



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

THIRTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT
THIRD SESSION
2000

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 15 June 2000

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mr Strickland) took the Chair at 9.00 am, and read prayers.

OLD-GROWTH TUART FOREST

Petition

Dr Edwards presented two petitions signed by 80 and 159 people respectively requesting that old-growth Tuart forest not be cleared.

[See petitions Nos 125 and 126.]

AUSTRALIND ELBOW SITE, REGIONAL PARK

Petition

Dr Edwards presented a petition signed by 1 178 people requesting the elbow site in Australind be included in a regional park.

[See petition No 127.]

GERALDTON ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY YAMATJI PATROL

Grievance

MRS ROBERTS (Midland) [9.04 am]: I wish to grieve to the Deputy Premier in his capacity as chair of Safer WA about the Geraldton Aboriginal community Yamatji patrol which came into being in October 1993 and which has a management committee. This patrol performs a vital task in Geraldton. Since its inception in 1993 it has been particularly effective in dealing with young people on the streets of Geraldton.

Several government members interjected.

Mrs ROBERTS: This patrol is a key crime prevention strategy. I am a little concerned that government members interject to try to stop me speaking, when I have only seven minutes in which to outline a case to the Deputy Premier. I am sure that members opposite would like the patrol to get the support it needs to continue the good work that it does. If that is the position of members opposite, I suggest they not interject or heckle me and let me get on with calling upon the Deputy Premier to ensure that this organisation receives the funds it requires.

The Yamatji patrol like many of these groups relies heavily on community support. Its street workers are all volunteers and they often work 90 or 100 hours a fortnight. Statistics on contacts the patrol has made and the work it is doing are contained in a yearly summary from the first year, which commenced in October 1993 and ended in June 1994, through to the year ending 30 June 1999. The patrol has dealt with intoxicated people, juveniles, disturbances, public drinking, and domestic matters. The patrol's total number of contacts in the year ending 30 June 1999 was over 16 000, which compares with the total number of contacts to 30 June 1994 of 3 354. The number of contacts increased markedly from 1994, and by the end of June 1995 was over 7 000. It approached 8 000 contacts a year by the end of 1996, was over 10 000 contacts by the end of 1997 and well over 11 000 contacts by the end of 1998. Last year, to the end of June 1999, the patrol had over 16 000 overall contacts. The patrol deals with intoxicated people and records how they are dealt with; whether they are turned over to a relative or friend, escorted home or handed over to the police, which happened rarely. For example, out of the 5 086 contacts with intoxicated people, 5 057 were taken home, 26 were taken to their communities and others were dealt with in other ways. In the course of last year, the patrol spoke to over 3, 000 juveniles, 2, 500 of whom were taken home and others were taken to other places. In terms of public drinking, the patrol spoke to a total of 836 people, 185 of whom were in parks and 651 on the streets. The patrol dealt with 21 domestic disturbances in homes and seven in public places. In terms of other disturbances, the patrol dealt with one person at his home and 130 in other places. The patrol conveyed 256 people to hospital and 406 from hospital. The patrol had 5 321 other contacts relating to disturbances.

Until now, for a very reasonable amount of money they have been performing an excellent service in Geraldton with a budget of about \$50 000 a year. However, resources are very stretched. In the beginning, the aims of the patrol were to stop the arrest rate and to help prevent antisocial behaviour and deaths in custody. Its aims now include ensuring no juveniles are kept in custody; linking to the yellow ribbon project, which is a suicide prevention project; mediation between families; advocacy; and liaison between various government departments.

The issue of funding is twofold. First, the patrol wants to increase its recurrent funding by \$20 000 a year to enable it to employ more staff. Its aim is to have 32 staff to accommodate four shifts a day with eight staff on each shift. The patrol's ultimate aim is to operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I am advised that it is able to operate only about four days a week.

When I was in Geraldton last week, the police confirmed that the patrol has a significant impact when it is operating. The patrol has made a submission to the Aboriginal Affairs Department for funding. It also requires funding for a building. At a recent meeting, \$80 000 was indicated as the cost of building premises for the patrol on the Larkin Street block alongside the sobering up shelter. At the last meeting, the architect said it would cost upwards of \$140 000. Work will not

start on the shelter for another three months, so there is a period of grace to get the funding together for that building. The project officer from AAD is preparing submissions to the Lotteries Commission for funding for the building alongside the shelter in Larkin Street.

The number of police the patrol frees up to do other work provides for clear cost benefits. I call on the Premier to do his best to ensure it receives the funding it requires.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Deputy Premier) [9.12 am]: I have been asked to respond to this because I co-chair with the Premier the cabinet subcommittee, Safer WA. I noted that the member for Midland has indicated broad support for the Aboriginal street patrol program, particularly the Yamatji patrol in the Geraldton region. I thank her for that support.

Like many of these patrols, when the Yamatji patrol first commenced, funds were made available and the people organising and managing the patrols were asked to very clearly show acquittal of the funds. Like so many of the community-based voluntary organisations, many of the patrols found a great deal of difficulty delivering to the State Government appropriate acquittals to ensure that the level of accountability was met with the dispensation of public funds. In those circumstances, the patrols threatened they would no longer exist and would have to go out of operation.

Some time ago that degree of difficulty was recognised and a change was made to the way in which funds were made available. They were subsequently made available every quarter and the people involved were given up to three months to demonstrate clearly their acquittals so that the accountability could be preserved. This has worked very well. As a result, the constant threat that the patrols would not receive any more money if accountability were not provided through acquittals has been removed.

There is some certainty for the patrols. I am very pleased to say the member is correct; the Yamatji patrol in Geraldton is funded through the Aboriginal Affairs Department to the tune of \$50 000 annually. That is part of an \$800 000 program. Last financial year, the program was allocated only \$500 000 with some top-up funding through Safer WA. The Northbridge patrol, for example, received top-up funding of approximately \$113 000 from Safer WA over three years.

Ms Warnock: It needs more.

Mr COWAN: The Government understands the pressing need for funds.

I noted the comments of the member for Midland in support of the Yamatji patrol's bid to have funds set aside for capital works to refurbish a building for the use of the patrol. Now that the Yamatji patrol has certainty of base funding of approximately \$50 000, there is no reason it cannot apply to Safer WA for funds to top up that base funding for some of the specific programs it may wish to implement.

The Safer WA committee reached the conclusion approximately 12 months ago that it was not the responsibility of the committee to provide that base funding, but that it should come through other resources, such as the Aboriginal Affairs Department. However, if the patrols wanted to mount specific projects in addition to their core business - which the member for Midland has outlined well -

Mrs Roberts: They can maintain their business only four days a week. They need to be able to extend it to seven days a week.

Ms Warnock: We have the same problem in Perth.

Mr COWAN: We are the victims of a very successful program. As the member for Geraldton said by interjection, these patrols have been taken seriously by the Government since 1993 when funds were made available. The funds have been increasing, but the demand for the services offered by the patrols has been increasing even faster. There is no question that they do a very good job, particularly in conjunction with counselling services that are also offered through the local area coordinator from the Aboriginal Affairs Department.

Mrs Roberts: The fuel bill is \$1 000 a month. So much of the funding is going on a practical need to keep the van on the road. If the patrol had more money, it would be able to put the van on the road for longer.

Mr COWAN: The Government is always sympathetic to the demands imposed on these patrols. We must remember that approximately 18 of these community patrols share the \$800 000 throughout Western Australia. I also suspect that, due to their support, some of the local government councils in the areas in which patrols operate also make a contribution.

The Government has increased funding and these bodies can make applications for specific projects to Safer WA. I recommend strongly that the Yamatji street patrol in Geraldton use that avenue to seek enhancement of its funds. It should do the same thing with the capital it requires for the building.

QUINNS ROCKS BEACH

Grievance

MR MacLEAN (Wanneroo) [9.18 am]: My grievance is to the Deputy Premier representing the Minister for Transport. In 1996, severe winter storms affected the whole of the Western Australian coastline, particularly the Quinns Rocks beach area. The dune system south of Quinns Rocks beach was almost totally destroyed only a few metres from the edge of the road.

At the north beach area of Quinns Rocks, a recreation reserve was destroyed and a barbecue of solid brick construction was

washed 300 metres out to sea. The boat ramp, which was one of only a few along that area of the coast, was completely destroyed. The car park came under severe threat and the surf life saving club was almost lost. The City of Wanneroo immediately committed itself to a sand renourishment scheme, which is an accepted policy of coastal regeneration. Unfortunately, this costs the City of Wanneroo some \$100 000 per annum. Since 1996 nearly \$500 000 has been spent on sand renourishment. Along with the Department of Transport, the City of Wanneroo hired some coastal engineers to advise the council on the best solutions to overcome the problems along Quinns beach. The engineers made two recommendations: First, sand renourishment; and secondly, a coastal wall. The coastal wall is said to cost over \$800 000; and continued sand renourishment will cost in excess of \$1m over the next few years.

The City of Wanneroo has contacted the Department of Transport on numerous occasions seeking assistance with the Quinns coastal protection works. These works are sorely needed in the area because if there is another severe storm, the next line that will come under threat is a roadway and then the houses; it is a serious problem. The Department of Transport indicated that its funds are fully allocated and that its recurrent funding budget is spent well in advance. It indicated that its current budget is already allocated to 2004. The problem facing the City of Wanneroo is that the Department of Transport has already entered into agreements with other local authorities to assist them with their sand renourishment schemes. The city feels it may have been left out because at the time, in 1996, the City of Wanneroo was a wealthy local authority. It has now been split and, although it cannot be said that it is not a wealthy authority, it has a lot of other things to spend its money on. The stand taken by the Department of Transport is perplexing, given that a considerable amount of time has lapsed between 1996 and now. One would have thought that the Department of Transport would have started to seek extra funding and would have allocated extra funding for coastal protection works.

It is not just the 1996 winter storms that cause me concern. The previous severe storms along the Western Australian coast occurred in 1993 and also caused considerable damage along the Quinns coastline. If another severe winter storm occurs in the next two to three years before the coastal wall has been built, the recurrence of severe damage will have a considerable financial impact on the council and will also cause considerable concerns to the immediate residents. Ocean Drive, which is just back from the second dune system, would be under threat. It is not far from Ocean Drive to the first line of coastal housing. If Ocean Drive were under threat, the coastal housing would become isolated, because Quinns is an old fishing community, and the road network is a sealed section of tracks that existed in the early 1950s and before. I want the Department of Transport to investigate some of the problems caused by the severe storms in 1996, and to consider providing financial assistance for projects such as the sea wall at Quinns where the financial impact on the local authority will be considerable. In my view, it is unfair that one local authority should have to commit more than \$1m over the next five years to protect the coastline, which is a regional area used by people other than just the residents of the City of Wanneroo.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Deputy Premier) [9.24 am]: I understand the difficulty confronting the member. There is no doubt that the same pressure has been applied in a number of other areas for which the Department of Transport has responsibility. The member will be well aware of the additional funds that have been made available to the Department of Transport during the time of this Government. Notwithstanding the fact that the funds made available to the Department of Transport through the budget have been increased by well over 50 per cent in the time the coalition has been in Government, it seems that most members regard that as not enough. There have been other debates about major transport requirements and public transport services to different parts of Perth that require considerable funding; members want to see them started. Coming back to the issue of coastal protection in the Quinns area, the member is correct; in 1996 some damage was caused. At that time, the Department of Transport contributed \$28 000 for renourishment of the area mentioned by the member for Wanneroo, which represented 75 per cent of the cost associated with the work.

The Department of Transport and the City of Wanneroo conducted an investigation and examined the erosion to find an engineering solution. That was carried out and a report by M P Rogers and Associates has been finalised. As the member for Wanneroo said, the report recommended that two things should occur: A sea wall should be constructed at the cost of about \$469 000; and there should be some initial sand renourishment which would cost well over \$500 000. Once that had been done, it was estimated that the annual cost of sand renourishment would be in excess of \$100 000 annually. As the member knows, the Department of Transport has committed the funds available for this type of work into the out years. It has not indicated to me that it has reassessed its priorities. Effectively, the member is asking that the Department of Transport reassess its priorities concerning the management of the coastal areas that come within its control and give the Quinns area a higher priority than it currently enjoys.

That matter will be taken back to the Department of Transport to see whether it is prepared to reassess the priority of this issue. The work will be done only after a rearrangement of priorities or if a greater burden is imposed on local government across Western Australia. At the moment, local government and the Department of Transport have a 75:25 ratio; in other words, the Department of Transport meets 75 per cent of the cost of any work done and the local government bodies meet 25 per cent of the cost. The Department of Transport makes no secret of the fact that it wants that cost sharing to be 50:50. If that occurs, some funds will be available. I have been given an assurance by the Minister for Transport that, if he succeeds in getting agreement from local government that it will share the cost of coastal work on a 50:50 basis rather than a 75:25 basis, money will be freed up, and he is prepared to redirect that money to the Quinns area. That is the only way this will happen.

The member for Wanneroo has been very vocal about public transport and the need for additional funds to bring forward the extension of the rail link to the areas he represents. Of course, that is very appropriate. However, money is a very precious resource in government. Rather than expecting the Department of Transport to win more funds from Treasury -

the member should talk to the Premier and Treasurer about that - the best option is for the department to win agreement from local government throughout Western Australia that the costs associated with coastal erosion will be met on a 50:50 basis. If that occurs, money will be freed up. As I said, the minister has indicated that he would be prepared, if he were successful in that approach, to ensure that any money freed up is allocated to Quinns.

BUNBURY BACK BEACH

Grievance

DR EDWARDS (Maylands) [9.32 am]: My grievance is to the Deputy Premier. It concerns the Bunbury Back Beach. It is interesting to note in today's program that I am apparently grieving about the Bunbury backbench.

The Opposition supports the plans to beautify the Bunbury Back Beach but opposes the construction of the three groynes added to that project late in the day. I will raise two issues this morning: First, the consultation associated with the project and, second, the lack of a formal environmental assessment. No doubt exists that action must be taken at this site. Aspects of the plans for the Bunbury Back Beach, particularly those that link the city directly to the beach so that visitors to Bunbury are aware of it, are a good thing. However, the Opposition is worried about the three groynes.

Consultation about this issue is a real concern in Bunbury. The community is angry that until February this year, when the Premier released the final plans, the groynes were not included. All the consultation we have been told occurred in the past did not include discussion about a plan including three groynes. It is interesting to note that even in December last year, the Department of Environmental Protection told the proponents they should undertake more consultation. The DEP wrote -

The DEP also notes that there has been little consultation with the wider public community, particularly local residents, through the development of this proposal.

It further advised that this is a highly visible project in an area in which communities feel a great sense of ownership; that is, their beaches. The DEP pointed out that the proponents should undertake a proper public consultation process. That has not occurred. I call on the Government to halt the groyne aspect of the project until that proper community consultation has occurred.

The project was referred to the Environmental Protection Authority and an informal assessment process was established. Therefore, none of the environmental conditions is legally binding. In September 1999, the DEP warned the South West Development Commission that any alteration to the scope of the project could be considered to be a new proposal and should be referred to the department for advice. The DEP made reference to the three low-profile groynes, but it went on to say that there were inherent difficulties in predicting the impact on the foreshore after the structure and surrounding area had settled. Even though the assessment was informal, the DEP was warning that the low-profile groynes would have an impact that was very hard to quantify. The department also referred to the visual amenity and again noted that the groynes would be low profile. A letter from the project consultants to the DEP in November 1999 pointed out that the groynes had been raised in height and width and thus could no longer be regarded as low profile. Indeed, the summary of environmental factors relevant to this project and groyne construction in the environmental management plan states that a potential impact is exacerbated beach erosion. Therefore, the proponents accepted that during the project, after referral to the Environmental Protection Authority, it had changed the nature of the groynes.

Obviously the DEP is not happy about this. In December last year, the department wrote to the engineering company pointing out that changes to the proposal should have been referred to it so that they could be included in the assessment. The proponents were warned early that if they made changes it may become a new proposal and that it would need to be referred back. It is clear that the proposal was changed and that it has not been referred back.

The community has written to the Minister for the Environment about this issue. She is having a bet both ways: She will not get the EPA to look at it again but she is getting the City of Bunbury to make comments. This is not good enough. No wonder the community is so concerned.

My final comment brings together the environmental concerns about the consultation process. Earlier this week, the Internet and an ABC radio news bulletin included a report headlined, "Bunbury beach project review favours groynes". The reports stated that a review commissioned by the Government favoured the groynes. After closer examination, it appears it was not a review; it was more information from the people who originally looked at the project and stated that the groynes were the best option. The community is angry that consultation has been inappropriate, that the project was not referred to the EPA when it was changed, that the groynes that are now an integral part of the project were not in initial documents provided in the consultation process, and that the review reportedly carried out by the Government was not a review but more information that until yesterday had not been provided to the community.

The Opposition supports the land-based components of this project - we should beautify Back Beach; we should be promoting this as a jewel in the crown of Bunbury. However, it is blackmail to tell the community that this must all be thrown together. The Government should go back to the drawing board, independently reassess the nature of groynes, get the experts to tell us what they really intend to do and put that part of the project on hold until we know it is the best thing for Bunbury.

MR COWAN (Merredin - Deputy Premier) [9.40 am]: In 1997, immediately after the last election, I was approached by a group of people from the Bunbury region, including the member for Bunbury and representatives from the South West Development Commission and the Bunbury City Council, who told me that over the past 10 to 15 years, committees within

the Bunbury City Council, and community-based committees such as the Bunbury Coast Care Committee, had been established to do something about the preservation or enhancement of the Bunbury Back Beach area. As the member for Maylands said, that area is recognised as being one of the jewels in the crown of the Bunbury region, and those committees wanted a clear commitment from government that the coast would be enhanced and the adjacent land would be better utilised for the people of the Bunbury region.

I decided, in conjunction with the Minister for Lands, that it would be appropriate to establish a committee - another committee, I know - chaired by the member for Bunbury to make a recommendation upon which we could act in dealing with this issue, which has been hanging around, with everyone talking and no-one doing anything, for more than 15 years. That committee examined some of the issues that were contained in the work that had already been done, and was a very public process. At the conclusion of that process it made a recommendation that we should undertake a detailed study of the marine environment, because prior to that time no in-depth marine engineering investigation had been undertaken on which to base any recommendations to government to spend taxpayers' dollars in improving this area.

The Bunbury Coast Care Committee recommended that there should be a 100-metre groyne on basaltic point, which is directly north of the Back Beach. Therefore, to have a member of that committee now advocate that no work should be done in that area indicates the hypocrisy of that person's claim. The Government spent about \$450 000 on a study to obtain engineering and marine information on sand drift and a range of other issues that are important in dealing with this matter. That study made a recommendation that there should be three groynes: One at basaltic point; one directly north of the restaurant and other facilities at the Back Beach, which are some 400 metres from the point; and a further groyne about 800 metres south of that area. Those groynes are expected to be as unobtrusive as possible, but it is very difficult to make a groyne unobtrusive if it to do its job properly.

The process included a requirement that environmental approval be given; and the government agencies set about that task and environmental approval was given. There was some concern, as the member for Maylands has said, about whether the height of the groynes had been clearly enunciated at the time the DEP undertook the environmental assessment. I will read a letter that may set the member for Maylands' mind at rest. The letter is dated 14 June 2000 and is addressed to Mr Don Punch, Chief Executive Officer, South West Development Commission. The letter is headed, "Bunbury Coastal Enhancement Project", and states -

Thank you for your letter of 9 June 2000 about the Bunbury Coastal Enhancement Project and for attending the meeting at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on 31 May 2000 to discuss the final plans for the project.

The DEP is satisfied that the plans shown at that meeting are the same as those discussed with the consultants GHD in October 1999. As you are aware, the DEP informal advice was based on different plans and concern was expressed, at that time, that the changes had not been submitted to the EPA for consideration.

I think that is the issue the member is raising. The letter continues -

Nevertheless, the DEP considered the increased height of the groynes to be a relatively insignificant departure to the original plans and further assessment was not required.

It is agreed that the final plans have been assessed by the DEP and further advice will not be issued.

That letter indicates clearly that the Department of Environmental Protection is satisfied with the environmental aspects of this proposal. On that basis, and because, in my view, there has been prolonged and adequate public consultation, I see no reason that we should not proceed with this project.

The SPEAKER: Grievances noted.

BILLS - ASSENT

Message from the Administrator received and read notifying assent to the following Bills -

1. Consumer Credit (Western Australia) Amendment Bill 1999.
2. Plant Pests and Diseases (Eradication Funds) Amendment Bill 2000.
3. First Home Owner Grant Bill 2000.

PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES COMMITTEE

Extension of Time

On motion by Mr Barnett (Leader of the House), resolved -

That the date for the Procedure and Privileges Committee to report on the method of operation and standing orders for portfolio-based standing committees be extended to Thursday, 22 June 2000.

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DELEGATED LEGISLATION

Report - Liquor Licensing Amendment Regulations (No 3) 1999

MR WIESE (Wagin) [9.47 am]: I present for tabling the report of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation in relation to the Liquor Licensing Amendment Regulations (No 3) 1999. I commend the report to members. The Liquor

Licensing Amendment Regulations were published in the *Government Gazette* on 21 December 1999 and were tabled in the Parliament on 14 March this year. The effect of the regulations was to increase the fees and charges relative to some liquor licences and permits as part of a strategy to achieve full cost recovery.

I need to indicate to the House that the committee was concerned that some very substantial increases in fees were contained in these regulations; in particular, the fees for occasional licences increased between 66 per cent and 13 233 per cent. They were very substantial increases. The committee was concerned about the extent of the fee increases and how they may impact upon groups which seek and use occasional licences to provide facilities at the functions those organisations run in order to raise funds. The committee was concerned that the explanatory memorandum provided by the Office of Racing, Gaming and Liquor did not provide details justifying the substantial fee increases and, as a result, the committee wrote to the executive director of the Office of Racing, Gaming and Liquor expressing its concerns. Subsequently, a hearing was held which the executive director, Mr Barry Sargeant, attended. Following that hearing the committee gave notice of a motion to disallow, to provide the committee with time to seek further evidence from the executive director and to look more closely at the matters involved.

The committee had three concerns: First, the uncertainty which surrounded the wording of part of the regulations that dealt with the anticipated number of persons attending. The anticipated number of persons attending a function set the level of fee to be charged. Secondly, the committee was also concerned about whether the fee increases for the occasional licences were justified on the basis of cost recovery. Thirdly, the committee was concerned that the fee increases could have amounted to a form of taxation, which was not authorised by the Liquor Licensing Act. In relation to the first of those concerns, the anticipated number of persons attending, the regulation was worded along the following lines -

in calculating the fee for application for an occasional licence for an occasion or an event lasting more than one day, the anticipated number of persons attending is the sum of the number of persons expected to attend on each day, calculated using the information provided in the application form.

Some members of the committee had already been told of the experiences of organisations affected by this regulation, and I was one of those members. I had a proposition put before me about the Wagin Woolarama, an annual event which is attended by approximately 30 000 people over a two-day period. Based on that figure - that is the figure around which the regulation is worded - the fee for the Woolarama would have increased from \$15 an application, which had been paid previously, up to \$2 000. The organisers of the Woolarama were quite concerned. Subsequent discussions I held indicated that the interpretation of the executive director of the Office of Racing, Gaming and Liquor was that the fee would be based on the number of people attending the licensed section of a particular function. In the case of an event such as the Wagin Woolarama, that is obviously a very different figure from the number of people that go through the gates. As a result, it was deemed that the number of people who would attend the licensed section of the Woolarama would be somewhat less than 1 000, and hence the fee set was \$115. That is the fee applicable to an event which between 501 and 1 000 people attend. That is a very different fee from the potential \$2 000 fee which had been indicated earlier.

The report gives some detail of the basis on which the department was interpreting the legislation. I will quote a section of Mr Sargeant's interpretation -

If a room has a capacity of 30 people, even on a rolling basis we will base it on 30 people in that area. If a room has a capacity of 100 but only 50 people are expected to arrive, we would base it on 50 people.

That is the way the department was interpreting the regulation. The committee was quite happy with that interpretation, but indicated that we believed there was still scope for misinterpreting the regulation as it is currently worded. In his evidence, the executive director indicated that the department would be willing to make an amendment to that principal regulation.

The other two concerns of the committee are dealt with at some length in the report, and I certainly will not go into great detail on them. With regard to the justification for the increase in fees, the department was reassessing its whole fee structure because of a requirement by Treasury set out in a letter to the executive director. A copy of the letter is attached to this report. The letter indicates that Treasury would consider an application for further funding from consolidated revenue, provided the department conducted a review of its fees with a view to raising the level of cost recovery. That is the reason the fee levels were changed in the first place. It was identified that the cost to the department of running the liquor licensing division was approximately \$2.2m; the revenue collected from fees was in the vicinity of \$1m; and there was a shortfall of about \$1.2m. Treasury believed that needed to be adjusted and that the department needed to raise its fees to recover more money.

The report indicates the basis on which the department set its new fee structure and the justification for those new fees. As a result of the committee's consideration of the issues, it came to the conclusion that the Office of Racing, Gaming and Liquor was not using the fee increases to raise more revenue than it cost it to run the licensing service, and hence the fees were justified and did not amount to a form of tax.

The report also deals with the results of section 45A changes to the Interpretation Act which were made in this Parliament in 1997. The report indicates that those changes leave a situation open whereby there is potential for departments to use fees to raise money in a way which could go close to, or be interpreted as, raising fees and charges which would otherwise be characterised as taxes at common law. The committee warns the House of the dangers which arise from that change to the Interpretation Act, and the fine line that is sometimes walked in that area.

In conclusion, the committee acknowledged that the previous \$15 fee could not be expected to cover the costs of the Office of Racing, Gaming and Liquor. The committee was satisfied that the fee increases were justified and did not amount to a tax. As a result of the discussions the committee held with the Executive Director of the Office of Racing, Gaming and Liquor, changes were agreed to be made. The Minister for Racing and Gaming has indicated in a letter, which is included as an addendum to the report, that an amendment to the principal regulations will be drafted to extend the benefit of that lower occasional licence fee of \$25 from 100 to 250 persons attending a licensed area. The committee was satisfied that the amendment would cover the vast majority of occasional liquor licence applications which would result in a fee increase of only \$10 to applicants.

The minister further agreed in his letter to amend the expression "anticipated number of persons attending" in the principal regulations to clarify that it applies to the number of persons who attend the licensed area.

The committee is satisfied with the results of its work on this issue. It appreciated the positive response from the Executive Director of the Office of Racing, Gaming and Liquor, and the Minister for Racing and Gaming, and I commend the report to the House.

[See paper No 970.]

TREASURER'S ADVANCE AUTHORISATION BILL 2000

Second Reading

Resumed from 14 June.

MR KOBELKE (Nollamara) [10.02 am]: In my previous remarks on the Bill I noted that the Government's general figures of the operating surplus and the cash bottom line had changed drastically between the mid-term report in February and the budget in May. It is indicative of the underlying problems in the budget when the Government then turns to the Treasurer's Advance authorisation to plug the holes. The Government is using the moneys available under this Bill in a way that is outside the requirements of the Bill. I shall refer now to a couple of examples of particular agencies to highlight how that works and when it becomes necessary to draw on funds from this Bill to plug these holes.

The first example is Education. There have been budget overruns in Education year after year and one factor contributing to those overruns is the Government's requiring an efficiency dividend. This dividend is simply an amount of money that is plucked out of the air which the Government says will come from savings in Education and other agencies. However, there is no supporting evidence to show how those savings will be made. The Government then reduces the amount of money the department requires to produce the outputs in its budget and, of course, the department does not deliver. Some agencies may be able to stretch their dollars to make them go further and to create some savings; however, it is generally impossible and it was impossible in Education. Therefore, at the end of the year, when there is not enough money in the Education budget, the Government digs into the Treasurer's Advance authorisation. That is a misuse of the Treasurer's Advance authorisation as it was intended that it be used only for unforeseen circumstances. The circumstances I am referring to were clear when the budget was brought down. There is no way that Education could deliver that efficiency dividend and the Government knew it would have to take money from the Treasurer's Advance authorisation, contrary to the intended use of those funds.

Another example of misuse of the Treasurer's Advance authorisation is when no allowance is made for salary increases. In past budgets a global amount has been put aside in Treasury's budget so that when the Education Department, the Health Department or other departments must meet salary increases, they can ask Treasury to cover the extra money required. These increases are more "line ball" as some salary increases are unforeseeable and, therefore, it is right and proper that the Treasurer's Advance authorisation be used. However, when the Government is negotiating with unions and employees for a salary increase, and the budget papers note that wages are generally expected to increase by a certain percentage, yet no allowance is made for those increases in the budget but, rather, the Government decides it will rely on the Treasurer's Advance authorisation, I again suggest to the House that that is an abuse of the allocation under this Bill as the increase is not unforeseen. The Government has already stated in the budget papers that it expects salaries to increase by a certain percentage, yet it makes no allowance to cover that increase in the budgets of individual agencies or by way of a global allowance in Treasury. The Government then has to draw on the Treasurer's Advance authorisation. In the example I used, the Education Department overruns its budget and the Treasurer's Advance authorisation must be called on to meet the funds required in a given year. That is not in keeping with the purpose of this Bill now before the House.

Another example is Health, again a very large area of expenditure in the Government's budget. The Government has simply not provided enough funds for Health budgets going back to 1993-94. Year after year the budgets have been topped up during financial years to provide extra money, which come from the Treasurer's Advance authorisation in most cases. The Government plans its budget to do that, which is improper and not in keeping with the requirements of the Treasurer's Advance authorisation. The Government has set up a recurrent hole in its Health funding so that in a given year the budget runs over, not because of one-off issues which could rightly be covered by this Bill, but because the whole cost of the system is much higher than the Government budgets for. However, in the following year's budget the Government makes only an incremental increase to the previous year's figure and does not take account of the actual amount expended in that previous year. The Health budget then carries into the new year a debt which belongs to the previous year's budget. Therefore, a recurrent hole is created in the new year's Health budget to pay for the overrun from the previous year. That goes on year after year. The Government is not budgeting properly and is relying year after year on top-up funding. The Treasurer's Advance authorisation is one way of providing that funding.

The Government has abolished the efficiency dividend, which was a smoke and mirrors trick. There were no real savings across government and it dispensed with that dividend. However, it has now put another little trick in the budget which will again require the Treasurer's Advance authorisation to be used in an improper way; that is, goods and services tax savings. The Government has said there will be many savings to agencies from the GST and they will therefore not require the funding that on the surface it appears they will need to cover their outcomes. This is a falsehood and will prove to be false in two ways: First, page 208 of the *Budget Statements* lists these GST savings across government departments as \$41.7m and states that this will accrue largely from the abolition of wholesale sales tax and from lower fuel prices. If those savings do not flow through, or flow through only in part, again the budget will be in deficit and the deficiency must be covered by the Treasurer's Advance authorisation. There is no way in which agencies will save \$41.7m. They might save some of that amount but they will certainly not save \$41.7m. Again, they will need to draw on the Treasurer's Advance authorisation to plug that hole.

The second issue is that the Government has included the expected cost and saving of the goods and services tax in the 2000-01 budget of nearly every agency. As an example, the total allocation in the WorkSafe Western Australia budget has decreased. The amount of retained revenue is deducted from the total output cost to show the required amount of funding for GST payments. The Government has included the extra cost for the GST in the recurrent funding, and then subtracted the GST saving. I do not see any problem with that; however, that accounting measure hides the fact that the agency's budget has been reduced. People tend to look at the top line of the budget, which is the total cost of outputs. That has been artificially inflated by the accounting required for the GST. Some agencies may have built the extra GST cost into their budget. In that case, there will not be a funding hole. However, a number of the agencies I have looked at, such as WorkSafe, have not taken proper account of the GST. The total allocation for WorkSafe - the amount required to fund outputs - is \$13m in 1999-2000 and \$12.87m for 2000-01. The appropriation is even lower once the GST cost, which is just over \$300 000, is subtracted. This method of accounting for the budget of WorkSafe and the other agencies I have looked at means further budgetary holes are likely to be created. Different agencies use slightly different presentation methods. Some agencies may have built in the extra cost; I cannot tell from the figures in the *Budget Statements*. The size of the problem is quite large. When the appropriations for about one-third of the agencies are added up and a proportional measure is used, the GST cost is in the order of \$200m. If that \$200m is simply whittled away by this accounting method, a large hole will be left that will have to be met by the Treasurer's Advance authorisation. I am concerned that the Treasurer's Advance authorisation will be improperly drawn on to cover the ruse in the 2000-01 budget of including GST savings but overstating the real saving and using an accounting method that shows an additional \$200m saving. I have no problem with how the cost and savings figures for the GST are set out, except that the total amount required to meet the new cost of outputs has not been factored in. This method hides a real cut in the budgets of a range of agencies. I cannot tell whether it is a majority of agencies, because so many other factors impinge on the total cost of outlays.

In conclusion, clause 5 of the Bill states that payments of an extraordinary or unforeseen nature are to be made. There is clear evidence that the way the budget has been framed means the Government will improperly rely on the Treasurer's Advance authorisation to plug a number of holes that are not unforeseen, but contrived. Those figures have been deliberately included in the budget to cover the Government's problems and the holes that have been created in the budgets of agencies. During the next financial year, the Treasurer will need to draw on the advance authorisation to cover some of those holes. That is an improper use of the funds we are allocating under this Bill.

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [10.14 am]: I thank members on both sides of the House for their comments. It was a good, quality debate that addressed the main substance of the Treasurer's Advance authorisation Bill; that is, the financial aspect of the budget. I thank members for their contributions.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time, proceeded through remaining stages without debate, and transmitted to the Council.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No. 1) 2000

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No. 2) 2000

Estimates Committees A and B Report and Minutes - Presentation and Adoption

MR BLOFFWITCH (Geraldton) [10.15 am]: I present the reports and minutes of Estimates Committees A and B, which recommend the appropriations and estimates and agree to the Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No. 1) 2000 and the Appropriation (Consolidated Fund) Bill (No. 2) 2000 and move -

That the report of Estimates Committee A be adopted.

I sat through a considerable number of the estimates committee hearings. They worked a lot better this year, although I am still critical of the way the *Budget Statements* are set out. It is very hard for me, as a chairman, to come in, take over from someone and find the relevant sections. The division numbers vary from volume 1 to volume 2, then from volume 2 back to volume 1. That made it very difficult. I fail to see why the divisions cannot be in alphabetical order so that they simply follow through.

I am still disappointed with the estimates committee process for looking at Homeswest and other incorporated agencies. Under Corporations Law, the directors approve the budget of a corporation, and the budgetary and financial information is presented to the shareholders at the annual general meeting. As representatives of Government, we represent the shareholders. Why can we not inquire into and comment on these matters? Treasury has taken the very narrow view that

now that these agencies are covered by Corporations Law, they are excluded from the scrutiny of the Parliament. Something needs to be done about that. Directors of those corporations need to appear before the Estimates Committee. I can understand a bit of reluctance with corporations like AlintaGas, in which confidentiality is often a clause of the contract. However, all the bureaucrats need to say is that a document is confidential and cannot be released. General financial information should be released. It is ridiculous that although I can inquire into the budgets of the smaller housing trusts, I cannot look at the major budget of Homeswest. It seems ludicrous. I am in this place to represent my electorate and something needs to be done very quickly. I want the format of the *Budget Statements* to be easier to follow and for the Estimates Committee to be able to look at every agency totally funded by the Government. I think that is a reasonable request, and I hope the Leader of the House will look at it.

[See papers Nos 971A and B.]

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [10.19 am]: As members will be aware, part 16 of the estimates committee sessional order provides for debate on the motion that the reports of the Estimates Committees be adopted. That debate is limited to one hour and, accordingly, my comments will be brief. I remind all members that following this, we will proceed to the third reading stage which allows members a 15-minute general debate on matters arising out of the budget.

I thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker, and the respective chairmen of the estimates committee process. It is a hard week's work in swapping from topic to topic, and long hours are involved. I also thank members on both sides of the House for their participation. My observation was in line with yours, Mr Deputy Speaker, that the committees were well conducted and that people focused on substantive issues and kept to the topic. That was my experience within my portfolio of Education and in the resources and mining area.

During the course of the Estimates Committee, a large amount of supplementary information was sought by members, and ministers have made commitments to provide that. The information is often very detailed and a considerable amount of effort within government departments and agencies is required to supply it. I am advised that all agencies have submitted all that information, and I thank the officers concerned. They have worked extremely hard and diligently to provide it so quickly, and they deserve some recognition for that.

As foreshadowed in your comments, Mr Deputy Speaker, some changes will be debated in this Parliament to the operations of the Estimates Committees. It comes from several sources. We have already decided that we will establish three portfolio-based committees, and the suggestion has been made that perhaps those portfolio-based committees should also oversee the estimates process in some way. The Public Accounts Committee reported on 25 May and made a number of suggestions about the estimates committee process. It suggested that the portfolio-based standing committees have responsibility for the conduct of estimate committee hearings. It again raised the issue of off-budget agencies, such as AlintaGas and Western Power - a point that you have just made, Mr Deputy Speaker. I have some sympathy with that but we must be careful. The types of procedures that would be applied to government trading enterprises would need to be different. I do not think it is reasonable to challenge and inquire about people's commercial trading activities, but policy issues may be involved. An estimates committee process or something similar which looked at policy matters - for example, in electricity, water or other areas - is quite appropriate. They are significant areas of activity, but it must be treated as a policy matter rather than a financial one.

Suggestions were also made about questions to ministers in advance of estimates hearings. That can be helpful if they are clear-cut. However, I have a general concern about this Parliament, and in particular the upper House, in that some of the spontaneous procedures of the House - that is, the ability for members to ask questions - are almost starting to drift away as a thing of the past. Members are now falling into the practice of giving prior notice of a question without notice. If detailed information is required, that is appropriate. However, one of the functions of a Parliament is to be spontaneous and allow members to ask questions.

Mr McGowan: In the upper House that seems to be the only way it operates.

Mr BARNETT: I know, and I think that questions without notice in the upper House seem to be effectively questions with notice. People are demanding all sorts of detailed information in their questions without notice which should be put on notice and asked of the respective minister. I am getting off the track, but members cannot reasonably expect detailed answers of a factual nature during question time unless prior notice is given. I would hate to see this Parliament fall into a practice in which everything has prior notice. That is an important test of accountability and ministerial performance.

Mr McGowan: Whenever I watch the proceedings in the upper House, which is not very often, and members ask spontaneous questions, it seems that the ministers just say that they were not given prior notice and that the question should be put on notice. It seems to be a practice that ministers have forced on members. If they complain about it, the whole nature of the place shuts them down. I cannot cast aspersions on the President, but that is the nature of the place.

Mr BARNETT: As the member for Rockingham knows, it is not for us to reflect or comment on how the upper House may conduct itself. I make the general observation that question time should be what it is - asking questions essentially without notice on topical or current issues rather than delving into detail. The format for that exists in questions on notice.

The proposed changes to allow the tabling of documents makes sense. The suggestion has also been made that ministers in the Legislative Council should appear before Legislative Assembly Estimates Committees. I have suggested previously that we have a joint Estimates Committee. I know there are objections to that on the grounds that this House has primary

financial responsibility and that it would confuse the role. I concede that point, but to some extent it is a bit awkward and sometimes unproductive to have acting ministers dealing with portfolios in respective Estimates Committees. That is something the whole Parliament needs to look at. It would be much simpler, but perhaps take longer, if we had one estimates process which included trading enterprises, rather than this duplicative role. Perhaps that reflects more on whether we should have two Houses of Parliament.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I warn the minister that he is not to reflect on the other House.

Mr BARNETT: I have always said that I would be very happy to abolish this House as long as we ended up with one.

Again, there is a report of the Public Accounts Committee. I am also conscious that the Procedure and Privileges Committee is to report on estimates hearings. We will have the benefit of some considered opinion from both those committees. During the course of this year we will need to make some decisions about the conduct of Estimates Committees in the future. With the establishment of portfolio-based committees, we will see another progressive move in the operations of this Parliament. Again, I thank members.

MR MCGOWAN (Rockingham) [10.26 am]: I have a different view from that espoused by the Leader of the House about the effectiveness of the Estimates Committees and how they operate. A number of factors come into play in relation to that. In my time in the Parliament - this was my fourth budget debate - the estimates committee process, during which members can examine and ask questions of ministers and senior public servants to garner information on portfolio areas of interest, has been a very good process. We should continue with that and expand it in a lot of ways, because it is very difficult for those in opposition to get to the bottom of things and to question ministers in a way that does not allow them or their departments to escape scrutiny. I note that in the ordinary question on notice process and even during questions without notice, ministers use certain mechanisms to avoid answering detailed questions and to avoid giving an exact answer to a question. However, in an Estimates Committee, in which members can ask and expand on the questions that were asked, they can find out some information and delve into issues of the day. Unfortunately, the hearings for a lot of portfolios - my portfolio areas include tourism and sport - went for only an hour. In that hour-long period members had very little opportunity to examine any issues of substance; whereas other portfolios such as Health and Education went for four or five hours. That was a very good way of teasing out information. With a state budget of more than \$8b, it is very important in terms of public accountability that we get this information from the Government.

First, I will say what I thought was good about the estimates process. It depends on personality as to how it works. I asked some questions of the Minister for Local Government. He was very helpful; he answered the questions I asked and was very forthcoming with supplementary information. His departmental officers were also very good.

Mr Omodei: I am a very good minister.

Mr MCGOWAN: The minister was very good; I cannot complain. He took the process seriously and when I asked a question, he answered it and he provided me with supplementary information in good time. That was excellent. I asked some questions of the Premier when he was representing the Minister for Tourism. He was as forthcoming as possible, but not as forthcoming as the Minister for Local Government. Principally because it was not the Premier's portfolio area, he was not as forthcoming as the Minister for Tourism might have been. The Premier was good at answering questions and directing supplementary information and so forth.

One of the other two committees in which I was involved had the Minister for Fair Trading, Lands and Parliamentary and Electoral Affairs before it. The minister appeared before the committee at 3.00 pm. Naturally, because the minister has been involved in some considerable political issues of late relating to his Fair Trading portfolio and the finance brokers affair, the room had in it a number of journalists who were waiting to listen to what he would answer to questions relating to that portfolio. The portfolio that came up before the Fair Trading portfolio was Lands, which does not normally arouse huge interest among members or the general public of Western Australia. Although digital mapping systems and all the minutia relating to lands are very important subjects and should arouse some interest, they do not normally arouse that sort of interest. A number of senior journalists were present, two of whom were on a deadline. They were Tom Baddeley from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, and Matt Price from *The Australian*. The journalists sat while government committee members spent two and a half hours questioning the minister on such minutia as whether kangaroos on the golf course in Kalgoorlie were a problem. At least, that was the way the minister was answering the questions. The questions were obviously part of a time-wasting exercise to push the committee's deliberations on the Lands portfolio past the deadlines of those media outlets so that the portfolio of Fair Trading, in which everyone was interested, could not be debated.

That complete misuse of the Estimates Committees, which sit only once a year, is an undermining of the role of Parliament. It was a shameful exercise in how a committee could be misused by a minister. The minister had questions on mapping systems around the State typed out, ready for government members to ask. The Opposition asked a couple of questions on that portfolio, but normally the Lands portfolio does not take long. As I say, it took us two and a half hours to get on to Fair Trading. Therefore, the whole Fair Trading issue was pushed beyond the press deadline, so the minister succeeded in what he was trying to do. There was massive time wasting.

A number of chairpersons in charge of the committees, without mentioning any names, exhibited great bias in the way they selected members to ask questions. I was involved in committees in which members had an hour to ask questions. Government members either had their questions typed for them by the minister or they frantically went through the budget papers looking for some stupid question to ask on an issue at which they had never looked before and which was of no

possible concern to them or their electorate. I sat on the Sport and Recreation committee hearing in this Chamber in which the chairperson went from one government member to the next before he got to an opposition committee member. As the opposition spokesperson on Sport, one would think that I would get the first question, as happens with question time, but the chairperson went from one government member to another. Therefore, the committee did not get an opposition question on the Sport portfolio until 35 minutes into the proceedings. I should not have wasted my time because the system of parliamentary secretaries threw up the member for Dawesville as the relevant parliamentary secretary. When I asked the question, I got a lecture on his career at Wimbledon, which I think amounted to one game, and how singlehandedly he set up the Peel Thunder Football Club.

Mr Barnett: You had to hear it rally by rally and kick by kick.

Mr McGOWAN: The Leader of the House has obviously experienced it before. It is an undermining of the parliamentary process because for the member for Dawesville to sit where the Premier normally does, surrounded by advisers, all of whom I suspect must know something about Sport and Recreation policy, and explain to me his role in the revitalisation of the Swan District Football Club in 1962, although he made me angry and simply frustrated me. If he is the parliamentary secretary when we come back next year, which I pray he will not be, I will not bother attending the committee because it was a complete and utter waste of time for somebody to spend the whole time of the committee hearing stupid questions from government backbenchers who do not care about the answers. They are the B team who come in here with "never to be promoted" marked on their files. They asked the most ridiculous questions of the parliamentary secretary. They asked him to wax lyrical about how he hits a backhand. I got to ask a question and he waxed lyrical about how he hits a forehand. It is a galling experience which undermines the whole parliamentary process. I went through it last year. I thought he might have improved, but I believe he is getting worse with age.

Mr Barnett: Discriminating against age!

Mr McGOWAN: It is amusing to see the mock outrage by the Leader of the House.

Those are my criticisms of the process. In theory, the process is good; in practice with various people, such as the member for Alfred Cove as the Minister for Fair Trading, there was a deliberate misuse of the process to hide shortcomings. In the case of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Sport and Recreation, I believe that he knows no better. He believes that everyone is interested in his sporting career, which obviously no-one is, because whenever he raises it in the Parliament I look at the government benches and see a lot of rolling of eyes and smiles on people's faces. There are two ways of misusing the estimates committee process and they both happened. The chairperson has a duty to ensure that the process is not undermined. The chairpersons who chair the Estimates Committee must be properly trained to deal with those situations.

I want to raise a couple of issues that have come out of those committees. The process was very effective in the Tourism portfolio, which is the portfolio I will concentrate on. It teased out information by way of supplementary information. The issue I want to deal with is the Government's much-vaunted Elle tourism campaign and the facts, as opposed to the rhetoric, which came out of the estimates committee process. Western Australia spends the least of any State on its tourism commission and advertising. However, the Government says that it has the Elle campaign which is so much better than anything else any other State has done. Press release after press release come from the Minister for Tourism or the Western Australian Tourism Commission in which it is said what a great job the Elle campaign has done. The reality, as opposed to the rhetoric, is quite different. The reality came out through the estimates committee process. The member for Bassendean asked the Premier whether he could provide some supplementary information on the changes in tourism from overseas during the period in which the Elle campaign has been operating; that is, the change in percentages and the profile of where people have come from and so forth. I asked where the advertisements were conducted in overseas markets.

Despite the rhetoric, the campaign was run overseas only in Singapore, Indonesia and the United Kingdom. Figures are available which indicate increases in tourism numbers from those markets from 1997 to last year. The visitor numbers from the United Kingdom to Western Australia increased by 23 per cent during that period. However, the figures for other States, which did not have the Elle campaign, indicate the following increases in tourism numbers from the UK: New South Wales, 31 per cent; Victoria, 36 per cent; Queensland, 38 per cent; and South Australia, 30 per cent. Tourism visits from the United Kingdom increased the least in Western Australia when compared to all other States, and by a long way. The campaign was run in Singapore, from which our increase in tourism numbers was seven per cent. Our tourist numbers from Indonesia declined by 41 per cent for obvious reasons.

Nevertheless, the visitor numbers from markets in which we did not advertise the Elle campaign, for instance, Germany and the United States, increased by 45 and 37 per cent respectively. Japan is in recession, yet the increase in tourist numbers from that market was 10 per cent. Some of the markets in which Western Australia did not run the Elle campaign increased far more than did the markets in which the campaign was run. Also, the States without that campaign had greater increases in tourism numbers from various sources than did Western Australia - the increase was double ours in some cases. Despite the rhetoric of that campaign, our improvement in attracting tourists was the least of all States. We attracted more visitors from Germany and the United States of America despite not running the Elle campaign there. I do not know where people get off vaunting this campaign. The cold, hard fact is that it has been nowhere near as good as has been claimed.

Other information which came to hand indicates the programs during which the television advertisements were run in the United Kingdom. Over 30 per cent of the ads were run on television after 10 o'clock at night, and some were run during the middle of the day, which has the lowest audience. The programs on which the advertisements were run in the United Kingdom were *No Balls Allowed*, an undoubtedly spectacular program called *Show Me*, one called *Can't Pay, Won't Pay*,

The Waltons and after midnight during a show called *Sex and Shopping*. The advertisements were run during a middle-of-the-day programs called *It's a Knockout*; if it is similar to the Australian television program of that name, it will not have high ratings. The Elle campaign was run in the middle of the night during a program for insomniacs and those who have nothing better to do called *More Real Monty*. It was run during the early morning with programs such as *The Bold and the Beautiful*, and at night during *Love Street*. It was run during the big programs called *Love Street*, *No Balls Allowed*, and *Sex and Shopping!* I know which market the Government is aiming at with this campaign!

Mr Barnett: Those people need some fresh air and a holiday!

Mr Cunningham: This is a total balls up!

Mr McGOWAN: Indeed. This information was teased out in the estimates committee process. The rhetoric is different from the reality with the Elle campaign. The advertisements were run during programs which no-one except the desperate and depraved watches; the Leader of the House wants to bring these people to the State. However, we have the lowest tourism number increases of all the States in all the markets in which the campaign was run. What a terrific campaign!

This campaign builds on the great tourism initiatives of the coalition Government; namely, applying the goods and services tax on tourism, the possible loss of Rally Australia, the loss of the Heineken Classic and the Whitbread Round the World Race, the balls up with the triathlon event, the continued destruction of old-growth forests despite the protestations regarding ecotourism, and the \$535 fee imposed on any small business for entry to the Government's tourism network, which could mean its collapse. The Government should follow the Opposition's course and get everyone on the network for a nominal fee to build the industry. This Government has been a disaster for the tourism industry.

MS WARNOCK (Perth) [10.48 am]: The estimates committee process varies greatly in its usefulness and effectiveness. I am aware that colleagues have widely differing views about the effectiveness of this system and its role. Basically, the estimate committee process is designed for ministers and government departments to be put under scrutiny and made accountable for the forthcoming year's budget. An Opposition is keen to seize the opportunity to put a minister and a Government under pressure, as the football commentators say, and to extract useful information. Depending on the minister and the portfolio - as the member for Rockingham colourfully indicated - sometimes it can seem like a leisurely stroll through a series of ministerial statements or a stroll down memory lane rather than an estimates process. If a committee has a laid-back Chair, putting it kindly, Mr Deputy Speaker - I except all present company - the Dorothy Dix questions can come thick and fast and the committee can become a theatre for grandstanding rather than putting the Government's budget under tough scrutiny.

I admit that I lost my temper with one colleague in the hearings when, in my anxiety to ask a question, I could see the queue lengthening and the time running out. This member - he will know to whom I refer - gave us a lecture on his views about militarism. I do not know whether I got up after a short sleep that morning, but I bit his head off. I thought I would never get an opportunity to ask a useful question while sitting through a stroll through his views on militarism. However, if he asks for an apology, I may consider giving one.

On the subject of awarding marks, I give an elephant stamp to the member for Vasse who was one of the tougher and better chairmen. He bit my head off at one stage when I needed pulling into line. He did it very effectively, as did my colleague the member for Kalgoorlie who was a tough and effective Chair. If we have complacent Chairs, and pally discussions ensue -

Mr Sweetman interjected.

Ms WARNOCK: I was not able to sit through one of the member's committees. I am sorry about that as I obviously missed something. If one has a complacent Chair who allows government members to waste time, the effect, as eloquently outlined by my colleague the member for Rockingham, is that no serious questions are put. Time elapses and many members of the Opposition are frustrated and are left with steam coming from their ears.

Apart from scoring one or two nice little media pieces - another function of Estimates Committees for backbenchers on both sides of the House - I found the rambling nature of one hearing extremely unsatisfactory. How this can be controlled, apart from better chairmanship, I am unable to say. I simply draw it to the attention of the House as it needs attention.

Members have heard my colleague the member for Rockingham explain that he does not wish to seize the opportunity to attend a hearing chaired again by a particular parliamentary secretary. In view of the fact that an election is approaching, perhaps that may be the case - he may not have that opportunity again. However, be that as it may, I wanted to add to his comments because I too have found that process extremely unsatisfactory. More seriously, I believe that it is an abuse of the process.

I also protest, as I have often done before, about the ridiculously inadequate time - one hour - allowed for the Arts, an area with a budget of some \$66m. For all the reasons I have already discussed, the time allowed is not controllable by an Opposition, and, frankly, it is a waste of time for highly paid bureaucrats to sit around in the corridors for hours, chatting about whatever they may be chatting about, only to be called upon to perform briefly at the fag end of the day. Also, it still seems unsatisfactory - other colleagues have mentioned this - that substitute ministers, for want of a better word, answer questions on behalf of colleagues in the other place. I do not criticise them personally, because obviously they are doing their best - some of them do better than others - but the nature of the process is not satisfactory.

Some hearings, apart from being useful, are also entertaining, as all of us would agree. In years past, I always enjoyed discussing the environment with Dr Syd Shea. I was not able to attend the environment hearing this year. It must have been

subdued and somewhat duller without the aforementioned person. However, we should look seriously at the process of the Estimates Committees, because although in many ways they are well conducted and well attended by members on both sides of the House, in some ways the process is very unsatisfactory.

MR KOBELKE (Nollamara) [10.51 am]: Like my colleagues, I have misgivings about the way in which particular estimate committee hearings function. However, on the whole, they are a useful means of overseeing the budget and examining the functioning of agencies to ascertain the degree to which they fulfil the requirements of the programs and policies they are asked to implement. A lot of good came out of the Estimates Committees, and I will comment in a moment on some of the details that I received by way of supplementary answers.

There is certainly a degree of frustration in a committee when opposition members, who put considerable work into preparing questions to try to get an understanding of key issues within the budget, are denied the opportunity to ask questions by members on the government side, who ask a range of trivial questions which lead to a general discussion about whether a program of weed eradication or support for a football team is the way to go in a particular minister's portfolio. Many of those discussions are obviously of some interest to individuals, but they can take place at any time outside the Chamber. Members can easily give or receive that sort of information that they wish to give to or obtain from the minister, either for their own interest or for the interest of their electorate. Estimates Committees are an opportunity to put a minister on the mat and to ask him or her what will be the effective use of the many millions of dollars that have been expended in a particular area. That may relate specifically to dollars, to programs, or to the efficacy of programs which are using that money. To simply seek information of a minor type does not make good use of Estimates Committees. It is clearly frustrating for opposition members when most of the time is taken up by government members asking ordinary questions which are answered by the minister and which need not be asked during an estimates committee hearing. I was not able to ask a range of questions. I did not get the opportunity to ask some of my questions in Estimates Committee A; however, in committee B, we could not even deal with whole portfolios because so much time was spent on earlier items.

To some extent that is a time management issue. It may be that in the future we should look at splitting the portfolios into specific time areas - which would require some agreement before the event - rather than leaving three or four hours for a minister with a number of portfolios, because that means that the portfolios that are listed towards the end are not dealt with or receive inadequate consideration. That would put constraints on the management of the process, and there may be disadvantages to that as well.

I will now speak about a couple of matters that came up in committee A, the first of which is the questions I asked of the Premier about the attitude monitoring surveys conducted for the Government by West Coast Field Services. The Premier indicated, by way of supplementary answer, that those surveys were conducted twice yearly, basically in May and November. I have now checked and found that the last report to be tabled in the House was that for November 1998. Since that time, the May 1999, November 1999 and May 2000 surveys have been undertaken, and none of those has been tabled in the House. On behalf of the Premier, is the Leader of the House willing to ascertain when some of those attitude monitoring surveys by West Coast Field Services will be tabled? None of the last three has been tabled in the House. In the past, we have asked the Government to table them on a regular basis. Perhaps the Government is holding back, hoping that the Opposition will continue to ask on every occasion whether it can have the next report. The clear request has been made by the Opposition. Those surveys cost the taxpayers \$124 000 a year. They can be used by the Government for its own political purposes, and that would be quite improper. If the Government is taking account of what it judges to be the public's perception on a range of issues, that should be public information. The taxpayer is spending that \$124 000 a year; that information should be made public. Therefore, through the Leader of the House, I request the Premier to table, before we rise for the midyear break in two weeks, the reports that the Government has received for May 1999, November 1999 and May 2000.

Mr Barnett: I will convey that request to the Premier.

Mr KOBELKE: I thank the Leader of the House. The next issue which came out of the committee A hearings is the question I asked about ministerial offices. I ascertained from the supplementary information that three ministers have ministerial offices outside metropolitan Perth. Ministers also did that when the Labor Party was in government. The electorate of the then Minister for the South West encompassed the area of Bunbury, so that minister had an office there.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: What about in the mid west?

Mr KOBELKE: I do not think the Labor Party had a ministerial office in Geraldton - the Deputy Speaker may correct me on that matter. However, it had a minister whose portfolio centred on that area.

At every opportunity, I will seek the Government's justification for those offices. The Minister for Primary Industry has an office in his electorate at Mt Barker, and it would seem that that is just an electorate office. I am not aware of any advice for the minister that must come especially from Mt Barker. Therefore, on the surface, it looks as though it is an additional electorate office for the Minister for Primary Industry. That would be an improper use of the money from the Premier's budget.

The Minister for Mines has recently established a ministerial office in Kalgoorlie. Kalgoorlie is a very important mining centre, but so is the Pilbara. Again, it looks as though that is an additional ministerial office, which may allow the Minister for Mines to count the numbers and to build up the Liberal Party membership so that when it comes to number crunching in the Liberal Party, he has an office in that region to service his party. Again, that would be an improper use of the funding. We have had no explanation of why the Minister for Mines needs a special ministerial office in Kalgoorlie.

The granddaddy of them all is the Deputy Premier. He maintains three ministerial offices outside Perth. The answers that came back indicate that the Deputy Premier has a ministerial office in Bunbury, where a Mr Klem is designated as a principal policy officer. He has been there since June 1996, at an operational cost of \$87 850. That is nearly \$90 000 to maintain a principal policy officer in Bunbury. The Deputy Premier's departments - Commerce and Trade and the South West Development Commission - have offices in Bunbury, so the necessity for a ministerial office that employs a principal policy officer has not been adequately explained. The Deputy Premier also has a ministerial office in Esperance where Ms Mackin is a senior adviser to the Deputy Premier. We assume the Deputy Premier, receives information from this senior adviser at a cost of nearly \$75 000 a year from Esperance. An office of the Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission is located in Esperance. Development commissions are located in many other parts of the State, which negates the need for a ministerial office. What is the special need for the Deputy Premier to maintain a ministerial office with a senior adviser at a cost of \$75 000 a year in Esperance? What is the effective outcome of employing a ministerial officer in Esperance office, other than promoting the National Party in a seat which it wants to try to hang on to? Again that would appear to be an improper use of government resources.

The location of the third ministerial office leaves me quite perplexed. Why has Ms Bow-Marshall set up a ministerial office in Dowerin? Dowerin is a lovely town, but I would not have thought that was such a major centre the Deputy Premier would need to establish a ministerial office to support him at a cost of nearly \$54 000 a year. Again it is not the centre for any development commission, which would come under the responsibility of the Deputy Premier. The answer indicates that the Deputy Premier thinks Ms Bow-Marshall has particular talents that he wishes to utilise; that is, she worked for him for some time, and when she moved to Katanning he maintained her services as a ministerial officer, and continued to maintain her services after a move to Dowerin. I cannot find any reason for Ms Bow-Marshall's services being retained at Dowerin, other than she had experience working for the Deputy Premier, who sees a value in her services. Having this person working in a location remote from the Deputy Premier's office comes at a cost. How that provides a support service to the Deputy Premier is beyond my comprehension. I can find no explanation of that.

It seems that rorts are going on with expenditure from the Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet in the support of ministerial offices. I can accept ministers' establishing offices outside Perth in given circumstances. However, there need to be well-argued reasons for how the Deputy Premier's office will function more effectively, and what policy advice or other information is coming from those offices that support the functioning of the office of the Deputy Premier. It is hard to see how maintaining an office in Dowerin, quite a small town, serves the interests of the Deputy Premier, the Minister for Regional Development. It may be that this officer is able to assist in support for the National Party, but that is not a proper function that is paid for by the Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet. I am concerned that the employment of those officers outside the metropolitan area is an abuse of taxpayers' money, because no reason has been given for those officers to be employed. I am happy to accept certain ministers retaining some staff in a ministerial office outside of Perth. However, if a cogent argument for that cannot be presented, we are looking at a rort. It would appear on the surface that the Deputy Premier is involved in three rorts in the use of money from the Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet.

The last example relates to information that was received by way of answers to supplementary questions shows the amount of money Treasury receives from government trading enterprises. The figures were quite enlightening, because they gathered figures for receipts from government trading enterprises that we had been able to see only in part into a whole-of-government picture. We found that from 1993-94 through to 1996-97 the net cash flow to the Government from government trading enterprises went from \$126m to \$140m. That was a reasonably gradual increase given the level of economic activity, with perhaps a ratcheting up of the rate of return, and seems to be reasonable return on those government trading enterprises. We need to keep in mind that when people pay their electricity bills, water rates, and for their use of gas from AlintaGas, in addition to the cost of the service, they are paying a specific tax to the Government, because it is taking a percentage off the top. As trading enterprises operate effectively, there is nothing wrong with the Government taking a percentage of the revenue as taxation. However, since 1996-97 that amount has jumped. In 1998-99 it was \$258m; in the current year, 1999-2000, it was \$240m; and for the coming year, which this budget covers, it is more than \$500m. The slight drop last year is explained due to the period in which the payments were made. However, there has been quite a dramatic increase in the take by the Government from government trading enterprises to half a billion dollars. That means every time a household pays for electricity, gas, water and other services, a large percentage of that bill is taxed by this Government. The Government is using those bills as a means of taxing the people of this State. The way in which tax has been increased is quite unreasonable and unfair. The Government is using these trading enterprises, particularly the Water Corporation, as a cash cow.

The Government announced the increase in the rates of the Water Corporation and said it needed to meet capital expenditure. That is false. If the Government is pulling hundreds of millions of dollars out of the Water Corporation, it does not need to increase the rate to cover the cost of additional capital expenditure. Capital expenditure in those areas is very much needed, and it costs a lot of money. However, it is adequately met from revenues of the Water Corporation. When the Government takes hundreds of millions of dollars out of the Water Corporation, it is simply using it as a cash cow. These figures show that the cash flow - not the net flow - for next year is approaching \$800m. However, \$280m is returned as community service obligations and equity contributions. That leaves a net cash flow to the Government from government trading enterprises of just over \$500m for the period covered by this budget. That shows how the Government has tried to cover the hole in its budget by placing an additional taxation burden on people through their payment for services from government utilities.

I thank the Treasurer for providing that data. I do not thank him for the way he has rigged this budget to place additional burden on the people of this State. I hope in my contribution in the third reading debate on this Bill to give an example of

the impact on the lives of constituents, in particular, a pensioner couple, of the increases this Government places on them. It is evident from the information I received in that supplementary answer that the Government has placed a huge burden on them through a big tax take from the government utilities.

My last comment relates to the information we received about stamp duty. This area has seen a large increase in revenue to the Government, partly because the rates of stamp duty were increased about three years ago and, in addition, the Government is charging the stamp duty on top of the GST. With the introduction of the GST, what was a 5 per cent stamp duty will in effect now be a 5.5 per cent stamp duty. That means extra revenue for the Government, and in some areas is the imposition of an additional burden. I am particularly concerned about the amount of stamp duty imposed on workers compensation insurance premiums. According to supplementary answers, in the coming year the Government expects to pick up \$34m from workers compensation insurance premiums. A system that is already under a great deal of stress due to the Government's mismanagement of it, that has led to a reduction in benefits to injured workers and unacceptable increases in the premiums to employers, is being used by the Government to raise a lot of revenue. The amount of \$34m will come straight off the top of premiums as government revenue.

Employers, already under unnecessary pressure due to the increase in those premiums, are not happy that they are also being used as a tax source by the Government to help fund its budget deficit. The anticipated amount in the coming year of \$34m is a massive increase in stamp duty from that paid on workers compensation premiums a couple of years ago. It is a double whammy for business. They must pay not only increased premiums but also increased stamp duty due to the increased percentage imposed by the Government on top of the GST.

The Government should not be doing that; it should be trying to keep workers compensation premiums down due to their effect on the industry and because they are needed to support injured workers.

Question put and passed.

MR BLOFFWITCH (Geraldton) [11.12 am]: I move -

That the report of Estimates Committee B be adopted.

MR BROWN (Bassendean) [11.12 am]: I have a number of comments on not only Estimates Committee B but also the whole process. I have also some suggestions about how the estimates might be improved. Estimates should be about the ability of the Parliament, particularly the committees, to test how taxpayers' funds have been used. That process can be properly achieved if the information provided by government is reliable and believable. Without that core information, the whole estimates committee process is a sham.

The budget papers are flawed. Although it is almost impossible to compare budget papers from year to year due to policy changes, this year's budget papers have three columns, one for 1998-99 actual expenditure, one for 1999-2000 estimated actual expenditure and one for the budget estimate for 2000-01. If we compare last year's figures with this year's actual figures, it is clear that departments and agencies are either incompetent in some areas in estimating the actual expenditure for the year or they deliberately mislead the Parliament and the people of Western Australia by including figures that are shown to be wrong.

In a number of areas the Government has estimated actual expenditure to be, say, \$5m or \$6m but a year later the actual expenditure is proved to be, say, \$2m or \$3m. The difference is not due to a slight miscalculation, but to a major miscalculation. It was either deliberate or a department was taking an extremely optimistic view to bump up the estimated actual figure for the year to give the impression that not much money would be carried over to the following year.

It seems to me that the budget papers contain a lot of hollow logging because agencies or ministers, or both, decide to carry over funds from one year to the next by overstating the estimated actual figure. They provide a figure that is approximately the previous budget estimate, but the actual figure is significantly different from the estimated figure.

What does that mean? It means that ministers in the Government are able to hollow log by transferring funds from one year to the next and overinflate budget expenditure in a given area the following year. It issues glossy pamphlets for that year which claim the Government is spending more money than it spent the previous year.

It avoids the need for the Government to explain in the Estimates Committees why the estimated actual of, say, \$6m for the financial year under consideration is considerably less than the budgeted amount of, say, \$2m. Within the framework of the budget papers, that information becomes available a further 12 months after budget consideration and is, therefore, old news.

As a result, the budget papers are unreliable due to either incompetence or people deliberately misconstruing the estimated actual figures to put them in the most favourable light so they do not have to be audited. To the extent the Government does that, the estimates committee process is flawed.

If the estimates committee process is to improve accountability and openness, ministers should provide the committee with an explanation of the difference between the estimated actuals for one year and the actual figures shown in the Budget Papers for that year prior to the committee hearings. Under the present procedure we would need to ask hundreds of questions in the committee hearings to obtain the detail and that is not possible because insufficient time is available. Ministers or departmental officers would need to refer to financial statements in order to answer questions properly.

People could then see the difference between the estimated expenditure of one year and the actual expenditure printed in

the budget papers for that same year, but which is printed in the budget papers the following year. One could then understand what those differences were. Secondly, where there are differences between the budget estimate for the year and the estimated actuals for the year, the reason that that has come about should be provided by the minister. That information should be provided up front so that one does not have to waste time and energy analysing all the information. It should be provided to Parliament as a right, and it should be provided to members of the committee as a right.

Thirdly, if one is also interested in openness in the Estimates Committees, there should be an alignment of budget expenditures between years. Because the budget papers are constantly restructured and redrafted, it is almost impossible to compare one year with another. That is a clever trick for a Government to use if it does not want to be scrutinised. If it wishes to be accountable, it will ensure there is consistency between one budget and the next to be able to make direct comparisons. If that cannot be done because of the implementation of accrual accounting or some other legislative requirement, at least a breakdown in the form of a schedule should be provided to Parliament which sets out what the previous budget estimates were and how the expenditures have occurred within that financial year based on those previous budget estimates so that one can make a comparison. At the moment comparisons cannot be made. In many areas it is simply impossible to make a comparison between one year and the next. If the Government is really interested in openness and accountability, I recommend that it provide a breakdown of expenditure on programs before the process commences.

The glossy brochures that are issued each year by the Government say that it has allocated X dollars to program A and X dollars to program B and so on, yet when the budgets for the following year are examined, it has all changed. Also, during the year, the Government may announce a new program, but when it is thoroughly investigated it is found to be the old program dressed up as something new with only a marginal change. If the Government is keen to ensure the estimates committee process works properly, it should disclose the programs in operation at the beginning and the end of the year; the differences between those programs; and the amount of money that has been budgeted and expended to each one in the course of the year. I will not hold my breath waiting for that to happen. A little game is being played by a number of ministers. One minister issued a media statement advising the public of Western Australia that \$200 000 had been allocated to a new program. When I asked the minister whether that \$200 000 was in addition to the \$200 000 allocated to an existing program, the minister said no, the \$200 000 that was allocated to the existing program was the same \$200 000, only the name had been changed. It was dressed up as something new merely for political purposes; there was no new money in it at all.

I will comment on the degree of openness and frankness in the estimates committee process. If the Estimates Committees are to work properly, there should be openness about the figures. One can argue about the politics - whether it was wise to spend money here or there - but to be able to have that argument, at the very least, one needs the correct figures and for people to be prepared to put the information on the table. In the absence of that information, the other argument is simply not possible. I commend a number of the senior public servants who attended the Estimates Committee and who were allowed by their ministers to answer questions. I found many of those public servants gave factual answers that did not take a political viewpoint one way or the other; that is, they did not think about the politics of answering the question, or try to second guess what the minister wanted. Where they were allowed to, they answered questions factually in a very matter of fact way. They did not try to put a gloss on the information which they provided. I contrast that with some of the chief executive officers who provided answers to the committee. Although some CEOs did a good job, others were highly political. Great reticence was shown by some CEOs to deal with the issues before the committee. One can understand why that is under the current public sector management arrangements. As members know, the Premier, the Minister for Public Sector Management, under the Public Sector Management Act, can push CEOs out of the Public Service without reason. As a result of the Public Sector Management Act and term contracts, CEOs in the public sector are insecure. More and more they are becoming political animals of the Government of the day; they toe the political line. One could see the difference between the answers provided by a number of CEOs and the answers provided by their staff. The answers provided by their staff in many instances were factual. In some instances, the answers provided by CEOs were structured around trying to second guess what their minister's political views were. Some CEOs tried not to take a view that was contrary to that of the minister.

I will contrast that attitude with that of the area of Justice in which I participated. A public servant from the Ministry of Justice was allowed to answer a question on the proposed prison at the Pyrtton site. She told the Estimates Committee that when the prison was proposed at that site, she went to the Western Australian Planning Commission and it rejected the proposal. Subsequently, she did not go back to the Planning Commission before going ahead with the prison idea; she simply got the Minister for Works to issue a taking order under the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act, thereby avoiding the need to go back to the Planning Commission. That public servant, openly and frankly said that two options were available: To go either via the Planning Commission or via a taking order, and the ministry elected to go via the taking order. That public servant showed a refreshing degree of honesty; she told it as it was. The Government has tried to camouflage this matter. It does not want to admit that it opted to ignore the Planning Commission process and use the taking order issued by the Minister for Works as a way of getting around the order. It was refreshing to hear a public servant say that the Ministry of Justice deliberately took that option in order to thwart going through the Planning Commission process. The inference was that it went through the Planning Commission but could not get the proposal through, so the best option was to avoid it. That was very refreshing. That is contrasted with the answers received from the CEO of the Ministry of Justice. The CEO of the Ministry of Justice was a political appointment.

I put a series of questions about the transport contract with Corrections Corporation of Australia to the parliamentary secretary, who handed them to the chief executive officer. I asked whether the Ministry of Justice and the Government understood that the CCA contract to take over prisoner and detainee transport services had been signed and people had

undertaken a six or seven-week training course conducted by CCA, but that they had not been employed by CCA. At that stage they had been sitting at home for three or four weeks with no income. I wanted to know what was being done to enable that contract to commence and these people to start work. The question was almost dismissed; it was unimportant. In fact, the CEO said that he understood that there would be a period between these people being trained and employed but that it was not a matter of consequence.

Mr Acting Speaker, I would like an extension.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Baker): The member is entitled to speak for 20 minutes. He has spoken for 19 minutes, so the extension is denied.

Point of Order

Mr CUNNINGHAM: A little earlier the member for Rockingham sought an extension. It was going to be allowed but I talked him out of it because we had other speakers. It was ruled that he could speak.

Mr TUBBY: I believe that the member should be granted an extension.

The ACTING SPEAKER: The extension is granted.

Debate Resumed

Mr BROWN: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker.

The people who have been trained by CCA are unemployed. The irate father of one young man has contacted my office. His son has been forced to wash cars to scratch together a living to support his family. That is the way he has been treated by CCA but, most importantly, by the Ministry of Justice. That was dismissed as unimportant and not a consideration.

I also asked questions about what was happening to those people who were affected by this contract; that is, older prison staff who previously performed the work that has been contracted out and who will have difficulty coping with the new work to which they have been assigned. Will they be offered a redundancy package? These people are at retirement age. Again, the issue was dismissed.

The budget process should be about not only allocation but also how those allocations affect people's lives. People are sometimes forced to change their lifestyle as a result of budget allocations. During the Estimates Committees, I asked whether the Government, in arriving at its budget allocations, considers social impacts, particularly when it contracts out work. I asked that because the CCA employees who will replace police officers and prison officers will be paid \$8 000 to \$12 000 less than their predecessors. I also asked whether that reduction in earnings is taken into account in the allocation of the contract. This raises two issues: First, does the Government consider the employment conditions that will apply under the contract? The answer provided by a public servant was that there is no interest in that issue. Secondly, does the Government take into account social impacts when allocating these contracts? When a slab of work is transferred from one area to another and that leads to people earning much lower incomes, is the social impact taken into consideration? A public servant answered that a social impact assessment is carried out by the State Supply Commission or the Department of Contract and Management Services. I asked for some supplementary information about what is taken into account, the way it is taken into account and so on. That information has not arrived; presumably it will arrive in due course.

I have made these statements because I believe there is room for vast improvement in the estimates committee process. That vast improvement can come about only if the Government is willing to supply useful information to members of the committees prior to the sittings. It would also be very useful if the figures in each budget aligned with those in every other budget. If the Premier is still in office in 12 months -

Ms MacTiernan: Graham Kierath will apparently be there.

Mr BROWN: Will he? Anyway, I ask the Premier, on the assumption that he will be there next year: Does the Government intend to change the format of the budget papers again next year, or will it leave the budget papers in the same format as this year? The point that has been raised is that because every year the format of the budget papers has been changed, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to make any meaningful analysis of those papers. If it is necessary to change the budget papers for legislative reasons, or whatever, the Premier should at least provide, prior to the estimates committee debate, a schedule that compares the expenditure for this year with the expenditure for last year in the same format.

Mr Court: Since we came into government, we have made a series of changes. Firstly, we established a consolidated fund. We then moved to the introduction of accrual accounting. This year, for the first time, agreement has been reached on a standardised accrual presentation format, which will allow better comparisons to be made between States. We have been pretty open about the way the budget has been presented. We have given briefings both before and after each year to get suggestions, criticisms, etc, on the format so that it can be in the most transparent form possible. The only change that I envisage will take place next year is the change that is associated with the implementation of a capital user charge; and that legislation has gone to a committee of the other House. That will be the last change necessary to have in place a full accrual presentation.

Mr BROWN: One of the areas for which I have responsibility for the Opposition is Commerce and Trade. Last year, the budget of Commerce and Trade was presented in such a way that we could see how much had been allocated to the various

sub-departments within Commerce and Trade, such as the Office of Information and Communications and the Office of Aboriginal Economic Development, and one could get the annual report of the department and the budget papers and try to work out whether individual sub-departments were getting more or less money and what programs were being pursued or not pursued, and so on. This year, that is impossible, because the format has been changed once again and all the sub-departments have been rolled into one. I take on board what the Premier said, and I will wait to see what happens next year.

Another matter on which the Premier may want to comment at some stage is that it seems to me that when we compare budgets from one year with the next, a lot of money is being put away in hollow logs for a rainy day.

MS MacTIERNAN (Armadale) [11.44 am]: My comments will canvass Estimates Committees A and B; and I have been assured by our Whip that that is acceptable to the Government. I share the concern of the member for Bassendean that it is very difficult, outside of the capital works areas, to compare the budget papers from year to year, and that matter does need to be rectified. Another problem is that, because the program statements are now supposedly more output-focused, some fanciful and speculative assessments are made about the output measures that are achieved; for example, minister's satisfaction with the quality of service delivered from the department. Given that - one would hope - the minister is ultimately answerable for the performance of his agency, it is unlikely the minister would acknowledge in the budget papers that he was anything less than 100 per cent satisfied with the performance of his department or agency. A lot of detailed and useful information about the programs has been lost and has been replaced with pointless puffery dressed up as statistical performance of outputs.

Some of my colleagues commented on the performance of ministers during the Estimates Committees. I compliment the Deputy Premier for his handling of the Transport estimates. He was very fair in allowing the bureaucrats to field the vast majority of questions, and it was only when I strayed into National Party heartland that he sought to intervene; for example, when I commented on the frequency of roadworks in the hitherto unknown town of Binnu -

Mr Pental: Binnu?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Has the member not heard of it? I recommend that he read the last two Transport budget papers, because Binnu has been plucked from obscurity and thrust into prominence in the amount of roadworks that is now taking place around Binnu. I know that it is pure coincidence that the current Minister for Transport happens to operate his property from Binnu. The erstwhile unknown expenditure by the State on a national highway around the Tammin area is also only coincidental, notwithstanding the warnings of public servants that state road funding should not be put into the realignment of Great Eastern Highway around Tammin - a realignment which, as we all know, freed up land so that the former Minister for Transport could build his huge roadhouse. It was only when we touched on those sensitive areas that the Deputy Premier sought to intervene and give answers that were of a more political nature. That is understandable, because the Deputy Premier is not only the grandfather of the Parliament but also the godfather of the National Party, and I guess he has an obligation to protect his ministers from close scrutiny. I also compliment Greg Martin, the Chief Executive Officer of Main Roads. It has been said by various ministers that I am not well liked among the senior echelons of Main Roads, presumably for my probing questions and monitoring of the department's activities; but, notwithstanding that, I thought Mr Martin acquitted himself with considerable dignity and performed as a neutral public servant should perform. I could not say the same about all the other chief executive officers who gave evidence at the estimates hearings. One officer in particular, in my view, took a highly partisan approach and in many ways his conduct could be described only as rude and contemptuous. I think that officer should look very carefully to his future if that is the way he sees the Public Service.

This is my annual rave on this particular subject, but I think it is important and one day the point will get through to the Government. As I have pointed out to the Treasurer year after year, Westrail is not a corporatised entity; it is an entity which is partly commercialised but is also a major recipient of taxpayers' money. In this current year it will get approximately \$120m from consolidated revenue. Notwithstanding the huge input of taxpayers' dollars into Westrail, it is not available for scrutiny. Westrail's payments are warehoused in two ways: In relation to the urban passenger service, the \$100m paid to Westrail is warehoused through the Department of Transport; and in relation to the provision of country passenger services, the \$20m paid to Westrail is warehoused through Treasury. It appears that at no time are the officers from Westrail available for scrutiny.

A further problem is the capital expenditure of Westrail, which is also not available for scrutiny. The argument is that Westrail does not receive a capital appropriation; nevertheless, as we all know, Westrail's debt is a liability to the taxpayers of this State. That debt now exceeds \$1b, yet we have no right, as a Parliament, during the estimates process, to ask Westrail what it is doing to generate its level of debt. As we all know, it is not building any rail lines; by any objective measure, the standard of maintenance on the rail lines has gone down; and nothing has been bought by way of rolling stock. Yet, the debt has blown out. This is one of the biggest areas of government expenditure and potential liability for exposure to debt, yet this Parliament has no capacity to scrutinise it and nor is any individual board responsible for it. Westrail is an agency that is under the direct control of the Cabinet; it is not a corporatised entity like AlintaGas or Western Power. There is a major hole in the budgetary process in respect of that.

I refer again to some information we received this morning as part of the response to the estimates hearings. The Government spends about \$200m each year on the urban passenger services in the metropolitan area which, again, is a very substantial allocation of taxpayers' dollars for a very vital service. One would think the Government would ensure that that particular area was performing well, and that the monitoring of the public transport system was spot on. Some results were advertised which claimed an overall public satisfaction rate of 79 per cent with the performance of Westrail in 1999-2000.

During the estimates hearings I asked whether Westrail would mind tabling the report which was the basis for making that assessment. Lo and behold, I received it this morning but I could not believe it. It is a report dated May 1999, which was tabled in this Parliament more than one year ago. It is exactly the same report that the Government wheeled out on 30 May 1999 as the indicator of Westrail's performance. What has gone on in the past year? It is extraordinary that not only has a major injection of taxpayers' funds been put into this area, but also major changes have been undergone. It is now a totally privatised public bus system. However, as a performance indicator, we were given a report that is more than a year old and was tabled in the Parliament more than a year ago. This report is being used as the performance indicator for a major area of expenditure.

There is no doubt that this report was prepared from survey material gathered in late 1998. It appears that this is the most up-to-date material the department has on how Westrail is performing in the delivery of public transport services. It is a disgrace, and I ask the minister in his response to tell us why we are not getting more up-to-date information. Why are we being presented in this Parliament - on an area as crucial as the public transport system - with a set of performance indicators that are more than a year old and which were probably collected more than two financial years ago? I ask the minister whether he would be prepared to table a more recent and up-to-date report. Presumably there is a report that relates to the past year and that is the report that should be tabled in this Parliament. We should not be going back to documents that are more than a year old. I suspect that it is an indicator of the poor state of the public transport system and consumers' perception of it. The information the Opposition is getting from its surveys all over the metropolitan area is that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction with the public transport system, from not only the people using it but, more importantly, those who do not even have access to public transport.

I shall now comment on information given to the Legislative Assembly Estimates Committee B. In the session on Planning, I thought the public servants from the ministry and those representing the Western Australian Planning Commission acquitted themselves very well. Unfortunately, their minister refused in many instances to answer questions, and his conduct, in his refusal to acknowledge whether or not he had received reports, could be described only as recalcitrant. At any time the Opposition strayed onto sensitive areas, the public servants were shut up. That aside, I would like to add that I found the Chairs of the committees of which I was a member this year to be very good. I even found in those committees that the level of dexterity from the government members had declined. In the estimates committee hearing on Planning, the member for Wanneroo challenged the minister almost as much as the Opposition. That is no doubt an indication that he is feeling somewhat sensitive about the impact of government decisions on his very marginal seat.

Also in Transport, nowhere near the time wasting occurred that has been a feature of Transport estimates in the past few years and I compliment the government backbenchers for taking this process a little more seriously than they have in the past. Transport expenditure is so vast that four hours is an inadequate time to deal with the number of agencies to be examined. I ask the Government to consider increasing the Transport portfolio to a five-hour time slot when compiling the timetable for next year.

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [12 noon]: I thank members for their comments on the Estimates Committees. I agree with most of the comments that the Estimates Committees proceeded well this year although, as I said, a number of policy issues which were raised by most members who have spoken must be considered by this Parliament before next year.

Question put and passed.

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No. 1) 2000

Third Reading

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [12.01 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a third time.

MR BROWN (Bassendean) [12.01 pm]: I -

Mr Tubby: We gave you an extension on the committee, now you want another one.

Mr BROWN: I am pleased that the Government Whip and the member for Roleystone is interested in what I have to say. I can assure him I will be making a number of speeches for his enjoyment.

I shall raise a number of matters in consideration of this Bill. The first matter relates to the Government's online strategy. The past couple of weeks have provided members with an opportunity to clarify exactly what that online strategy is, and also what it is not. Some statements released by the Government have given the community the impression that the Government will put a computer in every home in the State. I took the opportunity of raising that impression with the Minister for Commerce and Trade and asked whether the Government intends to place computer terminals in Western Australian homes. The minister made it clear in his answer that the Government has no intention to place computers in homes in Western Australia; that was the position at least on the day the Estimates Committee met. However, subsequent to that, I was interested to read a large article in *The West Australian* on 10 June which stated that the Minister for Housing was working on a move to put computers into WA's future public housing. I was unsure then when that statement was released of exactly what is the government policy. On one hand, the Minister for Commerce and Trade's view is that the Government will not intervene to provide computers to WA homes; on the other hand, the chief executive officer of the Ministry of Housing is making a policy recommendation that the Minister for Housing should go down that path. There

appears to be some confusion, therefore, if not in the minds of ministers, certainly in the minds of senior government officers, about exactly what is government policy.

Another matter that raises its head in government intervention in the telecommunications area, particularly State Government intervention, is the degree to which the Government must intervene to overcome reported deficiencies that will be provided by the market. I put a series of questions to the Minister for Commerce and Trade in the Estimates Committee arising from studies carried out in the United States of America. It has been suggested in the predictions made in those studies, in the event of what are loosely known as top boxes becoming available and working properly for \$500 or less, that 80 to 85 per cent of Americans would be online in the next five years. I inquired of the Minister for Commerce and Trade whether the Government had an estimate of the number of people in Western Australia who would not be online in the next five years without government intervention. Perhaps the Premier can answer that question before he leaves the Chamber, as I know he has an interest in it. Although I did not receive a direct response from the Minister for Commerce and Trade to that question, I interpreted the response I received to mean that the Government does not have an indication of the number of people involved.

Mr Court: In the past 12 months the number of people online in the metropolitan area has doubled, from memory, to about 28 per cent of homes. The rate of growth in the regional areas is even higher. The Government will concentrate on the lower income areas to which it can provide physical help. We want to do that predominantly through public housing strategies to ensure the suburbs are properly wired and so on. In the next 12 to 18 months we will concentrate on that end of the market. In the short term, we will consider establishing city versions of telecentres in areas where people cannot access tuition in schools and the like. I cannot provide the number of people it will involve but the market is moving very quickly. As I said when we made the announcement, the Government has a responsibility to avoid having technology haves and technology have-nots. The best way to do that in the short term is to assist in low income areas.

Mr BROWN: The point I raised in the Estimates Committee about state expenditure vis-a-vis federal expenditure or private expenditure is that Telstra is rolling out its asymmetric digital subscriber line network now. Although that focus is currently only in Perth and Bunbury, I understand it will be rolled out later in all regional centres and eventually, hopefully, to less populated areas. As the Premier knows, the ADSL arrangements will provide, through copper wire, high speed telecommunications access, particularly for downloading. It will be unnecessary, in the immediate future, to consider the issue of fibre-optic cable. I do not know whether additional compression technology will become available in years ahead that will improve on that. I do not have a problem with installing cables in new areas where roads and underground powerlines are being constructed. It is a very cheap and wise method. The view expressed to the Estimates Committee was that while that sort of infrastructure is not immediately necessary, it might be in years ahead. That is good planning.

Mr Court: The latest advice I have been given is that the cost to the companies of data transmission is halving every nine months. I do not know how they do it, but they have worked out how to get 300 times more capacity from the same fibre-optic cable that was used when the technology was first introduced.

Mr BROWN: Following Moore's law.

Mr Court: What is that?

Mr BROWN: It is a law that was developed when the technology was brought out. It says that every 18 months, the technology will double in capacity and halve in cost. That has essentially been applied throughout the whole industry from an early stage.

Mr Court: There is another law - I do not know what it is called - that although we think the cost will come down, we are encouraged to use the technology, so the companies' revenue flows keep increasing.

Mr BROWN: I thank the Premier for his explanation, because I was wondering about the degree to which government intervention would take place, and whether any studies had been carried out about the level of take-up of online technologies either by the Department of Commerce and Trade or the government generally. The critical test is whether people will connect to this technology without government intervention. If that is the case, there is no need for it. However, there is a need for intervention if people are unable to connect to online technology. In that context, the point has been raised elsewhere that Western Australia is yet to experience the types of schemes that have been implemented in other Australian States by some of the major clubs and organisations, including the Australian Council of Trade Unions. Under those schemes, a subscriber is provided with a computer terminal, modem and Internet access for a certain number of hours a week, for a modest weekly fee. That will become a lot cheaper in the next two to three years. Microsoft and two or three of the other major hardware producers are talking about producing a basic terminal for about \$300 or \$400, without the programs. The Dreamcaster and other products likely to become available in the next two to three years will provide for greater levels of convergence. People will be able to use their television sets as computer screens. That convergence will increase dramatically with the onset of digital television from 1 January 2001. All those things indicate that the take-up rate will escalate as services improve and it becomes possible to get information through the ADSL technology more quickly. The technology will become more commonplace as the price continues to go down. People are now moving to wireless hand-held devices, which are likely to become the order of the day in the next few years.

Another matter raised in the Estimates Committee concerned the impact of the goods and services tax on small business. The Opposition also raised that issue in this place yesterday and continues to raise it, although this Government has dismissed it as inconsequential. I refer to a report I have received from a media monitoring service about a report on ABC radio during Tony Delroy's NightLife program. A number of members of Parliament are probably familiar with the

program through listening to it while driving home in the evening. The program does a wrap of the headline stories that will be in the major Australian metropolitan newspapers the next day. This report refers to an article in this morning's *The Sydney Morning Herald*, which discussed the growing trend for small business owners to discontinue their businesses before the implementation of the goods and services tax because it is too much trouble. The journalist who was interviewed said his research showed that -

. . . the number of small businesses on the market has risen by up to 50 per cent in the last year and according to the Council of Small Business Organizations many are "getting out to avoid the GST".

He went on to say that he has been told that up to 100 000 businesses may collapse because they are incapable of dealing with the new tax system. That has been downplayed in Western Australia. The Minister for Works suggested yesterday that the implementation of the goods and services tax was a cakewalk for small business. That is not the indication coming from small business organisations. The State Government needs to make sure its federal colleagues ensure that small businesses are assisted through what will be a difficult time over the next 12 months in complying with the goods and services tax.

MR CARPENTER (Willagee) [12.16 pm]: I raise a few matters related to my shadow portfolio responsibilities and issues in my electorate which are impinged upon by those portfolio areas; namely, Education, and Family and Children's Services. There is a gross shortage of resources available to the public education sector in Western Australia. It is an issue of great magnitude, for people not just in my electorate but across the State. All members of Parliament have had this matter brought to their attention by their constituents. People are taking every opportunity to remove their children from government schools and transfer them to private schools because they believe the private school system is better resourced, and that their children will be able to access and attain a better standard of education than in the government system.

This is a most regrettable trend in Western Australia, and in Australia more broadly. This trend is encouraged and fomented by the attitude of the Federal Government and the current Minister for Education, Training and Youth Affairs, David Kemp, who was responsible for a great transfer of funds from the government sector to the non-government sector through the requirements of the enrolment benchmark adjustment system. The Western Australian Government has not improved the situation by placing a heavy emphasis on increased funding to the non-government sector. The budget papers for 2000-01 show that trend continuing, with a 13 to 14 per cent increase in per capita grants to non-government schools. This greatly exceeds the funding increase to government schools. The Minister for Education described the increase in real terms, after it had been adjusted for population growth, as 1 per cent. We must resist and reverse this transfer of resources from the government to the private sector, to maintain a quality education capacity for all children, not just those who are in the private sector for whatever reason.

It has come to my attention over the past couple of weeks, particularly during the estimates committee hearing in the other place, that government schools in areas which are not serviced by the Western Power grid pay a phenomenally greater power bill than non-government schools. I find that inequity very difficult to understand. Government schools in Broome, for example, pay 30¢ a kilowatt hour for their electricity. Non-government schools in the same town pay 20¢, industry pays 20¢, and local government pays 15¢ a kilowatt hour for electricity. It defies explanation for me to understand why government schools must pay 50 per cent more for their power - that is, 30¢ rather than 20¢ - than non-government schools, bearing in mind that this money is found in the school grant. An explanation has been given that the increased bill built into this system is catered for when the school grants for each school and district are provided in the budget. No matter which way one analyses it, a huge amount of money is being paid to Western Power by government schools for electricity supply which would otherwise be available for educational purposes. It makes no sense to me to see government schools penalised in this way, and a review of this inequity should be established.

It was put to Mr P. McCaffrey, the Education Department's Director of Finance, in the estimates hearing in the other place that this was an inequity and he was completely unaware of it. I find it not only surprising but also somewhat distressing that the finance director in the Education Department was unaware of the fact that government schools in localities of the Western Power grid are paying 50 per cent more for their electricity. This is something which we should be looking at. It is the kind of thing which underlies people's perception that the Government is more interested in ensuring private schools, rather than government schools, are well resourced and can provide excellent education. This is a trend which we must address quickly.

Yesterday, I raised in Parliament the matter of the Australind High School in Bunbury. Members who do not have a direct connection to the Bunbury area may not have paid much attention to that issue. The situation there is completely unacceptable. Australind High School is grossly overcrowded. The school is serviced by something like 11 transportable, demountable classrooms because of the population growth over a number of years. For that school to have an unreliable power source is almost inconceivable in 2000. We may have expected that 30 or 40 years ago, but it is just not acceptable now. The explanation that the growth in the school size and its demand for power has created this problem does not take into consideration the requirement for Education Department planners and government financiers to ensure they are keeping abreast of the growth in demand in the system. The acting principal of Australind High School released a memorandum to his staff, of which we obtained a copy, which outlines the problem in some detail. I believe that the minister should have been aware of this. He was not aware of it yesterday when I asked the question. He did not give a commitment to address the situation, although I am sure he will because it has attracted some attention now and it is a politically sensitive seat. I find it surprising that he did not know about the issue. The people from the Education Department, who are responsible for keeping the minister informed, as well as his political colleagues from that area, should have made a point of ensuring the minister was aware that this situation existed in Australind and required urgent attention. The fact that the members

who represent that area did not bring this matter to the attention of the minister reflects poorly on them. The people in that area will be able to exercise their judgment on that in the forthcoming election.

There is also the issue of the Bunbury Primary School. The member for Bunbury asked the minister to put to rest what he called the lie that was being perpetrated in the area by Labor Party people that the Government was forcing the Bunbury Primary School to sell some of its land to get an additional facility. Sadly for the member for Bunbury, the minister did not lay to rest that scenario; in fact, he said that when he visited the area some time ago he had raised the possibility of the sale of the land so the school could access additional resources. Yesterday, he declined to rule out a scenario which would see the school sell some of its land for additional resources.

This way of funding schools in the government system is disastrous. The notion that government schools should have to sell part of their sporting fields or ovals and assets to get funding for basic requirements is just preposterous. Again, it reinforces the community belief that the government school system is being left to its own devices, that parents in schools must raise the money themselves and that the Government is stepping back from its responsibility of funding the most basic requirements in those schools. Government schools are seen to be in decline; yet at the same time, everybody in the State knows that private schools are getting a far greater share of the cake.

The Kardinya Primary School is in my electorate of Willagee, and its playground equipment was deemed to be unsafe by occupational health and safety inspectors and was removed because it was very old. There was nothing in its place. The parents and citizens of the school approached the department and asked whether they would be funded for replacement equipment. They were told that they would not be and that they would have to raise the money themselves. Those parents find it something of an affront that they should be expected to raise the money for what is essential equipment for young children at a school - that is, playground equipment - bearing in mind that the parents and citizens at Kardinya Primary School, who are very committed to the quality of education for their children, have already gone through a process of raising funds to provide airconditioning at the school. Now they have been told that if they want their children to have playground equipment, they will have to find the money for that as well.

Another case in East Hamersley in the northern suburbs has been brought to my attention and I will bring it to the minister's attention directly by letter. The same scenario is in place there. Various members of Parliament have brought to my attention the overcrowding in government schools in their electorates. East Waikiki Primary School has over 1 000 young children, Koorana Primary School has nearly 900 and Charthouse Primary School has nearly 900. People are seeing the demise or the neglect of the government school system. We as a community let this happen at our peril. There is nothing more important in the responsibilities of State Governments than the delivery of education to the children of the State. It should be given the highest possible priority.

In the estimates hearings for the Justice portfolio, I asked the minister representing the Minister for Justice whether he could provide us with the educational levels and achievements of Western Australia's prison population. I believe that access to education and the quality of education has a profound impact on the quality of life that people are subsequently able to enjoy, and the likelihood of their running into social, economic and domestic difficulties later in life, and, therefore, the community, through the Government, running into additional costs to meet those difficulties. I found astounding the answer to my question about the educational levels of the prison population of Western Australia. I was surprised that the local media and *The West Australian* newspaper did not take up the issue, although *The Australian* newspaper and the ABC did. When the prison population of Western Australia is analysed by educational achievement, it shows that 76 per cent of the prisoners in Western Australian prisons have not been educated beyond primary school level.

We can read into those figures some very significant issues for policy making. Not only have 76 per cent of the prison population not been educated beyond primary school, but also a further 14 per cent have had only some level of high school education. Therefore, 90 per cent our prison population in Western Australia has only primary school education or some high school education. If ever there was an indicator to government of the need to address the quality of education for everybody in Western Australia via the government school system, where approximately 70 per cent of our population is educated, it lies in those figures. We as a community must take the issue seriously. The quality of education we are able to provide must be for all our children, not merely those who are lucky enough to have access to opportunities through intelligence or other skills, or those who have parents who are wealthy enough to send them to a school at which they can get the best possible quality of education.

Two or three days ago, I met with Professor Richard Bates, who is the president of the Australian Council of Deans of Education. We spoke about the trends in education and the supply and demand of teachers and graduates. The Education Department last year conducted its own analysis of the supply and demand of teachers in Western Australia from 1999 to 2005, and is well aware that there is a crisis looming in the provision of adequate teaching staff. A breakdown of the number of graduates who are at the moment going through the system and who will become teachers when they have finished their courses shows a critical situation in providing enough teachers in future years. Both sides of Parliament must be aware of the critical situation and have policies to address it.

MR MCGOWAN (Rockingham) [12.33 pm]: I want to concentrate on issues to do with my shadow portfolio of Tourism. Earlier, I made a few remarks about the Minister for Tourism. I referred to him as a disaster, if I recall correctly. However, I was too kind. He is the master of disaster. He has presided over some of the biggest mistakes in tourism events in recent memory.

I will put that remark into context. The Minister for Tourism and this Government have been very prone to providing jobs for the boys. A committee was recently set up to review the Western Australian Tourism Commission Act. It was

appointed by the minister. The person chairing the review committee is none other than Mr Bill Hassell, a former Liberal Party leader who seems to have been a factional ally of the minister, who has undoubtedly repaid him by giving him this job.

Mr Shave: He was in the Queen's honours list for his services -

Mr McGOWAN: To the Government no doubt.

Mr Shave: To charity, which is something you blokes would know nothing about.

Dr Gallop: I shall be writing a letter to congratulate him.

Mr Shave: Have a talk about him to your mate behind you.

Mr McGOWAN: The minister appointed him to that position. My point is that there has been a great deal of politicisation of those appointments by the Minister for Tourism, and Sport and Recreation. The minister has appointed Mr Ian Laurance, a former deputy leader of the Liberal Party, to chair the Western Australian Sports Centre Trust, which has responsibility for looking after a range of sporting facilities, including the Challenge Stadium, the Midland Speed Dome, Arena Joondalup and shortly the motorplex at Kwinana. An appointee to the Western Australia Athletics Commission was Mr Peter Bacich, a major figure in the Liberal Party -

Mr Bradshaw: He is not even a member of the Liberal Party. He resigned some years ago.

Mr McGOWAN: I beg to differ; I am sure that he is. The member will find that he will have to eat his words.

The chairperson of the Western Australia Athletics Commission is Mr Chilla Porter, another major figure in the Liberal Party. The chairperson of the Western Australian Boxing Commission is Mr Bill Grayden. There are a number of other positions which I am sure the minister will claim do not involve his appointees. However, the chair of the Western Australian Football Commission - I suppose this is coincidental - is Mr Barry MacKinnon, and the list goes on. These organisations should not be politicised in the way they have been. Instead of looking for political allies and soul mates, the minister should be looking for people who are best suited to do the job. It is not necessary to be a member of the Liberal Party to be best suited to doing those jobs. The minister's predilection for putting in place political allies has gone far enough.

I want to raise some further issues relating to the Tourism, and Sport and Recreation portfolios. The Partnership 21 document was put together under the minister's tutelage. He handed the work over to Market Equity to put the document together. The original contract figure for the work was \$50 000, but by the end of the project the cost to the taxpayer had blown out to \$156 075, which is a \$106 000 increase for one document. The way the Partnership 21 document will work will adversely affect small businesses in tourism which want to join the tourism network. The network may not work under the Government's arrangements. It may well be the case that a whole range of organisations which would have joined up with the network may be deterred because of the cost. The cost of \$535 to small business owners struggling with the goods and services tax, who are unsure how the system will work and who may well already be linked into the web site of organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, is a major expense. Other States are saying when setting this system up that in the first year they will charge a nominal fee, and after that they will go for full cost recovery. However, this State will go to full cost recovery first off. Potentially 4 500 businesses could join the system. The risk is that many may not join. That is a major failing of the Partnership 21 document, which the Government should have addressed. For the taxpayer to have to pay an extra \$100 000 or three times the originally quoted figure, is a testament to this minister's way of doing things.

In recent months we have lost a range of events from Western Australia. I went easy on the Minister for Tourism in relation to the Whitbread Round the World Race loss. I said it could have been just one of those things. We then lost the Heineken Classic golf tournament. I thought that these things can happen, and maybe it was just a coincidence. With the major issue arising with Rally Australia, these event losses can no longer be coincidental. We may also lose that event.

Mr Cunningham: We may lose the Perth Cup to Melbourne!

Mr McGOWAN: The way we are going, that is right. It is very distressing to people who rely on tourism events for their income. We paid \$156 000 for the Partnership 21 document, which was three times its original cost. A major emphasis of that report was that we concentrate on event tourism, and attract six major events and one icon event to Western Australia. However, we have seen only the gradual loss of events. It makes one wonder, after expenditure of that sort of money, what is going on in WA with such event losses.

Mr Court: To which events do you refer? I was outside the Chamber earlier.

Mr McGOWAN: I refer to the Whitbread, the Heineken Classic and a cricket tournament we once had. Following six days of constant speculation over Rally Australia, the Premier has not been able to tell us whether it is lost. Can the Premier tell us now?

Mr Court: I wanted to know to which events you were referring.

Mr Kobelke: Have we lost it?

Mr Court: I am not saying whether it has been lost.

Mr Kobelke: It sounds like it is then.

Mr Court: You would want that!

Mr McGOWAN: The Premier interjected on me, which I took. I now ask him whether we are keeping Rally Australia?

Mr Court: I certainly hope so.

Mr McGOWAN: So do I. I remind the Premier that a Labor Government secured this event for Western Australia, and it remained here while we were in government. It appears to now be under threat.

Mr Court: What is wrong with the Elle campaign? Why are you critical of it?

Mr McGOWAN: Was the Premier listening in his office to my speech?

Mr Court: Just tell me.

Several members interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: Yes; he is an avid listener to my speeches.

Mr Court: I was talking to the media, and they said that you were critical of the campaign.

Mr McGOWAN: I am pleased that the Premier has raised this matter. Figures which came out of the Estimates Committee process indicate that the increase in tourism numbers from the markets in which we advertised the Elle campaign have been half the percentage increases achieved in markets in which we did not run the Elle campaign. Furthermore, the other States which have advertised in the same markets as WA, in the United Kingdom in particular, had greater increases in tourism numbers than those achieved in Western Australia - some were double ours. The Premier constantly trumpets the Elle campaign.

Mr Court: I do not trumpet it. It has been a successful campaign. Industry is incredibly supportive of it, and is sick of your constantly knocking things.

Mr McGOWAN: How does the Premier explain Queensland's 38 per cent increase in tourism numbers from the UK during the period of the Elle campaign, when WA achieved a 23 per cent increase?

Mr Court: Is that not a big enough increase? Is that what you're saying?

Mr McGOWAN: We had the smallest increase of all the States, yet the Premier says it is a great achievement. Maybe the Premier likes coming last; maybe it gives him a feeling of moral superiority coming last, but I do not feel that way. It is a disgrace that we are coming last among the States in those overseas tourism figures, considering our assets and everything we have to offer in the State. How the Premier can say it is a great achievement is beyond me.

We did not advertise the Elle campaign in Germany, and we achieved a 47 per cent increase in visitor numbers from that market. That was more than double the percentage increase in the number of people visiting from the United Kingdom, where the advertisements were run.

Mr Court: Tell us the numbers of people?

Mr McGOWAN: We had a 20 000 increase in tourists from the United Kingdom, and Queensland experienced a 60 000 increase in visitors from the UK during the same period. South Australia had a 30 per cent increase. Every other State has achieved better results than Western Australia's. Maybe the Premier can provide an explanation: We advertise in the UK with his much-loved and much-vaunted Elle campaign, which is more a domestic political tool than in any sense a foreign advertising campaign. Why are 30 per cent of our advertisements run after 10 o'clock at night, and the majority shown in low rating periods during the day?

Mr Court: You have spoken to the industry. Can you explain why, every time they have run the campaign, they have sold all the packages? We don't pay for a large part of the ads, as industry pays.

Mr McGOWAN: We ask the questions around here, not the Premier! I mention now the types of shows in which the Elle advertisements are run. One around midnight is called *Dallas Cowboys*. I am familiar with another movie with a similar word in its title, so maybe it is related. Other shows are called *Night Fever*, *Love Street*, which is shown at 12.30 am, and another great one shown at 11.40 pm in England is called *Compromising Situations*. We are advertising Western Australia in the middle of *Compromising Situations*! What better could we ask for in advertising in England? Many people will visit looking for those compromising situations. They see Elle during *Compromising Situations* and will want to visit Western Australia! Other shows during which the ads appear are *More Real Monty* and, at 11.40 pm, *The Hand*. Maybe the Premier can explain why our much-vaunted advertising campaign is being advertised near midnight in a program called *The Hand*. What tourism improvement will be achieved with that?

Mr Court: When that campaign runs, it is funded by the people putting the packages together; namely, British Airways and other package people. They run the campaign for a short time, and they sell out the packages. Is that not what you want to achieve? Do you want to get tourists here? Why knock something that works?

Mr McGOWAN: The vast majority of funding is from the Tourism Commission.

MR THOMAS (Cockburn) [12.48 pm]: I draw attention to a major deficiency in the budget; that is, the provision made available under the Minister for Water Resources for the management of Cockburn Sound. Page 1476 of the *Budget Statements* trumpets the enhanced management of Cockburn Sound as being one of the major policy decisions made by the Government. A total of \$446 000 is allocated for that purpose in the forthcoming financial year, to be reduced to \$240 000 over the projected four years. That is totally inadequate. Of all the water resource problems in this State, the greatest conflict between competing users and land uses which affect water relates to Cockburn Sound. We have had problems with algal blooms in the past couple of years, and controversy has been associated with the development of industry in the area. Everybody agrees that we need a decent management authority - one similar to the Swan River Trust, which is universally recognised as being a good authority for the management of a body of water. It has done a great job in resolving many of our conflicts.

On a number of occasions in this House I have drawn attention to what I regard as the similarities between the problems that exist for the Swan River, which were addressed by the creation of the Swan River Trust in 1988, and those which now exist in Cockburn Sound. People in Cockburn want a dedicated management authority. It should have planning powers and be able to address planning proposals that might affect the quality of water in the sound, and it should be dedicated to Cockburn Sound, with an office and a presence in the area. The committee that has been established, with offices in St Georges Terrace and with some notional responsibility for Cockburn Sound, is not good enough. The propositions which are contained in the budget reflect the fact that the Government is trying to do things on a shoestring and is not giving to Cockburn Sound the priority that it warrants.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 7707.]

AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL

Statement by Leader of the Opposition

DR GALLOP (Victoria Park - Leader of the Opposition) [12.51 pm]: The State Opposition congratulates Gerard Neesham for his insightful and timely assessment of the state of Australian rules football and supports calls for a major review of Western Australian football. We all need to be honest and acknowledge that football in Western Australia is at the crossroads. It is not just that the West Coast Eagles and the Fremantle Dockers do not seem to have the firepower to win a premiership; it is the game and the way it is organised in Western Australia today. No longer is it possible for local competitions to groom the best players for our state teams. The draft sends them everywhere. No longer is it possible for the Westar Rules clubs to plan and develop teams on a time line longer than a season. Being a coach must be a nightmare. Keeping, let alone building, a supporter base is virtually an impossibility.

The time has come for the Eagles and Dockers to be given more autonomy so that they can develop as real representatives of our State, even if each will have its own flavour and emphasis. It all comes down to the pride and passion of football - to support a club through thick and thin and to show attitude when barracking. The Subiaco Oval redevelopment has not helped, with the Government providing money but not insisting that the battlers be given a fair go to attend. Like many other modern institutions, our football authorities have put moneymaking ahead of people and their beliefs. They have forgotten the difference between corporate support and corporate control of football. Football is a people's game - our national game. It needs more than just spectators; it needs commitment. We had that commitment when the local competition was at its height and we could look forward to the state games each year. We need to recover the pride of Western Australian football and to promote more vigorously our interests within the national competition. We need a major review of WA football that will look at, among other things, player development, the Westar competition, community-based football generally and the future of the Eagles and Dockers.

SOBERING-UP SHELTER, GERALDTON

Statement by Member for Geraldton

MR BLOFFWITCH (Geraldton) [12.53 pm]: I will follow up on a grievance this morning about the Yamatji patrol. A sobering-up shelter will be built in Geraldton, which is certainly needed. Most of the sobering-up shelters are built in conjunction with an Aboriginal patrol, because, unfortunately, many of the problems of street drinking and that type of thing fall back on to the people involved with those patrols. It makes sense to me that a building be built for them, rather than their paying the exorbitant rent they are now paying, to give them an opportunity to foster and to build on that enterprise. It makes good commonsense. It will cost around \$140 000 to \$160 000 to construct the building, but it will be a positive step in the right direction. The patrols in the Kimberley work very effectively, and they are situated alongside the sobering-up shelter. They have certainly reduced the amount of drunkenness, which has allowed the community to enjoy its social evenings without being abused. The State Government should consider this matter. I will talk to the Lotteries Commission to try to get some money from it. However, the Government should look at this matter anyway.

SCHENBERG, THE LATE DR HAROLD

Statement by Member for Perth

MS WARNOCK (Perth) [12.55 pm]: I pay tribute today to the memory of an extraordinary man whose life was remarkable for its achievement, its generosity and its flamboyance. Dr Harold Schenberg - whose funeral in Perth this week was notable for the fact that he played the piano and sang - was a distinguished dermatologist, an enthusiastic musician and

a renowned collector of works of art. However, he was most noted in recent years for the fact that he gave donations of both art works and money to the Art Gallery of Western Australia and the University of Western Australia. He gave away millions of dollars, especially during his final illness, and took great pleasure in doing it. His sense of fun and wildly colourful dress sense gave his friends enjoyment while he was alive. His generous donations to the public collections at our major state gallery and our oldest university will enhance the lives of Western Australians who love art for generations to come.

Dr Harold Schenberg should be celebrated for the example of his philanthropy and for giving so much to his fellow Western Australians, whether they were friends or strangers. A gallery is named after him at the Western Australian Art Gallery, of which he was made the first patron in 1994, and an art centre will be created in his name at UWA, at which he first studied medicine. Each year a scholarship will be awarded at UWA for modern music, and a genre art prize to the value of the famous Archibald portrait prize in Sydney will be given to a fortunate artist. Vale Harold Schenberg, a life-enhancing companion to all who knew him and a man whose great generosity will be long remembered.

Members: Hear, hear!

JOONDALUP HEALTH CAMPUS

Statement by Member for Joondalup

MR BAKER (Joondalup) [12.56 pm]: I wish to use this brief opportunity to correct some of the usual falsehoods currently being peddled by the Labor Party in the northern suburbs concerning the nature, extent and availability of medical services being provided at the local Joondalup hospital. Public patients receive free hydrotherapy treatment at this hospital irrespective of where their associated surgical procedure was performed, if they live in the Joondalup region and if they, naturally enough, receive a referral from a specialist. The Joondalup hospital has had access to elective surgery waiting list strategy funds managed by the Central Wait List Bureau of the Metropolitan Health Service. In the current year to date, the hospital has undertaken 1 398 extra elective surgical cases.

The Joondalup hospital provides inpatient mental health services, comprising 25 acute care beds, five of which are in a specialised secure unit, to the people of the Joondalup region. This unit operates a 24-hour a day service and is staffed with highly qualified mental health professionals. The Joondalup hospital takes its mental health patients from its catchment area like all other public hospitals. Sufficient capacity exists in the metropolitan health region to provide enough places for mental health patients. The Joondalup Health Campus is the State's most modern, state-of-the-art hospital and provides myriad general and specialist medical services to the families of the Joondalup region. In the circumstances, the Labor Party should encourage its members to support the local Joondalup hospital instead of trafficking falsehoods, distortions and baseless fear campaigns and degrading the hospital's fine men and women who work hard to ensure that the health of local residents is maintained as their paramount concern.

SCHOOL CHAPLAINS

Statement by Member for Girrawheen

MR CUNNINGHAM (Girrawheen) [12.58 pm]: Last Saturday night, 10 June, well over 100 people gathered at Our Lady of Mercy church hall in Girrawheen to participate in the annual chaplaincy dinner to raise funds for the support of three chaplains in three schools: Girrawheen Senior High School, Balga Senior High School and Blackmore Primary School. The dinner was well organised by the local churches' district council. The occasion was a great community function and was an outstanding success with a real sense of urgency present.

A major concern in our community is that we are facing an extraordinary crisis in which the youth of our society are very much at risk. The growing ingredients of drug dependence, alcohol, depression and suicide is alarming. The best way to address their problems is to have more skilled chaplains in our public school system. Such a provision comes at a cost, thus the need for the annual dinner attended by parents, teaching staff, clergy of all denominations, school principals, business people and many others including the Labor candidate for Girrawheen, Margaret Quirk. This is to be applauded.

The local churches' district council is to be highly congratulated. The community is saying clearly from the coalface that we need to stop the misery, sorrow and carnage among our youth. The Government must give far greater financial assistance to support chaplains in our public school system. The money granted for chaplaincies by this Government is only a pittance.

PEEL HEALTH CAMPUS

Statement by Member for Mandurah

MR NICHOLLS (Mandurah) [1.00 pm] I commend the public health service, and the Peel Health Campus. We often hear comment and criticism about the health system. However, in Mandurah the Peel Health Campus has seen a significant reduction in the waiting list for surgery. For example, the waiting time for orthopaedic surgery for joint replacements was previously two years. In Mandurah now it is around three months. The waiting time for arthroscopic surgery was more than 12 months; it is now fewer than three months. In ophthalmology, such as cataract surgery, people waited more than 12 months; now the waiting time is three months or less. There is no waiting time list for ear, nose and throat surgery for children for tonsillectomies and grommets. I understand that the waiting time for similar surgery at Princess Margaret Hospital is 12 months or more. It is estimated that approximately 650 children will be born in Mandurah at the Peel Health Campus this year. To the end of May, 584 children had been born at that campus. The only reason that children can be

born in hospital in Mandurah now is that this Government committed to build a decent hospital in Mandurah instead of the pathetic excuse for a hospital that Labor built in 1989. It is about time we recognised the benefits we get through the health system.

Sitting suspended from 1.01 to 2.00 pm

[Questions without notice taken.]

APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No. 1) 2000

Third Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage.

MR KOBELKE (Nollamara) [2.37 pm]: I wish to use the third reading debate to cover a couple of matters that arose during the earlier debate and in the Estimates Committees. First, I will bring some reality to the discussion on the budget and what it involves. The budget involves many billions of dollars, and when we look to various agencies, we see that the amounts involved there are also very large. If the actual programs put in place and the services offered do not deliver to the people of Western Australia, it does not matter how much money is in the budget or how long we talk about it, it is irrelevant. What we are about when discussing the budget is what is the impact on the people we represent in our individual electorates. For the people in the electorate I represent, this is a very poor budget. It does not provide the assistance that people are looking for in a whole range of services; whether it be in our Police Force to do something about crime on the streets; whether it be for our hospitals, about which I hear horrendous stories of the lack of funding week after week; whether it be the problems in our schools; or whether it be on the other side of the equation and we look to the increased costs of the various services on which people must spend their money. I will give one example, because I have covered this in an earlier debate on government trading enterprises. When people pay their water rates and water bills, they are finding that the cost is going up at an unacceptable rate. That is happening because this Government is using the Water Corporation as a means of putting very large amounts of money into its budget. In 1998-99, which is the last year for which we have an annual report, the amount of money being paid into general revenue by the Water Corporation was some hundreds of millions of dollars.

The net amount, less the community service obligations, as a percentage of total revenue was 23 per cent passed on as revenue to the Government. In 1998-99 the total revenue of the Water Corporation was \$900m, 23 per cent of which was passed on as revenue to the Government. I do not know if the position is the same this year or whether it will be the same next year, because it varies from year to year. On that figure for 1998-99, when I and my constituents pay our water bills, we know that nearly \$1 in every \$4 is tax to the Government. That is totally unacceptable. That money is being taken out of the Water Corporation to fill the deficit in the Government's budget. Those figures are based on the annual report of the Water Corporation for 1998-99. In the coming year the amount of money to be taken from those corporations is over \$500m, which is a four-fold increase on the figures of four or five years ago. I repeat: In just four or five years the total take from government trading enterprises by way of taxation by this Government has increased four-fold from about \$123m to a total of over \$500m, and the biggest contribution is coming from the Water Corporation.

Mr Bradshaw: You will stop it when you get into government, will you?

Mr KOBELKE: We will not have anywhere near the increase, and we will see if we can turn the situation around. The member will see that in our election campaign. When this Government came into power, a contribution of the order of \$120m a year was taken into government coffers in the form of revenue and other payments. That contribution has gone from \$120m or \$130m to over \$500m. That is the deliberate policy of the Court Government of milking the ordinary families of this State to try to cover the deficit in the Government's budget.

Mr Court: Are you saying that we have put up electricity and gas charges excessively?

Mr KOBELKE: We have a Premier who is very good at running his line and not answering the question. I will not take up his interjection because it is a red herring. He must listen to what I say and address the issues, but he does not want to address the issues, and that is why we have so many problems. Let us get down to the issues and how this affects the ordinary people in my electorate of Nollamara.

I will pass this page of figures up to you, Mr Speaker, to see if you will agree to have it incorporated in *Hansard*. A pensioner couple in Balga presented it to me. They know how to budget and are disciplined. They have worked all their lives to try to get themselves comfortable and able to live a reasonable life. They are quite frugal in the management of their affairs. The gentleman presented to me a detailed account of his and his wife's expenditure. They are in a house they are buying from Homeswest for which they have to pay their own home insurance, water rates, council rates, power bills and mortgage. If one examines the house repayments of just over \$3 000 a year, that means they are paying approximately \$60 a week towards their mortgage, or the equivalent of a low level of rent. They have a vehicle which they must keep on the road. They have itemised the amount spent on petrol, the Royal Automobile Club membership of \$42 a year, the cost of licensing and comprehensive insurance of \$370.

The SPEAKER: I find the top part of the document the member has given me in order where it shows figures, but the bottom part of the document has some notes under "annual balance".

Mr KOBELKE: Those notes relate to the letters next to the figures.

The SPEAKER: In that case I will allow it to be incorporated in *Hansard*.

[The material in appendix A was incorporated by leave of the House.]

[See page 7724.]

Mr KOBELKE: The amount left over after paying normal expenses such as for housing, utilities and newspapers is \$132 a week. Therefore, a husband and wife have \$132 a week to pay for their clothing, food and entertainment. We members receive very good salaries and must realise how difficult it would be to meet the standard living expenses for a couple for food, clothing and entertainment with \$132 a week. The couple have a number of children and 19 grandchildren for whom they like to buy a present at Christmas and on birthdays. All this comes from the \$132 a week. This family knows how to budget and are frugal and disciplined in managing their finances. What about those who are not as controlled and spend a fair amount on entertainment with the odd bet or trip to the pub? How much would be left from \$132 if one spent \$10 or \$20 a week at the pub? Hitting these people with extra charges on water and car insurance, as this Government has done, makes it difficult for these families to survive. I hope some members take the opportunity to look at those figures.

The Government's budget has placed an additional burden on ordinary families in Western Australia. The Premier was wrong to say that the budget had no tax increases. Water Corporation levies have increased, and other charge increases were announced a short time before the budget presentation. Those charges may not be referred to in the budget speech, but they directly impinge on the budget under debate.

I now refer to a couple of matters which arose in the estimates committee hearings. I turn first to the WorkSafe hearing. I gave a speech in this place a few weeks ago outlining my concern about the number of workplace fatalities in Western Australia, and the fact that government statistics were totally unreliable. One can have no confidence that WorkSafe's figures reflect the number of people killed in the workplace because the number of deaths for which compensation is paid paint a different and worrying picture as they are increasing at a high rate. The number of declared deaths is declining. During the estimates committee debate the minister pointed out that I had it all wrong and that some explanation could be provided. The minister stated -

I can go on and provide further statistical information which only goes to highlight even further the flaws in your assessment.

That undertaking to provide supplementary information has not been met. I take it that an oversight has occurred or that the minister could find no statistical information or arguments to make a hole in the argument I put to the Chamber; namely, that we have a worsening situation regarding fatalities in the workplace and that WorkSafe's figures are totally unreliable. The minister said I was wrong. The minister said I would be given the details by supplementary information, which have not been provided. Answers have been provided to other matters I posed at the time. For example, no definition of "workplace fatality" applies as such fatalities are judged on a case-by-case basis, and general guidelines exist for the kind of deaths to be investigated to determine whether to declare them work related. No hard and fast definition applies concerning whether to count deaths in that way. One example I gave was the unfortunate lady killed in a fire in Northam about three years ago. Her child was also killed. The death of that child was not counted in the fatalities. According to the information I have gleaned from the guidelines, that death should have been counted. However, the guidelines are so loose and vague that in that case it was not. The situation is similar with the Gracetown deaths. Eight people were killed. One was a workplace fatality but the other seven were not; yet according to the vague guidelines I have been given, they should have been counted as workplace fatalities. If a professional person, such as a teacher, is in charge of a group, as was the situation in that case, and the death of that teacher is counted as a workplace fatality, according to some of the guidelines, the deaths of those under the control of that teacher should also be counted as workplace fatalities. The same situation would apply to a diving accident. For example, someone may be on a diving expedition and he may pay someone to control the boat. If the person who was on the boat for recreational purposes was killed, that person's death should be counted as a workplace fatality because he was under the control or auspices of someone who was working. Therefore, that death should be included in the statistics. The deaths of the children and the parents at Gracetown were not included. Maybe they should not have been, but there is no hard and fast definition of who should and should not be included.

Putting those arguments aside - that debate took place at another time - the minister said that I have the situation all wrong. She said that statistical information would be provided to show the flaws in my argument. No such information has come back by way of answers to those questions. I hope that the minister, or one of the staff in her office, is listening, so that if they have that information and it was simply an oversight that it was not provided, it will be provided to me either today or within a day or so. If that is not the case, we will know that I am right and that the figures are unacceptable; that is, there has been a large increase in the number of workplace fatalities and the official figures released by WorkSafe are unreliable and should not be used. That is clearly the implication that flows from the fact that the minister has not yet provided those answers. I take it that I will be corrected very quickly if I am wrong; otherwise, it will stand on the record that I am correct and that the Government needs to address a major problem.

The final matter with which I will deal briefly concerns the fact that the answers I received to questions I asked of the Department of Productivity and Labour Relations were very unsatisfactory. When I asked about delays in registering agreements in the public sector, I was talking about the overall process, and I think that would have been fairly clear. However, I received an answer from DOPLAR indicating that it was fairly prompt in the bureaucratic part of clearing the matters. That is deceptive and false, because the process of getting agreement on enterprise agreements in the public sector involves a range of bodies, and DOPLAR is just the key agency that helps to control that process. The individual agencies must seek advice from DOPLAR. After the proposed agreement reaches DOPLAR, it goes to the cabinet subcommittee.

Then it goes back to DOPLAR. The whole process is protracted and is used to frustrate the determination of an agreement in a prompt way. DOPLAR has ducked the question and been misleading by talking about only one aspect of the process in which it is involved. One would hope to get more honest and direct answers from the minister and her agency than some of the answers I received in supplementary information from DOPLAR.

This is a false budget, and one in which the Government is trying to paper over major problems. Those problems will come down on this State. Unfortunately, we will then be required to correct the problems in this budget which the Government is seeking to hide.

DR EDWARDS (Maylands) [2.54 pm]: I will comment first on a couple of budget issues that I was not able to totally satisfactorily resolve. I hope that in the near future I will receive more information. The first issue relates to the fact that there was in the budget papers an item for the Forest Products Commission, but it did not have a division number. Therefore, we were unable to ask the Minister for Forest Products any questions about the statements of the Forest Products Commission which were contained in the budget papers. We attempted to do that in the division for the Department of Conservation and Land Management. I suppose in some ways it was fair, but in those officers' minds they have moved on from being CALM to being the Department of Conservation. Many of the questions that we asked were met initially with a blank face and then with a comment like, "Why on earth are you asking me that?" When my response was that CALM was still in charge of the matter, their answer would be, "Oh, yes." I still have a number of outstanding questions that I will submit as questions on notice. Until all the facts on what the Government is doing in the forest are laid out, particularly facts about the structural adjustment of the industry and what logging is intended this year, in the next financial year and up until the end of 2003, everyone is in a difficult position. The Opposition needs to know all of that so that it can work out precisely its policies and the impacts of its policies. However, industries and the community also need to know that so that they know where they are going in the short term.

Mr Court: What information do you want to know? Is it what areas are being logged?

Dr EDWARDS: According to the Minister for the Environment, I have put in 17 requests for information. I want more details about the Government's logging plans for 2000-01, its plans for 2001 to the end of 2003, and what it is doing exactly about the business exits.

Mr Court: A large part of those logging plans came out in the Ferguson report. That was what the discussion was about.

Dr EDWARDS: We need more detail than is contained in that report.

Mr Court: We have been completely open about it. As you know, between now and 2003, to meet scaled-down contracts, we will be logging in some old-growth forest areas. You know that. That has all been made public.

Dr EDWARDS: What we do not know and what the minister will not tell us, for example, is the cubic metres of old-growth forest that have been logged this year and in years gone by. The answer I got back contained the ridiculous assertion that this would require too much trouble to work out. For God's sake! Has the Premier not watched the demonstrations? He must know what those figures are. The Government must have collected those figures. Why does the Government not release them? Trying to get some of this information is like drawing teeth. I am again submitting the same questions. I am finding that we are now starting to get a trickle of information.

Mr Court: Do you accept that we have been open in saying that we have to go into these areas?

Dr EDWARDS: No, I do not accept that. I accept that under the new director of CALM that attempts were made to answer questions, and initially, earlier this year, information did flow. I accept that when I ask questions of the Minister for Forest Products I get answers. However, the most recent answer I got back from the Minister for the Environment, on a request that I made in January, is that I must wait again, that I have 17 similar requests about this issue and that I am in the queue! That is not an appropriate response. This is the argument I am putting now.

Mr Court: I was in Manjimup the other day and a group of women involved with the industry came to see me about their concerns. They said that the Labor Party would not log any old-growth forest if it were successful at the election. Could you tell me whether, between now and 2003, with the existing contracts, you will be logging old-growth forests?

Dr EDWARDS: No, I cannot tell the Premier that until he gives more information about what he is doing, in what blocks he intends logging to occur in the near future and what he will do after that.

Mr Court: Is the member serious? After all the debate, the Ferguson inquiry, all the public meetings that were held down south and our saying publicly that we will go into this area and that area, is the member honestly telling me she cannot say whether Labor will log old-growth forests?

Dr EDWARDS: If the Premier thinks he has given us all that information to which he has referred, he is deluded. If all that information were freely available and flowing from this Government, why would the Minister for the Environment write to me and say that she cannot answer my questions, that she has received 17 requests from me for this type of information, that she cannot get the resources together to answer them and that I will get an answer somewhere down the track? For heaven's sake!

Mr Court: Are you saying that you cannot say how you will supply timber to contractual levels?

Dr EDWARDS: The Premier is asking me to say which blocks we will go into, what volumes we will take, and how many workers will be affected.

Mr Court: In broad terms.

Dr EDWARDS: I want to answer the Premier, but I cannot until he provides me with a measure of information about what the Government is doing in 2000-01 and what it intends to do in the years after. The Premier does not even know what he will be doing.

Mr Court: It is all spelt out in the Ferguson report.

Dr EDWARDS: It is not. The Premier needs to read that report properly.

Mr Court: The logging plan went out for public consultation.

Dr EDWARDS: I am talking about the years after that and what the Government intends to do.

Mr Court: I am saying that the strategy to 2003 has been released. Ferguson said we can go here and there and we cannot go there, etc.

Dr EDWARDS: I would like to continue my remarks. As the Minister for Forest Products knows, I was sitting in the public gallery this morning with someone from the industry. People from the industry who we meet and who telephone us say that they wish they knew what was going on and that they appreciate the difficulty we are having as an Opposition when, as members of local communities, they cannot find out information.

Mr Court: Who said that?

Dr EDWARDS: The Premier should read the grievance I spoke on two weeks ago about a letter from the Pemberton Progress Association. At that stage, its letters were unanswered, although they may have been answered since then. The association did not know what was to occur in Pemberton. I refer to the comments of the Minister for Forest Products about the future of the mill at Pemberton. The Premier might think information is being provided, but I am saying it is not all on the Table. The Opposition would like to receive all the information. In case he has not noticed, we are in opposition. What is the main characteristic of Oppositions? They are starved of information, as the Premier knows from his experience on this side when he complained of the same thing.

Mr Court: You have demonstrated that you are not prepared to tell the people down south whether they will be getting any old-growth timber between now and 2000-03.

Dr EDWARDS: What hypocrisy from a Premier whose minister will not answer a question about the volume of old-growth forest that is being logged. The minister says he cannot give me that information because it would be too much trouble to collect it. I ask the Premier, indeed! He can whitewash some people but he cannot whitewash the Opposition in this Chamber and that is what he is trying to do.

Mr Court: How about you being open. You can speak for as long as you like, but you should tell the people in Manjimup the truth.

Dr EDWARDS: I am telling them the truth. I am telling them that in 2000-01, the Government's take of jarrah will be 12 per cent of old-growth forest. Information we have found indicates that in previous years it was only 2 per cent of old-growth forest. I will tell the community that the Premier has stood up and claimed that the Government has been open and accountable and put all the information on the table when in fact more old-growth karri and jarrah are being logged now than was logged in 1997-98.

Mr Court: If you know all that, what are you going to do?

Dr EDWARDS: It is clear. The Opposition will phase out logging of old-growth forest. When the Government shows us theirs we will show it ours.

The next issue refers to the Zoo.

Mr Court: You changed that subject quickly.

Dr EDWARDS: I just spent eight minutes on that topic instead of talking about other things.

Mr Court: I will give you 80 minutes' extension if you tell us what is going on.

Dr EDWARDS: The Premier is so generous!

The appropriations provide for an increase in the salary of the Chief Executive Officer of the Zoo from \$81 000 in 1998-99 to \$155 000 in 2003-04. Is there some reason that this salary increase is so profound? Is it an allowance for future years based on an estimated annual increase of 5 per cent? I hope the Government will not stick with this as a flat rate increase. Although I appreciate the valuable work the chief executive officer does, and I accept that the increase in his salary to date is appropriate, no such rate of increase is shown for other chief executive officers.

I refer now to the Bayswater Primary School which I recently visited at the request of some parents to examine the steps at the front of the school into Roberts Road. In 1995 the steps were repaired. However, at the time they were being repaired, parents and other people warned the school that the steps were not being built to the proper standard. It has now become clear that the steps are not only incredibly steep but also the space between each step does not meet the appropriate standards. I now understand why I have had to walk down them sideways. Even my small foot does not fit comfortably on the steps.

The other problem is that the height of the steps varies. As one climbs them one encounters a short step, a higher step and a short step. The steps have now been deemed to be unsafe, which is no surprise given how steep they are. For some time they have been barricaded with a combination of weldmesh and fencing to stop students using the steps. The school has been told that if anyone uses those steps and has an accident, the school is liable. The school is very concerned about that potential cost. The school has also been told that it must bear the brunt of putting in new steps at a cost of around \$25 000. At this stage the regional education people are saying that is not a priority because the money in the maintenance budget needs to be spent on other areas, and that the Bayswater Parents and Citizens Association must raise the money for the steps. This is difficult for that P&C and for the school. Bayswater is not exactly an area that is flush with funds. It would find it difficult to raise \$25 000 for steps. It is a waste of its fundraising capabilities when the money should go to projects that will better improve educational outcomes in the area. I ask the department to reconsider the issue. Given the fact that the department was warned that the steps were not to standard when they were under construction and that I have talked to the department over about four years and received assurances that the steps would be refurbished and made safe during the long holidays, I urge the department to attend to the matter as a priority. At this stage students are having to use other entrances or stream up and rush through the disabled entrance. I walked down that entrance the other day as the students were coming back from a break. As members can imagine, enthusiastic students rushing up a pathway makes progress difficult. I hope the department will look at the matter and make that rectification.

The next issue concerns a telephone tower. Approval has been sought to erect it in Beaufort Street in Bedford. The phone tower site is zoned commercial, but it is at the back of the site and is very near some households. The blocks immediately next door to this commercial site are residential. In recent times they have been subdivided, so that houses are now close to the fence. The proposed phone tower is around 23 metres tall, so it will be a visible structure. One of the problems is that the same company that is building the big tower has erected a smaller, low-impact tower on the same corner. When we have spoken to people to draw to their attention that the tower will be erected there and to find out whether they have an opinion on the issue, the response is, "Well, it is already up and it is not too bad." Initially the tower that went up was not even connected to the electricity supply. There was the strange anomaly of people seeing a council planning sign indicating that the tower was to be erected and them thinking the small structure was it. I am not sure whether that was not done on purpose to have people think that the small tower was the final result. We need a state policy to improve cooperation when someone wants to erect a phone tower. I know that we must have phone towers - I am sure almost every member has a mobile phone - but there needs to be more sharing of facilities and better overall planning so that we have two or three carriers using the one tower rather than three or four carriers needing to locate in exactly the same area but not sharing facilities. I urge the State Government to get involved to the extent that it can. I am aware that the towers are seen as development approvals, so the Minister for Planning can get involved with appeals, but we need a process before that stage.

Mr Kierath: That is exactly what is happening at present.

Dr EDWARDS: Does the minister mean the appeals process?

Mr Kierath: The cooperation and coordination between carriers is happening now.

Dr EDWARDS: I would like to see that in writing because I understand that until recently the committee that was set up about three years ago to consider this matter had not released its draft policy. There is some disappointment within the industry that a committee set up to sort this out at a state level has been tardy. If the minister has some good news on that matter, I would welcome it.

MR RIPPER (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.10 pm]: I will make some comment on the Government's operating balance, its history and the way in which it will achieve its forecast operating balance next year. This Government has chosen the general government operating balance as the most appropriate means by which to judge its financial credentials.

As part of the budget information, the Government published a paper entitled "Accrual Budget Background Information". That paper contains a history of the operating statement for the general government sector and illustrates that the general government sector net operating balance has been in deficit for five of the seven budgets this Government has brought down. The deficit in 1993-94 was \$358.8m, and we had a surplus of \$417.3m in 1994-95 and \$301.1m in 1995-96. Since then, we have experienced deficit after deficit: \$197.9m in 1996-97; \$263.5m in 1997-98; and \$135m in 1998-99. Of course, we expect a deficit of \$60m this financial year.

The Labor Party has been accused by the Government of placing too much emphasis on the cash figures. The Government wants everyone to look at the accrual figures. These are the accrual figures, and they illustrate that this Government has brought down seven budgets and the accrual balance for five of them has been in deficit. On that basis, this Government's finances are much more likely to be in deficit than in surplus. It asks us to believe in a pre-election year that it will have four surpluses in a row. That is not credible. Its record is five out of seven budgets in deficit. I repeat: The Labor Party is using the figures the Treasurer has asked it to use.

The Treasurer says that the general government sector operating balance will be in surplus next year to the tune of \$42m. That is a very flimsy surplus, and I will outline one mechanism by which it has been achieved. That mechanism is the Government's cash flow from government trading enterprises. During the estimates committee process, I asked the Government to provide me with a history of the net cash flow from government trading enterprises to the general government sector since 1993-94. I have the answer, and it is very illuminating. It states -

The table below provides details of the total net cash flow from the government trading enterprises to the general government sector that are administered through Treasury. The receipts are made up of tax and rate equivalents, statutory levies and business undertakings - dividends, surpluses and others. The payments represent community service obligations (CSOs) and equity contributions to agencies.

It is very instructive to look at the growth in the Government's take from its own trading enterprises. In 1993-94, the Government took \$126.3m; in 1994-95, it took \$131.9m; in 1995-96, \$132.7m; in 1996-97, \$140.8m; in 1997-98, \$167.4m; in 1998-99, \$258m; and in 1999-2000, \$239.9m.

It is forecast that in 2000-01, the Government will take \$501m from government trading enterprises. There will be an increase of \$262m in the Government's take from trading enterprises next financial year. It is no wonder the Government is forecasting a move from deficit into surplus! That additional \$262m is a tax on the rest of the community. The consumers of the services provided by those government trading enterprises are paying more than they need to pay because the Government is taking such a large amount of money out of the Water Corporation, Western Power, AlintaGas and the port authorities. Rather than take that amount of money out of its trading enterprises, the Government should improve the products and services that are provided by those enterprises. It is very interesting to examine the impact of this large amount of money on the Government's bottom line. Next year, the Government is forecast to have a cash deficit of \$345m. Were it not for the increase in the Government's take from its trading enterprises, the Government's cash deficit in 2000-01 would be \$607m.

Mr Court: Are you trying to make the point that we should not take money from government trading enterprises?

Mr RIPPER: The point I am trying to make is that this Government is covering up its budget problems and poor financial management by taking excessive amounts of money from its trading enterprises. That means that those government trading enterprises are prevented from charging the community less than they are at the moment and the community is paying more for those services than it should.

Mr Court: Does that mean that in government you would cut electricity and gas tariffs?

Mr RIPPER: We pay too much for electricity in this State. The gap between electricity prices in this State and electricity prices in other States is increasing. There has been a fall in real terms in electricity prices in Western Australia. However, that fall has not matched the fall in real terms in electricity prices in the eastern States. Therefore, the Western Australian consumers of electricity have an increased disadvantage.

Mr Court: Are you saying that if you were in government you would cut electricity and gas tariffs? We have had one increase in eight years. In 10 years in government, you increased those tariffs every year, yet you are now telling us that you will lower them. That is fine. No-one will believe you.

Mr RIPPER: I am saying that we could do better in this State with electricity prices. We do not have sufficient competition in our electricity generating industry in this State. That has been pointed out by the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia and by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia. Opposition members are not the only ones saying that electricity prices are too high in this State; it has been said by major business organisations. They are pointing to insufficient competition within the electricity generating industry.

Mr Court: Tell us what the Labor Party is going to do.

Mr RIPPER: We will be announcing our energy policy in the run-up to the election. One of the aims of our energy policy will be to reduce the gap in electricity prices between those in Western Australia and those in the eastern States. I come back to the way in which the Government is covering up the holes in its budget by this tax take from government trading enterprises.

A note to the supplementary information I received states that the Government shifted \$85m of receipts from budget year 1999-2000 to budget year 2000-01. It is a pity that the Premier and Treasurer has left the Chamber because I would like to know why the Government shifted an \$85m payment from the Water Corporation's financial year 1999-2000 to the financial year 2000-01. I would like an explanation from the Premier of the accounting implications of that timing change in the payment from the Water Corporation. I have adjusted the figures for the take from government enterprises to properly record what I think is the accrual accounting effect of that change in timing. It has been pointed out in the supplementary information given to me that -

In the absence of this one-off cash timing adjustment, the net cash flows in 1999-2000 and 2000-01 would be \$324.943 million and \$416.366 million respectively.

In other words, the Government is saying that after an adjustment is made for the cash timing issue, it will take an extra \$91.4m next year from the government trading enterprises to what it took last year.

I return to the surplus deficit issue: The forecast surplus for next year is \$42m. Were it not for this additional take from the government trading enterprises of \$91.4m, this Government, on the Premier's preferred measure, would be \$49.4m in deficit next year. This Government would be almost \$50m in deficit, in accrual terms, on the operating balance in the general government sector - the Premier's preferred measure - were it not for the fact that it will take an additional \$91.4m in accrual terms out of the government trading enterprises for the next financial year. That \$91.4m does not come out of thin air; it is paid for by the people who must buy water services from the Water Corporation; electricity from Western Power; and gas from AlintaGas. It is paid for by the exporters of this State who use the services of our ports; and all those

people who buy services from government trading enterprises. The Government could have told the government trading enterprises to lower their prices and provide a better service to the people of Western Australia. The Government did not do that; the Government asked for another \$91m so that it could cover up the fact that it would otherwise have a deficit of about \$50m. It wanted go to the public and say that it will have a surplus of \$42m. It should thank electricity consumers, Water Corporation users, port users, and AlintaGas consumers. The Government is taxing the community through its trading enterprises to cover up its financial management problems.

DR CONSTABLE (Churchlands) [3.24 pm]: I shall make some brief remarks this afternoon in this third reading debate on the budget Bill. I echo the words of other speakers, particularly the member for Bassendean's comments earlier today, about the information provided in the budget papers. I have no argument with the presentation of the accounts according to accrual accounting standards; they are fine. However, as years go by and in the nine years I have seen of budget papers, less and less information is provided about the specifics of the budget and where the money is being spent. One of my complaints from year to year is of the difficulty comparing the information one receives, particularly written information, as it has no continuity from one year to the next. It would do the Government well to look at the problem, so that members reading the papers can make comparisons from year to year about specific programs. Once upon a time we received a great deal of information about specific programs and these days virtually no specific information is provided. Members must read a range of papers, annual reports and so on to get essential information which should be included in the budget papers.

I shall raise two substantive matters this afternoon. The first matter relates to the issue of consultants; the second relates to Perry Lakes Stadium which is just across the border of my electorate. I shall begin by making comments about the report on consultants for the six months ending 30 June 1999, which was tabled yesterday. It is pertinent to point out some of the history of such reports. The first report was handed down by the Government for the six months ending 31 December 1994, in response to a request I made to the Premier, in the name of accountability, that we should have such a report on consultants to the Government. In that six month period about \$30m was spent on consultants. In the second consultants' report for the following six months to 30 June 1995, the amount spent was \$35m. Then there was a most extraordinary change. The following report for the six months ending 31 December 1995, showed that only \$11.2m had been spent on consultants. The reason for that drop from \$35m to \$11.2m was because the definition of "consultant" had miraculously changed, so that it appeared the Government was spending a lot less money on consultants than it really was.

I have a particular interest in this matter. For a Government to be accountable, this type of information should be fully and properly available to members of Parliament and to citizens of the State. That change has led me to ask questions on notice occasionally about consultants. On 23 September 1999 I asked the Minister for Health about the consultants engaged since 1 February 1999 by the major metropolitan hospitals: Royal Perth Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, King Edward Memorial Hospital, Princess Margaret Hospital for Children and Fremantle Hospital. I picked up yesterday's consultants' report for the six months ended 30 June 1999. My question to the Minister for Health therefore covered the period of the consultants' report tabled yesterday. I was not surprised, but I was angry, to see that most of the consultants listed in the Minister for Health's answers do not appear in the Government's summary of consultants. We are therefore not being provided with a full list of consultants. I shall give examples of some of the consultants employed in those hospitals during the period that the summary report tabled yesterday is intended to cover.

Royal Perth Hospital spent \$4 950 and \$31 000 on a review of the engineering department and \$3 600 on an analysis of its telephone facilities. The answers to my questions detail some small amounts Royal Perth Hospital spent on a couple of consultancies, followed by \$4 250 on structuring consulting for the helipad, \$24 400 on an investigation of the mechanical aspects of the emergency centre project, and \$8 720 on consulting for the fire sprinkler project. The hospital also spent amounts of less than \$1 000 on engineering consultancies and \$80 000 to facilitate the restructuring and re-engineering of the corporate services department. These do not appear on the report tabled in Parliament yesterday. During the period about which I asked, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital spent \$4 944 on a review, or work-flow study, of the Metropolitan Health Service Board supply chain and about a further \$20 000 was spent at Royal Perth Hospital. Of particular note are the large amounts spent by Princess Margaret Hospital for Children and King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women that do not appear on the Government's summary of consultants: \$12 117 on a review of hospital-wide finances; \$25 858 on benchmarking at Princess Margaret and King Edward hospitals, which was funded by the Health Department. These do not appear on the Health Department's summary of consultants for that period. Almost \$3 000 was spent on preparation for a property market appraisal for properties owned by King Edward Memorial Hospital. The hospitals spent a further \$76 000 on clinical equipment valuations, which does not appear on the Government's report. These are not trivial amounts of money and should appear in the summary to provide a full review of the money that is spent on consultants under the Health portfolio. Another \$82 394 was spent on accommodation study plans. This figure does not appear in the report either. Hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of consultancies in the Health portfolio alone do not appear in this report. It is time the Government reassessed its definition of accountability and provided a full report of consultancies for all government-sector agencies. The only reason we find out about the consultancies that do not appear in the summary is through members asking questions and digging for information. These sorts of things should be the bread and butter of accountability for any Government.

Perry Lakes Stadium is just over the border of the Churchlands electorate in the electorate of Cottesloe. Many people in the electorate of Churchlands use the Perry Lakes ground and it is very much part of their lives. There is much discussion and investigation about the possibility of redeveloping the stadium area for mainly residential development. Perry Lakes Stadium was a major, international-standard stadium built for the 1962 Commonwealth Games. It was the great pride of Western Australia during the Commonwealth Games. Nearly 40 years later, the stadium is freehold and belongs to the Town of Cambridge. The stadium came under the new municipality of the Town of Cambridge following the restructure

of the City of Perth. The development of Perry Lakes Stadium was initially jointly funded by the City of Perth and the State Government. At that time, the City of Perth had a wide and broad rate base. It was quite proper for a capital city municipality to be involved in the funding of such a stadium. However, if we turn to the year 2000, we find that pressure is being put on the Town of Cambridge to finance the lion's share of a new athletics stadium. That is completely unfair; in fact, it is a ridiculous proposition to expect a very small municipality to fund an international-standard athletics stadium.

Ms MacTiernan: It can fund it out of the endowment fund.

Dr CONSTABLE: It does not have the endowment fund to do that.

Ms MacTiernan: Didn't it get it?

Dr CONSTABLE: No, it did not. In 1962, as I said, the City of Perth was a major capital city and was very involved in hosting the Commonwealth Games. It is suggested by the Government, particularly through the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Hon Norman Moore, that the Town of Cambridge fund a major slice of many millions of dollars - \$9m or \$10m as I was told in the Estimates Committee last week - to build an international-standard boutique athletics stadium. The two sites that are under discussion are at Curtin University of Technology, which is not within the Town of Cambridge, and the A-class reserve near Underwood Avenue, which is in the City of Nedlands. The suggestion is that this little local authority fund an athletics stadium outside its own boundaries, which is another absurdity in this situation. At the same time as all this is going on, and the Government is putting pressure on the Town of Cambridge to sell off land to pay for the stadium, we find three major sporting complexes being funded in large or in total measure by the State Government. First, last weekend the Premier announced the funding for a new soccer stadium. Secondly, there is a motorplex at Kwinana, with \$16m for its construction being funded totally by the State Government. Thirdly, the Government has pledged \$1.5m a year for 20 years to fund the upgrade of the Subiaco football stadium. That is \$30m in total over 20 years for the Subiaco stadium. I am sure you will agree with me, Mr Deputy Speaker, that it is grossly unfair and grossly inconsistent to ask a local authority to fund the lion's share of an international-standard athletics stadium while the Government is quite prepared to spend upwards of \$60m or \$70m on three other stadiums for motor sports, soccer and Australian rules football, and athletics somehow must be funded by this small local authority. I ask the Premier to look into this matter and to rule fairly that this is a state concern not a matter for a small local authority.

MS McHALE (Thornlie) [3.37 pm]: My contribution this afternoon will be to comment briefly on the process of the Estimates Committees in terms of how well they flowed and so on, and then to draw from some of the questions and answers in the estimates hearing on Health to reflect on what we learnt or did not learn about the 2000-01 budget for the Health portfolio. Like the previous speaker, who was also at the estimates hearing on Health, I have grave concerns about the lack of transparency of the Health budget. Indeed, my overall and overarching comment about the Health budget is the lack of information that we were able to get through the estimates process. I will make a couple of remarks about the process itself. As I have said in previous years, I am a bit of an estimates-phile. I find the process of estimates very useful, and I am a great supporter of the estimates process. If it is used wisely by members on both sides, we from the Opposition can pursue the policies of the Government and the commitments used by government members to find information about their electorates or, indeed, to have dorothy dixers, as I gather happened in the estimates hearings on Lands and Fair Trading. That is not by any means a useful application of time in the estimates process. Nevertheless, the estimates process provides an appropriate opportunity for members to explore on behalf of their electorates or from their portfolio perspective.

I know that chairs of committees can ask questions, and I as a chair have asked one or two questions, so I recognise the chair's right; however, there needs to be some judicious management of that discretion or right. I record my disappointment that in the instance of the Health estimates hearing, the chair, in my view, exercised that right rather largely and, putting it bluntly, spent a lot of time asking questions when I felt that members of the committee should have a greater slice of the cake. Although I am not objecting to chairs of committees having that right, it is incumbent upon us all as chairs of committees to exercise that right with some caution and not gobble up the time. Perhaps this is a criticism of the chair of that committee, but I am putting on record that we all need to be conscious of not monopolising the time. I felt that was the case in Health, notwithstanding the fact that Health has five hours allocated to it, which is quite a long time.

I can comment on the process from the view point of being both a member and a chair of the Estimates Committee. This year the hearings went smoothly. Overall the ministers did not rely unduly on their advisers, unlike previous years, and that was quite good. In the hearing on Health, I commented to the minister that he had reduced the number of his advisers from an army of about 25 to 16, which is still a lot, but I did say that he had at least made the effort to reduce the number of advisers. I still question whether having 16 public servants at an Estimates Committee is an excessive and unnecessary use of the time, although there may be good cause for that. It is interesting to note that in the other place there were also 16 advisers.

I will turn to some of my concerns about the transparency of the Health budget. As the member for Churchlands indicated, in her view, many legitimate questions were asked for which no answers were given. However, the budget papers do not provide answers to some very sensible and legitimate questions. That is of great concern, given that the Health budget is the largest single budget item of the State's budget and absorbs over a quarter of the State's budget. Accountability and transparency should be made available for members with such an enormous slice of the state budget. It was not made available. For instance, the minister could not tell us how hospitals would be staffed or outline the hospitals' budgets for 2000-01. The hospitals will start a new financial year without knowing their allocations. It is heartening to hear the Chief Executive Officer of the Metropolitan Health Service say that he hoped the hospitals can start the financial year knowing their budgets. Frankly, I do not believe it will happen given the indication which arose during the Health hearings in the

Estimates Committee. It was clear that many of the negotiations were under way, and that there was little hope that the hospitals would know their budgets by 1 July.

Perhaps of greater concern was the contradictory information which seemed to emanate from the Estimates Committee on the capital works program in particular, and whether the Health Department and Metropolitan Health Service had sought supplementary funding. I traverse the answers provided to justify my concern regarding conflicting information, if not contradictory information. I asked on three occasions whether supplementary funding had been sought, and I received differing answers. I asked Mr Weeks whether he could quantify the supplementary funding and how much money was needed to top up his budget. The answer provided was that it was in the region of \$9m. When that point was pursued, we were told a slightly reduced amount of \$3m of supplementary funding. This is found on page 33 of the Thursday, 1 June Estimates Committee *Hansard*.

The minister then said, looking at the budget papers for the 1999-2000 financial year, as compared to 2000-01, there was an expected deficit of \$20m. He said that the department had sought supplementary funding of \$20m, and had received it. However, the minister was not able to indicate when that supplementary funding had been received. For the record, the correct answer, one would hope, is that there is a \$20m shortfall, for which supplementary funding has been sought. Treasury has not, at this stage, approved such supplementary funding. The story seems to be that the minister was not really sure whether supplementary funding had been sought; and, if so, how much. The figures were \$9m, \$3m and \$20m. It seems that the correct figure is in fact \$20m.

As I said in my speech on the Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill, if that supplementary funding is not approved - from comments made by the Premier, it looks likely that very little supplementary funding will be approved - the hospitals will start this financial year with a significant deficit, which will have a large impact on patient services. The Premier has been at pains to say that the hospitals are adequately funded, that they are coming in on balance and so on, painting a very positive picture of the state of the budget, both last year and this year; yet, in reality, the hospitals have a not inconsiderable deficit, which is built on previous years of deficit. Therefore, it is not as if any fat is in the system for that deficit to be absorbed without any pain. The reality of the funding issue to hospitals is far different from that which is painted by this Government. It will be interesting to see whether that \$20m supplementary funding is approved. If it is not, I believe that yet again our hospitals will face a very tight financial situation as they move into the financial year.

The other area on which I will comment is capital works. Trying to understand the capital works budget of the largest single item is not easy. It is a bit of a paper trail trying to find out where last year's money has gone and what has been allocated for the next financial year. The problem is that we keep getting different answers. Sometimes we are told that there was \$10m last year for the oral health centre at the University of Western Australia, and sometimes we are told that no money was in the budget last year; yet money has apparently been transferred to this year's budget based on the oral health unit. The second story is that there was a slippage of a lot of the construction and that \$11m was purportedly not spent last year and was allocated for this year; yet that conflicts with the oral health justification.

Finally, there is the question of the sale of Lemnos Hospital at \$13.9m, which was to have been included in the budget as an asset sale but which does not appear as such. We were told during estimates hearings that it is there in the budget, but how do we know that it is there, because it is not set out as an asset sale; it is just there as part of the budget. The problem is the lack of transparency and full accountability.

MR MARLBOROUGH (Peel) [3.53 pm]: I will talk about the budget as it impacts, in reality in a minimal sense, on some of the major environmental concerns this State is facing at the moment. I will focus particularly on one aspect of those environmental concerns that affects my electorate and the State of Western Australia. Yesterday, there was an article in *The West Australian* written by Norman Aisbett which was headed "Toxic plume faces a natural foe". That article indicates that under the Kwinana industrial strip there is a cocktail of nasties that have been well known to the authorities of all political persuasions for a number of years and that have been the residue of an infamous company known in the main as Chemical Industries Kwinana, which was closed down or sold out in 1985.

Before leaving the Kwinana site the company left behind a cocktail of chemicals that has seeped into the underground aquifers. They include what is commonly referred to as Agent Orange - 2,4-dichlorophenoxyacetic acid and 2,4,5-trichlorophenoxyacetic acid. When mixed those chemicals form what is now known around the world as the infamous Agent Orange that was used as a defoliant during the Vietnam War and which affected the lives of thousands of American, Australian, New Zealand and Vietnamese soldiers, and Vietnamese civilians. When mixed they form Agent Orange, and they are presently mixing in the underground aquifer. Nothing can stop them mixing and they are for all intents and purposes Agent Orange.

I have been the member of that area for 14 years, and I am aware of a number of scientific reports put together by the Environmental Protection Authority which indicated that a scientific assessment of the way that underground aquifer works showed that this cocktail of nasties headed by 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T will float under the surface until about the year 2020 when they hit the waters of Cockburn Sound. If that occurs we will be faced with a disaster of unparalleled consequences for our environment and many of our industries. If the chlorinophenols and that cocktail of poisonous substances hit Cockburn Sound we will start to lose our crayfishing industry, fishing industry and mussel industry in that area. We will also lose what seagrasses are left in that area, which are a nursery for the fish stock. Governments and scientists have known about this problem for a long time. On the one hand, it is fair to say that Governments have done little about it. It is out of sight - it is underground - therefore it is out of mind. Scientists have become frustrated at the lack of assistance. It is not an easy matter to fix. I raise it now because we need to start fixing it.

Included in the budget this year is an amount of \$37 000 which has been allocated to the Waters and Rivers Commission, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, to conduct further studies on the ability of this cocktail of poisonous substances to be contained within the existing underground aquifer by the use of bacteria. The science of that is in its infancy. I am sure members will appreciate that \$37 000 is a totally inadequate amount of money. It is simply, if members will excuse the pun, a drop in the ocean. What we need to do, and this speech is flagging a warning to all of us in government, is recognise what it will cost the State if we do not put the money and the resources into getting on with this right now. If members want some idea of the potential cost to the State, they should look no further than the North Fremantle state engineering site. We have seen, as a result of that site being developed for housing with river views, an unparalleled on-site cleanup of contaminants. That has already cost more than \$20m.

If that cocktail of poison under the Kwinana strip left behind by Chemical Industries Kwinana in 1985 reaches Cockburn Sound and the Indian Ocean, the cost for the North Fremantle state engineering site will fade into insignificance.

This financial year the Government committed only \$37 000 to test whether bacteria could eat that poison in its underground aquifer. It is the first step of what could be the final treatment. No scientific evidence is available to show whether these nasties could be eaten by bacteria. Although there is a scientific view that bacteria will eat certain poisons, not enough is known to indicate that it will eat this cocktail of poisons. The scientific research has a long way to go.

Based on discussions I have had in recent days with the scientists involved in this, we should have been considering investing at least \$1m in scientific research to tackle this problem before the pollution reaches Cockburn Sound.

That would enable scientists, through the Centre for Groundwater Studies, to gather scientific data. The centre was established by this Government in response to a recommendation made four years ago by the Joint Select Committee on Groundwater Quality in which I participated. Resources of that size are necessary; \$37 000 will not go anywhere.

Beyond scientific research into the effectiveness of bacteria, we need to investigate other methods. Elsewhere in the world barriers are built to retain this poison in its underground aquifer.

As you will know with your background, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr Masters), the barrier method is now considered worldwide to be the preferred method for handling these problems. My understanding from talking to the scientists is that it is no longer appropriate to pump these poisons above the underground aquifer. It does not work. When they come back to the surface a problem remains that must be handled; therefore it is better to deal with them in the underground aquifer. That may require the building of a wall. As you will have some understanding, Mr Acting Speaker, a wall would be built of material, somewhat like a sponge, that would allow water to permeate while forming a barrier to stop the nasties getting through.

The chemicals involved such as chlorophenols 2,4-D and 2,4,5-T are unknown quantities. We are talking about scientific research to compile a database that will provide sufficient information to determine the physical solutions required, such as whether a wall would be more effective at a cost of hundreds of millions of dollars or whether bacteria can do the job. We need to act now; time is running out. Twenty years is beyond my political lifetime, but it is a very short time in the history of this State and of this nation.

It appears that the Government has learnt nothing from the North Fremantle experience which cost millions of dollars in a very short time. The Government knows, as well I have known historically, that this plume under Kwinana exists and it must be tackled by being properly funded and resourced. At present the only monitoring being done on these sites is by private companies, Wesfarmers CSBP Ltd, Tiwest Joint Venture and Nufarm Ltd.

They are continuing to conduct private monitoring because they withdraw water from this plume for their industrial purposes. The body that is responsible for the monitoring, the Water and Rivers Commission, which has the expertise in underground aquifers, simply is not adequately resourced and has not been able to do any of this work for over the past two years. It must rely on those three private companies I have mentioned to carry out the process. From what we know - with the greatest respect to those three companies - there needs to be far more monitoring of and scientific research into the problem. I will describe the problem in detail of what is happening underground. From the surface, the aquifer within which these poisons are trapped lies between 15 metres of sand, a 30-centimetre thin membrane of clay - luckily - then 15 metres of limestone. As far as the scientists can ascertain at this stage, the poison is trapped between the sand and the clay membrane; however, they are not confident that that situation will remain. Now is the time to act. I plead with the Government to recognise that this is a disaster waiting to happen if money is not put in place for the scientific expertise that is urgently required. A proposed contaminated sites Bill is coming before the Parliament which we need to urgently act upon. That Bill will not fix this problem, because this situation developed well before it will be enacted. Even if such as a Bill is enacted, the problem in this State is, how do we create the funds to handle these problems?

The United States of America has an industry-based levy, but of course the USA is a massive country with a population of 280 million people; it is the biggest industrialised nation in the world. It can draw a levy from that industrial base which will have only a minimum impact on industry compared with the benefits which industry will gain from having a clean environment. Can a Government do that in Western Australia, which is a third of the size of the nation, with very few industries and which has only a small population base of 1.5 million people? Is such an industrial levy the way forward? It probably is not. Governments in the near future may have to look at a form of environmental levy. Although people may argue it is unfair in terms of the cost to every taxpayer, it may be the only way Governments will be able to afford the cost of such clean-ups in the future. This is a real issue. The only downside of this article is that it indicates that the present plume is under control; that bacteria may work and will not spread further than it presently has. That is a false picture.

There is no scientific paper in existence which shows that bacteria is working. There is no scientific paper or knowledge available to indicate that it will not spread further; all of the evidence is that it will. We need to act urgently; and the \$37 000 in the present budget is inadequate for the work that is needed to start to come to grips with the problem.

MR GRILL (Eyre) [4.08 pm]: I wish to deal with some subjects relating to resource development which I do not believe have been adequately handled within the budget process to date. I was going to speak generally about resource development in this State and go through the various projects that are currently on the drawing board and make some assessment of them. However, I have been told that I have only 15 minutes. Unfortunately, that type of resume would take much longer than that. I will not do that, but I will say that if one looks at *Prospect* magazine which is put out by the Department of Resources Development on a quarterly basis in Western Australia, the last pages of that magazine in each edition show a list of projects and a brief summary of them and it outlines the status of those projects. It is not a comprehensive outline of the status, but it gives an indication of which projects are committed, which are commissioned and which are in the pipeline. The list of commissioned projects in the latest edition indicates that only three projects have been commissioned in Western Australia in the 1999-2000 financial year. I have never known a period in this State's modern history when so few projects have been proposed, subjected to environmental assessment and feasibility studies and built. It may be indicative of a crisis in resource development in this State. As I said, I intended to provide an assessment of the various projects under consideration - it is a long list and some are very impressive. One would need some background in the resource sector to provide a precise indication of their status, and I am not about to do that for reasons of time.

It is striking that many of the projects have been on the list for some time. Many have gone through the various stages of assessment - environmental, feasibility and so on - but nothing is happening. That is a worry. What is more, the list indicates that very few projects involve much downstream processing. That is the great worry. It has always been understood that the great powerhouse of the Western Australian economy is resource development - everything hangs on it. However, the long-term future of this State requires us to do more than simply produce raw materials. It is obvious from this list that we are not doing much more downstream processing than we were doing 10 years ago. When I was Minister for Economic Development and Trade and some of these matters came within my purview, I was told that Western Australia would develop an advanced materials industry based on its minerals sands and other resources. The officials in my department said the State was better placed than almost any country in the world to proceed with such an industry because of its natural endowments. Some development did take place during the Burke Government, but everything has fallen flat and the industry has gone nowhere since. Many of these projects appear to be on hold. Some are agricultural, some are mining and some are more sophisticated, but very little downstream processing is occurring. That is a fundamental problem in our economy and the Government is starting to wake up to that fact.

However, some other indicators are on the horizon. On Tuesday this week, the business section of *The West Australian* contained a story under the headline "WA commodities slip 5pc on weaker prices". One does not need to be a genius to work out that this State is very vulnerable to world commodity prices. For the first time since 1992, we have seen a diminution in the value of raw and semi-processed mineral product being exported from this State. Given the buoyant nature of the Australian economy, if we believe the national figures, that is not a very good situation.

Yesterday, I received from the Minister for Resources Development an answer to a question that I put on notice on 14 March this year. God knows why the reply took so long. In that question I asked what progress has been made in respect of the development of a petrochemical plant in the Pilbara, whether a feasibility study has been completed, and what is the attitude of the proponents of the plant toward the likelihood of its establishment. That answer was picked up by *The West Australian*, which ran a story on it today in the financial pages under the headline "Petrochemical hopes fade but Syntroleum kicks on." Had I not asked that question, we would never have known that the Government had to give the proponents of the petrochemical plant in the Pilbara a 12-month extension under the memorandum of understanding to allow the project to proceed. The various speeches of the Minister for Resources Development over the past 12 months have given the impression that this project is on the verge of commencement. That petrochemical plant is a downstream processing venture, and the Opposition wishes it well and will do everything it can to make sure it gets off the ground, but it is not good enough for the Minister for Resources Development to take nearly three months to answer a question on this subject and at the end of that time expose the fact that the Government has had to give the proponents a 12-month extension.

A few weeks ago, I checked out Syntroleum on the Internet. Syntroleum is not a development company but is a small American research and development company. Not long ago it lost its major partner in its gas-to-liquids project in the north west of the State, which is, once again, an important downstream processing activity. Syntroleum's profit and loss statements indicate that it has made a loss in each of the past two years. Nothing is wrong with that, but it indicates that this small research and development company just does not have the clout to get this big project up and running. We need projects like this to get up. We need to add value to our gas. However, that is not happening. The minister has finally twigged to that fact and realised that a lot more needs to be done on these projects.

The Minister for Resources Development has been sceptical about the Kingstream project at Oakajee, but at long last he is now on board and is running with that project. However, there is a certain air of desperation about the whole project in the sense that only last month, the minister obtained a letter from the Premier indicating that the Government will pick up the whole cost of the port and the very next day he got on a plane to go overseas and foist that letter upon the various capital raising markets -

Mr Barnett: The sequence was the opposite. My trip overseas had been arranged months ago, and the letter and the cabinet decision were timed to precede my trip.

Mr GRILL: An objective observer looking in from the outside would get the impression that there was an air of desperation about the haste with which the minister got that letter and then went overseas, and the way in which the Premier almost denied the existence of that letter for some time.

Mr Barnett: I do not mind debating this. The trip was planned three months in advance. The decision went through the normal 10-day cabinet process a week or so before I left.

Mr GRILL: I am not criticising the minister for having got the letter or for having gone overseas. I am talking about those sorts of processes. I have not actually criticised the minister for going to those markets - and he should not think that I was not invited to by the media, because I was.

Mr Barnett: I know.

Mr GRILL: The media touted that story around for some weeks before they finally ran it with remarks from a professor, an academic from Curtin University. We did not criticise the minister on that point. We went out of our way not to do it. We want to see more action on these projects, because if one analyses them, one can see that they are not moving. I made a similar speech about this only nine months or a year ago. The minister says that they are moving. He might like to respond to the rhetorical question I put some minutes ago while he was out of the Chamber: Why did it take the minister three months to respond to a question about the petrochemical plant in the Pilbara? I put it on notice on 14 March. I expected an answer within a few days - one can understand a few days' delay. It did not arrive until yesterday. *The West Australian* ran a story on it. If I had not asked the question we would not have got the information that was in the story. It took the minister nearly three months to provide the answer.

Mr Barnett: That is because the extension is yet to be granted formally.

Mr GRILL: Whether it is or not, the other information that was conveyed in that response could still have been given.

Mr Barnett: No.

Mr GRILL: It should not be necessary to wait that period of time for an answer.

Mr Barnett: It is because I met with Mr Michael Parker, the world chief executive of the Dow Chemical Company, in the United States in December. As the member knows, Dow Chemical Company is in a merger with the Union Carbide Corporation, which means that the involvement of Shell Chemicals may well change because Shell and Carbide are competitive industries. There has been a lot of discussion going on. I am not secretive or sensitive about it, but there were corporate issues about involvement in the petrochemical project that had to be worked out at a corporate level before an extension could be considered or granted.

Mr GRILL: There is a lot more I could say on this issue. There is one other thing I want to bring up before my time runs out.

Mr Barnett: Did the member notice today that the Enron Corporation has invested in Syntroleum?

Mr GRILL: I noted that it indicated that it was prepared to come in as a partner but that it had not made a final commitment - it is a tentative commitment. While the minister was out of the Chamber I did make some remarks about the Syntroleum Corporation 2000. Having looked at its performance on the Net, it is clear that it is not a development company - it is a research and development company.

Mr Barnett: It is a technology-based company.

Mr GRILL: It is a technology company and it does not have the clout or the grunt to get a project of this nature up.

Mr Barnett: I think the member is wrong on that.

Mr GRILL: Well, I would like to be. One thing we were proved right about is this: We will end up being proved right about the costs associated with Oakajee. We have never quibbled about the costs but we do want some honesty about them. The minister originally indicated that the cost of Oakajee will be about \$80m on the basis that a third party will develop the port.

Mr Barnett: It will be \$192m, plus or minus 25 per cent.

Mr GRILL: It will be a lot more than that.

Mr Barnett: Why? That is not what the consultants say.

Mr GRILL: Answer this question: What is the depth of that port? I have seen plans for the port and it is a 13.2-metre port.

Mr Barnett: Panamax.

Mr GRILL: On that basis, it will not be a port that will support the Mt Gibson project. That project needs much bigger than panamax vessels to go into that port.

Mr Barnett: Correct.

Mr GRILL: If that port is to cost \$192m or \$200m on the basis of a 13.2-metre draught, it will cost at least another \$50m or more to get it to the state where it can take 100 000-tonne or 150 000-tonne ships.

Mr Barnett: Bulk carriers from Mt Gibson do not require the water conditions that Kingstream Steel requires.

Mr GRILL: That is a technical fact with which I will agree, but Mt Gibson needs a 17-metre port.

Mr Barnett: Yes, but we are not building a 17-metre port.

Mr GRILL: Just answer the question: Are the costs that have been put forward to date based on a 13.2-metre port, as I understand they are?

Mr Barnett: Yes.

Mr GRILL: Not on a 17-metre port? Then there will be an additional cost.

Mr Barnett: No there is not.

Mr GRILL: Mark me well, the additional cost will run well into another \$50m. A whole range of ancillary costs have not been added into this project yet. At the end of the day this project will cost nearly \$500m.

MR BARNETT (Cottesloe - Minister for Energy) [4.24 pm]: I want to take two minutes to respond, as I am entitled to do. The Kingstream port project has been kept quite separate from the Kingstream Steel Ltd project. We have had consultants look at port design and quarrying and we have drilled the seabed. We have done a whole lot of technical studies. About \$15m has been spent on research work, design work and land acquisition for the broader Oakajee estate and port issues. The consultant's advice is that the port, on a proforma design, will cost \$192m plus or minus 25 per cent. The wide margin of 25 per cent is primarily because this is a port being constructed in open water conditions on an exposed coast. Construction can obviously take longer and be more expensive in inclement weather conditions.

Mr Grill: Your department used the figure of \$200m.

Mr BARNETT: The consultant's report indicates that it will cost \$192m plus or minus 25 per cent. The consultant arrived at that figure independently. The port will be designed to handle steel slabs. A 20-tonne piece of steel slab cannot be dropped into the hull of a ship as it would go straight through the bottom of the ship. It must be placed in the ship, which means the ship must be absolutely motionless. The parameters for building a port to handle steel slabs are very exacting. We have to create, off the coast of Geraldton or Oakajee, absolutely still conditions, or very close to it. It is therefore in that sense an expensive and high capacity port. To extend that to capesize vessels which would handle iron ore, bulk material and perhaps direct reduced iron material, would require a greater water depth - the member for Eyre is absolutely correct - but it does not require the same conditions as steel slabs require.

Mr Grill: I didn't say it does.

Mr BARNETT: No, but I am making the point. Therefore, to include a Mt Gibson product through the port would require additional expenditure.

Mr Grill interjected.

Mr BARNETT: I do not know. The additional expenditure might well be incurred by simply pushing out a breakwater or a gantry structure with a conveyor belt into deeper water. It may require some protection by a type of breakwater; I do not know, but that is a design factor to be considered. However, that extension to the port will be a separate negotiation and will be largely funded from the Mt Gibson project.

Mr Grill: It will certainly be a separate negotiation.

Mr BARNETT: Yes. Anyone who wants to expand or add to the facility will contribute capital costs. The member should bear in mind that Mt Gibson has looked at different scenarios. It has looked at trying to build its own structure like one would see at Cape Lambert.

Mr Grill: Have you looked at the one at Dongara?

Mr BARNETT: That option has been considered. To build a structure like that will cost a significant amount of money. They are just economical alternatives, whether it is a structure that comes straight out from the coast or whether it is a smaller extension from the end of a breakwater at Oakajee.

Mr Grill: I am saying it will cost money. It will probably cost closer to \$250m.

Mr BARNETT: That is not a problem; it is an advantage. If an operator builds, for example, a nickel smelter or a chemical plant with special loading facilities, it will need to build tailor-made wharf facilities to service those products. The member should bear in mind that Kingstream Steel Ltd, not the Government, is building the wharf facility. The Government is building the outer and inner harbour structures but the wharf and handling facilities for steel slabs will be built at Kingstream's cost. The wharf and handling facilities for Mt Gibson or anyone else will be built at their cost in the broad parameters of a publicly owned port.

Mr Grill: You need some experts in this arena.

Mr BARNETT: There is no mystery about this matter. We had a silly debate last night when the member's party attacked me about a whole lot of projects and suggested there was something crooked about the Dampier to Bunbury natural gas pipeline. Today a journalist rang me to say that members in this House have described me as the bagman for Kingstream.

Mr Grill: Are you saying there is something inaccurate about what I am saying today?

Mr BARNETT: No, I am saying we know that expansions of ports, additional companies, additional wharves and additional loading facilities cost money. The point is that the Opposition seems to assume that the Government will pay for them. Why would the Government pay for them? We are in the business of building the breakwaters and charging for the use of the port's facilities. The company-specific facilities, such as those that Kingstream and others have, are paid for by those companies. Those facilities are part of their projects. They provide their cranes and build their wharves and loading facilities. We are building the broad port structure. Mt Gibson will do exactly the same. I recognise that it is a large project and I do not shy away at all from that. The decision to build a port costing \$192m on an industrial estate with 5 000 hectares of buffer zone is a big decision, as was the decision for the initial development at Kwinana - although this one will be different - and the decision to build the Dampier to Bunbury pipeline.

It was a major decision for the State; therefore, it is proper for questions like that to be asked. I am open to it; we know what we are doing. The Government has used the best consultants and the best advice. Four tenderers are short-listed and all are capable of designing and building the port. The member for Eyre would know from Kingstream Steel Ltd that, if anything, people within the industry believe that the cost of the final design of the port will come in below that figure. I hope it does, although I do not know that, because the Government has not yet received the final tenders. People say that the final bid will be less than \$192m and some suggest it might be \$140m or \$150m. I hope it is, because then the port would be close to breaking even from day one.

Mr Kobelke: According to the agreement Act, the State Government is obligated to build a port once Kingstream has committed \$100m.

Mr BARNETT: No, it is not.

Mr Kobelke: What is the trigger? The press release the minister published a couple of weeks ago indicated that the Government would go to tender as soon as Kingstream had the finance. I do not have a problem with that, as long as going to tender does not irrevocably lock the Government into proceeding with construction simply because Kingstream has the finance. If that were the case, the steps that we hope will follow could run into trouble.

Mr BARNETT: The Iron and Steel (Mid West) Agreement Act says that the Government will develop a port. It does not say how it will do that. The Government's obligation is for a port to be developed as long as it is economically, technically and financially viable, which it believes to be the case. The trigger for development is when the Government is satisfied that the Kingstream project will go ahead. The development of the port will not be triggered by Kingstream spending \$100m. The Government will carry out a due diligence exercise and when it is confident that all the contracts have been let, that funds are in place and that construction of the Kingstream project is going ahead, it will proceed with the port. We will not simply take Kingstream's word. We will talk to its banks, the engineering firms and the contractors.

Mr Kobelke: I accept that is the basis the Government is working on, but is it not also a condition that Kingstream can call on the Government to make sure the port is constructed once a certain amount of money has been committed?

Mr BARNETT: No, that is not a condition. The Government has due diligence. The obligation under the agreement Act is for the Government to have the port operational within three years of Kingstream completing the steel works, or something to that effect. I do not think that is satisfactory. It is the obligation, but the Government intends to have the port completed as the steel mill is completed.

Mr Grill: We have established that the Government is developing a 13.2-metre port, whereas Mount Gibson will need at least 17 metres.

Mr BARNETT: The member should not get excited, because he has not established that. It was known that steel would be transported in panamax-size vessels and bulk materials in capesize vessels. A capesize vessel will not be able to be brought into the inner harbour area.

Mr GRILL: You are conceding that the current design of the port will be for only 13.2 metres but that it will need to be 17 metres to allow for capesize vessels.

Mr BARNETT: I have not conceded anything.

Mr Grill: Of course you have.

Mr BARNETT: The member is trying to suggest that he has extracted this information from me. He should read the second reading speech on the agreement Act and the press releases. He would realise that the Government's commitment is to build a port capable of holding panamax-size vessels, which is 13 metres. The port will allow panamax vessels, but can be expanded to accommodate capesize vessels, when there is a need. The Government tendered for that. The member should look at the tender documents. I do not have to concede anything, because that has been the Government's position from day one.

MR CUNNINGHAM (Girrawheen) [4.33 pm]: Revelations during the recent Estimates Committees show that the dire shortage of police officers in the northern suburbs will continue under this Liberal Government. After questioning by the member for Midland and myself, it was admitted that the already understaffed Warwick Police Station had lost officers to the newly built Clarkson Police Station. The police officers remaining at the Warwick station face restrictions on overtime, numbers of shifts and the use of resources such as cars. No-one appearing before the committee could tell us how many

police had left Warwick Police Station. No-one could tell us how many police were currently at Warwick Police Station. Under questioning, Deputy Police Commissioner Bruce Brennan could not give any assurances that police officers would be replaced in the next financial year. He said that extra officers would not be available in the "one lump" - those are his words - and that they will be made available gradually and placed into districts on a prioritised basis. Warwick Police Station services the areas of Alexander Heights, Ballajura, Carine, Duncraig, Girrawheen, Greenwood, Hamersley, Koondoola, Landsdale, Marmion, Sorrento, Warwick and parts of Scarborough. Four years ago, Warwick Police Station had 108 staff. As of today, the approved staff at Warwick is 79. In fact, this very week there are 53 officers at Warwick Police Station. During the Estimates Committee, the representatives from the Police Service could not tell us how many officers Warwick Police Station had lost; they did not know the figure. However, I can tell the House that it has lost 10 positions to Clarkson Police Station. The reduction in staff from 108 in 1996 to 53 in 2000 is an absolute disgrace and is a shocking indictment of this Government's concern for the safety of the good people in the electorate of Girrawheen and those in the northern suburbs. This Government does not care about those people. For the number of officers to decrease from 108 to 53 is absolutely diabolical. Why could they not tell us this at the Estimates Committee, which was only two weeks ago? Why did these figures have to fall off the back of a truck? This is occurring at the same time as the home burglaries statistics have rocketed by 20 per cent from March last year to March this year. The situation is so dire that even the police have launched a campaign begging for more personnel, as was pointed out the other night by the member for Kalgoorlie. The campaign launched last month describes police as missing persons and calls on the assistance of the public. They have run advertisements in the northern suburbs and I believe it is to be reintroduced at the end of this month. It is a very sorry state of affairs when those with the duty to enforce and uphold the law are reduced to begging for help. This is squarely the responsibility of the Government of the day. This Government has failed and it does not look like lifting its game in the future; there will be no improvement whatsoever. As the minister pointed out during the Estimates Committee, the Government will not fund even one extra police officer in the next four years.

Mr Board: Have you put in your speech the record amount given to the Police budget? It is a record amount in the history of budgets.

Mr CUNNINGHAM: I am talking about the budget. The minister can make his speech later. Not one extra police officer will be funded in any of the next four years. The Premier says that the Police Service has never been better off. What a joke! Nothing could be further from the truth. All members need do is ask any police officer working in the Warwick area or anyone who has been the victim of a crime.

The figures released at the Estimates Committee hearing show that 27 per cent of calls to the Mirrabooka police district go unanswered. It is recognised that the police numbers are so stretched that it would always be the case that calls to the 131444 number could not be handled. It is bad enough that police cannot attend in person at the most serious of offences; however, when they cannot respond by telephone either, the situation can only be described as a crisis. Police who are left to operate in these conditions are placed under enormous pressure and cannot be expected to function efficiently without some relief or support. This Government's claims that it is spending more on police are absolute nonsense. Most of the increase in funding has gone to new buildings rather than additional personnel. Members opposite cannot deny that. All this Government is doing is moving the deckchairs on the *Titanic*.

Furthermore, mention was made during the Estimates Committee hearing of the escalating drug problems in this State. The Balga Action Group - a very wonderful community group - only last week held a meeting to try to work something out to make anti-drug legislation more targeted. Every one of the police officers who attended the meeting supported the group. Superintendent Fred Gere, who is head of organised crime investigation, told the group that strong laws were needed to counter the drug trade. He claimed that without having new laws for confiscating property, this absolute cancer in the community will continue. He expressed the view that the more significant dealers can be effectively stopped only if the profits of this dreadful, evil trade are seized.

We as a community in Balga, Girrawheen and Koondoola have had this problem now for the past two or three years. Okay, things have improved over the past six months, I must admit, after we named half-a-dozen dealers in this House, because we now have a police officer who picks up a phone. He has been in constant contact with my office and has left his number at our disposal. Inspector Bob Colton of Joondalup Police Station has done a magnificent job in reporting back to me. I have reported to him any problems I have received notice of from the community, and he has come back within three or four days and given an explanation of what is happening at a particular address. That arrangement was not in place in the previous two or three years. Having made a little bit of a noise in this place, all of a sudden things started to happen which were not happening before.

We are in dire straits. This Government must do something urgently about having more police in Warwick Police Station. As I said earlier, the fact that in four years the complement of police officers there has gone from 108 to 53 is an absolute disgrace and a shocking indictment of this Government.

MR MCGINTY (Fremantle) [4.44 pm]: I take this opportunity late today to deal with some matters in the Fair Trading portfolio, in particular, to complete the relaying to this House of a tragic story which the Leader of the Opposition relayed in part to the House yesterday, and on which I also provided some details, in which the Ministry of Fair Trading has failed in its responsibilities to the people of Western Australia in the finance broking scam in this State. Yesterday the House heard the details of the circumstances surrounding Mrs Jan LeNepveu of Cannington and her investment in First Charter Mortgage Services Pty Ltd, a finance broking firm. In particular, the Leader of the Opposition relayed to the House how Mrs LeNepveu, who has a very serious cancer where she has very limited life expectancy, was induced to invest her life savings of \$64 000 through a licenced financial adviser into a project known as Westonbirt Park, a rural property

development on the outskirts of Bridgetown. The Leader of the Opposition relayed to the House how Mr Tony Robinson, a licenced financial adviser, had given financial advice that Mrs LeNepveu should invest her money through First Charter Mortgage Services. He did not reveal to Mrs LeNepveu that he had a financial interest in First Charter Mortgage Services. It was through that particular mortgage broker that Mrs LeNepveu then invested in the Westonbirt Park project near Bridgetown. Mr Tony Robinson did not disclose that he was a director of Westonbirt Park. That is a double conflict of interest. It is one in which I know the Australian Securities and Investments Commission is particularly interested, because it is part of Mr Robinson's role as a financial adviser licensed by ASIC to disclose conflicts of interest to the investing party. I suspect that as a material omission it might even be a matter for state law, and something that the major fraud squad will also be interested in. I take this opportunity to call upon the major fraud squad and also ASIC to take strong action, and invoke the criminal provisions against Mr Robinson for his role in inducing Mrs LeNepveu to part with her \$64 000 and investing it in the Westonbirt Park project near Bridgetown.

I also take this opportunity to call on the major fraud squad in this State to look at First Charter Mortgage Services and investigate whether, in this and other loans, criminality is involved. I said in this place yesterday that in my view First Charter Mortgage Services richly deserves its place as one of the dirty dozen in the finance broking industry in this State. What First Charter Mortgage Services did was not only unconscionable but one of the most callous things I have seen done in this mortgage broking fiasco over the past 12 months to two years. It was compounded in the statement released late yesterday by the directors of First Charter Mortgage Services, who said they were looking for another investor to come into the Westonbirt Park project to replace Mrs LeNepveu, and in that way Mrs LeNepveu would get her money back. I hope nobody in this State is stupid enough to invest their money through First Charter Mortgage Services in the Westonbirt Park project. That project has gone belly up. It has run out of money. There is not enough money to complete that project. If someone else comes in - the last thing Mrs LeNepveu would want is someone to replace her on the second mortgage in that project - they will lose their money. They will do it cold. It will be a fraudulent act on the part of First Charter Mortgage Services if it induces someone to invest in this project while it is dead in the water. It cannot do that, and I hope that the fraud squad will take action against it for proposing to do it. However, there are other elements of this arrangement with which the major fraud squad should busy itself. As I said, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission has already shown, quite properly, an interest in the licensed financial adviser involved. That was a new dimension to this whole finance brokers scandal that was revealed yesterday, because until now licensed financial advisers in the financial planning industry had not been implicated. However, as of yesterday, with the involvement of Mr Tony Robinson, they clearly are. That is a matter that I hope will be taken up.

Throughout this matter, I have been full of praise for the job done by the major fraud squad in pursuing the finance brokers and other people associated with this matter. It seems that while the Government has done precious little to properly look after the victims of this finance brokers scandal, the one agency that can hold its head high and with pride about the way in which it has conducted itself is the major fraud squad in this State. Although it gives no-one any pleasure to see people charged with fraud by the major fraud squad, I notice that John Margaria, the principal of Global Finance Group Pty Ltd, the second firm that I named in this place yesterday as being part of the dirty dozen of the finance broking industry, was charged this morning with 21 counts of fraud and one of attempted fraud. However, I do not intend to address that. That matter is appropriately being dealt with by the major fraud squad. I am pleased that in this very murky, messy scandal, at least one agency, the major fraud squad, is doing its job properly. So many others have failed the people of this State, starting with the minister responsible for finance brokers through to the Ministry of Fair Trading, the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board and so on down the line. I include the Australian Securities and Investments Commission in my criticisms. It has not done its job. I urge the major fraud squad to continue the good work it is doing.

I will take a little time to complete the story that the Leader of the Opposition and I started to tell the House yesterday. Today, I was disappointed with the response of the Minister for Fair Trading, who again refused to take the public into his confidence and to make publicly available the legal advice on which he has relied to justify the inactivity and neglect of duty by the Ministry of Fair Trading and the Finance Brokers Supervisory Board. He said that he has in-house legal advice and advice from two Queen's Counsel that the Ministry of Fair Trading could not have assisted people who lent their money through finance brokers because they were not clients of finance brokers. That is arrant nonsense. The minister said that he has legal advice which justifies that position. He should make it available. He is the minister who is capable of waiving the legal professional privilege and making that advice publicly available. In the public interest, he should do exactly that. However, he has failed to do that and he stands condemned. Perhaps the reason is that he will be too embarrassed if that legal advice obtained by the Ministry of Fair Trading is ever made public because it cannot stand up to public scrutiny. Powers are contained in the Finance Brokers Control Act which give the ministry enough power to discipline recalcitrant finance brokers. I cannot believe that any legal advice from any respectable person would say that the various bodies within the Ministry of Fair Trading are incapable of acting in these circumstances. That view is enhanced by the persistent refusal of the Minister for Fair Trading to reveal, in the public interest, legal advice which he supposedly has but which he will not make available, even though it is about the performance of a public duty by public officers in the public interest. Where is the public interest in keeping that advice secret? There is none.

The final matter I touch on relates to Mrs LeNepveu's family and matters which time did not permit me to describe to the House yesterday. A broker about which many complaints have been made, which were never properly investigated by the Ministry of Fair Trading, is Gamel Ward Pty Ltd. It is of great concern that Mr John L.C. Ward of Gamel Ward lurched from Gamel Ward when it disappeared three or four years ago to become involved with First Charter Mortgage Services. Therefore, a disreputable operator from one of the first finance broking companies to go down is associated with First Charter Mortgage Services, the financial broking company criticised in this place yesterday. Indeed, the glowing investment proposal sent to Mrs Jan LeNepveu was signed by none other than John Ward.

I now touch on Mrs LeNepveu's sister Thea Dines, and her husband, Charles. The Dines had the sad misfortune of relying on Tony Robinson for investment advice. Personally and through their superannuation fund, they have \$170 000 at severe risk in the Westonbirt Park second mortgage proposal, through which Mrs LeNepveu has essentially lost her money. Thea and Charles Dines also have \$100 000 invested in a project being undertaken by Wattle Corporation Pty Ltd, which acts as trustee for the Wattle Property Trust. Units are being developed at a site which was originally lot 79 Doepel Street, Northbank, North Fremantle. The Dines have \$60 000 invested in a second mortgage and \$40 000 in the Wattle Property Trust, which means it is unsecured; indeed, trust units rank behind unsecured creditors in the same way as shares. The Dines never understood that risk, as it was never explained to them. To discover who was involved with Wattle Corporation Pty Ltd one need only read the list of guarantors in the second mortgage; namely, Sanford, Perry, Robinson, Ward and one other person, Brian Milton Featherby. With the exception of the last person mentioned, those people are involved with First Charter Mortgage Services and the Westonbirt proposal.

Thea Dines also received investment advice from Robinson to invest \$310 000 in a mortgage loan arranged by First Charter Mortgage Services secured by a mortgage over the Royal Exchange Hotel in Katanning. The borrower was Haskin Pty Ltd, which was a company controlled by the infamous Matthew Marinko Pavlinovich and his daughter Corina Johnson and son-in-law, Gregory Charles Johnson. Many investors have lost large amounts of money in disastrous investments in Pavlinovich-Johnson companies arranged by a succession of dubious brokers - namely, Balckburne and Dixon, Global Finance and First Charter Mortgage Services. An offer has just been accepted on the sale of the hotel for \$230 000. When the \$75 000 loss of principal is added to the outstanding interest of \$15 000, and the \$10 000 agent cost of sale, a substantial loss will be suffered by Mrs Dines on this sale.

It is disturbing to note that although Corina Johnson is now bankrupt, she was involved with the sale working with Ron Farris Real Estate Pty Ltd. Why the Real Estate and Business Agents Supervisory Board has not removed Corina Johnson from the real estate industry is yet another serious concern about the performance of boards in the Fair Trading portfolio.

I have provided to the House a few brief details regarding how that family - Mrs LeNepveu, Thea Dines, and her husband, Charles - have had their retirement years destroyed. I have spoken at some length to Mrs LeNepveu today. Radio 6PR and *Drivetime* producer Harvey Deegan offered to conduct an appeal to raise funds to make up for money which was basically robbed from Mrs LeNepveu by the First Charter Mortgage Services. Mrs LeNepveu said that she could not handle the stress of other people's money being given to her and that she was philosophically opposed to that because she wanted to pay for this herself. She therefore rejected that kind offer which could well mean that her life is now in jeopardy due to the inability to recover that money. That is a sad indictment and I thank the House for its indulgence.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

House adjourned at 5.00 pm

APPENDIX A

1-1 1999 to 31-12 1999

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| HOUSE INSURANCE | \$497.59 (1) |
| HOUSE REPAYMENT | \$3150.00 (2) |
| COUNCIL RATES | \$334.90 (3) |
| M.W.S. RATES | \$208.10 (4) |
| M.W.S. EXCESS WATER | \$24.65 |
| WESTERN POWER | \$1056.85 |
| ALINTAGAS | \$176.50 |
| TELSTRA | \$656.20 |
| OPTUS | \$106.80 |
| ST JOHNS AMBULANCE | \$49.00 |
| R.A.C. | \$42.00 |
| VEHICLE LICENCE | \$248.05 (5) |
| VEHICLE COMPR. INSURANCE | \$370.45 |
| FUEL FOR VEHICLE | \$1028.68 |
| MAINTENANCE FOR VEHICLE | \$721.25 |
| PERSONAL ACCIDENT INSURANCE | \$179.40 |
| NEWSPAPER | \$287.05 (6) |
| | ----- |
| TOTAL | \$9137.47 |
| | ----- |
| COST PER WEEK | \$175.72 |
| AGE PENSION PER WEEK | \$308.60 (7) |
| | ----- |
| BALANCE PER WEEK | \$132.88 |

BALANCE TO BE USED FOR FOOD; CLOTHING; MEDICINES; ENTERTAINMENT; PRESENTS FOR CHILDREN; GRAND CHILDREN OF WHICH THERE ARE 19 !!!!

PENSION:

1-1-1999 : \$300.80
 14-4-1999 : \$304.30
 14-10-1999: \$308.60

NOTES TO ANNUAL BALANCE

- (1) THE HOUSE IS NEARLY ELEVEN YEARS OLD. TWO BEDROOMS BRICK AND TILE.
- (2) WE ARE PURCHASING THE HOUSE FROM HOMESWEST - ON A SENIOR BASIS - OVER A PERIOD OF 30 YEARS.
- (3) WE DO GET A REDUCTION OF 50%.
- (4) AS ABOVE.
- (5) WE ARE DRIVING A 1992 TOYOTA CAMRY STATION WAGON ON AN AVERAGE 15 000 KM PER ANNUM.
- (6) WE DO GET DELIVERED: THE WEST AUSTRALIAN & SUNDAY TIMES.
- (7) MY WIFE AND I ARE ON AN AGE PENSION.

I HAVE BEEN KEEPING OUR WEEKLY EXPENDITURE FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

NORTHBRIDGE TUNNEL, HYDROLOGICAL IMPACT

1937. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Given that Mr Peter Airey, a qualified engineer with the company Airey Ryan and Hill which undertook an assessment of the impacts of dewatering for the construction of the Northbridge Tunnel, has stated in correspondence dated 16 September 1998 to GAB Robbins, Loss Adjusters for the tunnel contractors, that “indeed an appropriate mechanism to prevent further ongoing damage would have been to pump water from the upper sand aquifer into the perched lake bed to ensure that moisture sensitive silty peats were not destabilised”, does the Minister accept that the tunnel contractors failed to utilise all available measures to minimise the hydrological impact of the tunnel construction?
- (2) If not, why not?
- (3) Given that the report from Airey Ryan and Hill states “the lack of relevant and accurate ground water level data in the vicinity of the Northbridge Tunnel site makes it very difficult to conclude a definitive cause for the variation in the water levels at monitoring bore GD6”, does the Minister acknowledge that the tunnel contractors failed to provide adequate groundwater level data with which to determine the hydrological impacts of the tunnel construction?
- (4) If not, what is the reason for the difficulty in concluding a definitive cause for the variation in the water levels at monitoring bore GD6?
- (5) Was Main Roads Western Australia required to review or be kept informed of monitoring and audit reports undertaken by the tunnel contractors to monitor possible subsidence arising from the tunnel construction?
- (6) If not, which Government agency was responsible for assessing monitoring and auditing reports in relation to possible subsidence given that these reports were required under the Environmental Management Plan?
- (7) Was Main Roads Western Australia supplied with copies of monitoring and auditing reports relating to possible subsidence arising from the tunnel construction?
- (8) Did Main Roads Western Australia raise any concerns with tunnel contractors in relation to the data used for the monitoring and auditing reports relating to possible subsidence?
- (9) If yes to (8), what was the nature of these concerns?
- (10) If no to (8), why weren't any concerns raised?
- (11) Was Main Roads Western Australia informed of the processes used to revise the Environmental Management Plan?
- (12) If yes, did Main Roads carry out a desktop assessment of the process used to revise the Environmental Management Plan?
- (13) Who was responsible for reviewing the revised Environmental Management Plan and auditing compliance with this revised plan?

Mr COWAN replied:

The Hon Minister for Transport has provided the following response:

- (1) No.
- (2) The option presented in the Airey Ryan and Hill report to pump water from the upper sand aquifer to recharge the perched lake bed was a mechanism proposed to counter the seasonal variations affecting the perched lake bed rather than to counter the impact of tunnel construction. This seasonal variation is independent of tunnel construction and therefore the proposed recharge mechanism was not the tunnel contractor's responsibility.
- (3) No.
- (4) The Airey Ryan and Hill report examined data from the Water and Rivers Commission groundwater monitoring bores within a seven kilometre radius of Moir and Brookman Streets. The data had been collected over the past 15 years. The report draws particular attention to a monitoring bore GD6 which is located in the grounds of the Water Corporation in Leederville approximately 1.8 kilometres west of Brookman Street. The bore was selected to ascertain if there was a trend that could be used to determine any influence of the construction work on the Northbridge Tunnel. The fluctuations in groundwater level readings at GD6 are as a result of local and regional

factors. Measurements undertaken in the vicinity of the Northbridge Tunnel are also effected by local and regional factors including geological conditions. The Airey Ryan and Hill report therefore concluded that a correlation could not be stated. The reasons for variations in water levels at the Water and Rivers Commission monitoring bore is not a matter for the tunnel contractor.

(5)-(6) Survey measurements to monitor subsidence was an initiative of the tunnel contractor to assess the impacts of its dewatering processes. There was no requirement for these measurements to be provided to any authority.

(7)-(10) Main Roads has recently received a copy of the survey measurements undertaken to monitor subsidence. The measurements do not indicate any subsidence. The variance is within normal survey tolerance.

(11)-(12) The process used to revise the Environmental Management Plan is detailed in section 1.6 of the Environmental Management Plan. This process has changed to reflect the various stages of the project and the changes in the Contractors organisational structure. This is consistent with a certificated quality system.

(13) Main Roads.

SOUTH PERTH PRIMARY SCHOOL, SPECIALIST ENGLISH TEACHER

1943. Mr PENDAL to the Minister for Education:

I refer to the increasing number of non-English speaking children being enrolled at the South Perth Primary School and ask -

- (a) is the Minister's department aware that this has placed considerable pressure on the school's resources and teaching staff;
- (b) can the school be given urgent access to a specialist teacher to assist with the children's English skills, possibly shared with other schools in similar circumstances;
- (c) will the Minister's department urgently liaise with the Commonwealth to negotiate funding for such a specialist teacher, on a shared basis with other schools in the Cannington Education District; and
- (d) if action can be taken will the Minister ensure it is carried out speedily?

Mr BARNETT replied:

I am advised:

- (a) The Education Department is aware that the number of non-English speaking students at South Perth Primary School has doubled since last year and now numbers 12. General support for non-English speaking students is currently being offered to the school through the District Education Office and the Visiting Teacher Service. In order to access Commonwealth funding the visa status of the students needs to be determined. The school, with the help of the Visiting Teacher Service, has verified some of the students' visa status and is currently finalising the number of students that would be able to access a Commonwealth program. There are 3 categories under the Commonwealth program:

Category 1 - Students eligible to attend an Intensive Language Centre: Students who have been in Australia less than a year and have enrolled within 6 months of arrival, or those entering their first year of compulsory schooling.

Category 2 – Students eligible to attend an English as a Second Language (ESL) support or cell program: Students who have had no more than two years primary education in an Australian school.

Category 3 - Students not eligible for funding due to visa status: Usually students on temporary visas.

- (b)-(d) The Department is currently publicly considering, through a systemic Local Area Education Planning process, the viability of establishing an intensive language centre in the south eastern corridor to service the needs of eligible ESL students, including any that may have been enrolled at South Perth Primary School.

STATEWIDE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM, UNMET NEEDS

2009. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Since seeking requests for a proposal for the Statewide Telecommunications Enhancement Program, (STEP), what unmet service needs have been provided under the program?
- (2) In what locations –
 - (a) were those unmet needs identified; and
 - (b) have those unmet needs been met?
- (3) Exactly what has been provided?
- (4) What has been the cost of meeting that unmet need in each location?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) Most agencies have not completed implementation of the necessary measures to enable them to take advantage of the enhanced telecommunication capacity provided by Statewide Telecommunications Enhancement Program (STEP). However, I am aware that the unmet need for improved Police services in many remote towns has now been met. The Police Service was the first agency to complete trials of its applications over the new satellite service provided by Optus. Other agencies are evaluating which of the two carriers on the STEP panel, Optus or Telstra, provides the best match for their needs.
- (2) (a) Unmet needs for improved Police services were identified, at 91 regional, rural and remote communities.
(b) Yes.
- (3) See (1).
- (4) A once only capital contribution of \$6 million to Optus. This contributes to provision of infrastructure in remote communities for all agencies that choose Optus. The Police Service pays a monthly fee per site for usage. This fee is independent of distance. A similar monthly fee will apply to all agencies selecting Optus.

STATEWIDE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM, PAYMENTS TO CONTRACTORS

2017. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Since the request for proposals for the Statewide Telecommunications Enhancement Program, (STEP), what is the total amount that has been paid to contractors, suppliers and others?
- (2) What is the name of the contractors, suppliers and others who have received a payment under the STEP program?
- (3) How much has been paid to each contractor, supplier or other?
- (4) What was each payment for?
- (5) How many contractors, suppliers and/or others have received capital contributions?
- (6) For what purpose were those contributions made?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$6,653,802 as at April 2000.

| (2)-(4) Contractors & Suppliers | Purpose | Amount |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------|
| Interim HR Solutions | Technical advice and evaluation services from Peter Farr & Associates and | 102,963 |
| Beale Telecommunications | | |
| Amos Aked Swift | Project and contract development services | 102,935 |
| AeM Consulting | Project management support services | 31,352 |
| Silks | Probity Auditors | 5,211 |
| AOT Consulting | Probity Auditors | 16,020 |
| Arthur Andersen | Financial Evaluation Services | 33,670 |
| Freehill Hollingdale & Page | Legal Services | 138,393 |
| Contract & Management Services | Telecommunications data analysis services | 35,400 |
| Contract & Management Services | Accommodation & advertising services | 8,734 |
| Contract & Management Services | Contract management | 100,000 |
| Ernst & Young | Project facilitation & support services | 72,475 |
| Crown Solicitors | Legal advice | 1,274 |
| R&L Enterprises | Communications strategy advice | 4,100 |
| Assert Marketing & Public Relations | Media consultancy | 1,275 |
| Total | | 653,802 |

- (5)-(6) Optus has received a capital contribution of \$6,000,000. Its purpose was to ensure that infrastructure is provided in areas otherwise uneconomic to service and to ensure a second carrier entered the field.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, EXPENDITURE

2023. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Of the \$13.164 million allocated to the Science and Technology Development Services in the 1999-2000 State Budget, how much was spent by 29 February 2000?
- (2) What is expected to be spent for the remainder of the financial year?
- (3) How much of the total amount has been allocated to centres of excellence?
- (4) What amount has been allocated to each centre of excellence?
- (5) What other amounts have been allocated under programs operated by the department?
- (6) What amount has been allocated to each program and each entity?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$6.802 million.
- (2) \$4.734 million.
- (3)-(6) The Department of Commerce and Trade's budget is not allocated on a program basis. The provision of financial assistance to business and industry is principally done through the Department's Financial Assistance Schemes. A list of the grant, loan and subsidy payments made to business and industry by the Department of Commerce and Trade in the previous financial year is tabled by me annually. This list identifies the financial assistance scheme under which each payment is made. The list of payments for the 1999/2000 financial year will be tabled during the spring session of Parliament. The compilation of this information for the first eight months of the financial year would require the commitment of considerable resources and I am not prepared to redirect these resources from current activities.

REGIONAL HEADWORKS DEVELOPMENT SCHEME, EXPENDITURE

2024. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Of the \$7.334 million allocated to the Regional Headworks Development Scheme in the 1999-2000 State Budget, how much was spent by 29 February 2000?
- (2) What is expected to be spent for the remainder of the financial year?
- (3) How much of the total amount has been allocated to particular companies?
- (4) What amount has been allocated to each company?
- (5) What other amounts have been allocated under programs operated by the department?
- (6) What amount has been allocated to each program and each entity?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$4.596 million was allocated to all of the department's Infrastructure Development Division programs in 1999-2000 including the Regional Headworks Development Scheme.
- (2) \$1.69 million is expected to be spent for the remainder of the financial year, in all of the department's Infrastructure Development Division programs including the Regional Headworks Development Scheme.
- (3)-(6) The Department of Commerce and Trade's budget is not allocated on a program basis. The provision of financial assistance to business and industry is principally done through the Department's Financial Assistance Schemes. A list of the grant, loan and subsidy payments made to business and industry by the Department of Commerce and Trade in the previous financial year is tabled by me annually. This list identifies the financial assistance scheme under which each payment is made. The list of payments for the 1999/2000 financial year will be tabled during the spring session of Parliament. The compilation of this information for the first eight months of the financial year would require the commitment of considerable resources and I am not prepared to redirect these resources from current activities.

INDUSTRY SECTOR AND TRADE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, EXPENDITURE

2025. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Of the \$17.251 million allocated to the Industry Sector and Trade Development Services in the 1999-2000 State Budget, how much was spent by 29 February 2000?
- (2) What is expected to be spent for the remainder of the financial year?
- (3) How much of the total amount has been allocated to companies/entities?
- (4) What amount has been allocated to each company/entity?
- (5) What other amounts have been allocated under programs operated by the department?
- (6) What amount has been allocated to each program and each entity?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$11.057 million.
- (2) \$8.061 million.
- (3)-(6) The Department of Commerce and Trade's budget is not allocated on a program basis. The provision of financial assistance to business and industry is principally done through the Department's Financial Assistance Schemes. A list of the grant, loan and subsidy payments made to business and industry by the Department of Commerce and Trade in the previous financial year is tabled by me annually. This list identifies the financial assistance scheme under which each payment is made. The list of payments for the 1999/2000 financial year will be tabled during

the spring session of Parliament. The compilation of this information for the first eight months of the financial year would require the commitment of considerable resources and I am not prepared to redirect these resources from current activities.

ABORIGINAL ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, EXPENDITURE

2026. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Of the \$4.095 million allocated to the Aboriginal Enterprise Development Services in the 1999-2000 State Budget, how much was spent by 29 February 2000?
- (2) What is expected to be spent for the remainder of the financial year?
- (3) How much of the total amount has been allocated to Aboriginal Enterprises?
- (4) What amount has been allocated to each enterprise?
- (5) What other amounts have been allocated under programs operated by the department?
- (6) What amount has been allocated to each program and each entity?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$3.207 million.
- (2) \$1.879 million.
- (3)-(6) The Department of Commerce and Trade's budget is not allocated on a program basis. The provision of financial assistance to business and industry is principally done through the Department's Financial Assistance Schemes. A list of the grant, loan and subsidy payments made to business and industry by the Department of Commerce and Trade in the previous financial year is tabled by me annually. This list identifies the financial assistance scheme under which each payment is made. The list of payments for the 1999/2000 financial year will be tabled during the spring session of Parliament. The compilation of this information for the first eight months of the financial year would require the commitment of considerable resources and I am not prepared to redirect these resources from current activities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES, EXPENDITURE

2027. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Of the \$7.8 million allocated to the Information and Communications Services in the 1999-2000 State Budget, how much was spent by 29 February 2000?
- (2) What is expected to be spent for the remainder of the financial year?
- (3) How much of the total amount has been allocated to companies/entities?
- (4) What amount has been allocated to each company/entity?
- (5) What other amounts have been allocated under programs operated by the department?
- (6) What amount has been allocated to each program and each entity?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$4.426 million.
- (2) \$3.792 million.
- (3)-(6) The Department of Commerce and Trade's budget is not allocated on a program basis. The provision of financial assistance to business and industry is principally done through the Department's Financial Assistance Schemes. A list of the grant, loan and subsidy payments made to business and industry by the Department of Commerce and Trade in the previous financial year is tabled by me annually. This list identifies the financial assistance scheme under which each payment is made. The list of payments for the 1999/2000 financial year will be tabled during the spring session of Parliament. The compilation of this information for the first eight months of the financial year would require the commitment of considerable resources and I am not prepared to redirect these resources from current activities.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES, EXPENDITURE

2028. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Of the \$10.41 million allocated to the Regional Development Services in the 1999-2000 State Budget, how much was spent by 29 February 2000?
- (2) What is expected to be spent for the remainder of the financial year?
- (3) How much of the total amount has been allocated to companies/entities?

- (4) What amount has been allocated to each company/entity?
- (5) What other amounts have been allocated under programs operated by the department?
- (6) What amount has been allocated to each program and each entity?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$6.304 million.
- (2) \$3.225 million.
- (3)-(6) The Department of Commerce and Trade's budget is not allocated on a program basis. The provision of financial assistance to business and industry is principally done through the Department's Financial Assistance Schemes. A list of the grant, loan and subsidy payments made to business and industry by the Department of Commerce and Trade in the previous financial year is tabled by me annually. This list identifies the financial assistance scheme under which each payment is made. The list of payments for the 1999/2000 financial year will be tabled during the spring session of Parliament. The compilation of this information for the first eight months of the financial year would require the commitment of considerable resources and I am not prepared to redirect these resources from current activities.

FOOTBALL, LIVE TELEVISION BROADCASTS

2064. Dr CONSTABLE to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

What are the impediments, commercial or otherwise, are there to providing live television broadcasts of all sold-out football matches played at Subiaco Oval to the Western Australian public, which funded Subiaco Oval's development?

Mr MARSHALL replied:

Nil. National Sporting Organisations such as the Australian Football League (AFL) enter into contractual arrangements with television stations to provide coverage of their games and to secure commercial benefits. When a particular game is sold out, the AFL, the Western Australian Football Commission and the host club concerned discuss the possibility of providing a live telecast and make decisions based on the best interest of football and the scheduling difficulties of television programs for the day in question.

NATIVE TITLE APPLICATIONS, MEDIATION POLICY

2198. Mr RIPPER to the Premier:

- (1) Does the State Government have a formal policy on the mediation of native title applications?
- (2) If so, what is it?
- (3) How successful has it been?
- (4) Which native title applications is the State negotiating or mediating towards a consent determination of native title?
- (5) For each of these how long have negotiations been underway?
- (6) How many native title applications have been settled by consent in Western Australia?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) The State Government has had a formal policy on the mediation of native title applications since 1995.
- (2) The policy is included in a document which was most recently re-issued in February 2000. The document is titled "General Guidelines, Native Title Determinations and Agreements".
- (3) The Government's policy has been endorsed by the National Native Title Tribunal as a clear and consistent statement of the Government's expectations before entering into negotiation with native title claimants. The policy has not been opposed by any representative body or any single claimant group since it was adopted in its original form in 1995.
- (4) There are 148 claims in Western Australia at this point in time. Approximately 40 have been referred to the courts although many of those 40 remain effectively open to negotiation and will not be heard by the Federal Court, if at all, for years. Some of the 40 are in early or advanced stages of negotiation. Of the 148 claims approximately 50% are officially in mediation – that is, no formal decision has been made to either negotiate or go to court. Some of the remaining claims have not passed the registration test or simply have not been dealt with by the National Native Title Tribunal. Negotiations occur where the native title applicants have presented the Government with an acceptable level of proof about the legitimacy of the native title claimants and the rights and interests they assert under the Native Title Act.

The process of presenting the Government with documentary proof of native title rights has been completed, in part or full, for the Spinifex, Balangarra, Ngurrara, Karungal, Karajarri, Badamia, Martu, Kiwirrkurra, and

Tjurabalan claims. In some instances the Government has not accepted evidence presented by claimants or has invited the claimants to provide more detail. In all cases the Government seeks independent expert advice about the accuracy of evidence presented to it. Based on advice to the Government from the National Native Title Tribunal and from Government's own consultations, at least 30 other claims across the State are in the process of preparing statements of evidence as a basis for negotiation with the Government.

The State is currently negotiating agreements which may lead to a consent determination of native title with the Spinifex and Balangarra native title claimants. Should an effective native title determination be agreed over the Spinifex claim, it is likely that the same general form of determination could, subject to evidence in each case, be considered across most of the Central and Western Desert claims (approximately 12 claims). In November 1999 the Government invited the Ngaanyatjarra Land Council to consider a proposal which addresses both native title rights and long-term service planning across the entire region.

The Government is also in the process of negotiating an agreement with the Yamatji Land and Sea Council – the representative body for the Murchison Gascoyne region. The agreement is based on progressively dealing with all Aboriginal land interests in 12 different claims. The starting point for all negotiations will be to avoid litigation as far as possible. The Government is also advanced in the negotiation of an Indigenous Land Use Agreement with the Badamia claimants in the Gascoyne region.

The Broome Framework Agreement negotiations are currently in suspension. The Framework Agreement was intended to remove the need for any of the Broome claims to complete the full process required to determine native title, in the interests of a general settlement benefiting all Aboriginal people in Broome. That strategy disappeared with the lodgement of a combined claim over Broome by the Kimberley Land Council and the Federal Court's decision to program some Broome claims for trial. This approach further highlighted the dispute between claimants. The State now considers it inevitable that all the Broome claims will be tested in court. The State intends finalising the matters listed in the Framework Agreement when there is no doubt about who is legally able to represent the different Aboriginal interests in Broome.

- (5) Discussions on the Spinifex and Balangarra claims commenced in 1996. Formal framework agreements were signed with both groups in 1998. The Broome Framework Agreement was developed in 1997 but never ratified by the Government. All other negotiations commenced at some point since 1997. Some claimants were, however, invited to enter negotiation with the Government as early as 1995 (eg the Martu). The management of negotiations is subject to a number of factors outside the Government's influence, including:
- intra-indigenous disputes, either between claimants or within claim groups;
 - the changes made to almost all claims after the first Miriuwung Gajerrong decision in 1998, altering the list of claimed rights to match Miriuwung Gajerrong;
 - inefficiencies within representative bodies;
 - the effect of Federal Court native title decisions;
 - disputes over the registration of claims by the NNTT;
 - de-registration of some claims by the NNTT;
 - the amalgamation of some claims, altering boundaries or members or both;
 - the Commonwealth process to re-register all land councils. The process began after the amendments to the NTA in 1998 and has not been completed. This means no representative body in WA currently knows if it will be funded after June 2000;
 - in some claims, a complete lack of interest in any process which requires the claimants to present proof of their identity as claimants and the traditional rights they claim. In other words claimants wish only to continue to exploit a right to negotiate.
- (6) The potential for a consent determination decreased immediately after the Miriuwung Gajerrong decision in September 1998 and the amendment of most claims to include a right to mineral and other resources. Since the Full Bench Federal Court decision in March 2000 there has been greater interest in consent determinations from native title claimants and the State will progress discussions where appropriate.

FORESTS AND FORESTRY, ROYALTIES

2206. Ms ANWYL to the Treasurer:

- (1) I refer to royalties payable by timber companies to the Government and ask how much revenue has been collected as royalties from the harvesting of timber for the following years-
- (a) June 1993;
 - (b) June 1994;
 - (c) June 1995;
 - (d) June 1996;
 - (e) June 1997;
 - (f) June 1998;
 - (g) June 1999; and
 - (h) June 2000?
- (2) Will the Minister advise if there are any exemptions available to those industries operating and paying the above royalty and provide details?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(2) I am advised that the following revenue has been collected as royalties from the harvesting of timber for the following years-

| | | (\$000's) |
|-----|-------------------|---------------|
| (a) | 30 June 1993; | \$25,716 |
| (b) | 30 June 1994; | \$25,257 |
| (c) | 30 June 1995; | \$30,971 |
| (d) | 30 June 1996; | \$35,662 |
| (e) | 30 June 1997; | \$36,264 |
| (f) | 30 June 1998; | \$32,399 |
| (g) | 30 June 1999; and | \$33,861 |
| (h) | 30 June 2000 | not available |

PERTH INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE APPLICATION OF SOLAR ENERGY,

2230. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) Why did the Perth International Centre for the Application of Solar Energy spend almost \$160,000 of its 1997/98 operating expenses of \$1.746m on travel, visitors and hospitality?
- (2) Why did the Centre spend more than \$117,000 of its 1998/99 operating expenses of \$1.77m on travel, visitors and hospitality?
- (3) Will the Minister provide a breakdown of these expenditures including details of each trip taken or function hosted and the costs involved?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1)-(2) During the two financial years in question CASE was actively involved in Industry development in Australia through the creation of a peak industry body (SEIA (Australia)), participating in Government committees relating to the 2% renewable energy target, Kyoto Protocol/AIJ and other promotional activities. During this period projects were being developed and or implemented in Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, India and Australia. Representation was made to bilateral and multilateral funding agencies relevant to the implementation of renewable energy projects, and CASE activities. Particular activities conducted in each of the financial year are summarised below.

In the 1997/98 and 1998/99 financial years the travel hospitality and visitors expenditure was sourced from CASE funds and external funding sources. Travel was related to industry promotion and development, market development, project identification and implementation, consulting and professional services. Apart from CASE, the funding sources included the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO-CASE Trust Fund), grants and other sources where CASE was undertaking work where fees were received. The grants and funded work required CASE to travel in order to receive payment.

1997/98: In the 1998 financial year, key activities included: installing a number of renewable energy applications in Sarawak, Malaysia; the initiation of a pilot project for solar water desalination in East Java Indonesia using Western Australian manufactured technology; commenced one of the first Australian Activities Implementation Jointly projects in Irian Jaya, Indonesia; undertook monitoring of existing Thailand projects and strengthening of the relationship with the Provincial Electricity Authority of Thailand (PEA); and undertaking United Nations Consultancy in Palestine.

1998/99: In the 1999 financial year activities included: commissioned the solar wind hydro hybrid energy system in Irian Jaya, completion of the solar powered water purification project in East Java; Consulted for UN-ESCAP in Myanmar, Laos, Nepal, and Bangladesh; market research for Australian Industry in the region; organised a Western Australian Industry promotion in Taiwan; in conjunction with the Provincial Electricity Authority of Thailand (PEA) completed a proposal to undertake a feasibility study for electrification of twenty islands in Thailand to be funded by the National Energy Policy Office (NEPO) of Thailand; participated in the WA Government East Java Exchange Program; and entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with a South African Black Empowerment Group to develop a non grid electrification concession for rural South Africa.

SOURCE OF FUNDING

| YEAR | CASE | UNIDO TRUST FUND | GRANTS | PROJECT RELATED | TOTAL |
|---------|----------|------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|
| 1997/98 | 62% | 23% | 6% | 9% | \$159,957 |
| | \$99,336 | \$36,310 | \$10,083 | \$14,228 | |
| 1998/99 | 47% | 13% | 3% | 37% | \$117,172 |
| | \$55,134 | \$14,653 | \$3,389 | \$43,996 | |

CASE- International Centre for Application of Solar Energy
 MOU- Memorandum of Understanding
 GEF- The Global Environment Facility

RAPS- Remote Area Power System
AGO- Australian Greenhouse Office
DPIE- Department of Primary Industry Energy
DIST- Department of Industry of Science and Technology
UN-ESCAP- United Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
PEA- Provincial Electricity Authority
SEIA- (Australia) Sustainable Energy Industry Association
PVPS- Photovoltaic Power System
ESAA- Electricity Supply Association of Australia Limited
UNDP- United Nations Development Programme
APEC- Asia Pacific Economic Committee
UN- United Nations
LIPI- Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia
APDC- Asian Pacific Development Centre
MULU- Name of a city in Malaysia
NEDA- Non Conventional Energy Development of UP
UNIDO- United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
IEA- International Energy Agency
SEF- Now known as SEIA
DANIDA- Danish International Development Agency (Denmark)
CAT- Centre of Appropriate Technology
SEICA- Sustainable Energy Industries Council of Australia
NEPO- National Energy Policy Organisation (Thailand)
EGAT- Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand
AIJ- Activities Implementation Jointly
WVI- World Vision International

NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY, AGREEMENTS WITH CALM AND THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

2245. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) What financial or other arrangements and agreements exist between Notre Dame University and –
 - (a) the Department of Conservation and Land Management; and
 - (b) the Department of Environmental Protection?
- (2) When was each entered into and what is its duration?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) (a) The Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) rents office accommodation from Notre Dame University and hires additional meeting and seminar rooms for CALM activities as required. CALM has funded a PhD scholarship at Notre Dame University for research of interest to CALM. CALM staff attend training courses from time to time at Notre Dame University.
 - (b) None.
- (2) A rental agreement was entered into by CALM on 1 September 1995 and expires on 31 August 2000, with a fire year renewal option.

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES, KARRATHA

2277. Mr RIEBELING to the Treasurer:

With respect to the last two financial years, will the Minister advise -

- (a) the number of new cars purchased by Government departments and agencies in Karratha;
- (b) the names of the dealers and the dates upon which the new cars were purchased;
- (c) the type of vehicle purchased;
- (d) the cost of each vehicle; and
- (e) the department or agency that purchased the vehicle?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a)-(e) Information is available only in respect of vehicles leased through the vehicle fleet funding facility. Within this context:
the first table shows details of all vehicles identified by the relevant agencies as being located in Karratha; and
the second table gives details of vehicles shown as supplied by Karratha dealers to locations outside of Karratha.
[See paper No 972.]

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES, GERALDTON

2278. Mr RIEBELING to the Treasurer:

In respect to the last two financial years, will the Minister advise -

- (a) the number of new cars purchased by Government departments and agencies in Geraldton;
- (b) the names of the dealers and the dates upon which the new cars were purchased;
- (c) the type of vehicle purchased;
- (d) the cost of each vehicle; and
- (e) the department or agency that purchased the vehicle?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a)-(e) Information is available only in respect of vehicles leased through the vehicle fleet funding facility. Within this context: the first table shows details of all vehicles identified by the relevant agencies as being located in Geraldton; and the second table gives details of vehicles shown as supplied by Geraldton dealers to locations outside of Geraldton.
[See paper No 972.]

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES, BUNBURY

2279. Mr RIEBELING to the Treasurer:

In respect to the last two financial years, will the Minister advise -

- (a) the number of new cars purchased by Government departments and agencies in Bunbury;
- (b) the names of the dealers and the dates upon which the new cars were purchased;
- (c) the type of vehicle purchased;
- (d) the cost of each vehicle; and
- (e) the department or agency that purchased the vehicle?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a)-(e) Information is available only in respect of vehicles leased through the vehicle fleet funding facility. Within this context: the first table shows details of all vehicles identified by the relevant agencies as being located in Bunbury; and the second table gives details of vehicles shown as supplied by Bunbury dealers to locations outside of Bunbury.
[See paper No 972.]

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES, ALBANY

2280. Mr RIEBELING to the Treasurer:

In respect to the last two financial years, will the Minister advise -

- (a) the number of new cars purchased by Government departments and agencies in Albany;
- (b) the names of the dealers and the dates upon which the new cars were purchased;
- (c) the type of vehicle purchased;
- (d) the cost of each vehicle; and
- (e) the department or agency that purchased the vehicle?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a)-(e) Information is available only in respect of vehicles leased through the vehicle fleet funding facility. Within this context: the first table shows details of all vehicles identified by the relevant agencies as being located in Albany; and the second table gives details of vehicles shown as supplied by Albany dealers to locations outside of Albany.
[See paper No 972.]

MINIMUM WAGE, INCREASE

2299. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Labour Relations:

- (1) What is the State minimum wage under the Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993?
- (2) On what date was the minimum wage last adjusted?
- (3) By what amount was the minimum wage increased on that date?
- (4) What was the rationale of the Government/Minister to increase the minimum wage by that amount?
- (5) Did the Minister/Government receive any independent or other reports that recommended that or a similar adjustment?
- (6) Did the Minister receive any other reports on the minimum wage that lead to making that decision?

- (7) If so, what reports?
- (8) What matters did the Minister take into account in arriving at the conclusion that the minimum wage should be so adjusted?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) \$368.00 per week
- (2) 1 March 2000
- (3) \$21.30
- (4) The factors identified in submissions from interested parties and the recommendation from the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission were considered in the context of the Western Australian economy and labour market.
- (5)-(6) Yes.
- (7) Written submissions were received from employer and employee associations, and other interested organisations. A recommendation was received from the Western Australian Industrial Commission, under section 14 of the *Minimum Conditions of Employment Act 1993*. Advice was also received from Treasury and the Department of Productivity and Labour Relations.
- (8) Reports and submissions received canvassed a range of matters ranging from employee incomes and expenditures to the state of Western Australian economy and labour market. These were all considered in determining the minimum weekly rate.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, FACILITIES MANAGERS

2341. Mr BROWN to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Commerce and Trade; Regional Development; Small Business:

- (1) What departments and agencies under the Deputy Premier's control -
- (a) have appointed; or
- (b) have under consideration for appointment,
- a Facilities Manager or Managers?
- (2) What are the names of the Facilities Managers so appointed?
- (3) What is the scope of work undertaken by each Facilities Manager?
- (4) To what extent do Facilities Managers ensure that purchases/contracts are let in regional areas for regional work?
- (5) Do Facilities Managers ensure that the Regional Buying Contract is adhered to in relation to any purchases or contracts they manage?
- (6) Will the Deputy Premier name the departments and agencies under the Deputy Premier's control that have under consideration the appointment of one or more Facilities Managers?
- (7) What is the nature of the work proposed to be carried out by that Facilities Manager or Managers?

Mr COWAN replied:

Centre for Application of Solar Energy

- (1) No.
- (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Department of Commerce & Trade

- (1) (a)-(b) Department of Commerce and Trade.
- (2) Chesterton International.
- (3) Property management of Technology Park, Bentley.
- (4)-(5) Not applicable to this contractual arrangement.
- (6) The Department of Commerce and Trade.
- (7) . Facilities management for Technology Park, Bentley. This will entail elements of the current management contract and management of the function centre and research and development centre.
 . Technology Precinct Board of Management contract. The Technology Precinct encompasses Technology Park and the surrounding research and development organisations, government departments, educational institutions, recreational and community organisations.
 . A contract for executive support to the Technology Precinct Board of Management is under consideration. The nature of the work of this support team is to provide executive support/secretarial services for the functioning of the Board of Management.

Gascoyne Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Goldfields Esperance Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Great Southern Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Kimberley Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Midwest Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Peel Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Pilbara Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Small Business Development Corporation

- (1) (a) The Small Business Development Corporation has utilised the services of a Facilities Manager appointed under a WA Department of Contracts and Management Services (CAMS) panel contract.

(b) The SBDC does not currently have under consideration further use of a Facilities Manager.

(2) Serco.

(3) Serco was engaged to facilitate development of tender specifications, calling of public tenders and overseeing of works associated with modifications to office accommodation in the SBDC's ground and first floor tenancies.

(4)-(7) Not applicable.

South West Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Technology & Industry Advisory Council

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

Wheatbelt Development Commission

- (1) No.
 (2)-(7) Not applicable.

GOLD ROYALTY, COMPANIES APPLYING FOR RELIEF

2366. Ms ANWYL to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

I refer to the Gold Royalty and ask-

- (a) which companies have applied for relief from the royalty, and when;
 (b) were they successful;
 (c) if so, will the Minister provide details;
 (d) if not, , will the Minister provide details as to why;
 (e) has any member of the Government made representations to the Minister as to the royalty;
 (f) if so, which member/s and when;
 (g) has cabinet considered any alteration to the royalty; and
 (h) if so, when?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (a) Three Companies have applied for relief from the gold royalty. These were:

Ferrier Hodgson (Joint Receiver and Manager for Consolidated Gold Mines Ltd) in October 1998;
 Goldfan Ltd in January 1999; and
 Goldfields Kalgoorlie Ltd in May 1999.

- (b) Goldfan Ltd is the only company that has received gold royalty relief.
- (c) Goldfan Ltd received gold royalty relief equivalent to 75% of the rate of royalty for the March & June Quarters 1999. The total amount of relief granted was \$42,391.43.
- (d) The companies that were not granted gold royalty relief were unsuccessful because they did not meet the royalty relief criteria published in the Government Gazette of 24 April 1998.
- (e) Yes.
- (f) I am not prepared to provide details of private conversations.
- (g) Cabinet has not formally considered any alteration to the gold royalty.
- (h) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMS

2395. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

For all government departments and agencies under the Attorney General's control, will the Attorney General provide the following information-

- (a) does the department or agency maintain an internal audit program, and if not, why not;
- (b) is this internal program undertaken by an outside contractor;
- (c) if yes-
 - (i) who is the outside contractor;
 - (ii) on what date were they contracted;
 - (iii) when does the contract expire;
 - (iv) were tenders called for the contract, and if not why not;
 - (v) what is the total value of the contract;
 - (vi) if the contractor charges an hourly rate, what is that rate; and
 - (vii) what was the value of the contract in 1998-99?

Mr PRINCE replied:

Ministry of Justice

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Internal audit program managed in-house. A co-sourcing arrangement exists with KPMG who are contracted to provide audit services.
- (c)
 - (i) KPMG
 - (ii) 22 September 1998
 - (iii) 22 September 2001 (option of 2 year extension)
 - (iv) Yes
 - (v) \$607,864
 - (vi) Hourly rate varies from \$50/hr to \$225/hr depending on complexity/sensitivity of assignment.
 - (vii) \$298,356

Solicitor General

The Solicitor General's Chambers will be included in any response made to this question by the Ministry of Justice.

Director of Public Prosecution

- (a)-(b) Yes.
- (c)
 - (i) KPMG
 - (ii)-(vi) The DPP does not independently contract with the external provider of internal audit services. The DPP comes under the umbrella of a Ministry of Justice contract.
 - (vii) \$5,250.00

Office of the Information Commissioner

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes, the Office of Information Commissioner comes within the scope of a contract arranged by the Ministry of Justice.
- (c)
 - (i) KPMG, Chartered Accountants.
 - (ii) 22 September 1998.
 - (iii) 22 September 2001, with an option of an additional 2 years, determined by the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Information Commissioner.
 - (iv) Yes, by the Ministry of Justice.
 - (v) (This will be answered by the Ministry of Justice).
 - (vi) \$75 per hour.
 - (vii) \$1,575.00

Legal Aid

(a)-(b) Yes.

- (c) (i) Hall Chadwick
(ii) 16 April 2000
(iii) 30 June 2000
(iv) Requests for Proposal were sought with Hall Chadwick being chosen to provide audit related services on an annual renewable basis
(v) \$48,750 in 1999/2000
(vi) \$75
(vii) \$46,800

Equal Opportunity Commissioner

The Commissioner for Equal Opportunity has provided the following reply:

- (a) The Commissioner for Equal Opportunity does not maintain an internal audit program. The Commissioner does however, receive a bureau of service from the Ministry of Justice for a range of corporate services including internal audit, which incorporates an annual external audit.
- (b) The Commissioner receives an annual compliance review, which is audited by an outside contractor.
- (c) (i) KPMG
(ii) The Ministry of Justice submitted this contract for tender 22 September 1998.
(iii) The contract period is due to expire 21 September 2001 but has the option of a 2 year extension.
(iv) Yes
(v) The Ministry's contract made a provision for the inclusion of the other agencies (including the Commissioner for Equal Opportunity) under the Attorney General's portfolio. The Commissioner is charged according to the time taken to complete the review and the complexity of the audit taken.
(vi) The hourly rate charged by KPMG is \$75.
(vii) The value of the contract in 1998-99 was \$2,815.

Crown Solicitor's Office

The Crown Solicitor's Office is covered by the Ministry of Justice internal audit plan.

Law Reform Commission

- (a) The Law Reform Commission has an internal audit program.
- (b) The Commission's internal audit is coordinated by the Ministry of Justice which engages an outside auditor.
- (c) (i) The Ministry of Justice engages KPMG
(ii) 22 September 1998
(iii) 22 September 2001
(iv) The Commission understands that the Ministry of Justice called for tenders.
(v) Total value unknown: the Law Reform Commission will pay \$6,500 for 1999-2000 internal audit.
(vi) Hourly rates unknown.
(vii) Total value unknown; the Law Reform Commission paid \$10,890 for the 1998-1999 internal audit.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMS

2412. Mr RIEBELING to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

For all government departments and agencies under the Minister's control, will the Minister provide the following information-

- (a) does the department or agency maintain an internal audit program, and if not, why not;
- (b) is this internal program undertaken by an outside contractor;
- (c) if yes-
- (i) who is the outside contractor;
- (ii) on what date were they contracted;
- (iii) when does the contract expire;
- (iv) were tenders called for the contract, and if not why not;
- (v) what is the total value of the contract;
- (vi) if the contractor charges an hourly rate, what is that rate; and
- (vii) what was the value of the contract in 1998-99?

Mr MARSHALL replied:

MINISTRY OF SPORT AND RECREATION

(a)-(b) Yes.

- (c) (i) Stanton Partners
(ii) March 1995
(iii) March 1998
(iv) Yes
(v) The original 3 year contract was valued at \$12,000 per annum
(vi) \$55 - \$65 (subject to the nature of the audit)
(vii) \$14,000

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN SPORTS CENTRE TRUST

(a)-(b) Yes.

- (c) (i) Butler Settineri
- (ii) 29 October 1993
- (iii) 7 years
- (iv) Yes
- (v) \$32,400
- (vi) Set fee, no hourly rate
- (vii) \$5,500

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT

(a)-(b) Yes.

- (c) (i) KPMG
- (ii) 12 May 1992
- (iii) There is no expiry date to the arrangement
- (iv) Tenders were not called for the project. The rate quoted was known to be less than the market price.
- (v) The fee for the services since May 1996 is \$4,500 per annum, plus disbursements. Prior to that date the fee was \$3,200 per annum.
- (vi) An hourly rate is not charged.
- (vii) The value of the contract in 1998/99 was \$4,500 plus \$50 disbursement.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRAMS

2413 Mr RIEBELING to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Justice:

For all government departments and agencies under the Minister's control, will the Minister provide the following information-

- (a) does the department or agency maintain an internal audit program, and if not, why not;
- (b) is this internal program undertaken by an outside contractor;
- (c) if yes-
 - (i) who is the outside contractor;
 - (ii) on what date were they contracted;
 - (iii) when does the contract expire;
 - (iv) were tenders called for the contract, and if not why not;
 - (v) what is the total value of the contract;
 - (vi) if the contractor charges an hourly rate, what is that rate; and
 - (vii) what was the value of the contract in 1998-99?

Mr BARRON-SULLIVAN replied:

I refer the member to my answer given to question on notice 2395.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, LEGAL ADVICE FROM SKEA, NELSON AND HAGER

2418. Ms McHALE to the Treasurer:

- (1) Has any Department or agency under the Treasurer's portfolios contracted the legal firm Skea, Nelson and Hager to provide advice?
- (2) If so, what was the project and what was the price paid to the legal firm?
- (3) Was the project subject to the public tender process?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(4) Whenever the legal firm, Skea, Nelson and Hager has provided legal advice to Government the details are provided in the appropriate Consultants Report. These quarterly reports are regularly tabled in Parliament.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, INTERNAL LIBRARY SERVICE

2452. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

In relation to those agencies within the Attorney General's responsibility which have an internal library service -

- (a) what is the name of the agency;
- (b) how many staff are employed at the library of the agency;
- (c) what is the budget allocation for the library -
 - (i) in the current financial year; and
 - (ii) in the 2000/2001 State Budget?
- (d) will each of the agency libraries remain fully operational during the coming financial year; and

- (e) if no to (d) above, in which agency will there be a change, what is the nature of the change, and why is the change occurring?

Mr PRINCE replied:

Ministry of Justice

- (a) Ministry of Justice
- (b) Court Libraries - 6 full-time, 0.6 temporary staff
Other Libraries -
8 full-time
2 part-time
2.5 temporary staff
- (c) (i) Court Libraries
\$1,292,000 (includes \$349,000 for the Legal Practice Board and \$154,000 federal funding for the Family Court library)
Other Libraries - \$860,100
(ii) Not yet allocated.
- (d) Yes.
- (e) Not applicable.

Solicitor General

The library of the Solicitor General is included in the answer to this question supplied by the Ministry of Justice.

Director of Public Prosecution

The DPP does not have an internal library service. Under the terms of a corporate service deliver agreement, DPP staff have access to library services maintained by the Ministry of Justice.

(a)-(e) Not applicable.

Office of the Information Commissioner

Nil

Legal Aid

- (a) Legal Aid Western Australia.
- (b) 2 (1 Librarian; 1 Library Technician).
- (c) (i) Budget for current financial year \$197,200.00
(ii) Estimated budget for 2000/2001 \$207,060.00
- (d) Yes.

Equal Opportunity Commissioner

- (a) Equal Opportunity Commission.
- (b) None.
- (c) (i) A budget of \$25,000 was allocated to library related expenses in 1999/2000.
(ii) A budget estimate of \$25,000 was allocated against library related expenses for the 2000/01 financial year.
- (d) Yes.
- (e) Not applicable.

Crown Solicitor's Office

Crown Solicitor's Office has no library of its own.

(a)-(e) Not applicable.

Law Reform Commission

- (a) The Law Reform Commission retains a collection of law reform agency publications.
- (b) No staff are employed exclusively for library maintenance purposes.
- (c) There is no specific budget allocation for the library per se. It's current limited maintenance is funded through administration, services and contracts.
(i)-(ii) Nil.
- (d) Unknown.
- (e) The Commission currently is considering how to make the collection, which has never been catalogued, more accessible.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, INTERNAL LIBRARY SERVICE

2469. Mr RIEBELING to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

In relation to those agencies within the Minister's responsibility which have an internal library service -

- (a) what is the name of the agency;
- (b) how many staff are employed at the library of the agency;
- (c) what is the budget allocation for the library -
 - (i) in the current financial year; and
 - (ii) in the 2000/2001 State Budget?
- (d) will each of the agency libraries remain fully operational during the coming financial year; and
- (e) if no to (d) above, in which agency will there be a change, what is the nature of the change, and why is the change occurring?

Mr MARSHALL replied:

Ministry of Sport and Recreation

- (a) Ministry of Sport and Recreation
- (b) Two
- (c) \$105K for 1999/2000
- (d) \$121K for 2000/2001
- (e) Yes.
- (f) Not applicable.

Western Australian Institute of Sport

Western Australian Sports Centre Trust

- (a) WAIS and WASCT do not have an internal library service.
- (b)-(e) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES, INTERNAL LIBRARY SERVICE

2470. Mr RIEBELING to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Justice:

In relation to those agencies within the Minister's responsibility which have an internal library service -

- (a) what is the name of the agency;
- (b) how many staff are employed at the library of the agency;
- (c) what is the budget allocation for the library -
 - (i) in the current financial year; and
 - (ii) in the 2000/2001 State Budget?
- (d) will each of the agency libraries remain fully operational during the coming financial year; and
- (e) if no to (d) above, in which agency will there be a change, what is the nature of the change, and why is the change occurring?

Mr BARRON-SULLIVAN replied:

I refer the member to my answer given to question on notice 2452.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

MINISTRY OF FAIR TRADING, LEGAL ADVICE

878. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Fair Trading:

I refer to the controversial legal advice obtained by the Ministry of Fair Trading which it used to dismiss complaints from investors in finance broking schemes on the grounds they were not clients of finance brokers. I also refer to the minister's claim yesterday that, as that advice had been provided to the Gunning inquiry, it was up to the inquiry to release it.

- (1) Is the minister aware that counsel assisting the inquiry, John Chaney, said that he cannot release the advice because the legal privilege attached to it belongs to the ministry and in his words, "You've got to take it up with them"?
- (2) Will the minister now, in the public interest, direct the ministry to waive its legal privilege and make that legal advice public for all the people of Western Australia to see?

Mr SHAVE replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some notice of this question.

(1)-(2) I took up this issue this morning and received the following advice -

The High Court has repeatedly recognised that legal professional privilege is sacrosanct. I refer to the case of *Baker v Campbell* and others where this view was upheld. The Government's legal advice is quite

clear on the issue of client confidentiality and the release of legal information. Further, it is improper to make adverse inferences simply because somebody is adhering to professional privilege. People and Governments have the right to seek legal advice freely and to be properly protected. To make an adverse inference infers something improper has happened and impugns a person, which is wrong and would never happen in a court. I have volunteered to go to the Gunning inquiry and have everything necessary asked of me, including matters related to the legal advice.

Further, my office has spoken to the Attorney General, who advises that Governments of all persuasions have consistently taken the view that crown advice is not tabled in the Parliament. It is consistent with the privilege given to legal advice in the courts. This is an important principle to be maintained irrespective of the content of the advice.

I am happy to table this advice.

[See paper No 973.]

WESTRALIAN SANDS LTD, WORKPLACE AGREEMENTS

879. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Labor Relations:

I refer to the Western Australian Industrial Appeal Court decision of 9 June 2000 on the appeal by Westralian Sands Ltd against a decision of the Full Bench of the Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission in favour of certain unions and to the fact that the minister appeared as a "friend of the court" in support of Westralian Sands' case to argue that the spirit of her Government's law provided for a policy of "no workplace agreement, no start", a proposition that the judgment roundly dismissed.

Does the minister still contend that the Workplace Agreements Act 1993 supports a policy of "no workplace agreement, no start" or was this intervention by the minister undertaken because of the involvement of the Premier's brother with Westralian Sands?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

This matter is back before the Western Australian Industrial Relation Commission and, therefore, the commission will decide whether the union's application will be granted. The unions will have to go back to the commission and the commission will decide whether that clause should be included in the relevant award. Despite what the unions are claiming, the Western Australian Industrial Appeal Court has said that it has concerns about the breadth of the clause. Will the members opposite abolish our workplace agreements legislation?

Mr Kobelke: Absolutely; we will give a choice.

Mrs EDWARDES: The Opposition will tell some 200 000 people who have entered into workplace agreements, too bad. The Opposition will give them two fingers up the nose and tell them that they cannot enter into an agreement.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: That was an exhibition we do not need. Everyone was winding it in, dragging out a little line, and it all added up to a lot of rubbish.

Mrs EDWARDES: The Westralian Sands matter is before the commission and the commission is still to decide on the matter.

GOLD, POSITIVE MARKET TRENDS

880. Mr BRADSHAW to the Premier:

The international gold price has been under pressure for the past few years which, coupled with the added burden associated with the uncertainty of native title, has significantly impacted upon the gold industry in Western Australia. Are there any positive market trends that could assist the industry in the future?

Mr COURT replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question. The gold industry is a significant industry in the State. Western Australia produces 75 per cent of Australia's gold production and Australia accounts for 9 per cent of the world production. Its export value is worth around \$5b a year. There have been some pressure points; one has been the sell off by some of the central banks. The Bank of England, for example, in May 1999, started a program of selling some 25 tons of gold every two months from July 1999. Along with programs from some other central banks, it has put a great deal of pressure on the gold price. The industry itself has been in some difficulty.

Access to land for exploration has become very difficult because of the problems surrounding the native title legislation. One of the positive signs for the industry is that the demand for physical gold for a number of purposes has been very strong in the past couple of years. There has been very strong growth in the jewellery industry. One of the successful programs has been the Sydney 2000 Olympic coin program. The UK-based master coin designer, Stuart Devlin, designed the coins for this Olympic program.

Mr RIPPER: Perhaps the National Party leader is not here because he is embarrassed by the gold roting -

The SPEAKER: Order!

Mr COURT: I will talk about gold roting in a minute.

The SPEAKER: I was trying to give a message yesterday that although all interjections are disorderly, some are allowed when they relate to the question. The Premier has been asked a question about the gold industry but other funny questions are drifting around. Let us get on with the question at hand.

Mr COURT: I will report the progress of the Olympic coin program because the Perth Mint, in conjunction with the Royal Australian Mint, has embarked on this program and it has been an enormous success. Already 4 million gold, silver and bronze coins from the collection have been sold in 50 countries worldwide. The Perth Mint is responsible for all of the gold coin and half of the silver coin production. Only 2.4 million coins were sold for the Atlanta Olympics and, already, we have sold four million coins and the peak selling season is yet to start. Some 2.5 tonnes of gold have been used for that program. It is terrific to see that this program, along with many other programs, is increasing the demand for gold.

The industry is still operating with relatively low gold prices. It would be a huge help if members opposite were to agree to workable native title legislation. It would be of great assistance if this industry could undertake more exploration activity under more workable legislation. Members opposite raised the question of the gold royalty. I have asked the Leader of the Opposition whether he will abolish the gold royalty.

Dr Gallop: Watch this space.

Mr COURT: I have watched the space. The Labor Party's spokesperson on the gold royalty has said that the party has spoken to the industry on a number of occasions and asked whether it wants a Labor Government to abolish the royalty. The clear response was that the industry does not want the royalty abolished. It has come to an arrangement with the Government and it accepts the situation. The spokesman said that if the industry does not want any interference in that situation, the Labor Party will not interfere. Members opposite have already said publicly that they will keep it.

Dr Gallop: We have not announced our election policies.

Mr COURT: So the Opposition's spokesperson does not know what he is talking about.

Dr Gallop: He does know what he is talking about.

Mr COURT: Is the spokesperson talking as a country Labor member, a new Labor member, or an old Labor member?

Dr Gallop: Take a Mogadon and relax.

Mr COURT: Why does the Labor Party not tell the industry what it intends to do with the gold royalty?

Dr Gallop: We will tell everyone our policies at the appropriate time.

Mr COURT: I cannot believe -

Several members interjected.

Dr Gallop: Mr Speaker, I think question time is getting a bit carried away.

The SPEAKER: Order! Yes it is.

Mr COURT: The Labor Party is telling the biggest export earner in this State to wait until election time to hear its policy.

Mr Ripper: You announced your position after the election. At least we announced ours before it.

Mr COURT: Yes, country Labor has announced its position; new Labor will wait until the campaign.

ARTIFICIAL REEF, BUNBURY

881. Dr EDWARDS to the Premier:

I refer to a report on ABC radio in the south west on Tuesday that the member for Mitchell had spoken to the Premier about the construction of an artificial reef at Bunbury and ask -

- (1) Will the Premier confirm that this reported conversation took place?
- (2) If so, what was the outcome?
- (3) Has the Premier approved funding for the reef; and, if so, what amount has been approved?

Mr COURT replied:

(1)-(3) The Government has not approved funding for an artificial reef at Bunbury. The Deputy Premier answered that question yesterday. He made it very clear -

Mrs Roberts: Did you or did you not speak to him?

Mr COURT: I have spoken to all our members.

I will put this issue on the record because a delegation came to see the Government and the Opposition yesterday. In 1996, a very severe winter storm washed away the beach and left the buildings on the Back Beach in jeopardy. At that time, the Government was requested by the council and people in Bunbury to initiate a plan to enable the beach to be protected and upgraded. As the member said in a grievance this morning, strong support has been indicated for this upgrade. Extensive planning has been done and nearly \$500 000 has been spent developing the different engineering solutions. Debate has ensued about whether the proposed groynes are the best solution. I am sure there are plenty of other solutions, such as building reefs. A lot of things could be done.

Dr Edwards: Has the member for Mitchell made that proposal?

Mr COURT: The members for Mitchell and Bunbury have been raising this issue with me on a regular basis for the past four years. The Government has now committed funding to the project. We have been prepared to act. We will do a project only on the back of proper technical and engineering advice. We have no intention of proceeding with a project if it does not have the proper engineering advice. We have been prepared to do it, and we have committed the funds. We want to turn the Back Beach into an even greater attraction for Bunbury than it is at present.

JOONDALUP HEALTH CAMPUS, WAITING LISTS

882. Mr BAKER to the Minister for Health:

I refer to recent allegations by the Labor Party that hospital waiting lists at Joondalup Health Campus have blown out due to a shortage of funds. Can the Minister advise whether this is the case?

Mr DAY replied:

Any statement of that nature by the Opposition is just another example of its scaremongering. It is certainly not correct to suggest that waiting lists at Joondalup Health Campus have blown out. The reality is that Joondalup Health Campus does not have waiting lists as such. Waiting lists for elective surgery at Joondalup are held by the specialists concerned and by the Central Wait List Bureau. The Government has allocated \$125m over five years for additional elective surgery to be performed. That program has been going extremely well. Over the past 12 months, an additional 1 398 patients have been treated at Joondalup Health Campus, with about \$3.5m of funding from that elective surgery pool of funds being consumed. In talking about elective surgery, I am pleased to advise that over the past 12 months there has been a decrease of close to 20 per cent in the waiting lists in teaching hospitals, with a fall from about 12 900 patients from May 1999 to 10 500 patients at present, which is the lowest level since July 1995. What is more important is that the median waiting time has fallen substantially from the highest level of 8.2 months in November 1998 to the current level of 5.91 months. Those statistics are further evidence that the coalition's Health policies are working.

MOTORSPORTS COMPLEX, KWINANA

883. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Planning:

I refer to the finding by the Full Court of the Supreme Court in *City of Bayswater v Department of Family and Children's Services* on 1 June this year. Has the minister received any advice about the impact of this finding on the Government's construction of the motorplex site in Kwinana? In particular, is the minister aware that as the land is zoned under the metropolitan region scheme, it was unlawful to proceed with the construction without planning approval, and the matter must now be referred back to the Kwinana Town Council or the Western Australian Planning Commission? Is it possible that the Government will now need to dismantle the motorplex?

Mr KIERATH replied:

For the benefit of members, the motorsports complex was treated by the Western Australian Planning Commission in the normal manner in which it would treat any other project, which was to seek a formal approval. The Western Australian Sports Centre Trust lodged the development application with the Kwinana Town Council, and it was referred to the Planning Commission for formal assessment, as would be the case with any land that is in or abuts reserved land in the metropolitan region scheme area. When that decision was being made, Justice Murray came down with the first decision as a result of the Bayswater case and said that because it was in essence a public work, it did not require formal approval. The Planning Commission assessed it and gave the advice, and the Government at the time went along with that advice to the letter; and that was advice back to the WA Sports Centre Trust on how that matter should progress.

Ms MacTiernan: There was no planning appeal.

Mr KIERATH: Justice Murray said that a public work did not require a formal assessment but we went through the same process anyway. The Western Australian Planning Commission provided direction in the form of advice, but it would have been the same decision if it had been a formal approval. The Government acted on that advice to the letter. It would not have mattered if it had been formal or informal; it was treated in exactly the same manner. Since Justice Murray handed down his decision, a decision of the Supreme Court has overturned that decision. The Government is still waiting for further advice from Crown Law on whether the approvals and the processes are lawful. Our current advice is that we should continue with the construction and the situation should not change. On that basis we are continuing. We have asked Crown Law to give us definitive advice, and there are provisions under section 32 of the Metropolitan Region Town Planning Scheme Act to deal with that if we need to. The Government is still assessing whether it will use section 32 for approvals; whether it will introduce an amending Bill in the Parliament, if necessary; or whether

it needs to review the decision of the Supreme Court. That advice is with the Government at the moment, and it will obviously act on the advice it receives from Crown Law.

MOTORSPORTS COMPLEX, KWINANA

884. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Planning:

Should construction now be ceased until it is determined whether the construction is unlawful?

Mr KIERATH replied:

No, because at the time construction commenced it was lawful. It was in accordance with all the normal practices. What did the Labor Party do when it was in power? What did the Labor Government do when it established the Casuarina Prison? Did it seek approval from the council? No, it did not. The Government is operating on this in exactly the same manner as Labor operated with the Casuarina Prison.

Ms MacTiernan: You now know that was wrong.

Mr KIERATH: Not at all. When the contracts were signed and when construction commenced it was lawful.

INFILL SEWERAGE, BUSSELTON

885. Mr MASTERS to the Minister for Water Resources:

Last winter many Busselton residents were forced to move out of their homes when flooding rains caused their septic tank systems to stop working. Can the minister please advise what commitment the Water Corporation has made to infill sewerage in Busselton over the next 12 months, and describe how this will alleviate some flood problems and also protect the environment?

Dr HAMES replied:

Busselton has long been a problem in that it is a low-lying community, very flood prone and has a very high water table. The Government has been concerned about nutrient levels in the region, and the member will be well aware of the work we are doing in the Vasse River to try to address the nutrient problems that are significantly affecting that river. Because of that, and as part of the Government's \$800m, 10-year infill sewerage program, the City of Busselton has become a very high priority on the program to service a large proportion of Busselton with infill sewerage. Currently three programs are under way. The total cost of infill sewerage in Busselton will be \$15.8m by the time it is completed at the end of 2001. A program is currently under way, with a target of 550 lots and the Busselton Senior High School. Another one, due for completion in about three months' time, will cover a further 100 lots. The third stage of the three programs in progress at the moment is much larger than that, and 800 lots will be sewered by the end of 2001. They are currently in the design stage. This reflects very well on this Government. The previous Government spent in the order of \$3m a year on infill sewerage in the metropolitan and country regions, compared with this Government's expenditure of \$80m a year.

Mr Kobelke: That is untrue.

Dr HAMES: It is certainly true. This Government spends \$80m a year on infill sewerage, compared to expenditure by the previous Labor Government of about \$3m a year.

GUNNING INQUIRY, LEGAL REPRESENTATION

886. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Fair Trading:

I refer to today's decision by Ivan Gunning that Penny Searle and other investors with mortgage brokers should not be granted standing to be represented before the inquiry because, among other things, she would not be the subject of any adverse findings.

Why is the minister so desperate to have a taxpayer-funded queen's counsel represent him at the Gunning inquiry, when the Premier has confirmed in this Parliament that the Gunning inquiry cannot make findings against him or any other minister?

Mr Court: You don't mind your legal fees being paid either; that is a different proposition.

Mr McGINTY: There is a little bit of hypocrisy here.

Mr Court: That is real hypocrisy.

Several members interjected.

Mr McGINTY: The Government does not want an adverse finding against the minister but it is happy to dole out taxpayers' money for him.

The SPEAKER: Many members appear to believe they can answer the question. Having heard the question, perhaps we can wait and listen to the minister.

Mr SHAVE replied:

It is interesting that the member for Fremantle can say that the inquiry will look at certain issues, that it will judge the ministry's performance, that the Minister for Fair Trading is implicated as he is in charge of the ministry, and then deny me the right to have proper legal representation. I draw his attention to a couple of documents I have in my hand. One is about a royal commission in 1992 in which three people ran up legal bills. A man called Burke ran up a bill of \$1.7m; a Peter Dowding ran up a bill of \$2.1m; and a David Parker ran up a bill of \$1.9m.

Mr McGinty: It is pretty good that you can justify your actions by WA Inc standards; therefore, you should be able to have your snout in the trough.

Mr SHAVE: One must love the member for Fremantle for his hypocrisy. At the Easton royal commission in 1995, Mr McGinty MLA was part of a group that ran up a bill of \$159 000. I table the two documents.

[See papers Nos 974A and 974B.]

GUNNING INQUIRY, LEGAL REPRESENTATION

887. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Fair Trading:

As a supplementary question, why does the minister need to be represented at the inquiry now that he knows no adverse findings can be made against him in the inquiry and investors are denied representation on that basis?

Mr SHAVE replied:

I do not accept what the member for Fremantle said. I have advice that the inquiry can look into the actions -

Mr McGinty: The Premier disagrees with you.

Mr SHAVE: That may be the member's interpretation.

Mr McGinty: No, that is the Premier's interpretation.

Mr SHAVE: The advice I have received from the Solicitor General is that the Gunning inquiry has every right to report on the actions of the Minister for Fair Trading. If the inquiry is to report on my activities as the Minister for Fair Trading, I intend to have proper legal representation.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I have given the member for Greenough the call but he cannot get a word in. Perhaps members will allow him to ask his question.

GRAYLANDS HOSPITAL, FUTURE

888. Mr MINSON to the Minister for Health:

I refer to comments by the Leader of the Opposition this morning that he is concerned about the future of Graylands Hospital -

Dr Gallop: Yes, very concerned.

Mr MINSON: - where he might well find a home. Can the minister inform the House -

Mr McGinty interjected.

Dr Gallop: That is a disgraceful interjection.

Mr MINSON: The member for Fremantle should not stand there talking hypocrisy to me about his dirty dozen.

Mr McGinty interjected.

The SPEAKER: The member for Fremantle will come to order. There was a little hilarity at one of the comments made but things have developed to such a stage that I will call for the next question.

GST, FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

889. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

I refer to the \$400m propaganda campaign by the Federal Government on the goods and services tax and ask -

- (1) Given that Western Australia and Western Australian taxpayers have to fund the administration of the GST, will we in fact be paying for a portion of the Howard Government's propaganda?
- (2) Does the Premier believe that \$400m in GST advertising is money well spent or would he agree with the Australian Labor Party that the money would be much better spent on increasing compensation for pensioners, families and small businesses in our State?

Mr COURT replied:

(1)-(2) A large part of that money was given to industry groups to run information seminars about the tax changes. It is appropriate that people are informed about these significant tax changes. I have sat in on some of those seminars and they are very effective, particularly from a small business perspective. It is also appropriate that advertising is done to inform people of these significant changes. The Labor-controlled States have been very supportive of the introduction of the goods and services tax. I was involved in the Premiers Conferences in which those decisions were made.

Mr Brown: That is not what the Deputy Premier said yesterday.

Mr COURT: A recent quote from a current Labor Premier, Bob Carr, states -

It's better for the states to get that, a growth tax, than to subsist on grants from the Commonwealth that rise only with the CPI, that don't rise in response to the growth of economic activity.

Mr Ripper: Are we paying for the propaganda?

Dr Gallop: Western Australian taxpayers are paying for it.

Mr COURT: Even the Leader of the Opposition once supported the goods and services tax. He openly admits that he supported it when the matter was put to the Labor Party in Western Australia.

Mrs Roberts: Are you going to answer the question?

Mr COURT: The Opposition asked a question about the goods and services tax.

Mrs Roberts: Are you going to answer the question about the money being spent on propaganda?

Mr COURT: The Opposition is the political party that has no intention of changing the GST.

Dr Gallop: We certainly will change it.

Mr COURT: On Perth radio this morning, Simon Crean said a Labor Government would keep the goods and services tax, but would roll it back.

Dr Gallop: That is called changing it.

Mr COURT: No, it is called a backflip. A roll-back is a backflip. A Labor Government would keep the goods and services tax. Once again, if the Labor Party is critical of the GST and plans to change it, it should tell us how it will do that. The Opposition knows that if a federal Labor Government rolls back the GST, the States would get less revenue, or other taxes would be increased. The Leader of the Opposition nodded his head; that means taxes would be increased.

Dr Gallop: You are wrong.

Mr COURT: The Opposition calls itself a political party. It must be the only political party in the world that has its preselection fights sorted out in an industrial relations commission.

Mr Kobelke: You really do not want to answer the question, do you?

Mr COURT: The Labor Party has no intention of changing the GST.

Point of Order

Mr RIPPER: In the past, Speakers have had difficulty ruling on whether answers should be relevant to the question, but in this case the Premier's answer is so irrelevant he might as well be reading from the *White Pages* telephone directory. Could the Speaker guide him back to answering the question?

The SPEAKER: That is one of the joys of a question like that. It is not a point of order; it is a matter of opinion. The problem people in this place have is that some get to ask questions and others get to answer them. We all judge the answers they give, but whatever they say is the answer.

Questions without Notice Resumed

Mr COURT: *The West Australian* states that the "left-wing Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union backed other candidates". One union determines who will represent the Labor Party in the Mining and Pastoral Region.

Mr Kobelke: Western Australian taxpayers' money is being spent on advertising. Is that money well spent or is it an absolute waste? We think it is an absolute waste.

Mr COURT: I think it is appropriate that people, particularly small business operators, are informed of major tax changes.

Mrs HODSON-THOMAS: Mr Speaker -

Mr McGOWAN: Mr Speaker -

The SPEAKER: There can be all the Mr Speakers in the world. We have hit the 34-minute mark. The answer to the last question meandered all over the place, partly because of interjections, and that is what causes the difficulty in this place. Members should take their seats.

On occasions we need to reflect on the fact that some members ask four and five-part questions. That is fine. However, if they want a reasonable number of questions to be asked, perhaps there should be a little less interjecting. Then, if people meander all over the place with their answers, it may be fruitful. The length of question time is 30 minutes, and today it has been 30 minutes plus four or five minutes. Today, nine questions and two supplementary questions were asked, which is a total of 11. Over the past two or three years we have gradually been getting an average of up to 16 a day. That is the best around Australia, but we have regressed in the past week or two, partly because the answers are taking longer. Why are they taking longer? Often it is because of interjections which, in effect, are unofficial and informal questions. Question time has just finished and perhaps members can reflect on what I have said for next week.

Point of Order

Dr GALLOP: On the matter of question time and your recent comments, Mr Speaker, how would it have been possible for the Opposition to ask a question of the National Party today? The Deputy Premier and the Minister for Primary Industry are not here. The only National Party member of this Parliament who is in the Chamber is the retiring member for Wagin. If there is to be accountability in this Parliament, the Opposition expects the right to ask questions not only of the Government but also of the coalition partner, the National Party. I ask you, Mr Speaker, to explain to the Opposition how we could have asked a question of the National Party today? It is a disgrace!

The SPEAKER: The Leader of the Opposition is not entitled to ask me a question, but he has asked me a question which I cannot answer. When he catches up with the members of the National Party, he had better ask them. I can understand the Leader of the Opposition's frustration, but it is not my problem.
