

**Division 37: Office of the Government Chief Information Officer, \$9 019 000 —**

Mr P. Abetz, Chairman.

Mr W.R. Marmion, Minister for Innovation.

Mr G. Nunis, Government Chief Information Officer.

Ms M. Burchell, Acting Executive Director, Policy and Governance.

Mr L. Carren, Chief Finance Officer.

Mr G. MacLean, Principal Policy Adviser.

[Witnesses introduced.]

**The CHAIRMAN:** 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.

The minister may agree to provide supplementary information to the committee rather than asking that the question be put on notice for the next week's sitting. I ask the minister 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 the minister's cooperation in ensuring that it is delivered to the principal clerk by Friday, 3 June 2016. I caution members that if the minister 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.

I give the call to the member for Cannington.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I refer to the significant issues impacting the agency on page 439 and note in the first dot point that the agency has been created for only three years. Who will be managing these information technology functions when we no longer have the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer on 1 July 2018?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I envisage that the role will continue on past that date. That is how it was appointed.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** The minister is speculating because those years do not exist here.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Is the minister saying it is his belief, as a member of the cabinet of Western Australia, that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer will extend past 1 July 2018, despite the fact that the first dot point just presented to us as a significant issue impacting the agency states —

The Office was formally established on 1 July 2015 for a period of 3 years, ...

Is the minister saying that is wrong?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** This office was established by creating a fund that was based on 15 per cent reduction in other agencies' information and communications technology budgets. That fund has been set up for three years. It is early days, and I would imagine, because of the importance of having a strategy around ICT right across government, that in a year or two the value of the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer will be such that we will not want to get rid of the position. That is how I would see it panning out.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is not in the budget though.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Was the minister at the cabinet meeting that decided to create it for only three years?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** We have created it in the way that I explained. We wanted to get a strategy right across government. We needed to get some money. Cabinet decided, or the Treasurer decided, that we would allocate funds for three years, and that is what we have done. It may be that if it is not required in three years it might not be there, but I imagine it would be required.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I imagine it would be, too.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I refer to page 438, referencing the spending changes table generally. There is no mention there of any functions being transferred from the Industry and Innovation division of the Department of Commerce to the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. We understood that was the intention. Is that no longer the plan?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** This particular issue relates to the Government Chief Information Officer and was set up specifically for ICT. When this budget was prepared that is what was done. I think the member might be referring to my new portfolio as Minister for Innovation, which is not covered under this because this budget was produced prior to its formation.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is that because the minister forgot about innovation when he wrote the budget?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** No.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Is the minister saying that after the cut-off date for the budget, he is transferring the innovation function into this area, or that the innovation function is not going to the GCIO?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** That has nothing to do with this particular estimates hearing, by the way, but I will answer the question. It is early days. That is being negotiated at the moment with the Minister for Commerce.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It does have something to do with it insomuch as prior to announcing the creation of the portfolio, this office was going to transfer functions from the Industry and Innovation division of the Department of Commerce.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The innovation budget does not start until July 2016.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** This budget starts on 1 July 2016, too.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I know. When the office of innovation came up, we did not have that detail. We are working out the detail now. It has just started. I do not how many FTEs we might get from the innovation section of the Department of Commerce.

**Ms S.F. McGURK:** I could use a number of references for my question, with a few on page 440 around services and key efficiency indicators. There is talk about the establishment of platforms for the delivery of better government services through ICT strategy, policy solutions and then trying to work across whole of government ICT strategies, identifying and advising innovation that will enhance government services to meet business and community needs, and providing ICT standardised approaches across government and the like. My question relates to how government interacts, for instance, with the community sector. I know the Government Chief Information Officer presented at the Western Australian Council of Social Service conference not that long ago on the question of open data and making data more accessible. I imagine it is the same for business, but in this context it was the community sector saying that not only should the government make that data available, but also it should be available in an accessible form and in common formats so that they can better assess what government is doing, for instance, in social services, which is a good example. Can the minister advise whether the government is working in that area, and how it is doing that?

[9.40 pm]

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** We want to do exactly what the member has just said. Our aim is to work with departments that have big databases of information—that is all departments—and encourage the data to be available to the public. Some data is confidential, so under privacy laws we probably cannot do that in some individual cases. But our aim is, as best we can, to make available data that is stored away in various different departments, in different hardware packages that do not communicate across departments, so that agencies can better utilise it to help to deliver services online and so that any interested person in the community or in business can use that data to come up with bright ideas to develop fantastic applications such as the very good app that we launched when we announced the new Minister for Innovation. That simple app uses public data to show people what the waiting times are at hospitals and the distance from a hospital. We hope that by making more data available we can provide better services to the community, and that smart people in the community can come up with clever ways of utilising that government data. I hope that answers the member's question.

**Ms S.F. McGURK:** My further question is maybe similar to the one that the member for Warnbro was going to raise; that is, is there also dialogue with business or industry on how to share information? The minister has spoken about the government's sentiment, or goal, but is the agency working in partnership with those sectors to achieve that? How is that occurring in practice?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I will let the Government Chief Information Officer explain how he is going about that.

**Mr G. Nunis:** Firstly, our open data policy became effective on 3 July 2015. Numerous government agencies have already been in the process for a reasonable period of time to make data available, but not many government agencies are in that space. There are over 800 datasets available in a variety of different formats in that portal that are accessible by government, businesses or any member of the community. We have every intention of extending the number of datasets; we think they should be into the thousands. However, we obviously need to deal with issues of privacy and with limiting the type of personal information that is going out before we make those available. We have not yet commenced the process of working with the business community to look at ways to use its data to help us. We would need to go through that process at the

appropriate time. However, there are a few partnership forums. One that was recently announced was the data linkage forum, headed by the Chief Scientist, Professor Fiona Stanley and me, and that will look at how we can make that a better environment. There are many technological changes in data linkages—some are becoming automated, rather than being manually driven—and we want it to be real-time capable as well.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I have a question that relates to the same heading but probably focuses on a different dot point. I am interested—in fact, I am interested in all of them—in whether, specifically beyond the publicly available data and the data that the agency is looking at making available more easily, the agency has engaged with some departments and their ridiculous systems. For instance, the police database that identifies a call-out cannot communicate with the database that records someone having been charged, so the police cannot tell whether the call-out was for a mentally ill person who was then charged with a mandatory sentencing charge as a consequence of the call-out. Those two databases do not talk to each other in the same department. Are they looking at using the office's expertise to help them?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The member has highlighted only one of the problems; there are more. That is obviously not a very good system to have. Hopefully, with Giles' expertise and that strategy, those things will be ironed out. It is still up to the specific department or the minister to deliver that. Giles might be able to explain that in a bit more detail. Perhaps Giles might even know something about that specific example.

**Mr G. Nunis:** We recently also released an interoperability policy, which sets a standard to allow for multiple systems to talk to each other under a standard format and arrangement. That was released only yesterday in accordance with the ICT strategy. It is now putting the government on a footing that provides that if we are going to start using our information better, we need to look at how to consolidate that information so that it produces rich content, bearing in mind that in some circumstances privacy is an issue. In some circumstances, it may not be appropriate that a police officer know things that police officers should not necessarily know at a particular point in time. That is not to say that they should not know about mental health issues, but there may be some circumstances in which people are concerned about their particular medical issues being made available to those who are not related. We need to deal with those types of real issues. However, if it is about the safety and wellbeing of police officers delivering the services, we need to give them as much cross-government information as we can that helps them to deliver their service better.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** It is kind of motivated by the patients.

Although the agency is developing the policy that enables or encourages that communication across databases, what expenditure, effort or resources will be required to achieve that? Is that going to be the parent department's responsibility? Is that how it works?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I will open it up. We have a small budget to be a policy deliverer, but the change will happen within the department and will be driven by the minister. They will report to me and I will be reporting to cabinet.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Is it hoped that the minister will drive that change?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Absolutely.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I was asking about those two databases five years ago, and we got the same answer in subsequent years that they just do not talk to each other.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I totally agree with the member. We need someone to drive this, and to drive it damn hard.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** You are the man!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The member does not have to worry; I am an outcome-focused person. If any department is a bit slow, I will be dealing directly with the minister. I am doing that already.

**Mr J. NORBERGER:** I refer the minister to the third dot point on page 439. I understand that as part of its funding allocation, the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer was required to deliver a state ICT policy by 1 July 2016. Can the minister update the house on the progress of this requirement?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I will be quick because there is not much time. The first task the Government Chief Information Officer had to deliver was a strategy within 12 months, and he has delivered it. I am happy to have this tabled if I am allowed to table it in estimates.

**The CHAIRMAN:** You cannot table it.

**Mr J. NORBERGER:** Just wave it!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I am pleased that it has been released two months ahead of schedule.

**Mr J. NORBERGER:** It is not in electronic form. That is not very tech savvy.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** It was well advanced in the first few months. There was a lot of consultation with industry on this.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** The Auditor General's report had nothing to do with it either.

[9.50 pm]

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** No, it did not either. It was just convenient; we had planned it some months ago. This is a very good report. This takes up the member's point about having to be driven; I highlight that we are not taking away the responsibility of individual ministers for how they run their operations. Information and communications technology is part of the glue and each department has to run its own, but we want them to talk to each other. I refer to some of the points already raised, such as interoperability between departments and between databases within departments. They are some of the obvious things in the strategy, but it is also a framework or a map to make sure that departments comply with some overall policy concepts across government.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** That was the strategy. The minister stated that the Government Chief Information Officer has developed several policies. Which policies have been developed?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** We have a list. One of the first projects from which I think we will get the biggest return in cost savings is the GovNext project.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I asked about policies, not projects.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I know; I am building up. GovNext relies on the cloud.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I know what GovNext is; it is all right.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** That policy is about moving away from having hard drives and hardware in all the different departments; probably 100 or more will move to the cloud. That is one policy. The disaster recovery is a policy right across government. I mentioned interoperability, which is the key to the whole thing. The online servicing policy, as the member knows, is that 75 per cent of stuff that can be done online should be done online by 2020. That is a key performance indicator, really. Another key thing is security. We want to ensure that departments have a proper security framework right across their database.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Excellent. Does the minister have implementation plans for those policies?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Yes, I do.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** That is the strategy.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The implementation plans are for each department. Except for the ones that we are driving, at the end of the day each minister is responsible for their own ICT and we have suggested guidelines and time frames that they might follow to move more services online or into the cloud et cetera.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Is the Government Chief Information Officer focused on delivering a finance system for independent public schools that delivers the needs of the schools and does not show carry-over cash as income, for example? Are there any assurances that the minister can give us for that topic?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The member would have to ask the Minister for Education.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I am asking whether the GCIO will deliver in this very important area of expertise.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The GCIO will assist governments and provide advice on how they might better deliver.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I will put that as his number one KPI.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** We will take that on notice.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** I refer to page 440 of the *Budget Statements* and the number of full-time equivalent positions in the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer. Is the 19 FTEs the extent of the workforce for the GCIO or is the government planning to recruit more people?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** We have a detailed HR plan and I will allow the Government Chief Information Officer to outline some of the HR plans for the future. Hopefully the member for Wanneroo will wake up.

**Mr G. Nunis:** We have 15.6 full-time equivalent positions in the office and as more projects come on board we will get those FTEs on a finite basis for the period of a particular project, but they are not there as permanent employees; they are there to come on as public servants under contractual arrangements and at the end of the project they will finish.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** How many permanent positions does the office have and what roles do they fill?

**Mr G. Nunis:** The public servant roles are my role, an executive officer and a publications officer. The policy positions are Marion's position, executive director of ICT policy and governance; two principal policy officers; and a senior policy officer. For the technological agenda we have the executive director of technology innovation, three program directors and a project officer. For the strategy section, which delivered that strategy, there is an executive director for strategy and delivery, and two directors.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I refer in the last couple of moments to the third dot point under "Services and Key Efficiency Indicators", which states —

identifying and advising on ICT innovation, which will support and enhance government services to meet business and community needs;

What is the relationship between the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer and the Technology and Industry Advisory Council, which until now had been the principal advisory body on information technology innovation to the government of Western Australia?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Technology and Industry Advisory Council is established under the Minister for Commerce and the Government Chief Information Officer is established under the Department of Finance, so they have different ministers, but we get on very well together.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Yes. What is the relationship?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** In terms of line or structure?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Given that TIAC has already produced reports and given advice on the issues that the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer is doing, how is government integrating TIAC's advice with the advice coming from the GCIO?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** TIAC was set up back in the 1980s by a very good minister.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** Mal Bryce.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** His mother taught me at Bunbury Senior High School; she was Mrs Bryce to me. TIAC was set up primarily to start Technology Park Bentley WA: it did a very good job. Also, an innovation building was set up there to support start-ups and incubation and technology clusters. TIAC is about promoting science and innovation. The Government Chief Information Officer is the glue that holds all the departments together with their ICT, such as computers and telecommunications, specifically for government departments and across government. TIAC is about supporting the small business industry and technology development, and Technology Park, throughout Western Australia to make WA as good as Silicon Valley.

**The CHAIRMAN:** We must keep the questions and answers short now.

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** TIAC referred to the minister the outcomes of its Innovation Focus Forum. What is the minister's response to the information that it provided to him?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The member is saying that the chairman of TIAC —

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** TIAC held the Innovation Focus Forum and the Minister for Commerce sent the Minister for Innovation the outcomes of that forum.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** When?

**Mr W.J. JOHNSTON:** I do not have the date in front of me.

**The CHAIRMAN:** Members, given the time, I think we need to draw this to a conclusion.

**The appropriation was recommended.**

*Committee adjourned at 10.00 pm*

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