

**Division 35: Communities — Services 1 to 6, Child Protection; Women’s Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services, \$1 072 681 000 —**

Ms A.E. Kent, Chair.

Mr P. Papalia, Minister for Police representing the Minister for Child Protection; Women’s Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services.

Mr M. Rowe, Director General.

Mr D. Stewart, Deputy Director General.

Ms R. Green, Deputy Director General, Community Services.

Ms L. Kalasopatan, Assistant Director General, Management Accounting.

Ms C. Irwin, Assistant Director General, Strategy and Partnerships.

Mr M. Crevola, Chief Financial Officer.

Mr G. Mace, Executive Director, Service Delivery.

Mr P. Payne, Executive Director, Regulation and Quality.

Mr M. Richardson, Director, Management Accounting and Financial Analysis.

Mr M. Burgess, Director, Strategic Policy.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIR:** The estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. I will allow as many questions as possible. Questions and answers should be short and to the point. Consideration is restricted to items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must relate to a page number, item or amount related to the current division, and members should preface their questions with these details. Some divisions are the responsibility of more than one minister. Ministers shall only be examined in relation to their portfolio responsibilities.

A minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee. I will ask the minister to clearly indicate what information they agree to provide and will then allocate a reference number. Supplementary information should be provided to the principal clerk by close of business Friday, 3 June 2022. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system.

I give the call to the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I refer to page 520 of budget paper No 2, volume 2. Under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency” is “COVID-19 and Emergency Welfare Services”. Paragraph 2.1 is about the commercial accommodation purchased throughout the state. Can the minister give us an understanding of how this was undertaken? Is it permanent accommodation or was it hotel rooms? If permanent accommodation was purchased, what happens as we move through to the next stage of COVID?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Because it is the COVID response, it is hotel accommodation, and it is flexed up and down as necessary to meet demand.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Was all the \$11.3 million for accommodation used to purchase hotel rooms?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes, it was used to purchase hotel accommodation and fixed assets for the purposes of accommodating individuals. It was predominantly hotels.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Was \$11.3 million spent or is that how much was allocated?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, that is how much was allocated. The budget allocation was \$11.29 million. It is estimated at the moment that in the order of \$7.4 million has been expended, with expenditure forecast by the end of the financial year to total about \$8.1 million.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** If it is not fully expended, will that just be absorbed back into the department’s budget or does the minister anticipate that the government will require ongoing emergency funding?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That decision has not yet been made.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I refer to “Child Protection and Earlier Intervention Services” on page 521 of budget paper No 2. I could probably choose any number but I will refer to paragraph 3.2, which states, in part —

A review of the effectiveness of the Department’s Earlier Intervention and Family Support Strategy, comprising the Aboriginal In-home Support Service (AISS) and the Intensive Family Support Service (IFSS), during 2021 found that referrals for keeping children safe at home resulted in 94% of children for AISS and 86% for IFSS not being in care 12 months later.

Can the minister explain where these programs are located in WA and how many full-time equivalent employees are attached to these programs?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The Aboriginal In-home Support Service evaluation report completed by Social Ventures Australia has been endorsed by the Department of Communities and is published on Communities' internal and external websites. The report's findings indicate positive impacts on the community and successful relationships between the community sector and government due to the AISS being place based and trauma informed. The partnership between the current service provider, Wungening Aboriginal Corporation, and Communities is a fundamental and necessary way of working with Aboriginal families. Some positive outcomes were seen from the consortium model, including access to strong local connections and highly integrated and streamlined service delivery. Families reported Wungening helped them feel empowered. The AISS impact evaluation was finalised and approved on 30 April last year.

The implementation plan was developed in partnership with Wungening and endorsed on 22 September last year. Expansion of earlier intervention and family support services into select regional sites has been funded, with Halls Creek and south west trials being initiated in the 2022–23 financial year and further development of other selected sites commencing in the 2023–24 financial year. On 5 January 2022, the AISS expanded to the Peel region, which provided service support to a further 18 families. In total, the AISS can work with up to 192 families in the metro area. The member has already read out that 94 per cent of children referred to the AISS to keep children safely at home remained at home with their parents after 12 months.

The AISS is metro and the IFSS is the regional provider. The way it works is that the consortium outsources to local service providers. They are mostly Aboriginal corporations, so they are not actually in-house FTE; they are outsourced to others. The admin costs are absorbed by the providers, so there are no extra additional FTEs as a consequence of the program. Inside government, it is the delivery of service getting grants.

[1.10 pm]

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Can the minister supply the funding that goes to these external organisations that, for example, look after the intensive family support services? I think it is important to know what agencies get that funding, who are these agencies, what are the KPIs of these agencies and what towns do they operate in? It is very critical. I am glad that the minister is here because he is the police minister. The police are often at the pointy end of not having the resources in child protection or working with families in regional communities. This is a good way of finding out exactly what programs are out there, what intensive family support services are available, who is doing what and how much is being spent on it. That is very critical when it comes to the level of crime that has been plaguing regional WA.

**The CHAIR:** Member for North West Central, can you keep your questions to the point, please? What is your question?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes, what is the question?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Can the minister supply the names of these external organisations that look after, for example, intensive family support services for the Department of Communities, and where are they based?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The member made a speech about service delivery. As I read to the member, Social Ventures Australia did an evaluation report on the Aboriginal in-home support service and determined that it was very successful. As a consequence, the programs have been expanded. Clearly, there is a partnership with Wungening, and then it seeks other providers of service, who are largely Aboriginal. It has resulted in successful outcomes.

In terms of giving the member the detail and getting breakdowns of what services other providers are providing under the grant system to the prime service delivery, I will ask the member to put that on notice, the reason being, this agency is doing incredibly important work. It is confronting an exceptional challenge that is not just associated with the difficult field of supporting children in care and trying to keep them out of care and keep them in safe environments in their family homes, but it is also doing that in an environment that is impacted by COVID. Significant numbers of staff in the agency are affected by COVID and they require furlough. Therefore, I do not want to direct them away from the priority that should be those children in care and those children at risk. The member can put that question on notice, and then the agency will provide that answer because I do not have it here. A supplementary question would require very immediate action and divert the agency from its priority tasks. For it to be placed on notice is reasonable.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** No-one is doubting the work that the department does; it is one of the hardest departments in government dealing with some of the tragic issues that unfortunately have to be dealt with in our society. No-one is disputing that. But I am disputing a lack of funding that is contributing to the inability of the Department of Communities to actually perform its duties. That is why we need that scrutiny to occur —

**The CHAIR:** Member for North West Central, I am moving on. Member for Vasse, you had a question.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes. I refer to the spending changes on page 520 of budget paper No 2, volume 2. About halfway down the page, under "Ongoing Initiatives", is the line item "Strengthening Child Protection Services and Aboriginal

Outcomes”. How does the Department of Communities’ budget, which is responsible for both child protection and housing, ensure that children taken into care placements are housed appropriately?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am representing the Minister for Child Protection and the division that she is responsible for. Housing comes under a different minister and has a different focus. The member has combined a couple. I am trying to get in my head what she is getting at. I can answer with regards to child protection.

**The CHAIR:** I think we need to put that on notice.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I can rephrase it. How does the Department of Child Protection ensure that state wards—children who are being overseen and supported by the state—are in appropriate housing?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As part of the 2022–23 budget, the government will provide additional funding to boost investment in the state’s child protection system and, at the same time, improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and their families. The government has committed a further \$16.9 million across the budget and forward estimates to further boost earlier intervention family support through a phased expansion: firstly, to bolster urgent additional placements and enhance this current system; and, secondly, to expand two further regional sites based on priority; along with \$6.7 million to support urgent additional places and enhance current services; \$9 million to expand services to two priority sites; \$900 000 for a chief practitioner for child protection to not only lead the specialist child protection unit, but to also oversee a range of child protection reforms across communities; and \$400 000 to fund the Aboriginal cultural capability and reform program.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Does the minister acknowledge the revelations of the Moorditj Koort—and excuse my pronunciation—Aboriginal Corporation in the inquiry before the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations that —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** What line of the budget is the member referring to?

**The CHAIR:** Yes, what line, sorry?

**Ms L. METTAM:** It relates to this issue.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** What expenditure in the budget is the member referring to?

**Ms L. METTAM:** It is the expenditure related to “Child Protection Services and Aboriginal Outcomes” and the document by this Aboriginal corporation which raises concerns that the Department of Child Protection is placing state wards with families they know are homeless. What is the minister’s response to that very concerning submission?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I really do not think this is appropriate for the estimates. If the member wants to raise a specific question of the minister with respect to that report, she should do that in Parliament during the normal course of question time, which is an appropriate location. If the member wants to reflect on the budget and the matters I just referred to—she asked me what was being done in relation to that line item, and I indicated what was being done—that is fine. I ask the member to note, of course, that I am also just representing the minister. I would not want to reflect on a view of the minister, and I do not think it is appropriate in estimates anyway.

[1.20 pm]

**Ms L. METTAM:** The minister is not the responsible minister but he has many advisers here. Given there is a line item for strengthening child protection services and Aboriginal outcomes, what is the government doing to ensure that the Department of Communities does not continue to place state wards with families it knows are homeless, as put forward by the Moorditj Koort Aboriginal Corporation?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I already responded to the question with respect to the line item she referred to—what the government was doing to strengthen child protection services and Aboriginal outcomes. If she wants me to read it again, I can, but I have given her a response. The specific question she is asking relates to a document. I have not seen it, which is not surprising as it is not my portfolio. I suggest that the member raises it with the minister in question time during the next sitting, which is not far away, and I am sure that she will provide her with a response.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Is the minister aware that the Department of Communities is directing state wards to live with family members who are homeless?

**The CHAIR:** Member, you have to relate the question to the budget papers. It is about consolidated funds, so I remind you to focus on that.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am not going to respond. It is an inappropriate question. It is focused entirely on trying to achieve some sort of political outcome with a statement with respect to some report I know nothing about. The question should be posed to the Minister for Communities; Child Protection. She can pose it to the minister in question time in normal Parliament, as is the appropriate approach. Doing this here is just pointless, it is inappropriate and it is not related.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** That is the whole point of today.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, it is not.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It is.

**Ms L. METTAM:** It is actually.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am not even going to bother —

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** That is the problem with having you in this chair.

**The CHAIR:** Can we just move on and have the next question, please?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. Ask something about the budget.

**The CHAIR:** I give the call to the Leader of the Opposition.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I refer to page 519 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, and the total appropriation for the department of \$2 billion. Can the minister advise how much of that is appropriated to support the work of the portfolio of women's interests within the department?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The total appropriation?

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Within that total appropriation, what FTE allocation and funding allocation is there towards supporting the women's interests portfolio?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that it is in the order of \$5 million. My advisers do not have the precise amount.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Minister, is that \$5 million to support the work of the women's interests portfolio?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** How many FTE are allocated within the department?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Dedicated to?

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Dedicated to managing the women's interests policy. I have a question about *Stronger together: WA's plan for gender equality* as well.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There are five dedicated within the policy division and there are others who work as necessary on managing grants and the like.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Has that changed over the last five years?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** From what? It has got bigger, but I do not know what it was before. It has increased.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Can the minister ask?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I did. A few years ago, it was two and now it is five.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I thank the minister. I am assuming that within that general appropriation—I cannot see it in the budget; I am happy to be pointed to where it appears—the main policy framework for women's interests is the stronger together plan for gender equality. Can the minister point me to where in the budget I will see funding applied to achieve the outcomes or the recommendations and policy work that is contained within that document?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The point to bear in mind is that “stronger together” is an across-government plan, so every agency contributes and delivers on the objectives of the plan. If the member is talking about Communities, it is the first item, “Community Services”, in the service summary on page 526.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Is that just under “Community Services”?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Within my portfolios, I pursue the objectives of that plan, as does every other minister, so it is not like it is one allocation of funding.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I understand.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The policy demands that every minister and every portfolio pursue the objectives. Every agency would be expending some degree of resources or funding to deliver on the outcomes.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to page 532 of budget paper No 2, volume 2. I see that the department is spending \$500 million on the provision of safe and stable care arrangements for young people in the care of the CEO. Of that amount, how many staff are employed and what amount is spent on ensuring that children are placed in appropriate settings and not with families or carers of those who are homeless?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The agency is focused on the provision of safe and stable care arrangements, so it does not knowingly put anybody in a risky environment, including one in which accommodation may not be available. Obviously, it does not do that.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** How many children are taken away from carers and placed in alternative care? Are there any instances of children who have been removed from care and placed in another person's care being abused in any way or has any abuse been reported as a result of the department's move from one carer to another? Does that make sense?

[1.30 pm]

**The CHAIR:** Member, can you direct me to the line item?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I am asking a further question off that asked by the member for Vasse—for example, foster carers.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** With respect to placement, the agency acts in its best endeavours to find a safe place for a child.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I understand that.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is the primary objective. In the event that it becomes evident that that placement has not had a good outcome, the department will seek to find somewhere else but it obviously does not look to place children in a non-safe environment.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I totally understand that.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** With respect to how often replacements occur, I might ask the member to put that on notice if he wants a specific number in the last 12 months or something like that. Again, my motivation is not to deflect this agency from doing its important work, particularly in the next week.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I will rephrase the question. With any placements, moving from one carer to another, whether it be to a foster carer or to another carer, have there been any instances of a child being removed because that child may have indicated that they were hit by a spoon and removed from that family to a point where that child has been moved to another family or person and been abused? Are there any instances of the department moving children from one family to another who have been abused in some way? Do not worry about the stats; I just want to know if that is the case.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is a complex environment, and challenging with respect to when relationships break down or why placements do not work and need to be changed. There are often multiple reasons they might change. A duty of care unit within the agency is responsible for investigating any claims of the nature that the member has suggested, regardless of whether it is before or after a placement or a replacement or however we term it—a movement of a child from one carer to another. The advisers I have with me are unaware of the scenario that the member posed occurring.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** From one carer to another, have there been any instances of violence towards a child in care, being moved from one carer to another? Is the department aware of that occurring or aware of any abuse at all?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There are 5 133 children in care. They do move. There is a lot of complexity around the reason for placements breaking down. I am not aware of any. If the member is talking about a specific instance, we might be able to confirm whether that has happened. At the moment, I am advised that people are not aware of those particular instances. We would have to investigate. It is one of those questions to which I would ask the member to put on notice and define it, so ask, "In the last 12 months, did this scenario occur?" If the member puts it on notice, the minister can ask the agency to investigate but it is not a question that I can answer right now and I do not want to ask my advisers to take it as a supplementary.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to the explanation of significant movements on page 532 of budget paper No 2, underneath "Explanation of Significant Movements". I refer to item 6, "Care Arrangements and Support Services for Children in the CEO's Care", paragraph (d) under the table and note 3 under "Explanation of Significant Movements". Why have the budgeted days of secure care arrangements been projected to reduce, given that the accompanying note 3 references a growing number of young people with increasingly complex needs? Why is the government budgeting to secure fewer people in secure care when it also predicts that more young people will have increasingly complex needs? How does that add up?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I think note 3 that the member asked about in relation to the secure care arrangement may conflate a couple of things. All the kids are complex—increasingly, they are more complex—but the secure care arrangements are applied to a very specific cohort. They are the really challenging and difficult cases—those who end up in the Kath French Secure Care Centre, which is for a range of really challenging behaviours; they are not in someone's foster care home. It is not a large number of children. I think note 3 refers to everybody. All the children are increasingly complex. We would assume and hope that the number of children who are subject to the secure care arrangement will not grow and it will diminish.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Would the minister not also hope that the number of children with increasingly complex needs reduces as well?

[1.40 pm]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I do not get the member's question.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I will put it another way. Why does the minister think that the number of —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There are two different things. The member is conflating a couple of types of child, which is what I was suggesting but I may not have made it entirely clear. Note 3 refers to exceptionally complex children or complex cases. Secure care is a different type of service, and that is what I was trying to convey. That is for the really challenging cases—the small cohort of children who have to go into that other centre.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I will separate the two items and just ask what consideration or modelling is going into the assumption that we will see a reduction in the number of secure care arrangements? Why do you think that will —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Sorry, member, I was just getting a bit of a briefing. Could the member ask that question again?

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes. Minister, I am just asking, and separately: why is the department or the minister anticipating that we will see this reduction in the number of days of secure care arrangements going forward?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Secure care as opposed to exceptional? Thanks, member. I am advised that that secure care complex, the Kath French Secure Care Centre, was undergoing renovation and enhancement. As a consequence of that work, it has greater capacity for lower costs, so we will be able to accommodate more children for a smaller amount of money.

**Ms L. METTAM:** To get some clarification: what will be the trend of people or individuals going forward? The minister is talking about the cost of delivering this service. It is obviously going to be reduced, but what is the trend in terms of the number of individuals we anticipate will require secure care arrangements, and what are the numbers behind those budget figures?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I do not know about projections forward, but it has the capacity to accommodate more than it did in the past for the same, or lower, outlay. That aside, there has been a reduction, so we can, look backwards and see what has happened in recent times. There was a 3.9 per cent reduction in the total number of children in care overall from 30 June last year until 30 April this year, and that is as a consequence of a lot of different efforts across a whole range of classifications of children; it is not just the secure care. We hope that that trend can be continued. That is overall numbers, but for secure care, it might just be a reflection. If the overall number of children that are getting to the point of requiring care is on a downward trend, that might be reflected in the others. I do not think we are able to tell the member whether there is a trend in secure care demand. It is a very small number, so a couple at any one time.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I thank the minister. I refer to page 519 and the line heading, “Amount Authorised by Other Statutes—Salaries and Allowances Act 1975”. I refer to the first page of division 35, “Communities”, and the line on page 519, “Amount Authorised by Other Statutes—Salaries and Allowances Act 1975”. Under that is the line, “Total appropriations provided to deliver services”. Will the minister provide to me the staffing levels—that is, the FTEs—for Geraldton, Carnarvon and Meekatharra, and also the Kimberley region, being Kununurra, Fitzroy Crossing, Halls Creek, Derby, and Broome? I refer to the staffing levels at the child protection.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Does the member not care about Wyndham? Yes. I will see. Bidiyadanga?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Well, they would travel from Broome, I would imagine.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There is actually someone from the Department of Communities in Bidiyadanga. I have met her.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** While the minister is doing that, if they are full-time FTEs for those towns, what is earmarked for them and what is actually there?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Sorry?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** How many FTEs have been assigned to those towns and how many are actually there, working in town?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. The member is adding a whole lot of questions to the question, which is okay. I think it might be an on-notice question to get all the details for him. That is reasonable. I do not want to commit them to doing it inside. Does the member want all those other aspects?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I want to know how many staff are actually—

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is, the FTE. That was the member’s first question.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Yes.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** What else did the member want?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Are those positions filled?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Are they filled? Okay.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Does the minister not have that? That is unbelievable. The minister seriously does not have a breakdown of his own FTEs?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Can the member stop talking for a minute?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It is a simple thing.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Okay. Chair, I am happy to take as a supplementary—

**The CHAIR:** Could you state exactly what you are going to offer as supplementary?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. I knew you would say that. The FTE from the Department of Communities in the towns of Carnarvon, Geraldton, Meekatharra, Kununurra, Halls Creek, Derby, Fitzroy Crossing, Broome and Wyndham. No, that is Kununurra.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** And, say, Newman. I do not know if it is Karratha or —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The member is adding to it now? Why not? Which ones, Newman?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Karratha and Port Hedland.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Karratha and —

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Port Hedland and Newman.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Port Hedland and South Hedland, or either one?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It will be under one.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Okay.

[*Supplementary Information No B13.*]

[1.50 pm]

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to page 520, the heading “Ongoing Initiatives”, and the line, “Child Protection—Delivery of Services”. There seems to be a significant variation between each year in terms of the funding allocation, including \$32 million in the out years of 2025–26, and \$5.7 million for 2022–23. Can The minister provide some explanation about that and why there is so much variation in those figures?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I will try to get this right, but it is because of the cost and demand model that has been implemented the increase in costs as a result of shifting to the cost and demand model. The change in the use of the model is felt in 2025–26. It is like an accounting practise that has resulted in the change, or the modelling has resulted in the change. I will read it out, because I will probably mess it up. The increase in the cost and demand model in 2025–26 is mostly due to 2025–26 being the near out year. As the new out year has not previously factored in any previous projections on either cost growth or demand growth forecast in 2025–26, the out years in the spending changes from 2021–22 to 2024–25 show an adjustment from what was previously approved in prior budget processes, while 2025–26 shows the full population on the prior year’s base, plus adjustments to that forecast. Got that?

**Ms L. METTAM:** What does that actually mean?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is a different model and then it comes into effect, essentially, by that year.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Is this part of the machinery-of-government changes?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, it has nothing to do with that. It has been in effect since 2008–09.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Is the funding that is set aside in 2025–26 as an out year there because the government anticipates spending that on delivery of child protection services?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Member, it is not a conspiracy. There is nothing sneaky or anything like that. It is the last 2021–22 budget process. It is the projections from the cost and demand model. The cost and demand model expires in 2024–25, and they have applied the model again with all these other drivers like the consumer price index, population growth, and the demand growth of the number of children in care. None of those things were accommodated in the last model for 2025–26, and now they suddenly come on at 2025–26. The out year projections may not be realised. They are recalculated and reprojected each year and it may change. It will definitely change before then, but it is more like a budget modelling process, not a reflection of the number of kids, necessarily.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I refer again to page 519 and “Total Appropriations”, where there is a \$2 billion actual.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is more than that. It is bigger than the police budget.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** With regard to the defamation settlement between the Minister for Community Services and Dr Tracy Westerman—the \$13 000 settlement by taxpayers—has it come out of that budget, the total appropriations of the Department of Communities?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I have no idea and I do not think that is an appropriate line to reflect that question.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It is a total budget. Has it come out of the budget of the Department of Communities, yes or no?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** At a guess I would say things of that nature are not accommodated in this agency's budget. They would be some sort of whole-of-government type activity under maybe the Department of the Premier and Cabinet or the Department of Justice.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It is fair question to ask if it has come out of the budget, that is all. I just wanted to see if it had come out of the Department of Communities.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That would not normally be the practice, and in my experience that would not be where the funding is drawn from.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** What support did the Department of Communities give to the defamation case against the Minister for Community Services? Were there any expenses associated with staff or resources?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As I said, the Department of Communities is the agency. This is the budget for the Department of Communities. The member is talking about something that is completely outside the realms of this particular division.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** There is a cost involved with the Department of Communities, whether the director general or anyone else provided assistance in the defamation case against the Minister for Community Services.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** This strikes me as being one of those questions that would far more appropriately be put in the chamber during question time, and the member gets an opportunity to do so all the time during question time. He does not ask many questions about this particular portfolio, but he could put that question next time we sit. It is not about Department of Communities agency activity in respect of the budget.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I am asking a budget question. Has the Department of Communities used any of its budget—

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The member is struggling to make an association.

[2.00 pm]

**The CHAIR:** Member for North West Central, I think the minister has answered. Let us move on.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is right. It is not in this budget. If the member wants to ask that question, should ask it in Parliament, as he gets an opportunity to do every time we sit.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I refer to page 531 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, under the heading, "Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence". Is there an allocation in the total cost of service to support women or family members who may have needed to call an ambulance as a result of domestic violence and who are then left with that debt? That is one of the issues that has been raised by the sector and by individuals.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Essentially, the answer is yes. There are a number of services funded by the agency, like refuges, but also emergency relief-type services that have flexible budgets that enable them to cover the cost of ambulances in the event that someone is compelled to use an ambulance and then receives a bill.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I assume that is on an ad hoc basis.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is a very flexible, accommodating budget process, so the services that deliver relief to people who are victims of FDV are very flexible. The government agencies that they will encounter in seeking assistance are the ones that will be able to cover the cost.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Is it possible to provide me with information or detail on how many times the department has done that, and what has been allocated within the budget for that? What is the process that they have to go through?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It would actually be imposing an impost on not just the agency but also the service providers to deliver some sort of account of how frequently that has occurred. They currently are funded to do emergency relief; different agencies provide that. Refuges provide that service. They are not rigidly constrained in how they use those funds, so they are able to fund this. Is the member worried about how many people are receiving a bill?

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** It is absolutely an issue. I can provide some context, given that the minister is not the relevant minister. There have been concerns raised by community groups. In fact, one of the groups that the minister referred to in the south west has an entire FTE dedicated to following up bad debts from women who have been forced to call an ambulance and have then been left with a bill. Instead of being able to provide proactive financial counselling and support, they have actually got someone working full-time on trying to recover debts. St John Ambulance, I know, has been raising with the government for some time being able to write off debts that they hold within their organisation because it is not in their best interest to be calling women who have had to call for an ambulance in a period of great distress. Some individuals—there has been a number of them in the media—whom one would regard as survivors have said that they have simply stopped calling the ambulance until they have escaped domestic violence and moved themselves into a safer situation, because when they have had to do it multiple times, they know they cannot afford it. It is a real issue. Instead of the ad hoc nature that seems to exist in this space, it



seems to me that there is a policy gap that needs funding within that service to ensure that people are aware that if they call an ambulance in a situation like that, they are not going to be left with a bill.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the minister's response to that proposition is that it is part of a broader discussion around ambulance services and health challenges—because it is part of health, in a lot of ways—and how they might be addressed. I make the observation that despite the scenarios the member has postulated, the agencies that provide services to the, mostly, women who are in these situations, fleeing domestic violence and compelled to call for an ambulance, the people that then provide them with further support, regardless of whether they are going to get a bill in the mail, are the relief services, and they have funding. They have flexibility of funding to deliver those services. It is not like an ad hoc thing; it is a natural practice and a natural expectation of those agencies, as indicated by the department, because there is flexibility around their funding to enable them. With regard to the particular organisation the member referred to that has dedicated an FTE, is it actually addressing the bill on behalf of the victim of FDV, or what is it doing?

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** That is my understanding; it tries to get the debt forgiven, or it tries to follow up post the event.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is it a service delivery agency?

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Yes, it is. Sorry, I do not have the name at my fingertips; I had it last week in Parliament. It is one of the women's refuge and domestic violence services providers in the south west. I will find the name for the minister if I can get some time while somebody else asks a question.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That might be worth the member pursuing. If she has a specific question, I am sure she can put it to the minister with regard to that particular organisation.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I did try that last week.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am sure the answer is on its way, then.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I was not filled with great confidence, minister.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I cannot give the member an answer right now.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I understand.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** There is a degree of flexibility in the funding for agencies that provide emergency relief and that would normally, I expect, be the way people can avoid having to pay. They also get support in other ways. If it is a refuge or another emergency relief organisation, they will provide more than just dealing with an ambulance bill. They will be doing a lot more, I would hope, and that is kind of appropriate.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** It is the South West Women's Refuge, and the CEO is on record in the paper down there and in discussions with our office. The point of asking the question is it is clearly a policy area, and this is the department that deals at the coalface with individuals who are impacted by family and domestic violence. I would expect to see this as a priority for the department, so that if women find themselves in these situations, it is just one less thing they have to worry about. Nobody should get an ambulance bill that they have to follow up on when they find themselves in these circumstances, regardless of whether there is flexible funding within service providers. I just think it should be something that is resolved from a whole-of-government perspective, and I would that thought that this was the department to take the lead on making sure that happens.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Maybe, or it might be the Department of Health.

[2.10 pm]

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to page 531 and the heading, "Preventing and Responding to Family and Domestic Violence" under "Explanation of Significant Movements". I refer to footnote (a), which gives the number of cases. acknowledge that the minister and the department is anticipating a reduction in the number of cases in the coming year, and I would like an explanation of how that is calculated, appreciating that for 2021–22, the budgeted number of cases was 15 590 but the actual was 17 788. The level of demand was well and truly exceeded in the 2021–22 budget. Given what we are hearing across the board, how can the minister and the department actually expect or anticipate that the level of demand to go down, given that demand was well and truly exceeded last time? That is the demand for 2022–23, with a budget target of 17 750.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is not significantly lower, member. That aside, so the —

**Ms L. METTAM:** I did not say it was significantly lower.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I said that there was a significant increase.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. Well, that was all over the world.

**Ms L. METTAM:** The actual is a lot more than what was budgeted.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. During COVID, the number of family and domestic violence cases increased all over the world.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes, but COVID started in 2020 in WA.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That happened everywhere in the world; it is not something that happened only in Western Australia. It may diminish, but I do not think the number is significant in the budget. Regardless of that, the services will be funded. I am informed that there may have been a minor decrease due to the fact that one of the things we did in COVID recovery was increase funding for financial counselling to assist people, which may have averted some of the damaging environments that resulted in further FDV.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I appreciate that and I appreciate the challenges through the pandemic, but we are seeing demand continue.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The pandemic has not finished.

**Ms L. METTAM:** There is the additional challenge of a lack of housing, which plays into these issues. The real challenges of homelessness and lack of housing are resulting in women feeling that they have no options, or fewer options, as a result of very difficult circumstances. We are also hearing refugees talking about the fact that they have never been so under pressure. One south west refuge talked about having had to turn away 300 families over the last 12 months. What modelling is being undertaken to suggest that there will be a slight decline, given that we have seen such demands, despite WA reportedly being past our COVID peak? What makes the department think that our numbers will now plateau, given the other challenges of housing, and a sector that is continually being asked to do more with less?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No-one is being asked to do more with less. That is just a silly statement. There is more funding for this activity, for these services, than there ever has been in the history of the state.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Why does everything keep on going up, then?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The only jurisdiction that reduced its support was the previous federal government; it just lost office. Those sorts of statements are not based on fact and are pretty unhelpful. There was a peak in FDV as a result of COVID, but there was also an escalation in FDV witnesses. It is difficult to determine the drivers and isolate them, one from the other, and suggest that it might be housing pressures, COVID-related stress or whatever the other primary drivers might be. It is a bit difficult to isolate and refine and attribute growth or otherwise to any one particular driver.

Family and domestic violence is a priority of the McGowan government, and we have done more in creating a portfolio and focusing a lot of effort on it across all agencies. I can tell the member that, from a policing perspective, the culture with respect to FDV and the collaborative organisation response from police is light-years ahead of what it was when we took office; the focus has been unparalleled, certainly in the history of this state. The challenge of FDV is something that is replicated in every jurisdiction in this country, and everyone is suffering from housing shortages and rental unavailability and increasing costs in housing. That is something that every jurisdiction is confronting.

In response to the challenge, the state government has committed to establishing a two-year rapid rehousing pilot. This is specifically in response to the critical shortage of available and affordable rental properties, noting, of course, that Western Australia—Perth, in particular—is probably the most affordable capital city in the country. That aside, it is difficult for people. The pilot will assist eligible women, with or without children, to source and secure a tenancy in the private rental market so they can leave refuges and begin to rebuild their lives. We are extending the Safer Pathways program, which was established specifically to help Department of Communities clients sustain tenancies in situations in which family and domestic violence is or may be a primary cause of tenancy issues. That program helps women who are in public housing or waiting for a public housing allocation. We have also expanded the Safe at Home program, which provides intensive care, management, and outreach services; funding for home security upgrades; and victim and perpetrator intervention, so that wherever possible, women and children can remain safely in their own homes.

As I indicated earlier, safe housing is one of the responses that is required to address family and domestic violence. There are a lot of different drivers of that wicked problem. I have a list of things that were committed to in February 2021 as part of a \$60 million package of election commitments that is being delivered to tackle family and domestic violence. As this current financial year plays out, there has been an expansion of Safe at Home; rapid rehousing pilots; counselling programs for young people; training for first responders; expansion of Safer Pathways programs; development of a primary prevention framework; subsidised dental treatment; driving lessons for women who are exiting refuges; expansion of the Respectful Relations program in schools and sports clubs; and expansion of Pets in Crisis and KidsBark programs. Two additional one-stop hubs have been funded, and they are trying a Caring Dads program in the Peel region. We are also doing more reform measures. We are committed to law reform in this field of endeavour.

We just passed through the upper house amending legislation to the Firearms Act, an element of which is the creation of firearm prohibition orders, which can be focused on people who are FDV perpetrators. There is a whole

range of law reform in this field that is being pursued by the government. We would like to be able to say that it all will result in a reduction in FDV and fewer incidents of that nature, but it is just a huge challenge, and it requires ongoing significant effort. I do not think one can question this minister, this agency or this government with respect to its efforts against FDV, having elevated it to a priority. We continue to focus on everything we can possibly do to try and reduce the incidents of FDV.

[2.20 pm]

**Ms L. METTAM:** I have a further question on this section of the budget—I have raised this with the minister before—about the funding cuts dedicated to the cost of service. I note, and it is acknowledged, that it is mainly a result of the cessation of commonwealth funding for time-limited initiatives. The funding going forward for 2022–23 is \$73.6 million, which is less than the actual funding dedicated in the previous financial year in terms of the cost of service.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** What is the question?

**Ms L. METTAM:** The question is: how will the government be able to address this shortfall, given that demand is anticipated to be about the same, given that although there has been the cessation of commonwealth funding time and initiatives, and given we are seeing refuges like the one in the south west turn away 300 families over a 12-month period? Why is the government unable to ensure that the funding at least is at the same level?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The member has asked, and received an answer to, this question a number of times in Parliament. There are movements as a consequence of commonwealth-funded programs for FDV responses ending. That is just something that happens when the federal government funds its own programs for a short period of time, unlike the state government. When a grant ends, the federal government's funding for that activity ends. It is not state government budgeting that has resulted in the reduction in that line item.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Was the commonwealth funding that ceased related to COVID? My understanding is that it was just a two-year funding commitment.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. One could ask why the federal government only funded it for a limited number of years? It chose to do that. It did it under the guise of a social recovery plan. I think it was under COVID-related funding, which ended. What I have just said with regard to COVID funding may not be correct but, effectively, it chose to fund it only for that period of time. When it ends, it is like our budget. If we do not budget something in the subsequent year, then that funding ends, but the state government funding has not been reduced. The federal government funding has ended because it was a time-limited, or time-specific, program, and it chose to do it for that length of time and it ended.

**Ms L. METTAM:** But it does represent a reduction in funds dedicated to that area.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** By the federal government, yes. I agree with the member that the Morrison government failed pretty dismally in this regard and chose to only fund those programs that it felt were necessary. It perhaps should have funded them for longer.

**Ms L. METTAM:** My understanding is that it was COVID-related funding. Given the challenges that we are seeing and the demand, the question is: what will the McGowan government do to ensure that we see at least the same level of funding, given that demand is at least at the same level as last year and is, in fact, growing with so many refuges and other agencies or support services saying that they are doing more with less?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Funding from the McGowan government for family and domestic violence services has been extended for five years in terms of agreements or contracts. That is good practice and has resulted in certainty of funding and service delivery. That is what the state government has done. The Morrison government did not do that and that is why its funding ended. It only gave funding for a finite period of time, which was pretty short. It clearly did not give it much of a priority. I cannot apologise for the Morrison government. We are the state government and the practice of giving five-year contracts is really good one. The longer we can engage agencies and give certainty around their staffing and planning, the better. I just reiterate that our state government provided an additional \$63.9 million over the forward estimates to support the community sector as part of the 2022–23 budget process. We have provided \$10.3 million for homelessness over two years and \$18 million for family and domestic violence to facilitate five-year contract extensions. That is a really serious commitment to ensure that those service providers have certainty, and maybe it is a good model for federal governments to adopt.

**Ms L. METTAM:** In acknowledging the five-year contracts for refuges and other services, I understand that a number of those contracts were recently renewed. The sector is concerned that in some instances, the level of funding dedicated to those five-year contracts has not changed since 2014 and that the funding dedicated does not acknowledge increased utility costs or increased demand. This has led to a situation in which refuges have had to effectively cut services because they cannot keep operating at that same level. Why was increased demand not built into those renewed contracts?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Which refuges have cut services?

**Ms L. METTAM:** South West Refuge is one example.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** What service?

**Ms L. METTAM:** It has had to turn away two to three hundred families as a result of operating on the same contract or at the same funding level that it has had for some time. We also heard from the Centre for Women’s Safety and Wellbeing that has raised real concerns. The Western Australian Council of Social Service made a statement about the budget and raised concerns about refuges having to operate with less as a result of these contracts not having the increased demand worked into them.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is the member suggesting that there is a greater demand than that which can be met with their budget?

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes, as a result of demand they have had to cut services. They have not been able to operate the full suite of services because they can only deal with the basics.

[2.30 pm]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that the five-year contracts have been signed and extended as a way of giving certainty to those service providers. The agencies are currently engaged in a financial modelling process to determine whether baseline funding is adequate. During that process, those concerns about whether funding has kept pace with costs will be potentially addressed. I am informed that some of the agreements are more contemporary than others and have probably accommodated any elevation in costs. The other agreements may be addressed as part of that process. Undeniably, the sector has responded pretty favourably through voting with its feet with 135 of the 137 services signing up to that agreement.

**Ms L. METTAM:** The minister said that 135 of the 137 services have signed up to the agreement. What choice did they have? These services are desperate. I appreciate that some contracts are only a few years old and others are significantly older than that. Some contracts have been operating under the same level of funding for the last 10 years. What option did they have but to sign these contracts? When will we see an uplift in the funding?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Our government has implemented an enhanced or improved indexation formula and the five-year component of the agreement gives far greater certainty and support than has ever been offered. The current process of financial modelling will look to address any inadequacies. Other than the speech, it is an interesting observation to note that five of the last 10 years, during which the funding did not change, was under the member’s government. I will just reflect on the fact that more than ever before, this government has placed a greater priority on and given greater funding or resourcing to elevating and addressing the challenge of FDV. It is an ongoing process that involves a lot of effort by a lot of other agencies that are not specifically labelled “FDV response” in the Department of Communities. They will all potentially contribute to a reduction in FDV and better outcomes.

My agency has put in a significant effort—far in excess of what was happening when we took office—that focuses on the delivery of better FDV intervention and response from just that one agency. I am sure it is true in other ones where it is a cross-government effort driven by the philosophy that we stated when we took office—that this would be a priority. We see it as one of the biggest challenges that government confronts.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Can I get an indication of when we are likely to see these services get that uplift, which I understand is to be part of the reform process? I heard that it might be as soon as next year. Can the minister provide some clarification on that?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. The financial modelling process is underway, then that will inform the normal government process for budgeting. I cannot give the member a specific time frame.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I have a different question. I refer to page 149 in budget paper No 3 and “Investment in Child Protection Services”. Is the minister able to advise where across the state those additional child protection workers will be allocated and what work is being done to recruit into those positions?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** At the moment they are in the process of recruiting to the target indicated on that page and they are also working to determine where they will go. It will be dependent upon me and upon vacancies, but they have not resolved specifically where they will go yet.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Some areas must have greater need than others because a number has been reached. Those additional 36 have been funded across the budget. Can the minister provide any indication on where in the state is the greatest area of need?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We could predict that many will go regional because that is where some of the greatest need is for additional child protection workers. I think that since July 2020, there has been—the director general is getting the number—in excess of 100 additional workers. That is in advance of these workers or these additional numbers. Since July 2020, more than 116 full-time caseworker positions have been created, and since 30 June 2017, the child protection caseworker FTE has been increased by 31 per cent, which equates to 218.6 FTE. That is all in

advance of these—okay, the 36 are in the top 116, sorry. I have not got an answer on where those workers will specifically go, but it will obviously be driven by need and vacancy. They will go where the need is most acute.

[2.40 pm]

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Just to clarify that, is the \$36 million part of the funding that has already been announced or is it new money?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is new money. The paragraph under “Investment in Child Protection Services” states that “This Budget invests an additional \$114 million” and then the \$36.7 million is part of that overall increase.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Yes. I understand that, but I am trying to understand where these 36 additional workers will go. How far along are we in terms of recruitment?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** They are actively recruiting. Every effort is being made to attract and enable greater numbers to be recruited into the task, but they have to select the right people as well. I cannot tell the member the number.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Have any been recruited, minister?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As part of not this number, but of the effort prior to this time for this significant growth in numbers of FTE that are funded, there was a statewide recruitment campaign in June 2021 to address vacancies. Ongoing recruiting campaigns have focused on child protection and senior child protection workers. Last year’s initial campaign resulted in 227 applications with 179 applicants interviewed and 104 individuals deemed successful. Those applicants were advised of the outcome from late September last year.

A further child protection worker pool that focused on the recruitment of university graduates has just been completed. Communities incorporated assessment centres to build a degree of flexibility in the process and to allow graduates to demonstrate skills to the panel rather than provide examples of demonstrated experience against the essential criteria. The process of recruiting university graduates using the new model has yielded 237 applicants and 136 interviews with 90 applicants found to be suitable. This is additional to the 104 from the other process.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** The figure of 90 is a lot more than 36. I do not understand.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** This is from last year. The 36 is an additional target now —

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Okay; this is not the current figure.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** — because we are going to have to recruit to the funding. They are going to be confronted with the same challenge that everyone in the country has with respect to skilled workers. It is good that they are trying different models of potentially accessing demographics within our own population that we might not have encountered or attracted in the past. That is a good thing. But as with so many other fields of endeavour, this one would benefit from perhaps some additional effort by federal government to assist and attract skilled workers via some the things that have been thrown around in terms of incentives that are not within our capacity to offer. We cannot offer people a rapid passage to citizenship and all that sort of thing. We are doing everything we can to attract people to the state and from within the state, including those graduating from the education system, and into this field because it is really important.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** The minister has indicated that a decision has not been made about where these child protection workers will be deployed. Is there a shortage in my electorate of the wheatbelt? Is it likely that additional child protection workers will be allocated to the wheatbelt?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am informed that in the wheatbelt in its entirety there are six FTE vacancies.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to page 527 and the outcomes and key effectiveness indicators. Underneath “Outcome: Families and individuals experience FDV, homelessness or other crises are assisted to build their capabilities and be safe” there are three line items, but I refer to “Percentage of homelessness clients with some or goals achieved at the completion —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That one is not ours. That comes under the Minister for Housing. The other two underneath it are ours.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Does the percentage of clients who received an earlier intervention come under the minister’s portfolio?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes.

**Ms L. METTAM:** What I am really after is a breakdown of the number of women and families seeking refuge at the state refuges over the last 12 months, or in the last financial year. What will the anticipated numbers be going forward? If the minister provides a breakdown of refugees, that would be valuable as well.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Can the member repeat the question again with regard to what she is actually after, please?

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes. I am after an indication of the number of women and families or individuals accessing refuges across the state in response to family and domestic violence.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The total number of people who sought refuge in refuges over the last 12 months.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes, over the last 12 months, and what the predicted number may be going forward. I also asked for a breakdown of refuges.

[2.50 pm]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The refuge one might be hard, but I ask that the member put that question on notice—I do not want them spending time in the next week trying to get that. With the total number of FDV clients, this is who was assessed and received a response as a result of an FDV incident. The estimated actual number of FDV clients in 2021–22 is 13 396. We are still currently within that budget. The estimated actual is what was budgeted for. In the previous year, the actual number in 2020–21 was 13 586. That was the total number as opposed to those who did not require an FDV-related response within 12 months, which is the number in this table.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Just to clarify, are these individuals who are staying at refuges? Is this for refuge stays, not support?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No. I will see if we can get a definition of what that is. That table does not relate purely to refuges. It is the number of people who sought any service with respect to FDV.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I have one further question.

**The CHAIR:** Can I offer a 10-minute recess and we will return at 3.00 pm, unless you want to finish you point.

**Ms L. METTAM:** No, I will go back to it if that is okay.

*Meeting suspended from 2.52 to 3.00 pm*

**The CHAIR:** We are ready to go. Thank you, member for Vasse.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to that line item that relates to families and individuals experiencing family and domestic violence. Can we get, by way of supplementary information, an indication of the number of individuals seeking refuge at the refuges across the state over the last three years? I am also hoping for an indication on what the average length of stay was.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That information about refuges that the member is after is not readily available. The agency does not run refuges, so the member is talking about a great deal of effort to seek out from those refuge operators and other service providers, I imagine, information that they may have to hand. In which case, that will take time. As I indicated earlier, I am loath to divert the agency in the near-term from its priority and very important task. I would ask that the member put the question on notice rather than have us provide it as supplementary information. Supplementary information has a very short time frame. As an explanation for anyone who might be listening—it is unlikely, but, yes, possible—or reading this at a later time, supplementary questions have a very short time frame. I think that I have offered a couple of supplementaries—certainly I did yesterday. But with this sort of task, it is more appropriate that the question be put on notice, please.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I have a question that may relate to this line item. I can look for it but I know that minister referred to it earlier. Can the minister tell us about the rapid rehousing project trial that is being undertaken and where will that be rolled out? I have heard some feedback regarding the rapid rehousing project in Bunbury. If the minister can provide some clarification on how that is progressing as well, that would be of great value.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I think that I might have already referred to this.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes, the minister touched on it.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** In the government's *Path to safety: Western Australia's strategy to reduce family and domestic violence 2020–2030* we acknowledge the important role of housing and homelessness services in response to family and domestic violence. We have committed to establishing a two-year rapid rehousing pilot in response to critical shortages of available and affordable rental properties. That pilot will assist eligible women, with or without children, to source and secure a tenancy in the private rental market so that they can leave refuges and begin to rebuild their lives. I am just trying to see if I can get the member a little bit more information. I assume that the member wants to know where and how. The rapid rehousing pilot has two elements to it: one is focused on Aboriginal women and the other one is the rest of the population. A trial is about to go out to tender shortly and it will focus on delivering for 40 women across both cohorts—so 20 each across metro; this is for a pilot.

**Ms L. METTAM:** How does the program work? I heard some feedback that the trialling in Bunbury has been challenged by lack of housing stock. Can the minister give me some feedback on that and whether that is the case?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. That is a different program, member. The one that the member referred to in Bunbury is not this. That is under the Minister for Housing. It has a homelessness focus and potentially a different cohort. This is the FDV-focused program that will establish a response to women, with or without children, who are having trouble securing tenancy to help them get out of refuges. The one in Bunbury, as I understand it, is under a different

department and it focuses on a different cohort. I assume that it is for people who are rough sleepers—anyway, that is not this program. This is a new pilot with a new focus.

**Ms L. METTAM:** It begins this year and it runs for the next two years and is just —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The earlier tender advice is on Tenders WA. The program will be commissioned by the end of the year. It is a two-year pilot so I assume that it takes two years, but, yes, it will start by the end of the year.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I have another question. I refer to page 519, spending changes and the “Enhanced FDV Response Team”. It makes a reference to a centralised hub. Where will the centralised hub be based and how many FTE will make up the enhanced response team?

[3.10 pm]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Where the central control and support team might be located—we were actually talking about this earlier today—has not yet been resolved. From my portfolio perspective, I would be encouraging the agency to consider co-locating it with the State Operations Command Centre, or some version of that sort of an arrangement. The Western Australia Police Force has a State Operation Command Centre that has a 24/7 direct link to all the police districts. Increasingly, as we invest really heavily and move rapidly towards integrating technology with policing, it will result in things such as the provision of real-time intelligence to people on the ground, including teams that might be co-located with police such as a commission or a community staff member, or when encountering a situation that might involve a Communities response. As the first responder, we are increasingly able to provide them with direct communications, direct access to a database and intelligence support from specialists. In the event that these guys are stood up as a central authority or source of advice and assistance, it might be really helpful if they can communicate everywhere—and we are talking about everywhere. There are pilot trials running at the moment with satellite comms on police vehicles in the remote areas so that people are given, as close as possible, the same sort of support as they would get in the metro.

The location has not yet been decided, but I will encourage them to do that. It may not work or it may not be appropriate, but whatever it determined, the concept is pretty much the same sort of thing that we have in police operations in that some expertise is provided as often as it can be done in the hours that it can be done, but from a central location that gives everybody the support rather than expecting a specialist to arrive at every specific incident. Our FDV co-response teams cannot be everywhere. The policing model is to build a pool of people who are given additional training and capacity who then operate with the specialists from Communities and other agencies.

If this is the model in which the resource is centralised and greater support is provided everywhere, that is a change to the operating model to try and get greater and more effective coverage. The numbers to achieve that are funded. Where they will be located has not yet been determined. The number of additional FTEs are five from Communities and two from Justice. The police are doing it using its current resources. The historical model for the FDV response team was a Communities person with a couple of police officers driving around their vehicle. Increasingly in each district we have doubled the funding in police, but instead of getting twice as many police on that team, they will get a larger pool of police in each district so that they can rotate through or take the skillset that they have acquired during that training to their normal general duties response and provide greater support to an FDV response.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Thank you, minister, for that response. Would forensic services be included as part of the centralised hub? I imagine that it would be if it were co-located where the minister suggested.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** You mean police forensics?

**Ms L. METTAM:** Sorry, just forensic services. In terms of the principle of having a one-stop hub, are any considerations made in that regard?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I think we might be mixing a couple of things up. The FDV response model is in every police district. Communities people are generally co-located with police and they are not normally primary responders. They do not get to every priority callout, but they are effectively an additional specialty with special knowledge. They do not respond to every single FDV callout because that is far in excess of the numbers that they could respond to, but there is a specialist Communities person in each of the districts. We are doubling the funding this year and that will increase the numbers, but the model that police use to provide operational support is changing—that does not really matter.

The member was talking about a hub that is like a one-stop place for victims of family and domestic violence. That is a pilot and that has a physical location. I think there is one in Midland at the moment. In February 2021, the government committed to an additional \$60 million as part of our response. That included \$17.8 million for two new one-stop family and domestic violence hubs and in Armadale and the Kimberley, and that builds on the other ones in Mirrabooka and Kalgoorlie, which were launched in 2020. They have been successful so we are replicating that response, but that is a different thing. It is a one-stop hub where someone from an FDV situation can seek assistance and then be potentially referred to all those other supports and assistance that can be provided. But the

additional team that we are talking about in that central location yet to be determined is more like an operational response when an urgent matter is brought to the attention of police, and the FDV response goes to that site. They can seek advice and support from this central team, and we do not yet know where that will be, but I would encourage them to put it in the SOCC.

There are two different things. There are the hubs, which I would imagine are where FDV victims would seek assistance. They are a shopfront with a soft entry designed to be less intimidating and able to be accessed by people without some of the hurdles that they might have to overcome in other, more formal settings. They can then be directed or assisted with a range of other agencies or supports. The central team is more for the operational response. We have an operational response out there, often co-located with police, in all the police districts. When there is a callout or an overnight report of an FDV-related incident, these guys will prioritise it, go there, intervene and provide support to people in the home or the community. It is like a central team with additional skills and knowledge to advise people on the ground.

[3.20 pm]

**Ms L. METTAM:** Thank you. I have a new question. I refer to page 146 of budget paper No 3, “Major spending changes since the 2021–22 mid-year review”. Underneath “Other Spending” is “Investment in Child Protection Services”. I note the provision of \$800 000 to appoint a chief practitioner for child protection within the department. What is the breakdown of the \$800 000 and how many FTE does it support?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That is the salary for four years for a specified calling level 7 position, and apparently it was advertised recently.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Can I confirm that the \$800 000 is only the salary for four years? What will be the length of the contract for the practitioner; will it be a four-year contract as well?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No, it is a five-year contract but the budget estimates go for four years.

**Ms L. METTAM:** What is the purpose of this appointment? What will be the role of this additional person within the department for child protection?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** That person will be the most senior child protection practitioner. They will lead research and reform in the field of child protection and provide guidance with respect to child protection matters.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Will they be undertaking the role like a director general or how would their role be different?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The member is talking about a child protection specialist who can provide guidance in their field of endeavour—a specialist field of child protection. A director general is an agency head and may or may not have specialist knowledge in that particular field; they seek advice from specialists. This is one of the people who they would be seeking advice from particularly with respect to child protection.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I note that the minister stated that the position is being advertised at the moment. I would like an understanding of what the selection process will be and when we are likely to see an appointment made?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It will comply with the standard practice of the public sector. The position will be advertised. I imagine the department will receive applications. There will be a selection panel that will review the applications. It will probably shortlist those it will interview. It will then interview them and determine who it recommends for the role.

**Ms L. METTAM:** How was the decision made, or why was it determined, that the department requires such a role, such an investment in an individual—\$800 000 over four years? What was missing?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The Department of Child Protection wants specialist knowledge in the field of child protection, and I think any effort that we can make to enhance our capacity and our knowledge in that field is commendable. I am informed that there are similar positions in other jurisdictions, but it goes without saying that it would be a good thing to get someone who is a recognised professional or a specialist in that field.

**Ms L. METTAM:** What will be the reporting obligations of this individual? Will they be required to report to the director general?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is not like a statutory body or anything; this person will be just part of the agency. They will report and operate within the normal practice of public sector operations. They will have an immediate superior and then they will report to the director general. He or she could seek their advice if it is appropriate in the same way they would with any other person of that level with specific specialist knowledge. It is not like a commissioner or anything in terms of being an independent body or anything of that nature.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Will this individual have specific staff dedicated to support their role?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Within the agency there are a number of senior social work positions around the state. There is a child death review team and a small number of staff in a policy team. These staff are already within the agency and so they would support this person with the conduct of their role.

[3.30 pm]



**Ms L. METTAM:** To confirm, this individual will be utilising existing staff within the agency?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Where will they be based? Will this individual be based at the department of child protection?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. They will be based in the Fremantle office, but they will travel extensively right around the state.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Touching on something I asked about before, how did this decision come about? Was there a specific recommendation for such a role made in a report or has the agency looked at what has worked in other states? Is there something that suggests the reasoning or rationale behind the investment in this specific role?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I am told it was recommended in the Iain Rennie review in 2019. As I said earlier, other jurisdictions have similar positions and it looks like it might be becoming best practice to have a position of that nature.

**Ms L. METTAM:** What is the skill set that the department is looking for for this unique role?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is specified calling so applicants have to have social work or psychology experience, and it has to be extensive experience to meet the demands of the job description. It is a national search.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** The minister said that they will be based in Fremantle but will travel the state. I understand from an earlier answer that the \$800 000 is the salary component for the position. Will there be an additional budget to allow them to conduct their work, and will that be a specific line item in the budget?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Any costs for travel will just be absorbed by the normal budget.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** So the activities of the commissioner will be taken within the current budget; there will not be an additional —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is not a commissioner.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Sorry; practitioner.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Practitioner, yes.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** The activities of the individual will be funded from within the current budget; there will not be additional funding on top of the salary?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to page 519, the delivery of services in the area of women's interests and item 73.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is it page 519?

**Ms L. METTAM:** It is page 519. That is the appropriations page.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Which line is the member referring to?

**Ms L. METTAM:** It is the line item "Item 73 Net amount appropriated to deliver services". How much of the \$2.08 billion in the Department of Communities' budget will be appropriated for the work of Women's Interests?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I think that question has been asked. We undertook to provide it to the opposition.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Sorry; I must have been out of the chamber.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I asked for the question to be put on notice because it was kind of tricky.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I refer to page 523 of budget paper 2, volume 2. Sorry; I think I have the wrong reference in my chart. While I am trying to figure that out, I will ask a different question. I have the wrong number. I have a question. I just have the wrong number next to the question I want to ask.

**The CHAIR:** Throw the question out there and let us see if they know the answer!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I am sure that the member for Mirrabooka has a question.

**The CHAIR:** Member for Mirrabooka, go ahead.

**Ms M.J. HAMMAT:** Minister, I refer to the significant issues impacting the agency listed at page 521 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, with reference to paragraph 3 under child protection and earlier intervention services. Can the minister outline to the committee what this government's record investment into our child protection system will mean for services and frontline operations?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We know that children in care are some of the most vulnerable in society and many experience physical and mental health issues, increased contact with justice system and poorer employment outcomes. The government is committed to getting better outcomes for vulnerable children and families in WA, and this budget is about safe children, safe families and safe communities. That is why we are investing over \$114 million to keep

children safe as part of the 2022–23 budget. We are delivering the most comprehensive package on child protection the state has seen, and this investment shows that we are serious about keeping children safe and families together. Through the investment, we will spend \$19.3 million to deliver dozens more child protection workers to the front line to help keep vulnerable children safe. This investment will help address case load pressures in the districts by increasing the number of staff in frontline child protection roles.

Removing children is always a last resort and that is why we are investing \$23.9 million in early intervention initiatives so that children can remain safely at home with their families and thrive. The extra funding means we will reach more children and families and meet increased demand in Midland and Armadale. We are also trialling the program in Halls Creek and the south west. We know community safety is an issue in some parts of our state and it is a priority of this government to ensure that our communities are vibrant and safe places for everyone, and that is why we are spending \$11.1 million to expand our highly successful Target 120 program to nine more locations around the state, steering at risk youth away from the criminal justice system. Target 120 has already seen encouraging results, showing participants contact with police has been reduced by 50 per cent. This funding will expand the program to Broome, Halls Creek, Fitzroy Crossing, Derby, Karratha, Newman, Carnarvon, Mandurah, and Ellenbrook.

Our investment in this budget highlights our ongoing commitment to the child protection system. Through our record investment in early intervention, we are keeping more families together. The rate of children coming into care has dropped for the first time in a quarter of a century. This is the largest reduction in children in care for the last two decades, and that is why in this budget we are investing so heavily in early intervention. It keeps families together and children safely at home. Significantly, the number of Aboriginal children in care has fallen for the first time in a quarter of a century. It is quite extraordinary. To support that, we have increased the number of child protection caseworkers by 31 per cent since 2017, as of the end of March. We are also focused on significant law reform across a range of portfolios to assist and enhance efforts in child safety.

[3.40 pm]

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to page 522, budget paper 2, volume 2 and paragraph 6 on the Target 120 program. At how many locations is this program currently being delivered and can the minister provide a list of those locations and advise which organisations are operating at each site?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Target 120 is currently delivered at 12 metropolitan and regional sites. They are Armadale, Broome, Bunbury, Mirrabooka, Kununurra, Midland, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie, Rockingham, Port Hedland, Albany and Northam. Target 120 has formal grant agreements with the following service providers: Kinship Connections in the metropolitan sites; Breakaway Aboriginal Corporation in Bunbury; Whitelion Youth Agency in Mirrabooka; Ebenezer Aboriginal Corporation in Mirrabooka; MG Corporation, the Miriuwung Gajerrong people, in Kununurra; Ngala Community Services in Geraldton; Midwest Employment and Economic Development Aboriginal Corporation in Geraldton; Gorenang Moortabiin Aboriginal Engagement and Community Development in Albany—sorry if I got that wrong—and the Julyardi Aboriginal Corporation in Port Hedland.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Did the minister mention Northam was one of those sites?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes, Northam is one of the sites. There are some locations where it is not external; it is coordinated. Target 120 involves the delivery of wraparound services to the family home of juveniles who are at risk or actually on the pathway to being more than that. In Northam, it is being delivered by an agency person.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Is that a new allocation? Is that a new site?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It was established last year so it is relatively new, but it is going pretty well. They are saying 67 per cent of Northam clients have not reoffended since joining. I do not know what the numbers are—the numbers are pretty small, but it is early days.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Would minister like to share that number?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is three individuals but 11 family members. It is not just the child who gets the support or the intervention; it is the home environment. Sometimes when staff deliver Target 120 to one household, they might get a number of siblings. In this case, it is early days; they only just set it up last year.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I said earlier the overall results from Target 120, and some of them have been going for years.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** It is a great program.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Yes. It is difficult but I am optimistic that the greater rollout of that program will have a significant impact, particularly up in some of the areas that we were worried about—the Kimberley and the Pilbara.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Does the department record information such as the average length of time that participants are involved in this program? Is that information available? Further to that, if it is available, can we get a breakdown of that time for each of the locations?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I think that question should be put on notice. It is a good question to ask. We should be interrogating the outcomes, but I do not think it is something the advisers will have easy access to. Also, we have a number of programs that have been established and running for years and then we have other ones that have just been initiated, so it might take some effort to compile a report that will be useful. I think that would be a question to put on notice, please.

**Ms L. METTAM:** With respect to the program’s expansion in the Kimberley and the Pilbara that was recently announced, are those programs currently operational or when does the minister anticipate —

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is just Kununurra. In Kununurra, MG started a year ago or maybe a bit longer. It was two years ago. That was the first one in the Kimberley. MG Corporation has been delivering it in Kununurra since 2019 February. That was initially community led and now it is being delivered by the Aboriginal community-controlled organisation. Lawford Benning and Jeremy, I think it is, are delivering the service now. They currently have currently 11 active clients, with 41 family members involved. The member can talk to them; they will tell her they are pretty enthusiastic about it. I think that is probably one of the sites that gave confidence to the agency that in the regions it could look towards ACCOs to deliver this service in partnership. The agency is about to go out for an expressions of interest for service providers across those other towns that we referred to. We are empowering a local community to deliver things that it believes in and feels will make a difference. There is a whole lot of reasons for doing the program but, primarily, it is because it has been demonstrated to work in the metro area. That is not a bad reason to try it out. Kununurra now has had pretty good results. In Kununurra, they have 57 per cent of participants who have not reoffended since they started the program. It is a relatively small number in terms of the overall number of kids, but these are generally the ones who we can get the greatest return on if we can get a good outcome.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I am on page 539 of budget paper 2, volume 2, and refer to the “Details of Controlled Grants and Subsidies” table and the line item “Wooroloo Fire Recovery” under the heading “Community Services”. I note that there is no ongoing funding in this budget year. Could the minister perhaps outline how the agency made the decision to extract itself from a community that has experienced such a significant event, because I know community members in that area are still facing challenges? Can the minister just explain perhaps what that funding has been used to deliver?

[3.50 pm]

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** To allay the member’s concerns, that line refers to the specific grants that I think were from the federal agency—that is, the federal disaster response distribution of funds. That funding ends because the grants have a finite time. That is not the end of support to people, however. In this budget, there is \$5.4 million for the continuation of community and welfare outreach programs. That will not be specifically for Wooroloo, but for other emergency or disaster-type relief activity. There are funds available and the bushfire recovery centre at Gidgegannup is there to support people as a point of contact.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** On that same topic, I am just following up on something the minister said. So there is \$5.2 million somewhere in the budget for community outreach for communities that have been impacted by natural disasters. How much of that has been delivered to the Wooroloo community? How does that get dispersed?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The immediate response was specific to Wooroloo and there was a dedicated budget. Both state and federal funds were expended in support of people in the immediate aftermath and subsequent rebuild. This is just as an allocation to emergency welfare response across the state. I do not think there is a dedicated element of it for Wooroloo. There is a budget available. Is there some specific —

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** No, no. The minister mentioned there was \$5 million. Is that a bucket of money allocated just in advance of and knowing that there might be an emergency in the next four years or is it money allocated to support communities that have been impacted?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No. I think this is just an ongoing allocation. In the event of an emergency of that scale, we would allocate far in excess of that amount of money.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I would have thought so, yes.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** As the member has witnessed, in the event that one of those incidents occurs, it is a specific response that has to be addressed. I am informed that since 15 March 2020, the department has responded to more than 37 other emergency events. That includes not only Wooroloo, but also Seroja. We have seen a lot of other bushfires and floods, and supported the people who have been impacted by those unforeseen events. This is a budget allocation for that relief, but in the event of something more significant occurring, obviously the government will respond.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I have one further question. On the same page 539, just a bit further down, under election commitments, is the line item “Access to Regional Childcare.” This a significant issue in regional communities. Can minister explain to me what that allocation is for?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I actually got a brief on this this morning, but I am getting old. The commitment is to invest \$4.8 million over the out years into improving access to childcare in the regions to ensure that early childhood education care is sustainable, accessible and affordable. The funding will be used to address issues such as access to suitable facilities, attracting and retaining suitably qualified staff, and addressing issues such as population and workforce fluctuations. Funding for grants was approved until the 2025–26 financial year as part of last year’s budget. The funds consist of \$1 million capped grant funding, \$250 000 per annum to local governments in regional areas to fund retention and attraction packages for childcare workers, and \$4.03 million capped grant funding to identify key regions and assist in the establishment of sustainable models of regional childcare. Each council will apply to the grant scheme independently with their proposal for measures that will address the attraction and retention of staff and the provision of childcare. I think it is primarily for the attraction and retention of staff.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Is that royalties for regions funding?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** No?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** No.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Where has it come from, because it is under controlled grants and subsidies table?

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is just an appropriation, so it is consolidated.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** It is consolidated. Thank you.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** We have to pass this division. I want to get the money.

**The appropriation was recommended.**

*Meeting suspended from 3.58 pm to 4.30 pm*