

Division 23: Western Australian Land Information Authority, \$38 553 000 —

Mr J.M. Francis, Chairman.

Mr B.J. Grylls, Minister for Lands.

Mr G. Jeffery, Acting Valuer-General.

Mr M. Bradford, Chief Executive.

Mr M. Smith, Chief Finance Officer.

Mr J. Fortuna, Manager, Financial Operations.

The CHAIRMAN: If the members, the minister and the minister's advisers have no concerns, to speed up the process, I do not intend to reread the Chairman's statement.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Can I seek some clarification?

The CHAIRMAN: Certainly.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Are we spending the remaining 40 minutes on the Western Australian Land Information Authority?

The CHAIRMAN: My advice from the previous Chairman and the staff is that we have 40 minutes to deal with divisions 23 and 24.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: We must start on LandCorp, the Western Australian Land Authority, at 5.30 pm, which means that the WA Land Information Authority division must be recommended by 5.30 pm.

Mrs C.A. MARTIN: What is the Treasury item?

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: The last one is nothing.

The CHAIRMAN: We have divisions 23 and 24 in the next eight minutes.

[Witnesses introduced.]

Mr M. McGOWAN: I refer to page 288 of the *Budget Statements* and the reference to the "National Electronic Conveyance System agenda". Is that system the replacement for the electronic conveyancing program from Hon Alannah MacTiernan for which money was put in the forward estimates back in 2006–07 so that people could undertake their conveyancing activities online? Is this a replacement program for that program; and, if so, how much is Landgate investing in this program?

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: The member for Rockingham is correct; it refers to electronic conveyancing. I will have Mike Bradford give the member the details. It is essentially moving towards making conveyancing an electronic process rather than a paper-based process. At the moment, if someone wants to sell their house, a whole bunch of people turn up at the same place at the same time to exchange pieces of paper. This will allow that process to become electronic. Mike is very much in favour of this and he is happy to explain it at length.

Mr M. Bradford: The national electronic conveyancing system is a Council of Australian Governments initiative. The system is a piece of macroeconomic reform that has significant efficiencies for stakeholders in the industry—in the order of \$250 million a year. The funding that Landgate will invest through government is \$6.9 million, which is to assist the implementation and the development of that system and to take it through to its operational stage.

Mr M. McGOWAN: Going back to my original question, I recall that in the first lot of budget estimates back in 2009, a program along these lines was deleted. That program was going to be operated by the Department of Planning. Is this a replacement for that program or is it something completely different?

Mr M. Bradford: I do not believe that the national electronic conveyancing system has ever had anything to do with the Department of Planning. I do not know the initiative that the member is referring to.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: The national electronic conveyancing system is a partnership between the four major states and the banks. The banks also have to commit money. Banks are obviously key stakeholders in conveyancing. The system is part of the federal government's seamless national economy initiative, so the federal government will also commit some funding towards it. The state government, through Landgate, is committed to that project. Funding will come from the four major states and the major banks are also involved. If all those bodies involved can come to some sort of agreement, people will be able to do electronic conveyancing rather than paper-based conveyancing.

Mr J.J.M. BOWLER: It was a move, as I think the member for Rockingham alluded to, that intended not only to transfer to electronic conveyancing, but also to ensure that all land tenure and land records would be electronic. Even the state's mining tenure registration, which is under a very old system called Tengraph, was to be modernised and brought across so that it could sit within this system. What is happening there?

Mr M. Bradford: The state's land titling system is digital. The process for getting information into that system is still paper-based, but electronic conveyancing will change that. The land titling system has a relationship with mining titles in processing those titles, but I am not responsible for the Department of Mines and Petroleum systems.

Mr J.J.M. BOWLER: Was it the aim of government that the transferring of paper to an electronic system would go across all avenues? I think that there are about 170-odd different interests in land in Western Australia, and the aim was that eventually they would all be under the same system. Has that program stopped?

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: The member is talking about the shared land information platform. Each government agency holds a whole heap of information about a certain piece of land, including housing price, rates, native title and all those different layers of information. The SLIP program tries to consolidate that information and make it available to the people who want it. Again, Landgate has been at the cutting edge of some of this technology and I am happy for Mike to add to that.

Mr M. Bradford: The shared land information platform is the infrastructure that opens up access to that information. Since the platform became operational in 2008, we have made available access to 350 datasets that the government holds. The Interest Enquiry system, which builds on top of that data, makes available interests in land. We have identified about 60 interests in land—things that can affect a citizen's use or enjoyment of a parcel of land—that come about through state, local or commonwealth legislation. Through a program called Interest Enquiry, which is based on SLIP, 27 of those interests can be searched. Interest Enquiry is a single point of inquiry that opens up access to 27 of those interests, which includes mining leases and tenure.

Mr B.J. GRYLLS: The SLIP program has a major part to play in something like approvals and giving access to the information on what stage a piece of land is at in the approval process.

Mr J.J.M. BOWLER: Are there plans to increase the number of interests from the 27 to 60?

Mr M. Bradford: We are working very hard with the agencies to get all 60 on as quickly as we possibly can. It is a complex process because it means opening up databases that are not available for online searching and it requires negotiating service level agreements and agreement to publish the information. We have a dedicated team that is working across government to make that information available.

The appropriation was recommended.

[5.30 pm]