

**Division 1: Parliament, \$64 371 000 —**

Ms W.M. Duncan, Chairman.

Mr M.W. Sutherland, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

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

Mr R. Hunter, Executive Manager, Parliamentary Services.

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

Ms K. Galvin, Acting Director, Parliamentary Information and Education.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIRMAN:** Good morning, members. We have a quorum present, so we will commence with this Estimates Committee A.

This estimates committee will be reported by Hansard. The daily proof *Hansard* will be available the following day. It is the intention of the Chair to ensure that as many questions as possible are asked and answered and that both questions and answers are short and to the point. The estimates committee's consideration of the estimates will be restricted to discussion of those items for which a vote of money is proposed in the consolidated account. Questions must be clearly related to a page number, item program or amount in the current division. It will greatly assist Hansard if members can give these details in preface to their question.

Mr Speaker may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next sitting week. I ask Mr Speaker to clearly indicate what supplementary information he agrees to provide and I will then allocate a reference number. If supplementary information is to be provided, I seek Mr Speaker's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the principal clerk by Friday, 3 June 2016. I caution members that if Mr Speaker asks that a matter be put on notice, it is up to the member to lodge the question on notice with the Clerk's office.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Welcome down here, Mr Speaker. I refer to page 48 of the *Budget Statements*—I assume that we are doing this part of the budget papers—regarding the needs of members of Parliament, supporting members of Parliament and the like. I want to ask Mr Speaker about a specific issue involving a member of Parliament—namely, himself. Can Mr Speaker clarify whether Mr Sherry Sufi was on his electorate staff in his role as member for Mount Lawley or was he employed by him in his role as Speaker? In terms of Mr Sufi's entitlements, what was the reason behind him losing his job? Could Mr Speaker please provide details of any payout Mr Sufi may have received, both in total and as a breakdown?

**The SPEAKER:** First of all, he was not employed by me in my role as Speaker; he was employed in my electorate office. This happened at the beginning of 2013. I would have no idea what his payout was.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** On what basis did he lose his position?

**The SPEAKER:** He resigned his position, but I do not see that this has any relevance here. This is not a matter to do with the Speaker. He was employed by me before I was Speaker.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Leader of the Opposition, I endorse those remarks by Mr Speaker. That is not relevant to his role as Speaker.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Where would we ask questions with respect to that matter?

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition can direct them through me in my present position as Speaker and I will direct them to the Department of the Premier and Cabinet. I suppose that is the only way it can be done, unless the Leader of the Opposition were to write directly to the DPC.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Leader of the Opposition, your option is to put that question on notice.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Can I seek clarification of that? I understand that the Speaker is the employer of all electorate officers. Whilst they might be paid by DPC, they are not employed by DPC.

**The SPEAKER:** He was employed by me prior to me becoming the Speaker. I had no control over him as Speaker at that stage.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I understand the proper terminology.

**The SPEAKER:** What I am saying is that if the Leader of the Opposition wants to ask a question in these terms through me now as the Speaker about something that happened previously, he can do that, but I am not in a position to answer those questions today because I was not in control at the time.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Am I able to seek that information by way of supplementary information?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Leader of the Opposition, the best way forward is to put that question on notice because it does not actually directly relate to this budget period.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Can I clarify something? I refer to page 49 and employee benefits. Is that solely for the staff in the Parliament building or is that also for the payments to electorate staff?

**The SPEAKER:** It relates to members and parliamentary staff. If the Leader of the Opposition wants to ask a question about Mr Sufi, he can write to me as the Speaker and I will then send it on to DPC and they can trawl back in their records. That is the only way I can see that we can answer that one.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** For clarification, I cannot ask for supplementary information?

**The SPEAKER:** No, because it has nothing to do with my role as Speaker.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I refer to page 41 of the *Budget Statements* and the net amount appropriated to deliver services. I refer to the Select Committee into the Operations of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc). What has been the total cost of establishing and conducting this inquiry, and can Mr Speaker provide a breakdown in terms of staff, hearing costs, advertising et cetera? Is the Parliament aware of the costs incurred by the RSPCA as part of the committee inquiry? Has Parliament considered any action to reimburse the RSPCA for those costs?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, member for Cannington. I will just need to seek advice as to whether this is covered by this division. We are dealing with division 1, Legislative Assembly, and the member is talking about a Legislative Council committee. My advice is that that question cannot be asked in this place.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** How and when do we get that answer?

**The CHAIRMAN:** I imagine that the opposition will need to ask that question in the Legislative Council estimates hearings when they take place.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The final part of the question, as I understand it, was whether consideration had been given to reimburse the RSPCA. We are asking the Parliament itself whether the Parliament has considered that. As the senior presiding officer in the Parliament, Mr Speaker, is that something that Parliament has considered?

**The SPEAKER:** No, it is totally under the role of the Council. We have not considered that at all.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I refer to page 55 and the asset investment program. What building works or remedial works and internal fit-outs and refurbishments have been completed at Parliament since 1 July 2015, and what was the cost of each work?

**The SPEAKER:** We have a schedule here, which I can table for the member. It starts off with air conditioning to the lower south east corridor, which the member might have seen—there were huge works that went on there. It cost \$556 000, which is a staggering amount of money. The total is about \$1 850 000. We can table that document.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Mr Speaker, there is no tabling during estimates, but we can distribute that document to members who would like to see it.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Thank you, Mr Speaker. I have a follow-up question. Is there any schedule of works and refurbishments proposed for 2016–17?

[9.10 am]

**The SPEAKER:** We are looking at certain proposals. We are looking at trying to upgrade the office accommodation.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Sorry, which offices?

**The SPEAKER:** The members' office accommodation. We are trying to free up office space. We are looking at certain options about where we could put some more offices. We were very disappointed that we never got that building across the road to make four pieces of land owned by the government.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** That is number three.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes. We are spending \$1.7 million a year in rent for the committee offices et cetera over the road. That is estimated to be about \$20 million over 10 years. We are very cognisant that we should try to free up some offices here and create further office space, and we are looking at various options. Of course it is very difficult to free up any more space inside the building, because this building is a square, so we are looking at various options outside.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Do you have something like that for 2016–17 or is it not prepared at this stage?

**The SPEAKER:** We have some items here. Mr Hunter will take you through it.

**Mr R. Hunter:** I thank the member for the question. In relation to last year, there is a \$1.264 million investment through our capital program which is included on the list that the Leader of the Opposition has. For next year's capital allocation, we are looking at information technology switching upgrades to the tune of \$120 000; installation of broadcast equipment in this chamber and in the Legislative Council chamber to the tune of about \$100 000; and courtyard repairs, painting and structural works—which is the part that members see inside the courtyard—to about \$300 000. Things that are yet to be determined are a new finance system, at \$300 000 to \$400 000; window treatments, which is curtains and blinds, within the eastern side, at around \$200 000; and air-conditioning, which is about \$500 000 for the next stage. That gives us a total of around \$1.62 million. Therefore, that needs to be scaled back to \$1 million, obviously, because that is all we have.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Can we get a copy of that?

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes, you certainly can. There is an asterisk on this that indicates that we have not yet made a final determination on three things, which I can indicate as well.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** That is fine if you could do that. Thank you.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Thank you; that document will be distributed. Are there further questions?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** At the bottom in handwriting it reads “LA video wall \$16 000.” Is that the video screens out here?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, that is the upgrade of the foyer. As the member would know, that has never been touched since the building has been built. We can link it into the one in the foyer as well. Has the member seen the one that the schoolchildren use? The whole idea of doing it was to, firstly, freshen up that area, and, secondly, make it more educationally useable, because the other one was just a static dead display.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Is it correct that there were complaints from Liberal members of Parliament that the Labor members were pressing the Rob Johnson button and therefore Rob Johnson was always on the screen; so the system was changed so that it would return after three minutes to the home screen rather than have Rob Johnson there?

**The SPEAKER:** I thought it was set to return to the Bill Johnston photo!

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Sadly, no.

**The SPEAKER:** I have not heard that, but that is very interesting.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Is that what happened?

**The SPEAKER:** I had never heard about it, so I would not know.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Come on, tell the truth!

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It has changed.

**The SPEAKER:** Has it?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order, members!

**The SPEAKER:** Unfortunately I do not get involved in that level of detail.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Who were the people making the complaints?

**The SPEAKER:** You can ask Mr Hunter whether he knows something, or the Clerk.

**Ms K.M. Robinson:** I am not aware of that. We have different functionality for the screens so that it shows, as members know, the different settings. We can see the panoramic view of the chamber, and also individual members. It goes back to a default screen as well. We have a number of different options with that.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** When was that default option introduced?

**Ms K.M. Robinson:** I am not sure. We are constantly making upgrades and improvements to it. We would like to have further functionality added to it to enable it to show videos, and maybe committee information as well. We are constantly looking at ways to improve it.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** On that same line item, it appears from the page that has been handed out about work undertaken in 2015–16 that \$620 000 was spent on audiovisual hardware and camera tender. What is the reason for that?

**The SPEAKER:** I defer to Rob.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Thank you. We have new AV hardware and camera tender, \$620 000. Is that the item the member is referring to?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Yes.

**Mr R. Hunter:** We had an independent assessment of our AV equipment, which includes the cameras in this room, the microphones and the mixers.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** And in the other chamber?

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes; in the other chamber as well. That was undertaken by a group called Rutledge, and its recommendation was to upgrade our equipment because it was at the end of its life. Those processes commenced this year, in fact. The first part of the spend was about \$80 000 for a mixer, which is to control the microphones and cameras for both chambers. That work has been completed. We are also looking at the acquisition of cameras, which is underway now, for both chambers. The cameras in this chamber are standard-definition cameras, and they will be upgraded to high-definition cameras, which will enable us to put out a high-definition feed to constituents and users of Parliament. Those cameras have been acquired, and the source of funding was both the Parliamentary Services Department and the Legislative Assembly.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** An amount of \$13 000 has been spent on library modifications to enable a range of events to take place in the library. Does the Speaker have a list of those events?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes. It is being very well used and it will continue to be well used. We were just talking about it this morning when we were inspecting the water leaks upstairs. We could let you have a list of the events. We are looking at things such as art tours, because we have some interesting artworks. People will be able to have tea and cake there and use the coffee facilities that were put in, in anticipation of the space being freed up. We will also conduct talks there, such as from the Australasian Study of Parliament Group and those types of things. It is anticipated that it will be even better used over time.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Can I get by way of supplementary the list that the Speaker referred to?

**The SPEAKER:** I will provide the list.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Thank you. Mr Speaker, can you be more specific about exactly what you will be providing?

**The SPEAKER:** We will give the member a list of all the functions that we have held in the library since it was opened up as a function space.

[*Supplementary Information No A1.*]

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Page 48 outlines the support for the operations of the Legislative Assembly. During last year's estimates, Mr Speaker was good enough to provide a list or summary of the functions that he has hosted over the past financial year. Will I be able to get such a list again this year?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes; we can give the member a list along the same lines for this year.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Can you specify again, please, Mr Speaker, what you will be providing?

**The SPEAKER:** We will give the member a list of the functions and whoever I have entertained in my capacity as Speaker.

[*Supplementary Information No A2.*]

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I refer to page 37, Parliamentary Services, and the delivery of services. I refer to the visit —

**The CHAIRMAN:** What page is that, member?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** It is page 37.

**The CHAIRMAN:** I am not sure whether that is in this division.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** It is part 1, Parliament, summary of portfolio appropriations, so I assume it is.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Thank you; apologies.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Last October, during the visit to this Parliament by the Dutch member of Parliament Geert Wilders, I noticed the use of private security people who were assaulting members of the public with umbrellas. What action was taken against this behaviour in the parliamentary precinct?

**The SPEAKER:** I understand that the security staff here gave very strict instructions to whoever was there not to get involved with any direction of traffic or security arrangements. I think there was an altercation between one person; I do not know how serious it was. However, as soon as we were alerted to that, somebody went out and spoke to them a second time. That is what happened, but Rob can follow up because he was in charge then.

[9.20 am]

**Mr R. Hunter:** Obviously, this particular event drew some attention because of the contentious nature of the topic. Mr Wilders and his team who were liaising with Parliament were given strict instructions about the

by-laws that apply to a parliamentary reserve, particularly in relation to protests and rallies, and they were enforced along the way. I was literally out there with our security team dealing with Mr Wilders' team. We were unaware of any arrangements that he had made. There had been no communication.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** You were unaware of any arrangements he had made in respect of his own security?

**Mr R. Hunter:** Correct. Gentlemen dressed in suits surrounded him. More of those people were evident when Mr Wilders turned up in his vehicle. At one stage a person—presumably a constituent—complained that they were being prevented from accessing the stairs in the south garden. We went up to that person directly—who was associated with Mr Wilders—and told them that they cannot prevent a person from accessing the stairs. They said that they did not stop them; they told the person, “You might want to go another way because it is very crowded down there.” That is the extent we understood there were any security altercations or issues. They were not permitted into the building and they complied with all the by-laws. In relation to the specific question about what actions were taken after the event, it is the same as we do with all events; unless a complaint is made or a person comes to us and details a particular event, no action is taken by the Parliamentary Services Department.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** When there are other protests at Parliament, there is a visible police presence. For example, when the Australian Services Union was here the other day, the main entrance was locked and even members of Parliament could not enter the building other than through a personally controlled entrance, which is of course unusual. Why was there no police presence for Mr Wilders' demonstration?

**Mr R. Hunter:** There were three contingents of police present. Officers from the dignitary protection unit were present, who were dressed similar to us. There were police in uniform, quite a few of those—I think there were about 30 of them. There was also another group, which I think was the critical infrastructure group. So, there were three different groups of police, in the order of about 40 or 50 police, and some of those were on the wings of the building and out of sight. There was certainly a large police presence. That was not our doing; that was WA Police's response to what it perceived as a potential security event.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Given that Mr Wilders' private security assaulted an Australian citizen on the steps of Parliament, are you aware of any police action being taken to resolve that assault?

**Mr R. Hunter:** I am not aware of any action that was taken by the person who is alleged to have been assaulted—whether he reported that to police, made a complaint or whether there were any charges. It was not for the Parliamentary Services Department to be involved.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Do we know which company provided the security team to Mr Wilders?

**The SPEAKER:** No, we do not know, as far as I know.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Correct.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Do we know if these gentlemen were authorised licensed security officers?

**Mr R. Hunter:** I have no knowledge at all.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Has Parliament taken any action to see whether these security staff were complying with the laws in Western Australia, which require the registration of security guards?

**The SPEAKER:** I do not believe that we have done anything because we never received a formal complaint after the event. From what I saw, and I was standing in the Leader of the Opposition's office for some of the time, it defused itself and people went on their merry way.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Coming back to “Capital” on page 39, which we were referring to earlier, I note from the spending for 2015–16 that \$300 000 has been allocated to courtyard repairs. I am interested in what that \$300 000 will go towards in the courtyard.

**The SPEAKER:** First of all, there is the painting of the courtyard itself. Mr Hunter and I just went on a tour this morning, because we have various leaks. One of those leaks is outside the Leader of the Opposition's office, although that is not to do with the courtyard. There are leaks downstairs as well. The membrane under the paving slabs has deteriorated. We are trying to put it off as far as we can because it is a very expensive and labour-intensive thing. Those are the two things that we were looking at. Is there anything else, Mr Hunter?

**Mr R. Hunter:** The project was initially scaled at about \$450 000 and included the replacement of the rotting windows, which was done during our last summer recess. Some of the windows have been replaced including the ones in the members' corridor and on the western side of the eastern facade. Some structural problems remain within the courtyard. Looking particularly at the second level, cracks and leaking can be seen, and gutters and fascias are rusted, which need to be repaired and replaced. Also, part of the fascia is starting to fall away. The time to do it is now because it is during an election period when we get the longest recess. Scaffolding will be needed, which will encircle the entire courtyard, so they can work on the first and higher levels. The work

will be structural—painting, filling, gutter repairs and fixing any membranes that have been penetrated or broken down.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Is that for the coming summer?

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes. Work cannot be done in the winter, unfortunately.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** You indicated that work on repairing the roof membrane in the courtyard was done last financial year.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Are you saying that did not fix the problem?

**The SPEAKER:** That was the membrane on the strangers' bar, members' bar and the toilets.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Is there another membrane?

**The SPEAKER:** The membrane is under the slabs and that is decomposing. We have been patching here and there because it is a huge job.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Is the \$300 000 to paint the internals of the courtyard and to do some work somehow around the membrane?

**Mr R. Hunter:** Yes.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Is that sealing on the top; is that what will be done on the slab?

**The SPEAKER:** They would have to pull up all the slabs. There is sort of a tar membrane underneath that that has to be replaced. I am not an expert in membranes, but we saw what they did on the one in the bar. A sealer has to go in there to get rid of all the cracks and breaks in the membrane. I assume they will have to take the old one up because it cannot be put on top of the old one.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I refer to Parliamentary Services, "Delivery of Services" on page 37. Is there any revenue related to the coffee machine in the library?

**The SPEAKER:** There is an honour system. When people use it, they are supposed to put their name down so their account can be billed. The use of that coffee station will become more apparent now because if we use the whole strangers' lounge with the gazebo for a function, there will be no place for members to take their guests for coffee. The idea is to send them up to the library so they can use the facilities there.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** What is the revenue for this current financial year and what is the expected revenue for next financial year?

**The SPEAKER:** We have not done an expected revenue, but I will hand it to Mr Hunter. The whole idea of freeing this up as a function space is because we can now move the furniture to the sides and use the gazebo but people will have nowhere to take their guests for coffee. They will be invited to go upstairs, which is nicely furnished with coffee tables and chairs. Hopefully, it will improve the revenue. We cannot give an estimate until this comes onstream here.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** There was a coffee seller in the lobby—what happened to that?

**The SPEAKER:** We were trying to make the place more user friendly so that visitors could at least get a cup of coffee. We were looking at various ways of doing it. It is not cost effective to have our staff there. It was not cost effective to have a private person there. We now have a coffee station, which the member might have seen, so that staff can tell anybody who is waiting that they can help themselves to a cup of coffee, which I think is the best solution.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** What are the arrangements for Parliament with respect to listening devices and telephone intercepts?

[9.30 am]

**The SPEAKER:** The member for Murray–Wellington asked me that question a week or so ago, and I spoke to Mr Hunter. He said the place has been swept twice since about 2006.

**Mr R. Hunter:** It is actually swept after every election. Before members occupy their offices, we do a sweep through for, obviously, surveillance devices. Also, dogs go through looking, obviously, for bombs and things like that. We also do a similar exercise with the dogs after we have an open day or a heritage day. That is when we periodically do it. On two occasions that I am anecdotally aware of, listening devices have been detected.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Who does that—the police?

**Mr R. Hunter:** I understand the police have a division that looks after that responsibility.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** When was the last time it was done?

**Mr R. Hunter:** The last time I am aware that a sweep was done of the building for, specifically, bombs was after the heritage day in October last year; dogs came through after that. For listening devices specifically, it would probably be following the last election when we did a sweep of the building. I am not sure of that; I would have to check it. That is probably all I can say on that.

**Mr M.J. COWPER:** With the advancement of technology and the rapid way in which cameras and listening devices are evolving, does Mr Speaker think it might be worthwhile perhaps having a more regular regime for such matters?

**The SPEAKER:** We can raise it at the next Management Executive Committee meeting and look at it.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I refer to supplies and services on page 44 of budget paper No 2. In 2014–15, the amount spent on supplies and services was \$613 000; in 2015-16, it was —

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition, that is a Council page.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** So it is; sorry.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I refer to “Support the Operations of the Legislative Assembly”, on page 48 of budget paper No 2. Since 1 July 2015, has Mr Speaker had a hectic travel schedule or has it been light compared with that in previous years?

**The SPEAKER:** I have been away. We went to the Cook Islands for the fiftieth anniversary of the independence of the Cook Islands. We were asked to attend a United Nations seminar there because we are the sister Parliament to the Cook Islands. We went to the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association conference in Canada and the National Conference of State Legislatures in Seattle because they were close to one another. We went to the Conference of Australian and Pacific Presiding Officers and Clerks in Hobart, which is an annual thing that all Speakers go to. We went to the Australasian Study of Parliament Group conference in Wellington, New Zealand as well. That is the travel we did.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Does Mr Speaker have a breakdown of costs with him or can I have it by way of supplementary information?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes, I can give the member for Victoria Park a breakdown of costs.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Is this by way of supplementary or are you going to distribute this paper now?

**The SPEAKER:** I will give members the costs. My costs totalled \$38 120, but the Clerk went to certain things and the previous Clerk went to certain things, and a number of chamber officers went to the ASPG conference as well.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** What was the total cost of travel for the Legislative Assembly?

**The SPEAKER:** The total cost of travel for the Assembly was \$132 541, not including committee travel.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I have a question on the capital appropriation. Has any furniture been purchased for the Speaker or President since 1 July 2015?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** Or the building?

**The SPEAKER:** Which item is the member referring to?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** The capital appropriation on page 37. I asked whether any furniture has been purchased for the Speaker or President since 1 July 2015.

**The SPEAKER:** I cannot speak for the President, but we purchased our furniture some years ago, as the member is well aware.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Yes, but this is a Parliamentary Services Department capital appropriation.

**Mr R. Hunter:** To my knowledge, no capital appropriation has been spent on Presiding Officers’ furniture.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** What about more broadly for the building?

**The CHAIRMAN:** Can you repeat your question, please, Leader of the Opposition?

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I was following on from the member for Cannington’s question. In respect of the building itself, has any additional furniture or those sorts of items been purchased?

**The SPEAKER:** We spruce items up all the time. Some items are re-covered and some chairs are re-covered. We buy odds and sods from time to time. I will ask Mr Hunter to expand on that, but we try to recycle as much stuff as we can and re-cover stuff.

**Mr R. Hunter:** Generally, furniture is a fairly small cost, and most of it comes out of the building and maintenance budget—repairs et cetera, small office chairs et cetera; things like that. The last major thing we had

done was in the previous year, and that related to the refurbishment of the Members' Dining Room chairs, and also the corridor chairs and sofas. That was in the 2014–15 financial year.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** They were made that very attractive nappy-splash colour! Work has been done on the Assembly chamber because of termite infestation; that was obviously needed. Is there further work to be done in the chamber?

**The SPEAKER:** No, there is no further work.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Mr Speaker is satisfied that the termites invaded only the government side?

Several members interjected.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Order! One at a time, thank you.

**The SPEAKER:** Sorry. I do not know whether the member saw it, but this whole bank of chairs was pulled out. That is where the termites were. It was a very bad infestation. There have been no reports of any other infestation. This was done with untreated pine, so that was how it all came about. That was done when the chamber was refurbished in about 2006.

**Mr R. Hunter:** In 2007.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** The termites were only on the government side?

**The SPEAKER:** That is right; we will not go there, member for Cannington.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** They were under the member for North West Central! I refer to the work undertaken in 2015-16, when \$250 000 was spent on stonework. Which stonework had \$250 000 spent on it?

**The SPEAKER:** The facade of the building. The old side of the building has been fixed up over time, and the last work was done on the Legislative Council side of the building.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It was on the Council side?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes. We have been doing the front of the building in stages. Last December, the side nearest to the Legislative Council was done.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** When Mr Speaker says “fixed up”, what does he mean?

**The SPEAKER:** It is re-pointed and cleaned, and the old sash windows were taken out and replaced. It is a spruce-up of the front of the building.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** The repairs in the last financial year were to the stonework, and Mr Speaker said the last stage cost \$250 000?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes. Can I say something? It is a lot of money, but taking into consideration scaffolding costs, and then building management insisted on having a hand in it, and that cost about \$60 000 —

**Mr R. Hunter:** It was 16 per cent.

**The SPEAKER:** The scaffolding is prohibitive. The work costs a lot of money, but we get only a certain amount of it back in real work.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Is Mr Speaker saying that 16 per cent of the \$250 000 actually went to the Department of Finance through Building Management and Works?

**The SPEAKER:** Mr Hunter can clarify, but if works are done here that cost more than a certain amount of money, we are obliged to have these people as works managers. Can Mr Hunter explain that?

**Mr R. Hunter:** The appropriation or procurement process requires that capital works that exceed \$250 000— it was previously \$150 000—need to be processed by the building and works department. It provides project management oversight and charges a fee for that; I am fairly sure the fee is about 16 per cent. If we look at all our capital projects over time, we can see that considerable dollars go out in project fees. I cannot be sure of the exact figure for this one, but I would say it was about 16 per cent.

[9.40 am]

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** I come back to the capital appropriation. I know it has been commented on publicly before that the installation of the canopy and the doors in the Strangers' Lounge cost \$83 000, and the canopy, I assume, outside the south entrance, was \$14 000. That takes the total cost to nearly \$100 000. What was the genesis of those two initiatives?

**The SPEAKER:** The one outside was just a weather thing. When people were bringing stuff into the building, they normally had to stand out in the rain and the sun, and the journalists had to wait out in the rain and the sun.

We got a quote to do the work, and I think it was about \$60 000, but then somebody drove past the Home Base store in Subiaco and found a ready-made one, and that was the genesis of that project. As to the one in the courtyard, as the member knows, we do not have sufficient function space to speak of. We have now freed up half of the library. We were going to air-condition the Aboriginal People's Gallery, because we were having functions there, but the cost was \$700 000, there was no guarantee that it would work, and people did not like having functions there.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** That is the gallery and the foyer outside, is it?

**The SPEAKER:** Yes. People were walking through the foyer, and they could not get to divisions. We had complaints from some members opposite that they could not get to divisions. Then we looked at extending the Aboriginal People's Gallery, because there is air conditioning there. We were going to use it as committee rooms during the day, with bi-fold doors. It was the library before, and it was bigger than it is now. We looked at that, but there was a great deal of screaming, wailing and gnashing of teeth over that by certain people, so we moved on. The best and the cheapest option was to free up this area in the courtyard to use that. As the member knows, every time there is a function and the weather is inclement, tents have to be brought in, and the only way they can be brought in is through the corridors. Whenever scaffolding or anything else has to be used, it comes down the corridor. That is the genesis of this project, and we think it will be well used, and it is a nice setting for people to come into. It is easily accessible, and that is the history of the matter.

**The appropriation was recommended.**