

**Division 1: Parliament, \$65 198 000—**

Ms L.L. Baker, Chair.

Mr P.B. Watson, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

Ms K.M. Robinson, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr R. Hunter, Executive Manager, Parliamentary Services.

Ms E.L. Ozich, Chief Finance Officer, Parliamentary Services and Legislative Assembly.

Ms P. Traegde, Deputy Executive Manager and Director, Member and Operational Support, Parliamentary Services.

Ms B. Corey, Director, Parliamentary Information and Education, Parliamentary Services.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIR:** Good morning, members and welcome to committee A of our estimates process.

This estimates committee will be reported by *Hansard*. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available the following day. It is the intention of the Chair to ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered and that both questions and answers are short and to the point. The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must be clearly related to a page number, item, program or amount in the current division. Members should give these details in preface to each question. If a division or service is the responsibility of more than one minister, a minister shall only be examined in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

Mr Speaker may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. I ask Mr Speaker to clearly indicate what supplementary information he agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number. If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek Mr Speaker's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the principal clerk by Friday, 29 September 2017. I caution members that if Mr Speaker asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice through the online questions system.

I give the call to the member for South Perth.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** My question relates to page 46 and the table "Appropriations, Expenses and Cash Assets". Under the capital appropriation is an amount of \$1 million. Can the Speaker please inform the committee what that funding will be allocated to?

**The SPEAKER:** Rob Hunter will answer that question.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Thank you. That \$1 million in capital is a capital appropriation that we have each year. Once that \$1 million is allocated, we then determine what money is going to be used for which projects. Next year, which relates to the member's question, as opposed to last year, we will be allocating around \$800 000 of that to the fountain accommodation development. The remaining funds will be allocated to smaller projects—for example, universal access toilets within the reserve, because once the fountains are recommissioned for accommodation, the public toilets will need to be relocated.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Can the Speaker elaborate on what that accommodation will entail? How much accommodation will there be and why is it necessary to move down there for that accommodation?

**Mr R. Hunter:** The fountains, as the member knows, have not run for around 10 years. We unsuccessfully tried to get those fountains working at one stage at a cost of about \$60 000. We had problems with scheme water and lots of leaking. The fountains are heritage listed. A significant part of our heritage listing is the eastern facade, so we cannot do anything with the fountains; we cannot destroy or remove them, so we had to do something to restore them. We are trying to establish the fountains as they used to be. The only difference that people will actually see is that the fountains will have dark glass, which is the same as the dining room windows at the moment. It will look like the fountains, but without water, and it will accommodate about 18 to 20 staff. At the moment, about 19 staff from finance and information technology are located across the road, and those people will be relocated to the fountain area. We are unsure exactly which group of people will be located there, but that is our initial thinking. That will save us somewhere in the order of a quarter of a million dollars in leasing costs, which is a big saving for the Parliament.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** There has been a lot of talk in the media in the last 12 months about eventually extending over the freeway to bring the city right up to Parliament, which I think most people agree would be a very sensible idea. Mr Speaker, has anything been progressed on that or has any work been done on that? I know that it is a lot of expense.

**The SPEAKER:** Mr Hunter.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Not really. The concepts, as the member knows, have been around since 1967. There have been 13 iterations of that design. The most modern design was the widening of the Malcolm Street bridge, which gave us, if you like, a southern path across the freeway. Those things have been costed numerous times, and the 2010 government master plan included some development in that area as well. Unfortunately, the funding has never been available and we have not been able to progress anything. The fountains will be the first thing that we have been able to do on our “reserve” outside the building. It has been 50 years in the making to get something on our reserve, and perhaps in the next 50 years we might see that land bridge.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** I refer to the line item “Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Determination—Salaries, Superannuation and Allowances Changes 2016” on pages 35 and 41 of budget paper No 2. Can the Speaker detail what this increase in expenditure entails, please?

**The CHAIR:** Are you clear on the page numbers, Mr Speaker?

**The SPEAKER:** That is on the Legislative Council.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Page 41.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** Yes, of course. I refer to page 41 on the Legislative Assembly and the bottom line item “Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Determination—Salaries, Superannuation and Allowances Changes 2016”.

**The SPEAKER:** I will ask Ms Ozich to answer that question.

**Ms E.L. Ozich:** That includes a number of determinations that we have had. It includes the 2016 No 1 determination from the State Administrative Tribunal, the 2016 No 2 determination from SAT, and a variation to that 2016 No 2 determination. It has had three increases. It has had the 1.5 per cent salary increase and the 2.9 per cent increase in contributory superannuation, which was effective from 15 April 2016. It also has the changes that were brought into account from the date of the election due to changes in electoral boundaries, changes in the parliamentary travel allowance and the replacement entitlement for the provision of a motor vehicle with a motor vehicle allowance. There are those two, and a variation.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** Can the Speaker explain why in 2020–21, there is a big increase from \$762 000 to \$2 million? What is the reason for that jump in those last years in the out years?

**Ms E.L. Ozich:** Yes, because 2020–21 is an election year, and there are anticipated resettlement entitlement allowances to be paid in that year.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I refer to page 41 of the *Budget Statements* and the line item “Freeze Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Determined Salaries”. Could the Speaker please explain what that freeze is and the staff who will be impacted?

[9.10 am]

**Ms E.L. Ozich:** That particular line item applies to all members of Parliament and the Clerks and Deputy Clerks. That freeze is the removal of the 1.5 per cent salary increase that we had built in year on year. That has now been taken out.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Is that only in that case for the Clerks and members?

**Ms E.L. Ozich:** Yes.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** I refer to page 42 of budget paper No 2 and the cost of operations of the Legislative Assembly. Has the Speaker undertaken any interstate or overseas travel since being appointed Speaker; and, if so, where did the Speaker travel, when was the travel undertaken and what was the purpose of the travel?

**The SPEAKER:** The only travel undertaken was by Ian Britza, MLA, who went to the Presiding Officers and Clerks Conference in Tonga in July 2016.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** My question relates to page 37 of the *Budget Statements*. There is a fair bit here—“Support for Committees of the Legislative Council” —

**The SPEAKER:** That refers to the Legislative Council, member.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes, but I am going to ask questions about the Legislative Assembly. All I can see on page 37 is “Explanation of significant movements”, which states —

Costs have been calculated on eight committees in the 2016–17 Estimated Actual and on ten committees in the 2017–18 Budget ...

Can the Speaker outline where these increases are expected and how it will impact on other areas of operations?

**The CHAIR:** To be clear, is that for the Legislative Assembly?

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** This is for the Assembly.

**The SPEAKER:** Those figures are for the Council.

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**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Do we have any figures for the Assembly?

**The CHAIR:** Yes, member for South Perth, I understand that the question is where are the Assembly figures that correspond to the Council figures?

**The SPEAKER:** I will ask the Clerk to answer that question.

**Ms K.M. Robinson:** The Assembly is responsible for seven committees—that is, the three portfolio standing committees, the Public Accounts Committee and the Procedure and Privileges Committee—and we administer the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission and the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People. We do not have set budgets for those committees; they have their normal operating costs. We do not ascribe specific budgets to them. Requests for anything additional—for example, if they want to advertise for submissions or have consultants or legal advice or travel—need to come to the Speaker for the Speaker to approve. Those requests are done on a case-by-case basis. We do not have set budgets for them.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** How will the new Joint Select Committee on End-of-Life Choices, which was formed as a result of a private member's motion and will have eight members, impact on expenditure for the committees?

**Ms K.M. Robinson:** It will be quite a significant impact, because we do not have any additional funding for that committee, so we need to absorb those costs from within our ordinary operating budget. We have staffed the committee with a principal research officer, and it will also have a research officer. Any additional costs that may come in if the committee needs to travel or call for submissions, that sort of thing, will come out of our ordinary operating costs.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Is there any idea of what this committee might cost? I think the committee has been given 12 months to come up with findings and recommendations to Parliament, but no budget has been done for it.

**The SPEAKER:** Ms Robinson.

**Ms K.M. Robinson:** We have the costs for the staffing. Off the top of my head—we can confirm this, if you like—I think it is about \$200 000 for staffing before we take into account any travel or whatever. We could confirm at least the cost of what we have budgeted for staffing as supplementary information.

**The SPEAKER:** We will provide supplementary information on the cost as we see it for the Joint Select Committee on End-of-Life Choices.

[*Supplementary Information No A1.*]

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I refer to page 43 of the *Budget Statements*, the heading “Income Statement” and the line item “Accommodation”. Has the change in the composition of Labor versus Liberal members—that is, 41 versus 13—in the fortieth Parliament meant that expenses have been incurred as a result of the unprecedented influx of Labor Party members in terms of office fit-outs and the like? If so, could the Speaker outline the cost?

**The SPEAKER:** I will ask Mr Hunter to answer that question.

**Mr R. Hunter:** If members have the opportunity to read the annual report, they will see that it was a fairly significant cost for the Parliamentary Services Department, in particular, because we had 41 new members coming in and 39 members going out, with the two casual vacancies in the upper house. Logistically, it was very challenging because we had a lot of rooms to change in terms of furniture movements et cetera, and obviously a lot of inductions. We took the opportunity to do quite a lot of our capital work during the extended recess before the election. This year, there is a bit of a spike in our expenditure largely to do with the changing membership across the board. I think we had something in the order of a 41 per cent change of membership in both houses, so between inductions and giving people orientations, library education, all the information packs et cetera, it was quite expensive.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Do you have a cost associated with that, Mr Hunter?

**Mr R. Hunter:** No, we do not have a specific cost, because it is across so many functional areas. If we look at it from an information technology perspective, from building services and the logistics, the cost is quite spread. As a percentage, it would be hard to estimate what sort of spike we had, but our expenditure was certainly more significant in our maintenance area, for example, in getting ready for Parliament to return.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I have a further question in relation to accommodation. Was there any associated expenditure as a result of the departure of the former Speaker and the incoming Speaker?

**Mr R. Hunter:** No.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I again refer to page 43 of the *Budget Statements*, the heading “Income Statement” and the subheading “Expenses”. I am keen to understand whether under those line items “Employee benefits” and the like, the Assembly operates any fellowships or scholarships?

**The SPEAKER:** No.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** I refer to page 41 and the line item “Salaries and Allowances Tribunal Determination—Salaries, Superannuation and Allowances Changes 2016”. Going back to the question about the extra money paid to members of Parliament for serving on committees, is that money nominally allocated as a cost to the committee or as a cost of the salary of the member of Parliament?

**The SPEAKER:** That would come from the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal; it does not come from us.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** The actual sum of money, if you like, is not seen to be a cost of operating committees; it is seen as part of a member of Parliament’s normal salary?

[9.20 am]

**The SPEAKER:** No, it does not get charged to the committee.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Just in relation to one of the first questions asked by, I think, the member for South Perth on the fit-out of what I will call the fountain staff areas —

**The CHAIR:** Can I have a page number or a reference?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I refer to page 41, “Expenses”, general. With respect to the existing rental agreements in place for the 19 staff who will transition over to the fountain area, I am curious to understand when that fountain area will come online and when the existing leases will be rescinded.

**The SPEAKER:** Mr Hunter.

**Mr R. Hunter:** The people who occupy the second level of 11 Harvest Terrace are IT and finance. I have said that the lease currently costs \$308 000. That lease is due to expire on 17 December this year and we are currently in negotiations. We paid a market price of \$596.10 per square metre at the time, and the market is somewhere around about half that now. We will immediately get some savings. If we go to a longer term lease, we will get better savings. As a consequence of us having to leave that premise in the short term, we have a one-year extension with an option of one further year. We are looking at a market price of around \$320 to \$330 a square metre. That will bring about some of those savings I talked about. First of all, it will be about \$110 000 in the first year; subsequent to that, it will be about a quarter of a million dollars. The occupancy of the fountain accommodation is likely to be in about two years. The reason for that relates to the member for South Perth’s question about the \$1 million: we expect the fit-out will cost somewhere in the order of about \$2.4 million.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** So it is \$2.4 million for 19 people?

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes—\$2.4 million. That is for the fountains to be repurposed. Some that money has already been expended, so we have already started that process. We will have \$800 000 this year and a subsequent \$700 000 to \$800 00 next year, and we will finish it off in the next financial year. The reason for the time is because we do not have the money. If we had \$2.5 million now —

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** It would be done.

**Mr R. Hunter:** — we would occupy it within a year.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** In that case, I expect the \$2.5 million to be for the entirety of the construction costs associated as well as fit-out, or is that just fit-out?

**The SPEAKER:** Mr Hunter.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes, that includes the demolition and the complete fit-out. Some hefty costs are involved, because when something is done even on a retrospective basis—the fountains were built in the late 1960s—we now have to make sure that there is universal access. One of the big costs is the installation of a lift that will come from the forecourt and drop down to the level of the now fountain area. That is quite a big cost. There will also be double-glazing for the front windows because of the freeway noise.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Further to that —

**The CHAIR:** Member for Dawesville, if you have a further question, it needs to go through the Speaker.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Sorry, do I need to keep referring the question to the Speaker?

**The CHAIR:** You need to question the Speaker directly. I know it is weird.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** In that case, I have a further question for the Speaker. In relation to the costs associated with the construction of the fountain accommodation, are any funds set aside for contingencies in case there are any sort of unforeseen construction issues or is that the entire budget? We are stretched as it is in that case.

**The SPEAKER:** Mr Hunter.

**Mr R. Hunter:** As with any project we do, we generally have a contingency amount built into the tender. A contingency will be put into that. We hope to save some money when we do the demolition of some of the internal walls by putting that into the massive well or big pit that exists there. We hope we can save some money on the demolition by putting all the rubble and things in there; we have to landfill it anyway. But, yes, a contingency will be built into the tender documentation. That will exist after the close of the project to make sure that we have warranties in terms of the build.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I have one last question on this matter, Mr Speaker. Am I to understand, just from the explanation from Mr Hunter, that outside the very front of Parliament there will be an exposed lift? Is my understanding right?

**The SPEAKER:** Mr Hunter.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes, there will be a lift. This was a very sensitive issue. It took us three attempts through the Heritage Council. I went down to the Heritage Council to present to it on the concept. John Flower Architect put together the design for us. One of the things that the Heritage Council looks at when something is done that is an addition to a heritage-listed building is that it is either quite contemporary and looks like it is not part of it, or it is quite complementary and looks like it has always been there. The preference of the Heritage Council was for something that was far more contemporary. It will be a grey concrete-looking structure that sits about, say, six-foot high or 180 centimetres above the forecourt. The most important thing is to maintain the vista to and from St Georges Terrace and the river as part of the Parliament House Precinct Policy. The Heritage Council was aware of that. If we were to stand at the Barrack Street Arch, for example, and look back to Parliament, the first level we would see would actually be the very bottom of the first level. We would not actually see the ground level because of the elevation. The lift will be obscured by the background. We will not actually see too much; it will not obscure any views to Parliament, and from Parliament it will not be obscured either. They were important factors. But, yes, it will be a grey, modern, contemporary-looking concrete box, and I am sure Patricia will do something to make it look very special.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** On the subject of accessing the offices, was any consideration given to building a tunnel so there would be access from, say, the foyer area of the current Parliament to these extended offices, rather than building a concrete grey pillar box on top of the existing structure?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** It will look a bit weird.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes, and I imagine Patricia is smiling behind me right now as I answer this question. One of the suggestions very early in the piece was the construction of a tunnel. It is actually very expensive to build a tunnel. The loose concept was really to have the tunnel come up, if you like, just beyond where G12 is now, which is a meeting room in the foyer. I think Hon Robin Chapple's office was the preferred location, so it would have entered there.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** For us, too!

**Mr R. Hunter:** It does not address the issue of the universal access because the gradient to drop down to that level would not allow universal access for wheelchairs, for example, so we were always going to have to build a lift, but if we had the money, the time and the inclination to do it, we would build a tunnel. I have a great desire for a tunnel.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Mr Speaker, does a lift well present any security concerns in your mind? Are there any security concerns associated with an exposed aboveground lift well?

**The SPEAKER:** Mr Hunter.

**Mr R. Hunter:** The public will not be able to enter the lift from the top level. People will need an accredited pass or access pass with the right privileges to enter the lift. Predominantly, it will be for things like receiving goods et cetera. Depending on who is down there, parcels will be delivered. The current access ways are just steps on either side, and universal access obviously will also be needed. The security compound considerations have been part of the plan. At the moment I will not go too much into security detail, but in terms of our surveillance of that area, at the moment it is reasonably limited, but once the accommodation has been established, there will be high levels of security with camera monitoring and patrolling down there. The lift will not land outside the accommodation so that people will have to walk across to the accommodation; it will land into the accommodation,

much like the Legislative Assembly Committee Office where we come up into the building in the foyer. In our case, it will come down and will land in that accommodation.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** My question relates to page 48 of the *Budget Statements*, “Efficiency Indicators”, and it is in two parts. The first relates to the average cost per student or members of the public to come along to see Parliament House. It is a fantastic program, and the people in the education unit do a great job. Can we be given some idea of the sort of numbers we now get? There seems to be a lot more schoolchildren coming to Parliament. Has this program grown? Are we getting enough members of the public coming here, and is there something we can do to make Parliament a more interesting place for members of the public to come along to?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** They can always listen to the member for South Perth speak. That is interesting!

**The SPEAKER:** Before I go to Mr Hunter, the schoolchildren numbers have increased dramatically. We have had to make some changes in what we provide for them. We had a bit of an issue with the muffins, because we just could not make enough in our kitchen down there, so we have changed that. But, no, the schoolchildren numbers have increased by a huge amount. I will get Mr Hunter to follow up on that.

[9.30 am]

**Mr R. Hunter:** In most years, we get between 14 000 and 15 000 students coming through Parliament. The number this calendar year has increased by approximately 11 per cent. That is largely because of a very good strategy that was put in place about 18 months ago about community relations and engagement with both schools and the public. For example, there has been a great wealth of information put onto our internet for teachers and students in terms of guides, informing them how to run a mock Parliament within their schools and also how to engage with Parliament. We have seen numbers increase dramatically. Typically, as the cost to us is relatively fixed and volumes have increased—the numbers of people we are seeing—the cost per student will actually go down because we are seeing more students. This year we are up around 17 000 visitors. The figure for the public is slightly up as well. We average around 45 000 visitors through the door each year. If we keep going with our campaigning, we will see more numbers again.

We have also revised our outreach program, which is when we go out to regional areas, and we have redesigned some of the ways that we do that, and we are getting very good results there as well. Just this week, we were in Esperance and we had some very good results. We saw something like 600 students and five teachers and some people from community areas participate in the outreach program. Our program is not just about bringing people to Parliament; it is about bringing Parliament to the people. There are two focuses for that.

**The SPEAKER:** Further to that, we have art tours now, which I am sure the member for South Perth will be very impressed about. The initiative was launched this year. It is a dedicated art tour of the building. It was developed with the generous assistance of voluntary art tour guides from the Art Gallery of Western Australia. That is through our Parliament House Art Advisory Committee and Isla Macphail, who has done a tremendous job with that. We have had one or two art tours already. It is the people’s house and we want to try to get as many people here as we can. *The Key to Your House* documentary was another way of letting people know what actually happens in Parliament and behind the scenes. There is also the cooking program that I hear the member for South Perth might be going on! What is the name of the lady who does that?

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Nigella! One final question from me on this: I am interested in the number of adults who visit this place. Are they local people or tourists? Given the new state government’s push for tourism and bringing more people from Asia into Perth, do tourists come to Parliament House or are the visitors mainly local people?

**Mr R. Hunter:** It is a combination of both. The public tours, which is probably where the question is aimed at, predominantly are tourists. They also might be community groups that gather together and come for a tour. The number of people who are coming on tours is prolific. The tours run on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. We put on an additional public tour to cater for the numbers. If members look at the demographic of the tour groups, they will see that it is a mix of visitors to Western Australia and locals as well, because sometimes it is community focused. We actually have a community focused tour that we call “Talk and Tour” that often ends with cake and coffee and some people in the library providing education on Parliament as well. It is definitely an area of growth for the Western Australian Parliament.

**The CHAIR:** I remind members of the time. There are two divisions.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** I refer to works in progress under the “Asset Investment Program” on page 49 of budget paper No 2. The estimated expenditure to 30 June 2017 for the asset refurbishment and replacement program is \$8.7 million, but the actual estimated expenditure for 2016–17 is \$1.032 million. Can the Speaker explain why there is a difference?

**The SPEAKER:** I will get Ms Ozich to answer that question.

**Ms E.L. Ozich:** Each of those columns represents different things. The column to which the member refers is \$8.7 million. I will go to the estimated total cost first—that is the estimated cost of the program to date plus the expected budget to 2023–24, which is the \$8.7 million to 30 June plus \$1 million a year for each of the following seven years. The estimated expenditure to 30 June is the estimated cost of the whole program up until 30 June 2016. The figure for the year that has just gone, 2016–17, is just the one year’s cost of the program. That was \$1 million plus \$32 000, which was carried forward from the year prior to that.

**Mr I.C. BLAYNEY:** The figure for the total cost obviously stretches back further.

**Ms E.L. Ozich:** Yes, it does.

**Mr R. Hunter:** The first number to which the member refers, the \$8 million, is a very peculiar number because it takes a point in time somewhere back when Treasury had determined it would start counting the capital appropriations. The work in progress figure really relates to the capital investment. If we were getting \$1 million a year and we went back about eight years, we would find a date when Treasury started counting that. That figure will increase by \$1 million or thereabouts every year from now on. That figure confused me as well because obviously we had investments in capital before that period, but that is the time when Treasury started counting it. The \$8 million gives an impression that we have somehow got a lot of money, but that reflects a period of probably eight or nine years’ investment.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I refer to accommodation expenses on page 43 of budget paper No 2. I am curious to understand the total cost of the courtyard being repaved. What was the final cost of that design and construction? Can the Speaker provide the methodology behind the design and a breakdown of the cost of the enclosure, as it were? Also, on what date was that program signed off on?

**Mr R. Hunter:** I take your question to include the courtyard in terms of the membrane, the paving and the canopies?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** If we can.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Okay. A decision was made about 18 months ago to look for alternatives to put some covers over the courtyard. We spend around \$30 000 a year of taxpayers’ money bringing in marquees for events, so we looked to an alternative to doing that. We had proposed to put an atrium over the top of the courtyard. That required a significant investment by government in the order of about \$2.4 million. That was not going to be something that was supported, although we did try very hard. After that proposal was rejected, we looked at an alternative, which was the contemporary-type canopy that members see now. Some people have referred to that as a “bus port”, but in a practical sense it provides good shelter. I have noticed that a lot of members are currently using the courtyard in a period when they would not otherwise be in the courtyard. Going specifically to the cost, that courtyard used to be open; now it has a gymnasium, office accommodation and plant room underneath it. On average, we were getting five or six leaks through that courtyard membrane each year and we were basically patching holes. The membrane had a layer of sand on it, which was literally tonnes and tonnes of yellow sand from the original courtyard design that had to be removed. We also needed to fix the membrane. The cost initially was \$126 000 to replace the membrane and then we allowed for five square metres of membrane repair and removal of the sand. As we do not have very much money, we attempted to reuse the pavers. Unfortunately, when we pulled up the sand and we realised that the leaking was a bit more extensive than we initially thought, we had to extend the membrane repair and it cost us another \$30 000. The initial part, which is in the 2016–17 year, was \$164 000 —

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Just for membrane repairs?

[9.40 am]

**Mr R. Hunter:** —and the courtyard relaying. We put it on a suspended stilt system called a Buzon, which was about reinforcing and giving air between the membrane. So between getting all the guttering right and all the water membrane right and suspending it, that was the ambitious plan. I made the decision to reuse the pavers, thinking that they would be all right. However, after sitting on a bed of sand for 13 or 15 years their integrity was doubtful, and we saw it fail on two occasions at the first function we held, which was unfortunate, and there were some subsequent failures. We then decided to go to a more durable paver. We spent \$35 000 in the last financial year buying new pavers and spent a subsequent \$13 000 redesigning the Buzon layout to reinforce the floor. Then, unfortunately, because we had to rip up all the pavers and dispose of them and re-lay the others, we spent another \$98 000. Adding those numbers up, we spent about \$300 000 fixing the leaks in the bottom floor, removing the sand, re-laying the new pavers and putting in new Buzons, and on the design. That brings us to the last part—that is, the canopy that extended by about four times the original canopy—and that cost \$77 000.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** To clarify, did the entire process, end to end as it were, cost about \$377 000?

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes; over two financial years.

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE A — Tuesday, 19 September 2017]

p1c-7a

Mr John McGrath; Mr Ian Blayney; Mr Zak Kirkup; Dr Tony Buti

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**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** The member for South Perth is chasing me up here. On what date was the decision made to install the Buzon system and the canopy?

**Mr R. Hunter:** For the specific date, decisions like that are made at management executive committee meetings. Given that we had an election on 12 March and a change in the Speakership and the Presidency on 22 May, I suggest that the decision was made probably at the first meeting after 22 May, after we had had a failure. I would say that decision was made probably between the end of May and early June.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Was it within the fortieth Parliament?

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes.

**The appropriation was recommended.**