portfolio to the economic development portfolio, and that is a message to the EPA. The message to the EPA from this government is, 'We want you to be fearlessly independent, but don't make us unpopular. Don't do something that makes us unpopular.' I say to the government: if it is prepared to do

an indenture for OneSteel and let the Economic Development Agency negotiate the environmental outcomes, why not for ION, where there are 700 jobs at stake? It will not help that company. Even the union, the great supporter of this government, wrote to the Premier asking for a contribution for the company so that it could meet the new environmental standards required by the EPA—a \$10 million figure—and this government has said, ‘No.’

So, in the suburbs, where the local member says, ‘No; we have a problem with this company and we should not be helping them, and they should meet the highest environmental standards known to mankind,’ the government backs the EPA. At Whyalla, when the company says that it will cause it some issues to meet the EPA’s environmental standards, and the local member says, ‘We need the company to remain there,’ it is taken out of the EPA’s hands and given to the Economic Development Agency. There is a message here to every environment group in this state—and they should read it, loud and clear. The government talks about having a fearlessly independent EPA but it is prepared to cut its lunch when it is politically acceptable to do so. When the politics of the matter are that they need to stomp on the EPA, this government has, and will, stomp on the EPA. I am sure that the Wilderness Society, the Conservation Council and other environment groups will have some issues with the Economic Development Agency under Paul Holloway and Jim Hallion, negotiating the environmental outcomes on those particular issues.

Then we get to the natural resource management issue, which was subject to a lot of debate within this chamber. It starts in just seven days. What did we find during the estimates process? We found that the NRM boards do not have their budgets or the legal capacity to employ anyone yet. They have to keep two sets of administrative accounts until at least Christmas. They do not even have their policies and procedures in place from the government—they are still sitting there. All these boards have been appointed. There has been great fanfare about all the natural resources management boards, and when you speak to them they are in a state of total confusion as to how it will work on 1 July. The government—

The Hon. K.A. Maywald: Not my board.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: The member for Chaffey might be one of the lucky ones—and this government is not slow to give the member for Chaffey special treatment, given the circumstances in which she finds herself. However, I can tell members that the other boards to which I have spoken and which provided me with some questions to ask during estimates are furious that the NRM process had been bungled so badly by the government. They simply do not have their procedures, their budgets, or even the legal capacity to employ—and the whole process starts within seven days.

The member for Taylor as a former minister for planning will be pleased to know that, during the planning estimates last night, minister Holloway withdrew all the performance criteria for the agency. There was not one performance criteria in the agency. In fact, the budget estimate papers went from six pages to one page. All the social performance criteria which the member for Taylor worked so hard to put in the budget papers during the years she was the minister happened to be taken out because minister Holloway thought that they were useless. The whole planning system under the current minister has no performance criteria at all.

The interesting thing is that last year we were told by the then minister that they were going to increase planning fees

to spend \$2 million on improving the timeliness of the department in line with the Economic Development Board. They raised the extra \$2 million. Last night, minister Holloway told us that they have not raised \$2 million, even though the budget papers show that they did receive more than the extra \$2 million, yet they have not spent any of the money on improving the time line issues. The two answers do not go hand in hand.

The government is deliberately underestimating the amount of revenue it will collect in planning. That is clearly obvious from the fees and commissions lines. The government, in my view, has deliberately underestimated the revenue so that it builds up some headroom in that particular budget line to spend on popular projects for the event in March next year. I could go on, but I will not hold up the house any longer. I do re-emphasise my point about WorkCover. I think WorkCover is in trouble. I think the business community needs to start asking some serious questions before they suffer even a greater penalty under this government.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY (Light): I will take up from where the member for Davenport left off because, as he stated, the underestimation of revenue by this government is nothing short of amazing. Over the past three budgets, \$1.8 billion (not million) has been underestimated revenue by this government. At the time that this budget was delivered, the Treasurer said, ‘No, we are not building up a mountain of funds for the election next year.’ How can they believe that when he underestimates the amount of revenue over the past three years by \$1.8 billion? I am sure that, come the election next year, we will suddenly find that hundreds of millions of dollars are available for various projects, as the member for Davenport has just highlighted, which will come out of the woodwork. It will all come down to this government’s excellent management—or that will be the reason—that we will see this revenue appear.

This is the highest taxing government that South Australia has ever seen and it is not stopping. For instance, payroll tax. South Australia has the lowest threshold—I repeat: the lowest threshold—for payroll tax of any state in Australia. It is \$514 000, or around that figure, before payroll tax kicks in. If members look at the budget figures, they will see that the Treasurer has estimated that an extra \$36 million will be collected via payroll tax this year. One would think that we would want to encourage employment. Given the money that this government is rolling in, because of the property boom and the taxes collected via stamp duty and land tax, and also because of the additional unbudgeted revenue from the windfall gains from the GST—which, I might add, this government voted against when it was going through—one would think the government would be looking to encourage business to employ more people and to encourage the competitive edge of business for this state. But, no, we have left it at the same level. This might be a ‘watch this space’ for the election. This could just happen to be one of the carrots, which will come out of election grab bag of goodies, to business; that is, taxation levels for payroll tax will be lowered.

One of the huge disappointments of this budget is the lack of spending on our road infrastructure. The RAA indicated, and the opposition agrees, that there is some \$200 million backlog in road infrastructure spending. One would expect some sort of attempt by this government to address, or start to address, that matter. In the one breath that I say that, I

suppose it is not surprising, because, when members look at the draft transport plan of this government that was released some 18 months ago, everything was going to be sold by the year 2017. No figures were put into the draft transport plan, and, when the government obviously decided that it could not stand the criticism of it, it was rolled over into an infrastructure plan; and soon we will probably see another infrastructure plan because this one does not hit the mark, either. If you live outside the metropolitan area there is no doubt that you are a forgotten South Australian in terms of road infrastructure funding. I have not seen the roads in country South Australia in a more deplorable state than they currently are. It is a failure of this government not to have addressed this issue in this budget, particularly where there is ample money, given the underestimation of the Treasurer by \$1.8 billion and the other gains to which I have alluded in my speech.

While I am on transport, I should add that it is very interesting that we come out with an extension of the trams through to North Terrace. Some work was done on that, and one could understand the government's going down that path. But, having suddenly come out and said, 'Now we will take them to Brougham Place and it will cost an extra \$30 million,' where is the cost benefit analysis for doing that; where is the financial analysis which was undertaken to say that this \$30 million to be spent on extending the tram rail to Brougham Place, North Adelaide, is the best way in which this money could be spent in the state? Given that the road infrastructure is falling apart, one would think that \$30 million would be far better spent on that road infrastructure than being spent on a \$30 million whim to North Adelaide.

Similarly, in relation to the opening bridges, the parliamentary committee has now come down with its report that shows that it will cost some \$70 million extra to have opening bridges rather than closed bridges. Industry groups have lobbied the government and pleaded with the government not to have opening bridges, but this government is still going ahead with opening bridges—and it is beyond belief. One would look at it and say that, obviously, a political deal has been done at Port Adelaide. We all know what is going on as to the reason why—

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Yes; Kevin got jammed up; that is right. I was at the meeting at the Port Adelaide Council Chambers when the federal member for Port Adelaide made very clear to the state member for Port Adelaide exactly which way was up in terms of opening bridges, and that has stuck ever since. There are no surprises here as to why we have opening bridges. Quite simply, it is because the federal member pulled rank on the local member, and he will not back down. I am sure that this government would like to back down, because it can well see where \$70 million extra could be used.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for West Torrens will hear the member for Light's speech in silence.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: I believe that a couple of other areas should be raised at this time, one of which is the housing plan for the northern areas. I am very pleased to see this going ahead. It is a good move by the government. It is one project that has been overdue. My constituents in the Peachey belt area have been waiting 20 to 30 years for this to happen. I say in one breath that a feasibility study will now take place, but on the other hand no money is set aside to refurbish the Peachey belt and those Housing Trust homes

within the Peachey belt. I only hope that the minister is serious about this in terms of refurbishing many houses in that area, which both sides of government should have done 20 years ago.

That area has been ignored by both sides of government; and, with the money that it has in hand now, it is desperate that this government gets serious about refurbishing those houses in the Peachey belt area. Once that is done, I believe that you will see a different lease of life to that area. It is very sad, when one drives through that area, to see some of the houses and realise that this is metropolitan Adelaide and that the government has not done anything about it. We are yet to see the money.

I find it interesting that the Minister for Health should say to South Australia and to the nation that South Australia's health system is stuffed. She is the minister in control of this area. That is an admission, in my mind, that she has failed and, more to the point, that this government has failed. I am sure that the minister has done all in her power to increase funding into health, but, obviously, she is not the person holding the purse strings. This government has failed in the area of health.

I will give the house one small example. Dr Willoughby, an ophthalmologist, operated a surgery in Gawler, but he has had to move to Angaston. That is an issue between the Gawler council and the doctor with regard to the supply of car parks—a demand by the Gawler council that was way over the top. As a result, Gawler lost the services of Dr Willoughby. I was speaking with him and he said, 'Do you know, if you are a public patient and you have a cataract on your eye, or suspected cataracts on your eyes, it now takes eight months to get an appointment with me.' He said, 'If you are diagnosed as having that cataract, 12 months after that I can operate on the first eye and, if you happen to have cataracts on both eyes, a further 12 months after that I can operate on the second eye.' That means two years and eight months from the time that someone suspects they have cataracts on both eyes to having both eyes done. That is just atrocious. If one thinks about the standard of one's living during that two years and eight months and the lack of sight or deterioration of sight that one might experience over that period of time, it is just appalling.

I have a friend who is an orthopaedic surgeon, and we were talking about the public health system. He works in both the public and private health systems, but he commented to me how different it is when he operates on private patients. In the private system, his day will start at 8:30 a.m. Everybody is there on the dot ready to go, they complete about five procedures throughout the day, and he finishes work at about 6.30 to 7 p.m. When he operates in the public system, the starting time is supposed to be 9 a.m., but by the time everybody gets there and has a chat about the weekend and they have done some other things, it is about 9:30 a.m. before they start. They manage to get three procedures done, and at 3.30 to 4 p.m. everyone goes home. He thinks that this resource is being completely wasted through inefficiency.

Our waiting lists are forever growing. When the current Minister for Health was the shadow minister she criticised the Deputy Leader of the Opposition (then minister for health) about waiting lists. Well, waiting lists are far greater now than they were under our government's reign, and they are growing even more. This government has a lot to answer for in respect of health, and when we see only a 1.7 per cent increase in the budget for health, is it any wonder! I will finish with a few comments on capital works.

Mr Scalzi: What capital works?

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: The member for Hartley is quite right: what capital works? When this government came to power one of the first things it did was to delay all capital works because they wanted to rejig the priorities. I recall the minister saying at that time that, because of the heat in the building market, he thought it would be better to wait to allow the market to cool down before tenders were put out. Everybody knows that building costs increase every year, so the heat has not gone out of the market. As a result, we are now seeing tender amounts increase as the cost of building increases, so our public works are costing the state more because of this delay.

Mr Scalzi interjecting:

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: Yes, bridging finance worth \$70 million. That is incredible. This was obviously a ploy to delay the spending of any money on capital works so that there would be money in the budget for other things—purely a delaying tactic. Then we heard the rhetoric about money not being available for capital works projects which had been set down in the last Liberal budget. If we look back at past budgets of this government, we see a few things. First, we see that this is the highest taxing government that South Australia has ever had. Secondly, we see that the tax cuts indicated by this government are spread over the longest period that I have ever seen since I have been interested in politics (since about 1965 or 1966). The majority of this \$1.5 billion worth of tax cuts will not come in until 2009 and 2010. People think, 'Wonderful—\$1.5 billion worth of tax cuts.' I suggest they have another look when these tax cuts finally come in. The perception that is being created by this government is that it is being generous. Well, I say to taxpayers: look again, because you will be disappointed.

The third point I wish to make is that this government is all about spin—'Let's get something on the front page of the newspaper. It will look good at the time. We want to be a populist government.' That is the same as the \$30 million extension of the tramway to North Adelaide. It is not because it is sensible economics and it is not because it is sensible government: it is just a little grab in the newspaper that the Premier looks at and says, 'We have got front page; we are a popular government.' I well remember that the Attorney-General and I, when he was in opposition, had a conversation across the chamber. I mentioned to him that Liberal governments always have to come in after a Labor government to clean up the mess and that a Labor government when it gets in will spend, spend, spend. I remember the Attorney-General saying to me across the chamber, 'Yes, that's right, and it will be the same next time when we get into government.' Well, that is exactly what we see now. We have 1 800 extra public servants and \$1.8 billion extra revenue, and you have to ask: where is it being spent? Where is it going? What have we got for the extra \$1.8 billion?

The Hon. D.C. Kotz: It is a slush fund.

The Hon. M.R. BUCKBY: As the member for Newland said, it is a slush fund. As I said, three or four months before the next election in March next year suddenly we will see hundreds of millions of dollars being rolled out of this slush fund that the Treasurer has sitting there. I say to the people of South Australia: just remember the stories that have been told to you over the past four years by the government that, 'We do not have the money', and 'No, I do not have any slush fund.' It is a bit like the Treasurer's admission the other day when he came clean about government advertisements regarding the budget. He said, 'Yes, we are doing it and we

were wrong. When we criticised you in government we were wrong. It is a good idea to do this. We admit that we were wrong.' How hypocritical is that?

This budget is a disappointment. There is no vision. There is no addressing of the huge backlog of road funding that is required in South Australia. I have not gone into it but there is no funding of the infrastructure that SA Water requires for our pipes and sewers. I remember back in 1990 that it was about \$70 million behind at that stage, and I would hate to think what it is now. This is just bandaids stuff, with no vision, and a budget that I certainly would not be proud of.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY (Kavel): I am also pleased to make a relatively brief contribution to the process of bringing this budget down and seeing the legislation through the house. I was pleased to be part of three separate estimates committees this year: the Department of Treasury and Finance, the tourism portfolio, and the environment and conservation areas that are obviously very important to the state. I would like to make a couple of statements about my observations during these three separate committees

First, I refer to Treasury and Finance. The member for Light has just spoken extremely accurately on the current state of affairs as we see it in this state in terms of the Treasury portfolio. The Treasurer tries to convince us that we do not have any excess funds and that there is no war chest that will be opened and funds rolled out next year in terms of the government's election campaign. But what we have seen is a continued under-estimation of revenue over the past three years, and I know a number of members spoke about this in their second reading speeches. There is a significant under-estimation of revenue averaging \$600 million over the past three years, and \$600 million is a significant amount of money.

We also see the issue of 1 800 new Public Service positions created over 12 months. These are quite glaring examples of the Treasurer not having a handle on his portfolio responsibilities or his not having a grasp of what is required to be an efficient Treasurer. There have been 1 800 new Public Service positions over the past 12 months—and we certainly support more nurses, teachers and police—but the increases in those areas certainly do not go anywhere the 1 800 new Public Service positions.

The Treasurer was also very keen in the estimates committee to put out a challenge that he would stack his economic performance up against any previous Liberal government and even take it as a key election issue. It was through Liberal government policy initiatives that we saw the AAA rating regained in this state. It was nothing to do with the Labor government's initiatives, policy platforms and the like. It was wholly and solely the effect of the previous Liberal Government's policy directions.

Mr Koutsantonis: You just needed a little bit more time.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: The member for West Torrens is extremely accurate in his comments.

Mr Koutsantonis: If you had only had four more years.

Mr GOLDSWORTHY: It would have actually occurred in the first year had we retained government. In the first year, with the first budget of the newly elected Liberal government, the AAA rating would have been achieved. We had to wait a couple more years for the Labor government to deliver it as a consequence of Liberal Party policy. The two policies are the GST, which Labor governments vehemently opposed, and the privatisation of some of the state's assets. I will not dwell on that point, but it is a very important point to be made. It

will be interesting leading up to the election, because the Treasurer said he is more than happy to debate his government's economic credentials against those of the Liberal Party. One does not need to revisit history, but which government and party got us into strife in the first place?

There are other interesting aspects of the budget, particularly relating to land tax. We saw the big announcement of the land tax rebates, with the cheques going out to the property owners with a nice photograph of the Premier on the letters. It will be interesting to see, as the Leader of the Opposition said in his contribution, when the next round of land tax bills go out whether the Premier has his photo on them—I doubt it very much. It is surprising that after these much heralded land tax rebates that, as we see if we look at the budget figures closely, the land tax collections will increase over the next 12 months. Indeed, the total collections will increase from \$261 million in the 2004-05 year to \$292 million in 2005-06, even after the rebate and relief package is brought down. It is the old adage: you give with one hand and you take with the other. But what we have seen is that the government is taking more with the other hand than it is giving. Land tax will certainly be a significant election issue when the campaign cranks up next year.

As I said before, we have also seen a significant underestimation of revenue: \$600 million, on average, each year over the past three years. The Treasurer has said, 'There is no more money at all; there is no spare money to be spent on anything. It is totally committed. We must have a bit of head room here and there for any unexpected expenditure.' But \$600 million is a significant amount of money. If the government does not think that there is any flexibility to introduce an improved taxation reform package, I think it is extremely wrong. I am very confident that part of our election platform will involve a significant taxation reform package, which the Labor government certainly will not be able to hold a candle to as we get closer to the election.

As I mentioned earlier, I was part of the estimates committee that dealt with tourism. I pay a compliment to Mr Peter van der Hoven, the Chief Executive of the Convention Centre, who I understand is retiring in the not too distant future, and another gentleman, Mr Bruce Craddock, who is the General Manager of the Entertainment Centre. I know these two gentlemen reasonably well, because before I came into this place they were both customers of mine at the bank branch of which I was the manager. So, I got to know them as banking customers before they took up their current positions of managing two very important aspects of the state's business and entertainment scene.

I certainly welcome Mr Bruce Craddock to his position. He has had a long and distinguished career in the hotel industry, and I know that the experience he has gained in his previous careers will hold him in very good stead in his job of managing the Entertainment Centre. I also want to express my thanks to Mr Peter van der Hoven for managing the Convention Centre in a most professional and business-like manner, and I wish him all the very best in his retirement.

I want to comment on a couple of issues in relation to my electorate which arose from something I raised with the minister in the environment and conservation estimates committee, of which I was a part. I attended a meeting in my electorate earlier in the week and I left that meeting feeling some concern about the policy initiatives that the government is looking to introduce in bringing further restrictions to development, and subsequent economic prosperity, as it relates to the western Mount Lofty watershed area.

We know (and I have spoken about this previously in the house) about the proposal of this government to prescribe the water resources in that region, which will have an effect on what primary producers and other water users will be able to do in that area, which obviously takes in a considerable part of my electorate. I understand that the EPA and SA Water are the proponents of this proposal. They are looking to divide the Western Mount Lofty Ranges water catchment area into three zones. They are what they call priority zones: priority 1, 2 and 3. It is supposedly to do with maintaining or improving the water quality that comes from that water catchment to supply the Adelaide metropolitan area with some of its fresh water needs. It is of concern that, for priority zone 1, the result of this policy is that there will be very little if any new developments in terms of primary production that will be able to take place. The area that they are proposing is 22 per cent of the water catchment area. So, they are basically proposing to lock up one-fifth of some of the most productive agricultural and horticultural land in the state.

We all know that the Mount Lofty Ranges, because of its rainfall, soil types and its proximity to markets, lends itself to be some of the very best primary production land that South Australia has. The proposal of some of these bureaucrats is going to lock up at least one-fifth, if not more (22 per cent is a fraction over one-fifth), of some of this land in terms of any new primary production development. That seems to be at complete odds with the so-called, fantastic, you-beaut State Strategic Plan that the government is looking to roll out, or is supposedly rolling out at the moment, in terms of improving the possible growing and prosperity of the state. Well, if you are going to lock up some of the very best primary production land, I doubt very much whether the goals of the State Strategic Plan will be met, but we will certainly be looking to speak about the issue further and taking it up with the minister. I know that there is a group of primary producers who are very, very worried about this, and their representative body certainly wants to meet with me and other members, the Leader of the Opposition and shadow ministers about this issue to see what can be done about it.

Another point that I would like to speak about quickly, because time is running short, is the issue of the flooding problem at South Verdun. Yesterday I read in *Hansard* where the member for Davenport was questioning the Minister for Planning, the Hon. Paul Holloway from the other place, about this issue. The minister met with a group of residents up in that part of the Adelaide Hills about this matter. This is a very important and serious issue in that district of the hills. I would have thought that that minister would have had the courtesy of advising me or my office. He knows of my interest in this, obviously, but, unfortunately, that was not the case. All I can do on this issue is encourage the government, the minister and the bureaucrats who are dealing with it to hasten the process in working out some sort of flood mitigation initiative, policy, or whatever you would like to call it, and get some action happening on the ground, so to speak, so that those businesses are not once again flooded out. I can tell you that, if we had had the rain yesterday and today that we had in the first two days of this week, I think we would have had flooding again at South Verdun. It was 10 months ago, in August last year, when we saw the river flood in that part. We had the Premier and the Minister for Environment go up there and put on a big song and dance, and they said that they were going to do something about it. We are nearly 12 months down the track. We are in the middle of winter; the river could well flood again. There is every possibility that it is

going to flood again this winter, and there is still nothing done. I certainly encourage the Premier, the minister, all the departmental heads and others to progress the situation in order to solve the problem in an expeditious manner.

With those few comments, I reaffirm what the member for Light said, namely, that this budget clearly demonstrates that this government has no real plans or vision for the future of the state: it is just the same old story. I am sure that the South Australian community is well aware of this—and that will be reflected in the result of the election on 18 March next year.

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): I, too, rise to support the budget estimates process and, in doing so, say that, although it is hard work—and I am sure it was for you, Mr Deputy Speaker—I believe that it is an important one. It is a little like studying for an examination: you might not get all the questions you study for, but the process makes you accountable. I know the hard work many of the public servants must undertake when preparing for estimates, and I thank them for it. I certainly found it rewarding to be a member of the committees, as it opens up the budget process in the different portfolios and how they relate to one's electorate.

I was on the reserve list for the committee relating to the Department of Treasury and Finance, and I came in briefly to listen. However, I was fortunate to be a member of the committee examining the lines for the Courts Administration Authority, the Office of Multicultural affairs, the Department for Employment, Training and Further Education and, particularly, the Office for Youth, which is an area for which I am responsible and on which I certainly asked questions, particularly on the important area of youth debt. On two occasions, the member for Bragg was also a member of the same committee.

I was also fortunate to be on the committee for the Department for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation. It is an area in which I take a particular interest, as does the member for Florey, and we are both members of the Reconciliation Council. I certainly enjoyed being a member of the estimates committee relating to the Department of Trade and Economic Development and Planning SA, as well the committee on mineral and resource development, given the important role that this area will play in the future growth of our economy.

As I said, the budget process and the estimates committees are important. As many members on this side of the house have clearly pointed out, there is no question that the government has been flushed with funds and that the underestimation of \$600 million per annum is really of major concern. For example, in 2002-03, the underestimation was \$528 million; in 2003-04, it was \$794 million; and in 2004-05, it was \$461 million—a total of \$1.7 billion. Members on this side of the house are continually saying that there are hollow logs. I apologise; there are no more hollow logs: they have been filled.

Mr Goldsworthy: With cash!

Mr SCALZI: As the member for Kavel says, they have been filled with cash. The Premier calls himself the education premier. I believe that in true fashion he is really the directors' premier because, in everything he comes up with, he behaves as if he is a film director. There are more special effects when it comes to dealing with figures than there would be on a Cecil De Mille film stage. We have seen this first-hand with the underestimation in the budget. This is a time when the government could have dealt with the problems in health and education, giving the necessary direction

in relation to infrastructure. The government could have done that during the good times, as we have now.

Let us face it: the national economy has been bubbling along very well. We have the lowest unemployment rate for decades, and we have had a period of low interest rates. So, the economic indicators that this government has had to deal with have been good. However, this is a budget of missed opportunities, and that should be of major concern. We might not have again the prolonged growth we have experienced with relatively low interest rates. This is a time when the government should have allocated more to health and education, but, sadly, it has not done so. It is a budget of missed opportunities.

As the member for Light clearly outlined, when we look at the taxation cuts, we see that they are more rubber band cuts—we are going to get them in the next 10 years. So, the short term is about creating the perception that this government really cares and is getting things right. However, in reality, we are going to get more of the focus before March next year. The member for Torrens nods her head.

Mrs GERAGHTY: I rise on a point of order, Mr Deputy Speaker. The member for Hartley says that I nodded my head. Indeed, sir, I shook my head.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Mr SCALZI: As Elvis Presley would say, 'I am all shook up.' I take back that remark. For example, if we look at payroll tax relief, the South Australian payroll tax threshold of \$504 000 is the lowest of all Australian states and territories. The \$1.5 billion tax relief package that was announced extends to 2011, with a significant portion only starting to kick off in 2009-10. That is what I meant when I referred to the cuts as being of a rubber-band variety.

We know that this government is flush with funds, unexpectedly received from GST revenue—GST being something they all opposed. Standard and Poors tells us that we have a AAA rating, but the reality is that we have that rating because of the action taken by the previous government in dealing with the State Bank debt.

Mrs Geraghty: Tell us about the Wine Centre and the soccer stadium—those wonderful white elephants.

Mr SCALZI: The member talks about the Wine Centre. Criticise the Wine Centre to the University of Adelaide. I have attended many functions there, and I commend the University of Adelaide on how they are using this excellent facility—

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr SCALZI:—that was built under the previous government. Having that excellent facility going to a state university, a university of excellence—

Mrs Geraghty: You botched it in the beginning.

Mr SCALZI: Well, the reality is that, if it had not been built, they could not have done that.

Mrs Geraghty interjecting:

Mr SCALZI: Perhaps the member for Torrens would like to talk to me about bridging finance, something the Treasurer is such an expert on in his electorate. I would be quite happy to talk about the bridging finance—perhaps we could get some of it for health, education, law and order, or crime prevention programs which have been sadly neglected.

It is true that we have one of the lowest unemployment rates, but that applies nationally. The Premier tells us that we increased employment with 49 000 extra jobs. In reality, that represents a growth of just 7 per cent, which is well down on the national average of 8.5 per cent. He tells us about the

growth, but he does not compare it with the rest of the country. This represents 14.5 per cent in the public sector, but the budget papers show that that growth is not in health, law and order, or education; it is in departments such as the Environment Protection Agency, the Department of Primary Industries and Resources and the Department for Administrative and Information Services.

I am also concerned about the small percentage growth of young people, especially graduates, in the public sector. When we have an ageing public sector work force (and this also goes for education) one would have thought that at a time when we have the flexibility we could do something about assisting young people to get into the Public Service, because they will be needed in the future.

During estimates I also brought up the question of youth debt. I am pleased that the Minister for Youth supports my motion, which was adjourned by the government on 23 September last year, and I trust that that motion will be supported. In bringing up the issue, I was told that the government really wanted to amend the motion and expand it. The reality is that, if the motion passes and it is referred to the Social Development Committee, it could deal with HECS and other education-related debt. I have no problem with that but

I draw to the attention of the house what the Victorian Labor government has done about targeting youth debt. A press release on this matter was put out by the Victorian Minister For Consumer Affairs on Thursday 11 March 2004 so, obviously, if members opposite were in communication with their interstate colleagues they would have known about this. The press release states:

New School Resources Target Youth Debt: New school resources to tackle consumer issues for young people were launched by the Minister for Consumer Affairs, John Lenders, today. Mr Lenders said with more young people facing debt and negotiating commercial contracts the resources were timely. 'Youth debt is escalating and Consumer Affairs Victoria has developed a secondary school program to teach Year 9 and 10 students how to avoid the debt trap,' Mr Lenders said. 'We have worked closely with students, teachers, parents and youth networks to find out what problems young people face, the issues of concern and the best ways to address these.

That is precisely what my motion, my reference to the Social Development Committee, aims to do—to look at youth debt, not only in respect of mobile phones but also at contracts, Bankcard, and other related areas. It covers all the issues we could have been dealing with. That is the problem that the government glosses over. It was caught out by *The Advertiser* youth survey, but then it came out and said that it supported it. Please do something about it.

In my own area I am still concerned about what is happening with Lochiel Park. In yesterday's estimates, I asked minister Holloway the following:

With regard to my local area, what has been budgeted for Lochiel Park with the housing development? I cannot find planning for Lochiel Park, and my constituents keep asking.

The minister said:

The land at Lochiel Park is owned by the state government through the Land Management Corporation and is surplus to government. The land is still with the LMC and there is no current development action and no PAR affecting the site. There has been no request for planning and development fund money in relation to that. The matter is essentially with minister Conlon's portfolio, so I suggest you ask him at a suitable time.

I have been asking him since we have come back. When we go to Lochiel Park and Brookway Park, we see that the place is derelict, nothing much having happened. I am concerned that the excellent restoration of Lochend—the founding father's homestead, which has been restored by federal, state

and local funds, as well as by community contributions—is just there because the council does not know what land the government is going to give to it. This government needs to examine its priorities.

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Unfortunately, I think I will repeat some of what has been said by my colleagues in speaking to similar motions in previous years. The estimates process does not envelope this parliament in pride. The parliament cannot be proud of the process and how it works, because it delivers very little. It delivers little to the people of South Australia in the way of understanding what is actually contained in the budget and, more importantly, what is not contained in it. I heard at least one of my colleagues speaking earlier this morning about the problem of ministers coming in here with their advisers during the estimates process—and that is all they do; they go through the motions—and showing that they do not understand their own budget. I do not think I have ever seen an executive government that has such little idea of the finances that it is administering and the day-to-day administration of the departments under its control.

In this respect, I single out the Minister for Administrative Services. I have had the misfortune of going through a second experience of estimates with this particular minister. Every time I put a question to the minister, instead of his saying who was the expert on that particular matter in his department and asking them to give the detailed information, which is what he should do, in my opinion, the minister turned to his advisers, took minutes to get an on-the-spot briefing and then turned around and personally delivered the briefing to the committee. That process does two things. It wastes half the time of the committee, if not more, and it absolutely proves that here is one minister who has no understanding of his own budget. He has no understanding of what is going on in his department.

I heard a considerable amount of member for Davenport's contribution, who talked about the escalating or burgeoning or exploding (that is probably the right word) unfunded liability of our WorkCover scheme. This is why the member for Davenport was asking the rhetorical question 'What is going on, and why is this happening?' not only within WorkCover but also the unfunded liability within the public sector with regard to workers' compensation. In total, the unfunded debt that South Australia is facing is about \$1 billion. The rhetorical question asked by the member for Davenport is 'Why is this happening?' The answer is that the person who is responsible—the responsible minister—is just not on top of his portfolio.

As the member for Davenport said, we have asked him many times what is going on and what is he doing about it, and every time we ask him a question, he pleads ignorance. Also, he has the temerity to come into this place time and time again and blame the previous government. It is outrageous. I do not know how he can blame anybody for anything because he does not know what is going on within his own department. He does not know. I can tell the house, it makes the whole estimates process very tedious and, I think, makes a mockery of this parliament.

Mr Rau: Let's not do it any more.

Mr WILLIAMS: The member for Enfield interjects and says, 'Let's not do it any more.' That is not a sentiment that I share. I believe that the estimates process, if conducted properly, is very important. Democracy is about checks and balances, and you can only apply the checks and balances if

you have knowledge of what is going on. Through our estimates process, as conducted over the last fortnight in this parliament, very little knowledge is imparted.

One of the other areas that I am responsible for as a shadow minister, on behalf of the Liberal opposition, is the area of mineral resources. Lo and behold, when I started to study the budget papers in detail to see what the government was, or was not, doing in the area of mineral development encouraging mineral exploration and development of new mines across South Australia, I found an incredible paucity of detail. In last year's budget papers, the mineral resources part of the department of primary industries went over some nine pages. There were four separate programs and a significant number of subprograms—I think, ten—within those four programs were detailed across nine pages. In those nine pages there was a lot of program performance commentary, so, as the shadow minister at that time, it gave me a starting point, at least, to gain some understanding of what the government's priorities were, what its policies were, and the sort of things that it was applying the revenue from the taxpayers of South Australia to in that sector of government expenditure.

When I picked up this year's budget papers and turned to the mineral resources section in the primary industries portfolio area, lo and behold, I found two pages, one program with two subprograms—one subprogram called minerals, and the other subprogram called petroleum. There was very little detail. I asked the minister why the government had decided to do this. After wasting an inordinate amount of time getting a briefing on the spot from his advisers as to why this had happened, having obviously not read the document himself, having not understood it and not being cognisant of the changes, he came back and said, 'It better explains the way the department operates.' I fail to see how, by condensing nine pages of information in the budget papers of last year to two pages of information this year, that that explains more fully the expenditures and the policies of the department in that area.

Debate adjourned.

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

ASSENT TO BILLS

His Excellency, the Governor's Deputy, by message, assented to the following bills:

Criminal Assets Confiscation,
 Environment Protection (Miscellaneous) Amendment,
 Mining (Royalty) Amendment,
 Naracoorte Town Square,
 Physiotherapy Practice,
 Public Sector Management (Chief Executive Accountability) Amendment,
 Road Traffic (Excessive Speed) Amendment,
 Statutes Amendment (Environment and Conservation Portfolio),
 Statutes Amendment (Liquor, Gambling and Security Industry),
 Supply.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members that it is very discourteous for people to be interjecting at any time, but certainly during a message from Her Excellency.

MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): I rise on a matter of privilege. Last week, on 16 June 2005, the Minister for Infrastructure told Estimates Committee A, on a number of occasions, that I attended a public meeting at Port Adelaide and at that meeting I urged the government to build opening bridges at the third Port River crossing. The minister did not nominate the date of the meeting, but I assume it was the meeting attended by the Deputy Premier (Hon. Kevin Foley) on 23 April 2003 in his capacity as the member for Port Adelaide. For the record, it was the Deputy Premier who promised at that meeting that the government would build opening bridges, after his earlier comments in support of fixed bridges drew a hostile reaction from the meeting.

Last week, the Minister for Infrastructure told the house on four occasions:

Rob Kerin went to a public meeting and said 'Labor must keep the promise and build opening bridges'.

We had a public meeting and Rob Kerin went down to that public meeting and said that the Labor Party must keep the promise to build opening bridges.

Just go back and see what your leader said to the public meeting.

Then Kerin goes to a public meeting saying we must keep his promise and the Port must get them.

Mr Speaker, I did not attend any such meeting; and I did not make any of the statements the minister attributes to me. Further, the minister misled the house regarding the Liberal Party's position. The minister fully understands the Liberal Party's position because on 28 April 2004 I wrote to him and spelt it out. My letter (which I will table) was in response to a written request from the minister himself, asking for the Liberal Party's position on opening bridges across the Port River. In response to the minister's letter, I advised him of the Liberal Party's position on the bridges—a position he, last week in estimates, misrepresented. My letter of 28 April 2004 states:

I note you question the opposition's preference for fixed or opening bridges. The commitment made by the Liberal Party relating to these bridges was made well over two years ago when still in government. The decision was made with current information at hand and full consideration was given to the implications of that decision. At the time, it was the best identifiable model available to government.

Given the Rann government's considerable delay in progressing the project, the opposition now supports any moves that might identify a superior model. The letter continues:

Indeed, it would be irresponsible for your government to make a decision based on outdated information. If there is new information at hand that can provide better outcomes for South Australians, then it is entirely appropriate for the government of the day to explore those options. My major concern is that the project proceeds quickly. Significant time has been lost and a sense of urgency is required to ensure this project is completed as soon as possible.

Since my office has no record of the minister's having sought clarification in the 14 months that have passed since I wrote the letter, I can only assume that he understood our position: that he should get on with the job of building the bridges—opening or closing—one way or the other, based on up-to-date information. Mr Speaker, I believe the minister last week misled the house on at least eight occasions while giving evidence to Estimates Committee A; and I ask you to rule.

The SPEAKER: The matter will be considered by the chair, and I will report back to the house as soon as possible.

PORT RIVER BRIDGES

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Transport): I seek leave to make a personal explanation.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I indicate to the house that I accept entirely the position of the Leader of the Opposition that he was not there. I indicate that it was a genuine mistake on my part. I apologise for it. Please accept that it is not the first mistake I have made—and not the last. I do not make many of them, but I do apologise to the leader.

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, Mr Speaker. Mr Speaker Peterson previously ruled that any member who criticises any member, other than by substantive motion of the house, is guilty of contempt. I was thrown out for it. Accordingly, quite clearly, the leader of the house has criticised a member, other than by substantive motion, and he owes the house an apology, not just the leader.

The SPEAKER: Order! I do not believe that that is a point of order.

APY LANDS

Mr HANNA (Mitchell): I rise on a matter of privilege. On 5 May the Premier in answer to a question about the APY lands said:

Some of the programs that are up and running and providing activity for vulnerable young people include properly supported youth workers in each community.

Last Wednesday (15 June 2005) in Estimates Committee A, I specifically asked the Premier:

Will the Premier clarify his earlier statement to the parliament about there being youth workers in each of the towns?

I further said:

If you could be specific about youth workers, that would be appreciated.

I did that after having publicly raised the issue that a government report had stated that the Premier's claim was false. The Premier had the opportunity to clarify his statement to the house. The Executive Director of indigenous affairs was then given an opportunity to respond to my question, and she said:

The point I made earlier still holds, that is, from time to time, there are vacancies for those youth worker positions because there is a rotation of people through those positions, and there is a program now to recruit people in those two communities.

Quite clearly, the Premier misled the house. The question is whether it was done intentionally. I ask you, sir, to rule on that as a matter of privilege.

The SPEAKER: The chair will consider the matter. I point out that, whilst it is the prerogative of members to raise matters of privilege, other mechanisms are also available.

LAND TAX

A petition signed by 239 members of the South Australian community, requesting the house to urge the government to provide immediate land tax relief through the reform of the current land tax system, was presented by the Hon. R.G. Kerin.

Petition received.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS

A petition signed by 201 residents of South Australia, requesting the house to urge the government to withdraw pro-

posed marine protected areas from the Fleurieu Peninsula and Kangaroo Island and consult with fishing, tourism and boating groups before introducing new proposals, was presented by the Hon. Dean Brown.

Petition received.

BORDERTOWN AGED CARE ACCOMMODATION

A petition signed by 66 residents of Bordertown and district, requesting the house to urge the government to fund the building of a hostel for the aged in Bordertown to replace Charla Lodge which will no longer meet aged care accommodation standards by the year 2008, was presented by Mr Williams.

Petition received.

QUESTIONS

The SPEAKER: I direct that written answers to the following questions on the *Notice Paper*, as detailed in the schedule that I now table, be distributed and printed in *Hansard*: Nos 8, 21, 91, 99, 115, 138, 170, 199, 200, 212, 236, 239, 256, 301, 302, 372, 373, 378, 389, 401, 402, 408, 414, 415, 422, 423, 429, 430, 431, 432, 465, 466, 476, 486, 490, 494 and 501; and I direct that the following answers to questions without notice be distributed and printed in *Hansard*:

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, STAFFING

8. **The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** How many extra staff have been hired as a result of the Natural Resource Management Legislation?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I am advised that:

The Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation has substantially revised its structure, staffing and reporting arrangements to support its role in both the implementation of the Natural Resources Management Act and the on-going operation of the Act.

As a result only an additional 3.5 full time equivalent employees have been hired. These positions include one full time and one half time ongoing position to meet the increased reporting arrangements imposed by Parliament during the debate on the Act and two full time staff on short-term contracts to progress the human resource management arrangements as set out in the transition arrangements in the Act.

MUNDULLA YELLOWS

21. **The Hon. I.F. EVANS:** What outcomes have flowed from the redirection of the Mundulla Yellows research funding from the Waite Institute to the Knoxfield Institute and what is the progress of this research?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I am advised that:

The funding to which this question refers to, was not redirected from the Waite Institute to Knoxfield.

The Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) and the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage awarded this funding to the Victorian Department of Primary Industries as a new project through a competitive tender process.

This project was completed on 30 June 2004 and a final report was submitted to the two funding bodies.

The research has suggested that biotic factors may not be the primary cause and that several environmental factors are involved. A link to the summary of these findings is posted on the DEH website, and the research team is currently preparing the detailed results for publication in scientific journals. The Knoxfield research team has been awarded funding through the Natural Heritage Trust to complete this research through an additional three year project and the State Government continues to support this work.

RECREATION, SPORT AND RACING PROGRAM

91. (4th Session) and 453 (3rd Session) **The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** What is the reason for the difference between the 2003-04 estimated result of \$26.6 million and the budgeted amount of \$22.0 million for the Recreation Sport and Racing program outlined in the 2004-05 Budget?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The 2004-05 budget reflects a range of changes to the Office for Recreation and Sport's program delivery. Significant variations include:

- funds to complete the \$6.2M/5 year commitment to the recreational trails program
- increased funding for the Statewide Physical Activity Delivery
- reductions in the Office's operating costs
- increase in depreciation expenses
- adjustment in revenue budget due to a reclassification of revenue
- changes to the forward estimates resulting from the changed accounting treatment for grants
- changes to the Community Recreation and Sports Facilities Grant program
- reduction in interest revenue resulting from the introduction of the Department of Treasury and Finance's Cash Alignment Policy
- increases in revenue from the increase of cost recovery for Hindmarsh Stadium and the Vacs Swim program.

FLOOD MITIGATION WORKS

99. **Dr McFETRIDGE:**

1. Does any funding for flood mitigation works come from State or National Disaster Funding and if so, what are the details?

2. Will any funding for current flood mitigation works include compensation for the Glenelg flood victims?

The Hon. J.D. HILL:

1. I have been advised that funding for flood mitigation works is generally sourced from three programs. The programs are:

- The Catchment Management Subsidy Scheme, a State Government funded scheme that provide subsidies of 50 per cent for approved works associated with flood mitigation and drainage improvement, stormwater reuse, water quality and catchment health improvement, and eligible studies and land acquisitions. The scheme receives annual budget funding from the State Government of \$4 million. The scheme is administered through the DWLBC (Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation);
- The Regional Flood Mitigation Program, a Commonwealth Government initiative to assist State and Territory Governments and local agencies in funding eligible flood mitigation projects in outer metropolitan, rural and regional areas. The program contributes up to one third funding of approved project costs. South Australia receives a notional allocation of \$384 000 per annum. This funding is matched by the Catchment Management Subsidy Scheme and the proponents of projects. The program is administered through DWLBC; and
- The Natural Disaster Mitigation Program, a Commonwealth initiative that provide funds for measures to mitigate a range of natural disasters including floods. Applications that meet the criteria but cannot be accommodated under the Regional Flood Mitigation Program notional allocation can be submitted for funding consideration under this program. The program funds up to one third of project costs with the balance being matched by the Catchment Management Subsidy Scheme and the proponents of projects. For 2003-04 the Commonwealth approved \$705 000 for eligible flood mitigation projects in South Australia. The program is administered through the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

2. I have been advised that funding available under these programs is earmarked for works and measures that will mitigate flooding, not for compensation purposes.

SOUTHERN CROSS REPLICA

115. **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** What are the financial arrangements and timelines relating to the sale of the Southern Cross Replica and what is the status of the HARS arrangement?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have been advised that:

The Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) has been successful in securing the ownership of the Southern Cross Replica Aircraft after a competitive bidding process undertaken by Arts SA. The aircraft will be gifted to HARS by the South Australian Government; the Government will receive no money from HARS

for the aircraft. However, along with the aircraft, HARS will receive approximately \$187,000 of insurance monies provided by the insurer after the aircraft crash landed at Parafield Airport in 2002, to assist it in repairing the aircraft.

Under the terms and conditions for transfer of ownership of the aircraft, HARS has undertaken to own and operate the aircraft from South Australia, to repair it to airworthiness test licence standards, and to fly it regularly in South Australian skies. To this end, HARS has established an incorporated association in South Australia to operate the aircraft.

An audit has been conducted of the aircraft's spare parts, equipment, log books and other relevant documentation in preparation for the handover to HARS.

I am advised that a draft deed is currently being negotiated between HARS and Arts SA. Once the deed is signed, HARS will prepare a repair plan and ownership of the aircraft will pass to HARS once an approved repair plan is in place.

LIONS ARTS CENTRE

138. **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** When will the Lions Arts Centre lease expire, what is the Government's long term vision for the centre and what is the current status of those activities and operations formerly conducted by 'Music House'?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have been advised that:

1. The Lease Agreements for Nexus Multicultural Arts Centre, Jam Factory, Media Resource Centre, Leigh Warren and Dancers, Parallelo & Experimental Arts Foundation commenced 1 October 2000 and expire 30 September 2005.

The Lease Agreements for Ausmusic SA, SALA Festival and Peter Darwin are due to expire 30 June 2005.

2. The Government's intent is that renewed tenancies will be offered. These organisations represent a wide range of art forms and genres and the type of activities that they produce range from locally based work to a wide international profile.

3. All of the activities that were undertaken by Music House have either continued or have been expanded. Since the beginning of 2003 the following contemporary music initiatives and programs have occurred:

a. Launch of the SA Music On Line Website as a one stop music services and promotion website for SA artists, venues and promoters.

b. Funding of Ausmusic SA through the Industry Development Program. Ausmusic SA's charter is to provide music courses accredited by appropriate education authorities aimed at secondary school students; community service centres and selected learning institutions. In addition to their core work in schools Ausmusic SA have taken on the role of industry development by running a range of targeted workshops for members of the contemporary music sector. Three of the courses that have been run in 2004 include *Management in the Music Industry*, *The Recording Industry* and *Kick Starting your Career in the Music Industry*. In 2005 Ausmusic SA plan to appoint a careers officer to advise on pathways to employment and training within the contemporary music sector.

c. The Music Business Adelaide Conference has been re-branded as *Fuse* with management delivered by Arts Project Australia.

d. Establishment of the Live Music grant program, a grant funding program that provides funding for a broad range of contemporary music needs, including recording assistance, touring, skills training and mentoring, community electronic media programming, musicians in residence and new initiatives.

e. The Music House venue has been renamed Fowler's Live and is currently run by a private business delivering a range of music activities. The venue is also booked and used by the broader arts community for launches, performances and events.

UPPER SPENCER GULF AND OUTBACK ENTERPRISE ZONES

170. **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:** What funding will be provided to the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Enterprise Zones, from which expenditure program will this funding be drawn and how does this compare to existing funding programs?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: The Minister for Regional Development has advised that the Upper Spencer Gulf and Outback Enterprise Zone fund has been established to encourage value-adding industries

to locate in Port Augusta, Port Pirie, Whyalla and Outback communities to broaden the economic base of the region.

The Enterprise Zone has been developed to reflect Upper Spencer Gulf goals and priorities and link with USG Common Purpose Group's Strategic Plan and the priorities of individual regional development boards that cover the USG and Outback region.

\$3 million will be allocated to the Fund over the next four years for implementing specific initiatives through a management committee comprised of local representatives from the region and the SA Government.

This is all new money to economic development and does not replace any existing programs. In fact it builds on a number of existing economic development and social inclusion initiatives in the region:

- The Regions at Work program is providing over \$2.5 million over 2 financial years—\$1.3 million in 2003-04 and \$1.2 million in 2004-05.
- The Social Inclusion Board's Innovative Community Action Networks (ICAN) project injecting \$400,000 into the region
- \$1 million support for the new commercial fishing harbour near Whyalla.

The Enterprise Zone's work will also complement the new minerals and energy exploration policy, where the government will spend \$15 million over the next five years to treble investment in mining exploration by 2007 and boost annual minerals production to \$3 billion by 2020.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY STRATEGY

199. **The Hon. D.C. KOTZ:** What are the details of the \$410,000 funding allocation to support the implementation of the State Physical Activity Strategy and are there any other Government initiatives or projects designed to increase levels of physical activity for all South Australians and if so, what are the details?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The \$410,000 allocated in the 2004-05 Budget to assist with the implementation of the State Physical Activity Strategy will be used in the following areas:

- Salary Support for the *be active* project officer and the *be active* communications officer.
- The delivery of promotion, education, programs and services in regional areas.
- The development of educational resources for targeted populations identified by the Physical Activity Council (PAC) from the State Strategy.
- The production and dissemination of quarterly *be active* newsletters.
- The upgrade and continued management of the *be active* website.
- The delivery of the 2004 South Australian Physical Activity Survey.
- Physical Activity Council Board fees.
- The development of an implementation and action plan involving statewide consultation.

In relation to other government initiatives or projects designed to increase levels of physical activity for all South Australians, I offer the following:

- The government agencies represented on the PAC are currently completing an activity audit that will highlight the current programs and services being delivered against the Physical Activity Strategy by government.
- The community consultation will identify programs that are currently being delivered in the community that will complement future proposed Government programs.
- Specific information relating to the initiatives or projects implemented by other government agencies is best provided by those Ministers and agencies.

GRAFFITI

200. **Dr McFETRIDGE:** What State Government funding is currently being provided directly to Councils to assist in their graffiti control programs?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I have received this advice:

As part of the State Government's Regional Crime Prevention Program (R.C.P.P.), the southern metropolitan region, consisting of the Holdfast Bay, Marion, Unley and Mitcham Councils, has decided to allocate its R.C.P.P. funding of \$100,000 per annum to a regional graffiti-management plan. The graffiti management plan consists of:

- assessing the scale of the graffiti problem for the southern region;
- considering the factors contributing to the graffiti problem;

- developing prevention, reduction and management interventions;
- implementing the graffiti intervention; and
- reviewing and evaluating.

The Office for the Southern Suburbs (O.S.S.) received a budget allocation of \$750,000 (over three years) in 2004 to develop an anti-graffiti strategy and a co-ordinated community response to combat graffiti in the southern suburbs. The City of Marion and the City of Onkaparinga jointly developed complementary anti-graffiti initiatives. Funding totalling \$230,000 was subsequently paid by the O.S.S. to the cities of Marion and Onkaparinga for carrying out their anti-graffiti initiative in 2004-05. The remaining \$20,000 will be used to implement aspects of a Crime Prevention through Environmental Design initiative developed by the O.S.S. and the Attorney-General's Department, Crime Prevention Unit.

A one-year graffiti removal pilot will start out of the Christies Beach Magistrates Court this year. Magistrates will be able to direct graffiti offenders to perform their community service hours removing graffiti from the local area. Child, Youth and Family Services, the Department for Correctional Services, and S.A. Police will supervise this work. The pilot seeks to achieve the expected outcomes of the Member for Fisher's *Grffiti Control (Orders on Conviction) Amendment Bill*, without the need to resort to legislation.

INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY SERVICES COUNCIL

212. **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH:**

1. Is the Intellectual Disability Services Council being adequately funded by the Government and how much funding will be provided in 2004-05 and 2005-06?

2. Was the reason Ms Rebecca Brumbt was unsuccessful in qualifying for a place in the Home Link program due to a lack of available funding and if not, what was the reason?

3. How many program vacancies are available in 2004-05 and how can the Brumbt family fast track the qualifying process to secure a place in the immediate future?

4. What other forms of support accommodation are available to meet Ms Brumbt's needs, age and capability in the event a program vacancy is not available?

5. Is the Minister aware that the Brumbt family are at crisis point with one parent diagnosed with cancer and that the family require urgent long term respite care for their daughter Ms Brumbt's?

6. Is the Minister aware that Ms Brumbt's parents have suffered manual handling injuries when lifting their daughter and that their need for Home Link support is acute?

7. Was the \$900,000 provided to the Council in 2004-05 for new supported accommodation determined on the basis of need and if so, what are the details including the current and expected future levels of demand for this accommodation and if not, how was this allocation determined?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The State Government's funding to the Intellectual Disability Services Council (IDSC) in 2004-05 is \$68,991,852. An additional \$900,000 has been made available for this financial year for new supported accommodation places for IDSC clients, and an extra \$1.2 million for day options for school leavers with severe intellectual disabilities.

The \$900,000 provided to IDSC in 2004-05 has been applied for three country supported accommodation group homes which will be located in Murray Bridge, Mount Gambier and Port Pirie. The clients for these houses were identified from the IDSC urgent waiting list.

Vacancies in the Home Link program are affected by both the availability of funding and the availability of a suitably trained host family. IDSC has been seeking alternative accommodation for Ms Brumbt, including a supported accommodation group home. IDSC have now identified a vacancy in a Life's for Living group and as at 28 April 2005 negotiations between Rebecca's mother and IDSC are currently underway. If the family are supportive of the placement, the vacancy for Rebecca is available immediately.

OFFICE FOR RECREATION AND SPORT

236. **Dr McFETRIDGE:** What are the names and positions of Department of Recreation and Sport employees currently receiving remuneration packages over \$100,000?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The Office for Recreation and Sport currently has four positions with remuneration packages over \$100,000.

These positions are:

- Executive Director
- Director, Strategic and Operational Services

Director, South Australian Sports Institute
Director, Recreation and Sport Development.

BAIL BREACHES

239. **Dr McFETRIDGE:** Why has the number of bail breaches increased from 1833 to 3274 between 2000 and 2003 and the number of community service order breaches increased from 1374 to 3443, and what action is being taken to address this?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation has advised that:

On 16 November, Dr McFetridge quoted a number of statistics and asked why the Bail and Community Service breach rates had increased.

My Department has been trying to determine the source of Dr McFetridge's statistics so that it could develop a response to his question.

The Department does not normally gather the actual figures asked for, and as such I do not have the number of offenders who breached Bail and Community Service orders at my disposal. I can however, provide the number of orders that were revoked/estreated/breached in 2000 and in 2003.

The number of Bail orders that were revoked/estreated/breached is provided below. The increase in the number of Bail breaches is primarily due to the increase in the number of Bail orders at that time. Please note that in providing this response I have had to assume that Dr McFetridge is referring to Bail and not Home Detention Bail.

- 246 Bail orders revoked/estreated/breached in 2000; compared with

- 417 Bail orders revoked/estreated/breached in 2003.

The number of Community Service orders that were revoked/estreated/breached is provided below. The reduction in breaches can be attributed to a number of factors including a reduction in the number of orders commenced, offenders being provided with the opportunity to learn new skills while undertaking Community Service (providing them with an incentive to complete their orders) and new techniques being applied to address alcohol and drug issues.

- 2416 Community Service orders revoked/estreated/breached in 2000; compared with

- 1998 Community Service orders revoked/estreated/breached in 2003.

SCHOOL CARE COUNCIL

256. **Ms CHAPMAN:** Why has the School Care Council announced on 4 November 2002 as part of a 10-point strategy to upgrade security in schools only met once since it was formed and will it be disbanded?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: The School Care Council is one of the ten strategies that form part of the Government's School Care package.

The majority of the strategies in the School Care package have been completed and implemented. The remaining projects are well advanced and have been linked to ongoing work.

The School Care Centre promotes and reports on progress of the ongoing work within the school care package. The Centre provides safety and security advice and resources to staff, students, parents and other professionals in the government and non-government education sectors.

The School Care Council met to establish progress on these initiatives. The Council will meet again shortly to review the successful completion of the School Care package and as required in the future.

SPORTS FUNDING

301 (4th Session) & 358 (3rd Session) **Dr McFETRIDGE:** In each year since 1999, how much funding has been allocated to—

(a) the Active Club Program, State Facilities Fund, SASI Talent Scholarship and Statewide Development Scheme, respectively;

(b) the Aboriginal Physical Awareness program, the Indigenous Sports Talent Scholarships Program, the Indigenous Mentoring Scheme Training Program and the Country Athlete Award Scheme, respectively;

(c) develop, improve and upgrade sport and recreational facilities in the community;

(d) the Management Development Program;

(e) the Indigenous Community Sport and Recreation Unit in Adelaide, Port Augusta and Port Lincoln, respectively;

(f) VacSwim; and

(g) the Olympic Athlete Ambassadors Program?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT:

(a) The Active Club Program allocated the following amounts of funding:

1999-00	\$ 938,700
2000-01	\$1,874,502
2001-02	\$1,873,724
2002-03	\$1,880,000
2003-04	\$2,350,000

The State Facilities Fund allocated the following amounts of funding:

1999-00	\$ 411,144
2000-01	\$ 118,545
2001-02	\$ 553,729
2002-03	\$ 57,707
2003-04	\$ 172,665

The SASI Talent Scholarship allocates \$90,000 annually for the provision of individual talent scholarships. This annual allocation has remained constant through the period in question.

\$6.673 million has been allocated through the Statewide Enhancement Program.

(b) The Aboriginal Physical Awareness Program has been allocated \$1,500 each year since 1999. In the 2003-04 financial year \$4,500 has been allocated.

The Indigenous Sport Talent Scholarship Program became the Athlete Assistance Program in 2001. Since 1999, \$4,000 has been allocated each year.

The Indigenous Mentoring Scheme has a budget of \$1,500 per year since 1999, with the exception of 2002-03 where no mentoring projects were conducted.

The Country Athlete Award Scheme has had the following funding allocated:

1999-00	\$ 20,000
2000-01	\$ 80,000
2001-02	\$ 105,791
2002-03	\$ 80,000
2003-04	\$ 38,903

(c) The following amounts have been allocated through the Community Recreation and Sport Facilities Program:

1999-00	\$ 929,090
2000-01	\$ 6,908,240
2001-02	\$ 1,972,898
2002-03	\$ 3,355,800
2003-04	\$ 3,296,900

(d) The following amounts have been allocated through the Management and Development Program:

1999-00	\$5,960,600
2000-01	\$5,845,490
2001-02	\$6,528,820
2002-03	\$6,539,170
2003-04	\$6,698,000

(e)

2001-02	\$ 206,273
2002-03	\$ 206,273
2003-04	\$ 393,002

(f)

1999-2000	\$ 480,476
2000-2001	\$ 481,389
2001-2002	\$ 489,729
2002-2003	\$ 486,024
2003-2004	\$ 487,895

(g) Project funding for the program was originally sourced from the Office for the Commissioner of Public Employment. Allocations for the program were:

1999-00	\$ 220,000
2000-01	\$ 46,000

FITNESS INSTRUCTION

302. (4th Session) and 359 (3rd Session) **Dr McFETRIDGE:** What developments in the standards of fitness instruction have occurred over the last 5 years?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The Office for Recreation and Sport (ORS) funds Recreation SA (now incorporating Fitness SA) to operate the National Fitness Instructor/Trainer Registration Scheme, this is a voluntary system linked to the National scheme operated by Fitness Australia.

Individuals under the Fitness Instructor/Trainer Registration Scheme who have undertaken specific training courses and can demonstrate suitable experience are able to register. By becoming registered the individuals also commit themselves to maintaining their skills and knowledge through ongoing professional development.

Under the scheme, suitable training is determined under the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system. Training can be provided by any organisation prepared to become a Registered Training Organisation (RTO).

This process ensures that quality training is provided no matter where a person undertakes their training and that the skills and qualifications they are awarded are recognised anywhere in Australia and in some overseas countries.

The modules for the fitness industry training package have been undergoing a review and updating since 2002. The RTO's are now updating their materials and resources to implement the updated training package, which was endorsed in September 2004.

Recreation SA (incorporating Fitness SA), with the support of ORS, has provided for a recognition of prior learning, recognition of current competency process where persons with qualifications gained outside of the AQF system, such as through undertaking a relevant university degree, can have these skills and training mapped and recognised against the fitness industry training package, and therefore become eligible to register as a fitness instructor/trainer.

Likewise people who may have worked in the industry for a long period and/or gained their training before the adoption of the AQF framework can undertake a process to identify their current competencies. Their experience, skills and knowledge are taken into account and they can then be awarded status in some units and modules from the training package, while at the same time they identify the areas of additional training required for them to achieve their fitness instructor/trainer registration.

Through the State Coach and Volunteer Education Centre ORS delivers training in strength and conditioning for coaches under the National Coach Accreditation System (NCAS). This training is quite specific to the role of the coach in preparing the athlete and is not designed to train participants to become fitness instructors.

Through their funding programs ORS supports and works with the industry to raise awareness in the community about the fitness instructor/trainer registration program.

The ORS also is involved in contributing to the reviews of the fitness industry training packages and works with organisations like the South Australian Recreation and Arts Training Advisory Board (SARAT) to promote community awareness of vocational education and training opportunities as they apply not just to fitness leader training, but also to training for people wishing to work in the sport, community recreation and outdoor recreation sectors.

NATIVE VEGETATION PROSECUTIONS

372. **The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** Has the Department's Chief Executive the authority to prosecute under the Native Vegetation Act 1991, is the Native Vegetation Council required to endorse these actions and is it the Department's aim to prosecute as many people as possible under the Act?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have been advised that:

1. Any person, including the Chief Executive of the Department, may prosecute under the *Native Vegetation Act 1991*.

2. The Council is not required to endorse a prosecution. However, only a person authorised in writing by the Minister or Council may issue an expiation notice, and the issue of expiation notices is subject to the authorisation of the Council in each specific case. The Native Vegetation Council receives regular briefings on all compliance issues and may, as it considers appropriate, comment on expected outcomes.

3. A high level interdepartmental 'Native Vegetation Compliance Steering Committee' has been established to, among other things, provide direction for an appropriate course of action following an investigation into a breach of the Act. There are a number of measures available under the Act to respond to non-compliance issues, including prosecution, civil enforcement, expiation fees, and orders to make good. The measure deemed to be appropriate will depend on the nature and significance of any breach of the Act.

ADVERTISEMENT COSTS

373. **The Hon. G.M. GUNN:** What was the cost of the full page advertisement in the *Stock Journal* on 6 January 2005 entitled 'Office of the Upper Spencer Gulf, Flinders Ranges and Outback' which included the South Australian Government logo and a photo of the Premier, who authorised this advertisement, and how many more similar advertisements does the Government intend placing in the *Stock Journal* and other rural publications in 2005?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I have been advised:

The cost of placing the newsletter in the *Stock Journal* on 6 January 2005 was \$3402.80.

The placement of the newsletter was authorised by the Manager of Regional Ministerial offices.

The format of the newsletter and list of publications it will appear in is currently being reviewed.

LAYTON REPORT

378. **Mr HANNA:** Has the Government acted upon Recommendation 160 of the Layton Report and if so, when will the report into the assessment of State child protection laws be released?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: This question was asked by Mr Hanna MP on 10 December 2004 Question On Notice No. 364.

POLLS

389. **Mr HANNA:** Have any polls of the South Australian public been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister or the Department over the past 12 months and if so, what are the details and results of each poll undertaken?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I provide the following information:

No polls of the South Australian public have been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister for Energy or the Department over the past 12 months.

A poll is defined as 'an analysis of public opinion on a subject usually by selective sampling'.

401 & 402. **Mr HANNA:** Have any polls of the South Australian public been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister or the Department over the past 12 months and if so, what are the details and results of each poll undertaken?

The Hon. S.W. KEY: The following polls have been undertaken in relation to the Employment, Training and Further Education Portfolio:

1. The Overseas Qualifications Reference Group (a sub-committee of the Training and Skills Commission) surveyed industry and professional associations, recruitment agencies and other stakeholders to identify the current pressure points in the qualifications assessment and recognition system, and to identify where further investigation and action may be most usefully undertaken. Results are currently being compiled.

2. As part of the preparatory work associated with the development of the DFEEST program response to Social Inclusion Initiative 3.3.1 Career Information and Advice surveys were conducted. The surveys asked respondents to identify how they accessed career advice, where they got labour market information, the kinds of resources they found useful and how they thought information and access could be improved in the future. The results informed, and continue to inform the ongoing development of career related information and advice to young South Australians.

3. A survey of business in regard to their linkages with the university sector in South Australia. The results of the survey identified a number of areas where DFEEST can facilitate improved linkages between the two areas.

408. **Mr HANNA:** Have any polls of the South Australian public been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister or the Department over the past 12 months and if so, what are the details and results of each poll undertaken?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: A poll is 'an analysis of public opinion on a subject usually by selective sampling'.

It can be distinguished from a questionnaire or other means of determining client satisfaction with a particular government service or services or questionnaires which are designed to determine whether a particular service or regulation is understood.

Department of Education and Children's Services

The Department of Education and Children's Services has not conducted any polls on its own behalf or that of the Minister for Education and Children's Services, during the past twelve months.

Office of the Minister for Education and Children's Services
Inquiry into Early Childhood Services

As part of the research for the Inquiry into Early Childhood Services, McGregor Tan was commissioned to undertake an omnibus telephone survey of 1000 South Australian families with children 0 to 8 years of age. They were asked specific questions about early childhood services, which were defined as services for families with children from before birth to eight years of age, including education, care, health, family support and child protection services.

McGregor Tan was also commissioned to carry out 8 focus groups with families with children aged 0 to 8 years. Families who were users of early childhood services and families who were not users were included in the focus groups.

414 & 415. **Mr HANNA:** Have any polls of the South Australian public been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister or the Department over the past 12 months and if so, what are the details and results of each poll undertaken?

The Hon. R.J. McEWEN: No polls of the South Australian public have been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries by the Department of Primary Industries and Resources SA over the past 12 months.

ForestrySA has not conducted any polls over the past 12 months.

422. **Mr HANNA:** Have any polls of the South Australian public been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister or the Department over the past 12 months and if so, what are the details and results of each poll undertaken?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Acting Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation has advised that:

For the purpose of this response, polls have been defined as an analysis of public opinion on a subject, usually by selective sampling.

No polls have been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister or the Department for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation (DAARE) over the past 12 months.

423. **Mr HANNA:** Have any polls of the South Australian public been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister or the Department over the past 12 months and if so, what are the details and results of each poll undertaken?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Acting Minister for Correctional Services has advised that:

For the purpose of this response, polls have been defined as an analysis of public opinion on a subject, usually by selective sampling.

No polls have been conducted by, or on behalf of, the Minister or the Department for Correctional Services over the past 12 months.

LUCAS, Hon. R.I.

429. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** How many written representations from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC on behalf of South Australian constituents have been received since March 2002?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am advised that for the period March 2002 to 16 February 2005, one written representation from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC on behalf of a South Australian constituent had been received in the Department of Treasury and Finance. This was a copy of a representation made to the Treasurer's Office on 20 December 2004.

During this period, fifty three Freedom of Information applications were received from the Hon. R.I. Lucas, none of which were specifically identified to be on behalf of a constituent.

430. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** How many written representations from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC on behalf of South Australian constituents have been received since March 2002?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: For the period March 2002 to 16 February 2005, no written representation from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC on behalf of a South Australian constituent has been received in the office of the Minister for Police or by the South Australian Police Department.

431. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** How many written representations from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC on behalf of South Australian constituents have been received since March 2002?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I provide the following information:
Nil written representations have been received from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC.

432. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** How many written representations from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC on behalf of South Australian constituents have been received since March 2002?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: I provide the following information:
Nil written representations have been received from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC.

465. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** How many written representations from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC on behalf of South Australian constituents have been received since March 2002?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Acting Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation has advised that:

Neither the Ministerial Office nor the Department for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation have received any written representations on behalf of South Australian constituents from the Hon. Rob Lucas MLC since March 2002.

466. **Mr KOUTSANTONIS:** How many written representations from the Hon. R.I. Lucas MLC on behalf of South Australian constituents have been received since March 2002?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Acting Minister for Correctional Services has advised that:

Neither the Ministerial Office nor the Department for Correctional Services have received any written representations on behalf of South Australian constituents from the Hon. Rob Lucas M.L.C. since March 2002.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

476. **The Hon. G.M. GUNN:**

1. How many staff are currently employed by the Environment Protection Authority and how many were employed in March 2002?

2. What are the Authority's current operating expenses, including employee costs and is it intended to increase the number of employees in the near future?

3. When do the current EPA Board membership terms expire?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have been advised that:

1. As at 18 February 2005, the EPA had 222.8 Full Time Equivalent (FTE). At March 2002 the EPA had 174.5 FTEs.

2. The EPA's current operating expenditure is \$38.546 million, this includes employee costs. This incorporates a budget allocation of \$5.6 million for the transfer of waste levies to Zero Waste SA along with \$10.406 million for the initial payment of surplus cash under the cash alignment policy. The remaining allocation of \$22.54 million is therefore the EPA's budget amount that it can control.

3. The expiry dates for the members of the EPA Board are as follows:

One member's term expires on 20 October 2005

One member's term expires on 3 March 2006

Two members' terms expire on 20 April 2006

Four members' terms expire on 20 April 2007

The term of the Chair of the Board expires on 9 April 2008.

ROAD TRAFFIC FINES

486. **Mr HANNA:**

1. What policy work has been undertaken by the government since coming into office on a scheme where traffic fine rates are imposed on a sliding scale based on the offender's income level and capacity to pay?

2. Does the government endorse this proposal in principle.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON:

1. None.

2. No.

EYRE PENINSULA BUSHFIRES

490. **Mrs PENFOLD:** How much funding has the state government provided towards recovery and restoration efforts arising from the recent Eyre Peninsula bushfires, what are the details of the services, good and grants provided from this funding and is any of this funding recoverable from insurance and if so, what are the details?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Following the Bushfire in January 2005, immediate support to the Lower Eyre Peninsula community included a range of assistance and support grants which Cabinet endorsed on 13 January 2005. The State Government committed \$6 million to provide direct assistance to individuals and families affected by the bushfires. Individual grant programs provided for shelter, food, and basic needs to those affected by the emergency as well as broader support measures.

The list of grant programs approved by Cabinet and comprising the \$6 million fund is as follows:

- Exceptional Circumstances Family Grants
- Local Government Support Grant
- Emergency Farm Business Support Grant
- Bereavement Assistance Grant
- Rural Financial Counselling Grant
- Transport Subsidy for Donated Fodder Grant
- Emergency Small Business Support Grant
- Other Recovery Measures for Farms Grant
- Return to School Grant
- Waiver of Mortgage Stamp Duty, Land Title Fee and Motor Vehicles Charges Relief; and
- Waiver of Construction Industry Training Fund (CITF) levies.

In addition, to further assist with rural recovery and restoration on the Eyre Peninsula, Cabinet has approved the Lower Eyre Peninsula agriculture, natural resources and biodiversity re-establishment program. The total cost of the program is \$5.360 million, to be funded on a 50:50 basis between the State and the Commonwealth.

Furthermore, on 9 May 2005 Regional Development Minister, Karlene Maywald announced a special \$150,000 assistance package for community recovery initiatives in the fire-affected areas of the Lower Eyre Peninsula.

None of the funding referred to above is recoverable from insurance. However, some of the amounts provided for relief will be recoverable under the Natural Disaster Relief Arrangements (NDRA) with the Commonwealth.

AGED CARE FACILITIES

494. **Mr HANNA:** Will the government give consideration to the provision of funding for the elderly in aged care facilities to enable them to participate in regular excursions or for in-house entertainment?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: As Residential aged care facilities are the responsibility of the Federal Government, providers are assessed through the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing's national accreditation system, based upon *Standards for Aged Care Facilities*. Standard 3, *Resident Lifestyles*, includes Standard 3.7, *Leisure Interests and Activities*, which sets out the expected leisure outcomes for each resident.

Standard 3.7 states:

Expected Outcome

Residents are encouraged and supported to participate in a wide range of interests and activities of interest to them.

Criteria

Policies and practices provide:

- a. that individual interests and needs are identified, documented and acted upon;
- b. programs of activities, both internal and community based, catering for diverse tastes and interests that are planned and implemented with input from each resident (or his or her representative);
- c. services that are provided in a manner that promotes integration with the community and community events;
- d. the facilitation of community and family involvement in activities;
- e. that leisure interests and activities are regularly reviewed with input from residents, their families and, where possible, members of the community;
- f. on-going evaluation of residents and programs to identify changes in interests and needs; and

for recognition of residents' right to participate in activities involving personal risk and, where necessary, to document decisions to do so.

MYPONGA/SELLICKS HILL WIND FARM

501. **Mr HANNA:**

1. Did a draft report produced by Planning SA in September 2003 recommend that the proposed Myponga/Sellicks Hill wind farm be rejected and if so, why?

2. Was this recommendation contained in the final report by Planning SA and if not, why not?

3. Was Cabinet made aware of the content of the draft report before approving the development and if not, why not?

4. Why was same question on notice (number 618 asked in the previous Session) not answered?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: The Minister for Urban Development and Planning has provided the following information: Refer to the response to Question on Notice 618 from the previous session.

VON EINEM, Mr B.

In reply to **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH** (8 December 2004).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Minister for Correctional Services has advised:

I refer the member to the Ministerial Statement made in the Legislative Council on 9 December 2004.

PEATS PROCESSING PLANT

In reply to **Hon. I.P. LEWIS** (11 April).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have been advised:

Gabalu (Aust) Pty Ltd, trading as Peats Soils and Garden Supplies (PSGS), operate a composting business at Allotment 11, Aldinga Road, Willunga, which is licensed by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

In July 2002, PSGS submitted a development application seeking approval to establish a composting facility at Section 190, Hundred of Freeling (corner of Chauncey Line and Kangaroo Road).

The EPA and Development Assessment Commission have requested additional information from PSGS.

The EPA has now assessed the most recent information that was provided by PSGS in February 2005 and a response has been provided to the Development Assessment Commission for consideration.

BOURNE, Mr T.

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN** (23 November 2004).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: The Acting Minister for Correctional Services has advised:

The appointment was made in discussions with, and on the recommendation of, the Chairman of the Parole Board.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **Hon. I.F. EVANS** (25 October 2004).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have been advised:

1. To date, no cash has been returned to Treasury under the Cash Alignment Policy.

2. DEH estimated a 30 June 2004 cash position of \$78.2 million in the 2004-05 Budget papers, and as at 30 June 2004, recorded an actual cash position of \$85.5 million in DEH's audited financial statements.

3. The estimated cash position of DEH as at 30 June 2005, as per the 2004-05 Budget papers, is \$97.4 million.

The Auditor-General, in his interpretation and analysis of DEH's financial statements, noted that an amount of \$6 million was received in late June 2004 to address a potential cash shortfall as at 30 June 2004.

The cash balance of \$85.5 million disclosed in DEH's audited financial statements consists of the following components:

Deposit Accounts	\$ 10.752 million
Accrual Appropriation	\$ 74.261 million
Advance Accounts	\$ 0.098 million
Cash in Transit	\$ 0.320 million
Cash on Hand	\$ 0.025 million
Total	\$ 85.456 million

Accrual Appropriation is released at the Treasurer's discretion, and is not available to meet the day to day cash requirements of DEH. Of the \$10.752 million disclosed as available to DEH in its Deposit Account, \$3.026 million relates to outstanding funding commitments, reported as 'Restrictions on Contributions Received' at Note 31 of DEH's financial statements.

The balance of \$7.726 million represents the cash balance available to DEH as at 30 June 2004, and includes the \$6 million transferred from Treasury and Finance.

The increase in cash of approximately \$22 million from \$63.5 million at 30 June 2003 to \$85.5 million at 30 June 2004

primarily reflects Accrual Appropriation received during 2003-04 of \$13.3 million, and the \$6 million transfer from Treasury and Finance.

CONTRACTORS

In reply to **Hon. I.F. EVANS** (25 October 2004).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have been advised:

1. A process of monitoring usage and costs of temp agency staff under the Government's Preferred Supplier Contract arrangements is in place via quarterly reports provided by the Department for Administrative and Information Services (DAIS).

The cost of other independent contractors is monitored within the Department for Environment and Heritage (DEH) on a regular basis as an integral part of its financial management oversight (actual cost versus budget), the usage of contractors is monitored through the accounts payable system and general ledger transactions on an as needed basis.

2. The use of contractors increased by \$2.602 million, from \$9.655 million in 2002-03 to \$12.057 million in 2003-04, or by 27 per cent.

Contractors have been used for several new and on-going projects in DEH during

2003-04. These initiatives include;

- Sustainable Metropolitan Coast Program
- Fire Management
- Perpetual Lease Accelerated Free-holding Project
- Public Road Audit
- One Million Trees
- Heritage Fencing Agreement

This has involved additional expenditure of \$1.5 million (approx) in 2003-04 compared to the previous year.

In addition, the composition of the DEH's workforce has changed significantly with the employment of 255 new staff over the year. As a consequence DEH has found it necessary, from time to time, to use temp agency staff to backfill positions until new staff are recruited. The use of temp agency staff in 2003-04 compared to the previous year, has involved increased expenditure of \$1.2 million (approx).

A summary of all contractors paid in excess of \$50,000 is as follows:

Contractor (Vendor Name)	2004
WESTAFF AUST PTY LTD1,	755,600
ICON RECRUITMENT PTY LTD	509,108
HUDSON GLOBAL RESOURCES	376,539
HOWELL SPATIAL INDUSTRIES PTY	330,139
COLEMAN KENNY MARRIOTT	302,902
HOLDFAST BAY CITY OF	270,895
DIRECT PERSONNEL	260,033
KELLY SERVICES (AUST) LTD	250,321
DEPT FOR WATER LAND & BIODIVERSITY	178,147
CAMCO SA PL	175,206
DEPT OF ADMINISTRATIVE & INFORMATION SERVICES	148,923
HAYS PERSONNEL SERVICES	139,142
MCARTHUR MANAGEMENT SERVICES	137,581
SCHIAVELLO (SA) PTY LTD	135,061
UNITINGCARE WESLEY PORT	133,393
BAKERS VERTEBRATE PEST CONTROL	132,026
ITIM AUSTRALIA LTD	129,808
LOCHER & ASSOCIATES PTY LTD	115,921
ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AGENCY	106,047
TAYLOR CULLITY LETHLEAN	105,733
DELOITTE TOUCHE TOHMATSU	96,940
MAXIMA RECRUITMENT	92,831
SELECT AUSTRALASIA PTY LTD	90,041
TEMPSKILL	89,212
COASTAL ENGINEERING	85,867
OKE R	83,700
ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY OF	83,050
SPOTLESS SERVICES LTD	81,152
DEPT FOR CORRECTIONAL SERVICES	74,664
ADELAIDE ENGINEERING SURVEYS	73,490
SINCLAIR KNIGHT MERZ	68,993
TAYLOR DA	65,870
BIBBY FINANCIAL SERVICES	65,558
ROBERTS PC	63,079
ASCROW SERVICES	61,955
WATARRU COMMUNITY INC	60,000
FLINDERS UNIVERSITY OF SA	59,071

JEANES & SOMMERVILLE SURVEYORS	58,361
ALEXANDER & SYMONDS PTY LTD	56,659
AERO SERVICE PTY LTD	55,808
NATURAL RESOURCE SERVICES	53,307
MAUNSELL AUST PTY LTD	52,819
TRANSPORT URBAN PLANNING & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	52,082
HIPPER J	50,724
SPOTLESS SERVICES AUST LTD	50,231
OPEN ACCESS COLLEGE	50,102
	50,000

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR SALINITY AND WATER QUALITY

In reply to **Hon. R.G. KERIN** (11 November 2004).

The Hon. J.D. HILL: I have been advised:

1. The payments to Integrated Natural Resource Management (INRM) Regions and State-wide activities in 2003-04 are detailed in the table below.

National action plan for salinity and water quality (NAP) 2003-2004 payments by region

	Actual NAP Payments \$m
NAP Region	
Kangaroo Island	0.454
South East	1.539
SA Murray Darling Basin	12.116
Northern & Yorke Agricultural District	0.984
Mt Lofty Ranges – Greater Adelaide	2.468
Statewide Activities	3.392
Total NAP grant payments	20.953

The total payments for NAP in 2003-04 in the Auditor-General's Report are \$22.265 million. The difference between this amount and the payments of \$20.953 million to the regions is an accrued payment to Primary Industries and Resources SA of \$1.312 million to correct an error which occurred when the funds for the NAP program were transferred from Primary Industries and Resources SA to Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation.

The balance of funds held in the NAP Single Holding Account at the 30 June 2004 (\$25.16 million) are committed to approved regional and state-wide projects from

1 July 2004 to 30 June 2008. Payments to proponents are linked to the achievement of project output and reporting milestones as set out in the project agreements signed by the State and Commonwealth Governments.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT

In reply to **Hon. W.A. MATTHEW** (25 October 2004).

The Hon. L. STEVENS: The Minister for Emergency Services has provided the following information:

The Auditor General's staff discussed the issue of information transfer from the SA Metropolitan Fire Service (SAMFS) to the Emergency Services Administration Unit (ESAU) for Payroll purposes with ESAU Payroll staff. This followed a small number of instances identified by the Auditor General's staff where incorrect payments to SAMFS staff occurred because the advice regarding changes was received after the Payroll processing cut-off date.

SAMFS staff has been made aware of the need for timely advice being provided for Payroll purposes.

In reply to **Hon. W.A. MATTHEW** (25 October 2004).

The Hon. L. STEVENS: The Minister for Emergency Services has provided the following information:

The SA Country Fire Service (CFS) has 125 current active ANZ Visacards.

The total purchases made in the 2003-04 financial year were \$579,469.86.

A monthly report is prepared for the Chief Officer of the CFS regarding any outstanding accounts. If a name appears more than three times on the report, the card is removed permanently from the card holder as per a new CFS policy.

COASTGUARD, VOLUNTEER

In reply to **Hon. R.G. KERIN** (12 October 2004).

The Hon. L. STEVENS: The Minister for Emergency Services has provided the following information:

The Australian Volunteer Coast Guard – SA Squadron [AVCG] is an accredited volunteer marine rescue organisation in SA pursuant to the agreed Volunteer Marine Rescue [VMR] accreditation policy. It has search and rescue Flotillas established at the following locations:

- North Haven;
- O'Sullivans Beach;
- Port Vincent;
- Port Augusta; and
- Kangaroo Island.

The AVCG receives an annual grant from the Community Emergency Services Fund to assist with re-current operational costs.

In the 2004-05 financial year a grant of \$139,150 was approved for the AVCG and an additional grant of \$149,050 for the replacement of the rescue vessel at Port Vincent. The grants are provided subject to the conditions of the Government Funding Agreement, which also includes a quarterly reporting requirement.

The AVCG has advised that annual re-current costs to maintain the private vessel at Port Pirie are in excess of \$3000, taking into account sponsorship and donations. Additional funds were also provided to assist the purchase of an outboard motor for the vessel.

With the appointment of a new Commodore [Mrs Cheryl Dalling] and other new key executive appointments in May 2004, the Australian Volunteer Coast Guard (AVCG) undertook a major review of its SA operations including an assessment for the rationalisation of assets. The AVCG National Deputy Commodore assisted with the review.

Following lengthy discussions with the Volunteer Marine Rescue Coordinator from the State Emergency Service, the Commodore and Board of the AVCG a decision was made by the Commodore and Board that it was not feasible to continue to provide funding for a private vessel operated by a Coast Guard volunteer at Port Pirie.

The major reasons for this decision are:

- The SES Unit at Port Pirie, equipped with a SES Offshore rescue vessel, already provides a volunteer marine search & rescue capability for Port Pirie and surrounding area and have done so effectively since 1992. SES advises it is committed to retaining this marine rescue capability.
- Being a Government owned resource, the availability of the SES Vessel is therefore assured. The privately owned vessel was subject to an unavailability factor, dependant on the presence and health of the owner and therefore ongoing availability could not be guaranteed.
- The AVCG agreed that a duplication of effort was not an efficient use of resources that need to be spread throughout South Australia.
- There was no evidence to support the retention of two rescue vessels in the one location.
- With the vast coastline of SA, the AVCG is committed to ensuring funds provided by the Community Emergency Service Levy, are allocated to areas of most need, working towards ensuring the safety of the boating community.

The four current Port Pirie Coast Guard members, may wish to continue their community service by either retaining their membership and serve with the Port Augusta Flotilla or by electing to join the SES Unit at Port Pirie.

The AVCG Commodore issued a press statement to the local newspapers Port Pirie 'Recorder', the Port Augusta 'Transcontinental' and to the local TV station advising of the situation and reasons for the decision.

The SES, through the VMR Coordinator, Mid North Regional Manager and Port Pirie SES Unit Controller have implemented strategies to provide assurance to the boating community that an effective volunteer marine rescue resource will continue to be provided by the Port Pirie SES Unit. These include a press statement issued to local print media and subsequent interview at SES Local Unit Headquarters, local TV interview with SES Controller.

The Australian Volunteer Coast Guard in taking this action has acted in a professional and business manner and displayed open and frank accountability with respect to funds provided by the Government.

AUDITOR-GENERALS REPORT

In reply to **Hon. W.A. MATTHEW** (25 October 2004).

The Hon. L. STEVENS: The Minister for Emergency Services has provided the following information:

The Community Emergency Services Fund (CESF) fully funds the South Australian Metropolitan Fire Service (SAMFS) operating

expenditure and its approved capital expenditure in the year in which the projects are budgeted. Cash is disbursed by the CESF to the SAMFS in line with an estimated cash flow for operating and capital payments.

During the financial year 2003-04 the cash balance increased by \$3.834 million due mainly to the slippage of payments for major committed capital investing projects into the 2004-05 year following delays in station and appliance programs.

The cash on hand approximates very closely to the following liabilities and commitments as at 30 June 2004:

Annual Leave	\$4.339 million
Long Service Leave	\$9.815 million
Workers Compensation	\$7.343 million
Non-Current Loan on Adelaide Station	
Building	\$5.226 million
Other Liabilities less Other Assets	\$0.382 million
Outstanding Capital Investing Commitments	\$6.939 million
Total	\$34.044 million

In reply to **Hon. W.A. MATTHEW** (25 October 2004).

The Hon. L. STEVENS: The Minister for Emergency Services has provided the following information:

The Auditor-General's Report for the Emergency Services Administrative Unit also includes the State Emergency Service.

The Auditor-General's Report findings on credit cards related to the maintenance of cardholder listings, procedures for notification of terminated staff, outstanding card statements and reconciliation of the credit card clearing account. All issues have been addressed within ESAU and the SES.

The total credit card expenditure for ESAU for 2003-2004 was \$842,481.75 which involved 144 staff and SES volunteers.

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A AVIATION FUEL

In response to **Hon. G.M. GUNN** (17 June 2004).

The Hon. L. STEVENS: The Minister for Emergency Services has provided the following information:

The Minister for Mineral Resources Development has summarised information provided by the Department for Primary Industries and Resources concerning the downgrading of aviation fuel storages by the oil companies in the State's northern regions.

Two grades of aviation fuel are separately used by two different types of aircraft engines. Smaller and older types with piston engines require aviation gasoline (avgas), while newer and larger aircraft are turbine driven requiring aviation turbine fuel (avtur), or jet fuel.

The more modern aircraft tend to have longer-range capabilities requiring less refuelling at the minor airports.

If old existing underground storages that are nearing the end of their safe and useful life are replaced they would require double skin tanks or above ground tanks. A new facility such as installed at Broken Hill can cost \$200,000.

Where the oil companies have rationalised such as at Ceduna and Whyalla, the respective local councils have taken over the facilities. Now that the Royal Flying Doctor Service, a large customer of aviation fuels is remaining based at Port Augusta, it would be expected that the Port Augusta storage service would remain.

Oil companies say they are rationalising minor airport fuel storage facilities because of the changing demand pattern of fuel types and because aircraft now have longer fuel endurances.'

With respect to the second question, the Minister for Emergency Services advises:

The SA Country Fire Service (CFS) does not hold or manage aviation fuel supplies for aerial fire fighting operations. During the high-risk period of the fire danger season, the CFS utilises two principal service providers for aerial fire fighting operations:

1. CHC Helicopters (Australia) - Rescue 51 and 52; and
2. Australian Maritime Resources Pty Ltd - Fixed wing bombing aircraft.

Additional aerial fire fighting resources were provided during the 2003-04 fire danger season through the National Aerial Fire Fighting Centre.

Formal arrangements exist between the service providers and the CFS whereby each service provider is responsible for the coordination, supply and maintenance of all their respective fuels, lubricants and services that are required to operate the aircraft.

CHC Helicopters (Australia) has a series of pre-determined strategic drummed fuel stocks located throughout the State in order to accommodate both Rescue 51 and 52 helicopter operations.

The CFS will assist in the short distance transfer of drummed fuel supplies if required and will provide logistical transport during protracted operations if requested to do so.

ADELAIDE FESTIVAL CENTRE BUDGET

In reply to **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH** (8 March).

Why has the budget deficit at the Adelaide Festival Centre blown out by 46 per cent in the past 12 months to more than \$3.6 million, and why have attendances dropped by tens of thousands over the past three years?

The Hon. M.D. RANN: I have been advised of the following:

The question makes mention of 'the budget deficit' of the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust when, in fact, the deficit to which it refers is the operating deficit. In 2003-04, the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust reported an operating deficit after depreciation of \$3.6 million, compared with an operating deficit of \$2.5 million in 2002-03. This increase in operating deficit was due primarily to an increase in depreciation as a result of the revaluation of land and buildings, and plant and equipment, as at 30 June 2003.

In 2003-04, a Festival year, attendances at arts events at the Adelaide Festival Centre totalled 493,078 from 859 performances. This compares with 522,000 attendances from 854 performances in 2001-02, the previous Festival year. This represents a small reduction in attendances of around 5.5% when consideration is given to the fact that the Festival Theatre, the Trust's main venue, was unavailable for public attendance for over 11 weeks in 2003-04 as a result of *The Ring Cycle* rehearsals.

Why does the Adelaide Festival Centre now require \$8.2 million of taxpayer grants from the arts budget and why are there seven employees – an increase of one – earning over \$100,000 when the Premier claimed that he was going to slash the number of fat cats on the government payroll?

I have been advised of the following:

While the Adelaide Festival Centre Trust received government grants totalling \$8.2 million in 2003-04, the Trust raised revenue through its own activities and interest of \$23.5 million. The amount of non-government operating revenue generated by the Trust as a percentage of operating grants provided by the government has risen from 243% in 2001-02 to 293% in 2003-04.

With respect to the increase by one in employees earning over \$100,000, the salary was not a payment to any member of the management team, nor was it the salary of the CEO. One abnormally large once-off payment to an employee, whose remuneration package includes a base salary and a percentage of turnover, was the result of an extraordinarily active and successful year for one of the Festival Centre's business centres in 2003-04.

The Adelaide Festival Centre Trust has established a Remuneration Committee to monitor remuneration matters and approve remuneration above \$100,000 per annum.

PRIVACY

In reply to **Mr WILLIAMS** (10 February).

The Hon. M.D. RANN: Government agencies are required to comply with all statutory provisions, Premier's Circulars (including Privacy Principles), Treasurer's Instructions and other controls and obligations relevant to their operations and conduct.

AUDITOR-GENERALS REPORT

In reply to **Ms CHAPMAN** (25 October 2004).

The Hon. S.W. KEY: The Auditor General has noted that the cost of the TAFE Accounts Receivable Point of Sale system at the time of the review was \$2.1 million. As at June 2004 the project cost was \$3.0 million.

The project is expected to be completed in September 2005 which will include the reconfiguration work required for the new structure for TAFE Institutes. The final cost of the project will not be known until its completion.

The cost of the independent review was \$66,000.

TAFE

In reply to **Mr SCALZI** (25 October 2004).

The Hon. S.W. KEY: The personnel with responsibility for the key implementation of the TAFE Accounts Receivable Point of Sale system are from the Information and Communication Technology Services and Finance branches of the Department of Further

Education, Employment, Science and Technology, in conjunction with the product's suppliers.

An independent review has been undertaken by McLachlan Hodge Mitchell, which was completed in February 2005.

RIFLE RANGE

In reply to **Dr McFETRIDGE** (25 November 2004).

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: The District Council of Mallala maintains the public access road near the facility and as such, all concerns regarding the maintenance of the road should be directed to the Council.

In past correspondence to SARA, I have suggested that they work with Mallala Council in relation to the maintenance program for the access road.

INFANT HOMICIDE

In reply to **Mrs REDMOND** (21 September 2004).

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The Minister for Police has provided the following information:

The Commissioner of Police has advised that the South Coast Police Local Service Area Victor Harbor Criminal Investigation Branch is investigating this matter.

The investigation is both protracted and of a sensitive nature. Investigating detectives are pursuing a number of avenues of investigation, with a view to ascertaining all of the circumstances leading to the death of the child.

No prosecution has been initiated at this time and it would not be prudent to speculate on any time frame required to complete the investigation.

SUPPORTED ACCOMMODATION

In reply to **Mr HAMILTON-SMITH**.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: The State Government's funding to the Intellectual Disability Services Council (IDSC) in 2004-05 is \$68,991,852. An additional \$900,000 has been made available for this financial year for new supported accommodation places for IDSC clients, and an extra \$1.2 million for day options for school leavers with severe intellectual disabilities.

The \$900,000 provided to IDSC in 2004-05 has been applied for three country supported accommodation group homes which will be located in Murray Bridge, Mount Gambier and Port Pirie. The clients for these houses were identified from the IDSC urgent waiting list.

Vacancies in the Home Link program are affected by both the availability of funding and the availability of a suitably trained host family. IDSC has been seeking alternative accommodation for Ms Brumbt, including a supported accommodation group home. IDSC have now identified a vacancy in a Life's for Living group and as at 28 April 2005 negotiations between Rebecca's mother and IDSC are currently underway. If the family are supportive of the placement, the vacancy for Rebecca is available immediately.

ATTORNEY-GENERAL'S DEPARTMENT, WORKCOVER OH&S AUDIT

In reply to **Hon. R.G. KERIN**, (12 April).

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: In 2003, WorkCover undertook an evaluation of the Attorney-General's Department performance against the WorkCover Performance Standards for exempt employers and produced a written evaluation report dated 19 December, 2003.

The evaluator's summary report noted that 'the overall result of the evaluation was generally satisfactory' and concluded that although there were some 'significant issues' to be addressed, as 'major non-conformance is not evident [it is] recommended that a Board paper should not be generated at this time.' That means that the evaluator did not think that any of the issues were sufficiently serious to bring it to the attention of the Board of WorkCover at that time.

There were four matters raised by the evaluator.

Three of them dealt with the monitoring and auditing of the Department's O.H.&S. policies and systems and subsequent reporting on the results. The fourth related to a delay in completing a risk assessment of some Trade Weights and Measures equipment.

The fourth matter has been addressed. The other matters formed part of an external, independent and expert audit that the Department

commissioned. The audit recommendations are currently being carried out.

All of the issues were addressed and reported on to WorkCover.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER: I lay on the table a report of the committee entitled 'Emergency Services Levy 2005-06', which has been received and published pursuant to section 17(7) of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

The SPEAKER: I lay on the table a report of the Public Works Committee entitled 'Port Augusta Courts Building Redevelopment', which has been received and published pursuant to section 17(7) of the Parliamentary Committees Act 1991.

PAPERS TABLED

The following papers were laid on the table:

By the Treasurer (Hon. K.O. Foley)—

South Australian Budget Speech 2005-06 (Budget Paper 2) Erratum
Regulations under the following Act—
Land Tax—Prescribed Associations

By the Attorney-General (Hon. M.J. Atkinson)—

Classification (Publications, Films and Computer Games) Act 1995—
Guidelines for the Classification of Films and Computer Games
Guidelines for the Classification of Publications 2005 National Classification Code
Regulations under the following Acts—
Legal Practitioners—Fees
Magistrates Court (Fees) Variation Regulations 2005—
No 127 of 2005 Erratum

By the Minister for Health (Hon. L. Stevens)—

Regulations under the following Acts—
Controlled Substances—Poisons
Occupational Therapists—Prescribed Qualifications

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

Regulations under the following Acts—
Adelaide Dolphin Sanctuary—Prescribed Bodies
Natural Resources Management—Transitional Levies
Upper South East Dryland Salinity and Flood Management—Project Scheme

By the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries (Hon. R.J. McEwen)—

Regulations under the following Act—
Fisheries—Miscellaneous Fees.

ASHBOURNE, Mr R.

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

Leave granted.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: As members will be aware, Mr Randall Ashbourne, a former senior adviser to the Premier, was formally charged by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions with the abuse of public office. The trial of the charge was heard before a jury in the District Court of South Australia. On 17 June 2005, after a brief period of deliberation, the jury returned a unanimous verdict of not guilty.

The events and circumstances leading to Mr Ashbourne being charged have been the subject of previous statements to this house by the Premier and me. Although I do not wish to canvass all those matters here again, members will remember that, when the allegations involving Mr Ashbourne and the Attorney-General were first brought to the Premier's attention on 20 November 2002, he immediately asked Mr Warren McCann, the Chief Executive of the Department of Premier and Cabinet, to conduct an immediate preliminary investigation. Mr McCann was asked to inquire whether or not there were reasonable grounds for believing there had been any improper conduct or breach of ministerial standards. Mr McCann was to determine whether any further inquiry was warranted.

Mr McCann sought independent legal advice about the matter. His report concluded that there were no reasonable grounds for believing that the Attorney-General's conduct was improper or that he had breached the Ministerial Code of Conduct. The report also concluded that there were no reasonable grounds for believing that Mr Ashbourne had breached the relevant standard applying to his conduct but that there were aspects of his conduct that resulted in the Premier's issuing a formal reprimand to Mr Ashbourne. Mr McCann concluded that a further investigation was unwarranted.

At the conclusion of Mr McCann's preliminary investigation, his report and all relevant material was provided by the Premier to the Auditor-General. On 20 December 2002 the Auditor-General advised:

In my opinion, the action that you have taken with respect to this matter is appropriate to address all of the issues that have arisen.

The Premier has previously advised the house that at the end of proceedings in the prosecution of Mr Ashbourne the government would commission an inquiry. This inquiry will be independent. It will be conducted by a senior counsel or other suitably qualified person. The government will consult with parliamentary leaders (including the Leader of the Opposition) on the appointment. The terms of reference of the inquiry will be determined on motion by this house. The powers of the inquiry will be the same as those granted to Mr Dean Clayton QC under the Software Centre Inquiry (Powers and Immunities) Act 2001. The inquiry will be properly resourced and will be given sufficient time to meet its terms of reference. The final report will be tabled in parliament. The government will move to put these arrangements in place on Monday 4 July 2005. In the meantime, now that the court case is over, we intend to seek legal advice on natural justice issues that arise from publicly releasing the McCann report. Once we have that advice, we will come back to the house on when and how we can table a report in parliament.

TAXI FARES

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Transport): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: The Taxi Council of South Australia, on behalf of metropolitan taxi owners and operators in the state, has requested an increase in taxi fares of 4.6 per cent to reflect the increase running costs of providing taxi services. This increase is based on cost movements identified through the taxi cost index, which was developed in the late 1990s by the Passenger Transport Board in collaboration with the taxi industry. This index measures

running costs, including: LPG fuel prices, insurance, repairs, maintenance, parts, tyres and other associated costs.

The Office of Public Transport has reviewed the taxi cost index and the industry's request and endorses the increase, which will be reflected within the distance and waiting rates of tariff 1 and tariff 2 and the country running distance and waiting rates. The flagfall components across the tariffs will remain unchanged. This means that based on a 7.8 kilometre trip (excluding waiting time) Adelaide taxi fares will still be the second lowest of all capital cities under tariff 1 and equal third lowest of all capital cities under tariff 2. The increase will be effective from 17 July 2005.

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE

Mr CAICA (Colton): I bring up the 215th report of the committee on the Port River Expressway, Stages 2 and 3, Road and Rail Bridges over the Port River.

Report received and ordered to be published.

Mr CAICA: I also bring up the 216th report of the committee on the Gilles Plains TAFE Redevelopment of the Veterinary and Applied Science Centre.

Report received and ordered to be published.

QUESTION TIME

ASHBOURNE, Mr R.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Attorney-General. Did Randall Ashbourne discuss with him the issue of Ralph Clarke's legal costs being a complication in the negotiations to drop legal action between Ralph Clarke and himself?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): That matter will be the subject of an inquiry, I gather.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I have a supplementary question. Does the Attorney-General now recall Randall Ashbourne raising with him the issue of board positions for Ralph Clarke as witnessed by his adviser George Karzis?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: I was asked by Mr McCann to give testimony to him in, I think, November 2002. I was interviewed by police at some length in July 2003. I was proofed by the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions, because I was a prosecution witness in the prosecution of Randall Ashbourne. I can tell the Leader of the Opposition that, as a prosecution witness, I came up to proof—that is to say, I gave testimony in accordance with what the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions expected of me. Further, I went to court and gave testimony on oath, and my testimony has been consistent throughout. I did not then, and do not now, have any recollection of having a conversation or dialogue with Mr Ashbourne about board or committee positions.

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME

Ms RANKINE (Wright): My question is to the Minister for Health—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Unley is out of order.

Ms RANKINE: Given that tomorrow is Red Nose Day, will the minister inform the house as to progress on preventing sudden infant death syndrome in South Australia?

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I am pleased to be able to speak to the house on progress in raising awareness of sudden infant death syndrome in South Australia. As part of our 'every chance for every child' program, universal home visiting is provided to all new parents and babies. Members will recall that this program involves child health nurses visiting families with new babies to provide health checks, support and information on things like feeding and sleeping. These nurses are in an ideal position to provide important information to new parents on a range of health issues, including safe sleeping practices for their new babies.

Raising awareness of ways to prevent sudden infant death syndrome has been found to be very successful. Deaths from sudden infant death syndrome are now at their lowest levels since SIDS was first defined in the 1960s. Statistics from the Department of Health show that the SIDS rate has fallen dramatically since the promotion of SIDS education messages started in 1990. From 1986 to 1989 there was an average of 39 to 40 SIDS deaths each year, but this number has decreased to just four or five deaths each year for 2000 to 2003.

In 2003 the post neo-natal death rate due to SIDS fell to its lowest ever in South Australia, with a rate of just 0.2 per 1 000 live births being recorded. This is a very pleasing record for South Australia to have set. It shows that prevention messages are winning the war against sudden infant death syndrome.

The SIDS prevention message is all about helping parents and carers with the information to give their children the best possible start in life. I acknowledge the terrific work being done by the child health nurses who perform home visits, and other education campaigns by groups such as SIDS and Kids, which has also had a significant effect on SIDS death rates. I am pleased to inform the house that the SIDS prevention messages are getting out there and are having a very positive impact.

ASHBOURNE, Mr R.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is to the Attorney-General. After the Attorney-General gave evidence at the trial of Randall Ashbourne, and before the jury had reached its verdict, did the Attorney-General telephone any journalists and discuss his or any of the evidence with journalists?

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Yes, I did, because completely erroneous information was reported on ABC television—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: There was nothing wrong with the evidence given in court. Entirely erroneous information was reported on ABC television and radio. ABC television was kind enough to run a correction and the ABC radio journalist concerned, who is a very experienced journalist, was kind enough to acknowledge that he had made an error and he apologised.

SOBERING-UP UNIT

Ms CICCARELLO (Norwood): My question is to the Minister for Families and Communities. How has the

government assisted with the Salvation Army's renovation and extension of the sobering-up unit?

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): It is appropriate that this question has been raised during drug action week. I was pleased to attend the opening of the newly renovated sobering-up unit on Whitmore Square yesterday, and at that event I presented the Salvation Army with a cheque for \$135 000 as this government's contribution to the much needed upgrade. The sobering-up unit is a crucial part of the service delivery network we provide for vulnerable adults and young people in the Adelaide city area. It provides care, shelter and non-medical detoxification for people 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and it has been doing so for 18 years. Staff at the unit provide a safe and supportive environment to assist some of the most vulnerable people in our community to gain access to the services they need to protect themselves. Often we will find that the sorts of people who are wandering in are at the most marginal end of our community—people who are homeless—and this is an essential service.

Using the funds provided by the government through the crisis accommodation program, the Salvation Army was able to renovate and remodel the unit to provide more effective observation capacity, with greater safety measures for staff and roofing repairs to remedy water damage as well as improve the amenity of the area. We also have expanded the capacity of the unit, and the number of admissions has increased considerably. This is in addition to the \$2.7 million recurrent funding to the Salvation Army's drug and alcohol support program, and also the very important measure we have introduced to create a Public Intoxication Act facility based on the city watch-house cells to accommodate those who are most affected by substance abuse. Also included in that facility is a nursing station with medical supplies and properly trained drug and alcohol nurses as well as nurses with skills in mental health assessment.

The benefits of this new facility (which is a very expensive one; it costs \$700 000 per annum to run the very extensive services in this facility) are already being seen by the police: there has been a reduction in exposure to risk and less frequent utilisation of the Royal Adelaide Hospital Emergency Department (which was tying up police resources), and it also has provided an opportunity for the police to be engaged in the development of much better guidelines for the management of detainees with drug and alcohol problems. This is another crucial part of the inner city services network that we provide to the most vulnerable adults in our community and is another of the important contributions that we are making to reduce homelessness within our state.

ASHBOURNE, Mr R.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN (Leader of the Opposition): My question is again to the Attorney-General. Given his involvement in the Ashbourne affair, has the Attorney-General ruled himself out of any participation in drafting the terms of reference for the inquiry and, if not, will he now do so?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): That is not a question that the Attorney should have to answer. It is a question—

An honourable member: Why not?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Because it is a question for the Premier—or, in this case, the Acting Premier—to answer. The Attorney-General, quite appropriately, in a cabinet

discussion on this matter this morning, excluded himself from that cabinet deliberation, as is appropriate.

ABORIGINES, VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Ms BREUER (Giles): My question is directed to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education. What projects are being funded to improve vocational education outcomes for Aboriginal students?

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I would like to thank the member for Giles for her question and acknowledge her advocacy, particularly for her constituents of Aboriginal descent.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, the member for West Torrens!

The Hon. S.W. KEY: The Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology—

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for West Torrens will be warned in a minute.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: —has allocated \$1.5 million to one-off projects to be used for Aboriginal vocational education.

Mr Koutsantonis interjecting:

The SPEAKER: I warn the member for West Torrens.

The Hon. S.W. KEY: Some \$500 000 is being set aside for the redevelopment of the TAFE SA Narungga Campus. This is a unique project at Point Pearce, where the local Aboriginal community will undertake training. TAFE lecturing staff will work with a local Aboriginal builder to oversee the project, along with eight to 10 students from the community who have expressed interest in being involved. Some \$480 000 has been used to develop a multimedia facility in the Aboriginal learning centres around the state, and an additional \$210 000 has also been spent on other computing equipment for the use of Aboriginal students in TAFE SA. The sum of \$222 000 has been utilised to update materials and resources in TAFE's Aboriginal education programs, and \$128 000 has been used to train indigenous environmental health workers. We have allocated \$50 000 to upgrade and refurbish the Yalata TAFE building and \$50 000 to Marra Dreaming to assist in the construction and development of a new multipurpose arts and craft centre. I should acknowledge the advocacy of the member for Wright who has particularly made sure that the Marra Dreaming projects have support.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The Hon. S.W. KEY: We put money into projects, member for Bragg, which I am just trying to describe now. There is \$40 000 to support quite an exciting project, which is the Narungga language dictionary. Also, a lot of work has been done by the department to support Aboriginal people to preserve and protect their intellectual property in areas such as native medicine. At this stage, we have allocated \$8 000 for forums that will do just that.

ELECTIVE SURGERY

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Can the Minister for Health assure this parliament and the public that the priority of surgical patients has not been changed from urgent to semi-urgent status without the authorisation of the of medical specialists involved?

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): I thank the deputy leader for the question. When this government came to office, it was clear that we had a very big job to do in improving elective surgery performance, which, in terms of the other amount of elective surgery done, had been slashed year on year under the previous minister. The government has set itself the task of looking very carefully at improving elective surgery performance. In fact, we have increased the amount of surgery being done in our hospitals year on year since we have been in government.

In relation to doing that job, a number of strategies have been employed. First and very broadly, the government has increased funding to enable more procedures to be done. In fact, since we have been in power we have allocated \$21 million on top of the baseload of around about \$140 million worth of surgery each year.

The Hon. DEAN BROWN: I rise on a point of order. My question is quite specific, and the minister is clearly going off and having a very wide debate about the issue.

The SPEAKER: Order! The member has made his point. I think the need minister needs to focus on the question more specifically.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: As well as that, we are significantly examining how we do this work in order to get the best possible outcomes for patients so that people who are categorised by doctors as requiring surgery of various urgencies get that surgery as quickly as possible according to the benchmarks. Always, the rules and the process that is undertaken to assess the urgent—

Ms Chapman: This is drivel.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Sir, the member for Bragg says that this is drivel. It is very, very interesting that the member for Bragg would have no idea—

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: What do they say about her? She has nothing to brag about.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Nothing to brag about. Correct.

The SPEAKER: The house will come to order.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Sir, I would like to be able to explain. It is a very serious matter and requires the attention of the opposition.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The Minister for Health.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: In terms of the designation of a patient requiring surgery, the urgency of that surgery lies with clinicians. It is on the advice of doctors in particular specialty areas that an urgency classification is given to a particular patient. They are the rules. I am aware that the deputy leader made allegations in the printed media this morning and on the radio today that that is not the case. I would like to hear the nature of his allegations, and—

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, namely, relevance. Mr Speaker you have already ruled on this once. I cannot relate the answer to the question.

The SPEAKER: I think that the minister has probably finished the answer.

AIRWATCH PROGRAM

Mr CAICA (Colton): My question is directed to the Minister for Environment and Conservation. Are there any new initiatives to involve the community in monitoring the quality of Adelaide's air?

The Hon. I.F. Evans: That was yesterday's press release, John!

The Hon. J.D. HILL (Minister for Environment and Conservation): I am glad to hear that the member for Davenport is reading my press releases. As part of the EPA's AirWatch program, students from four Adelaide schools have been recruited by the EPA to monitor air pollution across the city this winter. The schools involved are: Christian Brothers College in the city, West Lakes Shore Primary, Elizabeth Vale Primary and Mount Barker Primary. Specialised equipment, called DustTraks, will be installed at each of the schools to measure the particulate levels of the air in real time. I understand that this is the first time that the EPA has set up air monitoring sites at schools. Students will receive training about air pollution as part of the EPA's AirWatch program. The children will be responsible for downloading and analysing the air monitoring data once a week and maintaining the monitoring equipment. The EPA will then carry out its own analysis and quality assurance process.

The aim of the project is to provide a report on Adelaide's air quality during winter this year and to estimate times when fine particulate concentration is high. This level of pollution has been linked to a number of health problems. As most members would probably know, Adelaide air quality is generally good, but it does decline in winter due to wood smoke.

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order. Speaker Lewis ruled that questions without notice are questions that seek information. If the government has issued a press release on this matter, and it is in the public domain, I ask whether it is a question seeking information. This has happened twice in question time today.

The SPEAKER: Order! That is not a point of order.

Mr Brindal: It is.

The SPEAKER: The member for Unley knows that, traditionally, governments of all persuasions have used question time to inform members in more detail about issues. It is not the job of the chair to gag a minister who is trying to inform the house.

The Hon. J.D. HILL: Thank you, Mr Speaker. I am very pleased to give the house the knowledge I have in relation to this matter. This is a very good program, as it does two things: it gives us some real information about the air quality in Adelaide and, at the same time, it educates and trains young people about those issues. The other day, I visited one of the schools to talk to some of the kids, and they had done some very serious work and developed a good understanding of air quality in South Australia.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS (Davenport): As a supplementary question, given the lead problems at Port Pirie and the red dust problems at Whyalla, why was the air monitoring equipment not installed there?

The Hon. J.D. HILL: An extensive air monitoring program is already in place in Whyalla.

HOSPITALS, ROYAL ADELAIDE

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): Will the minister for Health ask the Ombudsman to carry out an independent investigation into the changing of the priority of surgical patients with the purpose of hiding the government's failure to meet national surgical standards? Both *The Advertiser* and I have been sent an anonymous letter containing these serious allegations. In addition, last night and today, I received telephone calls from senior staff at the Royal Adelaide Hospital.

I was informed that the priority of surgical patients is determined by the medical specialist, who assesses the patient and then completes form M-45, which confirms what the minister said earlier. I was informed that in recent weeks cancer patients, who were classified as needing urgent surgery, had not received their surgery within the required 30 days. At that stage, administrators, without reference to the doctors or patients—and I emphasise that point—reclassified patients as needing semi-urgent surgery, that is, within 90 days. The senior staff and the anonymous letter name specific people who authorised the change, and they were administrators and not doctors. I have been informed that some staff refused to comply with the instruction because it was grossly improper. The senior staff said that this practice means that cancer patients could be waiting even longer for surgery under only the semi-urgent classification, which could then put lives at risk.

The Hon. L. STEVENS (Minister for Health): The allegation made by the deputy leader is very serious indeed, and I would appreciate the deputy leader providing me with the information he has.

The Hon. Dean Brown: I will provide it to the Ombudsman.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: I am very happy that the deputy leader is going to provide the information to the Ombudsman. We have nothing to hide. In answer to the other question he asked, I said that the procedure is that—

Members interjecting:

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Sir, this is a very important matter, and I ask for the attention of the house while I answer.

The SPEAKER: Order! The house will come to order. The minister has the call.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: In answer to the previous question, I said that the policy is, of course, that classification in relation to the urgency of a patient's condition lies with clinicians. The deputy leader is alleging—and alleging that other people have alleged—that this has not occurred at the Royal Adelaide Hospital but that it is being done by administrators, who have changed classifications to the detriment of patients. The deputy leader has also alleged that they are doing it to somehow politically mask and fudge the waiting lists so that they will look better for us. That is a very serious allegation—

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Bragg is out of order.

Ms Chapman interjecting:

The SPEAKER: The member for Bragg is warned.

The Hon. L. STEVENS: Thank you, sir. That is a very serious allegation, and I would like to be able to investigate it immediately. I have asked the deputy leader to provide me with the information to allow me to do that, but he has refused to provide it to me and says that he will provide it to the Ombudsman. I am happy that he is doing that, because it is very important that this matter be investigated so that these allegations can be substantiated or not, as the case may be. The government will be pleased to participate and cooperate in any way we can.

SCHOOLS, GUIDELINES

The Hon. P.L. WHITE (Taylor): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. How is the state government helping school staff to meet their responsibilities to their students with confidence?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank the member for Taylor for her question. I know this is an area in which she has shown a keen interest and has taken a leadership role. The state government is absolutely committed to child protection. Never before has there been a focus on this area until we came into government—a focus that has been active across all portfolios and throughout the cabinet. As part of the Rann government's Keeping Them Safe agenda of child protection reforms, the government has developed clear guidelines outlining appropriate conduct between teachers and students. The guidelines have been issued following considerable work between government, independent and Catholic sectors, including support from the out of school hours care services, to provide clear advice which provides safeguards for children and which supports the efforts of teachers.

All three school sectors have worked together. Most of the guidelines are, of course, basic commonsense. However, with the present focus and concern about child protection, these guidelines have been introduced because there was a fear in the community, and amongst parents and teachers, that it was inappropriate for any teacher to be involved in touching, holding, picking up or supporting a child in distress. This, indeed, was not the case. Clearly, teachers must always be allowed to form positive relationships with their students and to comfort them in times of distress. Teachers can have a significant positive influence—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order, member for Unley! It did not take a minute.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: They can have a significant positive influence on children, although I suspect children would not be positively influenced by the sight of some people in this chamber. Teachers need to have the opportunity to support and care for young people and, in fact, all school systems have existing procedures in place to investigate and deal with allegations of inappropriate interactions between teachers and students. These guidelines reinforce the need for all teachers and school staff to understand and respect professional boundaries when interacting with children. 'Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Students' is a document that has been issued to all South Australian schools throughout all schooling sectors.

SCHOOLS, STUDENT GRADING

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): My question is to the Minister for Education and Children's Services. For what reason would a teacher be instructed to grade students who have never attended his classes and, in fact, do not attend the school? The opposition has been told that a teacher at the Smithfield Plains High School is being required by school leaders to grade students who have never attended his classes and that, despite his clarification with parents that their children are in fact no longer attending the school, he has again been instructed to give them a grade.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for MacKillop will get a grading in a minute, and it may not be the one he wants.

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH (Minister for Education and Children's Services): I thank the member for Bragg for her question. I would be grateful if she would actually table some information. She is waving an email, which presumably has some facts or assertions on it, but it would be extremely useful if we could see the basis of the

allegations she makes. I have learnt from experience never to take the member's assertions or statements at face value and to seek evidence, information, data and the names involved, because quite often some of the assertions we hear from those across the chamber are not accurate.

Ms CHAPMAN: I have a supplementary question. Does the school still receive funding for a year for a student who is enrolled but who is not attending?

The Hon. J.D. LOMAX-SMITH: As I said, we do not have the facts of this case, but I can tell the member that schools do receive funding for children who are not at school every day of the week and every week of the year. The member for Bragg may not realise it, but schooling has changed since she attended school, and very many young people are engaged in part-time employment or apprenticeships or school-based traineeships, attend VET courses or go to TAFE institutions. So it is quite appropriate that schools may receive funding for students who are not in attendance throughout the whole of every school day. However, if the member for Bragg has any evidence that she would like to put before me, we will investigate the matter—but we do know from experience that she can get things so wrong.

IMMIGRATION, MULTICULTURAL AND INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

Mr KOUTSANTONIS (West Torrens): My question is to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs. Can the minister inform the house about a recent Ministerial Council on Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs? Why was it held in this state and what were the benefits for South Australia?

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Minister for Multicultural Affairs): And it was, my boy.

The Hon. I.F. EVANS: I have a point of order: the question has been answered.

The SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Every year ministers responsible for multicultural and ethnic affairs around Australia and commonwealth government ministers who are responsible for multicultural affairs, immigration and citizenship—such as the estimable Senator Amanda Vanstone—meet to advance multiculturalism and ethnic affairs across Australia. I am pleased to report that the meeting of the Ministerial Council on Immigration and Multicultural Affairs was hosted this year by the South Australian government in Adelaide on 13 May as promised. I thank the staff of Multicultural SA for the professional manner in which they organised the meeting. It is an example of the quality of work that Multicultural SA produces. South Australia can indeed hold its head high. South Australia had placed items on the agenda, and I believe that it is important to inform the house about one of those today.

The matter of the recognition of overseas qualifications has been a longstanding topic. South Australia has chaired a national working party on this matter, and I am pleased to report that, as a result of that work, the commonwealth has, in its budget, indicated that it intends to establish a web site portal that is a one-stop shop web site so that people intending to migrate to Australia will be able to access information about the status of their qualifications before they arrive in Australia. This is good work, and I congratulate the officers from Multicultural SA who have led this work. The South

Australian leadership of the national working party will continue, but its role will change so that it will now manage communication between the relevant agencies and report on the progress of the web portal.

Meeting participants are normally provided with a bag, often in the form of satchel, which is used to carry the material provided to conference participants. For this meeting it was decided to use environmentally friendly bags (green bags) promoting Zero Waste SA and the Environment Protection Authority. They were provided to participants with a range of the state's products that were made available by companies in South Australia. These products were provided to promote the good work that South Australian companies are doing. They included packets of San Remo pasta, fruit bars produced by Bellis—a company owned by Nick Begakis—Coopers Brewery ales, Willabrand fine figs from the Adelaide Hills, Nippy's drinks, Beerenberg jams, Hamilton's sunscreen, Kosmea cosmetic products and several others. Additionally, we took the opportunity—

Mr Brindal interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON: Wait for it, Baldrick. Wait for it. We took the opportunity to promote South Australia as a place that welcomes migrants, and included in the package were CDs provided by the Department of Trade and Economic Development. It is customary for a gift to be given to the visiting ministers, and I thank Parish Hill Wines, a winery in the Adelaide Hills town of Uraidla, for providing wine. On behalf of the government, I thank the companies and groups that supported this promotion of South Australia. As I said, the organisation was excellent. The agenda, and the outcomes of the agenda, will assist all jurisdictions. South Australia was well promoted. I also thank the Chairman of the South Australian Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs Commission, the estimable Mr John Kiosoglous, for his excellent work in ensuring that ministers and officers from each state enjoyed Adelaide hospitality.

FLOODING, MURRAY BRIDGE

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): Why did the Deputy Premier claim, in December 2004, that the floods in Murray Bridge were a one in a hundred years event? Was it an excuse for the government not to spend money on preventing future flooding? The government has failed to take any action to prevent more damage to property due to flooding in Murray Bridge in spite of the Deputy Premier's cheap media visit to Murray Bridge after the floods last December.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Deputy Premier): I made the statement that that was a one in a hundred years flood because, from memory, that was the advice that I was provided. Clearly, it would have been more accurate to say that it was—

An honourable member interjecting:

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: No; a three times in 101 years flood, which would have been more accurate. I do not want to be too flippant about it, because people are having some trouble. I learnt a couple of things about that: one is that one should always take advice sceptically—with everything in government, just quietly—and certainly when it comes from people who advise politicians about floods. The other thing is that you should never take your 16-year old son with you when there is a flood, particularly when it is school holidays and you say to your son, 'Come for a drive,' and you clearly know that he does not want to. Then you wake up the next morning and see a big picture in *The Advertiser* of a very

distraught and angry householder, and this grumpy young man with a baseball cap on; it was actually my 16-year old son who was angry with Dad for taking him up to Murray Bridge when he wanted to stay home. His picture appears again today. That is not another angry Murray Bridge resident, who is angry with me: it is my son.

Mr Williams: He knows you real well.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: How do you reckon he goes getting pocket money?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Let us just not go there about my son right now. So, that was an interesting trip. That trip showed me how local government can get it so horribly wrong with planning. The Mayor of Murray Bridge, Allan Arbon—who, I think, is a good mayor, and a person whom I have high regard for—is taking it on the chin. I heard him on radio this morning acknowledging that the local council was doing things to rectify the problem, that it was spending money to fix it, but that it had not been able to get it right just yet. At the end of the day, there is a limit to what is state government and what is local government responsibility.

The Hon. W.A. Matthew: So, why did you go up there?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I went up there because I was Acting Premier, and I thought it was the right thing to do, to offer some moral support to the residents in their moment of distress. I thought it was the right thing to do.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: And it is the right thing to do.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: And it was the right thing to do.

The Hon. Dean Brown: Well, why did you not go yesterday or today?

The SPEAKER: Order! The member for Finniss is out of order.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The question is: why did I not go yesterday or today? It is a very good question, and I think you know the answer to that one.

Members interjecting:

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

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I do not want to at all underrate the significance of what is occurring in Murray Bridge, but it is a responsibility of the local council. It is a planning and drainage issue, and the state government should not be in a position to accept responsibility for things which, in my view, are not necessarily the responsibility of a state government.

YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Mr SNELLING (Playford): My question is to the Minister for Administrative Services. How is the government providing job opportunities for young South Australians within the Department for Administrative and Information Services?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Administrative Services): I thank the member for his question. The government aims to assist our young people to contribute to the long-term needs of the public sector or, by using the talents developed in government youth training programs, find career opportunities in the private sector. An example is the recruitment development and retention of our young people through traineeships, graduate programs and indigenous scholarship programs in the Department of Administrative Services. These programs are also strategies in developing a work force profile that better reflects the diversity of the South Australian community. The government is attracting and retaining people with the required skills and knowledge, and is supporting social inclusion, for example, by providing

employment opportunities to young Aboriginal people from regional locations.

A specific example of this program is that of the 26 trainees recruited this year by DAIS: eight trainees are working in regional offices, including Berri, Gawler, Mount Gambier, Murray Bridge, Port Augusta, Port Lincoln and Whyalla. These government trainees are provided with formal vocational training and are undertaking accredited certificate level qualifications in areas such as business, government, information technology, and recreation and sport. Further, the department's graduate recruitment and development program attracts people who have completed, or are in their final year of, a degree level qualification from a recognised tertiary organisation and who have specific skills required by the government. From this program, DAIS has filled 26 graduate positions in areas such as information management, human resources, forensic and analytical chemistry and occupational health and safety. DAIS is also an active participant in the South Australian indigenous scholarship program, supporting three Aboriginal people in accessing tertiary study and employment opportunities within the South Australian public sector.

As an aside, I thank the opposition for providing me with a pair and thus with the opportunity today to attend the funeral of Trevor McRostie. Trevor was the Director of Policy and Strategy at Workplace Services—

The Hon. I.F. Evans interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: Yes, I will acknowledge that. He has represented governments of both political persuasion with great acumen. I know the shadow minister was also keen to attend but he had another function, and the shadow minister was represented by the Hon. Robert Lawson. I am sure the family was very pleased. I thank the parliament and acknowledge the great work that Trevor did for both parties. He was a very good public servant and I know the shadow minister acknowledges that.

FLOOD MITIGATION, KOONIBBA

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): My question is to the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education, or maybe the Minister for Transport might be able to help or perhaps the Deputy Premier who happens to be the authority on floods. Will the minister advise when the flood mitigation work involving earthworks and construction of roads in Koonibba will be completed? Is the minister aware that the site of the flood mitigation project, a levy bank a couple of kilometres long, is on a hill located about 170 metres above sea level in a low rainfall area; and is she confident that this project will be completed in time for the expected one in 500-year flood? In February 2004, the Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education announced, as part of job training initiatives, that \$15 000 was for the training of 12 people involved in a flood mitigation project in Koonibba. The overall cost of the flood mitigation and roadwork is believed by locals to be in the order of half a million dollars.

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I am quite happy to take the question, but I will have to investigate the claims being made by the member for Flinders. As the member for Flinders knows, we have been looking at a number of employment programs through our Regions at Work program, and I would be more than happy to come back with the information for the honourable member.

SA WATER

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): My question is to the Minister for Administrative Services. Will the minister now concede that the claim made by SA Water in a letter to its customers promoting a private plumbing service that ‘an estimated 200 000 South Australian households are likely to experience a plumbing or drainage emergency in the next 12 months’ is a gross exaggeration with no basis in fact? Will he demand that SA Water write again to its customers correcting its claim regarding the plumbing emergency risk? SA Water’s claim that 200 000 households are likely to experience a plumbing emergency this year means that nearly one in every second household will experience such an emergency, given that SA Water has only 458 000 household customers.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Administrative Services): I thank the member for his question. He asked a similar question during the estimates and I said that I would check that letter. What the member did not acknowledge was that, on the bottom of that letter, it stated that this was based on a survey conducted by Newspoll in December 2004. A footnote to that effect appears on the bottom of the letter. Newspoll is a reputable survey company. I am also advised that Newspoll specifically signed off on the statement referring to 200 000 households.

YALATA BUS SERVICE

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): Will the Minister for Families and Communities advise why the contract for the bus to Yalata has been terminated and why is his department now buying a bus to take over this service? The Social Services Committee in Ceduna, which includes representatives from council and state government agencies, established a local contract to provide a bus service to Yalata and this has been working extremely well. However, without any consultation at all with the local Social Services Committee, CYFS has decided to terminate the local bus contract and provide the services. I understand that Families and Communities have twice failed before in trying to provide bus services for Yalata. Nevertheless, the department has gone ahead and arranged to purchase a luxury coach, even though the community resisted using a previous luxury coach offered by the current contractor.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL (Minister for Families and Communities): I know that the honourable member is trembling with anger at the thought of government taking over and running something which someone, other than government, used to do. I am sure that it has something to do with her passionate hatred of all things government.

Mrs Penfold interjecting:

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: They can’t run businesses—just like ETSA; just like that great private institution that is now in private hands. They are ideologically incapable of understanding—

Mr BRINDAL: I rise on a point of order, sir. My point of order is relevance.

The SPEAKER: The minister is debating the issue. He should answer the question.

The Hon. J.W. WEATHERILL: I will check on this heinous crime of insourcing and see what is at the bottom of it, and get back to the house.

FLOODING, SCHOOLS

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): My question is to the Minister for Administrative Services. How many calls from schools, with regard to flooding, leaking roofs and associated water damage, has his department received in the past fortnight? What is the estimated total cost to repair these schools? The opposition is aware that many schools have reported water damage to DAIS over the past fortnight. All have complained that the damage has been greatly exacerbated by the lack of general maintenance on gutters and roofs and damage to the school.

Members interjecting:

The SPEAKER: Order! The house will come to order. The Minister for Administrative Services.

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Administrative Services): As the honourable member would be well aware, this government has placed a great priority on looking after our schools. I know she acknowledges that; and I know she appreciates the great work done by the Minister for Education and Children’s Services. I will get the detail for the honourable member.

K&S CORPORATION

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): My question is to the Minister for Regional Development. What action has the government taken to ensure that K&S Corporation remains operational in Mount Gambier? K&S Corporation is a major player in the freight industry in the South-East. The company has flagged that it may relocate its \$17 million freight business hub to Melbourne. The managing director, Lee Winsler, on ABC TV recently said:

There is not a lot of incentive to stay in South Australia. The government is not supporting those industries in South Australia.

The Hon. K.A. MAYWALD (Minister for Regional Development): I am not aware of any approach that K&S Freighters has made to me as regional development minister in relation to this matter.

FLOODING, GLENELG NORTH

Dr McFETRIDGE (Morphett): Will the Minister for Infrastructure provide some assistance to the City of Holdfast Bay to place valves in stormwater drains to prevent stormwater backflowing into streets and homes in Glenelg North during times of flooding? Will the minister advise the house why the state government has not yet finalised compensation for victims of the Glenelg North flooding incident nearly two years ago? There are still victims of the 27 June 2003 Glenelg North flooding incident who have not been compensated, and many residents are still concerned that flooding will occur again, particularly as infrastructure in this area has not yet been improved and valves have not yet been put into stormwater drains to prevent back-flow flooding.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Infrastructure): There are two questions there. I will try to deal with them in the correct order. The first one reveals a pattern of behaviour on the part of the Liberal opposition. There was the question from the member for MacKillop about drainage in Murray Bridge, and now there is the question from the member for Morphett about drains. I guess we will have to add to its election promises the cost of taking over the drainage system from local councils, which appears to be the new policy of the Liberal Party. The truth is that we have spent a great deal on

our infrastructure down there, but in relation to the privatised weir, the outsourced weir contract, it was the dreadful steps taken by the former government that led to the major flooding in the first place. We have remedied, predominantly, those shortcomings.

It is not the policy of this government—it may be the policy of the opposition—to take over council responsibilities in terms of drainage, but we look forward to costing that for them. Maybe it is just those singled out by interested members on the other side of the house for which we accept responsibility and councils accept the rest of the responsibility. It is a tremendous illustration of an utter lack of any strategic thinking—any policy—on that side of the house.

As to the incredibly churlish suggestion about the slowness of compensation for those people, let me put on the record that it was this government, within days of the flooding (flooding that was not our responsibility), that we established a fund to provide speedy compensation for those people—compensation they would not have got that speedily any other way. We put our money up with no knowledge of whether we would get it back. I have to say that, through some good negotiations, we did subsequently recover that compensation from some of the private sector parties, but we did not know whether we could do it at the time. We were prepared to do that so that people got speedy compensation. I am prepared to check how many have not.

I have to say this, too, that, when you deal with the member for Morphett, you always have to check very carefully the information that he is putting up. We remember that. It has been noted by our friends at *The Advertiser* from time to time just how incredibly inaccurate is the information he is prepared to put up. I am happy to look at that, but my understanding is that some of the slowest compensation has been for those people who elected not to take the government's compensation but to go down the path of a class action. We told them at the time that they were free to make that decision, but it would be a much slower route to compensation. The member for Morphett should really be a little less churlish.

This government deserves congratulation for providing an avenue for compensation so much more speedily than would otherwise have been available to those people, even though, shall we say, the flooding was shown not to be the fault of the government, but we were prepared to do that. I am happy to see who has not been compensated by the government. I assume that there would be very good reasons. I am really going to be happy to bring back those numbers to the house and show just how many have had their compensation speedily provided by the government as opposed to those who went down the legal route.

The member for Morphett may not like that. My own view is that the member for Morphett squirmed about the fact that the government responded quickly to those people. He would have preferred a much bigger problem, in my view, so that he could complain more. The truth is that we responded speedily. It was a model. Wherever there have been difficulties in this state this government has responded speedily. We have done it on the Eyre Peninsula. Do you know what happened over there? All we get is churlish complaints from the local member. That is not why we do it. We do it for the people of South Australia, and we will continue to do it, but it would be nice to get some congratulation from time to time instead of churlish criticism.

FLOODING

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): My question is to the Acting Premier. Given his answer to a previous question about flooding being a planning issue, will the minister acknowledge that the planning is under the purview of the state government of South Australia; and, because of contributory negligence, a succession of state governments may well have exacerbated flooding, particularly in the Sturt Creek catchment. I therefore ask the minister when and how will the government provide the \$160 million to join with local government to repair this problem?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Acting Premier): I am not an expert on planning law, nor am I an expert on drainage. I know that it is a passion of the member for Unley. We will take the question on notice. For the record, we now have the opposition officially saying we should spend \$160 million on drainage. Here we go: another uncostered financial commitment by the opposition. How would you pay for it? What tax will you increase? What service will you cut? Again, an undisciplined opposition, plucking figures out of the air.

The Hon. R.G. KERIN: I rise on a point of order, sir. My point of order is one of relevance. The Acting Premier is not even trying to answer the question.

The SPEAKER: I think that the Acting Premier has answered it. The member for MacKillop.

SA WATER

Mr WILLIAMS (MacKillop): My question is to the Minister for Administrative Services. In light of the minister's answer to my earlier question regarding the misleading risk analysis given by SA Water to its customers, is the minister now informing the house that SA Water's contract with Home Service Direct obliges SA Water to give information to its customers without being satisfied with the veracity of that information?

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT (Minister for Administrative Services): I thank the honourable member for his second question on this issue. This is a silly question. I have already provided this information to the honourable member. As I said, the honourable member asked an identical question during estimates.

Mr Williams interjecting:

The Hon. M.J. WRIGHT: I did not refuse to answer. The honourable member is misleading the house. I said that I would go away and check. He acknowledged at the time that he did not have the letter with him when he asked the question. I have done that, and I have supplied the information.

BRITANNIA INTERSECTION

Ms CHAPMAN (Bragg): My question is to either the Minister for Transport and Infrastructure or the Treasurer. Will the minister advise how much money the government has spent on the twin lights proposal at the Britannia intersection, which the government announced today it has abandoned?

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Transport): I am disappointed that this question is so far down the list, but I was hoping to receive it. Work on the Britannia roundabout has predominantly been planning by Transport SA. Now, be careful before you start shrieking. An amount of \$280 000 has been spent on planning various options for the round-

about, including at the opposition's request putting on hold our proposal and looking at theirs: that is, an underpass. I am pleased to say that this planning work will be useful in forming a solution, but it will not have the footprint of either the lights proposal or an underpass.

Mr Hamilton-Smith interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Homer Greenspan is back. One of them has got off the naughty spot at last. He must have behaved very well. He's now allowed to speak again. I will put on the record just what has occurred. The Liberals, with their new star recruit for Norwood, Nigel—

Ms Chapman: He's doing very well.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: He's doing very well, I'm told. We've heard about him on the radio a few times. He went out and stood on a roundabout with a couple of other unlikely characters. One of the characters thought that he would get the money from the commonwealth. He wrote to John Anderson, but we are still waiting. I will be seeing John Anderson in the morning. I will speak to him about whether Chris Pyne was successful in getting that money from him, but I know what the answer will be. They said, 'Don't do the lights; do what we want, do an underpass instead.' Well, we looked at both of those.

When I saw the plan for the lights, I have to say I was taken aback. I discussed it with the member for Adelaide who strongly put to me something with which I heartily agree and that is that the road should not be given preference over parklands and trees to that extent. We also looked at the Liberals' proposal. Our proposal would have taken out 66 trees including 16 significant trees, and I think 30 valuable trees were referred to. Under the Liberal proposal, 95 trees were to go. It was like the Agent Orange proposal: 95 trees were to go, 3 600 square metres of parklands, 18 significant trees and more than 30 valuable trees. We were prepared to say that we were not going to adopt either of those proposals, that we would go back and look at a new solution.

Members interjecting:

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Do nothing, they say. I also note the press release from Homer Greenspan earlier today which refers to: lost the way on infrastructure; just a couple of underpasses. One of the tunnels under South Road—the first commitment by any government in 30 years—is longer than the Heysen tunnels in the hills! These are just a couple of little projects, according to Homer. He also said that we should not borrow for infrastructure. I am not quite sure how we were supposed to build it—with Monopoly money or something like that?

The truth is that we have spent \$280 000 on planning, and that will help to inform a better solution than either the one which is planned by Transport SA or the underpass proposed by the Liberal Party. I guarantee this: I am happy to go out at any time and debate whether we put trees before roads. I am happy to have that debate anywhere in South Australia: whether we should put trees and parklands before roads or adopt the Liberals' solution and put roads before trees and parklands. I am happy to have that debate.

I stand by the decision. It is the correct one. We will preserve the parklands and they will still be there in 100 years' time. The trees that took 100 years to grow will still be there. We will find a solution using the \$280 000 we have spent on planning already to find a footprint that does not intrude into the parklands. We will save the parklands from those terrible destroyers, those Visigoths and vandals on the other side who would lay waste to our wonderful trees, just like we saved Lochiel Park from Joe's party, and we will

continue to protect the interests of South Australians against these invading Visigoths and vandals.

The SPEAKER: I think the minister has answered the question.

MATTERS OF PRIVILEGE

The SPEAKER: In respect of the matters of privilege, in the first matter raised by the leader—and the leader is quite correct to raise it as an issue—in terms of the specifics of privilege, it is not a matter that is likely to make a substantial difference to any consideration by the house (and that is the key element in a privilege issue) unless it goes uncorrected, and I will come to that point in a minute. This issue raised by the leader is a good example of the potential for problems when a member ascribes views and words to another rather than simply stating their own position, and I think there is a lesson there for all members. I note that the Minister for Infrastructure has, in any event, corrected his earlier error in wrongly ascribing views to the leader and has apologised.

The Hon. P.F. Conlon: No, sir, not the views. He said it to the media. He just did not say it at the meeting.

The SPEAKER: Well, ascribing in the form to which the leader took offence.

The second matter raised by the member for Mitchell, and this is drawn from the estimates committees of 15 June, is that the Premier said, after making some remarks about funding for the APY lands, 'I am told we have youth workers.' He then invited Ms Mazel to respond to the specific issues of youth workers. Ms Mazel then gave an answer which explained the provision of youth managers, youth coordinators and youth workers and the fact that there are vacancies from time to time. After being pressed by the member for Mitchell about vacancies in particular towns, Ms Mazel said, 'The point I made earlier still holds,' and gave further explanation about covering vacancies. She also offered to check whether there had been specific vacancies at specific times.

Regardless of any information that may be provided to the house on those specifics, I do not regard the events described by the member for Mitchell today as in any way touching on privilege. Members should not confuse deliberate misleading that could substantially affect the house with the failure of a minister to make a confession or a correction in a particular way to the satisfaction of a particular member.

DRIVER PENALTY ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE

The Hon. P.F. CONLON (Minister for Transport): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. P.F. CONLON: Today I wish to announce the formation of an across-government task force to crack down on loopholes that allow a driver to avoid a licence sanction or driving condition. The Driver Penalty Enforcement Task Force will examine current legislation and practices to identify and rectify loopholes as part of this government's practice on road safety and ensuring dangerous high risk drivers who break the law are removed from our roads. The task force will complement the National Registration and

Licensing Task Force, a group that has representation from all states and territories, including South Australia, and is examining loopholes at a national level.

The state Driver Penalty Enforcement Task Force will be composed of representatives from SAPOL, Courts Administration Authority, the Attorney-General's Office and the Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure. The aim is to ensure people who are caught breaking our road and licensing laws get punished. No-one should get a lucky break if they put the safety of other road users at risk. Closing certain loopholes will involve legislative change and go beyond transport legislation, impacting on acts committed to other ministers. Other loopholes will be closed by reforming current administrative procedures that will impact on the courts, licensing and registration and, of course, our police.

This government is concerned about instances such as workers caught speeding in company cars and not getting demerit points, and people with interstate and overseas licences breaking our road rules and not receiving demerit points. We have all heard claims of people sharing demerit points by agreeing to have them allocated via a statutory declaration or claiming to the courts that they did not receive a licence cancellation. Some of these loopholes have been around for many years and are prevalent in all states and territories. These are the types of loopholes that the task force will examine and recommend ways to close.

After recently introducing a spate of tougher laws to crack down on hoon driving, drink driving and excessive speeding, now is the time to examine the suite of legislation and administrative procedures pertaining to licences and driving penalties. We are committed to making sure people who get caught stay caught.

KOI CARP

The Hon. R.J. McEWEN (Minister for Agriculture, Food and Fisheries): I seek leave to make a ministerial statement.

Leave granted.

The Hon. R.J. McEWEN: I apologise to the house that I only have one copy of the statement because it pertains specifically to a question asked of me yesterday in estimates by the member for Light. Yesterday the member for Light asked me:

I refer to a subject of fisheries licences on page 5.19. My colleague the member for Mawson has received a complaint from a constituent regarding the inappropriate delays in granting a licence to export Koi carp. He believed he had been given some misleading information and advises that the department had been evasive and unhelpful in supporting him with his application. He claimed that the delay in granting his licence had cost in the vicinity of \$3 million and had jeopardised his good name to United Kingdom customers. Can the minister shed some light on this?

I indicated yesterday that I could not shed any light on it at the time, but I now can. I presume that the individual to whom the member for Light was referring is Mr Steve Morris.

Mr Steve Morris claims he has lost in excess of \$3 million as a result of delays experienced during the assessment of an aquaculture licence application for Koi carp and has been contacted by buyers in the United Kingdom asking why he is unable to supply the carp. My department advises that Mr Morris already holds an aquaculture licence to farm a number of species, including Koi carp, for export principally to the United Kingdom. This licence relates to a property at Kuitpo owned by Mr Morris's business partner, Mr Ray Hirst.

Importantly, the licence issued by Primary Industries SA is for farming and culture activities. However, any authorisation to export must be sought from the Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS).

Due to Koi carp being a noxious species in South Australia, the following conditions have been applied to the aquaculture licence: the licence holder must not sell carp to any person, company or agent in South Australia. Further, the licence holder must not move carp on or off the farm without prior notification to and approval from the Director of Fisheries. My department is of the understanding that significant quantities of carp are being held at the site at Kuitpo with the intention to export. Unfortunately, it would appear that Mr Hirst has prevented Mr Morris from entering the Kuitpo property and therefore access to the fish has been denied for some time.

Advice received by the Crown Solicitor's Office on this matter indicated that under the circumstances Mr Morris was not able to meet his obligations under the licence issued in his name. In an attempt to resolve the situation, the Executive Director of Aquaculture contacted solicitors, requesting both parties to facilitate discussions relating to the aquaculture licence. This has resulted in the existing licence being transferred from Mr Morris's name to Rankine Springs Pty Ltd, the company of which Mr Morris and Mr Hirst are both directors.

The implication of this action has been clearly explained to both parties and the solicitors, that is, both parties are now jointly and severally responsible for actions taken under this licence. In the meantime, there have been serious allegations that Koi carp have been sold or transferred to an alternative site within South Australia. If these allegations were proven to be correct, it would constitute a breach of the licence conditions, which may result in cancellation or suspension of the licence. Initial investigations have been made by fisheries compliance officers in this regard.

I come now to the point of the complaint about delays. Mr Morris lodged an application to farm Koi carp at Pelican Point which was received by Primary Industries SA Aquaculture in February this year. Due to insignificant information being included in the initial application, additional information was requested and provided on 23 February 2005. Further information was required and was received on 27 March 2005.

Because Koi carp is a noxious species in South Australia, careful assessment and consideration was given to the application by Primary Industries SA's aquaculture and fisheries division. The application was referred to the Environment Protection Authority on 3 May 2005, as required under section 59 of the Aquaculture Act 2001. Then, in accordance with section 51(b)(i) of the act the application was advertised on 24 May 2005 and the opportunity for public comment closed on 24 June 2005. There have been a number of requests for information in relation to the application. However, no written response has been received to date. Importantly, Mr Morris' inability to meet his export demands, therefore, appears to have arisen from a dispute with Mr Morris' business partner and the owner of the Kuitpo property rather than any delays in assessing and issuing a new aquaculture licence.

GRIEVANCE DEBATE

HOSPITALS, SURGERY CLASSIFICATIONS

The Hon. DEAN BROWN (Deputy Leader of the Opposition): I wish to grieve about the matter of changing the surgery classification of patients who previously have been classed as urgent for surgery at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. Earlier this week I received an anonymous letter, and I would like to read part of it. I will not read all of it, because it gives certain names, which I will not reveal. The letter states as follows:

About two weeks ago, *The Advertiser* printed a list of waiting times for different categories of elective surgery. It listed the time frames which people should get their surgery in, depending on the urgency—category 1, 2 or 3 and showed the percentage of those who were not getting their surgery in that time.

In response to this, surgical departments at the Royal Adelaide Hospital (and probably other hospitals) were ordered by the Department of Health to change their category 1 (urgent, less than 30 days) patients to category 2, to make the numbers look better.

A patient's category is normally determined by doctors, depending on the urgency of their need. To have bureaucrats change the urgency of patients' surgery for political reasons is terrible and should be exposed.

I will not read any more, but I stress the fact that that anonymous letter contains the name of the person who gave the specific instruction and also the name of the person on behalf of whom they believe the instruction was issued.

Subsequent to receiving that letter, last night I received a telephone call (because that anonymous letter is an allegation) from a senior staff member at the Royal Adelaide Hospital that was very specific indeed. In fact, I discussed in great detail what had been going on at the Royal Adelaide Hospital. I stressed the fact that priority on the surgical list is determined by the medical specialists; by the surgeon involved. They assess the patient and make a determination that it is either urgent, which means it should be done within 30 days; semi-urgent, which means it should be done within 90 days; or non-urgent, which means it should be done within one year. The surgeon would then sign off an M45 form, which is on the computer, and that is a classification determined by the surgeon.

About two or three weeks ago, shortly after *The Advertiser* had printed a major story coming out of the state budget about poor performance against national standards in our hospitals in the central and north regions in terms of achieving those national standards, the percentages dropped very dramatically. In fact, last Friday, the minister brought out the elective surgery bulletin and it showed that the deterioration has been huge; they were the worst figures ever recorded for this state. It became very clear, in talking to this person last night, that this change in category had not been made by the doctor; it had not even been made in consultation with the doctor concerned. There had been no further interview or assessment of the patient. It was made by an administrator, or a bureaucrat, and was made on someone's orders. In fact, I found out today that a number of the staff refused to carry out the changing of the classifications for surgery, because they thought that it was grossly improper. It has always been the prerogative of the surgeon to do that, and there are medical standards and ethics behind which it is done.

I find this very disturbing, indeed. I might add that I received a telephone call this morning which indicated that it would appear that all the original classifications suddenly have been put back again, which shows that, since this has

been exposed and questions asked at the Royal Adelaide Hospital yesterday, someone's guilt has got to them and they have decided to try to cover up what has occurred. However, the staff openly talk about the fact that this has been done. It is not one person; it is a group of staff who talk about it, and those staff members are able to give evidence as to what has occurred. There needs to be an independent investigation by the Ombudsman, using his powers of a royal commissioner to take evidence from people to get to the bottom of this, because it is a very serious matter indeed, which affects the safety of patients.

Time expired.

ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR AND EXPO

Ms BREUER (Giles): On 3 June 2005, the South Australian government held an Aboriginal Economic Development Seminar and Expo at the Adelaide Convention Centre. I am pleased to inform the house that the events were an outstanding gathering of indigenous leaders, including both elders and young people who are excelling in their chosen field. I was delighted to attend this seminar for part of the day. Around 400 people attended the event, which strongly focused on generating employment, business and economic development opportunities for Aboriginal people in South Australia. The majority of the attendees were Aboriginal people from communities, government and the private sector. I was very pleased to see many Anangu from the AP lands at the seminar, and also many from Yalata and the Far West area, amongst others from all over South Australia.

The seminar and expo showcased an outstanding array of Aboriginal businesses that included: Iga Warta; Bungala Corporation, which was represented with Walga Mining, which is operating in my particular area; Ku Arts; Process Express Print; Head of the Bight; Mannum Aboriginal Community Association Inc.; Camp Coorong Wilderness Lodge; Sacred Site Within Healing Centre; Classic Black Chauffeurs; and Ernabella Arts and Crafts. Many of those are in my electorate. It is well worth making the point that, of the over 40 exhibitors who participated in the expo, over half were Aboriginal owned and operated enterprises. These Aboriginal businesses, from a variety of industries, are success stories, and each are worthy of recognition and celebration in their own right. I certainly hope that they will be an inspiration to others, and I am confident that some business networking opportunities occurred during the course of the expo. In the breaks, it was very interesting to see the of interaction that was going. The people were discussing things, getting together, meeting up with old friends and making new friends.

During the course of the day, more than a dozen successful Aboriginal businesses participated in various panel discussions about Aboriginal tourism, mining and arts and crafts. Many more showed their wares in the expo, which continued into the early evening. Other speakers discussed opportunities for collaboration between Aboriginal communities and local government, the chief executives of DAARE and the Department for Trade and Economic Development spoke about the state government's efforts to work with Aboriginal people and communities in the field of economic development, and Mr Ron Morony, General Manager of Indigenous Business Australia, an organisation that is clearly

doing much to advance Aboriginal economic development throughout Australia, also spoke.

The day was about celebrating and showcasing Aboriginal success stories—and I think that that is something we as a community we certainly need to do more often. It was just wonderful to be there and see these success stories. There are so many innovative and dynamic Aboriginal businesses in South Australia, and the seminar, I believe, will inspire others to follow in their footsteps, and give hope that, by working together, we can make a difference in their lives. I am heartened by the willingness of Aboriginal people and enterprises to work with all tiers of government and the private sector, and to tackle the economic challenges that face the Aboriginal community. Indeed, this is itself a cause for great optimism for our state.

Rio Tinto was involved in the seminar and showed the private sector's support of the process and its willingness to work with Aboriginal people. I think that, if we can get more big companies like Rio Tinto involved, we will certainly go a long way in this state. In closing, I would particularly like to pay tribute to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, the Hon. Terry Roberts MLC, who I know could see the clear benefits of holding this seminar and expo, and he worked particularly hard in making this event happen. It was no easy task to pull together all those people and present this day. It was delightful that he was able to come along and speak, and he stayed for some time that morning. It was excellent to see him, and I congratulate him on having the vision to produce this expo.

In addition, the resounding success of the day could not have been achieved without the input of Mr Peter Buckskin, Chief Executive of the Department for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation, and his staff. I take this opportunity to thank them for their efforts. They did a great deal of work for this day, and I think they can be particularly proud of it. I was very happy to attend, and I certainly learned a lot. I was pleased to see the looks on people's faces when they realised just how much is happening and how it is possible for them to succeed in business and economic development. I know that we will get some good results from the day.

Time expired.

YOUTH PROGRAMS

Mr SCALZI (Hartley): Today I wish to bring to the attention of the house the cessation of funding for a youth participation program by the Tea Tree Gully council. I have been in contact with the spokesperson (the youth participation officer, Sally Patterson) and the member for Newland, who has had a long involvement with youth issues in the north-eastern area. She, too, is disappointed at the cessation of the funding.

With council support, a group of young people prepared an application for a youth empowerment grant from the Office for Youth for a youth festival to be held in May this year. In March 2005, they were advised that their application had been unsuccessful. According to the Office for Youth, only 13 grants were made from 50 grant applications. Tea Tree Gully council has a very strong record of innovative projects and of supporting youth in the area. I take this opportunity to thank the councils in my area—namely, Norwood, Payneham and St Peters, Campbelltown and Burnside councils—for all the work they do for youth. It is very important that local government gets involved with

youth projects to provide facilities and services for young people.

With input from young people, Tea Tree Gully council supported a skate park at Golden Grove, in addition to new sporting facilities at Harpers Field and generous support for sport and the participation of children and youth in school and club competitions, alongside recreational facilities. In the area, some 10 000 participate in sport, and 8 000 enjoy recreational facilities such as bike trails, parks, skate parks and playgrounds. The upgrading of library facilities (computer, youth and children's sections) has also been funded, in addition to programs that were not state or federally funded, such as the Blue Earth programs for children in year 3 which promote active and healthy lifestyles; the Green Room community youth centre, with Clovercrest Baptist Church—

The Hon. S.W. Key: Which I opened!

Mr SCALZI: The minister said that she opened it, and it was a good initiative. The Tea Tree Gully council also supports youth programs such as Life Education, Let's Talk, Drug Arm and the coordination of over 480 community groups and clubs for young people. Youth work programs established in 1989 employ a youth worker for the Golden Grove area. The council also supports the northern region crime prevention program, as well as early intervention and educational initiatives. This year, the council representative at local, state and regional youth networks participates in national Youth Week, which includes exhibitions, dance parties, a youth expo, a walk and musical events. For six weeks, Tea Tree Gully has had its own recently recruited youth participation officer.

The council has certainly shown a commitment to and passion for supporting its young people. I know that many other local governments are investing heavily in the well-being and engagement of the community's young people and are actively supporting this representation via youth advisory committees in 60 council areas. Therefore, it is all the more disappointing to hear that the reduction in state government funding—

Time expired.

BALTIC NATIONS

The Hon. M.J. ATKINSON (Attorney-General): Last month marked the 60th anniversary of VE Day, the day when the Allies celebrated victory over Nazi Germany. But, as pictures of celebration and re-enactments were beamed from Western European countries, uppermost in my mind was that many Europeans had little to be happy about on that day. The immediate and tragic fate of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania had already been determined by the signing of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact of 1939. At that time, barely 20 years had passed since those nations had gained independence. Caught between the Nazis and the Soviets, the Baltic countries were about to endure a period of bloody dictatorship. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania may not have been the only countries to have fallen into the sphere of Russian Bolshevik influence, but the rest of the world would learn after 1945 that there was only one thing worse than being part of the Warsaw Pact and that was complete annexation by the Soviet Union—to be a Soviet socialist republic.

The Baltic Council of South Australia invited me to speak on the 12th of this month at a solemn commemoration of the lost souls of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It was in June

1941 that the Soviet Union began mass deportations to the Arctic Circle of people from those countries—people whose absence in the far-off gulags weighed heavily on those left behind. These deportations of hundreds of thousands of people robbed most of the victims of their future. It also devastated their families, communities and nations. Imagine for a moment the contribution these hundreds of thousands of men and women would have made in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania if they had not been imprisoned or killed. Think of the number of lost workers, administrators, intellectuals, clergy, artists, academics, scientists and teachers.

In the last decade and half, we have seen these nations rise and develop at a pace that astounded the rest of the world. Since becoming free from the Soviet Union, the people of the Baltic countries have shown remarkable determination and enterprise that has propelled them into the European Union. It was this bright future that was denied them throughout a bleak 50 years. Through all the horror, stories of courage and hope emerged a foretaste of the bravery that Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians would show in 1990 and 1991, especially when Soviet soldiers in tanks tried to retake the means of communication, such as television transmission towers, from the Baltic people.

Ann Lehtmetts from Rakvere, Estonia, gave us a stunning example of courage in her book *Sentence: Siberia*. Assisted by her South Australian born son-in-law, Dr Douglas Hoile, Ann told us her extraordinary story and the story of many others who were deported by Soviet authorities. Ann was sent to Siberia in 1941. She was sent there after her husband was shot and her children were torn away from her embrace. Ann suffered through cold and hunger in a bleak and inhospitable land. She was also subjected to backbreaking forced labour and constant surveillance from secret police. Yet she survived in Siberia for 17 years. Her son Tiit and her daughter Tiiu, and later, Tiiu's husband, Douglas Hoile, prayed and hoped for her survival.

In 1959, Ann was reunited with her daughter in Australia. Ann's story is one of indomitable spirit, intelligence and a great humour maintained in adversity. Her story echoes the stories of thousands of others who did not have the opportunity to tell them. Some survived, but many perished. Ann Lehtmetts and Douglas Hoile have spoken for all the people to whom we paid tribute earlier this month—people who suffered the loss of family, freedom and life.

The strength of spirit of people like Ann gave Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians the belief that they would triumph in the end. More would be killed—as late as 1991, they were being murdered, as the Soviets made a last desperate attempt to hold onto power—but they would be free again. Today, these three Baltic nations are flourishing and showing the world their beauty—their amber coastlines, enchanting cities and verdant countryside. The people are showing leadership in academia, culture, enterprise and sport. We will not forget those who were lost, but we can take some comfort in their efforts to make Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia the free countries they are today.

FLOODING

Mr BRINDAL (Unley): Today, in question time, we saw an extraordinary contribution by the Acting Premier in respect of his contention that flooding was solely a local government issue, despite the fact that in his answer he clearly mentioned that it was a planning problem. I point out

to the house that the Planning Act is a lawful responsibility of this parliament, which delegates its responsibility for supplementary PARs to councils under the Planning Act, but it is planning as a lawful authority of this parliament, delegated to local government, in its own capacity and not through the Local Government Act. So, for the Deputy Premier to say, 'It's nothing to do with us, it is a planning issue,' clearly shows that he does not understand the statute laws of the state of South Australia. I think it was the last planning minister who implemented a ministerial PAR—as did the Hon. Diana Laidlaw on several instances on matters of concern to South Australia.

If there is one matter that increasingly concerns metropolitan South Australia and, obviously, Murray Bridge, it is the matter of flooding. For the Deputy Premier to say, 'Is not our problem: it is local government's problem,' shows a lack of understanding that should have been lost in this chamber 20 years since. Then the member for Flinders gets up and talks about an Aboriginal project, a levy and road works associated with Koonibba, that may—if her figures are correct—cost half a million dollars to prevent flooding in an area that would be lucky to get it once in 500 years. I lived near Koonibba and it is not an area of South Australia noted for its rainfall. There are clear signs all around the adjacent township of Ceduna (where water is piped) saying, 'Beware. If you are travelling to the border, no surface water for [I think] the next 300 kilometres.' It is not exactly the wettest part of the state, yet we can apparently afford to spend half a million dollars on levy banks in Koonibba for a one in 500 year event while at the same time ignoring what was purportedly a one in 100 year event but which just happens to have occurred twice in the last year.

The same is true of Unley, Ashford, West Torrens and Morphett: there has been severe flooding in each of those electorates, and that flooding is not solely the province of nature. The flooding is partly a direct result of planning decisions made not by this government but by a succession of governments; a succession of governments which have made bad planning law and which have held councils responsible in urban infill for making sure that the infrastructure could cope. No council looked at the consequences of square metre after square metre of impervious surfaces which instantly contribute to run-off and which result in natural creeks in this state running over capacity, and that has actually exacerbated the footprints of what we now describe as flood plain. The problem of flooding in metropolitan Adelaide is one created—at least in part, and probably in the most part—by the poor planning decisions of a succession of governments sitting in this chamber. It is this chamber that is responsible for planning law and it is this chamber who, in concert with local government, needs to sort out the matter.

In my electorate of Unley and in the electorates of West Torrens, Ashford, Morphett and many of the electorates to the north on the Light and Little Para flood plains, billions of dollars of personal property is exposed to risk. It is not good enough to say, 'Whoops; we gave you permission to build on a flood plain [which was itself illegal] but, now that you have built there, if you want to build an extension just build up the block on which your house is to be put by a metre above the rest of the house so that we are not responsible if the rest of the house floods.' It is not good enough for government to now obviate its responsibility and say, 'We didn't know; it is someone else's problem.' This is a problem for all the people of South Australia, every elector in the greater metropolitan area and most of the electors in this state,

because it is the common wealth of this state that is at risk, and it is the coffers of the state that are also at risk.

COMMUNITY FOODIES

Ms THOMPSON (Reynell): It gives me great pleasure to rise today to tell the house about an organisation called Community Foodies. I was privileged to be able to attend the Community Foodies celebration day on 3 June. It was one of those events that, after a hard week in parliament when you are not feeling all that bright and when, on Friday, you started the day with a 7.30 a.m. breakfast, you go and see the energy among the community members down south, and you suddenly feel like you can fly through the rest of the day. It was an absolute joy for me to attend this event. Sharon Spezzano, who is one of the community foodies on the state's steering committee, has asked me to publicise Community Foodies, because she knows that a number of people are making decisions about their continuing funding at the moment. She hopes that I might be able to assist her in demonstrating the value of the Community Foodies program to the community, hence, the desirability of continued funding by the various sponsoring bodies.

Community Foodies is attacking the problem of poor nutrition in poor communities. We all see it and know it. We all know that, despite amazing publicity campaigns about healthy eating and giving up smoking, the community members who have the most difficulty adopting healthy lifestyles are people who are poor, for all sorts of reasons. They do not have the gadgets and fun in the kitchen that I have on the few occasions when I get to do some food preparation. They do not have nice saucepans or knives, etc. They are always battling with trying to meet the budget. They are often tired and stressed; so, whatever comes quickest is often the easiest answer. Trying to balance meals and do budget planning, etc. is not an easy task for anyone who is feeling tired and run down, and often unwell, because many people who have low means also have poor health. Community Foodies is tackling this issue at the community level. They are community members who, generally, are unemployed or on disability support services themselves or sometimes on a carer's allowance, but really having a difficult time.

They attend a training program that has been developed by the dietitians and nutritionists at Noarlunga Health Service. As part of this, they learn how to go into the community and give programs on healthy eating, basic nutrition and meal planning and budget-type programs. Then they go back to their community and they work out how they can best work with members of the community on a peer education basis to spread the very good news about nutrition and the benefits of healthy eating. The programs that have been developed by these community foodies, with the help of dietitians and nutritionists, include Cheap Easy Meals, Stretch Your Dollar Further, Baby's First Meals, Smart Food Shopping, Men Can Cook Too and Healthy Barbecues.

The Hon. K.O. Foley: Men can cook, too; absolutely.

Ms THOMPSON: Yes; they even have a program for you! Foodies have set up gardens with the children in schools and early years programs. They have run fun, hands-on nutrition programs with children and adults at kindies, schools, community centres and early years centres. Some other areas of involvement have included canteens, breakfast clubs and Lions clubs. Community Foodies proclaim that

they are making a difference and, from the presentations and the energy that I experienced on 3 June, I know that they are making a difference. I also know that, from the feedback that I get around my community about the enjoyment of the programs that they have run, they are getting good feedback and that they are helping young people and older people not only to understand the benefits of healthy eating but also to be able to organise their gardens, budgets and kitchens so that they can enjoy healthy eating and good health, too.

Time expired.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on motion:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

(Continued from page 2990.)

Mr WILLIAMS: I wish to continue the remarks that I started this morning. I was talking about the actual process of estimates and that the way in which the budget is presented to the parliament leaves a lot to be desired and makes it very difficult for anyone—least of all the opposition, and I am sure non-members of the executive government have the same problem—in making any understanding of exactly what is going on. For a government that professes to have openness and accountability as some of its hallmarks, the budget falls well short of providing anything which could be compared with openness and, therefore, it makes it very difficult for the government to be held accountable. I think I could be excused for taking the cynical attitude that that is done quite deliberately.

Regarding some of the things that happened in the budget, when picking up this morning's paper, two articles caught my eye. First, on page 2 of *The Advertiser* it says that the government is going to appoint a top level group to plot South Australia's needs. After about two years of rhetoric, we have finally had the State Infrastructure Plan presented to us. I said at the time, and I do not mind repeating, that it is like all the plans that the government produces: millions of words but not much planning and no strategy. Now, at the eleventh hour—and this government is in the eleventh hour of its four-year term—we are going to set up another group to produce some more reports.

So, here we have a government that has been in office for over three years, and it still does not know what are the infrastructure needs of South Australia. It has no idea, yet, only a month and a half ago, we had the Minister for Infrastructure and Transport stand up here and say how important it was to proceed with the transport announcements that were made: saying how wonderful the underpasses on South Road were—and I am not suggesting that they are not necessary—the tram up King William Street—and I will not accept that that is a wonderful idea—and then, when the Premier was in America, he said that it was going to go all the way to Brougham Place in North Adelaide. It is an absolute waste of money, and yet, after all of these grandiose announcements, the government turns around and says, 'We are going to set up another high level committee to advise us

on infrastructure.' I think this article points to another massive failure of the government.

I am pleased that the Deputy Premier is in the house as the Minister for Police because the other article in this morning's paper—much further in—that took my eye was about 81 new bobbies on the beat, the police recruited from England to work in South Australia, and that is fantastic. But a couple of figures were quoted in there. The police minister might dispute the figures that *The Advertiser* has used, but it states that the target is to get 4 000 officers in South Australia, and that today we have 3 834. So, I do not know whether that target reflects the extra 200 police whom the Deputy Premier says that he wants to recruit. In fact, he has not been saying that: he is saying we have 200 extra police. If those figures in *The Advertiser* are correct and I am interpreting them properly, of that 200, we actually have 34. Again, this indicates a massive shortfall in what the government said it wanted to do. Again, on that point, I am not surprised, because, as we know, what this government is very good at (and it will get marked 100/100 from me) is spin and rhetoric. What it is very poor at is the delivery.

I have a couple of comments regarding the areas that I shadow through the estimates process. In the mineral resources area, the Labor government will grapple over the next couple of years with the uranium issue. Again, the minister said in the estimates committee that during the time between mineral discovery and when we receive an application to open a new mine the federal Labor Party will hopefully have changed its policy. I hope the minister is right—I wish him luck. Some of the noises coming out of Canberra suggest that he may not be right. The spot price for uranium—remembering that just over 12 months ago uranium was worth \$US10 per pound—is up around \$29 per pound. There is a hell of a lot of it in South Australia. Any company that discovers a new uranium deposit in South Australia will want to fast-track to production. The Deputy Premier again is one who has expressed his opinion that it is time the Labor Party got over its stupid philosophical stance on uranium and came out with a half sensible policy—I wish him luck.

Another area which I covered in the estimates committees was Forestry SA. Notwithstanding the fact that in the last two or three budgets it has had money to buy new land to expand the forestry estate, Forestry SA has been unable to utilise all those funds, and that is disappointing. It is a huge industry which is located almost totally in the South-East, and it underpins the economy of the local area—the seats of Gordon and MacKillop in the South-East. I honestly believe that we do need to grow the local forest estates in the South-East, and grow it substantially for the benefit of not only the South-East but the whole state. It provides for value-adding businesses in the South-East which is worth about \$1.5 million per year. That is significant and substantial, and to continue to do that we need to grow the forest estate considerably. I am pleased to see the money in the budget; I just want to see its being put to good use to purchase land and have it planted to forest.

One of the other areas I covered was administration services, which includes SA Water. Today in the house I asked the minister two questions as a follow-up to a question I asked in the estimates committee about a letter sent out by SA Water under the signature of Neil White, General Manager Retail, SA Water, to I suspect all the metropolitan customers of SA Water. I am not sure how many letters have been sent, but we know that there have been a couple of test mailings over the past nine months. This letter makes an outrageous claim. It states:

A recent national survey revealed that two out of three home owners have at some time experienced a plumbing or drainage emergency—

Whoopy-do. The letter continues:

The survey results also suggested that, based on recent trends, an estimated 200 000 South Australian households are likely to experience a plumbing or drainage emergency in the next 12 months.

I repeat: 200 000 households. I undertook some research. SA Water has a sum total of 458 000 household customers in South Australia. I would suggest that there are only about 400 000 SA Water household customers in metropolitan Adelaide. SA Water is sending out a letter which is seriously suggesting that there is a high risk—virtually a 100 per cent risk—that half their customers will experience a plumbing emergency in the next 12 months.

I put it to the house that, if a private company in South Australia distributed advertising material of this nature, Mark Bodycoat would be drawing to people's attention that this is an outrageous claim that has no basis in fact whatsoever, and would be demanding that the company withdraw its letter and write to the people to whom it had written pointing out the error of its ways. That is what any government would do if a private company tried to do what SA Water is doing. This is an absolute outrage, and the minister in question time today just wanted to wash his hands of it. He wants nothing to do with it. He is saying that there is a rider down the bottom to say that this is based on a survey. So what? He will not table the survey. The plumbing industry association made a freedom of information request last year, and, when SA Water sent the material requested, it even blanked out the questions that were put in some of these surveys. It would not allow the plumbing industry association to have an understanding of the questions in the survey. That is the way in which SA Water is treating this matter: it is treating it incredibly secretly, as is the minister.

I am a cynical person and, if you spend long enough in this place, you become cynical. My cynicism says to me that there is a large stench behind this matter. If there was not, last year the minister would have explained what was going on. Certainly today—because the minister has had two or three days to do a bit of homework on this matter; I asked him about this matter on Tuesday in the estimates committee—having done his homework, he stonewalls it. He will not give an answer. He just wants to stonewall it and hope it will go away.

I will not lie down and let SA Water—a part of the government of South Australia—send out this sort of nonsense to promote a private business to dupe the people of South Australia. It is on SA Water's letterhead and it is signed by one of its senior managers. I think any realistic analysis of the state of the plumbing in people's households in metropolitan Adelaide would show that the risk of half of those households experiencing a plumbing emergency in the next 12 months is close to zero. If this letter went out and said that there was a fair chance 10 per cent of people have a reasonable risk of requiring this service in the next 12 months, I think that would be a fair claim. But to say virtually half the households in South Australia will require the service in the next 12 months is outrageous. The government and minister know they would not let a private company behave in this manner.

Mrs GERAGHTY secured the adjournment of the debate.

STATUTES AMENDMENT (BUDGET 2005) BILL

Adjourned debate on second reading.
(Continued from 26 May. Page 2787.)

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH (Waite): I rise as the leader speaker for the opposition on this bill and indicate that we will be supporting the bill. We have no intention of getting between any form of tax cut and the people—unlike some federal leaders in Canberra who seem to have a different idea. I think Mr Beazley should take a leaf out of the state opposition's book in South Australia. Having said that, and acknowledging the desire of the house to deal with this bill expeditiously, the opposition feels that it is necessary to place the bill within the context of the broader budget. It does deliver some reductions in tax to taxpayers. Of course, that is within the context of overall increases in revenue to government, in particular, the budget benefits from the GST deal, which the Premier, the Treasurer and the Labor Party opposed, and from the debt reduction due to the sale of and ETSA's privatisation, noted by Standard & Poors as one of the key reasons why the state achieved its AAA rating—a turnaround, which was delivered after the catastrophic State Bank collapse over a period of many years but which finally arrived after the March 2002 election, but due, as Standard & Poors note, largely as a consequence of efforts taken well before this government came to office.

In 2005-06 this government will collect \$2.2 billion more revenue than the last Liberal government—\$10.7 billion versus \$8.5 billion, and what has happened to it? Where is the dividend for South Australians? The budget numbers simply cannot be believed, in the view of the opposition. We have told the house previously that, in the three previous budgets, revenue was underestimated to an amazing extent. In fact, in 2002-03 it was \$528 million; in 2003-04, \$794 million; and in 2004-05, \$461 million. That is a total of \$1 783 million—an average of about \$600 million per annum of underestimation. The opposition has raised the point, both publicly and in the house, that it makes it difficult to rely on the government's budget figures when there is that level of underestimation.

The opposition reminds the house and the public of South Australia that this budget has delivered no payroll tax relief. The South Australian payroll tax threshold of \$104 000 is the lowest of all states and territories in Australia. The \$1.5 billion tax relief package, of which this bill enacts part, extends to the year 2011, with a significant part starting to kick in only from 2009-10, as will be discussed during the committee stage of this bill.

All this (except the land tax relief of \$380 million) was forced upon this government by the federal Liberal government (the Howard/Costello tax cuts, as we like to think of them) as a result of GST negotiations with the commonwealth that were originally negotiated by the former state Liberal government. Taxation revenue collections fall within the context of this being the highest taxing government in the state's history; and the Treasurer is presiding over the highest taxation windfall on record in South Australia.

Conveyancing stamp duties in 2004-05 resulted in the collection of \$105 million, or 24 per cent more than was budgeted for—another Rann broken promise. In regard to land tax to which this bill relates, taxation collections increase from \$261 million in 2004-05 to \$292 million in 2005-06 despite the cuts in this bill, even after the rebate relief package that this bill will enact. Private sector collections

doubling in collections, of course, will occur from 2001-02, and rising even after the rebates and relief in this bill come into being.

It is worth drawing to the attention of the house and the taxpayers of South Australia the full extent of that, because the land tax collections comprised \$140 million in 2001-02. They went up \$157 million in 2002-03, \$198 million in 2003-04, \$261 million in 2004-05 and \$292 million estimated for 2005-06—more than doubling since the last Liberal budget which dealt with the issue of land tax. Land tax, even after this bill, will have doubled. That is the take from the people of South Australia. When one looks forward, it gets worse. It continues to rise in 2006-07 to \$301 million. It rises again in 2007-08 to \$308 million, and again in 2008-09 to \$318 million.

In the second reading explanation the house was encouraged to believe that these were land tax cuts. In fact, in total revenue terms, there are ongoing increases in land tax revenues to the state government. There is no cut, in effect. This is simply a reduction in the increase, if you like, and the people of South Australia need to be reminded of that. In particular, private sector land-holders need to be reminded that in 2001-02 the former Liberal government took \$76 million off them in land tax, but \$91 million was taken in 2002-03 in this government's first budget; \$118 million was taken in 2003-04; and the figure was \$151 million (a more than doubling) in 2004-05. In 2005-06 it is estimated that \$161 million will be taken off private landholders, \$168 million in 2006-06, \$173 million in 2007-08 and \$182 million in 2008-09.

So, let the house and the people of South Australia be in no doubt about the real picture in regard to land tax revenue before we get into the meat of this bill. The land tax take is increasing exponentially, despite the contents of this bill. There is a little bit of window-dressing here but, according to my calculations, the net result will be that total government revenue under this government from the time the Liberals were in office until 2005-06 will have increased by a massive 25.57 per cent—almost 26 per cent—and government expenditure will have increased since the last Liberal budget in 2001-02 by 22.46 per cent.

Over this period, inflation was just over 9 per cent. The Treasurer must wake up in the morning and thank his lucky stars that not only has he not been contained by government revenue and tax-take to CPI but he has been able to outspend CPI by a factor of almost 2.5. When I did the sums for the last financial year I found that the increase in revenue to 2004-05 was 20.66 per cent and the increase in government expenditure by the Treasurer was 16.1 per cent. When you look at the gap between the revenue that has been rolling over the counter and expenditure last year, you see that the Treasurer has allowed himself a buffer of 4.5 per cent—a gap between revenue and expenditure of 4.5 per cent.

The Treasurer tells us he is running a tight budget. He is keeping it under revenue, but I just remind the house that he is using a multiple of 2.5 of CPI in terms of revenue. When you do the sums for 2005-06 you see that he has tightened the margin; in this pre-election year he has spent a bit more. The gap between revenue and expenditure up to 2005-06 is only 3.1 per cent. So, he has taken the advantage this year of spending considerably more than he had spent up until last year. Almost 1.5 per cent extra of total revenue has been spent this year.

Some might call that porkbarrelling or a pre-election spend, but there is a lot more money out there in this financial

year than there has been in previous financial years. That is the context within which we debate this bill. It is a context in which the money from GST, land tax and other sources is simply rolling over the counter. Anyone who is running an enterprise, whether it is a business or government enterprise—and there are many on this side of the house who have done so—would know that when the money is rolling in it does not matter how inefficient you are—you can over-staff, run things ineffectively, spend up on things that you might not ordinarily be able to spend up on, and you will still look good.

When the money is rolling in you can get away with a whole lot of inefficiencies and evils. It is when the money is not rolling in that you have a problem. It is when conditions tighten—when you have to face the sort of conditions that Stephen Baker faced in budgets in 1993, 1994 and 1995 when revenue was not even matching the CPI, when your ability to spend was contained so dramatically by the lack of revenue coming in, when house prices were actually falling as well as land tax revenues as a consequence of that—that is the test of a treasurer, a budget, and a government. This government, this Treasurer and this budget have not really been tested, not when you have the spectacular revenue increases that we have seen.

The bill deals with a range of issues. It addresses the impact of the increase in land values on land tax liabilities, so the government claims, and it reduces the bracket creep effects. The land tax threshold and the rates structure are adjusted by the bill to provide more broad-based relief, but as I have just pointed out the massive jump in land tax revenue from three years ago means that every person who pays land tax is paying even after this bill exponentially more than they were in 2001-02. All this has done is simply soften it ever so slightly.

In addition, the bill introduces specific amendments to provide additional relief to property owners conducting a business from their principal place of residence—in particular, operators of bed and breakfast accommodation. It changes the arrangements for caravan parks, residential arrangements, supported residential facilities, land use for primary production and persons holding land by way of moiety titles. There is a new land tax structure specified in the bill, which is noted by the opposition and by the house. Effective from the 2005-06 assessment year there will be different exemptions and land tax arrangements payable based on the proportion of a home or residence which is used for business purposes. The government claims the bill will deliver similar land tax treatment to that provided to retirement villages where retired occupants do not own the land on which the retirement units are located, and we will go into that during the committee stage.

The bill also adjusts arrangements in defined rural areas for all owners of primary production land and talks about proposals for situations where a co-owning relative derives significant income from other sources. The proposal contained in the bill deals with a range of further ownership arrangements that will now receive the benefit of the exemption—including, for example, where an owner has retired and a close relative has now substantially engaged in the primary production activity conducted on the land. But, as we will see and explore during the committee stage, in the view of the opposition, there will necessarily be a degree of red tape and form filling that will be required in order to substantiate this, and the compliance regime may well result

in revenue expectations falling short of the government's hopes. We will explore that later.

The bill proposes to amend the act to recognise individual undivided share title owners as owners of their portion of the land for land tax assessment purposes, and hopes that in this way land tax liabilities will only be based on the value of their particular portion of the property. Changes to the Land Tax Act 1923 have an estimated revenue cost of \$58 million in 2005-06 and \$244 million over the four years from 2005-06 to 2008-09. But members should remember that at the outset the opposition made the point that land tax revenues will still be extraordinarily higher than they have been, so it is really nothing but a token effort that we are making with this bill.

Of course, the bill also addresses the federal Liberal government's, shall we call them the Costello-Howard-GST tax cuts that were foisted upon the Treasurer. I know state treasurers were gathered in Canberra and there was a public and feisty exchange of words. In the end, however, it was apparent that the government needed to concede on this issue and cave in on reductions that were agreed to, after all, in the intergovernmental agreement that constituted the Ministerial Council for Commonwealth-State Financial Relations and which acknowledged that by 2005 states would review the need for retention for stamp duty on non-residential conveyances particularly involving leases, mortgages, debentures, bonds and other loan securities, credit arrangements, instalment purchase arrangements and rental arrangements, cheques, bills of exchange, promissory notes and non-quoted marketable securities.

South Australia took action on some of these stamp duties ahead of the scheduled time frame when it abolished cheque and lease duties in the 2004-05 budget, so some of these measures have already been implemented, but this bill proposes now to take action to implement the phasing in of more of these reductions that have been required by the federal government. So, they are really Liberal Party-federal government tax cuts that are being delivered to business. Remaining mortgage documents will continue to attract stamp duty at a rate of 45¢ per \$100, and the bill goes on and explains an array of other changes.

Rental duty will also be phased out between 1 July 2007 and 1 July 2009. Well done, Mr Costello! The hire of goods under equipment finance arrangements currently attracts a duty rate of 0.75 per cent of rental income. That is to be reduced in three stages to zero. All other rental businesses attract a rate of 1.8 per cent on rental income in excess of \$6 000 per month. This duty rate will also be reduced in three stages.

A number of minor stamp duty charges are to be abolished—thanks to Messrs Howard and Costello—and these stamp duty changes have been estimated to cost \$24 million in 2005-06 and \$180 million over the four years 2005-06 to 2009. That really is GST money—the extraordinary GST revenues that have come to the state offset those reductions. There is really no cost to the budget, but a surplus from the GST revenue and the residue land tax increases of an extraordinary scale that have occurred over the past three or four years.

The opposition supports the bill because it delivers some amelioration of what has been an extraordinary hike in taxation under this state Labor government. It is very much a tax and spend government. The government and the Treasurer may crow about the fact that they are containing spending to within revenue, but when you have had a 25 per

cent increase over three or four budgets—the most extraordinary increase in revenue this state has ever seen—it is not surprising that you would contain your expenditure under revenue.

The state government is a bit like the woman from Salisbury who wins Lotto and suddenly finds herself with \$10 million and then says, 'I'm doing a great job paying my rent and the car payments; I'm living within my means.' That is the situation this government is in. It has won Lotto and it is in a position to live within its means. Well, whoop-de-do! All the reasons for that have nothing to do with the actions of this government but a lot to do with the actions of the former Liberal government in sorting out the State Bank wreckage left to us and with the federal government delivering overarching reforms that have delivered a more prosperous and better state. With those remarks, the opposition indicates that it would like briefly to go into committee and deal with a number of matters.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY (Treasurer): I do not intend to speak for very long. I make the observation that ever since I have had this job I have been criticised by members opposite, particularly the member who has just spoken, for everything. We have either taxed too much, spent too much, spent too little or we are not cutting taxes enough, but in all of the merry dance the opposition tries to lead the government around it has never once put up a constructive cost of policy. There is not a minister in this government who does not face criticism and demands by the opposition to spend more money.

So, I find it bizarre that the member for Waite could say that we are spending too much money, when in fact we are balancing the budget and we are spending less than we are earning with modest surpluses. However, the shadow minister for education is always saying that we should spend more on education. The shadow minister for health, the deputy leader, always says that we should be spending more on health. The shadow police minister says that we should be spending more on police. We have the shadow minister for families and communities saying we should be spending more on families and communities. The member for Waite says that we should spend more money on the arts and millions on bio innovation. How does the member for Waite, in his bizarre economics, rationalise an argument that we should be spending more and more money but that we are spending too much? I cannot work it out.

The government is criticised every day for not spending more money on every possible area of government activity, yet members opposite waltz in here tonight and say that we are spending too much. For goodness sakes! Or they say that we are not cutting taxes quickly enough or that we have not cut payroll tax. We are the biggest tax cutting government in the state's history. The taxation revenue the honourable member refers to is what occurs when a government presides over strong economic growth. There is higher taxation revenue when you are able to manage a stronger economy. Yet, he says that they should be named 'Costello-Howard tax cuts'. Well, fine. I have never hidden the fact that Peter Costello was keen for the states to cut these taxes. I have not ever hidden the fact that these are a result of Peter Costello's interpretation of the IGA agreement.

Members of the opposition can call it what they like, but underlying every contribution opposition members make is that they have not yet got over the fact that they are not in government. They still try somehow to connect everything we

do back to when they were in office. If that makes them feel better and they sleep at night because of it, honestly, I am happy for that to occur. If the member for Waite thinks that all the good stuff we are doing in government is the result of things that he or his government started, good luck to him. If he wants to feel that way I am happy for him to take credit for it because, at the end of the day, I do not want to waste the time of this place in trying to play one-upmanship with the opposition.

Bill read a second time.

In committee.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Pages 4 and 5 of the bill deal with the exemption or partial exemption of certain land from land tax. There are revised arrangements and, in particular, new section 5(10) talks about 'proper grounds for exempting land from land tax under this section'. There are three tests, as follows. Land may be wholly exempted from land tax if the land is owned by a natural person and constitutes his or her principal place of residence; that the buildings on the land have a predominantly residential character; and that no part of the land is used for a business or commercial purpose other than the business of primary production, and it talks about 25 per cent of the floor space. Can the Treasurer explain how these tests will be monitored and how they will apply in a practical way for assessment purposes?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am advised that we have a database of people who we believe will now be exempt. We intend to write to all those people, giving them details of what will now apply, and they would respond accordingly. As is the case with respect to any taxation matter, the onus is upon the individual. We will endeavour, as accurately as we are able to from our database, to determine who we think should be eligible, but it is also incumbent upon an individual to question Revenue SA, myself, or whomever, as to whether or not they meet the criteria.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: How will it work in a practical sense? There is talk in the bill and during the second reading debate about bed and breakfasts, where, say, 25 per cent, 30 per cent or 40 per cent of a property might be used for a B&B. What about the case of, say, a country machinery business, a harvesting business, or an earthmoving business where the owner might park four or five vehicles out in the backyard—they might be in the garage of the property—and there is clearly a business being run from home, and there is clearly an enterprise being conducted from the residence? There might even be a small office inside the house, but most of the activities are in the backyard or the shed.

The bed and breakfast across the road will be paying land tax if, say, 30 or 40 per cent of the property—a couple of rooms in the house—are being used for a B&B. But, across the road the earthmoving business, which is quite a big enterprise, may not be picked up by the bill, and it may not have to pay any land tax because the house itself might have only a phone for the taking of orders. Most of the action, if you like, is in the backyard or perhaps in the garage. What is the minister's view about the equity of that arrangement? Is that a fair arrangement? Would the bed and breakfast operator have grounds to feel aggrieved about that?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The issue of equity is interesting, and that is really why governments of all persuasions are always reluctant to provide exemptions to anyone in a tax base. What occurs is that very legitimate questions of equity arise. I am not hiding the fact that a benefit is being delivered

to bed and breakfast enterprises that we as a government think is fair. If you then choose to provide me with examples of other commercial enterprises that may, on face value, have a similar argument but are not exempt, and then say that that is an equity issue, it may well be correct. I caution the member in the context that—and I am not critical of him for asking the question—with the tax net you start to loosen the criteria and you do start to undermine the revenue base of the state, and that is a very difficult thing for us to manage.

In respect of the analogy that you used, I cannot offer a particular answer other than in respect of the shed the member talked about being on the land. If the shed is for commercial use, clearly it is a commercial business. I have no doubt that if you scour the state you could find anomalies, but we have chosen to put bed and breakfasts into a particular category along with other businesses that are run from home. Clearly, in some cases, particularly in rural South Australia, there would be issues where anomalies might be raised. I do not doubt that that might occur.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Paragraph (g)(3) deals with exemptions for land use for primary production situated within a defined rural area. Subparagraph (iii) provides that 'if the land is owned solely, jointly or in common by a retired person, the following conditions are satisfied', and there are three tests. One of them is that, if you retire and you have a family member come in and work the land, you can retain the exemption. However, if you have a family friend or someone who is not an immediate family member—it might be a nephew, a grandson or whatever; and I think there are definitions later in the bill about who is and who is not a family member—you are not exempt from land tax. I wonder about the rationale behind the government's thinking. Is this a little unenforceable and difficult to police? I can see a lot of avenues for people to get around it or to raise objection and say that it is unfair. A person coming in to help them may not be their son or spouse, but might be an extended family member or a close friend.

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: The reason you do not do that is that you want to avoid rorting and tax evasion. Clearly, it makes sense to us, and we understand 'family members'. However, if you start talking about extended family, friends, the bloke down the road, or your drinking partner at the pub, it puts us on a very slippery slope in terms of mechanisms of which not even sophisticated tax avoiders could take advantage. We have to maintain integrity in the system where we can.

Clause passed.

Clause 7.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I will use this clause as an opportunity to ask the Treasurer about the issue of aggregation. A table is set out on page 10 of the bill that specifies the rates of tax that will be paid, depending on the value of the property. The issue of aggregation has been raised, and it seems that we have the most severe regime in the nation for properties exceeding \$1 million. With prices as they are, some families may reach that threshold simply because they have two homes. I ask the government: what was its thinking behind its making the rate for properties up to \$1 million so severe—the most severe in the nation? Did it consider the aggregation policy for change or review?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: We considered aggregation. I asked that question, and it was a legitimate one. The advice I was given was that, if you were to do away with aggregation, the cost to the budget would be in the tens of millions. It is a significant hit to the budget. The opposition has already

said that, at the next election, it wants to offer the electorate a sweeping reform of land tax and property-based valuation systems. Good luck to it! It has every right to do that at the next election. We have our land tax system in place. We think it is equitable, fair and balanced. Clearly, the opposition does not think so, and it intends to offer significant cuts in the land tax base. As I said, it has every right to do that in the lead-up to the next election.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: I have a question on compliance. Will the Treasurer tell us how the compliance regime will work? Reading the *Hansard* of the estimates committees of 15 June, I note that this issue was discussed with the Treasurer and Mr Walker, the Commissioner of State Taxation. In estimates, the Treasurer made the point that it relies on an honesty system. Given the point he has just made about the need to avoid loopholes and abuse of the system, how will this new system be policed? How will the issue of what percentage is used for private business, residential use and other measures be policed? Will additional compliance officers be taken on board? Will additional resources be put into checking, double-checking and catching up with small businesspeople to ensure they are meeting their commitments? What is the new compliance regime? How will you make it work?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: I am advised that land tax compliance is not considered by Revenue SA as a high revenue to risk area. In the main, taxpayers who pay land tax are very honest and very compliant in terms of their tax liability to the state. It is not a high revenue to risk ratio, but that is not to say that we do not have compliance officers looking at it: I am advised that we do. This is a system where the honesty sits with the individual. Records to date indicate an extremely high level of compliance but, like all areas of revenue raising, we have compliance officers. I am advised that we do checks and audits, and we will continue to do that.

Mr HAMILTON-SMITH: Given the Treasurer's answer to the question about compliance, doesn't the system favour the honest? That is, if you run a bed and breakfast and you put a shingle out the front, or you are running a business from home and you put up a sign, and you are open about it and you run an advertisement—something that can be checked through compliance—you are caught up by the system. However, if you want to be sneaky and run a business from home, not put a shingle out the front and not be open about it, would it not be easy to evade this regime of taxation and changed arrangements the government is introducing? Is that fair on the people who are honest and open about it?

The Hon. K.O. FOLEY: Obviously not. The tragedy with our tax system is that there is rorting of our tax system. I would think that as a small business person himself—and I am not suggesting for one minute that he would have avoided tax—he would be someone who mixes with business people, particularly small business people. I think all of us in this place would have come across people or businesses from time to time, where we wonder whether they are paying their due rate of tax. One of the arguments and the rationale put forward by the current federal government was that GST was one way of trying to deal with the black economy. Whether or not it has done so is debatable. Unfortunately, the reality is that, in society, particularly in relation to small businesses, many people trading in this economy find ways of avoiding their appropriate levels of taxation.

Obviously, in the areas the member has referred to, there is opportunity. We believe that the risk is very low; that has been the history. However, it is not a risk that people should

assume they can take without there being a chance of being caught. We have very sophisticated data matching systems in Revenue SA. We have very good intelligence as to business activities, and we have compliance officers. It would be a very reckless and foolish business operator who would gamble with being caught. However, to be brutally honest, the opportunity for avoiding tax in this area is there, but there is a level of how much effort you put into compliance. Since we came to office, we have increased compliance significantly in Revenue SA—not necessarily in this area; it is more in payroll tax and stamp duty—with significant revenue return per compliance officer. Please do not quote me, because I could be wrong, but purely from my memory of the data I had at the estimates committee, I think it was about \$800 000 net revenue above the value that a new compliance officer earns Revenue SA. So, compliance officers do have a significant impact on revenue. I would caution any small business operator to attempt to take advantage of any avoidance scheme in this area.

Clause passed.

Remaining clauses (8 to 22) and title passed.

Bill reported without amendment.

Bill read a third time and passed.

APPROPRIATION BILL

Adjourned debate on motion:

That the proposed expenditures referred to Estimates Committees A and B be agreed to.

(Continued from page 3016.)

Mrs PENFOLD (Flinders): I am most concerned about the plight of our regions, and I have seen little in the budget to make me any less concerned. Today I take the opportunity to put on the record some of the excellent points that have been made in a submission to the Independent Inquiry into the Financial Sustainability of Local Government by Vance Thomas, the executive officer of the Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association. Vance points out the issues as he sees them for the region covered by the EPLGA, which includes Whyalla. He states that without some serious underpinning we already have a couple of our councils under immediate stress and in serious financial difficulties. His concerns are my concerns but, as he has found, it is difficult to get anyone to listen. Vance sets the scene with a geographical and economic overview of the regions, as follows:

- The Eyre Peninsula occupies a vast tract of land approaching the size of Tasmania. It measures 72 410 square kilometres in area, or roughly one-third of the state land mass (40 per cent unincorporated).
- Eyre Peninsula's population of 55 392 represents 3.6 per cent of South Australia's population (Whyalla included).
- Distance between Port Lincoln and Border Village equates to Melbourne to Sydney via [the] Hume Highway (918 kilometres). Our nearest major market in Adelaide is located nearer to Melbourne than it is to Streaky Bay.
- On average, the size of an Eyre Peninsula council is nearly double that of its state counterpart.
- Average population of an Eyre Peninsula council is 4 003, compared with the state average of 22 348 or a factor of 5.5 times.
- Average number of council employees working in an Eyre Peninsula council is 34, compared with a state average of 107.
- The average revenue of an Eyre Peninsula council is \$4.67 million per annum, compared with a state average of \$15.4 million.

He points out that on a state per capita basis this is a high performance region, generating in an average year:

- a third of South Australia's grain harvest;
- two-thirds of the state's catch of seafood;
- home to one in every six of South Australia's sheep;
- higher levels of visitation than any other country tourist region in South Australia;
- processing all of the state's steel and a fair bit of its gas;
- sitting on a rich bounty of minerals, ranging from gypsum to gold;
- one of the world's top ten locations for the generation of wind power;
- healthy growth in coastal real estate, as a result of 'sea change', tourism and retirement trends; and
- one of Australia's most aggressive and successful exporters.

However, Eyre Peninsula's infrastructure challenges are daunting. He continues:

Water: Eyre Peninsula's primary water supply is sourced from a series of underground basins topped up by the ailing Tod Reservoir system. The region remains in a crisis position whilst totally dependent on these finite reserves as the sole water source.

Roads: Eyre Peninsula has a local road network of 13 798 kilometres, 93 per cent unsealed, representing 18.1 per cent of South Australia's roads maintained by 3.6 per cent of the population. End to end, that network would exceed the distance of Highway 1 around Australia.

Waste: Barriers of distance, landfill rationalisation, cost effective recycling, efficient disposal of green waste, escalating transport costs, waste reduction and raising the legislative bar are challenges that must be addressed with some urgency.

NRM: Although there is support for the decentralisation of power, integration of decision-making and project management as described in the new state model for NRM, local government has made it clear that it would only negotiate a devolved regional structure in an atmosphere of equity, partnership and adequate resourcing. The potential for cost shifting is a major concern.

Electricity: Eyre Peninsula is in a vulnerable position with regard to its regional power supply, totally dependent on a 40 year-old single transmission line from Whyalla to Port Lincoln. Augmentation costs for commercial power infrastructure is prohibitive, due to size and remoteness. Despite being one of the prime spots on the planet to generate wind power, shortcomings in the transmission infrastructure make it difficult to get the product to market.

Grain freight: Eyre Peninsula Grain Freight Summit was convened in Cummins in October 2003. Grain is the region's biggest economic driver, generating roughly a billion dollars per annum and employing a third of the region's work force. Movement of grain harvest is by far and away Eyre Peninsula's biggest transport task. Broadacre farming also plays a critical role in survival of the region's inland rural centres. A safe, efficient and competitive transport system to deliver the region's annual harvest from paddock to port was identified of critical importance to the region of Eyre Peninsula. Every stakeholder identified the retention of a viable rail network as the essential element in that equation.

A major funding submission has been lodged with the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Service. Outcome pending.

Jetties: Ownership of recreational jetties was divested to local governments by the state government in the late nineties. Eyre Peninsula's coastal councils were left with the care/control of close to a third of South Australia's jetties.

Transport: There are only limited public transport facilities beyond the three main centres of Port Lincoln, Whyalla and Ceduna. There are currently no commuter air services to Cleve, Cowell, Wudinna, Streaky Bay and Elliston.

Regional organisations: Local government on Eyre Peninsula has a major challenge in maintaining their regional organisations such as economic development, tourism marketing, water catchment, local government and natural resource management, compared with smaller more populous regions located closer to town.

The combined impacts of size, location and population have a clear and demonstrable effect on the sustainability of remote rural councils. Rather than to expand further on those impediments, we have chosen to give simple, practical examples of the difficulty of sustaining our councils in the bush over the medium to longer term.

The Commonwealth Grants Commission cites five main reasons for the increased functions tackled by local government over the past couple of decades. They are new functions by devolution (or divestment), raising the bar by legislative or other changes, cost

shifting, community expectations and policy choice. Eyre Peninsula could probably add a couple more to that list.

I certainly could. As to new functions by devolution, the example that Vance gives is the divestment of recreational jetties. In July 1997, the state government advised of a proposal to divest South Australia's recreational jetties to the care and control of local government. Eyre Peninsula believes that the proposal was inequitable, based on the premise that the region was home to one-third of South Australia's recreational jetties with the population base of less than 30 000 to maintain them.

Issues of equity, capacity of local government to finance ongoing jetty maintenance, liability and cost shifting were raised. Negotiations/lobbying between the minister and the officers of Transport SA ensued for the next 12 months, eventually resulting in contracts being drafted and leases being signed. One of the real sticking points was the inequity between country and city. The Adelaide metropolitan area has seven jetties, at 15 per cent of the total, with 1 045 854 people, at 73 per cent of the total population. Eyre Peninsula has 15 jetties, at 31 per cent of the total, with 29 170 people, at 1.9 per cent of the total population. Despite assurances given that leases with metropolitan councils were to be signed, eight years on, a number of metropolitan jetties still remain under the care and control of Transport SA and, therefore, the government.

The Eyre Peninsula Local Government Association raised this issue with the South Australian Regional Organisation of Councils, a group representing 49 rural councils and cities across the state. The following resolution was passed: that SAROC makes representations to the Minister for Transport seeking early resolution of the issues of the care and control of recreational jetties with metropolitan councils or, alternatively, renegotiate agreements with country councils to better reflect a more equitable sharing of financial-legal burdens being carried across the state.

The next heading refers to raising the bar by legislative or other changes and gives waste management as an example. Due to the size and complexity of the waste management task on Eyre Peninsula, a regional approach was adopted in 2002. The key elements identified were: efficient waste management practices and effective use of council resources; opportunities to improve existing waste management services; adequate levels of service to ratepayers through a coordinated and integrated approach; and compliance with Environment Protection Authority guidelines. At that time, the game of regional waste management for Eyre Peninsula seemed to be played on an oversized playing field, with moving goal posts and a changing set of rules. Those rules and penalties were getting tougher by the year, and beyond our capacity to have any significant input.

The Eyre Peninsula Waste Management Strategy was delivered in 2004. Preliminary numbers crunched by consultants URS Australia on the rationalisation of the region's waste management structure paint a financial scenario that is a cause for some concern. Full compliance would witness the regional price tag to deliver the waste management task escalating by a factor of two to five times. Member councils are committed to lifting their game in the field of environmental management. But, at the end of the day, it may not be what we would like to implement in waste management reform but what we can afford—in financial terms, in human resources and community impact.

Cost shifting can impact on local government in one of two ways, first, in service provision for another tier where funding is reduced or stopped and, secondly, when council steps in where another level of government ceases to provide a service. The example Vance gives is local road funding: without doubt maintenance of the local road network is the big ticket item on the budgets of Eyre Peninsula councils. A recent lobby by the Local Government Association identified that South Australia has 11 per cent of national local road length, and 7.7 per cent of national population. Its current level of 5.5 per cent identified local road grant funding is inequitable. Using road length and population as an indicator of relative road use, South Australia should get 9.4 per cent of the funding. EPLGA's sphere of influence is criss-crossed by a local road network of 13 391 kilometres, 93 per cent unsealed, representing 18.1 per cent of South Australia's roads being maintained by 3.6 per cent of the state's population.

I would love to continue; however, my time seems to be up. I will never believe that population-based funding, as practised by this Labor government, is fair. One minister said in the house, when speaking about road funding, that the money should go back to where the people are. On that basis, Eyre Peninsula would never get roads, regardless of our economic input into the state. I ask that the government take note of the concern of our region, and our regional councils, and the issues that will impact negatively on the goals that the government has set for itself unless they are dealt with.

The Hon. W.A. MATTHEW (Bright): I, too, rise to briefly address the budget deliberations, in what, I am rather pleased to say, will be my last speech to the parliament on budget matters before my retirement at the time of the election in March next year. It has been somewhat interesting going through the process this time. Initially, I thought, having stepped off the front bench to the back bench some five weeks ago, that I would be able to have a quieter time in budget estimates. However, one piece of advice that I can give to any member of parliament when they decide to retire is that it is important that they make sure that, if they are retiring from the lower house, their replacement minister or shadow minister should come from the same house. Otherwise, you finish up still doing the work, and that is what I found on this occasion.

However, there was one committee where I did not have to undertake that workload, and that was one of my favourites—correctional services—because my colleague, the Hon. Angus Redford, put together some good information as he has held that portfolio for some time as a parliamentary secretary before becoming shadow minister. I was rather pleased to lead opposition questioning in a very familiar area, having served for three years as correctional services minister, and, before that, two years as shadow spokesman for the opposition.

The Attorney-General was the minister representing the government on this occasion because of the illness of the correctional services minister—and the opposition extends its best wishes to the Hon. Terry Roberts for a speedy recovery and supportive words to his family while he combats his illness. In my experience, he is a thoroughly decent individual and I look forward to his speedy recovery. The Attorney-General filled in for his ministerial colleague. I asked the Attorney a question about the rate of imprisonment. We all know in this house that the Attorney would have himself believed publicly to be a champion of law and order

issues and has been advocating more punishment for offenders, longer prison sentences and the like. I asked the Attorney how could it be, in light of his stand, that the prison figures for South Australia will increase by only 1 per cent in this new financial year, or at a rate that is half the national average, as reported by the Productivity Commission.

Could be it be that in South Australia, despite all the government's rhetoric, is only doing half as well as other states in terms of increasing imprisonment rates? The Attorney had an interesting response. He said:

South Australia's population growth is rather less than that of other mainland Australian states, and correspondingly our prison population does not grow as much as the prison population of other mainland Australia states.

The Attorney would have us believe that, despite all the government rhetoric about law and order and despite the illusion it is trying to create in the community of locking up criminals for longer periods, in actual fact it is not achieving what it says it is because our population growth is less than the other states and therefore our prison population is not growing as fast. The reason given certainly sounded to me like a load of bunkum. I draw a little further on the Attorney's response, because he then said:

I do not claim any credit for the crime statistics that have rolled in since the Rann-Labor government was elected to office.

That was an interesting claim, because the Attorney-General normally would claim credit for everything. He is saying that crime is going down, but he cannot claim credit for that. Some further investigation by my colleague the Hon. Angus Redford has revealed why. The opposition has had a very interesting leak from the police department under the Whistleblowers Protection Act, and the police officer concerned has provided the opposition with three documents. The first is a general order crime reporting manual, which sets out the rules for disclosure of offences by the police department. That has certainly been in operation for a good eight to 10 years, from my knowledge. The second is an administrative instruction from a police superintendent regarding reporting on PIRs (Police Incident Reports), and that is dated January 2003. The third is a policy statement dated April 2003 and headed 'Guidelines for entering on to PIMS regarding reporting of the level and nature of criminal activity'. PIMS is the police incident management system.

It is of concern to the opposition that these latest instructions change the way in which crime is now reported. What traditionally occurred with the reporting of crime statistics is that the number of incidents that occurred were counted. For example, if there was a break and enter of a dwelling and goods were stolen, and then those goods were loaded into the boot of a vehicle that was in the garage of the dwelling that they had broken into and that vehicle was then started and stolen, a number of offences are laid in place and there may be six charges. That was recorded as six incidents. That is the way it used to occur. Those are the crime statistics that are available for historical comparison.

However, under these new instructions, all those incidents will be recorded as one incident, and the incident determined to be the most serious is the one which will be counted. Whereas, in a situation such as that, you may have had six incidents recorded for criminal statistical purposes, now there is only one. That artificially creates a drop in crime—and that is most disconcerting. We have a government claiming that there is a drop in crime, but, in actual fact, there is a change in the way in which crime is being counted. The question can be posed: is crime reducing or are the statistics simply being

manipulated? Is this yet another case that adds to the old adage of lies, damn lies and statistics? It appears that may be the case in relation to the way in which our criminal incidents are being recorded.

It is my view, on seeing this information, that the Attorney-General has told the budget estimates committee that he takes no credit. He said:

I do not claim any credit for the crime statistics that have been rolled in since the Rann Labor Government was elected to office.

He takes no credit because he is taking no credit for the manipulation of the statistics. I see this as a way of the Attorney-General distancing himself from what is occurring. In a nutshell, we have a government that is trying to create an illusion of a strong stance on law and order. We have a Premier and Attorney-General who react with a knee jerk to every public case that they believe may get some attention on the media—through radio and newspaper—to try to show the public that they are being hard line on law and order, but our imprisonment rate is rising by half the Australian average; it shows we are lagging behind other states. They then point to our population statistics to use as an excuse for the dropping imprisonment rate, saying that our population is falling relative to other states—because the rise is less. Then they say, 'By the way, the crime statistics are going down,' but we have found that the way in which crime is being counted has changed.

We are seeing the Labor government's great illusion act. It is another travelling magical circus. As prime magician, we have the Premier, who is moving around statistics in the same way in which the old sideshows of the turn of the last century used to play the pea and thimble trick. It is quite appropriate that this pea and thimble trick, in part, is being utilised during a budget estimates process. I believe this example, in itself, goes to the very core of the integrity—or lack thereof—of this government. If we have a government that is so hell bent on public perception—or, should I say, deception—that it will manipulate the crime statistics that have been used in this state for a long time as the measure of a government on its law and order policy, we have a very serious situation occurring.

I put to this house that the information that has come to the opposition shows that we have a government that will stop at nothing to deceive the public. That should be a concern to every member of this parliament. I appeal to members of the government to question in their caucus their police minister, Premier and Attorney-General about this appalling act that is occurring to deceive the public; and to demand of them the truth on crime statistics. That is why we have local newspapers around our state carrying headlines that run something like, 'Perception of crime high, but crime actually dropping'. In fact, it may be that, if the old way of counting statistics was used, crime would be going up, not down.

Mr LEWIS (Hammond): I say at the outset that I want to comment not only upon the process through which the House of Assembly—traditionally the house in which supply is obtained—examines the purposes of that supply but also the processes and the purposes. In the first instance, I think the estimates committees, as they stand, could work better if they were open more than is the case at the present time. It does not lend itself to facilitating the participation of members who are neither members of the government party nor the opposition party. I am increasingly cynical—distressed, in fact—by the fashion in which this government

has, over the last three years, reverted to the same kind of behaviour which occurred during the 1980s and early 1990s, wherein members of the government party were not seeking information that had not already been determined as being an appropriate question for a government member to ask a government minister.

During the 1990s the Liberal Party in government was no better—perhaps a bit better. It is not fair to say ‘no better’. Independent inquiries were made by members of the Liberal Party during the 1990s, and so it is not quite fair to say that it was driven by an agenda determined by a majority within the party room. We are here to represent the people who vote for us, not the parties which may endorse us or otherwise. In other representative democracies elsewhere in the world it is not possible to do what occurs in Australia. Indeed, in some places it is forbidden for political parties to make a requirement to impose a condition of membership and endorsement upon the members seeking election that they comply with the party’s determination of how to vote or not to vote.

The consequences of voting other than as the party has determined—in any party in a democracy in this century and, indeed, in the latter part of the last one—are serious enough, but for the Labor Party to go on believing that it is a good system which it has (which automatically means that the member resigns if a member votes against the party) is quite wrong. It is mistaken in that respect. Equally, the propositions which have been adopted by the Liberal Party in a formal part of its structure in recent times are equally draconian and inappropriate in a democracy.

They, as parties, ought to allow the people they endorse—if they have the brains as individuals to be worthy of a place, a seat, in this or the other place—to be trusted to pursue what they believe to be those matters in the public interest according to their own likes rather than according to the way it is dished up by whatever decision-making mechanism is on foot in each or either of those two parties. The public expressed that very same view during the Constitutional Convention. However, sadly, that is now history and gone. I do hope, before leaving that matter, that the opportunity to do something about the management in this place is not simply torn up as a consequence of my decision to resign. That was a decision which I took principally because I had no wish to continue to work with a group of people who were hell bent on deceit.

I want also to make the point, though, about the parliament that, although well managed, it can be more efficient than it is at present in the way in which the building itself is maintained. Clearly, there is no allocation in the budget for the purpose, but there is a great need to construct a building which I refer to as the annexe—and I know that you share this view, Mr Speaker—in the north-western corner of the precinct of the parliamentary messuage (that is, the surroundings of this building) right now.

If that is not undertaken fairly quickly, I think that, as a result, there will be some fairly serious repercussions. It is now being developed as a car park for the casino to provide additional car parking spaces. I just wonder whether, after the next election, the will will remain to take it over for the purposes of the parliament’s using it for documents storage as a sound and safe archive deep in the bowels of the earth and above which there should be, in my judgment, at least two levels of car parking and two levels of office space with outdoor facilities above it.

I will move on to matters which are perhaps not so much related to the parliament and its processes but which are of

concern to me in the budget: two outstanding public works which are being undertaken at the present time without proper authorisation. One is the tramline. It is appalling, not just a travesty, that a government has made a decision based on nostalgia rather than on commonsense and rigour to completely, as it were, replace the tramline and continue to connect Glenelg with the city by tram without looking at the cost per kilometre of running trams.

The amount of atmospheric carbon which is contributed per passenger kilometre by trams and the comparative costs I bet will stack up in favour of using a dedicated carriageway for buses which are far more flexible than trams. Trams must stay on tracks; buses can go off into suburban streets at major interchanges in the same way as they do on the O-Bahn. It is not necessary to have a very expensive concrete channel which automatically acts as a guide for the buses. They can be driven at much higher speeds than the current speed limits of 50 or 60 that apply on suburban streets along a dedicated carriageway at speeds well in excess of that and give a far more rapid, satisfactory and efficient carriage of the people who use public transport from the south-western suburbs into the city than can a tram. Its flexibility commends it. Those two tramlines should have been converted into paved carriageways for buses, in my judgment. No attempt was made by the government to discover the truth of the matters to which I refer; it simply stuck with nostalgia.

The other matter to which I draw attention—and I will have more to say about it at another time—is the proposal to have an opening bridge across the Port River. This is nothing short of bloody stupid. It is more stupid than the decision by the Liberal Party when it was in government to go with Motorola without comparing that technology exclusive to Motorola for the government radio network with the technology that was available for all manufacturers including Motorola. The very things which the Public Works Committee recommended were ignored in spite of the remarks made about it. It cost a premier his place in history as a result of the fashion in which he went about it, and I say that this opening bridge in Port Adelaide will do no less. There is no necessity whatever to have an opening bridge and spend \$70 million that could be far more sensibly put towards education, health in particular, as well as law and order and safety.

I commend the government for what it is doing, but I point out that it will have to do even more almost immediately or in the very near future with respect to the redevelopment of the Murray Bridge Hospital campus. Work is going on there at a very satisfactory rate, ahead of schedule and within budget, as I am told, but everybody involved is to be commended for that, although I suspect the weather has had a fair bet to do with it.

I lament the fact that the people of Peake do not have a sound future as far as their water supply goes in consequence of the irresponsible fashion in which the Minister for Environment and Conservation’s department allowed exploitation of the underground aquifer without adequate data to determine what level of exploitation ought to be permitted. Not only are pumps needing to be lowered to provide for stock and domestic supplies but also a higher cost type of pump will have to be installed because no longer will those pumps which rely upon atmospheric pressure to give them lift be used. We will have to use mechanical lift pumps, whether they are submersibles or column-driven turbines. We will have to use turbine pumps to supply stock and domestic needs. The people involved have no certainty other than through the processes of law. It is not the irrigators who are

at fault here, in my opinion, unless the irrigators have done something of which I am not yet certain. It is the fault of the minister and the department for allowing it in the first place. What has been done to those folk is terrible.

I am also distressed at the fact that for over five years we have been trying to get a green organic composting unit shifted from Willunga, where it is causing problems on Aldinga Road, out into an area where there are no people nearby and where it can cope with all of the southern suburbs green waste and turn it into valuable product and recycle it on a site at Kangaroo Road south of Monarto, on the corner of Chauncey's Lane.

I have been told quite considerable gobbledegook in answer to a question which I put to the minister regarding the company trading as Pete's Soil and Garden Supplies having asked the Environment Protection Authority for approval and clearance. In July 2002, Pete's Soil and Garden Supplies submitted a development application seeking approval to establish a composting facility on section 190 in the Hundred of Freeling, which is where I have mentioned, on the corner of Chauncey's Lane and Kangaroo Road. The EPA and the Development Assessment Commission have requested additional information—at last. Talk about make haste slowly! The EPA has now assessed the most recent information that was provided by PSGS in February and a response has been provided to the Development Assessment Commission for consideration. How much ruddy longer? It is not only the people in Willunga on Aldinga Road who are inconvenienced but also the business, and we are losing a hell of a lot of valuable organic waste while this takes some time.

I turn to another matter related to parliament. I think it is about time this parliament followed the lead of Western Australia and appointed parliamentary fellows. In Western Australia, Professor Black has done a great job of writing a history of parliament and those people who have been members and who have made a substantial contribution to it in its constitutional development. I think we could do well here in South Australia to similarly appoint people as parliamentary fellows. I urge you, sir, to seize the opportunity during our sesquicentenary celebrations to put that on the agenda and let the house debate it. I guess that, unless it is something that you endorse, it will not happen. It is something that I had in mind.

I turn now to a mess that I have been pursuing for some time, and it affects everybody, including a lot of people in my electorate. I want to be quite frank in pointing out that the minister responsible for children, youth and family services is not delivering on what he should be. The Keeping Them Safe policy is not a model for professional practice and it is not a model that is recognised by social workers as a profession. I wonder whether, as a lawyer, the minister has bothered to look at what the social work profession is about. By not having looked at that in some detail, I suspect that he has been advised ineptly. That has been a problem with that department under all its various names for a good many years.

One must now ask how they are achieving the policy they have in place called 'Keeping them Safe', by what means and by what philosophical or ideological position, and is that consistent with the human rights perspective? It is not, frankly. Where is the discussion paper that details the way this is to be implemented and how social workers of the department are to abide by that so-called best practice? There has not been one!

I have seen no reference to any 'Keeping them Safe' model anywhere in any social work texts or academic manuals, and with my voluntary assistants I have looked far and wide. I cannot find it, but there is a family preservation model that has been adopted and was presented by minister Martyn Evans. It is formal departmental policy and it does fit with professional social work guidelines in the way in which they do their work. It is a manual and is part of what the department has adopted, yet it is not being used by the department because it is twee and reactionary, and the minister is letting them get away with it. The kind of mess we now have on this twee, reactionary claptrap that goes on has been referred to by other members where prostitution has been introduced to people who are minors and wards of the state. If it is not prostitution, it is certainly an inappropriate way to conduct oneself when, as the case worker you take your charge, who is a minor, to bed with you in a motel, where they are supposed to be accommodated at taxpayers' expense. That is appalling!

Social workers are supposed to advise Crown Law about these matters, and there now needs to be an extensive inquiry. When intervention occurs it is supposed to be with a view to getting families reunified. I do not think there is one case where the department has satisfied that objective or where it has been successful during the past two decades. There has been no audit of practice within the department, no quality assurance program and, if you do not like the manual, the minister should change it and should do it through the due process of a discussion paper. The family preservation model is one that we as members of parliament should continue to embrace and require the department to back it up.

Isobel Redmond, the member for Heysen, has asked questions about this, but sadly the answers have not been very reassuring to me or to the people who are genuinely competent as social workers. The recruitment processes for the investigators of the children in state care inquiry were not adequately provided for, and Commissioner Mullighan now needs to have independent investigators so that he can check out and report on the limited extent to which his responsibilities, as they relate to wards of the state during the course of the time they were wards of the state, in commenting upon the appropriateness or otherwise, can come to a valid conclusion. Any other approach is less than adequate.

I make this plea on behalf of those who are least able to defend themselves. They do not have parents or responsible parents. They certainly do not have a responsible department, and they have a minister who is long on rhetoric and short on substance.

Time expired.

Motion carried.

The Hon. S.W. KEY (Minister for Employment, Training and Further Education): I move:

That the remainder of the bill be agreed to.

Motion carried.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT

At 5.46 p.m. the House adjourned until Monday 4 July at 2 p.m.