

**Division 16: Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety — Service 2, Commerce, \$119 239 000 —**

Mr S.J. Price, Chair.

Dr J. Krishnan, Parliamentary Secretary representing the Minister for Commerce.

Mr R. Sellers, Director General.

Ms K. Berger, Deputy Director General, Industry Regulation and Consumer Protection.

Mr J. Kwong, Chief Financial Officer.

Mr S. Abdoolakhan, Executive Director, Building and Energy.

Ms P. Blake, Acting Executive Director, Consumer Protection.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIR:** The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof will be available online as soon as possible within two business days. The chair 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 be examined only 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 noon on Friday, 2 June 2023. If a minister suggests that a matter be put on notice, members should use the online questions on notice system to submit their questions.

I give the call to the member for North West Central.

[9.10 pm]

**Ms M. BEARD:** I refer to page 231 of budget paper No 2 and the first paragraph under “Key Government Reforms” under the significant issues impacting the agency. When are the changes to the Residential Tenancies Act and the Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Act forecast to come before the Parliament?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** The statutory review of the Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Act 1985 is progressing. The purpose of the review is to ensure that current provisions of the act are operating effectively to promote fair commercial tenancy arrangements. Objectives and outcomes of the Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Act are still appropriate and adaptable in the changing retail environment. A consultation paper of key issues and an online survey were released for public comment between June and August 2022. Submissions are currently being analysed with a view to finalising recommendations and a report to government by the middle of 2023.

Reforms to the Residential Tenancies Act to make tenants feel more at home in their rental premises and streamline dispute resolution processes are expected to be announced in the coming months.

**Ms M. BEARD:** Similarly, referring to the second paragraph under the same heading, is there a time frame for the delivery of the registration scheme for short-stay accommodation?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** The Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety Consumer Protection division assumed responsibility for policy development and implementation of the registration scheme for short-term rental accommodation in November 2022. Consumer Protection expects a bill for the purpose of establishing a short-term rental accommodation register to be introduced into Parliament in the second half of 2023, with the register expected to commence operation in the first half of 2024. There will be a transition period of six months to enable industry participants to comply with the new requirements before registration becomes mandatory. Once the short-term rental accommodation register is fully operational, all short-term rental accommodation in Western Australia will be required to be registered. Short-term rental accommodation premises will not be able to be advertised or offered for rent without valid registration. A state-based short-term rental accommodation register will enable state and local governments to obtain a better understanding of the short-term rental accommodation sector in WA, which will lead to better informed planning, policymaking and regulatory responses. It will also provide members of the community with information about the existence of short-term rental accommodation in their area and increase awareness of state and local regulatory requirements that apply to short-term rental accommodation. In essence, the bill is expected to be introduced in the Parliament in the second half of 2023. It is expected to commence operation in the first half of 2024. There will be a transition period of six months for industry participants to comply with the new requirements.

**Ms M. BEARD:** I refer to page 232 of budget paper No 2 and the third paragraph about regulated plumbing work in Western Australia. How many staff are currently employed to conduct plumbing inspections and compliance, and how many extra staff will be employed in 2023–24?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** I am not expected to know the details of the number of staff. May I direct the question to the executive director of building and energy, Saj Abdoolakhan.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** We currently have 11 plumbing staff who look after the whole state. We are planning to get an additional six plumbing inspectors to cater for the expansion of plumbing legislation going forward.

**Ms M. BEARD:** Do those staff travel out to the regions?

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** Most of them are based in Perth. We have one inspector in Broome and one in Geraldton. We are planning to recruit. Of the six we are planning to recruit, we want them to be in regional areas. A fair bit of the expansion of the legislation will look after the regional areas more to try to capture plumbing work in those areas, which is not currently adequately covered. The intention is to cover more regional areas. If we can accommodate those inspectors in the regions, we will. If we cannot, we will have them based in Perth and travelling to the regions.

**Ms M. BEARD:** Is that seen as an issue of sourcing skills in the regions or is it linked to housing or is it just the availability of staff?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** With regard to recruitment, it is across every specialty. I will get Saj Abdoolakhan to expand further on that.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** It is a challenge to recruit in regional areas, but the plan is that we want to try to have people based in the regions to better service them. If we can succeed in doing that, we will have what we intended in the first place.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to the Mental Awareness, Respect and Safety program, which is under the heading “Build a Sustainable and Responsible Resources Industry” on page 233 of budget paper No 2 and also on page 241 under the details of controlled grants and subsidies. To start with, funding for the program really drops off a cliff after this year. It goes from \$1.6 million in 2021–22 to \$1.3 million in 2022–23 and then to \$332 000 in 2023–24, with no funding in the out years. Can the parliamentary secretary explain the funding changes?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** Can I confirm that the member is referring to the eighteenth paragraph on page 233?

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes, and also the spending changes on page 241.

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** This falls under a different department. It is that of the Minister for Industrial Relations.

**Ms L. METTAM:** That is okay. I have another question. It will be quite different, of course. I refer to page 231 and the spending changes related to the climate action fund and green energy approvals. Is there just one FTE focused on the task related to the \$164 000 budget for 2023–24?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** Again, I am sorry, that is the responsibility of the Minister for Energy.

[9.20 pm]

**Ms M. BEARD:** I refer to page 241, the details of controlled grants and subsidies and the exploration incentive scheme. How many times is this funding oversubscribed each year?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** I am sorry, member; this is again under the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

**Ms M. BEARD:** I am sorry.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** It might be an early night.

**The CHAIR:** Not that I would like to rush you, but because there are no other divisions after this one, once you have finished, everyone can go.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Can we ask about risk work licences?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** Sorry, member; that comes under the Minister for Industrial Relations.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** If I can swap in: what are we limited to in the scope of the questions we can ask within division 16, service 2?

**The CHAIR:** Commerce.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Just commerce?

**The CHAIR:** Just commerce.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to page 231 and significant issues impacting the agency and key government reforms. Paragraph 2 states —

The Department is continuing its work to reform the State's building regulatory framework and implement key recommendations from the national Building Confidence—Improving the Effectiveness of Compliance and Enforcement Systems ...

From a national perspective, where is Western Australia in these national reforms? Where do we sit?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** The WA government is progressing the implementation of the recommendations of the national *Building confidence* report in Western Australia. The *Building confidence* report identified a number of weaknesses and regulatory systems across Australia. It made 24 principle-based recommendations for law reform aimed at establishing a national best-practice model for compliance and enforcement. Significant work had to be undertaken at state level to convert these high-level recommendations into practical solutions. The Australian Building Codes Board was also tasked to develop international best-practice guidelines aimed at improving national consistency. Between 2019 and 2021, the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety carried out extensive consultations with industry on several proposals for reform. It is anticipated that these will go a long way to improving the quality of construction in WA. Given the size, care and cost of the *Building confidence* report recommendations, a staged approach to the review has been taken that focused firstly on the registration of building engineers and then strengthening the process around the design and construction of new residential and multistorey apartment buildings.

In January 2022, DMIRS finalised the first review and recommendations on reforms to register building engineers. This was approved for release by cabinet in July 2022, and drafting of the required amending regulations is complete. The amending regulations will be published in the *Government Gazette* in June and July 2023 and commence operation from 1 July 2024 to allow sufficient time for industry to adapt. A report on the second stage of the review is currently being considered by the minister.

We have also issued a new code of conduct for building surveyors. The code sets out minimum expectations of registered building surveyors undertaking building surveying work in Western Australia. It applies to all registered building surveyors undertaking statutory functions of assessing compliance and approving building designs and building work under the Building Act 2011 and associated legislation. We have also developed and published our *Building compliance audit strategy 2021–24* and our *Audit priorities statement 2021–22*. Both documents are publicly available. They set out the approach we take to our inspections of registered builders, building surveyors and owner-builders to monitor compliance and respond to emerging issues and risks in the residential and commercial building industry.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Is WA still the only state that has not implemented the mandatory inspections?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** I ask Mr Abdoolakhan to respond to that.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** Thank you, parliamentary secretary. In WA, the minister is currently considering a range of reforms, one of which is mandatory inspection. To answer the member's question of whether WA is the only state, no, there are different types of inspections undertaken across Australia and everyone looks at different things. Some states look at purely residential constructions, while others look at commercial. The *Building confidence* report focused on proposing to implement inspection regimes for mainly the commercial sector, and not many state jurisdictions have implemented any changes as a result of the *Building confidence* report to implement mandatory inspections in the commercial sector.

**Ms L. METTAM:** The parliamentary secretary mentioned that the minister is considering mandatory inspections. Why has the government dragged its feet on these reforms, which has apparently allowed cowboys in the industry to thrive?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** There are various reasons for the delay. It is public knowledge that we are in a consultation process and, eventually, a decision will be made. It is a staged approach. The first stage is the registration of building engineers, which in itself will enhance the quality of construction in Western Australia. When we look at the risk of multistorey buildings compared with single-storey buildings, we see that the risks with multistorey buildings are much higher. The second stage will look at strengthening the process around the design and construction of multistorey apartment buildings. We are staging this so that the industry is not strained. We all know that the building industry is already under strain, so we are taking that into consideration and taking a staged approach to implementing and strengthening the processes.

[9.30 pm]

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I thank the parliamentary secretary. The public reports of problems with buildings have overwhelmingly been in residential buildings. I recall some water ingress issues in some of the early buildings at Elizabeth Quay and other places, but not major structural problems. Although there may be a higher risk, it would seem that the highest frequency of problems is in the residential sector. What is being considered for residential construction and the implementation of inspections?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** There are a couple of things. I thank the member for his question. Demand for construction went up significantly after grants from both the federal and state governments. When we look at the number of complaints in the residential construction space, we see that it is proportionate to the demand and the construction activity that

is going on. Measures are being taken; the majority of those issues are resolved through consultation between the builder and the consumer. When things are not resolved at that stage, it is the department's job to refer them to the State Administrative Tribunal to resolve the issues. I will get Mr Abdoolakhan to expand further on that.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** As part of the reform, as the parliamentary secretary said, quite a lot of things are going on. The first question is: why are we doing staged inspections? It is because we need to become a safer sector. If we want an inspection regime, we need people. That is why we are proposing to register engineers. There are building surveyors in WA, but not enough to do all the inspections, so we need other trades and other skills to come in, which is why it is being done in a staged approach.

In terms of risk, the member is correct that the main volume of complaints we get is in the residential sector, but with regard to the major risks, the building confidence report focused primarily on the commercial sector. In the package of proposals that is being considered by the minister, there is a proposal to look at inspections across the board, but implementation will be done in a staged approach to make sure that industry has the capacity to deal with it. Over time, we will deliver on all the proposed reforms in a proper, orderly fashion.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I am intrigued by the logic of prioritising the commercial sector. I appreciate the structural risk issues with commercial properties, and obviously human safety is a key consideration for government, but, equally, for many people who buy homes with major structural problems, it is a disaster for them as individuals. I would have thought it would be logical to prioritise that as well. Would the parliamentary secretary care to comment on that?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** I thank the member for the question. There is no denying that it is a major life event for someone to build a house with the aim of moving into their own house. Having the security of good-quality construction is extremely important. We are trying to deal with a workforce shortage and a global supply chain issue that is impacting on the building industry, big time. There were things that were out of our control or any other government's control such as the COVID pandemic and the Ukraine war, which had an impact on supply chains. The building industry is under immense pressure and implementing reforms with major changes is going to have a huge impact on the delivery of the houses for which people have been waiting for long enough now. That is why the government is taking the cautious approach of a staged implementation. Stage 1 is building industry registration; stage 2 is multistorey buildings. Eventually, all of them will be covered; it is just that we are taking a staged approach.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** We have been talking about compulsory inspections. Over the past 12 months, has the department carried out any non-complaint-initiated inspections on commercial or residential buildings?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** I do not have the details for that; I request Mr Abdoolakhan to respond.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** We have, as part of the building confidence report, implemented an audit strategy. As part of that strategy we have identified a set of priorities that we have been looking at in building works. As part of our 2022–23 priority statement, which was published in September 2022, we have committed to doing inspections of roof tie-downs and wall framing to look at wind classification in a minimum of 22 residential buildings. We are planning to look at an inspection of 50 certificates issued by registered building surveyors in class 2 to 9 buildings; a general inspection of eight class 3 buildings to assess passive fire safety systems; and a general inspection of class 1a buildings for waterproofing. I have mentioned what we are planning to do going forward. As the plan for the past year, we looked at roof tie-downs in 44 residential buildings and 80 certificates issued by building surveyors. We are looking at not only buildings, but also building surveyors and how well they are doing their work. We audit building surveyors and as part of that, when we find noncompliant work, we bring it to the attention of the local government, which has the power to enforce these deviations. In future we are proposing, as part of a package, to give the Building Commissioner powers to enforce these deviations. Currently, if we pick up any defects as part of our inspections, we do not have the powers to enforce them; the power sits with the local government as the planning authority.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** In relation to the 44 inspections of the roof tie-downs, was that carried out in the past 12 months?

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** Yes.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Does the department have a comparable figure for the 12 months before that?

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** No, we do not. In the previous year, because of COVID-19, we did not achieve much in our numbers, in terms of what we were planning to do. The priority statement we published was the result of the building confidence report and having a structured way to look at inspections going forward. This is an initiative that we started around the same time as COVID hit, unfortunately.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I ask for further clarification and this is all part of the same question. The parliamentary secretary mentioned that the minister is yet to make a decision about mandatory inspections. It is my understanding that there was a general agreement with other states and territories several years ago that mandatory inspections would be implemented. Does the parliamentary secretary anticipate that it will be supported? If the issue is not having the inspectors, what efforts will be made to ensure that we have the people needed to undertake that role?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** The WA government has committed to the implementation of the national building code, so it is a question of how we implement it. We are taking a staged approach so that we engage the building industry and put no further strain on it.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Touching on the comments of the member for Cottesloe about residential properties, how many complaints has the department received in relation to residential properties in terms of building completions, and in relation to commercial properties as well?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** I direct that question to Mr Abdoolakhan.

[9.40 pm]

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** We have seen an increase in the number of building complaints that we have received over the past year. The total complaints in 2019–20 was 591. In 2020–21, it went up to 771. In 2021–22, we were looking at 1 003. Up until March 2023, we were looking at 745. As the parliamentary secretary mentioned, although there has been an increase in the number of complaints, it is proportional to the building activity in the sector. It is not abnormal in any way.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Are they for residential builds only?

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** Yes.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Can we have similar figures for commercial builds?

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** Under building services contract resolution, people who reach out to us are consumers of residential buildings; we do not receive complaints for commercial services. They are big enough to look after themselves.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** There was mention that obviously the focus is on building engineers. What is the program for the other trades? One of the common complaints, particularly in a very constrained labour market, as we have now, is that people carrying out plumbing, for example, are not skilled and that inadequate services are being provided. Is there a requirement around that or is there going to be certification for those other critical trades, particularly plumbing and electrical?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** Thank you for the question, member. Like any other trade—pick a trade—it is on the shortage list. There is a global skills shortage. Everyone is facing it, and Western Australia is no exception. The state government remains committed to making it easy for workers from other states and territories to travel to Western Australia to work. This is an automatic mutual recognition and mutual registration process that the government is undertaking. Currently, 165 people are operating under the automatic mutual recognition scheme and 1 327 Western Australian licences have been granted under mutual recognition in 2022–23. We are anticipating a big movement of skilled workers not only from interstate, but also internationally. We expect them to fill the gaps and support the building industry in the coming months and years. I will get Saj Abdoolakhan to further expand on that.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** In terms of the trades, the building confidence report identified eight different fields in which it suggested that states should look at registration, and engineers is very high up. There are architects and designers, and we already register plumbers and building surveyors. Engineers are one of the first cabs off the rank. We already have building surveyors and plumbers registered. In terms of ensuring the quality of the work, the registration scheme is in place. There are penalties under legislation for people who do not comply with the registration requirements and we have a risk-based inspection regime that is based on the quality of work of the plumber or the electrician who does the work. We inspect a sample of their work. If we found that we were getting a lot of defects, we would inspect more of their work until we had confidence in the quality of the work they are doing; and, if we found any serious noncompliance, we would refer them to a board and disciplinary action would be taken against the plumber or the electrical contractor who has done the work. The plan is to bring engineers into that frame. Builders and building surveyors are already covered. We also have proposed changes in the pipeline. We are introducing codes of practice and codes of conduct so that we can compare that and ensure that people are complying with the legislation and are doing what they are supposed to be doing by consumers.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Those inspections of the work of plumbers and electricians, for example, are already occurring and the department already has a process to identify faulty workmanship; is that correct?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** Thank you for the question, member. It depends on the skill set. There is also a program whereby the number and frequency of inspections increases depending on the number of defects or problems that they have. It depends on the different skill sets. I will get Saj Abdoolakhan to advise on that.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** Yes, that is correct. We are already inspecting the work of licensed electricians and plumbers. With builders, we do a sample because the regime is very different. In terms of electrical contractors, plumbers and gasfitters, that is already in place.

**Ms E.L. HAMILTON:** I refer to page 245 of volume 1 of budget paper No 2 and the rental accommodation account. Can the parliamentary secretary please describe what support this would provide to tenants in WA?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** I thank the member for the question. The rental accommodation account is a statutory fund that holds all private tenants' security bonds. Interest earned on this account is used for a variety of purposes, including funding the Magistrates Court, as well as grants to not-for-profit organisations providing information and advice on tenancy and related matters. The tenancy advice and education service program, which is funded through this account, has provided Western Australians with access to advice, advocacy, legal representation and community education programs related to tenancy matters for nearly 25 years. Currently under the program, 16 community legal centres across Western Australia assist tenants in resolving issues with their landlord or property manager, such as negotiating lease renewals or terminations, dealing with rent increases and resolving bond disputes. The member will note the funding increase for the rental accommodation account in the budget papers. In this budget, the McGowan government is providing \$4.5 million a year over the next two years to the tenancy advice and education service program. In 2016, the Barnett Liberal–National government cut funding for the service by 25 per cent. Our investment brings funding back up to the pre-2016-17 level. This represents an increase in the current funding level of more than 36 per cent on that \$3.3 million a year. Tenancy advice and education services are essential in providing advice and support to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged members of the community and the increased number of residential tenants requiring assistance in the current tight rental market. Tenancy advice and education services are intended to complement the advice and assistance provided by Consumer Protection, and the additional funding will be distributed to tenancy advice and education service providers by Consumer Protection.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I refer to the breakdown provided earlier of the complaints in relation to 745 residential builds. What is the breakdown of actions undertaken by the department on those complaints?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** If I can clarify it, the 745 that the member has mentioned is for the current year up to March. I will get Saj Abdoolakhan to expand further on that.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Just to clarify, is that year to date or is that for this financial year to March?

[9.50 pm]

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** It was to March, so April, May and June will add to those numbers. From memory, the previous year's number was about 1 007. It remains the same. As we said earlier, we did not see a significant increase in number. The increase in number was proportionate to the demand or the number of constructions of builds in the community. The majority of complaints are resolved with mediation between the builder and the consumer, but if it does not resolve, the process is for them to go to the State Administrative Tribunal for further resolution. I will get Mr Abdoolakhan to explain further.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** The parliamentary secretary is correct. The Building Services (Complaint Resolution and Administration) Act 2011 provides an avenue for resolution. It does not mean that the builder is at fault in all 745 complaints. As part of this process we have to provide natural justice to both parties to sit down and work out their differences. Sometimes there are misinterpretations of the contract, when it is a contract dispute; or if it is a defect, we will sit down and look at the defect and whether there has been any noncompliance. We are talking about 745 complaints, but one complaint from one party can have anything from one item to 50 items to 200 items. We sit down and look at all of them, one by one. One significant contribution the government brought about a couple of years ago was to improve the time line of how long we take to manage those complaints. We dedicated a team of six inspectors. Pre-2018, when someone lodged a complaint with the former Building Commission, the party lodging the complaint, the consumer, had to provide a report to the Building Commission and as part of natural justice, the builder was asked to provide another report and we would sit down and compare reports, asking for further evidence, and it took much longer. The government backed an addition in 2018 to invest in our own inspectors and we have been doing our inspections internally.

When we look at the time lines to resolve those complaints, we see that it is quite frustrating for someone who has spent so much money to have to go through this process. We want to expedite it as quickly as we can, but there are elements that mean we are unable to do that. There are times when we have to refer things to the State Administrative Tribunal for a decision. As much as the number of those complaints looks quite scary, it is a reflection of how much work and activity there is in the industry. To try to manage the number of complaints we have ensured that consumers are well aware of their rights. We have published a Torrens guide on our website that points out to consumers certain things that do not look good to them when they see them, but they are within the Torrens limit and they should accept them in managing that.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Is a breakdown available of how the department has followed up on those complaints?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** Is the member asking how many of those complaints have already been resolved and how many are in progress?

**Ms L. METTAM:** Yes.

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** Yes, we do. I do not have the statistics on me. Not all of the 745 are resolved by now; it is what we received during the year. It takes some time to resolve all these complaints. We will have the data for previous years. Previously, the department was not collecting this data. We have just started the process of collecting the data. At the moment, no, we do not. However, for those we have been monitoring for the past financial year, for this current year, we will have the data moving forward.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Could that be provided by supplementary information?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** To clarify what the adviser said, there is no data available from the past. Moving forward, we will have data to provide. The process of collection has just started.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I misunderstood that. Of the 745 complaints, that data was collected in the financial year to March—not the whole financial year. Is there not currently data on how those complaints have been followed up?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** My understanding is that that will be reported in the coming months in the annual report.

**Ms M. BEARD:** Is there a scale of complaints within those 745 complaints? Are most of them terrible, dreadful situations, or are a majority of them minor complaints?

**Mr S. Abdoolakhan:** They do range. One person may lodge a complaint that is a very small issue about paintwork; however, there are also complaints about paintwork and waterproofing. Lately we have seen a trend of issues with waterproofing and painting. We have published some reports on what we have analysed so far, but it is not the final report on the 745 at this stage. Our website contains those reports to give industry and everyone an indication of the key issues we are seeing. The intent of it is to try to educate industry. We are finding a lot of complaints about waterproofing work. As part of our follow-up action we provide bulletins to industry about what we are finding and what we think we need to address going forward. We do have some visibility that we did not have before, but we will get better in the future. That is the plan.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I am not sure whether this is relevant. I refer to page 245 under details of administered transactions and the \$254 000 in regulatory fines. Does that come under this division?

**The CHAIR:** Is there a question there, member?

**Ms L. METTAM:** Can the parliamentary secretary explain why there has been a significant increase from 2021–22 in that number and why the fines amount is otherwise consistent over the forward years?

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** The \$254 000 is the longstanding estimate and actuals, and it will go up and down depending on how many fines are issued and paid. The number depends on the number of fines and the amount paid. That can vary. The \$254 000 that is listed there is the longstanding estimate based on the previous figures.

**Ms L. METTAM:** The fines for 2021–22 were just \$89 000; I assume that is COVID-related.

**Dr J. KRISHNAN:** It was the COVID-19 impact.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Roughly how many fines are captured by \$254 000?

**The CHAIR:** Sorry, members, we have run out of time.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I will have to wait until next year!

**The appropriation was recommended.**

*Committee adjourned at 10.00 pm*

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