

**Division 40: Commerce — Service 3, Industry, Science and Innovation, \$84 740 000 —**

Mr J.M. Francis, Chairman.

Mr J.H.D. Day, Minister for Science and Innovation.

Mr B.T. Bradley, Director General.

Mrs J. de Jong, Acting Executive Director.

Mr D. Goodwin, Chief Finance Officer.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, members and advisers. It is my intention, unless someone requires it, not to reread the Chairman's statement. I will ask the minister to introduce his advisers to the committee.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIRMAN:** Member for Cockburn.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** Thank you, Mr Chair. Being aware of the time, I might ask that this information be provided by way of supplementary information so that we can get in a couple of other questions. I refer to the asset investment program on page 464, under "Works in Progress", and the line item "Other Works—Southern Precinct". I have never heard of the southern precinct. Will the minister provide by way of supplementary information, information about the southern precinct including: What is it? Does it fall within the scope of the industry portfolio? What is the project? When will it be completed? It is down as not being completed until 2014. What is the reason for that? Why has the timeframe been set the way it has?

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** The work being undertaken is for water quality and seagrass monitoring programs in the northern harbour at the Australian Marine Complex in Jervoise Bay. That is the project that is being undertaken. I presume that it is nearing completion, although there is \$1.444 million to be expended in 2013–14. Does that answer the member's question?

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** Yes; it does. I know exactly what it is now. It is just that it was down as the southern precinct of the AMC; in fact, it is the northern precinct of the AMC, not the southern. But it is the clean-up of the paint dioxins there. My second question refers to page 464 of the *Budget Statements*, under "New Works", "IT Infrastructure — Customer Focused Service Delivery".

[9.50 pm]

What does the IT infrastructure project entail? How will this increase customer-focused service delivery? My fourth question is about the fact that the total cost of the project has increased by \$1 million since last year's budget: is there a reason for that?

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** The project undertaken relates to the department having a series of high-quality information technology support services that are neither currently integrated consistently nor leveraged across the department. This program will result in service delivery having a greater focus on the customer and will provide a greater level of coordination and consistency across all the department's business service areas. These improvements will be implemented in line with government policy and Public Sector Commission strategies—I am not sure that I like this term!—for "citizen-centric" service delivery. I will ask Mr Goodwin to indicate why there has been an increase in the funding.

**Mr D. Goodwin:** The series of budget provisions are part of the department's strategic asset management plan. The department has a high reliance on information technology. A lot of the IT is in areas of the department other than science. But this is across the whole department. That program has been running for some time. IT projects tend to run behind schedule and need to be rescheduled. This is the tail end of that longer term project.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** I again refer to page 464 of the Budget Statements under the asset investment program and "Bentley Technology Park – Stage 1 Implementation". This has been a favourite of mine; it is just that there is not enough money in it, although there would have been enough money if we had been able to get into it and had started selling off that land! Why is there delay in completing stage 1? It appears that it was estimated that \$1.9 million would be spent on the project in 2009–10, but that does not seem to be the case. How much was spent in 2009–10? What work is yet to be completed, and has the government progressed to those future stages beyond stage 1?

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** Is the member asking how much was spent in 2009–10?

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** Yes; \$1.9 million was going to be spent on the project in 2009–10.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** What is the member quoting from?

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** I assume that the figure is quoted from previous budget papers. An amount of \$1.9 million was allocated, but it does not seem to have been spent. It is there in the estimated total of costs. No; I apologise. It must have been in the previous budget, because the estimated total cost in this budget is \$9.6 million. It has always been that.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** Just so everyone is aware, the project intends to expand Bentley Technology Park and create a wider area known as the Bentley Technology Precinct. Approvals from the Western Australian Planning Commission, the Town of Victoria Park and the City of South Perth are required, and the department is progressing the project in collaboration with the Department of Planning. I guess it is a matter of priorities and what the state can achieve in relation to all funding requests. I am not sure whether the money for this project has been pushed out a little compared to what was previously expected. I am told that it is a Treasury process that has required the money to be pushed out further in the out years so that it is carried over. I expect that this is a budget adjustment issue.

**Mr A.P. JACOB:** I refer to page 466 of the *Budget Statements* and the line item “Science and Innovation”. Moneys are allocated this year and going forward. Could the minister please explain how this government’s budget and funding will be used to support science and innovation in the financial year 2011–12?

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** A total of \$54.5 million has been allocated in this budget to science-related activities. Of that—this is across the forward estimates period—\$9.5 million has been allocated to the Western Australian Marine Science Institution to undertake research, particularly, but not exclusively, in the Kimberley area. There is \$6 million allocated to the integrated marine observation system—IMOS—off the Western Australian coast. The research and innovation fund has an allocation of \$10 million; that is new funding for 2011–12 specifically. This enables us to continue a number of programs that require some additional funding, and maybe some new projects to some extent. Also, \$1.1 million is allocated to the Gravity Discovery Centre, which wanted greater certainty about its continued operations, and that has been met. In 2011–12, the Nobel Laureate’s Office has been allocated \$800 000, and \$500 000 has been allocated to the research fellowship program. Also, \$10.8 million has been allocated to the Square Kilometre Array Project for the construction of fibre-optic cable between Boolardy Station, the site of the project, and the Murchison radio observatory project, which are closely related, through to Geraldton, and the construction of some road access and other facilities. Over the four years of the forward estimates, \$15.848 million has been allocated for the iVEC Pawsey Supercomputing Centre that will be constructed; this is an important part of the SKA project. It will be a very high capacity computing centre located in Bentley Technology Park.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** I could probably answer this question myself, because I am sure the answer is the same one that the minister gave earlier. I refer again to page 464 of the *Budget Statements*, the asset investment program and “Works in Progress”, “Marine Industry Technology Park”, for which the estimated expenditure is \$559 000, seems to have been deferred to 2013–14. I presume that is for the same reasons that the minister gave before. Yes, people are nodding their heads. I am particularly miffed because that is an issue very close to my heart and to my electorate. I am sure that the Chairman is miffed as well, given his close involvement in marine issues. I am not very happy about this.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** I probably should not point this out, but if the member wants to raise this issue further, the minister taking direct responsibility for this part of the portfolio is the Minister for Commerce, Hon Simon O’Brien, and his representative in the Assembly is the Minister for Transport.

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** Hon Simon O’Brien is also a member for South Metropolitan Region. We would think that he would look after his own electorate.

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** I am sure that we all seek to look after our own electorates, but that has to be done in the context of the overall budget!

**Mr F.M. LOGAN:** I refer to major spending changes on page 457 of the *Budget Statements*. I see that the department has been able to get \$5 million from royalties for regions for the Pilbara maritime common-use support facility. Is it possible for the department to provide me by way of supplementary information exactly what will be in that facility?

**Mr J.H.D. DAY:** The purpose of this funding is to undertake investigations about the possibility of establishing in Jervoise Bay a similar facility to that in Henderson. The location has not yet been determined, and this funding will be used to determine the best location, whether it be in the Pilbara or the Kimberley region. It is very early days; therefore, it is a significant allocation to allow some quite in-depth investigations to occur.

**The appropriation was recommended.**

*Committee adjourned at 10.00 pm*

