

Division 63: Zoological Parks Authority, \$12 007 000 —

Ms J.M. Freeman, Chairman.

Mr A.P. Jacob, Minister for Environment.

Ms M. Finnigan, Acting Chief Executive Officer.

Mr W. Starkie, Director, Corporate Development.

Ms M. Price, Chief Finance Officer.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIRMAN: Member for Fremantle.

Ms S.F. McGURK: I refer to “Wildlife Management, Medicine and Research” on page 705 of the *Budget Statements*. I hope that is the appropriate line item. My question is about the native species breeding program. How much money is being spent on that program and what species is it looking at?

[5.40 pm]

Mr A.P. JACOB: The Perth Zoo native species breeding program works to breed for release five species of native fauna—the numbat, the dibbler, the western swamp tortoise, the white-bellied frog and the orange-bellied frog. The 2014–15 budget allocation to the program of \$633 000 covers maintaining breeding population for the species and the breeding and rearing costs of the numbat, dibbler and western swamp tortoise offspring. The western swamp tortoise exhibit upgrade is separate from that.

Ms S.F. McGURK: Thank you; that is fine.

Mr A.P. JACOB: A further \$120 000 is also allocated to the breeding and rearing of the two frog species. The total budget allocation for threatened species breeding and rearing in 2014–15 is \$755 000.

Mr J.E. McGRATH: I refer to the line item of accommodation under “Cost of Services” on page 710. Can the minister please outline the disparity between the increase in accommodation expenditure given the significant investment in solar energy generation and water conservation at the zoo.

Mr A.P. JACOB: The Perth Zoo’s solar installation is now generating 16 per cent of the zoo’s electricity requirements but at the same time the average unit cost of energy has increased. The benefits of the solar installation will continue to assist with offsetting increases in energy prices and at the same time reflect an overall net benefit to the Perth Zoo and to government accordingly as a major funder to the zoo. As a registered accredited power station, Perth Zoo is also now benefiting from trading in the large-scale generation of the certificates, which are market-based tradable commodities associated with solar installation. This is expected to generate additional revenue of between \$10 000 and \$20 000 per annum, which will be recorded as revenue in the income statements. The water savings and the cost benefits of the water project will not be clearly demonstrated until 2014–15, but Perth Zoo’s scheme water consumption and its wastewater production has remained steady and has been offset by increases in current charges in future periods.

The appropriation was recommended.