

Division 43: Planning, Lands and Heritage — Services 3 and 4, Aboriginal Affairs, \$50 670 000 —

Ms C.M. Collins, Chair.

Dr A.D. Buti, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs.

Mr A. Kannis, Director General.

Mr V. Davies, Assistant Director General of Heritage and Property Services.

Mr M. Hanrahan, Chief Financial Officer.

Mr M. Darcy, Assistant Director General, Land Use Management.

Mr D. Corr, Executive Director, Land Use Management.

Mr S. Hayden, Special Policy Adviser.

[Witnesses introduced.]

The CHAIR: The estimates committees will be reported by Hansard and 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 those 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.

The member for Central Wheatbelt.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I refer to the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021 under the heading “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency” on page 714. Can the minister advise how many new staff the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage will employ to support the implementation of the local Aboriginal cultural heritage services and the delivery of the act?

Dr A.D. BUTI: The government has already funded 31 FTEs under the current act. Obviously, they will still be in place, and then 25 FTEs have been funded for heritage officers and policy and compliance officers.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: So 25 new employees —

Dr A.D. BUTI: And also 10 regional staff.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: That is 25 FTE plus the 10 regional staff —

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, it is 31 plus 25. They will still be involved.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I am talking about the new ones.

Dr A.D. BUTI: There are 25 new FTEs and 10 regional FTEs.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Can the minister advise where the regional officers will be located?

Dr A.D. BUTI: They will be located in Broome, Karratha, Geraldton, Kalgoorlie and Albany.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Sorry, did the minister say Bunbury?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I said Albany.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Will the new employees, both the 25 and the 10 regional employees, be in place by 1 July?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Five of them will be.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Will that be five out of the 35 new employees?

Dr A.D. BUTI: No, it will be five of the regional employees.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Sorry. My question was: will the new employees, both the 25 and the 10 regional employees, be in place by 1 July?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes, they will be. Those additional ones will be, but out of the 10 new regional staff, five will be in place. All the others will be in place.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Will 25 new FTEs be in place and will five of the 10 regional FTEs be in place by 1 July?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I refer to the same paragraph as previously; I will not waste time. I refer to the regulations and guidelines for the act, which were released on 6 April. Have any of the documents that were published on 6 April been changed or altered since they were uploaded?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Not as far as I am aware, no. They have been gazetted now.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I am talking about between when they were published on 6 April —

Dr A.D. BUTI: As I said, as far as I am aware, I am advised, no. But I am also letting the member know that they have been gazetted.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I refer to the same heading and the regulations and guidelines again. We spoke about the education sessions last week. Does the minister have an update on where they will be held?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I do. As I said, I apologise; there is no excuse for the comment I made earlier. I said it because I was very disappointed with the member, who I thought was a person I could talk to in a free and frank manner. I spoke to the member after question time and told her that we were trying our best to get one in the wheatbelt. The member never relayed that in any of her interviews with the media afterwards, and I think that was really bad faith. I went to the member in good faith to let her know as soon as I was aware that it would be possible, but the member did not have the honesty and respect to let the media know that because it did not go with the narrative. That is why I was very disappointed by the member's behaviour. I did not think that would happen.

In regard to that, there will be a new session in the wheatbelt in Merredin. Do we have a date for that? We are still trying to work out the date, but there will be one in Merredin.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I thank the minister. I take it that the education session will be before 1 July.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes, it will be before 1 July.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Thank you, minister. Is there a reason that the minister was reluctant to provide an education session in the wheatbelt, given the landowners and the local governments out there?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I was not reluctant. The member asked me what they were and I told her what they were at that stage.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Okay. I can rephrase it.

Dr A.D. BUTI: We are not going to get into —

The CHAIR: Members!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I am asking whether there is a reason that it was not on the list.

Dr A.D. BUTI: At that stage, it was the view that because of the time period, the sessions were determined on where we would have the greatest numbers, and at that time, that was the advice I had. After the member asked me that question, I talked to my advisers and the department, and that is why I think I got back to the member within an hour and told her, but, as I said, the member did not have the honesty to relay that in her media interviews afterwards or in her social media. I hope that after this she will go on to social media and provide that information. It would be even better if the member said that I provided it to her last week.

[12.20 pm]

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Is the minister finding it difficult to find time to schedule these sessions because this legislation has been unnecessarily rushed through by this government? I note that the regulations and guidelines were released nearly two months after they had been promised and the legislation in particular was rushed through the house. The minister is under a deadline that I understand has come from the Premier. This is an incredibly important piece of legislation that people want to get right. Why does the minister not give himself more time?

The CHAIR: Member, can you please refer that back to the line item?

Ms M.J. DAVIES: It is absolutely under the line item, "ICT Projects — *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021: Implementation*".

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is not.

The CHAIR: Minister, we will finish this one in a moment.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It is being a bit loose, but I am prepared to answer it. I can correct the record. The Premier has given no instructions at all. It is actually my determination that it be 1 July, so I will correct the record there. The member should not make up things for which she has no evidence. The Premier has not once given me any direction

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about the date. I imposed this date myself and I will tell the member why I imposed it. It is because the 1972 act is defective and it needs to be updated and I want this new act in place as soon as possible.

As the member would also know, although she was not the shadow minister last year, the co-design process of the regulations and guidelines went through an extensive consultation process, including in the wheatbelt, over three different phases. There has never been —

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I just find it surprising that there were no education sessions.

The CHAIR: Member, the minister is speaking.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I cannot recall another regulatory system that has gone through consultation or a co-design process such as this. There has been extensive consultation. There is now an extensive education program. As I have said, regulations can be changed and this will be reviewed after a year. We do not know how the system will operate. We need to get the system up and operating so that we can see how it works, and then if changes need to be made, they will be done. Under the current system, as minister, I am signing off on consenting to damage of Aboriginal cultural heritage. I know that the member respects Aboriginal cultural heritage. I do not feel easy as a minister, and neither did the many ministers before me, that is being done under a regulatory system whereby the Aboriginal cultural owners are not consulted. Under the current legislation, the minister can sign off—although we made it a practice that we do not—on a section 18 without consulting Aboriginal people. I know that the member would not agree with that system. That is why it is imperative that this legislation be put in place. It is not being rushed. The act came in at the end of 2021. The co-design and consultation process on the regulations and guidelines has been going on for a year, an extensive education program is taking place and the regulations will be reviewed after a year.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I refer to the minister's comments about the extent of consultation and the co-design process. I have had extensive conversations with local government, farmers and others about this new act and its regulations. I appreciate that the regulations are relatively new, but a great majority of those local governments have no idea of the detail of this act or how it will affect their operations. As the minister knows, local government is likely to be a significant gatekeeper in this process. Local government will not be able to give approval for various building activities and others unless it has some proof or certainty that this act is being complied with. That will join a tick box, if you like, of other things —

Dr A.D. BUTI: Can the member ask a question, please?

The CHAIR: Member, please get to the question.

Dr D.J. HONEY: I am just providing some background to the question. What effort is the department making to fully inform local government of its obligations under this act and also the liabilities that it could incur if it does not comply with the act?

Dr A.D. BUTI: It would be interesting to know how many of those local governments that the member said have come to him have actually approached the department. The act has been in place since the end of 2021. The Western Australian Local Government Association has consulted with the department at least 16 times. There have been two zonal meetings and three webinar meetings and there will be another online consultation with WALGA that all councils in Western Australia can hook into or attend in person. There has been extensive opportunity for consultation. We cannot be held responsible if local governments do not approach the department or do not come to these meetings. Sixteen meetings have already taken place, and, as I said, further ones are yet to take place.

With regard to the act, we held 75 workshops and received 223 submissions. Extensive consultation was held with local government during phase 2 and 3 of the co-design workshops. We even went to small places in the wheatbelt and in the member for Roe's electorate. We went to Katanning and only eight people appeared. There are various reasons for that, but we still held that meeting. In Northam, 23 people attended and in Moora, nine attended. Those meetings still took place. If people do not come, we cannot be held responsible for that. There has been a significant opportunity for people to obtain knowledge about the act and its impact, and now about the regulations.

Ms M.J. HAMMAT: I have a further question that the minister might have already partly answered. Can the minister outline all the consultation that has occurred on the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Thank you, member. Some of this has already been asked about, but when it comes to this issue of people not knowing, we can only provide the information. If people do not come to the meetings—the member would know, being a farmer, that if the horse does not come to the water trough, one can only do so much.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: They are very busy at certain times of the year.

Dr A.D. BUTI: That is right; they are, but a lot of other people are busy, too. There has been more than one opportunity to attend. The state government has completed a 12-month co-design process that included three rounds of widespread community and stakeholder engagement and 94 workshops across 36 locations around the state that resulted in 223 submissions. The process informed the development of key regulations and guidelines that support the

implementation of the new laws. These documents released in early April include details about due diligence and consultation requirements, local Aboriginal cultural heritage services, fee structures and tiers of ground disturbing activities. We are also continuing to work to facilitate Aboriginal organisations to determine their capability to be designators—LACHs et cetera.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Just to enlighten the minister, I heard from farmers in Lake Grace yesterday who had no idea about what is going on. I hear what the minister just said about consultation. If those farmers are not clear on things by 2 July and they carry out a tier 2 activity—dig in a strainer post for a fence or whatever—will they be prosecuted? Is there some sort of leeway that the minister will give —

Dr A.D. BUTI: As the good local member that the member is, I would advise him to tell his constituents to contact the department to find out. It is like anything else: when people break the law, ignorance is no excuse. The member knows about this act because he is a member of Parliament and he has been here, so he also has the responsibility to tell them to contact the department.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: There is a lack of clarity on what is a tier 1 and tier 2 activity. If these farmers use their air seeder or a deep ripper to do a job, which one is a tier 1 activity and which one is a tier 2 activity? Some of the consultation has not provided that information.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I am not really sure where we are in the budget papers. The guidelines of the levels have been published. I would ask those farmers to look at that and if they are in doubt to contact the department. I am sure that farmers contact various departments all the time over other issues. I do not see why this should be any different. We should realise that farmers and others have other regulations they have to adhere to, like local government regulations, environmental regulations et cetera. Why should this be necessarily any different?

[12.30 pm]

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I refer to page 174 and the heading “Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2021” under “Significant Issues Impacting the Agency”. Can the minister advise how many applications have been received from groups to become local Aboriginal cultural heritage services?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I can. Let me explain. Someone can make an application to seek an \$80 000 grant to help prepare the application to go further. Once they become a LACH, they receive an additional \$200 000 and then annual funding of \$300 000. There have been nine applications for the readiness grant, which is \$80 000, eight have been approved, three are approved subject to conditions, one has been declined, two require further information before assessment can be completed and four grant agreements have been issued. I will explain it now, if the member might ask a subsequent question. If there is no LACH, it is not the end of the story. If there is no LACH for a particular area, it goes to the native title holders. That is the beauty of this new act, that it aligns with the Native Title Act, which is so important. If no LACH is in place—there will be more LACHs over time—proponents can just go to the native title holders or owners for that area. If that cannot be determined, they can go to the native title representative body. That is how the process will work.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Or the knowledge holders.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Is there a list of those that have been approved? Where would we find them, rather than having every farmer in Western Australia calling our office, which I think is about to happen?

Dr A.D. BUTI: That will be published, but it has not been published yet.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Where will it be published?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I presume on the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage website.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: The minister mentioned there will be LACHs after 1 July. What happens if industries or individuals have used that alternative pathway in the interim and a LACH is approved? Will that change what that proponent needs to do if their agreement with whatever was there at the time of their agreement was perpetual?

Dr A.D. BUTI: No. It is with whom the agreement is with at that time.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: A new LACH cannot come in over the top of that and say that they do not agree or they have missed something?

Dr A.D. BUTI: No. The LACH are the native title holders. The LACH is just a new description that we are providing, with additional funding. The LACH are native title holders. They are going to be the same people. One avenue will be the native title holders, and another will be under a different name, which is a LACH, with additional funding.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: With respect, there are some challenges even within native title holder groups, for instance, in the goldfields, which has now been settled; that has been challenging over time. I guess the clarity for the proponent

is that they will have to go down a pathway. They want certainty for their project or for what they have agreed to. We want to make sure that we are not damaging cultural heritage.

Dr A.D. BUTI: That is exactly right. If there is any lack of clarity or uncertainty about who the proponent should be negotiating with, the department or the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Council will provide clear instructions who they should be.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Again, under the same heading, I am referring to the ACH knowledge platform, which I understand is the name given to the information technology system for lodgement of all those tier 2 and tier 3 management plans. Can the minister advise what has been invested in the creation of this system? Is it a brand new system?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I will pass to Mr Davies.

Mr V. Davies: The figure invested in the ICT system was in the 2022–23 financial year. It was \$3.9 million.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Is that reflected in the budget? Did I miss that? My apologies; I did look.

Mr V. Davies: It is in year 2022–23. The expenditure was \$3.83 million.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Has the creation of the system been outsourced? Has this been done by an external contractor or has it been developed in-house?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Mr Davies.

Mr V. Davies: We have obviously outsourced the build of that system. There are a couple of vendors that are charged with creating a new system. They are working with our own internal ICT guides, because a lot has to join up.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Obviously, it is a new system. Has training commenced for those in the department who will be managing the system in readiness for 1 July?

Mr V. Davies: Yes. Training has commenced. We have been doing train-the-trainer sessions. Obviously, key users of the system have been trained up and are continuing to be trained. Their job as superusers is to then train their staff on how to use it. A series of guidance materials have been provided and developed with the system. Once that has occurred, we then have sessions planned whereby we will teach known stakeholders. There will be an awareness program of what the system looks like and then there will be a series of materials, both video as well as written, on how to operate and navigate through the system as well.

Dr A.D. BUTI: With regard to the IT allocation, it is on page 722 under “Completed Works”.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Is the build complete? Has the system been completed? I just do not know any IT system that works without gremlins first go. Will there be an opportunity for it to be user tested or stress tested prior to 1 July, when we would imagine submissions would be coming thick and fast with new operators and new systems?

Dr A.D. BUTI: It will be completed as of 1 July to do its role in the new regime. But of course, as we progress, there will be new updates and further work because, as the member knows, technology changes from day to day. It will be operating as of 1 July.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: There will be a user interface for those making submissions. Has the platform been designed for people who are in low-bandwidth areas? Typically, we would find exploration and landowners in regional and remote areas. Regardless of investments in telecommunications over the years, there are still some very patchy areas. We expect that they will need to use that platform in low-bandwidth areas. Has that been accommodated with the build?

Dr A.D. BUTI: From my understanding, and Mr Davies might want to add to this, it will be built so that everyone in the state will be able to utilise it.

Mr V. Davies: That is correct.

Mr G. BAKER: I refer to page 716 of the budget. Could the minister please provide an update on the status of the divestment of the Aboriginal Lands Trust estate?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I thank the member for this question. In 2017, the McGowan government made an election commitment to divest the Aboriginal Lands Trust estate. We believe that increasing direct Aboriginal control of land will help strengthen communities, foster economic activity and securely improve outcomes for Aboriginal people in WA. Land divestment is a very complex process that must be engagement-led if it is to succeed, so it was very important that we approached the divestment of the Aboriginal Lands Trust estate in a methodical manner. It was thought that we could do this over two terms, but that has proven to be quite difficult; however, we do have some runs on the board. As of May this year, the Aboriginal Lands Trust and the minister approved 72 properties for divestment, and 23 properties have been transferred into the ownership of or management by Aboriginal entities,

leaving 288 properties remaining in the estate. Of the initial \$5.841 million, the state government has committed \$900 000 in 2022–23 and 2023–24 to progress the divestment of further properties. We continue to work closely with stakeholders throughout this process. The department is also progressing targeted amendments to the Aboriginal Affairs Planning Authority Act 1972 to remove legislative barriers and maximise opportunities for divestments. We hope to bring a bill to amend that act to Parliament towards the end of this year or early next year.

[12.40 pm]

Dr D.J. HONEY: Were those lands divested to those groups as a freehold title, or are they still under a common title?

Dr A.D. BUTI: It varies, member.

Dr D.J. HONEY: In relation to the land the government still holds, if one goes to those remote communities, typically the ALT land is the most dysfunctional land. An ALT area in Carnarvon has no rubbish collection. It appears that there is no road maintenance or management of those sites. I understood that the management of those sites fell within the minister's department. Is there a program to maintain those sites? It is not apparent when one visits them.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I am not sure how that relates to the divestment of Aboriginal lands.

Dr D.J. HONEY: It relates to the lands that the government maintains.

Dr A.D. BUTI: The member is talking about essential services or community service delivery. That is not within my purview.

Dr D.J. HONEY: They do not fall within the shire either; that is the trouble. They used to fall under the Department of Aboriginal Affairs, but it appears that they do not fall under anything now.

Dr A.D. BUTI: We are of the view that if we can divest to an appropriate Aboriginal group that has that linkage to the land, it will increase economic activity. I think the member would agree that part of the way to close the gap is to provide economic —

Dr D.J. HONEY: My concern is that if the land is not freehold or subdividable, it ends up dysfunctional. But that is okay.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: Minister, I refer to page 714, new initiatives, and the Aboriginal heritage inquiry system run by Data WA. My understanding is that when mapping for heritage locations, there is an error factor of up to four kilometres. Will there be a more accurate mapping system so that farmers or local community people can accurately identify areas of Indigenous importance?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I will hand over to Mr Davies.

Mr V. Davies: As part of the new acknowledge system, we are building a new database for Aboriginal cultural heritage. The existing data on the Aboriginal register of heritage sites is being transferred to that new database so that we can better manage it. The issue of making that data as correct as we possibly can is an ongoing activity. There are 14 000-odd registered heritage sites and about the same number of lodged places that have not been assessed under the 1972 act. All those sites will be transferred. If there are any errors on that data or if people think there are errors on that data, they need to contact the department to make sure. What that data will show is that there is Aboriginal cultural heritage. Some data is very accurate. There is some historic stuff that we have not had a chance to assess at this point. But the data shows, as a first port of call, that there is heritage in that area, so if there is any doubt, then proponents, landowners and land users should contact the department to try to get the best understanding of what that heritage is in that particular area.

Dr A.D. BUTI: There seems to be a misapprehension here that this is such a significantly different system that we have not had to protect Aboriginal cultural heritage until now. Under the current system, even though it has a lot of defects because of the fact one can get a section 18 decision legally without the consent of the Aboriginal group, people still are not allowed to damage Aboriginal cultural heritage. This system will actually provide much better information on that. There are exemption categories and there is a tier 1 category and permits and so forth. We need to be careful and not think that this system will develop all this new Aboriginal heritage; it will not. The system is there now and we have to protect Aboriginal heritage right now. This system will ensure Aboriginal people are at the centre of any management plan that still allows for damaged Aboriginal heritage. If someone has already been engaging in an activity that they are still engaging in—if it is a like-for-like activity for which they have permission—that continues.

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: I hear what the minister is saying, but at the moment the system has an error factor of four kilometres. If I want to go to dig a dam, it is very challenging to get an accurate location. It is also very challenging in that it can take up to 10, 12 or 14 weeks to get responses.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Do a survey!

Mr P.J. RUNDLE: It is just not workable. I am worried about the practicalities. If a farmer wants to put in a fence, dig a dam or whatever, they could be looking at waiting 26 weeks or any length of time to actually get some activity happening. That is what I am worried about.

Dr A.D. BUTI: People should be doing due diligence now. I would hope that people are doing due diligence now and that they would also be mindful to not damage Aboriginal cultural heritage, as they would not want to damage any cultural heritage. Therefore, I do not see what the difference is in that respect.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I agree. We are all on the same level, except I just wonder whether the minister believes that that is the common practice within, particularly, the agricultural sector. It is a well-known practice within the mining and exploration industry, but has it been identified as a risk because the government is transitioning, and are there appropriate staff, local Aboriginal cultural heritage services and heritage surveyors available? If the minister's advice to farmers is to go and do a heritage survey of their entire property and every farmer says that they now need to go and do that as part of their cost of doing business, is there a capacity for that to be done? Will the department be staffed appropriately to make sure that we do not see an enormous backlog? That is the risk. The minister is talking about what should be happening and what might happen from 1 July, given the changes.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Additional staff are being put on. Some of the activities will be exempt. The activities for which a person would need a management plan are in the regulations. If a person is doing a like-for-like activity, it will be under the same situation that they have now. If someone has any doubts, just contact the department.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: The minister might need a few more than the 25 additional staff, at least at the outset.

Dr A.D. BUTI: We will be ready.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act implementation, can the minister advise how the system will be paid for? I understand it is cost recovery. Was that canvassed during the minister's consultations with ministry stakeholders?

[12.50 pm]

Dr A.D. BUTI: It was made quite clear that we would have a cost-recovery model. That has been discussed in numerous conversations. No, the actual model was developed as a budget measure to be announced during the budget process.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Who was engaged to develop it, and how long did they have to provide advice to the government on this?

Dr A.D. BUTI: It was developed by Treasury and the department, but there was consultation in developing various models, and various models were looked at. Particularly for many of the people whom the member for Vasse and the member for Roe represent, this system is far better than some of the suggestions because, obviously, the amount of revenue generated will determine, largely, the amount they pay. A mining company with global revenue of over \$5 billion will pay much more than a farmer in Katanning, unless the farmer has a revenue over \$5 billion.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: It is taken on businesses' global revenue?

Dr A.D. BUTI: Yes, of the parent company.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: How will government departments be charged? I am thinking of the Rottnest Island Authority, which has a small budget but a significantly complex project.

Dr A.D. BUTI: Governments will be charged. The director general of the department has the ability to exempt certain fees et cetera, in certain cases.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I have a further question.

The CHAIR: Would you like to continue with these questions, given the time?

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Yes.

Dr A.D. BUTI: We have to make sure we leave enough room to pass the next division.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: In a moment, minister! How much of the appropriation for the cost recovery that will bring the funding will be set aside for managing the department's expenses, and how much will go to the local Aboriginal cultural heritage services and others?

Dr A.D. BUTI: I will maybe ask the director general to elaborate, if need be, but the breakdown is that \$12 million of that will be for the local Aboriginal cultural heritage services funding; \$0.4 million for the council cost; \$6.6 million for operational staff costs; \$2.2 million for regional resourcing; \$1.4 million for other costs; and \$5.3 million for department overhead costs, including depreciation for this year, 2023–24.

Extract from *Hansard*

[ASSEMBLY ESTIMATES COMMITTEE B — Tuesday, 23 May 2023]

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Ms M.J. DAVIES: I had some advice from some industry groups, and they commented that they only found out about the cost-recovery modelling a week before it was announced. That is quite a significant impost for these businesses.

Dr A.D. BUTI: It was a budget decision.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: There was limited consultation with industry on the actual funding model. Was it a surprise?

Dr A.D. BUTI: It was a budget decision.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I have just one further question about the same dot point under the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act, and then we are good to go. Are any further guidelines being developed by the department that have not been published?

Dr A.D. BUTI: There are. The ones that have been published have been published. Some further work is still being done on the survey guidelines.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: When can we expect to see those published?

Dr A.D. BUTI: It will be available before 1 July.

The appropriation was recommended.