

Mr David Templeman; Ms Sheila McHale; Mr Rob Johnson; Chairman; Mr John Hyde; Mr Terry Waldron; Mrs Carol Martin; Mr Mike Board

Division 69: Culture and the Arts, \$122 582 000 -

Mr McRae, Chairman.

Ms McHale, Minister for Culture and the Arts.

Mr A.J. Bryant, Director General.

Ms A. Lucas, Director, ArtsWA.

Mr A.D. Ferris, Acting Chief Financial Officer.

Mr E.J. Griffiths, Director Planning and Policy.

Dr I.D. MacLeod, Acting Director, Western Australian Museum.

Ms C.L. Forte, Acting Chief Executive Officer and State Librarian, the Library and Information Service of Western Australia.

Ms T.C. Chambers, Chief Executive, ScreenWest.

Mr C. Coggin, Director of State Records.

Mr G. Dufour, Acting Director, Art Gallery of Western Australia.

Mr R.S. Palmer, Acting Director Operations and Contract Management, Perth Theatre Trust.

Mr TEMPLEMAN: My question is about the West Australian Symphony Orchestra. Given that the federal Government has not to date provided the \$8 million promised towards the project of finding the orchestra a new home, what will the Government do to find WASO a new home? I refer to page 1193 of the *Budget Statements*.

Ms McHALE: It was very disappointing, but perhaps not surprising, that the commitment was not made in the federal budget to fund the Commonwealth Government's responsibility to the orchestra. As an eternal optimist, I am still hopeful and of the view that the federal Government will see its responsibilities and realise that it cannot cast adrift the WA Symphony Orchestra. The State Government has provided, in this budget, \$4 million as a grant towards the rehousing and relocation of the orchestra, and another \$4 million will be allocated next year. The Government's commitment was very clear; that is, it would provide \$8 million on the understanding that the federal Government would also provide \$8 million, and there would be an additional \$4 million from the Perth City Council.

The new home for the WASO is essentially a federal Government responsibility, not a State Government responsibility. However, the State Government sees as supremely important a vibrant, strong and well-housed symphony orchestra. I spoke today to one of the board members of the symphony orchestra and suggested that the issue should be revisited and, in the light of the federal Government's lack of commitment, an assessment made of where the orchestra wants to go, and how it wants to handle it. My advice to the orchestra is very clear - we all need to box on to bring the federal Government around to a sensible position. I am sure that I will be having meetings very shortly with the chair of the WASO and other board members to reassess where we are going. The position that all parties have adopted about relocating to the Concert Hall site is a fantastic opportunity for Perth, and I want to make that happen.

Mr JOHNSON: I have a very quick question, which I am sure will receive a quick answer. I refer to page 1194, and the line item for grants and subsidies. A figure is given, which is an increase over last year, for which I commend the Government. Does the minister, through the grants and subsidies program, allocate any funds to Kulcha in Fremantle? If so, how much?

[9.30 pm]

Ms McHALE: Kulcha received a significant increase in last year's budget. I am happy to provide by way of supplementary information the triennial funding provided to Kulcha. I will provide the information on past and future funding.

The CHAIRMAN: The minister will provide the estimated actuals for the year 2001-02 and a breakdown of allocations to Kulcha for the next two years.

Ms McHALE: And 2000-01 to give the comparison.

[*Supplementary Information No B30*]

Mr HYDE: On page 1192 the capital works program has a line item on the Perth Cultural Centre development. I am delighted to finally see something in the budget for that. So often under the previous Government we looked at budget papers in which the only capital expenditure in the arts was *The Chillers* at His Majesty's Theatre. I am delighted to see the \$1.25 million in the budget and further allocations. Exactly what will we get

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for our money in this year's development? Are we finally doing forward planning and planning to see a project to fruition in the arts? I understand that the Burke Government initiated the redevelopment and that there has been no capital expenditure on it since.

Ms McHALE: The cultural centre precinct is a vexed issue, certainly for the member's electorate. I acknowledge the work he has been doing on that. The total cost for the development of the cultural centre, according to previous reports, is in the region of \$16 million. The budget shows that, for the first time, funding will be provided to allow us to start to move towards the redevelopment of the cultural centre precinct.

Mr BRYANT: The \$16 million plan looks to completely revamp the cultural centre to put back the streetscape, to resurface the precinct and to clear the site lines. As the budget paper will reflect, there is no provision to do that at the moment. However, a considerable amount of work has been done to tidy up the cultural centre, which will continue. The lighting will be improved. There is an objective to get more activity into the cultural centre because that would seem to be a cure for most of the problems that are besetting it. The report on the cultural centre recognised that the key to the success of the cultural centre was to have vibrant institutions in the cultural centre. There is a strong emphasis in the department to make sure that occurs.

Ms McHALE: In answer to the second part of the question on planning, members will see in this budget the first significant investment in capital works. The year 2005-06 has a commitment of \$14 million, which will be ongoing, to enable our Government to deliver on the infrastructure that is so desperately required for arts in Western Australia. We will then really have some money to start moving forward with the cultural centre precinct work.

Mr WALDRON: On page 1174 the third dot point of significant issues and trends states that regional and remote communities have increasing expectations of improved access to collections, cultural information and services. Are there allocations in the budget to start to address this identified trend? Can we expect to see more live shows touring regional Western Australia?

Ms McHALE: Our election commitments to the arts were about an additional \$1 million going into agencies, an additional \$1 million per annum into the four major regional organisations and \$1 million going into other arts agencies. Touring funds have been increased by \$250 000 per annum. That is one of the significant planks of our commitment to get arts out into regional Western Australia and make them more accessible. Additional funding has been provided to enable the Western Australian Ballet, the Black Swan Theatre Company and the Western Australian Opera to tour regional areas. Part of the funding that we provided and increased for those organisations was earmarked quite specifically to enable people in regional Western Australia to access what people in the metropolitan area can access without any difficulty. Some of the touring money went to Country Arts Western Australia and some of it went to Art on the Move to enable both the visual and performing arts to have greater coverage and access.

Mr WALDRON: What is the total figure?

Ms McHALE: The increase of \$250 000 per annum was to assist touring. I cannot give off the top of my head the specific amounts allocated to the major companies. I am happy to provide by way of supplementary information the proportion of the increase that has been specifically allocated to the major organisations to increase their touring ability.

[Supplementary Information No B31]

Ms McHALE: That is not the end of the matter, because the organisations use their recurrent funding to tour as well. However, some of the new money was specifically targeted to enable people in the whole of the State to share the benefit of that increase in funds.

Mr HYDE: The arts budget does not include the money that regional development commissions are spending on touring product and bringing touring product in. That is additional regional touring money.

Ms McHALE: The member for Perth is entirely correct. Some additional funding has been going to the companies through the regional investment fund and also through state development funds to promote the arts. For instance, the Craftwest Centre for Contemporary Craft has received funding from regional investment funds to support a major conference and training in fine wood products in the south. We are trying to link the economic and social importance of the arts through programs in other departments. It is a slow process, but that is a good example of the matter raised by the member for Perth.

[9.40 pm]

Mrs MARTIN: My question pertains to something that is dear to my heart and important for the Kimberley - not that I am biased or parochial in any way! As one of the Labor Party's election commitments, it undertook to

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provide the Broome Performing Arts and Cultural Centre in the Kimberley. All members know that the Kimberley is where *Bran Nue Dae*, *Corrugation Road* and the Pigram Brothers come from.

Mr JOHNSON: This is a dorothy dixer.

Mrs MARTIN: The member for Hillarys can waffle and so can I. This issue is very important and close to my heart. Kimberley is the furthest electorate from the capital city, the decision-making centre of this State. It is important that these issues are registered in whatever forum possible. The Kimberley has produced Goolarrie Media and Mary G. When members consider the wonderful things produced in the Kimberley, is it not right that it should have a performing arts and cultural centre? My question pertains to that and says, what community consultation -

MR JOHNSON: That is wonderful.

Mrs MARTIN: Is the member for Hillarys having a go at me? I am asking the question and I do not need a hand from him. What community consultation has occurred on this project? Yesterday afternoon I met with some very nice people and I had a yarn about the consultation process. When will the facility be built?

I will repeat the question because the very rude member for Hillarys interrupted me. I refer to the Broome Performing Arts and Cultural Centre under new works on page 1193 of the *Budget Statements*. I would like the minister to provide some more information on that project.

Ms McHALE: I thank the member for Kimberley for giving me the opportunity to update her on what is happening. The people in the Kimberley very successfully lobbied the Government to fund the Broome Performing Arts and Cultural Centre. We have committed \$5 million to the Kimberley region to build it. A lot of very successful discussions have been held between the shire and the various people who are interested in this project and who will make it happen. This is an exciting opportunity for the member and the people of Kimberley to determine what they want to best meet their needs. The shire has established a steering group that comprises people from the community and the shire, with support from the Department of Culture and the Arts and the Department of Housing and Works.

Mrs MARTIN: Bogardi Garda is also involved. That is the steering committee for the cultural centre in the Kimberley. I spoke to some elders who attended a consultation meeting and they are very happy with the process.

Ms McHALE: I had a meeting with the Broome shire to take stock of where the project is at. I ask the member for Kimberley to reflect on what will best meet the needs of the community and the cultural environment of the Kimberley, which is so rich and fantastic. It is important during that consultation phase to determine the various models that exist to develop a performing arts centre that the member wants. It is not a matter of looking at what is in Mandurah and replicating that in Broome. The centre must suit the environment and culture of the Kimberley. It is an exciting concept and funding will be provided when construction begins.

Mrs MARTIN: I will give the minister an undertaking that I will support the consultation process and the steering committee to get an outcome that suits the whole community. We understand that Broome is the cultural centre of the Kimberley.

Ms McHALE: That commitment is fantastic. It is good that those discussions are being held. It is important to achieve something that meets the unique culture that makes Broome so fantastic.

Mr BOARD: I will get back to the main game. I refer to the output appropriation by service agencies on page 1173 of the *Budget Statements*. Why is ArtsWA projected to underspend its budget this year, yet it has the biggest percentage increase for next year? Why have the Perth Theatre Trust and ScreenWest not benefited in the overall budget increases being shared by the other major agencies in the portfolio?

Ms McHALE: Was the member's first question why ArtsWA is underspending in 2001-02?

Mr BOARD: Its budget for 2001-02 was \$18.212 million, yet the estimated actual budget projects that it will receive only \$16.861 million in 2001-02. However, it has a budget estimate of \$23.406 million in the following year. That is a major increase in funding after a year of underspending. I think I know the answer but I would like the minister to explain the rationale for that. Neither the Perth Theatre Trust nor ScreenWest shared in the budget increases. Why has their funding been decreased after inflation?

Ms McHALE: The reason for the underspending is that some of the commitments have not got up to speed yet; for example, \$750 000 has not been spent on contemporary music work. The increase in funding is due to the implementation of a lot of election commitments. Those agencies have not spent the money because their programs are not up and running yet. The member may recall that we deferred some of that funding in a mid-

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year review because we would not spend it all. That accounts for the difference in the budget estimated actual figure. The increase for 2002-03 in part includes the reinstatement of that money so that we can spend it this year. I think it also includes \$4 million for the West Australian Symphony Orchestra. The WASO is funded through ArtsWA, so that accounts for \$4 million of its budget. The Perth Theatre Trust in 2001-02 had an allocation of \$140 000 for the previous Government's belltower and that allocation is not included in 2002-03.

[9.50 pm]

Mr JOHNSON: It is the minister's belltower now; it is not ours.

Ms McHALE: The member is correct: it is my responsibility now to manage the belltower.

Mr BOARD: Can the minister get back to the Perth Theatre Trust, because we need to talk about ScreenWest in the same appropriation? The figures in the outgoing years indicate a two to three per cent cut each year in real terms. The budget projects a cut by that much each year for the Perth Theatre Trust.

Ms McHALE: Most, but not all, government agencies are subject to dividend cuts. I have implemented those cuts in my agencies; however, I have done it in such a way that does not diminish the outputs of either ScreenWest or the Perth Theatre Trust. The member will recall that agencies faced dividends cuts of around two per cent so that the Government could reprioritise its funding. I have delivered those cuts and they are reflected in these figures. I have also delivered a way of not affecting the quality of services by virtue of those cuts.

Mr BOARD: The out year of 2004-05 appears to have had money moved forward into the following year with a massive decline in funding in the forward estimate for that year. Is the Government signalling the demise of ScreenWest in that funding outlay? If so, that does not appear to be in line with the Government's policy developments. What is the rationale for those figures?

Ms McHALE: The reason for the decrease in the figures relates to the finishing of the screen industry partnership funding of \$2 million in 2004-05. The budget figure reflects the government funding for ScreenWest prior to the screen industry partnership funding. That explains the figure and does not in any way indicate the demise of the screen industry; we have, in fact, an incredibly flourishing industry. I invite Ms Chambers to comment, if she would like to add anything in answer to the member's assertions that ScreenWest will demise.

Ms CHAMBERS: Essentially, on the issue of partnerships with the commercial sector, whether they be with broadcasters or distributors both nationally and internationally, ScreenWest has been working in a much more strategic manner to encourage investment that will gear up the State Government's money. Some examples of those initiatives are *The Mary G Show* with the Special Broadcasting Service, the *Year of the Outback* with the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, referred to in the budget papers, and *Family Matters*, one with SBS and one with Showtime Australia.

Mr BOARD: Would the minister agree that is a long way from the task force's recommendations?

Mr HYDE: There was no \$19 million in your forward estimates.

Ms McHALE: I also remind members that ScreenWest receives money from the Lotteries Commission to the tune of about \$3 million which does not appear in these budget papers because it is not my appropriation. However, the screen industry is very well supported and our plans for the future not only will ensure that it is not in demise but also that it will flourish.

Mr TEMPLEMAN: Will the minister outline briefly how the Government intends to implement some of the task force's recommendations on the screen industry?

Ms McHALE: For the record, is the member referring to page 1188?

Mr TEMPLEMAN: Yes.

Ms McHALE: The screen industry task force made three broad recommendations: firstly, an incentive package; secondly, industry training and education; and, thirdly, a screen industry precinct. In the first recommendation, which was directed at basically joint venture funding, we achieved some of the initiatives with the screen industry partnership fund. That fund has been reconfigured to enable new ventures with industry partners. Funding for that in 2002-03 will be \$1.4 million and in 2003-04 a further \$2 million, which funding will have the potential to result in production activity of at least double those amounts over the following years. In relation to training, we have now appointed members of the screen training advisory group, which has now been operating for more than six months; therefore, we have been able to deliver on that commitment. The screen training advisory group received funding from the Department of Training; again that cross-government linkage in support of the arts is being encouraged in many of the decisions that we make. Recommendations are currently being finalised to encourage partnerships between training organisations and the industry. The third recommendation is essentially aimed at improving the infrastructure that is available for screen producers and

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other workers in the film industry. We have had negotiations with the ABC for many months now on the provision of a digital studio in its new East Perth facilities. I am optimistic that the ABC will agree to commit to a 600-square metre digital studio in those new facilities with a plan that it will be available to non-ABC producers.

We have had the Long report - that is the name of the author - into the operations of ScreenWest. That report reaffirmed that ScreenWest is well placed to deliver the screen industry agenda in the Western Australian community. We have basically endorsed those recommendations and a number of initiatives will occur on the recommendations of the Long report. One of those recommendations was that the Granada West fund be reconfigured so that other appropriate partnership opportunities can be developed. We are doing that now. The other recommendations were about the corporate structure of ScreenWest, which we are looking at in the context of the machinery of government report. There is therefore a lot of activity happening and I am confident that with the ABC negotiations we will be able to roll out the initiatives to deliver additional space for film producers.

Mr HYDE: Is *Quads* done out of East Perth?

Ms McHALE: No, because the East Perth facility is not there at the moment; it is being built. *Quads* was funded through ScreenWest and a second series of *Quads* has also been funded through ScreenWest. It was a great show.

Mr TEMPLEMAN: The minister mentioned that training is already under way through ScreenWest.

Ms McHALE: An aspect of it is through the screen training advisory group. That will look at the training needs of the film industry in Western Australia.

Mr BOARD: I apologise to the minister's advisers. There are many things that we could have and should have explored. In regard to capital works, the minister has chosen to spend \$5 million on the new Broome Performing Arts and Cultural Centre.

Ms McHALE: It was an election commitment.

Mr BOARD: I know. However, the minister has done that in preference to any other performing arts space and requirement within the Perth central business district. Can the minister justify the decision to do that in preference to upgrading a precinct or building a new one for performing arts in Perth?

Ms McHALE: Did I really hear the member ask me this question? Is he really suggesting that funding to regional and remote Western Australia is not justified? That is the implication of the member's question.

Mr BOARD: It is justified.

Ms McHALE: I am very proud that we have made a commitment to fund the new Broome Performing Arts and Cultural Centre, because there is an absolute necessity for it. If the member took the time to look at the budget papers, he would see that we have committed something like \$39 million over the next four years for capital works, including \$14 million in 2005-06 and thereafter. That represents for the first time a Government that is prepared to put money into the current years and the forward estimates for capital works needs.

Mr JOHNSON: The Government may not be able to fund the forward estimates.

Ms McHALE: That is for the arts in this State. An amount of \$39 million over the next four years is no insignificant commitment.

The CHAIRMAN: I put on the record my appreciation to the minister and her staff for a very long session.

Ms McHALE: I also thank my staff for appearing tonight and, more importantly, for the preparation of the budget and for answering members' questions.

The appropriation was recommended.

Committee adjourned at 10.03 pm
