



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

# **Parliamentary Debates**

**(HANSARD)**

THIRTY-FIFTH PARLIAMENT  
FIRST SESSION  
1998

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 9 June 1998

# Legislative Assembly

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**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Strickland) took the Chair at 2.00 pm, and read prayers.

## **CROMMELIN, MR H.W. - CONDOLENCE MOTION**

**MR COURT** (Nedlands - Premier) [2.01 pm]: I move -

That this House record its sincere regret at the death of Harold William Crommelin and tender its deep sympathy to his family.

Bill Crommelin was born in West Perth on 9 April 1903 - 95 years ago. He was educated at Toowoomba Grammar School from 1911 to 1913 and Hale School from 1914 to 1919. From 1919 to 1924, Mr Crommelin worked in the farming industry on various acreages in the wheatbelt of Western Australia and from 1924 to 1929 farmed his own property "Elderslie" in the Pingelly area. During this period he married Peggy Taylor at St Mary's Church in West Perth on 1 June 1926.

During the Depression, Bill Crommelin became a vehicle salesman for Winterbottoms and continued as a clerk with Burridge and Warren. While working part time, he studied accountancy before becoming a partner in the Aqua Proofing Company from 1937 to 1956, producing leather goods, oilskins and waterproofing materials. The company was commissioned during the Second World War to make army greatcoats, an obvious testament to their water repelling capabilities.

Before joining the Liberal Party in 1939, Mr Crommelin was a member of the Liberal Country Party League and he also served on the Claremont Municipal Council for a 10 year period between 1953 and 1963.

Bill Crommelin entered this House as the elected member for Claremont on 7 April 1956 and served that electorate for 12 years, until 23 March 1968. During his parliamentary career he was Deputy Chairman of Committees from 1959 to 1968 and a member of the Library Committee from 1956 to 1968, and he represented the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association at its general conference in Wellington, New Zealand in 1965. In 1958, he also served as the Secretary of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and joint Liberal and Country Party meetings for that year.

It is interesting to look at some of the comments made by Bill Crommelin in his maiden speech to this House on 14 August 1956. He spoke, in part, about road safety issues and made a comparison between the attitude of motorists in Great Britain and Europe and those in Western Australia. He suggested that European drivers were better than those in Western Australia and said -

The answer to their tremendous effort of road courtesy and doing as they are asked with a good grace has come from the same system as we are adopting in Western Australia today, and that is by educating the children from a very young age to learn the rules of road safety and road courtesy. . . . We must keep on with this system because it is fairly evident that if we do, we will gradually educate our drivers and pedestrians to the essentials of safety on the roads.

I could not agree more. He talked also about the need for road signs to be of international standard so they could be recognised by new immigrants and overseas tourists. He argued for brighter lighting on highways, and suggested that penalties for speeding and drunken driving include the loss of the offender's driver's licence. Mr Crommelin suggested also that in the city, vehicles be allowed to be parked only at special times during the day to alleviate traffic congestion - an early version of clearways, which are now part of our traffic management system.

The introduction of parking meters in the City of Perth was also advanced back in 1956. Bill Crommelin suggested that the funds raised by paid parking be used to provide parking spaces outside the city and that a rapid transit system be provided to get people into town - which is our park 'n' ride system. These are examples of the foresight shown by Bill Crommelin in statements made in this House over 40 years ago!

Mr Crommelin was a member of the Chamber of Manufactures, and Commodore of the Claremont Yacht Club in the early 1950s. He was also a member of the Claremont Football Club and the Claremont Swimming Club, as well as an active worker for the Claremont Police Boys Club.

On behalf of members, I extend our sincere sympathy to his wife of 72 years, Peggy, and also to his sons, Terry and Barry, and their families.

**DR GALLOP** (Victoria Park - Leader of the Opposition) [2.07 pm]: I join with the Premier in recording our sincere regret at the death of Harold William Crommelin and in tendering our sympathy to his family. Mr Crommelin represented this Parliament in an earlier era, and members in this current Parliament may not have known him, but

it is clear from his record that he was very active in the local Claremont community. He was Commodore of the Claremont Yacht Club, a member of the Claremont Swimming and Football Clubs, and an active worker for the Claremont Police Boys Club.

One senses from reading his details that he was yet another one of those fine people from the post war years who went on to serve the State of Western Australia. It is also clear that many of his passions related to his electorate. I was struck by the references in his maiden speech to many issues that are still with us today, such as schooling in the Swanbourne and Graylands area, and traffic along Stirling Highway. One issue that attracted my attention, and in which I am sure the member for Cottesloe and Minister for Education will be interested, is Mr Crommelin's statement in his maiden speech that -

At this stage, I have not been a member or the representative of my electorate for a long enough period to know what is required and what is lacking. I can do no more than say that there are certain things that I would like to see altered. In this regard I would refer to the fact that there is a high school in Claremont, yet children living on the western side of Stirling Highway, a distance of only 450 yards from the school, unfortunately have to travel all the way to Fremantle for their education and I hope that in the near future that position will be remedied.

It is interesting how certain issues come back to haunt us. Mr Crommelin's reference to the need for high schools in the western suburbs, so that students did not have to travel to Fremantle, is still pertinent today.

I join with the Premier in expressing our sympathy to the Crommelin family. Bill Crommelin lived to 95 years of age, and we all aspire to that. We note also the distinction with which he served the community, both in local government and in State Parliament.

**MR BARNETT** (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [2.10 pm]: I also support this condolence motion and express my sympathy to Mrs Peggy Crommelin and her sons, Terry and Barry, and their families. As the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition said, Bill Crommelin was a member of this House for 12 years. He represented the electorate of Claremont, which is now part of the electorate of Cottesloe. He served this House with distinction, as chairman of committees; and the Liberal Party, as party secretary; and took a great deal of interest in the proceedings of both Parliament and the party system - in this case, the Liberal Party.

Bill Crommelin was a very strong contributor to the local community through his involvement in sporting clubs and, at one stage, was the Commodore of the Claremont Yacht Club. His son, Barry Crommelin, is currently the Shire President of Peppermint Grove. The Crommelin family's commitment to public and community services has continued strongly. Both Barry and his wife Carol have been my strong supporters. They have given me advice both before and since my entering politics. To Barry and Carol and other members of the Crommelin family I express my deepest sympathy.

I met Bill on one or two occasions. He was at that time quite elderly, but during those brief meetings he struck me as being one of the old guard, a very conservative and true gentleman in every sense of the word.

Question passed, members standing.

### **SPECIAL ADJOURNMENT MOTION**

#### *Statement by Speaker*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Strickland): Members, when the House adjourned on Thursday, 21 May, an unusual set of circumstances led to the usual special adjournment motion not being moved. The special adjournment motion was prepared to postpone the next sitting of the House for two weeks, firstly to allow the Estimates Committees to meet and then to break last week. The error was discovered within moments of the House having adjourned, but it was not possible to recall the House that evening.

As the motion for a special adjournment was not moved, technically the House would have had to resume on 26 May. I took into account the agreement of the House to a report from the management committee for the Estimates Committees which scheduled business from Tuesday, 26 to Friday, 29 May, as a clear decision of the House for its meetings that week. Even with that decision made, the House technically should have sat, according to our sessional order, on Tuesday, 2 June. I was aware that all members had made plans on the basis that the House would not sit that week but the problem remained.

The Speaker has responsibility to ensure the smooth and orderly operation of the House, and the powers which go with that responsibility are limited in many respects by standing orders. Standing Order No 50 provides for the Speaker to determine a date for meeting on request by the Leader of the Government, but that also depends on a special motion and consequently did not apply in this case.

After receiving advice of the views of the Leader of the House and after discussing the matter with the Leader of the Opposition, and receiving his concurrence, I decided that the House had intended and expected to adjourn to Tuesday, 9 June and I consequently directed the Clerk to issue the Notice Paper accordingly. This was not an easy nor clear-cut course of action to take and in my view it is open to question with a strong contrary case being that the House should have met last Tuesday. Well before now we have considered propositions that the Speaker should have the capacity to call the House together on a date different from that for which it was adjourned on the basis that a request is received from the Leader of the House and the matter is discussed with the Leader of the Opposition. In my view the current situation is a demonstration of the need for such a provision to be formalised in the standing orders, and the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee will consider that issue.

### **CAR REGISTRATION FEES INCREASES**

#### *Petition*

Mr Kobelke presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 22 persons -

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned citizens are totally opposed to the State Government's decision to impose a new tax on Western Australian motorists through massive increases in car registration fees.

Western Australian motorists already pay directly for the cost of roads through State and Federal fuel levies. The revenue received by the State Government from the fuel levy and from the sale of the gas pipeline provides the Government with resources to develop our transport infrastructure. This new tax is unfair and has a disproportionate impact on middle and lower income earners.

And your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See petition No 224.]

### **POLICE PRESENCE IN ROCKINGHAM AREA**

#### *Petition*

Mr McGowan presented the following petition bearing the signatures of 78 persons -

The Honourable the Speaker and members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in the Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned, request that the Minister for Police take urgent action to base more Police Officers in the Rockingham area to recognise Rockingham's enormous growth and to combat crime.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that you will give this matter earnest consideration and your petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See petition No 225.]

### **BILLS (3): ASSENT**

Messages from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following Bills -

1. Environmental Protection Amendment Bill.
2. Acts Amendment (Abortion) Bill.
3. Treasurer's Advance Authorization Bill.

### **BILLS (4) - APPROPRIATIONS**

Messages from the Governor received and read recommending appropriations for the purposes of the following Bills -

1. Acts Amendment (Education Loan Scheme) Bill.
2. Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill.
3. Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill.
4. WADC and WA Exim Corporation Repeal Bill.

**TREASURER'S ADVANCE AUTHORIZATION BILL***Returned*

Bill returned from the Council without amendment.

**LEGAL AID WESTERN AUSTRALIA***Annual Report - Addendum*

**THE SPEAKER** (Mr Strickland): I have received a request from the Attorney General to insert an addendum to the annual report of Legal Aid Western Australia for 1996-97, which was tabled in the House on 10 March 1998. The material contained in the addendum was inadvertently omitted from the printed copy of the report.

Accordingly, under the provisions of Standing Order No 233, I advise the House that I have authorised the necessary correction to be made.

**FISH AND HABITAT PROTECTION INITIATIVES***Statement by Minister for Fisheries*

**MR HOUSE** (Stirling - Minister for Fisheries) [2.25 pm]: I advise the Parliament that in this, the Year of the Oceans, the people of Western Australia are assured of a commitment by this Government, through Fisheries WA, to conserve, protect and manage the State's fish and fish habitat resources.

As part of the \$40m budget allocation in 1998-99 for sustainable fisheries management, \$1.8m has been specifically allocated to the fish and fish habitat protection program within Fisheries WA.

This program was established by this Government in recognition of the increasing importance of the conservation and protection of our fish and fish habitats. We have in place some of the most advanced and sustainable commercial and recreational fisheries management strategies in the world. Fisheries WA is a leader in fisheries research and management and fosters a cooperative involvement with industry, the community and other agencies in fisheries management.

Our fish resources must be sensibly protected and managed for use by all including our valuable commercial fishing and pearling industries, our highly popular recreational fisheries, our developing aquaculture sector and the community in general. For example, 600 000 Western Australians enjoy recreational fishing opportunities while commercial fishing generates in excess of \$1b annually.

To achieve these objectives a number of important new initiatives have been established within the Fisheries WA fish and fish habitat program. Some initiatives in the new program include research into trawl by-catch including a trial of by-catch reduction devices, continued funding of \$100 000 per year which supports Fishcare WA, and the federal fisheries action program. To date \$410 000 has been directed to 47 projects in these programs. The completion of a draft management plan for the Abrolhos Islands will set aside the entire reef complex as Western Australia's first fish habitat protection area. Fisheries WA and the Environmental Protection Authority have agreed to a policy on the translocation of aquatic organisms. This will help prevent potential environmental problems and provide a clear process for full risk assessment of applications.

Other key responses include protection of the great white shark, a temporary ban on fishing near HMAS *Swan*, the preparation of fisheries environmental management plans for key areas of the State, and greater planning and opportunity for public input into consideration of pearling and aquaculture leases.

Fisheries WA will also play a key role in facilitating marine reserve development in Western Australia. Therefore, in this, the Year of the Oceans, the community is assured of a commitment by this Government to conserve, protect and manage the State's fish and fish habitat resources.

**YOUTH LEADERSHIP TRAINING***Statement by Minister for Youth*

**MR BOARD** (Murdoch - Minister for Youth) [2.28 pm]: I inform the House of an exciting new initiative to provide leadership training for young Western Australians. This scheme is designed to develop young people into future leaders who will one day help build a better State. This program will give youth from all walks of life the opportunity to develop outstanding leadership skills. It will encourage them to strive for excellence in their dealings with each other and with the community.

This training scheme will be based at a specially developed leadership training school campus to be created at Murray

House - part of the former Heathcote Hospital site. Training exercises will be conducted on board the sail training ship *Leeuwin*, at Fairbridge Farm and at other locations around the State.

The work of this leadership training school will be guided by an administrative trust made up of influential and respected community members and led by a person of considerable public profile.

This project was initiated last year when the Office of Youth Affairs commissioned the Westrek Foundation to report on the development and future direction of a leadership training school. The foundation consulted with a wide range of community based organisations involved in the fostering of youth leadership before it recommended that we establish a youth leadership training school. The foundation recommended this school be accessible to a wide cross-section of the WA youth community and its leaders and that it be linked to broad community and corporate financial support.

The Office of Youth Affairs has now developed a plan to establish this leadership training school. It will provide courses for youth and adults from a wide range of backgrounds who will be selected from a broad scope of existing community programs. It will offer places to disadvantaged young people, youth who have been in trouble with the law and the young unemployed, as well as people already displaying leadership potential in organisations such as the Scout Association of WA and Guides Western Australia. Leadership skills are found in many young people irrespective of whether they have had an opportunity to show them.

The school will promote and encourage self-development in leadership and citizenship and will have a strong focus on excellence in all aspects of its work. It will be a lead organisation promoting a positive image of Western Australian youth. It will build effective relationships with government agencies, the corporate sector, youth organisations and the community. It will attract financial support and sponsorship from the general community and the private sector.

Two pilot programs will be offered in July and August this year and the commissioning of Murray House as the leadership training school campus is expected by September 1999.

This leadership training school will add value to our already significant investment in Western Australian youth. I commend this scheme to the House.

**[Questions without notice taken.]**

**REVENUE LAWS AMENDMENT (ASSESSMENT) BILL**

*Cognate Debate*

On motion by Mr Court (Treasurer), resolved -

That the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill and the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill be considered cognately, and that the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill be considered the principal Bill.

*Second Reading*

Resumed from 21 May.

**DR GALLOP** (Victoria Park - Leader of the Opposition) [3.06 pm]: I firstly refer to the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill, which seeks to change the stamp duty and land tax regime to give effect to the taxation rate changes announced as part of the state Budget.

Before doing so, however, I refer to the Government's taxes and charges in general. Since coming to power, the Government has enjoyed record revenue growth buoyed by Western Australia's traditionally strong economic activity. Total revenue from taxes and licences was \$1.5b in 1992-93, and the equivalent figure will be \$3.2b in 1998-99, including the safety net revenue in lieu of the tobacco, fuel and alcohol franchise fees decision. Revenue from land tax and stamp duty has also grown significantly over this period. In 1992-93, land tax revenue totalled \$128.5m, which will increase to \$177.5m in 1998-99, an increase of 38 per cent, or 27 per cent in real terms. Increases from stamp duty revenue have been of greater magnitude. Revenue from stamp duty on property conveyances amounted to \$207.3m in 1992-93, and this revenue is expected to be \$423m in 1998-99. That represents a staggering increase of 104 per cent, or 88 per cent in real terms. Stamp duty on insurance policies returned revenue of \$50.5m in 1992-93, and this is expected to raise \$115m in 1998-99, an increase of 127 per cent, or 109 per cent in real terms, over that period.

I outline just a few examples of the revenue gained by this Government since it came to office in 1992-93. The trouble is that the people of Western Australia are not seeing any return from this high taxing State Government.

Citizens of this State are told to tighten their belts, but the Government continues to levy record levels of taxes and charges. The Government's revenue raising record has been recognised by economic and political commentators around the State and the nation. For example, Dr Michael Nahan, the Director of the Institute of Public Affairs, in his analysis of the 1998-99 state Budget, commented that "The Government does not have a revenue problem, but has a credibility problem." The Opposition could not agree more.

As the Government continues to enjoy revenue growth, and spend taxpayers' money on expensive monuments of dubious community value, and on self-promotion propaganda campaigns, it unbelievably continues to cry poor when the sick ask for hospital beds and nurses ask for a pay rise. The people of Western Australia do not understand how one can have that revenue increase, yet an elective surgery ward at Osborne Park Hospital, which could be used to reduce the hospital waiting list in Western Australia, is closed. People cannot understand when we have this record revenue, and when other States can find money to pay nurses for the job they do, that money for a pay increase for nurses cannot be found in Western Australia.

We have a major credibility problem at the core of government in Western Australia. The gap between the Government's record revenue collections and its performance of the delivery of services is an indictment of the priorities that this Cabinet sets for the people of Western Australia. Moreover, the Treasurer continues to shift all the blame to the Commonwealth for poor service delivered. While the State Opposition is pushing also for a better funding deal, the Treasurer cannot continue to use commonwealth funding constraints as an excuse for its failure across a number of areas of service provision.

The deliberate political tactic by the Government last year to shift the blame for the crisis in our health system across to the Federal Government was just that - a political tactic. If the State Government were serious about the crisis in our public hospitals, it would have injected more of the revenue it has collected into the public hospital system, thereby giving it moral and political strength in its argument with the Commonwealth. To use a football analogy: The Government cannot keep crying foul of the umpire - in this case the Commonwealth Grants Commission - when it continues to fumble and waste the ball when it has possession.

There is no doubt that the Government's priorities are wrong, and it has been wrong for some time now. In this year's Budget, \$100m has been allocated for a convention centre, but meanwhile the people of Perth are calling out for an extension of the public transport system. When we argued during the election campaign we made a contrast between the Northbridge tunnel and other areas of government expenditure that could have been committed. Now that it is 18 to 20 months since the election, we can point to the commitment of \$100m and more by way of land to a convention centre and the continuing problems in the public transport system in Perth. The Government has made its priorities very clear. Those priorities do not represent a realistic assessment of government expenditure for the people of Western Australia.

The Government is continuing to spend money on self-promotion while the public health system plummets further into crisis. There was a debate in the federal arena last week over the Federal Government spending \$10m of taxpayers' money on "educating the public" about the GST package. The fact that \$10m can be found for a political propaganda campaign at the federal level merely adds weight to our argument that Liberals throughout Australia set the wrong priorities.

In the Budget that we have been addressing in the Parliament in the past few weeks, the Treasurer has again demonstrated his arrogant indifference to the people of the State. I refer to the impact of taxes and charges on families. When a Government is considering its Budget it has to meet two tests: It must meet the progressive test on tax collection - that is, in the taxes and charges regime that it selects there should be a fair distribution of the burden throughout the community so that those with the most ability to pay contribute more than those with the least ability to pay; and it must meet the cost-benefit test on expenditure - that is, it must consider the costs and benefits involved in any government investment or expenditure to ensure that they have a return for the people of Western Australia. The Opposition will continue to argue that when considering costs and benefits, we must also consider economics, social and environmental costs and benefits. One of the reasons for the gap which has emerged between people's expectations of politics and the performance of politicians in contemporary government is that we do not take into account a broad enough basis in our assessment of government expenditure and investment.

I turn to the first test, the progressive test. In agreeing to the increases in taxes and charges in this State Budget, the Government gave no thought to their impact on the community. No analysis was sought or undertaken by the Government on the expected impact of its proposed taxation changes on ordinary Western Australian citizens. Instead, the Government agreed to a number of increases across a number of areas with the accounting bottom line as its only objective. The Treasurer demonstrated this in the Parliament when he could not answer a question on the issue. He had no idea what the increases meant for the ordinary person on the street. To rub salt into the wounds, he claimed that the Budget was one for our needy. Even his own calculations, after three weeks of juggling the figures, showed that the average family will be \$300 a year worse off as a result of his last two state Budgets. In other

words, there was certainly no social dividend to the people of Western Australia by way of a reduced taxes and charges bill from the Government of Western Australia.

We argued initially that the impact on the family of the taxes and charges measures was an increase of \$350 per annum which rose to \$372 after the stamp duty increases were announced in the Budget. Members will recall that many of the taxes and charges increases were announced before the Budget. When the Budget came down, we had to add the stamp duty increases. Importantly, we were able to estimate the impact on families within a day of the announcement. Meanwhile, it took this Government three weeks, firstly by trying to avoid the issue and then by juggling the figures, to show that the impact was \$300 only.

Even more incredible is that in his answer in Parliament, the Treasurer tried to qualify it by claiming the Treasury has "difficulty in determining what an average family is." Interestingly enough, in the Budget prior to the last election, this Government had no difficulty determining what was an average family or the expected impact of its policies on the family. Indeed, the Treasurer released a media statement on the impact of the Government's taxes and charges on the average family. Apparently, the average family existed before the election and we were able to determine the impact of the taxes and charges on that family. However, after the election, when the taxes and charges were increased, the average family was not capable of definition. That is a failing on the part of the Government of Western Australia. The impact of the taxes and charges is a very important consideration by any Government when framing its Budget. We have a right to ask, where is the social dividend that the Premier and Treasurer promised?

I move now to the specific changes to the land tax and Stamp Act regimes. I deal firstly with the land tax changes. The legislation proposes a new tax scale from the 1998-99 year of assessment. The second reading speech claims that the scale has been adjusted to help insulate land taxpayers from significant increases in the unimproved value of land across the State. When the Government says something like that, that should not be the end of the story. We need to look at how the proposed scales will impact on different values of land. It appears that only the owners of relatively highly valued land will receive the benefit of these new tax scales. Government figures show that as a result of the proposed changes, taxpayers owning land with an aggregate taxable value of between \$150 000 and \$500 000 will be issued an assessment in 1998-99 of between 9 per cent and 27 per cent less than would otherwise be the case. However, 44 per cent of land taxpayers will be paying more under the new tax scales and the majority of those will be those with land valued at under \$150 000. Although we acknowledge the need to insulate land taxpayers from significant increases in land values, it does seem inequitable that those owning land worth more than \$150 000 will receive the most benefit.

Information from the Valuer General's Office and the State Revenue Office indicates that the average unimproved value of urban land in Western Australia was only \$105 406 in 1996-97 and is expected to increase by 10 per cent to \$115 946 in 1997-98. This means that the benefit of the proposed changes in tax scales will be heavily weighted against people who hold land of average or below average value. The bias towards the owners of high value land is reinforced by a table produced in the Treasury publication for state taxes and charges, which makes an interstate comparison of the rate of land tax payable for different values of land. Interestingly, it shows that even before these proposed changes, the land tax payable in Western Australia for properties worth up to \$100 000 was the second highest in Australia, second only to Tasmania. However, for land valued between \$1m and \$5m, Western Australia has the lowest land tax payable in Australia.

The new land tax scale that will be introduced will result in an estimated increase in revenue for the Government of \$9.5m. We note in our assessment of this measure that the proposed changes will impact most on people at the lower end of the land value scale. It appears quite unfair that these measures will serve to further exacerbate the inequity by giving no taxation relief to people at the lower end of the taxation scale.

Another important issue is the impact of these changes to land tax on the renters and lessees of properties. All too often I receive letters from renters and small business owners who complain about increases to their rents and leases as a result of increases in land tax. I am sure this matter will be discussed when we debate the small business legislation in this Parliament. I trust that the owners who will receive a reduction in their land tax bill will pass on at least some of those savings to the renters and lessees of their properties so that the wider community will receive some benefit from the new tax scale, and we will be calling upon all small businesses to take note of these changes and to pass on some of these savings. That important consideration must be part of the public debate on this matter, and we will do our best to ensure that any benefits from these changes are spread to the small business sector of our economy.

This legislation also proposes to increase the stamp duty rates on general insurance and workers' compensation insurance. The general insurance rate and the motor vehicle rate will increase from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. Estimates from the Insurance Council of Australia indicate that the cost of average general contents insurance will increase by \$11.50. The cost of insuring an average motor vehicle will increase by \$9.20.



The overall budget measures of the Government will result in motorists being hit with higher general insurance rates, third party premiums and licence fees. We know that next year, licence fees will be indexed to the consumer price index. As a result of this Budget, the average cost of running a motor vehicle will increase by \$76; and the cost for families with two motor vehicles will increase by more than \$150 per annum. As if that were not enough, the Government has also continued its attack on public transport users by again increasing public transport fares in this Budget. Therefore, this Government has made it more expensive for people to either drive a car or catch a bus. We need to have a close look at public transport and motor vehicle charges in Western Australia with a view to trying to get a fairer system for families in Western Australia. Any Government in considering its Budget should look at that impact when it is drawing up the tax scales and percentages.

The Bill will also extend the first home buyer \$500 stamp duty rebate threshold from \$85 000 to \$135 000. An extension to the first home buyer rebate threshold has been long awaited. The first home buyer \$500 stamp duty rebate concession was introduced in March 1989 under the former Labor Government. The value limits were increased from \$80 000 to \$85 000 on 1 November 1989. However, since that time, the Government has not increased the threshold, even though the median house price in Perth has increased over the same period. The change in the concession threshold, while strongly supported by the Opposition, is merely a catch up to ensure that the exemption is available to the section of the market for whom it was originally intended. The concessional 1.5 per cent rate of duty for all home buyers will be increased, and a phase out period will also be introduced. Again, this value limit for the 1.5 per cent concession duty rate for the transfer of owner occupied residences and small businesses was increased from \$50 000 to \$85 000 on 1 November 1989 and has not been changed since. These stamp duty changes will result in a net increase of \$73m to the consolidated fund.

The Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill seeks to amend a number of pieces of legislation, including the Land Tax Assessment Act and the Stamp Act, to bring into effect a number of state taxation measures announced as part of the 1998-99 state Budget. I will talk about all the amendments but will concentrate on a few. One of the most significant amendments is to the Stamp Act to remove the current exemption for chattels conveyed with land. This will mean in the case of homes that curtains, rugs and furniture will no longer be excluded from the stamp duty levy; in the case of small businesses that computers, photocopiers and furniture will no longer be excluded; and in the case of mining tenements that removable ore crushing equipment, drilling rigs and other off road vehicles will no longer be excluded.

The removal of the exemption is expected to bring \$10m to the consolidated fund in 1998-99 and \$12m in 1999-2000. As the second reading speech states, this measure is equivalent to around a 3 per cent increase in the conveyance duty base. I should remind the House that the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill proposes an increase of 12.5 per cent in conveyance rates. Therefore, the cumulative effect of both Bills will be that conveyance rates will increase by 15.5 per cent from 1 July 1998 for home and small business buyers. It is interesting that the information accompanying the legislative changes does not mention that as a result of this Budget, the stamp duty costs for purchasing a property will increase by 15.5 per cent. There is no doubt that the Government has embarked upon a course of increasing revenue through the measures that it has chosen to take.

One of the more significant amendments to the Land Tax Assessment Act is the phased removal of the 50 per cent concession for certain land held by universities and educational and religious bodies that is used or leased out for business, commercial, professional or trade purposes. This change is consistent with the thrust of the national competition policy which requires that bodies that undertake commercial activity should have no competitive advantage unless the public benefit of the advantage outweighs the public cost of the advantage. We will see an increasing debate in the community about the national competition policy. It has already occurred in New South Wales, and in Queensland during its election campaign. I am sure that debate will grow in Western Australia before very long. However, the removal of this concession creates some grey areas which have not been adequately addressed by either the second reading speech or the explanatory memorandum.

We seek from the Treasurer an explanation of the amendments to the Land Tax Assessment Act. As an example, will the St John of God Hospital become liable for the full rate of land tax on hospital land as it carries out commercial and trade functions on the land? Will the local Good Samaritan store, which carries out trading and commercial functions, no longer have a concession rate applied to it? Although I have been given assurances from officers of State Revenue that the land involved in those scenarios would still be taxed at a concessional rate, I seek confirmation from the Treasurer on the issue.

I also understand that the removal of the concession will be phased in to try to limit the commercial impact of the change on the owners. I hope that such bodies will be given sufficient notice of the proposed changes to the concession to assist in the transition to the new tax rates. We were told at the briefing that in 1998-99 the Government expects to gather \$0.2m from this measure; in 1999-2000, \$0.7m; and in 2000-01 another \$1.2m. Therefore, we are very keen to see that this measure is capable of absorption by those who must meet it, in a proper

and orderly way. We seek clarification also on the precise nature of the property that will be taxed, which was not previously taxed, in relation to the 50 per cent concession.

The second tax measure in the Bill seeks to clarify the residential exemption provisions to ensure that only one residential exemption is allowed in an assessment year. It is expected to have a revenue neutral impact on the Budget.

The third land tax measure is to amend the Act to provide legislative support for the inner city land tax rebate. This scheme was an initiative of the previous Labor Government as part of a policy to encourage inner city residential development. The amendment will incorporate the policy into legislation to streamline its administration. We think that is a good measure, to encourage people to move back to the city. Of course, demand for inner city housing has been growing, as evidenced at auctions of the property associated with the East Perth redevelopment project. We are keen to see to it that this measure, which means that land tax is based on residential use and not on the base commercial use of property, will have a basis in law as well as administration. That will be a good measure for encouraging the development of inner city housing. Incidentally, I believe from the briefings that only 11 owners so far have been affected by that policy, although that number is likely to increase in future.

The two Bills propose a number of changes to current rates of taxation in a number of areas. We will not oppose these budget measures in this House.

As I have already said, the Government has enjoyed record revenue growth, and these changes will contribute further to its revenue takings. However, the Government has shown an inability to spend its revenue according to the real needs of the community. Until this Government does something to address the priorities of the community, the people of Western Australia will be justified in asking the Premier, where is the social dividend that he promised at the last state election?

**MR PENDAL** (South Perth) [3.35 pm]: I will make a few comments on a number of elements of the Bills. In the main, I congratulate the Government on what it has achieved in its Budget because I did not have the opportunity to do so during the Budget debate. Secondly, I specifically commend the Government on what it seeks to achieve in the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill. I note the many pluses, but there are one or two minuses - in particular, a very serious matter on which I will touch in a few minutes. In the meantime, I commend the Government for certain actions it has taken on land tax. I have been a constant critic of the Government, both in this Chamber and in correspondence to successive Treasurers over the years, due to the impact by land tax on my constituents.

In some of the explanatory notes circulated with the Bill we were told that the new land tax scale is proposed to provide relief from the effects of increased valuations; the new scale will limit growth in collections to 5.6 per cent.

I learnt from the very welcome briefings from Treasury officers and officers of the State Revenue Department that the growth in collections in land tax would have been in the order of 14 per cent were it not for the new land tax scale. I do not claim to be an expert in land tax; however, I imagine that were those collections coming in at a growth rate of 14 per cent, it would have produced a lot of angst from my constituents. Therefore, I congratulate the Government on seeking to limit to up to one-third the growth in collections, to a figure of 5.6 per cent.

I was also pleased to learn that 56 per cent of taxpayers will receive a decrease or no increase in their land tax bills; and of the 44 per cent of taxpayers whose land tax bill will increase, three-quarters of that number will receive an increase of less than \$20 in 1998-99. Again, the Government deserves commendation.

I am interested in the rebate system for inner city residential land. I must admit that until I read this Bill, I was not aware that the previous Labor Government had extended a rebate for inner city residential land. The explanatory memorandum reads -

The scheme provides for landlords who own inner city residential properties in a commercial or other non-residential zone, to receive a rebate of the difference between their land tax assessment and what it would have been if the land had a residential zoning.

I made a note in the margin, "Is it working?" I anticipated that a bit too soon because the next paragraph stated that the number of eligible applicants and the value of rebates provided reduced from 92 applicants at a cost of \$87 516 for the 1993-94 assessment year to 11 applicants at a cost of \$11 679 for the 1996-97 assessment year. The expected outturn for 1997-98 and the budget estimate for 1998-99 is \$40 000. It bothers me that an otherwise sensible sounding scheme does not seem to apply to many people. At one level, one might say that it seemed to work because of the growth in the number of inner city residential land developments that occurred, mainly in Perth central, East Perth, and Northbridge. Every ground level car park in which one previously could park in the past couple of years at Northbridge seems to have been replaced with eight or nine storey residential units. This scheme might have been responsible for inducing those investors and land developers to go ahead and do what they ultimately did. But when a concession is extended to so few people and for such small amounts, one wonders whether the paperwork warrants

the continuation of the scheme. However, the flip side of that argument is the fairly arbitrary boundary that exists to this rebate. If one looks at a map of either Western Australia or the metropolitan area - as you will know, Mr Deputy Speaker, because you live in South Perth when you are not in Geraldton - it is hard to escape the notion that a place such as South Perth should be included. One can argue that people in South Perth are doing those things regardless of any rebates being offered, and therefore no incentive or inducement is needed. However, it seems to me that there must come a time when the rebate must be set aside, if in fact it succeeded in encouraging inner city residential development, which was the whole point of it in the first place. I do no more than place on record my own puzzlement about a scheme which on the surface is a sensible and attractive one, but which in reality does not seem to attract a great deal by way of rebate dollars going back to the customer.

The second issue to which I draw attention is those parts of the amendments that seek to phase out the 50 per cent concession applicable to universities and educational and religious bodies in respect of land used or leased out for business, commercial, professional or trade purposes over a three year period. The Government should have another look at this. I oppose the Government's intention to phase out the 50 per cent concession; it will end up being penny-wise and pound-foolish. Some irony arises from the fact that the current Treasurer's father put in the concession in 1976 which gave some wide berth to universities, educational and religious bodies, and others against the impost of land tax. If my reading of the 1976 Act is correct, other groups in society will continue to receive the concession. Universities and educational and religious bodies are not totally reliant on the taxpayer because we gave them the capacity to have, if one likes, a slightly preferential playing field. The conventional wisdom is that we must have a level playing field. I have never discovered what this term means. If one wants to level the playing field with respect to universities and educational and religious bodies which have land used or leased for business or commercial purposes, and to assist those organisations to further the work they do, in my judgment one can continue to give them some form of preferential treatment simply by virtue of their being a university or an educational or religious body. I imagine this will affect the Raine Foundation. I do not know if the Raine Foundation is a legal part of the University of Western Australia. Among other things, the Raine Foundation owns and runs the Windsor Hotel in South Perth. This Bill intends to remove any capacity by one of the offshoots of the University of Western Australia to gain the 50 per cent tax concession. In the main, universities, educational institutions and religious bodies are benevolent institutions. In other words, they exist not to produce profits, but to do things of a benevolent nature for the wider society. If we limit the concessions that they receive, they will have a reduced capacity to do that. I am happy to declare a sort of general vested interest. I sit on the board of the South Perth Community Hospital. It is the only hospital of its kind in Australia. It is not owned by government, by a church, or by a local authority; nor is it owned by a commercial enterprise. It is owned by the community. When a few of us have tried to work out what that means, we have not been able to succeed.

In all respects it is like St John of God Hospital, where the profits are returned to better the facilities, the only difference being that St of God Hospital is under the umbrella of a church, but the South Perth Community Hospital is not. I suspect that under this Bill, we will see the South Perth Community Hospital lose the 50 per cent concession on its land tax assessment on, for example, the property it owns within the neighbourhood from which it gets a commercial return. Again I say to the Treasurer that this may end up visiting upon those organisations something which the Government never intended.

Earlier I talked about the alleged need for a level playing field and I mentioned that I did not understand, and never have understood, what the term means. In the same budget documents, we are talking about \$100m being set aside by the Government for a state convention centre. That is an appalling decision, in the same way as is the decision under which the Government will own \$50m worth of picture theatres in the northern suburbs.

Mr Baker: Oh, come off it.

Mr PENDAL: I am serious. I will get an opportunity to mention this once or twice, to the chagrin of the member for Joondalup, during debate on the repeal Bill on the Western Australian Development Corporation. My point is that on the one hand, the Government is trying to level the playing field in respect of the 50 per cent land tax concession by saying that it will no longer apply to a religious body, university or educational organisation, but on the other hand, in the same Budget the Government wants to reintroduce an uneven playing field with the provision, for example, of a state convention centre. I will not mention that further in this debate, mainly because I have only three minutes remaining, and I will have a chance to pursue the matter elsewhere. In the Budget the Government cannot get on this new bandwagon of economic rationalism and breast beating, and at the same time not apply the same policy in respect of some of its expenditure.

I ask the Treasurer - if I get the chance in Committee, I will also ask him to do this - to say for the record what amount of revenue we are currently forgoing as a State by allowing the 50 per cent land tax concession, and what are the projections in respect of the restoration of a full 100 per cent land tax assessment in these cases. It will have an impact on these organisations - the churches, private hospitals, universities and educational institutions - far and

above that which the Government might have contemplated. On the surface it might be the streaker's defence to the magistrate when asked why the offence was committed - it seemed like a good idea at the time. It seems to me that this might be in that realm. To remove the 50 per cent concession might have sounded like a good idea at the time, but it might come back to haunt the Government.

I draw attention to the fact that when the Local Government Act was amended a couple of years ago, local authorities were given the chance to begin rating properties which they had never been allowed to rate in the past. Now the State seems to be following its own example by appearing to withdraw those concessions - the state and local taxes - from organisations which have either been exempt or received a concession. Why have those organisations received that concession? The reason is as valid today as when they were given the concession: They are all doing benevolent, charitable, educational or religious works - helpful work to society - and the concession helps them do their job better. This amendment will prevent them from doing that work better. I will oppose that clause. Notwithstanding that, the Government is to be commended for all it has done within the context of the Bill.

**MR RIPPER** (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [3.55 pm]: The second reading speech in support of the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill contains a complaint from the Government about the reduction in commonwealth grants. It states -

The Grants Commission has progressively reduced Western Australia's share of grants in recent years, to the extent that our 1998-99 grant will be some \$235m less than if the funding share from five years ago had been maintained.

I will add two other mechanisms which have seen this State having to incur additional expenditure or, alternatively, losing commonwealth support to which it otherwise would have been entitled. Both are in the education area. The first is the enrolment benchmark adjustment policy under which the Commonwealth makes a determination about the distribution of school enrolments between the government and the non-government sectors. It then makes a judgment about the way in which that notional distribution has changed. For every student who notionally is judged by the Commonwealth to have moved from the government to the non-government sector, the Commonwealth deducts \$1 712 from its assistance to the State for education. Although there may be a change in the distribution in enrolments between the government and non-government sectors in this State over time, the truth of the matter is that the government sector and the non-government sector are both in receipt of the increased enrolments in this State and both need additional support.

Mr Barnett: Both sectors are getting substantial increases in funding.

Mr RIPPER: I understand that over four years this State will lose \$28m as a result of the Federal Government's enrolment benchmark policy.

Mr Barnett: Compared to what it otherwise would have received.

Mr RIPPER: How else can the judgment be made? That is the same basis on which the judgment has been made about the activities of the Grants Commission. I hope the Minister for Education is still arguing this matter with the Federal Government. When I last raised this issue he indicated that he was continuing to take up the issue with the Federal Government. I do not see why government schools with growing enrolments in this State should be losing \$28m.

The second mechanism applying in education is the commonwealth common youth allowance policy which denies the unemployment benefit, or its equivalent in current terminology, to 16 and 17 year olds. If young people from less affluent families want to receive this commonwealth assistance, they cannot do that by being unemployed and looking for work, but only if they are enrolled in education. The Government's budget papers say that that will cost the Western Australian State Government \$17.3m annually. That is after additional commonwealth assistance to compensate the State for the impact of the common youth allowance on school enrolments and school costs. Even taking that assistance into account, the annual cost to the State is \$17.3m according to the Government's figures. That might explain why the budget of the Education Department is projected to be in deficit by between \$20m and \$25m at the end of June. It might also explain why the Minister told the Estimates Committee it would be a tough call for the Education Department to stay within its budget projections for 1998-99. A Federal Liberal Government is reducing the financial assistance grants to Western Australia from the State's expectation of the level of financial assistance it would receive. A Federal Liberal Government is taking \$28m over four years from this State for funding government schools, and it is imposing a common youth allowance policy which will cost this State an additional \$17.3m annually to run its schools. I hope that when the federal Liberal leader arrives in Perth in the next couple of days, these matters will be taken up with him by the state Liberal leader, the Premier.

Mr Barnett: There has been a lot of discussion between the federal and state Ministers on this issue and there is an implicit understanding that it will be monitored closely. The Commonwealth does not agree with the way the States

put their position. At the same time, the States cannot be absolutely certain as to the numbers. Nobody can project what impact the common youth allowance will have on enrolments. We have undertaken to monitor it closely, and it may be revisited depending on the outcome.

Mr RIPPER: I am glad to hear it may be revisited. The Minister's monitoring has obviously given him enough confidence to put a figure in the budget papers of \$17.3m. Even if that figure is 10 per cent or 20 per cent out, it is still a significant cost.

Mr Barnett: The problem is that it will be very localised. For example, in Mandurah there might be a very localised but strong impact. In other areas it might not be felt at all. I and other Ministers have stressed to the Commonwealth that it may not be uniform in its impact.

Mr RIPPER: The point of my argument is that the Federal Government is affecting the finances of this State in a number of ways. The Treasurer has mentioned this State's share of financial assistance grants, but other mechanisms in education are making life difficult in this State. It is no accident that the Education Department is having trouble meeting its budget allocations. I hope the State's leaders will put the interests of the State above their party political interests, and will raise these matters in a vigorous manner with the Prime Minister rather than cave in because of the approaching federal election.

Despite these difficulties the State has with the Federal Government there is, nevertheless, good news on another front for the State's accountants; that is, the revenue the State is receiving from taxes and licences. The Treasurer has made great play of the Government's record of good financial management. He has boasted about the State Government's financial management. He does not often tell the people of Western Australia of his very good fortune on the revenue front. The Leader of the Opposition quoted some figures which are worth reiterating. In 1992-93, the last financial year of the previous Labor Government, stamp duty on property transactions was \$207.3m; in this financial year that duty is estimated to be \$423m. Land tax in the last year of the Lawrence Labor Government was \$128.5m; in this financial year it is estimated to be \$177.5m. Stamp duty on insurance policies in 1992-93 under the Lawrence Labor Government was \$50.5m, and in 1998-99 it is estimated to be \$115m. I am advised that the total revenue collected from taxes and licences in 1992-93 was \$1.5b, whereas the total estimated to be collected in 1998-99, after the passage of these two Bills, is \$3.2b. That is a very significant increase in revenue over the six years this Government has been in office. When the Treasurer talks about his record of financial management, he should inform the people of Western Australia that his record has involved a huge increase in the revenue the Government extracts from Western Australians and their households.

The Opposition questioned the Treasurer in the Estimates Committees about his Government's support for a goods and services tax. It understood him to say that his support for a GST was not unconditional. The Opposition understood the Treasurer to say that he wants a reform of commonwealth-state financial relations before he will offer full support to a tax reform package that includes a GST. I hope he is as good as his word, but I suspect he will put his party interests ahead of the State's interests and that, when the commonwealth tax reform package is revealed and he must confront the issue of a GST, he will support it whether or not the Commonwealth has made any agreement to reform commonwealth-state financial relations. I suspect that, because it will be announced just before the beginning of an election campaign - as late as possible so that people do not have a chance to realise the full horror of the detail - and in that political context the Treasurer will not desert his party interests but will back the GST even if it does not include a reform of commonwealth-state financial relations.

Mr Court: Just before the last election you tried to trick me and asked whether I supported a GST. Even though it was just days before an election, I said I would fully support the implementation of a GST if it was part of an acceptable tax package. The time has come in this country for a proper debate on taxation, and if you want to be part of a scare campaign you will be seen for what you are; that is, as negative and not providing a positive contribution to the debate. I understand there is a motion on the Notice Paper for discussion tomorrow on taxation. I look forward to debating that motion. You have said that the Government should make public its submission. I have been doing that in this Parliament for the past three years.

Mr Brown: Why not release it?

Mr Court: We will release it.

Mr RIPPER: Give it to the Opposition now, and it can be used in the debate tomorrow.

Mr Court: I was going to say I will do it on the proviso that you tell us your tax policy.

Mr RIPPER: I will give the Treasurer the statements of the federal Leader of the Opposition on tax issues. I would be delighted to do that. I re-emphasise my earlier point: The Treasurer has said his acceptance of a GST is conditional on reform of commonwealth-state financial relations, and the Opposition will hold him to that. When

the crunch comes, and he must decide between his party political interests and the State's interests, we shall see whether he will refuse to support the Federal Government's GST package.

One possible option in a tax reform package introduced by the Federal Government would be to replace a number of the state taxes which are the subject of these two Bills. I am sure some members opposite will argue that one of the reasons for introducing a GST should be to replace some of the state taxes. However, there is a major problem with proceeding down that reform path; that is, the Federal Government is not talking about a state based GST, but is talking about a federal based GST. If a federal GST replaced some of the state taxes, the current mendicant status of the States with regard to the Federal Government would be exacerbated and the problem of vertical fiscal imbalance, which the Treasurer is happy to talk about on many occasions and which is dealt with in the Economic and Fiscal Overview prepared by Treasury in association with this year's budget papers, would grow worse. Those people interested in the States' autonomy and a proper financial relationship between the States and the Federal Government should be careful about accepting the GST as a replacement for certain of the State Governments' taxes and charges.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr RIPPER: The Opposition advocates a broadening of the income tax base and a crackdown on the rich who are using all sorts of esoteric legal devices to avoid their taxation. The Opposition advocates having a go at those people who are on the *Business Review Weekly* rich list, but who are declaring taxable incomes of \$20 000 a year and are avoiding their share of community obligations. We say we should tax the rich; we certainly should not impose a goods and services tax on the necessities of household life while affluent people avoid their share of tax through measures which perhaps the member for Joondalup supports and encourages.

I return to the taxes and charges proposed in this Bill. It is interesting that the proposals to change land tax in this Bill involve a total concession of about \$13.5m. The Government argues in its material that the concession has been targeted at middle-value land packages; indeed, the second reading speech states -

... a taxpayer owning land with an aggregate taxable value of between \$150 000 and \$500 000 will be issued an assessment in 1998-99 that is between 9 per cent and 27 per cent lower than that which would apply under the current scale.

It appears from the Government's material that those people who own unimproved urban land of average value will be heavily concentrated among the 44 per cent of land taxpayers who will pay more under the land tax scale. We are concerned about owners of land of modest value. Such people may own a house additional to their residence to provide for their retirement. They may own the average urban lot that was valued at an unimproved value of \$105 406 in 1996-97 but which is projected to be valued at \$115 946 in 1997-98. The Opposition believes that people with modest additional amounts of land will not receive any advantage from the \$13.5m concession extended through this legislation.

That would fit a pattern in which this Government has engaged. Concessions have been extended to people who are affluent and have a capacity to pay taxes. However, these people are among the Government's supporters and have the ear of government members, particularly that of the Minister for Finance.

I commend the Government for publishing a statement from which I shall quote shortly; namely, appendix 10 of the Economic and Fiscal Overview, which is headed "Tax and Royalty Expenditure Statement 1997-98". That statement runs through, and places a value on, all the tax concessions which the Government extends to various classes of people. That is a most welcome addition to the budget papers. Often in the past Parliament has scrutinised expenditure, while ignoring concessions on the revenue collection side. It is good that the information is now available to us.

However, some of the information in the appendix is not so welcome or positive. The papers reveal that although the Government is hitting ordinary Western Australian families with greatly increased taxes and charges, it is extending expensive concessions to the corporate sector. The section headed "Stamp duty on conveyances" on page 124 of the Economic and Fiscal Overview states that the corporate reconstruction exemption cost \$3m in 1996-97, and has an estimated cost of \$14.5m in 1997-98. That is a significant growth rate. That concession is extended to people who see commercial advantage in reorganising their corporate structure, but who do not want to pay the commercial downside of that restructure; namely, state taxes and charges. They want the advantage of the corporate veil and restructure in taxation terms, but do not want to meet any disadvantages. That is a most inappropriate exemption costing us \$14.5m. If that rate of growth continues, it is likely to cost us much more in future financial years.

The other exception to which I draw the attention of the House is that on financial institutions duty. The average income earner operating a small bank account pays financial institutions duty. When pensioners put money, which

is not their pension, into their bank accounts, they pay FID. However, a big corporation which puts in a large deposit has its financial institutions duty capped at \$1 200. The corporation will not pay any financial institutions duty on the portion of the deposit beyond \$2m. That exemption will cost us \$21m in 1997-98, and in 1996-97 it cost us \$19m.

This Government offers \$21m in concessions to very large corporate players, and \$14.5m in concessions on stamp duty to people engaged in dodgy corporate reconstructions, yet at the same time it is hitting ordinary Western Australian families with increased taxes and charges which will cost them, on the Government's figures, \$300 a year.

This Government should get its priorities right and come back to the House with legislation to minimise or abolish these concessions, and it should devote the proceeds to either improving health, education and justice services for ordinary Western Australians, or reducing the tax burden on ordinary Western Australians. This Government has twice, in two Budgets, greatly increased the burden of taxes and charges on ordinary Western Australian families, while at the same time extending these unnecessarily expensive concessions to the corporate sector.

I return now to the Government's boast of good financial management. I said in a previous speech that the total reduction in state debt was virtually equivalent to the total proceeds of the asset sales that had been devoted to that debt reduction. In other words, the Government's much vaunted debt reduction strategy has been historically, and presumably will be in the future, simply a privatisation strategy. A similar mechanism can be seen in the Government's management of the recurrent Budget, which has been based on a huge increase in revenue from taxes and licence fees resulting from a huge impost on Western Australian households. What is good about a financial management record that relies on asset sales to reduce debt and on tax increases to support the recurrent budget?

**MR BROWN** (Bassendean) [4.22 pm]: I join with my colleague the member for Belmont in making a few comments on the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) and the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bills. The Treasurer said in his second reading speech on the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill that -

The Grants Commission has progressively reduced Western Australia's share of grants in recent years, to the extent that our 1998-99 grant will be some \$235m less than if the funding share from five years ago had been maintained.

It is true that as a result of very significant cuts made by the Howard Government, ordinary taxpayers and members of the community in this State are suffering greatly, and a significantly greater burden is being placed on the State Government to meet that shortfall. It is important to note that in addition to the cuts that have been made by the Grants Commission, other measures have been taken by the Federal Government that are placing a great burden on this State and, therefore, on ordinary citizens.

One of the significant cuts that has been made by the Howard Government has been to the dental program that was initiated by the Keating Government. The Keating Government recognised that because the States were not providing adequate funding to meet the needs of people who could not afford dental treatment, many aged people in particular were unable to receive dental treatment, and in its last few years in office it committed \$100m to dental care, which went directly to the States for the provision of dental care, particularly for the aged. When the Keating Government lost office and when the money allocated by that Government ran out, the average waiting time for pensioners who sought treatment at Perth Dental Hospital or other places in Western Australia was two months. However, a recent article in *The West Australian*, which I take to be correct, suggested that the average waiting time has now extended from two months to 22 months. Another consequence of that cut was that the eligibility criteria for dental care in Western Australia were narrowed so that people who were on partial benefits no longer qualified for that treatment. Therefore, that reduction at the federal level has impacted upon the quality of life of people in Western Australia.

A significant reduction has also been made in the provision of legal aid. I do not know how other members of this place are faring, but people are streaming into my office who have been denied legal aid, generally for matrimonial matters, in particular child custody. I refer to one such case to indicate that I am not talking about an academic situation. A constituent came to see me recently who is separated from her husband and has custody of the two youngest of her three children. The husband has custody of the eldest child. The two eldest children are on medication that is prescribed by their medical practitioner. However, the husband is a member of a small religious group which believes that children should not be given this prescribed medication, and he will not allow the eldest child to take that medication. That is of great concern to the child's medical practitioner and the child's mother. However, when the mother applied for legal aid to get custody of that child, she was denied legal aid because her case fell outside the commonwealth guidelines. We are endeavouring to have that changed, but that case illustrates how that child's quality of life is being affected by a Federal Government decision.

Another reduction at the federal level over the past few years has been in tax concessions for research and development. It is obvious from talking to the business community that our private sector commitment to research

and development has fallen as a result of the lowering of the tax concession for that expenditure and that Australia is not at the forefront of investment in research and development.

The Federal Government has passed down many of its obligations to the State, yet the State has not been too concerned about also passing down some of its financial responsibilities. For example, today in question time, the Minister for Family and Children's Services said, in answer to a question from the member for Joondalup about whether funding would be provided for a family centre in Joondalup, that the State Government would provide \$500 000 if a corresponding amount were provided by the local authority. That is a new policy that has been introduced by the Court Government, because previously, family centres were funded totally by the Government.

Mr MacLean interjected.

Mr BROWN: When the previous Court Government was in office, there were no family centres; that Government did not give a cuss about them. They were pioneered by Labor Governments in the 1980s, when a number of current members of the coalition were in opposition. Not one family centre was in place before the Labor Government came into power in 1983.

Several members interjected.

Mr BROWN: Regardless of whether the Labor Government pinched a coalition idea, the coalition never put in any money - all it did was yak. What has happened since the Labor Party went out of office? As the Minister for Family and Children's Services indicated today, this Government has been scrimping on this whole issue and trying to take out more and more money.

Mr MacLean interjected.

Mr BROWN: Why does the member not get up and make a speech, if he can make one coherently enough?

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr BROWN: I can tell the member for Wanneroo that I have spent about two and a half years in my constituency fighting for a family centre. We will eventually get one.

If we look at the other responsibilities the Court Government is pushing down onto local government, we see the issue of security and attempts by local authorities to establish their own security requirements because of the absence of proper funding from the State Government. We have seen money allocated in this Budget to try to further expand that. This represents a clear intention to put the security requirement into the hands of local authorities. As a result of changes in the Education Department's policy, it has placed preprimary centres on school sites with no provision for parking or other facilities and local authorities are being approached on this issue. All of those requirements are being put onto local government. When members look at the Premier's graffiti program of which he is so proud - and I looked at it recently - they will see that, after a short period, the burden for the program will rest on local government. For the Shire of Swan that represents \$150 000 a year. The State will do something in the short term by using redeployees, a car and a bit of paint but in the medium term the responsibility will be pushed onto local authorities. This Government is great at passing the buck; it has learnt from its federal colleagues to push responsibility down and to give financial responsibility to someone else. We can see this happening all the time in the way this Government is operating.

In his second reading speech the Treasurer referred to the fact that the grants commission has reduced the money available to Western Australia. The Treasurer went on to say that most of this reduction is a result of Western Australia's strong economic performance and associated higher revenue raising capacity.

It is true that in comparison with the rest of Australia, Western Australia and Queensland have very strong economic performances. One has only to go to the annual reports of the Department of Resources Development to understand why that is. If one really analyses it, one must ask: What is the mystery? The mystery is that the minerals are here in Western Australia; the minerals are not in South Australia, Victoria or New South Wales. We have the gas, the iron ore, the gold, the diamonds and other minerals. The Treasurer talks about \$50b of investment in the pipeline. Where is it going? It is going into Western Australia. Why is it going into Western Australia? Is it because of the prowess of the Government and its wonderful legislative framework or is it because of the climate and that people like to live here? It is not for any of those reasons, but it is because coincidentally the minerals are here. We have to be here to mine them, not in South Australia because they are not there.

Mr Court: If that is the case, why did you not do something about it?

Mr BROWN: The Treasurer knows, as we all do, that the world's need for fuel and gas supplies has changed. If the



Treasurer talks to people in the gas industry, he will find that they are not talking about this year, next year or the year after, but about 30 years ahead. If people have any idea at all, they know that those projects do not happen overnight; three to five years are required for exploration and to study world demand. If people examine the 1992 Access Economics report and the annual report of the predecessor of the Department of Resources Development, they will see the investments which were planned in Western Australia. The investments did not come about through tinkering with the law; people saw the world demand. When the Treasurer says, "We are doing a wonderful job", all I can say is thank goodness for mineral resources.

Mr Court: Tell us about the petrochemical project on which you spent more than \$400m.

Mr BROWN: I notice the Treasurer does not deny it.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr Shave interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister will come to order.

Mr Shave: I would love to comment further.

Mr BROWN: The Minister can make a speech.

Mr Shave: Thank you.

Mr BROWN: Another matter raised in this Bill relates to stamp duty on homes. I note that in order to alleviate the increase which will be applied, the exemption for the first home buyers' rebate of \$500 will apply to houses costing up to \$135 000 instead of \$85 000. That will not apply in many circumstances where people are struggling to buy subsequent homes. The increase in stamp duty will have an impact, albeit a small one, on home affordability and the capacity of many people to enter the housing market. This will be the case where a previous home owner has failed to meet his mortgage commitments and has had to sell his property, or where people in relationships or marriages have purchased houses and, as a result of splitting up, need to purchase separate properties. The increase in stamp duty will impact on lower income earners and house affordability. Although the extension of the rebate threshold to \$135 000 will certainly be welcomed by first home buyers, it is not a total exemption which would ensure that all the people seeking to get into the housing market would not feel the impact of that decision.

Stamp duty is to increase on workers' compensation policies from 3 to 5 per cent. I find this a curious decision. The Minister for Labour Relations has been bleating publicly about the high cost of workers' compensation. He has been saying that it acts as a disincentive to employment and so on. Given that the Government has been complaining about the apparently high and increasing costs of workers' compensation, it now elects to increase the tax on those increases which have occurred under the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act.

I cannot follow the Government's rationale on this matter. After talking to people in both the general and business communities it is becoming more and more evident that inconsistent decisions are being made across a variety of ministerial portfolios and departments. This is another example of what appears to be a decision by Treasury on the revenue issue without reference to industrial relations, the Minister for Employment or whoever. Decisions appear to have been made by compartments rather than across all relevant portfolio responsibilities.

I cannot understand why that provision is included in the legislation given that the Minister for Labour Relations has constantly made that complaint. If, as rumoured, the Minister introduces amendments to the Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act to reduce premiums, the argument for that is hollow. On the one hand the Minister would be arguing that premiums should reduce - that is, benefits payable to injured workers need to be reduced to make the premiums economic - but on the other hand he would be arguing that it is appropriate to apply a higher tax to the policies. Those two aspects are entirely inconsistent; they involve no consistency or logic.

In his second reading speech on the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill the Leader of the House referred to the removal of a 50 per cent land tax concession from universities. I understand the Leader of the House's argument is that the exemption applied to universities is wrong in principle because it exempts businesses that operate from universities and therefore gives them an advantage over private sector businesses which must pay land tax.

In debate on another Bill, I raised with the Minister for Fair Trading the matter of the on-payment of land taxes; that is, when land tax is incurred by a landlord it is passed on to a small business proprietor. As I recollect, the legislation in South Australia has been changed. In that State the landlord meets the cost of the land tax and there is no ability under "variable outgoings" to pass on a proportion of the tax to the tenant.

The Minister for Fair Trading has not adopted the South Australian arrangements in the Commercial Tenancy (Retail Shops) Agreements Bill. If that arrangement were adopted the anomaly referred to in the second reading speech would be overcome in a different way than provided for in this legislation; that is, rather than removing the exemption we could ensure that businesses that rent from a university or college would not be advantaged over smaller businesses renting in the private sector because those businesses would not be required to meet their proportion of land tax costs.

I refer to the provisions of the Bill dealing with stamp duty on chattels. The Leader of the House had this to say in the second reading speech -

Division 4 of part 5 of this Bill seeks to broaden the conveyance duty base by limiting the scope of the current exemption for chattels conveyed with land, including mining tenements. Western Australia is currently the only State which still provides a general stamp duty exemption for chattels sold in conjunction with real property. Common examples of chattels conveyed with various types of real property include in the case of homes - curtains, rugs and furniture; in the case of businesses which own real property - computers, photocopiers and furniture; in the case of office buildings - moveable partitions; and in the case of mining tenements - removable ore crushing equipment, drilling rigs and other off-road vehicles . . .

Chattels situated in Western Australia will be charged with duty where they constitute property transferred in conjunction with land . . .

As a result of this change people will now be charged a tax based on the total value of the establishment, furniture, fittings and equipment; there will not be an exemption for chattels. The second reading speech continues -

The proposal that chattels sold in conjunction with a farm should remain exempt from stamp duty reflects that they are often expensive and account for a relatively high proportion of the total value of the farm.

There will be two ways of calculating chattels. If a home contains some lovely paintings worth say \$30 000 which are to be sold with the home their value will be included in the stamp duty.

Mr Baker: You wouldn't do that; you would rearrange your affairs in a lawful manner.

Mr BROWN: I am not talking about tax avoiders.

A home to be sold might have a panoramic view which should be offset by one or two magnificent pictures. Once it is sold stamp duty will apply to the value of the building plus paintings, carpets, curtains, fancy windows, etc. However, a farm which contains an old tractor out the back worth a couple of thousand dollars and other pieces of equipment will not attract additional tax. Where is the equity in that? How was it worked out? I can understand people asking, "Where is the equity?" The Opposition is trying to work out the real equity in this proposal. If a property is in the city stamp duty is calculated one way and if it is on the farm it is done in a different way. I do not understand that.

Mr Marlborough: What is the difference between a mining company and a farm? They are both businesses. If you own a mining company you must pay tax on everything.

Mr BROWN: There are many small miners and some very big miners. We are not talking about exemption for the little person who prospects with a bit of equipment. If they flog their drilling equipment with the business they must pay.

Mr Baker: It is tax deductible -

Mr BROWN: We are talking about state taxes and about equity across the taxation scheme.

Mr Bloffwitch: There is no such thing.

Mr BROWN: That is right; there is no such thing across the taxation scheme. However, we are talking about equity and the way this tax will apply.

Interestingly, there is no argument about equity in the second reading speech. He says that often the equipment can be very costly and therefore it would be harsh to impose a tax. Given that logic, it would be harsh to impose a tax that would cost a large amount. That logic does not appear to be applied elsewhere.

Mr Bloffwitch: It is matching what is done in other States and gives us an equal opportunity to gain the revenue available.

Mr BROWN: It might be; but that is not in the second reading speech.

I have raised the matter because the arguments for a GST and other tax changes include equity and efficiency. Any change to the taxation system must be equitable and efficient. I cannot see how either of those criteria apply to this change. The Leader of the House has not used either principle in his argument. Therefore, one is left with the impression that this is not about equity and efficiency; it is about identifying a group of strong supporters of the National Party in particular, but also of the Liberal Party, and therefore it is a tax concession. It is nothing more than that. Unless one can identify the equity aspect, and given the absence of that clear definition, the legislation provides an exemption for a sectional interest.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr BROWN: It is a federal tax. We are talking about -

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr BROWN: There may be equity issues as well. This is a state tax and the Leader of the House has not mentioned equity and efficiency. In the absence of that argument, we must conclude that it is an exemption for a group which has a vested interest and which supports the Government.

**MR MARLBOROUGH** (Peel) [4.53 pm]: The Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill highlights the inbuilt inequities in the 1998-99 Budget. This assessment procedure offers greater concessions to people who own land valued at between \$150 000 and \$500 000. The bulk of the population owns land valued at something less than that and the duties involved for such owners will be significantly increased under this Bill.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: That is correct; it is land tax. The application of stamp duty to property transactions reveals amazing inequities. Why would one argue on the one hand for a taxation system that will now include all chattels as part of the value of the enterprise, be it a home or business enterprise, and on the other hand find a means by which to exempt an industry such as farming? What is the rationale behind that? Why would the Government want to attack one element of business in the bush - the mining industry - yet deliberately exempt the farming industry?

I am particularly concerned about the small miners; those who in the main are still out there working day and night, 100 hours a week, trying to find their pot of gold, nickel or whatever. If they are fortunate enough to strike it rich, they are no different from the local farmers. They work as hard as any battling farmer. The small mining entrepreneur and the farmer in the bush trying to grow an underpriced wool or wheat crop are in the same situation - they are hardworking Australians.

Through this legislation the Government will reward one group but penalise another facing the same problems. That is, it will hit the mining industry but not farmers. It will class every piece of machinery or vehicle used on a mining lease as a chattel. Much of the equipment used on farming properties is the same as that used by miners. Farmers use graders, front-end loaders and large semitrailers to cart crops, but they will not be covered by this legislation. The Government has found a way of excluding them. It has nothing to do with taxation: It has a lot to do with politics and the Government's hanging on to seats that it needs to retain at the next state election.

I would be interested in what the Treasurer has to say about the sort of industry that will be affected by this definition of chattels. Let us consider the Parmelia Hotel on St Georges Terrace. If it were sold, many chattels would be included in the sale. The \$10m suggested increase would be conservative, particularly if the property market were booming in Western Australia. We have been in a slump for a while and there are no cranes in the Perth CBD. Any upturn in the sale of property and investment in Western Australia would see the predicted \$10m increase jump dramatically. I cannot see any large investor being happy to pick up the extra duties attached to what would be classified as chattels in the hotel scenario.

The only other exempt area is aged care, and I am delighted about that. Most Australians would agree - although it is difficult to predict the Federal Government's attitude - that that industry is in the business of care. It provides the opportunity for aged people to be cared for when they most need it. I have no difficulty with that exemption and I am not saying farmers should not be exempt, but why are miners not included? The premise of this Bill is inequitable, and that inequity is evident throughout the taxation process that this Government has indicated it wants to implement.

Obviously these increases will also affect many other areas and will result in increased costs for the average household in Western Australia. The Treasurer has agreed that the overall tax increase will be \$293 for each family per annum.

The Opposition has assessed figures showing a further increase of \$300 for each family as a result of this Budget, on top of the \$293 acknowledged by the Treasurer. An increase will occur in motor vehicle registrations, which will

now be based on vehicle weight. The Opposition estimates that the cost to register the average family vehicle will increase by \$55, and I do not think those figures have been disputed by the Treasurer. Third party insurance will increase by \$12.55; stamp duty on motor vehicle licences by \$9.20; public transport fares by \$26 a week for the average family; water, sewerage and drainage rates by \$21.40; and stamp duty on house insurance by \$11.50. These increases will total \$136 in 1998-99. Another \$55 could be added for most families for their second vehicle.

The Minister for Education has told us that he wants families with children in primary school to start paying school fees. That is not in the budget figures, but it will be a cost to families. The Minister has even put a figure on it. In his opinion, the fee should be \$69-\$70 a year for each child in primary school. Most high school fees currently are \$300, on top of equipment and uniforms. That is where the Minister for Education wants to take the cost of primary school education. At least another \$120 can be added from those two areas alone - \$55 for the second car and the proposal of the Minister for Education that fees of about \$70 per child be introduced into primary schools.

Hidden away in this Budget are all sorts of barbs which will continue to affect the ability of families in this State to cope. When the Treasurer was elected some three years ago, he talked about the social dividend; he did not tell everybody that they would have to pay their way to that social dividend and that he would define the social dividend. We now know in defining his social dividend that we have an increase in crime - we now lead the nation in armed robbery, home break-ins, assaults and car thefts.

When the Treasurer talked about a social dividend he did not tell us that he would dramatically increase waiting lists in all our hospitals. We now have the ludicrous situation where the elderly are waiting two years to receive proper dental care. I am constantly faced in my electorate, as I was yesterday at the Medina senior citizens centre, by retirees such as the man who has had a cataract operation delayed for more than 20 months. Two months ago he went along for his appointment as requested, thinking he was going in for the operation, only to be told it would be delayed again because there was no money in the budget to perform the operation. This man is 74 years of age. That sort of thing is happening throughout the community. That is the sort of social dividend people are living with today.

The Peel district - Kwinana and Rockingham - is one of the most rapidly developing parts of the State, if not Australia. Some 40 houses are being built every week in the areas of Warnbro and Port Kennedy alone. The schools are bursting at the seams. The Minister for Education visited the area last week and he must agree. He was taken to four schools, each of which was designed to take about 550 students. One school has 800 students, another 1 050, the third 1 000 and the fourth 960 students. They are bursting at the seams. They are under-resourced. The students are living in a demountable jungle. The core school, the bricks and mortar, cannot be seen at many schools in my district. It has disappeared behind a jungle of demountable classrooms. These are the social dividends that this Treasurer has delivered to the people of Western Australia.

Two weeks ago in Parliament the Treasurer agreed he had increased the cost to families by \$293 in the 1997-98 state Budget. The Opposition's estimate was about \$307. A further increase of between \$140 and \$260 will be incurred in the coming Budget. This is a doubling of the cost to families over two Budgets. That is what we have seen happening in Western Australia. The Treasurer appears to believe he can hide much of that increase by redefining stamp duty on property transactions without supplying details - hardly any detail was provided in the second reading speech other than that it was estimated that the measure would generate additional revenue of \$10m. Hardly any evidence was given of how the increase would impact on people purchasing houses - first home buyers and people who want to improve and buy their second home and businesses. Yet the Treasurer, without making it public, can find a way to exempt the farming industry while ensuring that if the mining industry wants to grow and improve, or if it wants to amalgamate its operations with a new company, it will be penalised accordingly.

If the Government taxes the mining industry in that way I cannot see any reason for exempting the farming industry other than that it is a political decision. The exemption is pure politics, nothing to do with straight revenue or how hard the State is doing it because the Commonwealth Government will not give it money. It is purely to do with wanting to keep the National Party onside, and with looking at the seats in the bush that the Government needs to retain to win government again. The Government has found a way to exempt that group, but it was not within its vision to exempt the mining industry.

This Budget will become more and more transparent to the average householder in Western Australia as these costs begin to bite. If there is a federal election in August and the Howard Government is returned - an increasingly unlikely scenario - a goods and services tax component must be added to most of these costs. Who knows at what level the GST will be? The Prime Minister says 10 per cent, but the ex-leader of the Liberal Party said on the "Sunday" program last week that nobody in Australia would believe a Prime Minister who set a GST at 10 per cent. John Hewson said it had to be a minimum of 15 per cent.

The cost of this Budget is unique. It is not unique in the sense that the Government is trying to hide the real cost of its increases from people; it is unique in the sense that it is brought down at a time when the Federal Government is

pushing an agenda of total tax reform. This State Government says it is in step with that. I do not know to what step it is marching in terms of its federal colleague, but I am sure the Prime Minister will not march to a step where he can tax the mining industry while excluding another industry like the farming industry. If that is the case, it will be as transparent as this transaction. If the Treasurer is fair dinkum about tax reform, before he starts to move towards a goods and services tax, which will be far too complicated for most members opposite and will lead to their political downfall - I hope members opposite pursue it - he should get this tax right. Members opposite should not get up on their high horses and take the high moral ground that they are the people best able to manage the finances of this State when they put in place, through these Bills, taxes that discriminate against certain industries in this State. By any definition this is a tax on the mining industry, and on any business other than aged care, particularly businesses in the Perth CBD that the Treasurer has devoted a lot of time to trying to improve. There would not be one business in the Perth CBD that would not face extra costs associated with the definition of chattels under this clause.

Mr Baker interjected.

Mr MARLBOROUGH: I do not know of any farmers in the Perth CBD, and the member for Joondalup would have to spend some time to convince me. Members opposite cannot take the high moral ground and say they are the people best able to manage the State's finances when they take this Mickey Mouse approach to taxation that discriminates against the people most in need. The average value of land is \$105 000 and that covers 44 per cent of people in this State. The cost of land tax will increase for them. Those 44 per cent own the bulk of land. The cost to every householder for vehicle licensing and insurance will increase under this Budget. It will also increase costs in a discriminatory way for certain businesses. Members opposite cannot take the high moral ground on this issue, and have any credibility if they also support the GST. People will see through that argument as they will begin to see through this Budget and the Government will be rejected on both counts.

**MS McHALE** (Thornlie) [5.12 pm]: I remember well when the Leader of the House delivered the second reading speech on this Bill. He did very well. There were times when he found the second reading speech somewhat tedious. I was in the Chair at the time, so I listened intently to the speech. As a result I picked up a number of points about the Bill that caused me to be concerned and at one point pleased.

The Opposition's position has been made clear by speakers so far. This is a revenue raising Bill that will put into practice the tax increases that this Government is imposing on the community of Western Australia. It will amend nine revenue raising Acts and will provide a legislative amendment to increases in the Budget.

In the budget debate I made it clear that for the second time since I have been a member, the Budget has delivered very little to the electorate of Thornlie. The costs and the cost increases that will flow from these amendments are substantial to the families in my electorate. People in my electorate are typically low to average income earners who are very hardworking people but with little excess capital at their disposal. Any increase in government service charges or taxes has a real impact on the quality of their lives.

Before I get onto specifics I will register the anger that the residents in my electorate are once again feeling. They have been promised on several occasions the benefits of the social dividend. That has not eventuated, as the Opposition has argued in this House. However, they have had to bear the costs imposed on them by the Government. Once again we see that in this Bill.

The member for Peel ran through the cost increases that we estimate will be imposed on the Western Australian community and for the sake of brevity I will not repeat that information. Suffice it to say the Opposition sees those increases in charges as biting, and as having a significant negative effect on the quality of life of many of our residents. Regardless of whether residents earn \$20 000, \$40 000 or \$60 000, they will still have to pay the charges this Government is imposing on them. An average increase in motor vehicle registration of \$55 a vehicle will have to be paid by everybody regardless of the income. However, the differential effect and impact will vary depending on level of income. The point must be made that in electorates with low to average income earners, the effects of this Budget and the previous Budget are particularly hard hitting.

I will address two issues in particular. It is a significant Bill which amends nine Acts. I have not analysed each Act in detail.

Mr McGowan: Why not?

Ms McHALE: I have been very busy, member for Rockingham, and so I have not had time to look at the Fuel Suppliers Licensing and Diesel Subsidies Act, although I am sure that someone else has and will make a contribution.

This Bill and the second reading speech contain a great deal of detail. The first point that I want to canvass is one that the members for Bassendean and South Perth alluded to - that is, the amendment to the Land Tax Assessment Act in relation to the removal of the concession for universities, educational institutions and religious bodies.

Essentially, this amendment phases out over three years the concession that those three general institutions have received since 1976. The concession that universities, religious bodies and educational institutions have had for land used or leased out for business, commercial, professional or trade purposes will be reduced to zero. The reason given for the removal of this concession is essentially competitive advantage. I am not convinced that is what will occur in reality. The explanatory notes state that the benefit of a tax concession flows to the tenant and that is seen as a competitive advantage. The indication from contacting the various institutions is that may not necessarily occur. I am not arguing whether that is good or bad practice; I am looking at the facts and therefore the impact of this amendment, particularly on universities. For instance, university owned student housing would come within the framework of this amendment as it is not property used for the prime objectives of that institution which is imparting knowledge and wisdom.

Universities use commercial leasing agents to manage their properties, and I understand that commercial market rents are paid. Therefore, students who are renting in Nedlands will pay the rents that are determined by the market forces in Nedlands. I understand also that the universities will absorb the land tax.

Mr Court: If they have not been paying land tax and have not been passing on that benefit, and if they have been receiving market rents, they have been doing well, have they not?

Ms McHALE: They have been doing well to the extent that they have been putting that money back into teaching and research. Student rents are obviously only one part of a university's investment portfolio. Educational institutions may not suffer as a result of this amendment, because the land tax will be included in the total package and the tenants will pick up the difference. However, I am dubious about whether that will be the case, for a number of reasons. Student housing is one reason. My knowledge of the commercial rental market is not very great, but university owned premises may charge a slightly lower rent because they do not pay as much land tax -

Mr Court: You would like to think that.

Ms McHALE: It is hypothetical, but it is an important point. If the rent charged for the property was somewhat lower than the market rate and that provided a competitive advantage, given that rents will increase and that the rental market is not very good for property owners, the universities might not be able to rent out their properties. One could argue that that would depend on the vagaries of the market. This amendment will affect mainly the University of Western Australia, because it has a large investment portfolio. Edith Cowan, Curtin and Murdoch Universities do not have significant investment portfolios and may not be affected by this amendment, other than in the area of student housing. However, it is likely that this amendment will have a significant effect - not to the tune of millions of dollars, but certainly to the tune of a couple of hundred thousand dollars - on UWA's capacity to raise revenue for research and teaching.

Mr Court: In my response, I will give you an answer that I think will satisfy you.

Ms McHALE: The explanatory memorandum and the second reading speech state that over three years tenants will adjust to the removal of the concession. However, I am not sure that that is the simple equation that it appears to be, and it may have a deleterious effect on the revenue that is available to UWA for teaching and research. The universities are currently experiencing significant cost pressures, and this may be yet another pressure.

Last year, the universities suffered from the change to the payroll tax system that required payroll tax to be applied to superannuation. Universities have generous superannuation schemes, and the application of payroll tax to that superannuation slugged universities considerably; I understand to the tune of more than \$500 000. While it is not directly a state matter, the Commonwealth has also reduced funding to our educational institutions by 6 per cent on previously announced budgets. Therefore, while this amendment may be minor in the scheme of things and may apply only to UWA, from the universities' point of view it is yet another example of how they are not being supported by Federal and State Governments.

The amendment with regard to religious institutions is interesting. I have spoken to one of the private hospital systems - members can probably guess which one - about the possible impact of this amendment on religious institutions in the health system. It said that it probably would not make a significant difference because it would pass on the removal of the concession to the doctors. The second reading speech states that the removal of the concession will be passed on to the tenants; and, in the health context, the tenants are the doctors. The doctors will have to pass on that cost, and that will be to the patients. Therefore, while the religious institutions will not be affected, and the doctors will not be affected, even though that cost will be absorbed into the overall cost of renting their medical suites, the patients at the other end will be affected. Therefore, very indirectly but not too indirectly, the Government has once again put a burden onto the ordinary person.

Mr Shave: Can you explain what you mean when you say "very indirectly but not too indirectly"? It is either indirect or it is not. What are you trying to say?

Ms McHALE: I said slightly indirectly. I am trying to say - I thought I said it reasonably clearly - that there will not be a direct flow on to the individual, because there will be several steps in between, but it is not such an indirect connection that it could not be said to be causative. I know I lost the Minister from the start; so trust me, Minister. I know that the Minister needs things to be made simple when he is being briefed, so next time I will not use long words and the Minister may be able to understand me. For the benefit of the Minister, this amendment will have an indirect - not too indirect - impact on the individual.

One positive change is the amendment to the Rates and Charges (Rebates and Deferments) Act. I raise this matter not necessarily to applaud the Government, although it is a positive change, but so that people will be aware of this change, because it will impact on older residents. This amendment will allow pensioners who leave their places of residence on an indefinite basis to claim rebates on their properties. Currently there is a limit of two years, and the rebate ceased when the pensioners had not occupied the ordinary place of residence - in circumstances beyond their control such as ill health, infirmity or frailty. If a pensioner had been in a nursing home for two years but still had a previous place of residence, he or she had to give up the rebate. As I understand it, the amendment will allow the rebate to be claimed on an indefinite basis. That is a positive move.

During the year and a half that I have been in this place, a number of residents have raised the matter with me because it was felt that they were disadvantaged. In a scenario where an elderly person enters a nursing home for an indefinite time, the partner left at home will lose part of the concession. I understand now that the couple will continue to receive the rebate for an indefinite time, and that will alleviate some of the stress that elderly people face when a partner goes into a nursing home.

I recognise the other part of the amendment outlined by the second reading speech where a person such as a surviving spouse of a deceased pensioner, who continues to occupy the former home, will continue to enjoy the full rebate or deferment benefit if an eligible person in his or her own right. That is typical Treasury language, but essentially it will mean that the remaining partner will be able to enjoy the rebate and will not be financially disadvantaged by the rebate's being reduced. That is a small amendment, but I welcome it because the issue has caused hardship to many elderly residents, particularly at a time of grief over the loss of a partner.

The Opposition does not oppose the Bill - I guess the Government has the numbers anyway, so there is not much point. It is the Government's Budget, and it carries responsibility for any increase in charges. The Government must account to the community for slugging people with two Budgets and increasing the everyday cost of living across the board in areas such as motor vehicle registrations; government services and charges such as water, sewerage and drainage; and stamp duty on house insurance which, in the scheme of things, may be small. However, when people measure every dollar and cent from a disability pension or unemployment benefit, or a wage which is no more than \$20 000, to pay even \$11 on stamp duty makes a difference. It means that people must choose between one essential item and another. I cannot stress enough how minor charges added together hit ordinary residents significantly.

I will be interested to hear the Treasurer's comments on the impact of the removal of the land tax concession on institutions, particularly the University of Western Australia. I welcome the amendments to the rates and charges Act which, although not huge amendments, will make life a little easier for a number of elderly residents.

**MR McGOWAN** (Rockingham) [5.35 pm]: I wish to comment on the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill, but before doing so I would like to make a few remarks about the Minister for Education. Last week the Minister visited a number of schools in my electorate to examine overcrowding issues, a school choir and a number of other matters. I thank the Minister for responding to my invitation, which I extended to him across the Chamber -

Ms McHale: You shouted at him!

Mr McGOWAN: Nevertheless, I was very appreciative. He did a very good job, and the feedback from schools is that they appreciated his visit. They even enjoyed his company -

Mr Barnett: Even!

Mr McGOWAN: They even enjoyed the Minister's company. He was putting on an act at the time! They hope that something positive will come from the visit. A number of people said that it was very good to see both sides of politics cooperating and attempting to get something done in the area. There is probably a lesson in that for all of us. We should give credit where it is due, and I thank the Minister for visiting the area. I told the Minister that I would put out a press release saying what a good bloke he is -

Mr Barnett: You must have a safe seat!

Mr McGOWAN: I think there is a lesson to be learnt from cooperation between both sides. More members should start doing that. I did not put out a press release saying that the Minister was a good bloke -

Mr Barnett: You have not been through an election as a sitting member yet; it will give you a better sense of balance.

Mr McGOWAN: The election I went through was hard enough! I told people that I was appreciative; I said that the Minister listened and that everyone appreciated that. The proof of the visit will be whether we get another school in the area. Regardless of that, however, I appreciate the Minister's visit.

I turn now to the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill, which imposes tax increases which flow from the recent Budget. I wish to address a number of matters which have impacted upon my electorate and on my shadow portfolio responsibilities, together with some issues which flow from the Estimates Committees relating to the raising of revenue and how the Government intends to use that revenue.

Without any research, I will try to place certain matters in a historical context and compare this Government with other conservative Governments around the world. The two outstanding examples of conservative Governments in the past 10 to 15 or even 20 years are the Reagan Government in the United States and the Thatcher Government in the United Kingdom. Both Governments were elected at roughly the same time. The Reagan Government was elected in 1980 and the Thatcher Government in 1979. One aspect that distinguished those Governments from all others was the fact that as conservative Governments they made a great effort to reduce the taxation liability on people residing in those countries. They did it in different ways. The Thatcher Government was elected 1979 at the end of what was known as the winter of discontent in the United Kingdom. That was at a time when the British economy was not doing well. The community expressed a great deal of discontent. The Labour Party was then led by a chap called James Callaghan who lost the election to Margaret Thatcher's Conservatives in 1979. I was only starting high school then. The Reagan Government was elected a year later. Over the years that the Thatcher Government was in office -

Mr Osborne: I think it would be quicker if we disagreed with it now.

Mr McGOWAN: Mr Acting Speaker, that is what I was talking about a moment ago: Members in this place who disagree with one another when they have not heard each other. I said a few nice things about the Minister for Education. That resonated with my electorate.

Dr Hames interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Sweetman): Order!

Mr McGOWAN: The Thatcher Government was elected in 1979 after the winter of discontent. She served as Prime Minister for 10 or 11 years. She was voted out by the party some time in 1990. During those 10 or 11 years, she instituted a fairly radical program of reform in the United Kingdom, characterised by three major points: Privatisation, a number of tax cuts, and the disaffection of large segments of the population of the United Kingdom, particularly those living in the north of England and in Scotland.

A member interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: That is actually what saved her. It looked like she was headed for an electoral defeat before that. I am sure her victory at the next election was an unintended consequence of General Gattieri's invasion of the Falklands. As I said, Thatcher's 10 or 11 years in office were characterised by three main points, and possibly a fourth - the closure of a range of traditional industries in the United Kingdom. She is remembered for a whole range of things. The Thatcher Government's tax cuts were funded largely by cuts in expenditure; they were not deficit funded.

The Reagan Government instituted a program which resulted in the loss of cohesion of the American people. Anyone who has been to America will know that it has two societies, the haves and the have nots. One can see that dramatically by walking down any street in America. The Reagan Administration also instituted a range of tax cuts. It did not fund them through expenditure cuts. The greatest public deficit in the history of the world was created in the United States of America during the eight years of the Reagan Government. The country mortgaged itself into the future. That is another argument about whether government debt is a bad thing, and we now accept that Governments probably should not acquire such debt.

Mr Johnson: Did you know that Tony Blair speaks quite highly of Margaret Thatcher?

Mr McGOWAN: Tony Blair is about three times as popular as she ever was. He is a close friend of the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Johnson: I know.

Mr Baker interjected.



Mr McGOWAN: I am conducting an analysis of these issues in the light of the state Budget.

Mr Bradshaw interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: I am talking about Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan in an analysis of this Budget.

Mr Bradshaw: You are talking about mortgaging the future. What do you think the Labor Government did in WA?

Mr McGOWAN: Again, there is a bit of rewriting history. The member is trying to tar me as a member of Parliament for things that happened in the past. What about the fact that in about 1979-80, the then conservative Government committed this State to \$7b of unfunded liabilities on the North West Shelf project? The member does not mention that.

Several members interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: When the member for Murray-Wellington tries to tar me with the activities of the Labor Government during the 1980s - when I was in high school - it really shows up his moral bankruptcy. Everyone has a past; if we go back far enough we could very easily tar this Government with the Vietnam War; it is the same principle.

Several members interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: When the member for Murray-Wellington talks about the past, he should mention \$7b of unfunded Liberal liabilities.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Order!

Mr McGOWAN: The former conservative heroes were Reagan and Thatcher. Both the American and British Governments of the 1980s instituted major tax cuts; one of them was funded, and one was not. However, in this State we have seen major increases in taxation, and that is a major difference. The Treasurer freely admitted in answer to a question in the House a number of weeks ago about the state Budget that every household in this State had incurred a \$293 increase in the two years since the last election. It makes me wonder who their ideological leaders are when they increase taxes to that extent. As I said, in this State -

Mr Court: We will switch to Blair now.

Mr McGOWAN: The Treasurer would do well to switch to him.

Mr Court: He is cutting welfare.

Mr McGOWAN: He is not cutting welfare. He is reorganising the priorities in welfare. The same amount of money is going into welfare. There is a reorganisation. The Conservatives were moving to privatise the national health system, their version of Medicare, before losing office. Tony Blair has made sure that that has not happened. He has put more money into health. Those opposite could probably learn something from that. The Treasurer may not be aware of that policy which has allocated funding to the health areas.

Mr Johnson: I think Tony Blair is an excellent Conservative.

Mr McGOWAN: Fortunately, the member will never have an influence upon Tony Blair and Tony Blair will never hear what the member thinks of him, and so his thoughts in that regard are not relevant.

I am attempting to address the state revenue laws. As I was saying, in this State we have not followed the example of Margaret Thatcher; we have increased taxes, rather than reduced them. The Federal Government will go down that path. It will impose on the people of this nation a goods and services tax. That tax will, no doubt, be embraced by this Government, which will say that it is needed.

When I questioned the Treasurer about this in the Estimates Committee, he said that the State has put forward a proposal to the Commonwealth that the Commonwealth should hand to the State a proportion of its income taxing powers and of the revenue raised by a consumption tax.

The Prime Minister has never shown - certainly since he was a member of the Fraser Government - any interest in addressing the financial arrangement between the States and the Commonwealth. The Prime Minister has never shown any intention, any interest or any leadership when dealing with a commonwealth consumption tax, in allowing the States to remove all the taxes and charges they impose. The Commonwealth will come down with a tax package that will include a goods and services tax of between 10 per cent and 12.5 per cent. That goods and services tax will not be introduced to remove any state taxes and charges and this Government will embrace the goods and services

tax, irrespective of whether it removes any state taxes and charges. There will be an increase in those flat taxes. Is the Minister back from plotting?

Mr Shave: I am.

Mr McGOWAN: We saw him plotting during question time. It was interesting to watch. It was a relevant question in question time in light of what he was doing earlier. As I said, a flat tax will be applied to those who can least afford it. At the same time, there will be no removal of any of the state taxes and charges. Let us say a package is introduced which contains an agreement on state taxes and charges. I find it very difficult to grasp what will be the benefit in a goods and services tax. What will be the reduction in the taxation imposed on people? There will be none. The goods and services tax will have to replace wholesale sales tax and all state taxes and charges. There will be no reduction in personal income tax rates. The Prime Minister wants to reduce taxation for those in the highest income bracket.

I acknowledge there has been bracket creep, that many people are paying too much tax and that tax must be reduced. However, the GST will be imposed on those who can least afford it. There will be no package to help those most in need. The Commonwealth Government will not be able to afford it. In other countries where a GST has been imposed there has been a big increase in the rate of the GST. Those opposite will wear this around their necks in the next election campaign. Those opposite who are smart know that by now.

A further point to be considered in this debate is the duplicity of the Prime Minister. In May 1995, John Howard said, "There is no way a GST will ever be a part of our policy - never, ever. It's dead. It was killed off by the voters at the last election." It has risen from the dead. That shows how much his word is worth.

Mr Riebeling: So has little Johnny.

Mr McGOWAN: Johnny has risen from the dead about four times. I remember when he was Mr Fourteen Percent. He will not rise from the GST. This thing will kill him in this election. He should bring on the election, because I am looking forward to it.

I will address a number of other issues. The increase in boat registration fees in this Budget has impacted heavily on my electorate.

Mr Shave: Do you support the industrial park LandCorp is proposing?

Mr McGOWAN: I am pleased the Minister has raised that. I had a look at it. During the Estimates Committee I raised with the Minister the fact that the four big projects being put in place by LandCorp are in Liberal marginal seats.

Mr Shave: I have more information for you.

Mr McGOWAN: He did not know anything about it. Although one of his advisers managed to refer to cinema complexes and beautiful, big parks in Joondalup, a nice big residential cum park development in Bunbury, a big foreshore development in Albany and a major development in Carnarvon, he managed also to refer to a fairly benign industrial estate in a Labor electorate - mine.

Mr Shave: It is for \$3m, and you scoff at it.

Mr Court: Do you want a marina, too?

Mr McGOWAN: The Treasurer keeps making promises, but nothing seems to come from them.

Mr Court: The former member was desperate to get a marina there.

Mr McGOWAN: The Treasurer keeps promising the marina, but nothing seems to happen.

Mr Court: Would you support it?

Mr McGOWAN: I would examine it; but on principle, I would support it.

Mr Shave: We can create the Mark McGowan memorial park.

Mr McGOWAN: I am not dead yet.

Mr Cowan: That is a matter of conjecture.

Mr McGOWAN: I would examine a proposal for a marina if the Government put one forward. I remember when I was first elected to the Rockingham City Council about four years ago -

Mr Riebeling: What a great day that was.

Mr McGOWAN: It was a great day for Rockingham.

Mr Court: It was a public holiday.

Mr McGOWAN: About a month after I was elected, the Treasurer and another member of the Government came to the first council meeting that I attended and said that the Government was moving on the marina proposal, because it was what Rockingham needed. That was four years ago!

Mr Court: We don't want you to kick our heads in if we go ahead with it.

Mr McGOWAN: I did not think the Treasurer was very concerned about what I had to say about him. Obviously he is very sensitive. In this Budget there has been a 22 per cent increase in boat registration fees on top of the 25 per cent increase last year; that is, a total of 47 per cent increase in boat registration fees in the last two Budgets of this Government. That has had a major impact on people in my electorate. It has one of the highest levels of boat ownership in Western Australia. Many people move to Rockingham because of the access they will have to facilities for boat owners.

Mr Court: And one of the highest levels of fish caught.

Mr McGOWAN: They are not members of Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club or the South of Perth Yacht Club; they are ordinary people who own boats. The registration fee increases of 47 per cent in the past two years are having a dramatic impact on them.

Another part of the State Budget, which I found to be outrageous, is the effect cuts in financial assistance grants are having on local government authorities across this State.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm*

**DR CONSTABLE** (Churchlands) [7.31 pm]: I propose to comment on a specific section of the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill. Although I share the concerns of a number of speakers who have referred to land tax on educational institutions and religious organisations, I will take a novel approach and zero in on clause 23 dealing with an amendment to the Rates and Charges (Rebates and Deferments) Act 1992. This clause amends section 30(1) and (2) of that Act which currently contains the following provision, which was set out in a letter from the Under Treasurer to me on 15 April last year -

... where the residence of a person ceased by reasons of ill-health, frailty or other cause not within the control of that person, a registered pensioner can be treated as being in occupation of his/her property, for the purposes of section 32(5), for a maximum period of two (2) rating years following the expiry of the charged period in which residence at the property ceased.

If a pensioner ceased residing in his or her property for two years because of ill health or frailty, that person could continue to defer the rates for that period. In August last year I wrote to the Ministers for Finance and Local Government about a situation faced by an elderly couple in my electorate. I pointed out that I had written about this matter earlier in the year and had received a most unsatisfactory response from those Ministers, and so I tried again.

The husband, who was very frail, was resident in a nursing home and his wife was still residing in their home. On two counts she was in financial strife because of the rating situation. First, she was upset because the pensioner rebate on her rates from the City of Stirling had been reduced by 25 per cent because her husband was no longer resident in the family home. Second, because she had passed the two year period for rates deferment, she found she could no longer defer those rates but had to pay them. The amendment in the Bill addresses the second of those problems. This couple were not living apart by choice but because of the husband's ill health, but the legislation placed a limitation on them that was very harsh and punitive to these elderly people.

In April last year when I wrote to various authorities about this matter, I received a response from Treasury which indicated that it did not have much heart -

In circumstances such as you have indicated, under the current provisions of the Act, should a person wish to obtain the full rebate, consideration could be given to transferring the property title to the occupant spouse.

In response to that suggestion, I wrote to the Ministers in August as follows -

This suggestion may be considered to be practical in theory, however, in reality we are talking about an

elderly pensioner couple concerned about the loss of a rebate. Where are they likely to be able to find the necessary stamp duties fees applicable to the transfer of the property to the wife's name?

Although the suggestion had merit in theory, in practice it had no merit whatsoever for an elderly pensioner couple. In my letters to the Ministers for Local Government and Finance I asked that consideration be given to amending the Rates and Charges (Rebates and Deferments) Act so that deferments could continue beyond the two years specified. Clause 23 of the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill corrects an injustice that had a dire effect on this couple. I suspect it is not an isolated case but that it happens to many other pensioner couples separated because of ill health. I received a response from the Minister for Finance dated 6 November 1997, which indicates that the Government does have a heart after all -

I refer to your letter of 14 August 1997 and the subsequent reply of the Commissioner of State Revenue, concerning the loss of a rates concession by one of your constituents, as a result of her husband being confined to a nursing home.

I am pleased to advise that I intend to recommend to Cabinet that the Rates and Charges (Rebates and Deferments) Act be amended to remove this anomaly.

I am delighted to support this part of the Bill because my constituents will no longer have that impost. They will now be able to apply for renewal of deferment of their rates. In that respect I am delighted to have been part of this change to the law.

**MR CARPENTER** (Willagee) [7.37 pm]: I preface my brief remarks on these two Bills and put them into context by relating an experience I had last night which flowed into today. I am talking not about sleeping, but about attendance at a meeting at the Coolbellup Hall. The meeting was called by members of the Coolbellup Residents Association who were there in anticipation of hearing from the developers involved in the Homeswest regeneration project of Coolbellup. As members will probably appreciate, the redevelopment of that suburb has been looked forward to with great anticipation and interest by the residents in the area, many of whom are long term Homeswest tenants. We arrived at the meeting, which was scheduled to start at 7.30 pm, and the meeting room, which seated about 35 people, was full. The only notable absentees were people representing either the developers, BGC Construction, or Homeswest.

As the evening wore on, it became apparent that they would not be attending. That was a matter of great disappointment for the people who had gone out of their way on an unpleasant evening to attend the hall to hear about the future of their suburb. I gave an undertaking that I would raise the matter today with the appropriate Minister. However, before I could do that, the Minister informed the House that a major development had occurred in the proposed regeneration of Coolbellup; notably, that the signed tenderer, Buckeridge Constructions, had withdrawn from the project altogether, thus leaving the situation in a shambles with no assigned developer.

If one had had an anger and frustration meter at that meeting last night, it would have been riding high for a couple of reasons: First, the project seemingly was in delay mode at the time because nothing had happened since the last assurances were given by the parties that the project was about to get under way. Also, when proponents of the project who were supposed to attend fail to turn up, a community like Coolbellup becomes very angry and frustrated about government. That affects people in my position as well. I am not a representative of the Government, but the residents and people who turned up to the meeting saw me as somehow representative of government and the political process - namely, a politician representing all politicians.

Although I was not there to defend the Government or Buckeridge Constructions, I did my best to assure the people of Coolbellup who took the trouble to attend the meeting that I was certain that their interests would be considered positively.

Dr Hames: I hope you will put in *Hansard* the comments I made to you about the meeting to balance the argument.

Mr CARPENTER: About the letter? The Minister for Housing showed me a document today prepared by his department, in anticipation, I presume, of a question he did not receive.

Dr Hames: No firm commitment was given about the meeting last night. No formal invitation was received for Homeswest or BGC to attend the meeting. We were told that the meeting was going to happen. We were waiting for an invitation but it never came.

Mr CARPENTER: There was an informal understanding that the people representing Homeswest and the contractor would be there. Hence the big turnout. I am not criticising the Minister.

Dr Hames: It represents a misunderstanding; it was an impression.

Mr CARPENTER: The misunderstanding was that the people of Coolbellup thought their suburb was to be redeveloped in a positive way, and that BGC would be doing the work. It turned out to be not the case. That misunderstanding is unfortunate, and it reflected badly on everybody involved in the political process.

People become very cynical about anything to do with politics or political commitments or promises. Basically, they do not believe anybody and they end up in the arms of crackpots like Pauline Hanson. People become alienated from the process of government, which they regard as hostile. They get more hostile and alienated when, if they get the chance at budget time, they see the accounts which show that the Government's revenue through taxation, stamp duties and so on is at record levels. People cannot understand why the Government is raking in record revenues, and boasting about them, when people living in the suburbs feel no benefit. Also, they feel they are victims of the process.

These people are paying in all sorts of community activity by which the Government is raising record revenue. However, no community return is seen. If one had to summarise the view of the State Government prevalent in the community at the moment, it is that this Government has promised them everything and delivered nothing. However, it is taking record taxes and charges. People also feel that way about the Federal Government.

People gave this State Government the opportunity to show its credentials on fiscal responsibility. A broad perception at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s was that Western Australia's finances needed addressing. That is why people elected the Government in 1993. They are canny enough to understand that that is not an end in itself. Government is about delivering services and ensuring that people can improve or maintain their quality of life. In 1996, a promise was made to the people of Western Australia that they would reap the benefits from the Government's fiscal responsibility in its first term in office. It was a sad cliché that people would get the "social dividend". The Treasurer talked about full dams and fields of rich golden wheat as everything was rosy and people would be better off. People have discovered that no social dividend was delivered and they are very unhappy about it.

Not only has no social dividend been delivered; people are also paying more taxes and charges and receiving fewer services. The basic responsibilities of a State Government lie in health, education, law and order and so on. The health system in Western Australia - nobody would quibble about this description - is experiencing a critical period of massive unrest. The health system is in crisis. The education system is undergoing a major period of upheaval, as a different philosophy for the delivery of education services is being applied in the community. Many people do not understand the subtleties of the process. However, they understand that they are paying more for their kids to go to school. It is sheer nonsense for the Minister to say there has been no increase in school fees. His position is refuted in the budget papers which describe school fees and their increased return to government. People are paying more for their children to attend school. It is hoped that they will get a better education for that payment.

In law and order in the State, people would not say that the situation is better or worse than it was -

The SPEAKER: Order! To clarify the matter, this is not a general debate as with an Appropriation-type Bill. It is a reasonably specific Bill concerned with revenue laws, taxation and such matters. Although I am prepared to allow some reasonable latitude for members to make points, when they talk about law and order and other matters, they are going beyond the province of the Bill.

Mr CARPENTER: I wandered a little in my preamble, Mr Speaker, which I end there.

The revenues figure indicates that the total land tax revenue for the State Government in 1992-93 was \$128.5m. This will increase to \$177.5m in 1998-99, which is an increase of 38 per cent.

Revenue from stamp duty, which is also addressed in this Bill, on property conveyances was \$207m in 1992-93 and is expected to be \$423m in 1998-99, an increase of 104 per cent. Therefore, there has been an increase of 38 per cent, or 20 per cent in real terms, in land tax revenue, and there has been an increase of 104 per cent, or 88 per cent in real terms, in stamp duty on conveyances.

The total revenue from taxes and licences for the State in 1992-93 was \$1.5b. It will be \$3.2b in 1998-99 when one takes into consideration revenue in lieu of tobacco, fuel and alcohol franchise fees. It is easy to increase the revenue. It is easy to increase by over 100 per cent in four to five years the revenue from stamp duty on property conveyances. However, what is the purpose of that revenue? What is that revenue supposed to deliver to the community? When we take into consideration the core activities of government in Western Australia, has that large increase in the revenue take from the community resulted in a demonstrable improvement in the delivery of those services? In specific cases, a new school may have built here or there, but I believe a broad section of the community will agree with me that there has been no demonstrable improvement across the board.

When we look at an increase in revenue by taking money out of the community's pocket and putting it into the

Government's pocket, we need to look also at the other side of the equation and at what the community will get in return in the form of increased services or maintenance of current services. The revenue that the Treasurer has extracted from the community should serve only one purpose - to provide a service to the community. The Treasurer has promised that the community will receive a social dividend. The Treasurer has made promises about the services and capital infrastructure that will be provided as a result of that increased revenue, and the community can make judgments about whether that has been delivered. However, I am trying to explain to members of the Government that the community no longer believes the Treasurer when he states that the revenue that he is taking via these measures will provide a substantial return for the community.

I will provide an example from one of my portfolio areas - sport and recreation. On 1 October 1997, the Minister for Sport and Recreation, Hon Norman Moore, announced that \$40m of government money would be provided in the Government's forward estimates to build a major sporting stadium. Most of the people in the Western Australian community would regard that as a positive initiative because it will meet the growing demand for a sporting venue, notably for soccer, in Western Australia. That announcement also received some accolades from the sporting community. Two weeks ago during the budget Estimates Committee, I asked the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Sport and Recreation, the member for Dawesville, whether he could tell me where in the Budget I would find that \$40m of revenue, and to his credit, and in demonstration, once again, of his honesty, he said he could not tell me, because it was not there. That amount of \$40m is not in the forward estimates.

The SPEAKER: Order! What you are saying is tremendous, but you are speaking on the wrong Bill. We are dealing with revenue laws and so on, and shortly we will get to the third reading speech on the budget Bills, when all of those points can be made.

Mr CARPENTER: Mr Speaker, I will say it again at that time. I said I would take only a few minutes to convey my thoughts about these Bills; and I have done that now.

Any Government can increase taxes and charges, and stamp duty, and take more revenue from the community. A Government does not have to be particularly good in government to do that. However, a Government does have to be good at providing services and infrastructure as a result of the money that it is taking from the community. That is where this Government is failing hopelessly, because it has no capacity and no vision to ascertain what the community needs and how to deliver it. That is the great failing of these budget papers and this budget process for this State this year. These Bills will take record revenues from the community, but they fail to demonstrate how the community will be better off in that process.

**MR RIEBELING** (Burrup) [7.56 pm]: I too wish to make a few comments about the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill and the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill, and in doing so I hope I will not transgress. However, it is important that the general public understands the budget process, and part of the budget process is these revenue Bills, which represent a cost to the general public.

This Government was elected twice on the promise of better management. However, it is clear from my calculations that as a result of these Bills, the average Western Australian will be about \$372 worse off a year than was the case last financial year. The Government says I am wrong in that assumption, but they are my calculations, and any member opposite who wishes to examine those calculations can do so. In examining the amount of money that each person will be expected to pay for this better management, the average person in the street wants to know what social dividend or benefit will flow from this increased tax take.

This Government has during its time in office sold off as many assets as it can lay its hands on. It has sold the bank and the pipeline. It has basically sold everything that is not bolted down. In the process, it has lauded itself for being a good financial manager, because it has paid off some debt. However, that debt does not equal the number of assets that have been sold off. It does not make a great deal of sense for a person to sell his house, pay off the mortgage and rent it back, which is what this Government has proudly said for some six years it has been doing. Despite what the Treasurer said about securing the future for the next generation, he has sold the future of the next generation and another country owns it, and in future years we will have to rent it back. However, we look forward to the improved services that are promised in the budget documents. The people of Western Australia are asked through these two Bills to pay more taxes so that services can be provided. I noted with interest that the member for Hillarys indicated that more money would go into the maintenance of hospitals as part of the money raised by these Bills.

Mr Johnson: I did not say that.

Mr RIEBELING: The member tended to indicate it.

Mr Johnson: The question was where we would be spending the money. I said that we would be spending it on new schools, new police stations, new hospitals and the tunnel.

Mr RIEBELING: I am sure that the tunnel is gratefully appreciated in Karratha and Dampier. It does not help us a great deal and is not something that is big on the request list for my area. Maintenance to hospitals is big. Common old maintenance to hospitals is an area in which people expect any Government in power to perform, so that patients at least have a comfortable stay. That is not too much to ask!

Mr Marshall: We found in 1993 when we took over that everything had gone.

Mr RIEBELING: We can have the debate about what it was like before. I will give members an example of what people in the Pilbara have to put up with now.

Mr Johnson: We will fix it all.

Mr RIEBELING: I am glad the member said that. It is like fishing here. This particular hospital -

The SPEAKER: Order! The members, including the member for Burrup, have been in this Chamber for quite some while. They realise that we are dealing with the revenue laws amendment Bills. The expenditure of the moneys comes up in the budget Bill. We get the opportunity, according to the schedule, to debate those matters after these. I remind the member that I have given him a lot of latitude but this is not a general debate on the Budget; it is specifically to do with the revenue laws amendments to the various Acts. I ask him to start coming to the point, otherwise I will be forced to take some action that he will not like.

Mr RIEBELING: I thank you for that direction, Mr Speaker, which seemed to come pretty quickly. I will not go on with the hospital side of things. I do not wish to question your ruling, Mr Speaker. However, when we are debating a Bill of this type, people in Western Australia want to be told where the money is being spent. I understand what you are saying, Mr Speaker. To justify the increases in taxes, the Government is telling the public indirectly or directly that it deserves these tax and licence increases because it is doing such a wonderful job! Part of these Bills is the approval by the people of Western Australia of what the money is being raised for.

Mr Johnson: They were told that two weeks ago.

Mr RIEBELING: I understand the ruling but these Bills were not discussed two weeks ago; we are discussing them now.

There will be quite massive increases as a result of these two pieces of legislation being passed. There will be increases in stamp duty on insurance, and general insurance will increase by 3 to 5 per cent. The Government says blandly that it is doing a fine job of balancing the books. It is not a very hard task to balance the books if it spends more money and when asked what it will do about the increased expenditure says that it will raise taxes! That is the style of this Government. In the past six years it has been reducing the number of public servants, selling off assets, increasing taxes and reducing services to the population of Western Australia.

These increases are cruel when compared with other increases, such as the nurses' request for 12 per cent. There is no compunction for increasing the conveyancing duty rate by 12.5 per cent. We are expected to pass this legislation without talking about what the money will be spent on! The Government has no compunction in not putting that information before this place; yet every day we see that it cannot afford to pay the nurses an extra 12.5 per cent. I am trying to get into this debate some comparison of the importance of the legislation with that which the general public is being asked to accept from this Government as good management.

There are also concessions in the legislation. The first home buyers' concession of \$500 stamp duty rebate will apply to houses with an increased value of \$85 000 to \$135 000. That provision will have little impact on people in the north of the State. Currently, I am dealing with a Government Employees Housing Authority matter. The Minister for Housing is no doubt aware that in the town of Dampier the current market price for a common three bedroom GEHA house with nothing special is \$250 000.

The concessions that are offered to people in the south of the State and which are increased slightly for land above the twenty-sixth parallel are hopelessly undervalued. It means that people in my area will not get the benefit of the concession which the Government has put in place to make it feel good. These Bills include increases in taxes and licences by 77 per cent in one year in certain circumstances. They are a cruel hoax on the vast majority of people who expected this Government to show in its second Budget some signs that it is in the business of servicing the State's population.

Perhaps the Minister will tell me where I should look in these revenue Bills for a reduction or for the provision of royalties referred to in the budget documents. I did not question the Treasurer about the reduction of some \$50m in petroleum royalties. I would be interested to know whether that reduction, which is expected in this financial year, is somehow compensated for in these pieces of legislation. Perhaps the Minister will explain by telling me that there will be a massive increase in car registration fees or whatever to compensate for that massive loss. I am at a loss to

work out why we are losing \$50m in those royalties. Contracts with Woodside Petroleum Ltd and others may involve less in royalties or there may be some other explanation. However, it appears that that dramatic loss must be compensated for. I would appreciate an explanation of whether these Bills contain compensation for that.

It appears that stamp duty rates are on the increase for not only this year but also the next four years. It has been estimated that by 2001 stamp duty on insurance will reach \$46m which is an increase of \$12m from \$34m in this Budget. Stamp duty rates on property transfers have increased. Revenue is expected to increase from approximately \$47m this year by \$9m to a staggering \$56m in 2001.

As everyone in this place knows, a slump has occurred in real estate mainly due to this Government's policy designed to destroy permanency in the work force. The housing market is slowly improving, although most experts say that sales will level out again at the end of next year. Revenue raised in that area is expected to plateau from next year onwards.

Licensing fees for family and light commercial vehicles have also increased. That increase is reflected in my figure of \$327 a year. Licensing fees are expected to increase from this year's Budget of \$73m to \$90.1m in 2001. Those increases may be justifiable. However, we must examine more closely where the money is being spent. Our budget process is not transparent or easy to understand. In many cases answers to questions are not available, even through the Estimates Committee hearings, despite the Premier saying the detail of this Budget would be available in those hearings. That was not the case in any Estimates Committee hearing in which I participated.

This year's State Budget will have a number of impacts on the average family. I will refer quickly to the basis on which I arrived at \$372.

The SPEAKER: Order! You had better not. You have been speaking very well to the Bill, but you are about to deviate.

Mr RIEBELING: I will not deviate again. The revenue increases in these Bills are excessive. One day, the Government will be mindful of the concerns of the Western Australian public when it is raising fees and restricting payments to employees, quite savagely in some departments, while charging more and more for services for which the Western Australian population do not want to be charged more. The average Western Australian family will be \$372 worse off this year.

**MS ANWYL** (Kalgoorlie) [8.14 pm]: The Opposition does not oppose these Bills; nevertheless as a number of speakers have indicated, it is concerned about the impact the increases will have on the average Western Australian family. Some of the increases will have a greater overall impact on small businesses and corporations than on families. I refer in particular to some of the increases in stamp duties. Although families will be affected, businesses will be significantly affected, some of which are least able to cope with extra increases in the present tight economic climate.

I often say that we debate these issues in a somewhat rarefied atmosphere in this Chamber. Members of the public do not have any difficulty suggesting that politicians are out of touch. Unfortunately, the integrity of state politicians appears to have taken a further nosedive as indicated by the recent Morgan Gallup poll which showed that the rating of state politicians which had been sitting on 12 per cent had decreased to 7 per cent. I see the member for Perth grimacing. That is the sad truth.

Ms Warnock: Aren't journalists and car salesmen further down?

MS ANWYL: I am glad the member for Geraldton is not here because car salesmen are still the lowest of the low with a rating of about 3 per cent.

Mr Pandal: We have been nudged out by the paedophiles.

MS ANWYL: I do not think a rating was indicated for paedophiles.

Mr McGowan: The member for Geraldton is a used car salesman and a politician.

Mr Bloffwitch: I beg your pardon?

The SPEAKER: Order!

MS ANWYL: I was saying that I was glad the member for Geraldton was out of the Chamber, but I see he is back. I was referring to the fact that we sometimes debate Bills such as these which impose extra charges on Western Australian families and businesses. I was saying that small businesses may be least able to cope with some of the charges contained in this Bill.

Mr Bloffwitch: We all have trouble with them, I can assure you.



Mr Osborne: Let me assure you, he is not a small business owner.

Ms ANWYL: I know that all businesses like to stick together. Irrespective of whether the member's business is small, medium or large I am sure he will be interested in comments about small business. I then said the recent Morgan poll about the esteem in which the community holds certain professions or occupations in our community did not hold any good news for the member for Geraldton because car salesmen are rated at the bottom of the heap.

Mr Bloffwitch: They are just above politicians and journalists.

The SPEAKER: Order! Members obviously want me to make some comments. We are dealing with the revenue laws amendment Bills to do with the revenue the State gets. It is nothing to do with expenditure or Morgan Gallup polls. I have allowed some latitude across several speakers. However, many of them have been in the Chamber the whole time. It is time for people to focus on and address the Bills in hand.

Ms ANWYL: I heard your comment, Mr Speaker. Although I have not been in the Chamber for the whole time I have listened to many speeches which were very broad. I was recapping for the benefit of the member for Geraldton because he asked me to. The point I was making was that from next month, as members of the Legislative Assembly, we will be on salaries of \$82 600. The average Western Australian family does not have that income. In fact, in many cases its income is much lower; but, of course, there are cases where it is much higher.

Not only will individuals and families be affected by the stamp duty increases contained in these Bills; to some extent small businesses and corporations will also be required to bear the brunt of some of these increases. I refer specifically to the 3 per cent increase in workers' compensation insurance stamp duty rates. I have detected from contact I have had with employers around the State a somewhat begrudging approach to payment of workers' compensation insurance premiums generally let alone any increase in the premium. That is one area in which there will be some unhappiness and pain.

It has always been a matter of some fascination to me as a solicitor that one can find a huge variation in what is offered for the dollars paid in insurance premiums. A simple example is that many household policies include family members bitten by a dog but many do not. People might be paying the same premium but they do not necessarily get the same coverage. The state Budget includes an increase in third party motor vehicle insurance that will result in an average increase of \$12.55 for car owners. Yet, since 1993 we have seen a steady erosion of the entitlement to be covered by compensation if one is unfortunate enough to be involved in a motor vehicle accident. The premiums are constantly increasing but the level of coverage is decreasing. Many Western Australians are not familiar with that. It is reasonable to expect that if the premiums increase then the amount of compensation will also increase. However, that is not happening; in fact, there is an erosion of those entitlements.

The Minister for Labour Relations has foreshadowed a further erosion in workers' compensation entitlements. Injured workers already face significant hurdles before they can claim compensation even when their injury was caused by the negligence of the employer or by vicarious liability as a result of the negligence of another employee. It is a matter of some puzzlement to me that these premiums are increasing but the level of cover is decreasing.

I wonder what the people of Western Australia would say if the Government said that it intends to increase the general insurance stamp duty rate from 3 per cent to 5 per cent - which is what is happening - but because there is too much crime they will not be covered for the first \$20 000 of goods stolen from their houses. There would be a significant outcry. Effectively workers have been told that employers must pay increased premiums but workers will not be entitled to claim common law compensation in the case of negligence unless their loss of income is more than \$100 000. That is the current situation. Largely because of ignorance, we do not hear an outcry. However, if we draw the parallel with the general insurance rate, which will be increased as a result of this measure, there might be some outcry in the community.

Motor vehicle insurance has also been increased from 3 per cent to 5 per cent, and a range of other increases will affect average Western Australians. One such measure is the 12.5 per cent increase in the conveyance duty rate. Many Western Australians do not own their own homes. Many more would like to, but they cannot make that commitment because they cannot gather together the required deposit. The lowest deposit currently required in traditional lending circles is 5 per cent. Some other avenues are available to Homeswest residents, but the rate of take up by those residents in my electorate has not been good.

It is extremely important to note that the Western Australian Council of Social Service has said that its members - that is, the bodies that provide emergency relief to Western Australians - are reporting an average increase in demand of 25 per cent across the board. Even though we are into only the sixth month of 1998, there has been a 25 per cent increase in demand for the services of some agencies. Anglicare has reported an increase in demand of 52 per cent so far this year. That is a significant figure.

Members have previously asked where this money is going. The lack of transparency in the budget papers provided to the Opposition this year is unprecedented. It has made it extremely difficult to establish how government dollars are being spent.

Given the background that I have mentioned of increased demand across the community for poverty relief, it is particularly disturbing to note that there do not appear to be any measures in this Budget designed to alleviate poverty. In December 1996, a short time before the last state election, the then Minister for Family and Children's Services, the now member for Kingsley, made a -

The SPEAKER: I remind the member that we are dealing with the Revenue Laws Amendment (Assessment) Bill and the Revenue Laws Amendment (Taxation) Bill. According to the schedule, we will shortly move on to the budget debates and third readings. That is the opportunity for her to speak on those matters. I thought the member was going very well in talking about revenue laws, the changes and so on, but she is now deviating to budget matters.

Ms ANWYL: I am glad the Speaker is enjoying my speech. I find it hard to isolate discussing these increases without looking at how they will impact on the real world; that is, the people who are not earning \$82 600 a year but who live on incomes much lower.

I will now address the chattels exemption, which is sufficiently dry to fall within the parameters of the Bills we are discussing. Most people would not have much idea about the difference between the inclusion or otherwise of a chattels exemption when it comes to calculating the stamp duty base.

What will change as a result of this legislation is that chattels which were once taken out of the stamp duty calculation will now be included. One of the practical results will be that a lot more thought will be given to allocating a notional value to chattels when contracts of sale are being drawn or when there are assignments of lease and so forth. Previously, chattels were not dutiable and the value of chattels could have been overestimated.

Mr Baker: If one did not claim more than 4 per cent of the total gross purchase price for chattels there was no need for an itemisation.

Mr Thomas: It is a hidden increase in stamp duty.

Mr Baker: There was a need to substantiate the percentage of the gross price.

Ms ANWYL: I was describing what the practice may have been and there may have been some tendency to do that. The practical application of these changes is that extra charges will be levied on individuals. However, these charges can also be levied on corporations and the like. It can apply to broader issues than the sale of land; that is, stamp duty will be levied against other chattels. The member for Peel and the Leader of the Opposition have raised the example of the mining industry which is caught by this change. Some effect is yet to be felt in relation to that because I did not pick that up before the debate this evening. The two members alluded to the fact that such a levy will not be applied to the farming industry. That is curious because it goes against the grain of what one would expect from a Government with such links. For some reason the mining industry has been singled out and the mining industry will be interested to know that it has been singled out. As a result of this debate, that will happen in due course.

It is impossible to form an opinion about the direct financial impact as it cannot be calculated. However, the imposition of increased levels of stamp duty on home buyers will impact on many Western Australian families, even if they buy only one home. They are often amazed by the extra hidden costs that stamp duty and so forth raise. I am cognisant of the fact that the level of insurance rates will increase and one must ask the rhetorical question: What extra value do Western Australians receive as a result of that, from either their insurers or the Court Government?

**MR THOMAS** (Cockburn) [8.37 pm]: A matter which follows on directly from those raised by my colleague, the member for Kalgoorlie, are the changes to stamp duty brought about in this Budget that will affect ordinary Western Australian households. As the member said, many people do not know until they purchase a house - and sometimes not even then because so many fees and charges must be paid at that time - to what extent they are slugged by the State Government when they purchase a new home. Many new home owners might not notice a 16 per cent increase by the State Government in the changes made to the stamp duty scheme. It is worthwhile considering why it is necessary to amend the state system of stamp duty. A greedy Government or a Government in need of revenue -

Mr Baker: Greedily paying off the previous Labor Government's debt.

Mr THOMAS: The member does not know what he is talking about, as is once again demonstrated - not that it ever stops him talking about it. We have had an increasing of scale for stamp duty up to \$500 000. As real estate prices have increased over the years, through what is known in the trade, or in jargon, as bracket creep, people have purchased more expensive or higher dollar-value homes. As a consequence, they have been expected to pay a higher rate of stamp duty. For 10 years the Labor Government did not change that either and enjoyed the fact that an

increasing flow of revenue was coming from this source of taxation. The same situation existed in the past with income tax, and it tends to occur wherever there is a graduated scale of taxation and some level of inflation. Governments, without legislating or changing rates of taxation, have steadily increased the revenue that they gain from that source through this process known as bracket creep. The rates were last changed in 1983, which was a significant year. In 1983 a \$40 000 house would have been a good house, or perhaps an average price for a house in that year; certainly an average price for a house in the circles in which I moved. One is now looking at \$120 000, \$130 000, or \$140 000 to purchase the same type of house. The dollar values have moved substantially. It should be possible for a Government to continue enjoying an increase in revenue without adjusting the rates. However, what does this Government do? Not satisfied with the windfall of bracket creep, it imposes a 16 per cent slug on the rate of stamp duty on the purchase of a home. That is a time when people tend not to be cashed up and tend to be under some financial stress, and it is unfortunate to hit them with an extra 16 per cent. How does this 16 per cent come about? The 12.5 per cent increase in the rates was acknowledged in the Treasurer's second reading speech. The member for Kalgoorlie mentioned the additional 4 per cent increase which results from the fact that there is no longer an exemption for chattels. Anyone who has had any experience in real estate - and I have had very little, apart from buying a house or two and knowing people who have - would know that the State Revenue Department allowed 4 per cent on any conveyancing transaction for goods and chattels.

It was generally accepted without substantiation that the rate that was being taxed was in practical terms 96 per cent of the value of the contract. Despite that it turned out to be a lucrative money spinner for the Government. We now find that not only does the Government benefit from the bracket creep that results from inflation, albeit that that has been low in recent years, and from the extra 12 per cent it has put on the rates, but also the home buyer must put in another 4 per cent. That amounts to 16 per cent of the total take on that revenue, which is particularly steep. The Government is well cashed up through a windfall from asset sales and it is rather parsimonious about expenditure, so why is it that this sort of money must be raised in these circumstances? The budget papers indicate that this will raise an extra \$47m in 1998-99 and an extra \$56m - \$9m on top of that - in 2000. These are substantial amounts of money.

The Treasurer's second reading speech estimated an increase of \$400 on the cost of a new home. That probably understates the situation, because I do not think those figures have allowed for the extra 4 per cent on top of the 12 per cent that can be ascribed to the abolition of the chattels exemption component in the contract. In most cases people who are buying new homes are not in a position to afford another \$400. It is said that the rebates that apply and the exemptions up to \$135 000 provide relief for the needy. I acknowledge that. However, many people who are buying houses in excess of \$135 000 cannot be described as rich. I have a range of new suburbs in my electorate, most of which cannot be described as particularly affluent. Some of them would be described as being at the bottom of the range of house prices, notwithstanding that they are good areas populated by good people and represented by very good members of Parliament, both State and Federal. Despite that, not too many houses in those areas can be bought for under \$135 000. Those people will bear the full brunt of this Government's tax grab. They are not in a position to pay an extra \$400 on top of the price of their home.

The Treasurer has been able to boast that the Budget is in surplus and has received a significant windfall gain from asset sales, so the Government has money available to allocate \$100m to a convention centre and, in recent years, hundreds of millions of dollars to tunnels and, out my way, tens of millions of dollars to roads that people not only do not need but do not want. With all those forms of expenditure that for the most part people would prefer were directed to other areas, why is it necessary for new home buyers to be saddled with this extra expense of \$400? The Treasurer stated in the second reading speech that it is "only" \$400. The Treasurer has lost contact with the ordinary people. To most people who are buying a new home \$400 is a significant amount of money. The Treasurer has understated the amount and it is probably closer to \$500 than \$400.

With the exception of adjusting the bottom of the scale from \$85 000 to \$135 000 to extend the rebates and exemptions - \$85 000 is totally unrealistic in today's real estate market - it should not be necessary for the Government to adjust the scales for stamp duty. For the most part, bracket creep provides an increasing revenue stream for the Government. That revenue stream increases as real estate prices increase. If they increase at anything like costs elsewhere in the community at large they will move in a manner similar to the Government's revenue requirements. The Government needs extra revenue to pay for government departments and services and the wages it incurs. If there is no inflation there should not be significant increases in the take from stamp duty. Similarly, there should be no particular need for extra revenue for government, particularly as this Government is not keen to expand the functions of government and, therefore, its revenue from that source.

The Government has boasted that its Budget is in surplus and in terms of the balance sheet the State is in a healthy situation. That is hard to argue with. However, apart from the fact that the surplus in large part is due to windfall gains from asset sales, which other speakers and I have dealt with on earlier occasions, that has been achieved by a tax grab which has hit at a vulnerable section of the community at a time when they are not cashed up - that is, when

people are buying new homes. That has hit at people in a way which is most unfair. The Government has done that by disguising what is a real increase in the taxation rate by removing an exemption and stating that the increase is only 12 per cent when it is significantly more than that.

**MR KOBELKE** (Nollamara) [8.48 pm]: I would like to dwell on specific areas of increases in stamp duty and how some of the changes which are seen as reductions do not advantage the people whom I represent in the electorate of Nollamara. Before doing that one needs to see the increases in the overall context of the highest taxing Government in this State's history. One can say that it is always the case when a Government is in boom time. I accept that. However, this Government when in opposition time after time reminded the public of how the tax take of the previous Government was going up through growth. If the cap fits, wear it: This Government is the highest taxing Government in this State's history.

However, when we look at the actual elements that comprise it, we find that that increase in taxation is due not just to the good economic growth that this State has had, but also to the added tax burden placed on ordinary families by the Court Government and reflected in some of the changes in the two Bills now before the House.

In that overview, one sees in the 1998-99 state Budget an increase in motor vehicle registration, third party insurance, stamp duty on motor vehicle licences, public transport fares, water rates, sewerage rates, drainage rates and stamp duty on house insurance. For an average family, that amounts to a total increase of \$136. When the impact of last year's Budget on the same average family is added to that, it amounts to \$236. The total increase in added taxes due to the added imposts by the Court Government is \$372 a year for an average family with given criteria which the Government has used. For a family with two cars - which is not out of the ordinary - over those two state Budgets the added cost is \$470 a year.

The Bills now before the House provide for an increased burden on average households. The public has a right to ask why and to get an answer - although the Government seems to be very slow to answer. If we are in the middle of the greatest resources boom in the nation's history, as the Government heralded in the last Governor's speech. If we have had all the changes in our system of government which are supposed to be saving hundreds of millions of dollars in lower interest repayments and in restructuring and greater efficiency, why the added impost in taxation along with the reduction in the general level of services? It simply does not add up. It does not add up because the Government has been very ineffective in hiding its extremely poor management.

I turn to some of the tax increases proposed in the Bills before us. Stamp duty on general insurance is to be increased from 3 per cent to 5 per cent. That may seem a small percentage but members need to recognise the increased cost of insurance premiums under this Government. The absolutely skyrocketing figures on household theft and breaking and entering offences have had a direct impact on almost every family in Perth, and many outside of Perth. That has led to escalating insurance premiums for ordinary households because of the huge number of claims that have been made for breaking and entering, vandalism and theft. Due to the increase in those claims, householders are already suffering insurance premiums that they are finding difficult to pay. In addition to that huge increase, the Bill will increase the stamp duty from 3 per cent to 5 per cent. Therefore, this represents not just a 2 per cent increase in general insurance stamp duty; it is 2 per cent on a rapidly increasing base because of this Government's total inability to deal with the law and order problem in this State, a problem which is totally out of control. Yet, this Government is totally impotent. It has no policies; it has made no attempt to rein in those figures for breaking and entering offences. Figures revealed last week - I cannot quote them - showed a clean up rate for home burglary of the order of 10 per cent or 12 per cent. This is absolutely abysmal. With that sort of clean up rate it does not matter what sort of penalties are in place. We have a problem of huge proportions that is totally out of control and a Government that does not know how to address them. What does it do? It adds insult to injury. We are to have an increase in stamp duty on general insurance from 3 per cent to 5 per cent.

It is ludicrous that this Government, which spoke about a social dividend, is doing nothing to try to overcome the problems the people in the suburbs of Perth are having with breaking and entering offences. Now it wants them to pay more for their insurance because of the increase in premiums; on top of that, it wants them to pay the additional impost on stamp duty. This clearly shows how out of touch this Government is. It is totally uncaring, unable to deal with the issues, and unwilling to even try. All it does is add an extra impost on ordinary householders trying to cover the cost of their household insurance.

I turn now to the increase in workers' compensation insurance stamp duty. This is to go from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. However, we have a similar problem here as with normal general and household insurance. In past weeks the Minister for Labour Relations announced an average increase in workers' compensation premiums of 13.6 per cent. In some industry groups it is a 40 per cent increase in the standard premium set for workers' compensation insurance. On top of that 40 per cent, we will have an increase in stamp duty from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. While the 3 per cent may seem small, taken in the context of the skyrocketing costs of premiums for workers' compensation insurance it is an added burden which small employers are finding very difficult to bear.

However, the problem is far worse than that because many insurers were undercutting the standard premium rate on workers' compensation. While there has been an average increase in that standard premium rate of 13.6 per cent, many of them have wiped out the discounts they were giving. What may seem to be a 13.6 per cent increase announced on average, may in fact be a 20 or 50 per cent increase for occupational groups that have a higher claim rate. Therefore, they are doing away with discounting, which has caused a major increase in premium costs. In addition to that, the ceiling will be lifted on the average increase in premiums, causing costs to escalate in some areas by up to 50 per cent. In addition to that, we are increasing stamp duty from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. This again adds insult to injury.

This Government is keen to drive down the costs of labour but it is not worrying about the addition to the costs of labour of increasing the stamp duty on workers' compensation. It is happy to drive down the take home pay of people who are already on the lowest possible incomes and battling to survive and keep a family. However, the tax take can be increased by increasing the cost of labour to the small business. Where is the sense in that? This is a greedy Government that is uncaring and unable to deal with the major issues of this State. It is seen clearly in the change to the standard of workers' compensation insurance. It is a total travesty. In addition to that, an announcement was made a few weeks ago that the workers' compensation insurance premiums will go up by 50 per cent in some cases and stamp duty will go up from 5 per cent to 8 per cent. The Government itself has a problem in this area because those workers' compensation premiums relate to the general workers' compensation insurance covered by WorkCover. However, the Government also self-insures for its own employees. I presume the Government is not going to have to pay the stamp duty to itself. There may be a book transfer but there is no real cost.

I received today answers to a question I asked of the Minister for Finance about the State Government Insurance Commission's losses on self-insurance. I use two figures to show where the Government has a problem and why it is increasing some of these taxes and charges, because these losses have not yet been brought to account in the general revenue of the Government. The Government has undertaken that the Treasury will give an indemnity to the Insurance Commission of Western Australia. However, these are losses carried in the books of the Insurance Commission. We find currently there are losses in the 1997 financial statements of \$14.9m and net claims of liability for the unfunded scheme of \$89m. That \$89m needs to be kept in context as the total premiums being paid are of the order of \$42m to \$45m.

The unfunded liability is twice the annual premium paid to the Government's insurer. I asked what were the anticipated outcomes for the 1997-98 financial year, and was told that the Government insurance fund, both funded and unfunded, is expected to have an operating loss of \$33.5m in that year. The Government's self-insurance for workers' compensation, in addition to losses last year - accumulated losses and unfunded liabilities - is expected this year to have an operating loss of almost the magnitude of the total premiums. There is certainly a hole in the Government's funding for workers' compensation.

I may stand corrected by the Treasurer, but I expect the increase in stamp duty will not apply to the Government's scheme. I assume it will apply to everyone else - and everyone else will have to pay the extra tax due to the Government's mismanagement.

I also have concern about the change in land tax applying to universities and educational and religious bodies. The change will be phased in, but when it is fully operational in a couple of years, the full cost to universities, educational institutions and churches is expected to be \$1.2m a year. This is another example of the Government's being very greedy, because already attacks have been made on universities by a reduction in commonwealth funding, and a reduction in funds to many charitable organisations of which the churches are a key part. They have tried to meet some of the reductions in state and commonwealth programs, but this Bill provides a further reduction in one of their sources of income. For a number of organisations the leasing of properties is a very important source of funds to enable them to run many charitable and educational programs; yet this Government expects them to find money elsewhere. This Government has taken millions of dollars from welfare programs.

Mr Bloffwitch: They must be on their knees if they own commercial properties!

Mr KOBELKE: Is the member suggesting that they should sell their assets in order to run their food programs for the poor?

Mr Bloffwitch: They operate in a real commercial market and they should pay a real commercial price.

Mr KOBELKE: So that they can do the charitable work on which this Government has reneged!

Mr Bloffwitch: It is nothing to do with charitable work. They have a financial investment in a commercial property.

Mr KOBELKE: They want to manage their assets as effectively as possible to run social and educational programs for the benefit of the people of this State. The member is saying that because they are using good commercial

management to maximise their returns in order to run those very important programs, they should therefore pay higher tax.

Mr Bloffwitch: I certainly am.

Mr KOBELKE: The member is going out on a limb there!

Mr Bloffwitch: How can I be out on a limb when the Government has already made the changes? That is what is happening. You will not live with reality.

Mr KOBELKE: These provisions are in the Bill before the House. This very greedy Government does not care for the ordinary people of this State. It has already drawn back millions of dollars from many programs that assisted people in real need, and educational programs. A number of non-profit organisations - educational bodies and religious organisations - are trying to take up some of the slack; they are trying to move into areas of great need which are unmet due to the reductions by Liberal State and Federal Governments. Their resources are stretched to the limit, trying to meet the real needs in our community.

This Government wants to reduce another source of income for those organisations. In a full year, when the changes are fully effective, the Government will take \$1.2m from educational and religious organisations and the programs they run in this State. It is not as if the organisations have been doing well, that they are flush with funds, and there is a declining need in our community. It is exactly the opposite. There is an increasing need for funding for education. The Government is continually - even in schools - putting an added burden on parents to meet the educational needs of their children. Our universities are having their funds withdrawn and restricted, and they have found it more difficult to meet the educational needs of young people. If organisations are good managers of their resources and try to maximise the return they receive on some of their properties, it seems that the member for Geraldton thinks they should sell the property - or that is the implication; they should get rid of those assets and splurge the money gained on a few more soup kitchens or run an extra educational program for one year - but with no assets remaining, they will not be able to continue the program.

Mr Bloffwitch: They should pay rates - as they have always done - on a commercial property. Other people who own property rent them and pay the same taxes. Why should support groups or churches be exempt from the normal taxes because they do wonderful things? Do you think a shopkeeper who rents a shop is exempt from sales tax because it is a wonderful institution? It has nothing to do with it. Nor has this!

Mr KOBELKE: I thank the member for Geraldton for that interjection. It is very good to have him on the record, enunciating the very narrow, greedy view of the Court Government. The Government fails to recognise that the non-government sector in this State is highly efficient and, in general terms, returns a fantastic advantage in the various programs it runs for the people in this State, at very little cost to the Government. A little seed money, whether paid directly to programs or by way of concessions on land tax, returns an advantage to this State manyfold; yet the Government is so greedy and parsimonious that it cannot see the advantage of encouraging educational or religious groups to play that role, as an important part of providing the services to the people of this State.

This Government simply wants to treat those bodies like any other commercial organisation. The Government and its mates can pocket the profits, and they do very nicely. They believe that educational and religious groups should not be treated differently. The fact that their funds will go to specific programs in an efficient way, to meet the needs of the people of this State, is of no value to this Government. It comes down to a weird idea of a level playing field.

Mr Baker: The Catholic Church does not pay municipal rates.

Mr KOBELKE: And that should be taken away!

Mr Baker: No. These organisations are commercial enterprises, and land tax should be passed on to the commercial tenant.

Mr KOBELKE: I think the member is talking about a different point. The Bill contains an example where the Government is cutting back without providing any arguments which support the removal of a small concession amounting to \$1.2m, which could mean much more for some of the non-government organisations. It could be part of the money which they use as a multiplier to do far more than the Government could ever do with \$1.2m.

I am willing to be corrected if I can be given examples of how the money is wasted that the universities and religious organisations gained by the exemption that has been in place up until now - if I can be shown examples far worse than the wastage of this Government, which would be hard to find, in which these organisations have misused or abused this concession that they have had up until now. To my knowledge, none exists. This Government is just too greedy, and its actions are likely to cost the State in net terms. We discover that \$1.2m comes out of the pockets of our universities, educational institutions and churches and goes into the government coffers. If those institutions no

longer are able to use that \$1.2m to operate the extra educational program, to put research into university, and to run programs for the needy, whether it be soup kitchens or housing, the net cost to the Government could be far greater than the \$1.2m gained. Non-government bodies can often use a small amount of that secure income from a property investment as their base funding for operations that are well beyond the actual amount of money that they derive from that source. It gives them a part of their revenue that is secure, based on a property that they will let. These bodies will now discover that the return on that property investment will be reduced over the next couple of years because the concession which had previously been available to them is to be removed. I think I have made it clear that by this and other actions, the Government is being very greedy and short-sighted, and not looking after the interests of the people in this State.

In closing, I raise one more issue: Mention is made in these two Bills that foreign companies will be treated differently. I do not have any problem with that as a general principle, and we could look to the provisions in the Act to see the details of the variations of treatment of foreign companies as opposed to Australian companies. However, my concern is this cloud on the horizon called the multilateral agreement on investment. The full proposal has been floated internationally. If exceptions are not put in place we will find that we will have to treat foreign owners of property or other assets in this State the same as we treat Australian companies, which may not be in our State's interests. We could have a proper and robust debate on whether we should legislate to discriminate between Australian and non-Australian companies, but I do not enter into that now. If the MAI comes into effect and exceptions are not put in place, we simply could not do that. We advocate that this Parliament should have power to take such steps as we find within the Bills before us now. The Treasurer expressed some reservations about the MAI in the Estimates Committee, but it is certainly very worrying that we have a Federal Government which allows this process to proceed without any formal consultation. The Treasurer said that there has been a meeting; however, no formal consultation has occurred between the Commonwealth and Western Australia. That is a totally unacceptable position.

While Australia will benefit from increasing world trade as a result of opening up the flow of investment, we do not want to do that at the cost of losing the legislative powers that protect and look after the interests of this State. The Treasurer has waxed eloquent in the past about standing up to the rights of Western Australia. I hope that in this case he might be a bit more forthcoming than he has been in the past, and ensures that the MAI does not progress until the interests of Western Australia have been fully considered, so that we can ensure that if the Federal Government decides to agree to the MAI, it contains quite clear exceptions to ensure that the interests of this State, and presumably other States, are well protected. However, we cannot embark on that because we have had no public debate. We have not seen a clear statement from the Commonwealth on what it hopes to achieve and what safeguards it needs to put in place to protect the rights of the Australian Government, the various State Governments, and even the local government authorities that clearly will be affected by a full blown MAI. I am concerned about that matter, and this legislation is an appropriate place to raise it because we see within the Bills special clauses relating to how duties or taxes on foreign investment in this State will be dealt with. Foreign investment is very important to this State, but at the end of the day we must make a judgment that it is to the benefit of this State that we allow and in fact encourage that investment to occur, and not be caught in a position where we abrogate the rights and duties of this Parliament to look after the interests of the people of Western Australia.

**MR COURT** (Nedlands - Treasurer) [9.16 pm]: I thank members for their contribution to this debate and I will work backwards in responding to some of the issues that have been raised. With regard to the argument put forward by the member for Nollamara, which some other members also advanced, I assure members as a former tenant of a university commercial property, that the university has the ability to pass on any increases in expenses that it might incur.

Mr Kobelke: That maximises its profit.

Mr COURT: No, I am just saying that these bodies will not receive any less from those properties because they are commercial people and members will find they will increase their rents at the appropriate times to ensure their returns remain the same.

The member for Burrup questioned why the petroleum royalties were expected to fall by \$50m in 1998-99. An explanation of the basis of the estimate is contained at page 82 of Budget Paper No 3. The main reasons for the reduction are that one of the major oil producers has been out of production during a refit for a longer period than it anticipated, and there has been a fall in oil prices.

The member for Thornlie asked why the halls of residence for universities are exempt and are not within the bounds of the proposed changes.

Dr Gallop: Private hospitals run by religious bodies.

Mr COURT: I will get to that in a minute.

The Deputy Leader of the Opposition also commented about situations in which people will be most affected. We are targeting land tax relief to the group of land values between \$150 000 and \$500 000. The majority of persons below the \$150 000 who face an increase will be limited in dollar terms; of the 44 per cent to pay an increased amount, three-quarters will face an increase of \$20 or less, and many will face no increase or in fact a decrease. The majority of land owners remain exempt due to the principal place of residence exemption.

The Leader of the Opposition referred to the St John of God Hospital. It will not be liable under the measures because the Act contains a specific exemption for land use for a public hospital or any hospital conducted by or on behalf of a religious body. A local Good Samaritan store which is owned by the charity would remain exempt under a specific exemption for land owned by a charitable institution or a public benevolent institution.

Those owners who face a phased removal of the concessions will be notified by the State Revenue Department. The member for South Perth raised an issue similar to that raised by the member for Nollamara about religious and educational bodies which are renting out commercial properties. As I have said, those bodies may ask for increased rentals. My experience as a tenant of the university is that such bodies are not backward in coming forward to make sure they cover all their costs. Where those bodies use the land for non-commercial purposes, they will continue to enjoy an exemption. It applies only where a property is rented out for commercial purposes.

In relation to the South Perth Community Hospital, the Treasury officials want to obtain further confirmation. If this is a public hospital, it will continue to enjoy the exemption which is provided by a separate provision of the legislation, which is unaffected by the proposed changes. We will double-check the status of the South Perth Community Hospital. The St John of God Hospital will continue to have that exemption. A number of general issues have been raised.

Dr Gallop: Given that the justification for removing the exemptions in relation to business activities conducted by charitable or educational bodies is that there should be competitive neutrality, that today universities and educational institutions compete on the market and that the St John of God Hospital is also out there in the market competing with private hospitals, does that imply that the National Competition Council will regard clauses like this as uncompetitive in general? Are you concerned that it might come down and say that this clause in this Bill is uncompetitive?

Mr COURT: I suppose it is always something that might happen. My association with a university was with the sports store at the University of Western Australia. The private sector always complained that it never had to pay many of the taxes that a typical retail store owner had to pay. Those in the private sector wanted to put us in a more competitive position. As far as private hospitals go, not paying land tax is an interesting issue. The National Competition Council would have to be pretty bold to move, but given the way in which the competition area is going, I am prepared to make further inquiries about that if the Leader of the Opposition wants me to do so. The issue is whether it puts these bodies in a favourable competitive position.

Dr Gallop: The issue really is this: Has the National Competition Council indicated that exemptions like this will be subject to its analysis and scrutiny?

Mr COURT: I will seek some advice on that. I cannot give an answer offhand. Some broader issues were raised about taxation levels and whether the Government is delivering dividends. In a general sense I say that I believe the financial management that has been delivered has enabled us to reduce considerably expenditures in areas such as interest payments which gives us more moneys to put back into important areas. The overall philosophy of making sure we are improving the delivery of services, both now and in the future, and putting infrastructure networks in place for the future without burdening future generations with excessive debt, is something of which we are proud. However, that is a debate for another day. I thank members for their support of this legislation. In Committee, I will seek to move the amendments that have been circulated.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### *Committee*

The Chairman of Committees (Mr Sweetman) in the Chair; Mr Court (Treasurer) in charge of the Bill.

**Clauses 1 and 2 put and passed.**

**Clause 3: Act amended by this Part -**

Mr COURT: I move -



Page 3, line 5 - To insert after "1997\*" the words "unless otherwise indicated".

We have had some discussion with the Clerk. In relation to the other amendments we propose, we have been advised that this is the appropriate wording at this stage.

**Amendment put and passed.**

**Clause, as amended, put and passed.**

**Clause 4: Section 1 amended -**

Mr COURT: I move -

Page 3, after line 8 - to insert the following subclause -

(2) The *Taxation (Reciprocal Powers) Act 1989\** is amended in section 3, in the definition of "State Taxation Act", by deleting "*and Diesel Subsidies*".

[\*Act No. 18 of 1989.

For subsequent amendments see 1997 Index to Legislation of Western Australia, Table 1, p. 230 and Act No. 56 of 1997.]

\*[Page 3, line 7 - Headnote to clause 4 to be changed to read "Section 1 amended and consequential amendment to Taxation (Reciprocal Powers) Act 1989".

Page 3, line 8 - Insert subclause designation "(1)".]

At this stage I will give a brief explanation in relation to this amendment, which will also cover the other amendments I will seek to move. This is a consequential amendment which is proposed to the Taxation (Reciprocal Powers) Act. Currently the definition of "State Taxation Act" in section 3(1) of that existing legislation makes reference to the old title - the fuel supplies legislation - and must be updated to reflect the proposed new title. An amendment is also proposed later to clause 11 of the Bill pertaining to the land tax rebate for inner city residential land. The Bill provides for the inner city area relevant to the scheme to be prescribed. However, no flexibility exists in terms of the timing of that prescription to allow it to have definite application from midnight on 30 June 1998, should the necessary Executive Council approval and gazettal not take place until after that time. Accordingly, it is proposed to insert a provision to allow the prescription, once gazetted, to have effect from 30 June 1998. This will ensure the scheme can operate effectively under the legislation for the 1998-99 assessment year.

Finally, two minor changes are proposed to the stamp duty amendments, which seek to include chattels in the conveyance duty base. The first amendment seeks to remove any doubt that chattels which are not conveyed in conjunction with land are not subject to duty. While the draft legislation as it stands could be read down to reflect this result, it is considered desirable that clarity be provided so that the issue is beyond question. Furthermore, it is proposed to amend the wording of the proposed section 70 of the Stamp Act to clarify the duty treatment where chattels and land are conveyed by way of separate instruments. Again, although the legislation could be read down to achieve the desired result, it is proposed that the current wording be changed to provide greater clarity to ensure that while the duty rate will be struck on the combined value of land and dutiable chattels, the chattels instrument and the land instrument will not both be charged with duty on the value of the land.

**Amendment put and passed.**

**Clause, as amended, put and passed.**

**Clauses 5 to 10 put and passed.**

**Clause 11: Section 23AB inserted and consequential amendment to *Valuation of Land Act 1978* -**

Mr COURT: I move -

Page 12, after line 20 - To insert the following subclause -

(3) Regulations -

(a) that are made under the *Land Tax Assessment Act 1976* as amended by this section; and

(b) that are made within 6 months after this Act receives the Royal Assent,

may come into operation at a time specified in those regulations that is not earlier than 1 July 1998 and may relate to land owned by a person at midnight on 30 June 1998.

**Amendment put and passed.**

**Clause, as amended, put and passed.**

**Clauses 12 to 32 put and passed.**

**Clause 33: Section 70 inserted -**

Mr COURT: I move -

Page 27, after line 28 - To insert the following -

(4) The duty payable on an instrument referred to in subsection (3)(a) is to be reduced by any duty paid in respect of the arrangement referred to in subsection (3)(b).

**Amendment put and passed.**

**Clause, as amended, put and passed.**

**Clauses 34 to 42 put and passed.**

**Clause 43: Third Schedule amended -**

Mr COURT: I move -

Page 35, after line 28 - To insert the following -

(7c) The conveyance or transfer of any estate or interest in goods, wares or merchandise not referred to in subitems (7a) and (7b), except as provided in sections 70(2) and (3) and section 31B(1)(ca) and (cb).

**Amendment put and passed.**

**Clause, as amended, put and passed.**

**Clauses 44 to 55 put and passed.**

**Title put and passed.**

**Bill reported, with amendments.**

## **REVENUE LAWS AMENDMENT (TAXATION) BILL**

### *Second Reading*

Resumed from 21 May.

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)**

## **APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No 2)**

### *Estimates Committees A and B Reports - Presentation and Adoption*

**MR BLOFFWITCH** (Geraldton) [9.37 pm]: I present the reports and minutes of Estimates Committees A and B and move -

That the report of Estimates Committee A be adopted.

In commenting on the Estimates Committees A and B, I indicate that we have moved into a new era of reporting. The figures presented must provide an estimate of the end result because the budgets are being dealt with in May and June instead of after 30 June. Consequently, the best we can do is estimate the situation. With that there has been a complete change in format. The Government could certainly improve on the format used this year. The order of business was unlike anything seen before. For example, I refer to the Health budget. In the past I could look through the various sections of the budget papers to find the Geraldton Hospital, note that it would receive an allocation of \$17m, and make constructive comments about that. However, this year that was impossible because all I could see was a Health budget of \$1.5b. A lot more work must be done and I urge the Treasurer to be careful when moving into this new system.

Although accountancy standards are good, they do not always have the desired result. I think of my own commercial experience when dealing with a cooperative. Under Australian accounting standards provision must be made for such things as long service leave and holiday pay, and they must be treated as accrued deductions. Each year the cooperative ends up with a list of deductions of around \$280 000. The cooperative must submit its financial statements to the registrar, and he will not accept a loss when it distributes a dividend. Therefore, we had to show a profit. As the standard was for about \$300 000 a year, we as a co-op had to pay tax of 34 per cent on that \$300 000. That was because those standards are not in sync with, and have no relevance to, the Taxation Department.

I have had many arguments with accountancy firms regarding why they do not tailor standards. I am told that that is what we all do. Whether we be Joe Citizen, a firm, or a large corporation, we must all fill in tax returns. Why should my balance sheet show one figure, and my tax sheet show an entirely different figure? I say to the Treasurer that this is a trap. In our case, we do not pay tax and the Treasurer will not receive such penalty. However, he should encourage this House to function more efficiently.

First, we need a little more order in the departmental layout of the budget papers. I remember an Estimates Committee session I chaired in which we were on page 871 in volume 1 of the Budget Statements, then at page 1678 in volume 2, and then back to page 477. Trying to follow proceedings was not easy. We have an onus to make these reports user friendly, and more functional, to allow members to understand them. Information such as full time equivalents could have been included until the date of the Budget presentation so comparisons could be made.

Also, the outputs do not give a true figure for some departments. Sometimes with Education, cutting staff may be more efficient, but will reduce productivity. That is not applicable for every department. The Treasurer should tell his staff to look at aspects to ensure that tests conducted on each department are applicable.

I compliment the Government as we are the only jurisdiction in the world to have dealt with our Budget presentation before 30 June. It is ridiculous to bring down a Budget in August two months into the financial year, and then claim it is the Budget for that financial year. We must retain that format.

However, for ease of members in the Estimates Committee, we must be a little clearer to make it easier for members to follow the papers to make comparisons. I know it will get better in time. We will be able next year to look at last year's estimate, this year's actuals and the realities of the figures. We will be able to better analyse the figures. However, the random nature of the layout of departments in the books can be addressed. They can be placed in one section under the responsible Minister. Surely, that can be achieved in the presentation rather than having agencies dispersed.

This is not meant as a criticism. This was the first of these accrual Budgets we have seen. I hope we all learn from the exercise undertaken. It has been worthwhile. It can be very useful, but it is extremely difficult to make any objective argument, particularly on the Health budget, when considering a block budget of \$1.5b. It is hard as a member representing an electorate to ask constructive questions. I understand that these changes would require a lot of work, and that it is very early in the process. However, most hospitals and departments have not allocated their budgets when we discuss the Budget. Nevertheless, these are problems. I ask Treasury to consider these changes; after all, the estimates are designed for members to ask constructive questions and to find out about what is happening in our part of the world.

I compliment the Treasurer for bringing forward the estimates so the Budget applies to the forthcoming year from 1 July. The Treasurer achieved that goal by bringing the accounts forward. It must be looked at not so much from the point of view of accountancy standards, but from regarding what is beneficial and constructive for us all. Through the government finance committee, I will be talking to Treasury to pass on my good ideas so the Estimates Committee will be more constructive. I commend the Budget.

**MR RIPPER** (Belmont - Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.47 pm]: It is interesting that members of the government backbench share some of the frustration the Opposition has experienced regarding the presentation of the budget papers and the conduct of the Estimates Committee.

I turn first to a perennial issue: We are about to embark on the third reading of this debate, yet we do not have the corrected *Hansard* report from the estimates committee process. We have had a week's recess. The problem is not with *Hansard*, I suspect, but with Ministers not ensuring that departments produce the supplementary information promised in the Estimates Committee. The Ministers and the bureaucrats did not have to make that promise to provide that supplementary information. They had the option to say that it was not possible to produce the information in seven days, so please put it on notice. The Minister for Education asked for one matter to be placed on notice. Ministers and public servants had that choice which they exercised.

However, once again, they have failed to deliver the information. As a result, this House does not have available the corrected record of the estimates committee process before we are required to debate the third reading of the Budget.

Many members would like to go back over *Hansard* to check the facts that the Ministers have given to the committee. They would like to do that before debating the third reading of the Budget. That is a perennial issue. Once again, the Government has failed to provide supplementary information on time.

I turn now to the third issue of the accountability process. It was mentioned tangentially by the member for Geraldton. I refer to the presentation of the budget papers. We have enormous amounts of rhetoric from the Government about its record on financial management and accountability, particularly financial accountability. We had the same rhetoric in the presentation of the Budget. The papers were presented as new, more open, more transparent and more accountable. They might have been accountant friendly, but they were not friendly for members of Parliament or members of the public trying to determine how the Government is spending taxpayers' money.

I checked the budget papers for last year to see what information was available last year but is not available this year. That was an interesting comparison. The budget papers for 1998-99 contain no information on the number of staff employed by the Government, no information on programs and subprograms, no information on corporate services, no information on the amount of money that is spent on contracts, no information on the achievements of the agency in the previous financial year, no information on the evaluations which the agency has conducted in the past financial year and which it proposes to conduct in the next financial year, and no information on grants, subsidies and transfer payments.

In the Education budget, grants, subsidies and transfer payments amounted to \$100m in 1997-98, but the 1998-99 budget papers do not contain that information. A lot of information is missing from these budget papers, and what we have instead are endless additional financial tables which appear to repeat the same information, in a slightly different format, over and over again. That may be of some interest or fascination to a professional accountant, but it tells the average member of Parliament absolutely nothing, and it is a waste of paper to receive this so-called additional information at the expense of information which is actually valuable to us.

The point of accountability is that Governments are accountable not to accountants, but to the Parliament and members of Parliament, and through those members of Parliament to the public. Members of Parliament want information about the nature of the programs on which the Government is spending taxpayers' money and about the way in which the Government is implementing those programs. They do not necessarily want output and appropriation statements which seem to duplicate the information in cash flow statements which seem to duplicate the information in operating statements, and so on and so forth. Some accountants may find that information useful, but I do not think any member of Parliament to whom I have spoken about these budget papers finds the new presentation more helpful in understanding what the Government is doing with taxpayers' money, or more helpful in achieving the role of a member of Parliament in this process, which is to hold the Government accountable for its expenditure of taxpayers' funds.

Each year, this Government embarks upon a so-called reform of the presentation of the budget papers, and each year that the Government makes its so-called reform, it becomes more difficult for members of Parliament to compare the Government's performance over the years. This so-called set of reforms that has been adopted for the 1998-99 budget papers has been the worst. We are missing important information which was provided in previous years and which is necessary for us to determine what the Government is doing with taxpayers' money.

The estimates committee process has been "dumbed" down. Members of Parliament have been required to ask simple factual questions merely to determine information which in previous financial years was printed in black and white in the budget papers, so rather than members being able to ask some of the more penetrating questions, time has been wasted in determining the basic facts which should have been in the budget papers in the first place. These budget papers are not an improvement in accountability. They are not evidence that this Government is more open, transparent and accountable than its predecessors.

This Government has got the wrong idea about its accountability and responsibilities, and it has made the Budget more opaque and difficult for members of Parliament and the public to understand. I do not know whether the Government has been blinded by its own ideology and rhetoric and the accountants in its ranks, or whether it has done this in a semi deliberate fashion.

It is quite a neat trick to claim, on the one hand, to be more open and accountable, and for a handful of accountants to say they can now understand public sector budget papers because they are more like private sector accounting statements, but on the other hand to make the whole situation more opaque for the people who really count in the accountability process; that is, members of Parliament and the public. Governments are accountable to Parliaments, not to accountants, and the budget papers should be prepared in a way which enables members of Parliament to perform their role of holding the Government accountable.

I will give an example with regard to the Education budget. After three series of questions to the Minister for

Education in the estimates committee process, I was at last able to get the Minister to confirm to the Estimates Committee that the Education Department's budget is likely to be in deficit by \$20m to \$25m at the end of this financial year.

Mr Barnett: I said that in this Parliament about six months ago.

Mr RIPPER: Yes, but it took three sets of questions in the estimates committee process before the Minister could confirm that that was still the case. That information should have been in the budget papers in black and white, but it was not. I wonder whether the Education Department deficit is news to the State Treasurer. In previous years, we had three figures to compare - an estimate, an estimated actual and an estimate for the new financial year. This year, we lacked one of those figures - the initial estimate - and that made it impossible to see by an initial inspection that the Education Department budget would be in deficit.

On this Government's previous form, it is likely that next year it will make yet more changes to the presentation of the budget papers, give us yet more rhetoric about how the presentation has been improved, and create yet more confusion for members of Parliament and increased problems with the accountability process. If this Government does propose to make more changes to the presentation of the budget papers, it should consult with the Public Accounts and Expenditure Review Committee and get its approval for those changes before it embarks upon the preparation of the budget papers. What happened this year is that we got a wonderful power point presentation from Treasury if we chose to go along to its briefing. However, we did not get the opportunity to say that we did not think those changes would be useful to the Parliament. I hope the Government will try to provide some of the information that was provided in the past, and that if it does intend to make further changes to the presentation of the budget papers, it will consult with that parliamentary committee to make sure that the people who will use the budget papers will find them user friendly.

The debacle with these budget papers gives the lie to the Government's claim that it is open and accountable with regard to financial management issues.

**MR BARNETT** (Cottesloe - Leader of the House) [9.58 pm]: My observation was that the estimates committee process worked quite well; and I thank the Clerks and the staff, in particular the Hansard reporters, for that. It was originally proposed that the Assembly Estimates would be held when the upper House was in recess. Unfortunately, because of delays as a result of the abortion debate, the Estimates Committee was held while the upper House was sitting, which did put some pressures on the system. Indeed, for Estimates Committee B it was necessary to record the proceedings rather than have them directly reported by Hansard. Therefore, a delay in the *Hansard* contributed to some of the delay in providing supplementary information. Immediately following the week in which the Assembly had the Estimates Committee meetings, the other place had its Estimates Committee. At that stage there was again more pressure on staff and on Hansard and from further requests immediately coming through for supplementary information.

I concede that quite a deal of supplementary information is still to be provided, but I will ensure that it is provided within the next few days, unless it is particularly complex and difficult to ascertain. I ask members to recognise that effectively we had two lots of estimates over two weeks of two committees, with limited resources and a lot of pressure on not only parliamentary staff but also departmental staff and staff in ministerial offices. The two estimates committee system has worked quite well for the past few years. Now is perhaps the time to include the sessional order as part of our standing orders. Perhaps the Standing Orders and Procedure Committee might consider that.

What always comes up in this debate on the Estimates Committee is the usual complaint that I used to make in opposition; that is, that it excludes government trading enterprises, such as Western Power and the Water Corporation. The Standing Orders and Procedure Committee has been looking at that. It is proper that there should be a parliamentary process so that Ministers and particularly senior executive officers can be quizzed, not so much on commercial dealings but on matters of policy relating to the activities of GTEs. I would certainly support our setting up some standing committee procedure or some permanent process for doing that.

Mr Ripper: When the Budget is constructed for payments to those GTEs for community services obligations, there is an argument that there is an appropriation for those obligations and that the GTEs should be in the process.

Mr BARNETT: I agree with that. In the old days there used to be nominal allocations of \$1 to some of the then government trading authorities so that their CEOs could be questioned. The member makes a fair point, but by using something of a contrivance to allow scrutiny, one could argue that the only matter of scrutiny would be related to the community service obligation, so the scrutiny would be limited. As a Parliament we should set up a more formal procedure which does not necessarily coincide with the budget process but which would allow some committee scrutiny process of GTEs. They are the custodians of very substantial public assets and do participate in policy issues, even though they are constructed as though they are entirely independent business units.

The committee process has worked well. We are all aware of some of the shortcomings in the way it is formulated, but the physical operation this year was very good. I thank all members of staff. I thank the Whip from the Government's side and also Nick Hagley, who played a role in keeping it all happening.

**MR MCGOWAN** (Rockingham) [10.05 pm]: The idea and the concept of an Estimates Committee is very good and one which enables us, particularly members of the Opposition, to tease out from government Ministers information which is not always apparent on a first look at the budget papers. It is also an opportunity for the people of Western Australia to get a bit of an idea of what has happened as a result of the Budget via the media, who are also able to listen to the explanations of Ministers when questions are asked in the Estimates Committees. I was told that the estimates process was set up in the late 1980s, I think by Bob Pearce. If used properly, the process provides for a high degree of accountability of Ministers. However, I have a number of criticisms of the way in which it works.

My first criticism is that at a number of the committees I sat on - and I came to one virtually every day - the Minister answering the questions was not the actual Minister but the Minister representing the Minister in another place. A better technique would be to get the actual Minister, even if that Minister were to be questioned by members from another place. For instance, on one occasion I was questioning the member for Warren-Blackwood about transport issues. He is the Minister representing the Minister for Transport. He has big responsibilities for local government and disability services. However, he did not know a great deal about the transport issues on which I was questioning him. It would have been far better to have the Minister for Transport present, ask him questions and get him to answer, so that we could get the views of the actual Minister and his perspective on an issue, rather than question somebody who is not perhaps as full bottle as the Minister. I am not sure how we would do that, but it would probably require some sort of amendment to standing orders to enable members of one House to question a Minister from another House. The committee should not be a joint one because if too many members were involved from both Houses, we would reduce the opportunities for members from one House or the other to ask questions of a Minister. The real Minister should be involved rather than the Minister representing the Minister.

I had some difficulty with receiving supplementary information. On a lot of occasions Ministers indicated that they were not prepared to give supplementary information and that I should ask a question on notice, when the information I was requesting was pertinent to the line in the Budget to which I was referring. When we had government and opposition members present, I found that the way in which these committees operated was that when a Minister or the Premier came under some pressure and the Opposition was pressing an issue, government members all of a sudden would flash into their Budget papers and come up with 15 different questions on issues that did not interest them in the slightest to try to take up time to take the pressure off the Minister or Premier. Some people may say that members have a right to ask questions, and I agree with that, but when they misuse the process to take up the very limited time in such a way as to prevent the proper use of the committee to tease out relevant information, something is wrong with the process. On one occasion I was questioning the Treasurer in this Chamber about commonwealth-state financial relations. The Treasurer obviously was not enjoying the line of questioning. I found that three government backbenchers all of a sudden found things to talk about when they had not said anything for the previous two hours.

I agree with the Deputy Leader of the Opposition that the Budget is difficult to understand. In many places it is extremely repetitive. I am not an accountant, and generally I had to do a lot of looking and reading to try to work out what was taking place, particularly in the big departments. I got a handle on the Department of Local Government budget, which involves my shadow portfolio area, because it is quite small and not repetitive. Its budget of only a little over \$6m is pretty easy to get around. In some of the other departments' budgets, such as those of the Police Service and the Health Department, it was very difficult to understand what had been spent in a particular area. During last year's budget process the Government provided each member with a handout which set out what was being spent in their regions or electorates. It set out the big and the small projects, which might extend from a new hospital to a car park. It was an easily identifiable way of finding out what was occurring in an area. During this year's process those tables were not handed out. I was asked to comment to my local media immediately the Budget was handed down. I had to race through to various high profile areas and issues of concern in my area in order to find some sort of comment. It would have been far better had the Treasury and the Government provided us with a breakdown of what expenditure was occurring in each member's electorate.

The Leader of the House referred a little while ago to government trading enterprises. The Water Corporation has an impact on my electorate. In last year's Budget specific mention was made in the Water Corporation's budget of the location of the corporation's major capital works programs. For instance, an upgrade of the sewerage project is necessary to treat the water flowing into the ocean off Point Peron. Last year's Water Corporation budget contained an explanation of the money set aside for that upgrade. This year's Budget contained a one page explanation for the entire Water Corporation budget, which set out nothing on capital works expenditure. I assumed when I first read it that all the matters relating to upgrading the sewage treatment works in my area had been cut off. That was quite annoying to me. I contacted the Water Corporation, and was advised that it had not been included in the budget

papers. It seems to me to be a very bad way to explain to the public and politicians of Western Australia how government money is being spent when a \$100m sewerage upgrade is not included in the state Budget. That area needs reform so that we are adequately informed about what is happening in this State and in our electorates. They are my main criticisms of the process of the Estimates Committees and the budgetary process.

**MRS van de KLASHORST** (Swan Hills - Parliamentary Secretary) [10.11 pm]: I rise not specifically to talk about the monetary side of the budget estimates, but to bring to the attention of the House matters relating to the organisation of the Estimates Committees. My first concern refers to the appalling lack of space in the select committee room in which the estimates debates were held. To illustrate this, I refer to one session I attended on Tuesday, which was for Family and Children's Services; it also applied to some other sessions. This small room, with which most members are familiar, accommodated the Minister, 15 advisers, the Minister's chief of staff, a contract reporter to Hansard and tape-recording equipment, the chairperson, two parliamentary clerks, three opposition members, three government members, one independent member, and, believe it or not, three members of the Press. A total of 31 people were crammed together in that small room. Some of us were trying to read and write at the tables; the ministerial advisers were changing chairs - they had to move back and forward all the time so they could be heard; the telephone was ringing and the clerks were answering it; the contract reporters were moving in and out during the changeover times; people were coming in and out with messages to the Minister and to other members; the clerks were bringing the Minister glasses of water because the tables were too crowded to have the jugs on them; and overall, it was not very conducive to the application of the task. During the week of the estimates, it was very humid so the windows of that select committee room were opened and the noise of every single vehicle that went by was heard quite clearly over and above the sounds of the various people speaking. I do not know how the contract reporters ever heard the debate because the noise was tremendous and horrendous at times. I do not usually complain about places where we work, because I have worked in many places that were not perfect and in fact were quite rough, and as members of Parliament in this place, we are used to working under quite difficult conditions and can often cope with many other people in the room; but this was a number of people who were crowded for hours in a very small space. It was not right to impose this on all the staff and the advisers.

However, let it not be said that I come here to complain without offering a solution. There is a solution to this. It might be helpful for next year's committee if we held the second estimates committee in a week when the Council was not sitting, so we would have one group in here, and the other group in the Council Chamber, because it has the microphones and is very suitable.

Mr Barnett: That was the plan. However, the abortion debate meant that the Council was sitting when it had intended not to. You are right, but we failed to achieve it.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: The Council Chamber would have been much more suitable for the task. My concern also relates specifically to the session with Family and Children's Services. We did not have enough time to look at the Minister's other two areas of responsibilities, which are Seniors and Women's Interests. Family and Children's Services covers a huge area and the subject of drugs was added to it this year. We ended with those two areas of Seniors and Women's Interests being hastily discussed in the last few minutes. All members present expressed concern about that. We did not have enough time to consider these areas in detail. I ask that a specific time slot be set aside next year for the two areas of Seniors and Women's Interests - possibly a minimum of half an hour or a maximum of an hour. I felt quite remiss about this because the same thing happened last year and the year before. I decided to speak about it last year but I became so busy that I did not get around to it, so I thought I had better put it on the record this year.

The third issue relates to the budget documents. Some members have said they found them difficult to understand. I found that once I delved into them and read them, they were quite reasonable and easy to understand. The only problem was that the papers that we were given telling us what sessions we were at were written in numerical order, and the Budget was written in the name of the program. It took some time to work out the programs. That could possibly be remedied by having the name and number of the program next to the page number in the index. It would take only one extra column to do that so all members would be able to find it easily. The estimates committee debates are a wonderful way to allow members to look at the programs and learn in detail about what the Government is doing.

Ms MacTiernan interjected.

Mrs van de KLASHORST: I must have been at different ones from the member because I found that Ministers were able to answer questions, and when they could not, their advisers were able to do so. These committees are a good way for the Government to be accountable, but again I ask that we change to another committee room - I believe the Minister will agree to this - because it is not necessary to work under such difficult circumstances. I commend the motion to the House.

**MR BROWN** (Bassendean) [10.18 pm]: I rise to comment briefly on the format of the budget papers, particularly Budget Statements volumes 1 and 2 which relate to the program statements for the various departments and agencies. It seems to me that when one compares these statements over the past three years, one notes that they have become progressively worse in that they fail to disclose details which should be provided to this Parliament if the Government of the day is interested in being accountable. Let me demonstrate that by reference to one area alone, the Aboriginal Affairs Department. I refer to how the Budget for 1995-96 - that is, two Budgets ago - was presented.

The Budget allocates separately the amount for each component of the department. For the year 1995-96 the budget for the Aboriginal Affairs Department was broken into corporate services, showing what they would cost the State. Then it was broken into three programs. The first was Aboriginal development, which involved three subprograms. Program 2 was Aboriginal land and program 3 was heritage and culture. Under each program, reference was made to significant issues and trends. Major achievements for the previous year and planned achievements for the forthcoming year were listed. That information allowed the reader to check what were the significant trends, what were the major achievements and the various costs for the past financial year and what was proposed for the next year. That was two years ago.

Last year under the budget for Aboriginal Affairs all of the information under significant trends and major achievements was lumped into one area. The significant trends were listed, in a similar manner to the previous year, and major achievements were listed for 1996-97. They covered approximately two and a half pages and were followed by an assessment of the manner in which the department had carried out its responsibilities. In last year's budget papers the planned achievements for the department for the following financial year were not set out. In this year's Budget there is one lot of information; that is, significant issues and trends, which cover five paragraphs and major initiatives for 1998-99. They are lumped together. No mention is made of the achievements for the previous financial year. That is somehow suddenly unimportant. No detail whatsoever is provided. It simply contains major initiatives for the following year. Four output statements are included in last year's Aboriginal Affairs budget. Those budget papers do not provide a clue about which amounts of money have been allocated for which purpose. A list on one page indicates what the department will be doing for the following 12 months. Then there is a breakdown of four subdepartments, but not a clue about how they will achieve the objectives set out in the budget papers.

Financial management has often been referred to as being more than figures on a page; it is about being able to assess whether one is getting value for money by looking at the tasks, the outcomes and the costs associated with the tasks and outcomes. A number of Ministers have said in this place time and again that that is the test. However, in these budget papers the Government has brought down a series of papers that will not allow us to test the Budget in that way. As I said in the second reading debate, some Ministers believe the estimates process is a test for them in the same way a cricket test was a test for Rodney Marsh; that is, nothing should get through the slips. Everything must be stopped. Those Ministers who believe they should let through very little real information so that they minimise our capacity to test the Government must have had a hand in drawing up these budget papers. One must be a super sleuth to work out exactly what major initiatives will be achieved. The Premier has said that in commercial terms this format is appropriate. If one asked the managing director of a private company to give it to his section heads to follow they would laugh; they would think it was the biggest joke they had come across. There is no direction or capacity to test in these statements.

**Mr Bloffwitch:** Be fair. Company directors don't produce their reports to their shareholders until September when they have actuals in public corporations. However, they would be working under the same premise when they set own budgets for their staff.

**Mr BROWN:** In these Budget Statements the Government is producing an allocation and objectives to be achieved during the following year. That is the purpose of a budget.

**Mr Bloffwitch:** It is to indicate what money is available.

**Mr BROWN:** It is an indication of what money is available and for what purposes. If it is set out correctly it should be able to be tested. One should be able to read what are the objects and see what amounts have been allocated to what. By reference to the previous budget papers one should be able to see where the money is carried over from one year to the next, to understand why that is and to understand what lumps of money are being allocated to what purposes. That is not possible with these budget papers.

Some people might be able to justify this year's format on the basis that it is the first year in which we have used accrual accounting. If accrual accounting is meant to provide more accountability we should go back to the previous format, in which more information was provided. The information that was provided in 1995-96, two financial years ago, is far more detailed with the issues that would face the department or agency over the 12 months, the achievements of that agency and what it would be doing. Not only was it far more detailed, but it elaborated on each subprogram. That detail was available two years ago; it is no longer to be found.



I acknowledge the comments of the member for Geraldton that this is the first time the budget papers have been presented in this way. The test next year will be whether we get the detail that enables us to test the assumptions in the Budget. If we get that detail we can write off this year as a learning experience and say the departments or agencies did not have the capacity to deal with the new system, but they are now getting used to it. If we get the same thing dished up to us again next year, we can say that any professed public claim that this Government wants to be open and accountable is simply not believable. One cannot make that claim and produce budget papers like these which make it almost impossible to test a whole range of assumptions and whether the taxpayers' money is being spent in a correct and prudent way.

Question put and passed.

**MR BLOFFWITCH** (Geraldton) [10.30 pm]: I move -

That the report of Estimates Committee B be adopted.

**DR EDWARDS** (Maylands) [10.31 pm]: I will make a few brief comments because a lot of the comments I wanted to make have already been made by those who spoke about Estimates Committee A. It must be placed on the record that in every year I have been in opposition, we have been presented with a Budget in a different format. Making comparisons from year to year is extremely difficult. It might be smart from the Government's point of view to give a different presentation every year; however, from an opposition point of view, we constantly feel starved of information, and to have the Budget presented in a different way every year means we cannot easily compare year to year and track what has happened. Given that we have now been in opposition for a number of years, it would be nice to track the situation over those years. The presentation this year makes it extremely difficult to compare the figures with those for last year.

I raise this issue about Estimates Committee B because what happened during the estimates committee hearing involving the Department of Conservation and Land Management was quite innovative. Those officers went to the trouble of preparing a huge sheet to show how the figures for this year fitted in with those for last year, and I appreciate the effort they made. Basically it was a huge laminated sheet, with lots of photocopies of various sections of its budgets from this year and last year and there was a whole series of lines and arrows. The print was so small that, although we could follow it through, it did not make a whole lot of sense. We had to rely on the accountants from the Department of Conservation and Land Management and trust that what they were telling us was the truth.

Another issue - a number of other members have said this - relates to the content of the Budget Statements this year. It is so general as to be quite hopeless. We have had much better information in the past. I know that this is a transition year and, presumably, next year we will be given better information than we got this year. However, it makes any comparison with the past quite meaningless.

The next issue on which I will comment is the arrangement of outcomes, outputs and performance indicators. Again, much of this does not make a whole lot of sense. For example, let us look at the Department of Conservation and Land Management's budget statement and the outcome relating to the conservation of indigenous plants, animals and ecological processes in natural habitats. We get performance measures and comments on effectiveness. The outcome is very complicated. To have an outcome in this detail is pretty amazing. It is no surprise that when we look at the performance measures they do not tell us much about the outcome. The area in hectares of the conservation estate that is managed, I suppose, gives some basic information; however, the performance measures under the heading "Quality" give the changes in the number of threatened species - it goes down. It does not tell us anything. We had fun in this committee by asking whether it means that three species became extinct and, therefore, the number had decreased. There is no explanation of what the words mean when they are used as performance measures.

In a similar vein, under the heading "Timeliness" we are told that completion of management plans within specified time frames will be measured; however, the figure is already 100 per cent and next year it will be 100 per cent as well. It does not tell us that for many conservation areas there are no management plans. The question about the outcome relates to the number of areas that do not yet have management plans. Where there are management plans, that is fine. They have been completed and the figure is given as 100 per cent; however, in many areas there are no management plans and there is nothing to say when a management plan will be done.

I now turn to effectiveness which, of course, is very important because it tells the extent to which the goals have been met. The words here are so complicated that I am not too sure what they mean. It says that effectiveness will be measured for wildlife habitat management by example population estimates of native fauna following control of a threatening process. What does that mean? If the department can work out that that is measuring effectiveness, God alone knows what are the department's goals!

With the other two outputs of the Department of Conservation and Land Management's budget statement, we had similar problems of very grand outcomes being stated, but the measures in no way reflecting the outcomes, and the

detail provided not telling us anything about the outcome or the relationship of the performance measures with the outcomes. I could go through other parts of the Budget Statements that we considered in Estimates Committee B, but my comments would be much the same.

I conclude on this note: From my years in Parliament, it seems to me that the role of the Estimates Committees is somehow evolving. This year in the committee I was on, the questions were fairly basic, information gathering questions. If that is the role of the Estimates Committees, it has changed from when I arrived here. This year in the sessions of the committee I attended, the Ministers did not do a whole lot of talking. Generally the chief executive officers did that. This seems to be some sort of evolutionary trend. Given that we now have outcomes, outputs and performance measures, it might well be time to evaluate what goes on in these Estimates Committees and come up with a model that serves us better.

**MR CARPENTER** (Willagee) [10.36 pm]: I will be very brief because I know other members have points to make. I will make two or three minor comments, which I want to get on the record, about my experience in the Estimates Committees. They are important enough to be mentioned and deserve some consideration. First - I doubt whether this is a new concept raised in relation to Estimates Committees - I invite members to place themselves outside the mental framework of members of Parliament and into that of the general public in looking at the process of Estimates Committees, and to ask this fundamental question: Why do we have two sets of Estimates Committees in the one Parliament? I understand the reasons include that there are two Houses of Parliament and there is a tradition and a history; however, the practical outcome of this tradition is totally nonsensical. We have one Government with one set of Ministers. The Ministers who take their seats in the upper House of the Parliament should be open to the scrutiny of all members of Parliament in the Estimates Committees; and vice versa - Ministers in the lower House should also be open to the scrutiny of members of the upper House in the Estimates Committees.

I do not know the specific standing orders which apply here. I understand how the standing orders of this House relate to the Estimates Committees of the lower House. I do not know what is the prohibitive factor in this equation. Whatever it is, it should be removed for the sake of good management and commonsense. It is an absurd situation. I have portfolio responsibility for Sport and Recreation. I went to an estimates committee hearing and addressed questions to a member of this House representing a Minister from the other House when the responsible Minister was within the walls of the Parliament but could not attend to be questioned. That is totally absurd. Whatever the parliamentary tradition, it should be set aside. We are living in a modern era and antiquated practices should give way. The Parliament of Western Australia should have estimates committee hearings involving the Ministers and members of both Houses and the timetable should be extended.

I spent 19 or 20 hours in Estimates Committees A and B. The amount of time allocated to the Education portfolio was adequate. In Sport and Recreation, which has a very small budget in comparison to the major portfolio areas, the time available for questioning was reduced to about 48 minutes given the time taken for the changeover and the opening remarks of the Parliamentary Secretary. When one factors in the changeover, after we moved from recreation camps to sport, we had about 40 minutes in which to ask questions. Effectively, only a very small number of questions could be put to the Parliamentary Secretary in either portfolio area and even less detail could be provided. The Parliamentary Secretary has a reasonably good grasp of sport and sporting history in Western Australia, and everybody acknowledges that. However, if a member requires specific information he or she needs the Minister or the Parliamentary Secretary to be able to provide it. I asked one simple question about where in the Budget I could find an allocation of \$40m that had supposedly been included in the forward estimates. It took considerable time to ascertain that there was no such allocation. In fact, I had to work it out myself and point out to the Parliamentary Secretary that it was not mentioned. Members do not have sufficient time to go to such lengths.

Another portfolio area for which I have direct responsibility is Disability Services, which was combined with Local Government. Both areas are of considerable importance. Members had a couple of hours to deal with both portfolio areas but that was not sufficient time. We could not ascertain what information was available in the budget papers, what was not included, and then frame some intelligent and worthwhile questions.

The member for Geraldton made the point that the budget papers were very difficult to penetrate if one required detailed information. In fact, in preparing for the budget debates and the Estimates Committees I looked at budget papers from 1978 onwards and the detail they provided. Contrary to the assurances given that this initiative would allow greater transparency of government activities, these budget papers provide the least information about government programs and activities of any budget papers over that period.

The Disability Services Commission establishes an outcome that it purports to want to achieve. It then measures whether it has achieved that outcome. No criteria are provided about how those measurements are determined. It then gives itself a mark on how well it has done. Every outcome in that area was rated at 90 per cent. That would lead even the most naive person to question the worth of those figures.

Mr Riebeling: The Minister did it himself.

Mr CARPENTER: Yes. The figure is totally meaningless. If I were to tell the Parliament that I hoped to achieve outcome A and then said that I had achieved it and 90 per cent of the consumers were satisfied, most members would ask me to prove it. No proof is provided in the Budget and nothing assists members to ascertain the basis of the information provided. The budget papers are not worthless documents; they are valuable but they could be much better.

The Government has gone from providing minute details of its activities to outlining what it hopes to achieve and what it claims it has achieved. We have lost the ground in the middle, which should state how outcomes are being achieved, what is being achieved and how those outcomes measure up to what it was hoped would be achieved. The presentation of these documents must be reviewed and improved dramatically.

The practice of having separate committees should be abolished. I do not know how easy or difficult that would be. However, the current system is totally antiquated; it is no longer practical or useful. Members would then have more time in each Estimates Committee. Instead of going through the ridiculous process of having Estimates Committee hearings in the lower House, where half the Ministers may or may not be present, and more hearings in the upper House, we could have one set of hearings.

I asked opposition members in the upper House to put certain questions to the Minister for Sport and Recreation in its Estimates Committee and was told that there would be no hearing in the upper House on that portfolio area. Other portfolio areas, such as the Attorney General's Department, also had no hearings. That is unbelievable.

Ms MacTiernan: Neither did Main Roads, and the Minister responsible is in the upper House.

Mr CARPENTER: I was with the member for Armadale in the committee dealing with the Main Roads portfolio in the lower House. The presentation of information by those present was shameful. Not only did the Minister representing the responsible Minister have no grasp of what was going on but the staff also made a virtue of the fact that they were refusing to provide information. It was a joke and made a complete mockery of the process. We might as well not have had the hearing. If that is to be the outcome of Estimates Committees, perhaps we should do away with them or have a completely different system. The current system is not functioning as it should; it does not provide members of Parliament with an opportunity to scrutinise realistically the activities of the Government, which they are doing on behalf of the people of the State. The system is failing and needs reform.

**MS WARNOCK** (Perth) [10.49 pm]: I will emphasise what several of my colleagues have said. In previous years I have been rather more polite than I should have been about substitute Ministers. Without intending any offence, members on this side would prefer to have the organ grinder rather than the monkey. On occasion we have witnessed the rather foolish scenario of the substitute Minister's spending almost the entire hearing relying on the information provided by the advisers. I know that is what advisers are for, by definition, but it seems that the point of an estimates committee hearing is for the people with the information to be present and they should be able to demonstrate their grasp of the portfolio. I am glad my other colleagues mentioned this because it is a bad fault with the estimates and, although information can be prised from the person concerned, it is not good enough to have a person there who does not have a total grasp of the portfolio.

I also agree with the member for Swan Hills that the setting for Estimates Committee B was quite frightful. Members of this House get used to second rate accommodation because their rooms are pretty shabby and they share them with several people who, if they work very hard, are difficult to share a room with. It is best to share with a person who does not work hard because that person is never there! I make the point again that the select committee room is not good enough as accommodation, not so much for members, because they are used to the second rate accommodation, but for guests and visitors who are there to help and provide information. It does not provide the sort of setting that this Parliament should provide for people.

I also agree with my colleague, the member for Belmont, who said that changing the system of providing the information year by year may appeal to accountants, but at the last count there were more lawyers, teachers and small business people in this Chamber than accountants. While it may be challenging for accountants to see the accounts presented each year in a different way, quite frankly it seems the Government is trying to make the accounts more obscure rather than presenting accounts to the light each year so that, through their members of Parliament, the public of Western Australia can find out what the Government is doing. It would be a much better idea if, as many of my colleagues have suggested, the Government settled on a way that provides rather than hides information. I am sure our constituents, on whose behalf members ask the questions, would much prefer that. I am relieved to find that other people found the process difficult. I thought it was my lack of accounting skills, but clearly other people found it difficult as well.

I briefly address the matter of the estimates committee hearing for the portfolios of Family and Children's Services,

Women's Interests, and Seniors. Family and Children's Services is a big portfolio with a large budget and it involves important issues for the welfare of families and children in society. Not surprisingly, it takes a lot of time. Most of the questions to the Minister - on that occasion we had a real Minister, as opposed to a substitute Minister - in that three hour hearing were about Family and Children's Services. There would have been more questions had time allowed. Because of the sheer weight of this portfolio, it took up most of the three hours allocated, with the result that Women's Interests and Seniors had about half an hour towards the end of the hearing. Admittedly, these two offices have much smaller budgets but, with every social commentator telling us repeatedly that grey power is growing and that those over the age of retirement will soon be a much larger percentage of the population than they have been historically, and as women make up more than 50 per cent of the population, both areas should have been awarded more time for the debate and scrutiny process. I had many more questions to ask the Minister, and I found it completely unsatisfactory not to have a chance to put those questions. Of course, I can put those questions on notice but that is not the object of the exercise with estimates committee hearings. The object is to do it at the time, to put the portfolio under scrutiny and to ask questions of the Minister. The arrangements were not good enough. I also believe that the portfolios of Women's Interests and Seniors - I know at least one of my colleagues agrees - should have been allocated more time. Committee members needed more time to question the Minister and to scrutinise the portfolios.

I could address other matters but I am anxious not to take up too much time because other colleagues want a say. The matters members have mentioned - several mentioned the same issues - should point to an issue for the Government about the budget estimates hearing process. It is a good process which I am sure all members welcome, although perhaps not the Ministers. It is an important part of the parliamentary process and as far as the public is concerned, if it ever hears what happens, it is an important process for finding out what the Government has planned for the people, where it is spending its money and how accountable it is in those areas. It is an important process that could be very much improved.

**MS MacTIERNAN** (Armadale) [10.56 pm]: I compliment the member for Willagee on his comments about the need to modernise the estimates process and to do away with the farce of the Lords and the Commons in that process. It is all very well for us to wax on about the necessity for microeconomic reform and the need for productivity improvements at the waterfront, but we persist with a process that is monumentally unproductive. It is a ridiculous process in which the most senior members of the bureaucracy are dragged in for replica procedures. The Minister for Health had 20 of the most senior bureaucrats in the Health Department tied up between the hours of 9.00 am and 2.00 pm, and I presume most were again required to go to the Legislative Council for a repeat of the same process. This happens in every department, and it is time a cost estimate was made of the impact of that. Before the Government has the audacity to tell anyone in the private sector to get their act together and to be more productive, this Parliament should do the same.

There is also a very real effect on the level of scrutiny when the Minister is not available. When Ministers were not available, members had to make do with the Ministers representing those Ministers and, of course, they were unable to make any real contribution to the estimates process itself. From the other perspective, members also found that to be the case when the opposition spokesperson, who had perhaps developed some knowledge and expertise in a particular area, was unable to be present to ensure that the really hard questions were put to the Minister concerned and that the responses to those questions were properly followed up. On every possible parameter, the system is completely indefensible. If this Government is not prepared to get beyond the medieval history that has led to the current parliamentary structure, it is not fit to govern into the twenty-first century.

Unfortunately, the mere presence of a Minister during an estimates hearing is not always of great assistance. I must single out here for special reference my good friend the Minister for Fair Trading. His would have to be one of the most truly disgraceful performances that I have ever seen. With the exception of the area of regulation of trading hours the Minister was simply not able to answer questions on any part of the portfolio, and - even more puzzling - neither could the chief executive officer. On very basic questions neither the Minister nor the CEO were able to shed any light on the operations of the department, how the department functioned, who was in the department, and how many complaints were received. The CEO had a range of files with him. However, they appeared to have nothing to do with the administration of that department. I will give an interesting example. One of the key indications that appears in the budget papers for the Ministry of Fair Trading -

Mr Shave: What have you been saying?

Ms MacTIERNAN: I am not responsible if the Minister chooses to wander in and out of the Chamber. The Minister's performance in Estimates Committee B was truly appalling. The Minister does not get the medal by himself as his CEO came equal first in the, "I know nothing" stakes.

Mr Shave: I said then that you were ungracious and you are continuing that performance now.

Ms MacTIERNAN: We had an interesting debate in the estimates hearing. The Minister for Fair Trading needs a special induction program because of his incapacity to differentiate between himself personally and his role as a Minister. As I sought to explain to him during those estimates, when I criticise his performance as Minister he should not take it personally. It has nothing to do with my personal feelings. As I have told the Minister frequently, it is my fervent desire to see him as the Premier of this State during the next two years. I think that would be an event to which the Labor Party would look forward and it would certainly mean that we would have massive success in the next election, so we have a certain degree of support for the Minister for Fair Trading. The crucial point is that we must distinguish between the Minister's performance as a human being and his performance as the Minister for Fair Trading. The Minister might be a really great guy in every other area, but as Minister for Fair Trading there are a few vacancies.

Mr Shave: How would you rate me?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Try 0.5.

One of the key roles of the Ministry of Fair Trading is to respond to consumer complaints and to supervise various sectors of the economy that require regulation to provide consumer protection. The real estate industry is an important component of that. The real estate industry is the area in which the Ministry of Fair Trading is experiencing its greatest problems in dealing with the matters for which it has statutory responsibility. I will not go into the reason for that. We sought to find further information. There is no information in the budget papers about the number of complaints that have been received and dealt with, so we went to the paper that was tabled last year by the Minister - after much harassment, if the Minister recalls. We asked the Minister to produce the annual report of his ministry and slowly and painfully that was extracted from him and tabled. We took note of those figures, and we noticed something interesting. The report was tabled in November 1997, and in March 1998, when the report was printed and distributed to the community, we found that crucial figures had been changed. The key parameters and indicators of the level of difficulty being experienced within the industry, which are the key indicators of the workload that the department must handle, had been changed between the time that the paper was tabled and when the paper was printed. We thought that we would ask the Minister at the estimates hearing how this occurred. The Minister had no idea; he had never seen the report. The Minister did not know anything about it, so I asked the CEO how it occurred. Surely, someone somewhere must have altered the tabled paper in order to produce this printed document that was so fundamentally different from the annual report? He knew nothing about it. Somewhere in this department some lackey is presumably changing statutory reports and producing printed documents and the Minister knows nothing about it, nor does he care. "What is the problem?" he asks. It is only a key indicator for his department! Unfortunately, the CEO did not know either, so who is in charge of the shop? We have Douggie asleep and his CEO is asleep. What is wrong with this department? It is out of control and the Minister does not care.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I ask the member to get back to the estimates and we will all be a lot happier.

Ms MacTIERNAN: The member for Willagee made important comments about microeconomic reform which I support absolutely. I was seeking to point out that while I support those comments, with some Ministers it will not be sufficient to ensure a more adequate scrutiny of departmental performance.

I want to comment on the performance of Main Roads Western Australia in the estimates hearings. I do not blame the Minister for Local Government, who was representing the Minister for Transport. Given that it was not his portfolio he probably did a reasonable job. The problem is that the figures in the budget are completely inexplicable. In each previous year the budget for Main Roads commenced with a simple equation comprising recurrent and capital expenditure, and the figures were set out under each of those headings. Nothing as obvious and important as that appeared in the documents before members this year, so I reasonably asked Main Roads staff if they were able to provide me with those figures. They could not understand why the Opposition would want those figures. We spent half an hour explaining their previous practice. Finally, after much time wasting, they agreed to provide those figures on a supplementary basis. When we got these figures we found that the categories they are dealing with are completely different. They have gone to the trouble of drawing up a little chart which they claim makes this contrast between recurrent and capital expenditure.

Unfortunately, the definition of recurrent expenditure is vastly different from what it was in previous years when it was salaries. Recurrent expenditure in this revised, supplementary documentation, which is supposed to show us the equivalent to previous years, suddenly becomes known as "road preservation". We waited for a fortnight for supplementary figures, and we are no closer to finding out how this budget compares in any shape or form with previous budgets.

To make matters more complex, we cannot even compare the capital items because we are told that they are not what they used to be. We pointed out that the capital cost estimated for some 30 projects had changed dramatically. The most notorious of these was the Northbridge tunnel. The explanation given was that capital is no longer what it used

to be. Capital now includes some recurrent expenditure. How much recurrent? They could not really say in relation to any project. They said, "Sometimes we included it last year; sometimes we did not." It was an appalling performance. Notwithstanding that we have the Minister for Transport's new motor vehicle levy, which is the reckless levy of some \$700m or \$800m, it is impossible to tell whether any increase has taken place in capital expenditure. We do not know the sum of capital expenditure, or the extent to which it incorporates what previously was described as recurrent expenditure. We simply cannot compare last year's capital expenditure with this year's because it has been completely redefined, and the department seems incapable of providing analysis of figures to enable us to draw those two matters together.

We could go on about the inadequacies of the documents. It is not acceptable for the Government to change the format without being responsible and providing equivalent data up-front, at least as a transitional measure. Frankly, I do not believe that this change has been a consequence of accrual accounting, but a separate move away from program budgeting. I have given an analysis previously on the absurd notion of outcomes when they are defined generally as "making the world a better place". That is like the outcomes in the Ministry of Fair Trading.

Although I do not refer strictly to Estimates Committee B, in Estimates Committee A we had the amazing experience of trotting down to the Housing estimates session, only to find that Housing decided, despite the fact it was listed, not to front up to be scrutinised. We were told that this was because it does not have a consolidated revenue allocation. That may be the case, but some other mechanism must be used to scrutinise those incredibly important large agencies of Westrail and Homeswest. Some mechanism must bring them to account in Parliament. Currently, they are running free of any parliamentary scrutiny, which is completely unacceptable. That must be brought to the attention of this place. We simply must change the rules and provide some other mechanism, so agencies like Homeswest are brought to book. As they are conducting themselves at the moment, they are a law unto themselves. I do not believe the Minister knows what is going on in that organisation.

Mr Omodei: In Homeswest?

Ms MacTIERNAN: Yes.

Mr Omodei: You're joking! You did not even ask a question of it.

Ms MacTIERNAN: Why did we not ask a question?

Mr Omodei: Because you're dumb!

Ms MacTIERNAN: Because they did not come. He is really bright, this one - really bright!

**MS ANWYL** (Kalgoorlie) [11.05 pm]: Most of the comments I wanted to make have been made. I echo the comments of the members for Swan Hills and Perth in relation to the Estimates Committee B as we had less than 15 minutes to deal with the drug issue, which is a matter of overwhelming importance to the Western Australian electorate. We had less than 15 minutes to deal with the Women's Policy Development Office. That is a poor state of affairs.

I had the pleasure of spending almost two full days on the estimates hearings, up to 12 hours each day, on a variety of matters. I grant that some fishing expeditions took place with some of the allocations. As I have said previously, this is my third year participating in the estimates process. Nobody has any questions for some portfolios, for which we have an almost embarrassing stringing out of questions for the sake of appearances.

Mr Omodei: You could stop and go home.

Ms ANWYL: I would like to see the Minister be brave enough to send his 25-plus advisers home early. He should be responsible; I am trying to make a serious contribution to the debate.

Mr Omodei: Your colleague was making some unusual gestures; I was responding.

Ms ANWYL: I thought the Minister was referring to my speech.

Mr Omodei: No.

Ms ANWYL: The time allocated could be reduced for certain portfolios, and extensions could be granted for others. I have made those comments to the appropriate people on my side of the House, and I am sure the Leader of the House has heard those comments from other quarters. We have 12 months to sort that out. The drug issue resides in the Family and Children's Services portfolio, yet no more time has been allocated to allow for its consideration.

I echo a number of comments made on the budget papers. The papers have an incredible paucity of detail. Often, nonsense is provided, such as the customer satisfaction outcomes. When questioned on these matters, Ministers and their representatives often were unable to identify the customers. One could visit the area surveyed for customer

satisfaction, for example, with youth. The budget papers outlined an incredibly high level of satisfaction. However, not one young person had been surveyed. The customer survey is a self-serving exercise in visiting agencies which have regular dealings with the government organisation. Of course they will say that they are satisfied by and large, as they will not make critical comments about their funding bodies. It is nonsense.

The classic example of performance measures was on page 155 of the Budget Statements. The Western Australian Building Management Authority, under the quality of performance measures, outlined the Minister's satisfaction with the report on the annual non-residential building program. A scale of one to seven was allocated in which the Minister could rate his level of satisfaction.

Mr Johnson: It was seven.

Ms ANWYL: It was not seven but we had the symbol for "greater than" five. We did not have less than six so I do not know where the "greater than" symbol fits into all of this. However, it is an incredible waste of taxpayers' money for the Minister giving a rating in a report of greater than five being a measure of performance in this area. Perhaps in some other portfolios it could be said that those preparing the budget papers were more honest. They actually said that they had not worked out how to record measures of timeliness, and quality and so forth. I would rather accept that than accept this ridiculous notion of the Minister's satisfaction with a report on a scale of one to seven where this year's estimate is greater than five and the target estimate for next year is also greater than five. It is complete nonsense. Over the next 12 months there will be refining of this. That sort of thing is okay because there is not a huge impact in terms of the community.

Mr Carpenter: Which Minister is this?

Ms ANWYL: The Minister for Works in respect of contract and management services. However, it falls under the Building Management Authority. The Minister may have given an approval of less than seven; however we must use these "less than" and "greater than" symbols. Now the Minister has dispensed with those. It may be he is more of a practical man and he could write the report next year.

Unfortunately, many other issues are dealt with in a similar fashion that are much more important and have an impact on people's lives. One of the most serious issues that one could possibly deal with falls within the Minister for Family and Children's Services' portfolio. I refer to page 450 of the Budget Statements, which contains performance measures for child protection services. As members know, child protection is one of the core business areas of FACS and there have been significant criticisms of the time delays in investigating allegations of child maltreatment. I am not referring to the police child abuse unit; I am referring to Family and Children's Services.

Under "timeliness" there is an estimate that 83 per cent of allegations of child maltreatment were investigated within five working days. There were no satisfactory answers to the question of where that figure was derived from. The Midland inquiry published earlier this year suggested more than five days. I am pleased to see that the target for next year is 100 per cent to be investigated within less than five days. However, these are arbitrary notions being applied to what is the most serious question that we as a Parliament must try to deal with. I hope that there can be some refining of this. I am not surprised that we have lost transparency in the discarding of planned achievements as a category within the budget papers. This Government has a record of broken promises; therefore why would it not try to cover up promises made in earlier papers but never delivered? The most glaring of those within FACS is the whole concept of poverty relief, to which not one dollar extra has been allocated. A promise was made in 1996 that \$600 000 would be allocated to poverty relief. That has not been delivered. Of the amount that has been delivered towards setting up the poverty task force, the report on that has been ignored in this process. Therefore, of the \$600 000 promised, this Budget contains not one dollar for the next financial year.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind the member that there is only an hour on each of these subjects and there are seven minutes left. If the member wants someone else to contribute, I give her that as a warning.

Ms ANWYL: I am obliged. I have already spoken about the lack of time. I make the point that supplementary information can also be hopelessly short. I asked the Women's Policy Development Office for details of the domestic violence prevention output, to which \$2.1m has been allocated; we are talking big dollars here. The supplementary advice provided does nothing to extend the hopelessly poor information contained in the budget papers. I hope I shall not have to stand here next year and criticise to the same extent.

**MR MCGOWAN** (Rockingham) [11.25 pm]: In the debate on Estimates Committee A, I raised issues dealing with the operations of the Estimates Committee. With five minutes left to me, I take the opportunity to discuss one issue that arose in Estimates Committee B last week with the Minister for Lands. I asked a number of questions of the Minister for Lands concerning the Western Australian Government's ongoing High Court challenge against the Commonwealth Government on the Lancelin defence training area. The Minister confirmed that a High Court challenge is proceeding and the State is challenging two principal issues involving this training area. The first issue

relates to a road that the State wants to construct through the training area from Lancelin to Cervantes. The second issue relates to mining companies having access to this area of land. The State seeks the resolution of issues with the Commonwealth. I have criticised this proposal and this action in challenging the Commonwealth Government in the High Court, for a number of reasons. At the outset a threshold question is to be resolved here: If the Government supports a defence force, that defence force must be given an opportunity to train.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The estimates do not refer to the defence force but I am sure you will tie it in somehow.

Mr McGOWAN: Thank you for your guidance Mr Deputy Speaker. The threshold question is: If we support a defence force, we must support having somewhere for it to train. If the Government does support a defence force, its position in saying that it does not think that the defence force should have access to training areas is ideologically unsound and inconsistent. However, if the Government thinks there should be a defence force and if that defence force should be supported in a manner which adequately serves the defence of the nation by being spread out in order to cover all of the land mass of our country, the Government must provide it with an area in which to train.

The challenge being instituted by Western Australia against the Commonwealth is irresponsible for a number of reasons. Firstly, as the Minister confirmed during the Estimates Committee, ongoing negotiations are taking place between the State and the Commonwealth over this issue. Surely this issue could be resolved by ongoing negotiations at the highest level in the Premier's office with some very senior people in the Department of Defence? That is the preferred method of resolving this dispute, not taking the issue to the High Court. Members will recall that the last major challenge in the High Court over a land issue cost \$4m. I am sure this challenge will not cost that much, but it will cost a great deal of money.

Secondly, if the State is determined to put a road through a defence training area, that is the end of the defence training area. The two are mutually exclusive. If a road goes through it, there is no defence training area. The Government is saying that the defence force must spend a fortune to train in the eastern States. The defence force has invested millions of dollars in assets - in my electorate alone, heading towards \$1b in fixed assets and \$10b worth of warships and submarines. We have the crack SAS regiment here. A number of reserve battalions are based in Western Australia. We also have some air force assets. However, what the Government is saying is that those people are not permitted to train. Therefore, by implication it is saying they are not welcome here; otherwise, why would the Government deny them the right to train? It is totally ridiculous that the Government is saying, "Let us put a road through." The Premier admitted that his objective is to construct a road to connect the two communities where there are already routes around the perimeter of the training area.

The point of the exercise is to put a road directly through that area. If a road were put through that area, the defence training would stop, and if the defence training stopped, the defence department would not invest substantial funds in this State because -

Mr Carpenter: It is an act of treason.

Mr McGOWAN: I would not go that far. I would say it is an act of stupidity. We would be saying that they are not welcome here.

Mr Shave: If you had your way, you would make the whole of this State a rifle range!

Mr McGOWAN: I would not. I have only 50 seconds left -

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: That is right, and I ask the member to get back to the estimates.

Mr McGOWAN: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. This issue did arise in the estimates. The State Government is being irresponsible about this issue. I do not believe the whole State should be a defence training area. I am saying that if we have a defence force, we must have a training area. The two are necessarily consistent. The Government should come clean about why it is pursuing this matter in the High Court and about the purpose of this road and whether any ulterior motive is involved.

Question put and passed.

[See papers Nos 1464 and 1465.]

## **APPROPRIATION (CONSOLIDATED FUND) BILL (No 1)**

### *Third Reading*

**MR COURT** (Nedlands - Treasurer) [11.31 pm]: I move -

That the Bill be now read a third time.



**MR McGOWAN** (Rockingham) [11.32 pm]: I wish to make some points with regard to my shadow portfolio area of Local Government. I addressed this issue at the beginning of this year and perhaps late last year, and it is an issue that has built up some momentum among some people in Western Australia, in particular people who live in caravan parks. That issue is the crisis that is facing people who live in caravan parks and people who use caravans as a means of recreation and when they are holidaying around the State. I use the term "crisis" advisedly, because people who are living in caravan parks are feeling victimised by the regulations that have been put in place by this Government. They do not know where they stand with regard to that most basic of things - their own home.

There are four caravan parks in my electorate. The people who live in caravan parks generally fall into a number of categories. Many of them are retired, their children and grandchildren do not live with them, and they do not need a lot of space in which to live. The second group of people are fairly transient and might want to stay in a caravan for a number of years and move on somewhere else. In general terms, most of the people who live in caravan parks are not wealthy and do not have much in the way of disposable income and savings.

Last year, the Government introduced regulations to control the activities of people who construct homes in caravan parks. On the face of it, it is laudable that some rules have been put in place with regard to caravan parks. However, those regulations are retrospective and apply to people who have already constructed homes in caravan parks. In some cases, those people will be required to knock down their homes. It is absolutely unbelievable that this can take place.

The Minister for Local Government lauded as one of his major achievements the fact that he got these caravan regulations through. I would not have lauded it, because it is an absolute attack -

Mr Omodei: As usual, you don't know what you are talking about!

Mr McGOWAN: I will explain, Minister. Obviously the Minister has not read the regulations -

Mr Omodei: For eight years the Australian Labor Party promised to introduce caravan park legislation, but it did not deliver. Local government applies the regulations, and it has a great deal of flexibility to do that.

Mr McGOWAN: We may have promised to deliver caravan park regulations but we certainly would not have set regulations such as these -

Mr Omodei: Stop misleading Parliament and frightening old people!

Mr McGOWAN: These regulations attack people living in caravans. The Minister may be a millionaire but these people are not!

Mr Omodei: Is it not right that a caravan park owner came to you and offered to work through the issues relating to the caravan park regulations, and your response was that you were not in the business of sorting out problems but you were in the business of embarrassing the Government?

Mr McGOWAN: I do not know where the Minister heard that. It is not true. I will explain the regulations. The principal point relates to annexes. An annexe may not be more than 30cm higher than the caravan to which it is attached. An annexe can be no wider than 3.6m.

Mr Omodei: That is if it is new. If it already exists, it is up to the local government, which has complete flexibility on the application of the regulations. Stop misleading people!

Mr McGOWAN: I will outline exactly what the Minister is doing to these people. He can attack people who live in caravan parks but we will not let him get away with it -

Mr Omodei: You had the opportunity to move a disallowance motion. Why did you not do that?

Mr McGOWAN: The Minister may be a millionaire but these people are not millionaires. The Minister should understand that.

The second requirement is that every park home must have wheels. The third requirement is that if a fence adjoins the caravan it must be no higher than 1.2m, and a storage shed is not to exceed 4 square metres in area. That would be fine if these rules were to be imposed in future. However, the crunch comes towards the end of the Minister's regulations -

Mr Omodei: The regulations were approved by Parliament.

Mr McGOWAN: These regulations will come into effect on 1 July 1998, unless a local authority gives an extension for three years. On 1 July 2001 the regulations are compulsory; there will be no further extension. These rules will apply from 1 July 2001, and that is the end of it.

Mr Omodei: If people build a park home or a caravan park annexe which is greater than the size stipulated, the regulations should apply.

Mr McGOWAN: They are also applied to people who already have set up park homes. These people may have lived in a caravan park for years.

Mr Omodei: Did you raise these issues with the local government in question?

Mr McGOWAN: The Minister's regulations specify certain things -

Mr Omodei: Local government has flexibility to apply the regulations.

Mr McGOWAN: There is no such flexibility. My local authority has issued work orders to people in caravan parks -

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The third reading debate requires members to speak directly to items in the Budget. The member is talking about caravan and camping legislation. I ask him to return to the budget debate.

Mr McGOWAN: I have been referring to the budget of the Department of Local Government -

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not mind the member referring to it, but he must not talk about matters contained in that legislation.

Mr McGOWAN: A line item in the budget indicates that the department has spent a great deal of money on implementing the policy contained in the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Amendment Bill.

These retrospective regulations will apply to everyone living in a caravan or an annexe in the year 2001.

Mr Omodei: That is not correct.

Mr McGOWAN: Maybe the Minister should get a legal opinion, because that is what the regulations do.

Mr Omodei: Why do you not raise those issues with your local government? All you do is go around frightening old people. You are like the member for Armadale over bus fares, who frightened old people - the most vulnerable people in our society.

Mr McGOWAN: Did the Minister not say that pensioners are ripping off the system? *The Geraldton Guardian* ran an article which featured the proprietor of the S Bend Caravan Park. I am not quite sure why it was named that. The proprietor spoke of the impact of these regulations on people living in his caravan park. He said -

These residents, some of whom have lived here for more than ten years, could face losing part of their homes if their home, annex or carport is three inches too big.

The article continues -

Greenough Rivermouth Caravan Park part owner and shire councillor Anne Franks admitted more than 60 long-term residents would be adversely affected by the changes.

I have had letters from people living in caravan parks in which they have set out their particular situations. One disability pensioner wrote to me -

Complying with new bylaws means removal of rear of annexe, causing total loss of bedroom forcing me to sleep on the lounge suite.

Removal of 1½ metres off lounge room from the front of the annexe to bring it back to the size of the caravan is a major job. It entails removing the roof, taking down the front wall . . . and slicing off side walls, one of which has the entrance door.

This is a disability pensioner to whom the Minister is doing this - a person who is not wealthy.

Mr Omodei: Has it actually happened?

Mr McGOWAN: I have another letter.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! Member for Rockingham, Standing Order No 133 states -

No member shall digress from the subject matter of any question under discussion . . .

The question under discussion in the third reading is the items in the Budget. I have been very tolerant in allowing the member to expand his argument with reference to it but I now insist that he get back onto the Budget.

Mr McGOWAN: I really only wanted to talk about the subject of caravan parks. The Budget sets out in the local

government division how the Government has spent money in developing the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act. I would have thought that the expenditure of that money would be a relevant factor to be debated here tonight.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: How the money is to be spent is not covered by the deficiencies that the member sees in the legislation.

Mr McGOWAN: I find it difficult to understand how the Minister's department could have spent money in coming up with these regulations and laws which have had such a dramatic impact on people in need and people who live in caravan parks.

Mr Omodei: A caravan and camping task force with membership from the caravan industry and the whole sector, including local government, worked for a long time on this legislation. The Australian Labor Party, which you represent, failed to introduce the legislation. It was introduced by this Government, which was one of its major achievements to do with local government. The legislation was accepted by all and sundry, including this Parliament. You have the chance to disallow regulations. Why did you not move for disallowance?

Mr McGOWAN: The Minister knows exactly how regulations come before this place.

Mr Omodei: So do you.

Mr McGOWAN: A huge number come before this place. As the Minister would know -

Several members interjected.

Mr McGOWAN: Is one of the major achievements of this Government kicking old people out of their caravans? That is something to be very proud of. The Minister must go home at night, put his feet up in front of the fire and think about how many old people he kicked out of their caravans. I will conclude my remarks -

Mr Omodei: Not before time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order!

Mr McGOWAN: This Government has expended some money in coming up with these regulations. I have discussed this with the former Labor Minister responsible for this area, who said that she was not in the business of attacking old people.

Mr Omodei: Which former Labor Minister?

Mr McGOWAN: The member for Armadale.

Mr Omodei: She was the Minister for Local Government for about five minutes, as I recall.

Mr McGOWAN: She probably achieved more during that time than the Minister has in five years. The Labor Party would not introduce such regulations to do this sort of thing to people.

Debate adjourned, on motion by Mr Barnett (Leader of the House).

*House adjourned at 11.45 pm*

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### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Answers to questions are as supplied by the relevant Minister's office.

#### CHILD CARE FUNDING - OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS

2900. Mr PENDAL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What changes are being proposed for the outside school hours care services funding?
- (2) Do the proposals focus solely on providing funding for placement for work-related child care spaces?
- (3) If yes to (2) above, is the result likely to be that organisations such as the "Karawara Fun Factory" will be excluded from the funding guidelines for their school holiday programs for disadvantaged minority groups?
- (4) If yes to (3) above, and given that the "Fun Factory" has won acclaim for its longstanding holiday programs, how would its funding be provided to continue its valuable community work?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) From 27 April 1998 the Commonwealth government will no longer provide operational subsidies to outside school hours care services. Instead, eligible parents accessing approved Commonwealth outside school hours services may claim Child Care Assistance at a higher level.
- (2) Under Commonwealth guidelines, priority of access is for work-related child care.
- (3) This would depend on how the Commonwealth assess the service.
- (4) The department will continue to support the "Fun Factory" as a Family Support Program.

#### SCHOOL DRUG EDUCATION PROJECT

2910. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

With respect to the teacher training and professional development involved in the School Drug Education Project -

- (a) how many schools have been invited to participate in the intensive program of development for the whole school, or for a specialist teacher?
- (b) how many hours of training and professional development will be involved in the case of -
  - (i) whole of school development; and
  - (ii) specialist teacher training;
- (c) who will provide the training and professional development; and
- (d) who will pay the cost of the training and professional development?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) All schools in WA have been invited to participate.
- (b)
  - (i) approximately 48.5 hours
  - (ii) approximately 32.5 hours
- (c) Training and professional development (for both options) is provided by the School Drug Education Project team, Health Department of WA personnel, local community agencies and the Police Service.
- (d) Whole School Approach: The School Drug Education Project and the schools involved pay 50% each for teacher relief to attend professional development. The School Drug Education Project covers all other costs, e.g. personnel, materials, venue.

Specialist Teacher: The School Drug Education Project pays for teacher relief and all training costs.

#### SCHOOL DRUG EDUCATION PROJECT

2911. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) With respect to the School Drug Education Project -

- (a) which schools will be involved in the pilot of the drug education curriculum materials;
- (b) when will the guide for the use of the existing drug education resources and curricula be available to schools?
- (c) how many, and which schools have adopted policies and guidelines for a whole of school approach to dealing with drug abuse?
- (d) which parents, and how many, will receive the education material being piloted with the new curriculum in Term 1?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) 55 schools will provide detailed feedback by trialling the drug education curriculum materials (list attached). Additionally all of the 270 schools currently participating in the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office Project professional development will be asked for general feedback.
- (b) It has been sent to all schools.
- (c) Without any formal evaluation, WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office Project staff estimate that 90% of participating schools are formulating or rewriting a school drug/health policy, compared to an estimated 30% of other schools which have a drug/health policy. Thus it is estimated that around 500 of our 1200 schools have a school drug policy.
- (d) The Drug Education Home Pack materials for parents will go to the homes of children from the 55 pilot schools. If all 86 teachers from the 55 schools use one Home Pack activity with their class of 30 students, then 2,580 parents will be involved in the trial.

#### School Drug Education Project

##### Teacher Support Document Trial Schools

1. Adam Road Primary School
2. Applecross Primary School
3. Applecross Senior High School
4. Armadale Christian College
5. Ashburton Drive Primary School
6. Attadale Primary School
7. Ballajura Community College
8. Belmont Senior High School
9. Brookton District High School
10. Broome Senior High School
11. Bunbury Senior High School
12. Carmel School
13. Challis Primary School
14. Chidlow Primary School
15. Christ the King School
16. Clarkson Primary School
17. Cooina Primary School
18. Coolbellup Primary School
19. Dawson Park Primary School
20. Floreat Park Primary School
21. Girrawheen Senior High School
22. Gooseberry Hill Primary School
23. Guildford Grammar Prep School
24. Heathridge Primary School
25. Highgate Primary School
26. Infant Jesus School
27. Inglewood Primary School
28. Jerramungup District High School
29. John Septimus Roe
30. Joondalup Primary School
31. Kelmscott Primary School
32. Lake Monger Primary School
33. Lancelin Primary School
34. Lymburner Primary School
35. Margaret River Primary School
36. Matthew Gibney Catholic Primary School
37. Meekatharra District High School
38. Midvale Primary School
39. Mindarie Primary School
40. North Albany Senior High School

41. Northcliffe District High School
42. Out Lady of Fatima
43. Parkerville Primary School
44. Perth College
45. Perth Modern Senior High School
46. Port Kennedy Primary School
47. Quintillian School
48. Rossmoyne Senior High School
49. Sacred Heart School
50. Santa Maria College
51. Scotch College
52. Servite College
53. South Hedland Primary School
54. St Francis Xavier Primary School
55. St Hilda's Anglican Girl's School
56. St Jude's Catholic Primary School
57. St Mary's Anglican Girl's School
58. St Mary's College
59. St Matthew's School
60. St Munchins Catholic Primary School
61. Ursula Frayne Catholic College
62. York Pre-Primary

#### SCHOOL DRUG EDUCATION PROJECT

2912. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) With respect to the School Drug Education Project -
  - (a) how many persons will be members of the Community Drug Service Teams; and
  - (b) what skills and expertise will they be expected to have?
- (2) What is the role of the Community Drug Service Teams?
- (3) What is the funding for the Community Drug Service Teams, and who provides it?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) The School Drug Education Project and the Community Drug Service Teams are separate services.
  - (a) There are six people in each metropolitan team and between three and seven in country teams (the larger numbers are where other services have been combined with the core team).
  - (b) Counselling and community development skills are the core skills.
- (2) The teams have both a treatment and prevention focus and provide:
  - general alcohol and drug counselling services;
  - support to other health and welfare providers to manage alcohol and other drug problems among their clients (through shared case management, consultation and education activities); and
  - support to the local community to prevent alcohol and other drug problems.

In implementing these services, the teams will provide a particular focus on:

  - early intervention and family support;
  - support for schools dealing with drug abuse incidents;
  - outreach counselling for youth;
  - attention to specific local problems (such as solvent abuse);
  - support for Local Drug Action Groups;
  - support for regional coordination.
- (3) The total cost of each team is:

#### METROPOLITAN

SOUTH METRO	\$272,000
NORTH METRO	\$272,000
NORTH EAST METRO	\$272,000
SOUTH EAST METRO	\$272,000

## REGIONAL

	Total	WADSO contribution	Health contribution
SOUTH WEST	\$188,700	\$188,700	
GREAT SOUTHERN	\$207,600	\$168,600	\$39,000
GOLDFIELDS	\$238,600	\$238,600	
GASCOYNE/MURCHISON	\$376,000	\$287,000	\$89,000
KIMBERLEY	\$277,750	\$238,750	\$39,000
PILBARA	\$410,707	\$328,707	\$82,000

The WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office provides \$2,538,357. The Health Department provides \$249,000.

## PARENT EDUCATION COURSES

2913. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What are the existing parent education courses being provided to schools?
- (2) Who provides the courses?
- (3) To which schools is each course provided?
- (4) What is the total funding for each course, and what percentage is provided by Government sources?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1)-(2) The Health Department provides "Drugs in Perspective" train the trainer courses and the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office funds courses through the non government agencies Palmerston, Cyrenian, Holyoake and Life Education.
- (3) Courses are provided through the community including schools. Any schools can arrange to access a course.
- (4) The total funding from WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office is \$50,000 and a similar level of resources are provided by the Health Department, where the courses are delivered by a number of staff.

## SCHOOL DRUG EDUCATION PROJECT

2914. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What evaluations of the School Drug Education Project have been conducted?
- (2) Who conducted the evaluations?
- (3) What was the cost of each evaluation?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) At this stage, a pre-test questionnaire (based on the Principles of Best Practice in School Drug Education document produced by the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office Taskforce) is implemented with each school which begins the program. A post-test questionnaire will be given to the schools at the end of their 12 month involvement which will begin at the end of Semester 1 in 1998. This is implemented by the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office Project staff. Additionally, all training provided by WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office Program staff is evaluated at the completion of each course providing qualitative and quantitative feedback.
- (2) A full evaluation plan has been formulated by the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office Project Management Group in liaison with Education Department of WA staff. A tender process is currently under way to ensure that an external and independent organisation is responsible for this evaluation.
- (3) Cost of the evaluation has not yet been finalised.

## SCHOOL DRUG EDUCATION PROJECT

2915. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What is the total cost of the School Drug Education Project to date?

- (2) Who provided the funds?
- (3) What are the projected costs over the next five years?
- (4) Who will provide the funds over the next five years?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) \$1,719,000 to the end of the 1997/98 financial year.
- (2) The Government of Western Australia through the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office.
- (3) Approximately \$5.3 million as intensive implementation continues for 1998, 1999 and 2000 and then a lower level of activity is maintained thereafter.
- (4) The Government of Western Australia through the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office.

#### PARENT DRUG INFORMATION HANDBOOK

2917. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) How many copies of the Parent Drug Information Handbook were published?
- (2) How many households received a copy of the Handbook?
- (3) What was the cost of the mailout?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) A total of 775,000 booklets have been published.
- (2) 728,245 booklets were delivered to households in Western Australia.
- (3) The cost of the direct mail delivery was \$45,227.

#### FREMANTLE HOSPITAL - CARDIAC SURGERY UNIT

2938. Dr CONSTABLE to the Premier:

Further to part 2(b) of your answer to Question on Notice 2317 of 1997 -

- (a) where in the report by Professors Hickie and Baird, and Dr Keaney, do the authors discuss the issue of a third (as opposed to a second) public cardiac surgery unit at Fremantle Hospital; and
- (b) will the Premier confirm that the report never considered, let alone recommended, the establishment of a third (as opposed to a second) public cardiac surgery unit at Fremantle Hospital?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a)-(b) The authors in their report to the Health Department of WA made the following recommendations in regards to the venue of a third public cardiac surgery unit at Fremantle Hospital.

Extract from Sir Charles Gairdner Cardiothoracic Surgery Review Recommendations:

- 1. The cardiothoracic surgeons undertake, as a matter of urgency, a review of their organisation to improve their own productivity and services to patients. As a minimum this should include consideration of the division of work between the Royal Perth, Sir Charles Gairdner and Fremantle Hospitals for the management of public patients on the waiting list.
- 12. The Royal Perth Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and Fremantle Hospital be directed to set up and provide regularly adequate data re waiting lists, cancellations, length of stays, DRG's, case mix, operative mortality and redo rates in cardiothoracic surgery and cardiology.
- 13. The Royal Perth Hospital, Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and Fremantle Hospital monitor the cost of the cardiac and cardiothoracic departments and their procedures on an ongoing basis and report same to the Health Department.

These recommendations clearly raised the issue of Fremantle Hospital being considered for the establishment of a third public cardiac surgery unit.



## TRAFFIC INFRINGEMENTS - REVENUE

2940. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Police:

In the last financial year -

- (a) how much revenue has been raised from traffic infringements;
- (b) what was the cost in terms of time and equipment in raising the revenue;
- (c) how much police time has been allocated to -
  - (i) traffic offences; and
  - (ii) other offences?

Mr DAY replied:

- (a) Ministry of Justice figures show \$13,046,423 as at 17 March 1998.
- (b) The Western Australia Police Service does not have systems to continually monitor police officers' time against different activities. However, an activity survey was conducted in June/July 1997 as part of the development of Output Based Management. The survey involved monitoring the activities of police officers at 49 police stations across the State for a seven day period. The output of Traffic Management and Road Safety accounted for approximately 18% of the total police effort over this period.
- (c)
  - (i) Approximately 18%
  - (ii) Approximately 28%

## BANKWEST - BRANCH CLOSURES

2941. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

I refer the Premier to the decision taken by BankWest to close its branches in Carnamah, Koorda, Nungarin, Dowerin and Bruce Rock and the prospect of further closures in Corrigin, Narembeen and Morawa and ask -

- (a) were these closures mooted as part of the sale of the 'State Bank';
- (b) how does the reduction of banking services being provided by BankWest in country centres meet the obligations set out in the Banks articles of association; and
- (c) what action will the Government take to support those living in country Western Australia who are seeking to reverse the Bank's decisions to close branches?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a) No. It was not the Government's expectation that the form and delivery of banking services would always remain the same.
- (b) The Bank of Western Australia Act 1995 amended the bank's articles of association to require the bank to carry on in Western Australia a banking business of substantially the same type as, and on a scale not significantly less than the banking business conducted by the Bank of Western Australia Ltd immediately before the day of privatisation. As with other banks, BankWest is continually readdressing the way it delivers banking services. This has led to branch closures, both before and after privatisation. In recent times changes in customer behaviour and technology, combined with pressures on the banks' margins, have led to Australian banks having to reassess the role of branches and the manner in which banking services can be efficiently delivered. BankWest has advised that 75% of customer initiated transactions are now outside the branch network principally through EFTPOS, ATMs and phone banking.

BankWest has established super agencies in Carnamah, Koorda, Nungarin and Bruce Rock in which it has closed branches. BankWest has advised that it does not have a branch at Dowerin. BankWest also provides access to card-based services through Australia Post's giroPost in some towns. These arrangements should meet the bulk of customers' day to day needs. Separate arrangements may be required to access less frequently used specialist banking services.

With respect to any future branch closures, BankWest advises that the branch network is constantly under review.

- (c) The Government aims to ensure that those living in country Western Australia have access to banking services appropriate to their day-to-day needs consistent with modern technology. The Regional Financial Services Task Force, chaired by Max Trenorden, recently reported to the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Fair Trading with a number of recommendations aimed at minimising the impacts on country communities resulting from changes in the provision of financial services.

#### SUICIDES - ROCKINGHAM

2942. Mr McGOWAN to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What are the services currently available in Rockingham for people contemplating suicide?
- (2) How do these services compare with other similar areas?
- (3) Does the Government propose to improve the counselling services in the Rockingham area for people contemplating suicide?
- (4) Will the Government be addressing this issue further in the future?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) The services to people contemplating suicide are provided by a number of individuals and organisations in Rockingham. To be effective there needs to be a whole of community approach to this issue. I will list a number of relevant services in the Rockingham area.

#### Mental Health:

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services are provided in the Rockingham area. They specifically have an 0.5 FTE community mental health nurse in the Rockingham area dedicated for early assessment, which includes young people with suicidal ideation (the other 0.5 FTE component provides services in Fremantle). They can respond within 24 hours. They have a number of clinical staff providing therapeutic services to young people.

Adult Services: The adult service has a dedicated Suicide Intervention Officer for assessment and short term intervention. The Acute Team of Rockingham Kwinana Psychiatric Service (Adult programme) provides assessment and short term intervention for people in acute situations where there is a psychiatric component to their presentation. They are able to respond within 48 hours to referrals.

Psychogeriatric Services are presently provided in the Rockingham area from Armadale/Kelmscott Health Service. They provide both community and inpatient services for the elderly who have suicidal ideation.

Psychiatric Emergency Team: presently provide a psychiatric emergency service to assess people, make appropriate referrals and provide clinical intervention. They are funded to provide an emergency response to the Rockingham area.

Fremantle Hospital Emergency Department has a Suicide Intervention Officer who provides extended hours (i.e. 7 days a week) service. They are able to assess and ensure follow up for people from the Rockingham area who are admitted to Fremantle Hospital.

Other Agencies: There are a number of general agencies providing counselling for people who are contemplating suicide in the Rockingham area. Services that can be involved for people with suicidal ideation include general practitioners, school education guidance officers and school nurses, Alcohol & Drug Authority, Relationships Australia, youth workers, Youth Link.

Rockingham Kwinana District Hospital provides a medical assessment for people with extreme suicidal ideation or people who have attempted self harm.

Primary Care: General Practitioners play a significant role in the identification and provision of a range of services to people contemplating suicide.

- (2) The services in the Rockingham area are similar to areas in Perth where there is a high population growth without commensurate development of social welfare services. This would include areas such as Joondalup in the north and Armadale in the east.
- (3) The improvement in counselling services in the Rockingham area for people contemplating suicide is a shared responsibility. The two statutory agencies which most affect this are the Health Department of WA (HDWA) and Family & Children's Services (F&CS).

The following initiative are being implemented by the Mental Health Division of HDWA -

There will be an increase in child and adolescent mental health services in July, 1998. This will witness the development of the Rockingham Kwinana Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service under the auspices of the Rockingham Kwinana Health Service. There will be an increase in clinical staff to provide assessment and therapeutic services.

There will be a significant increase in mental health services for older people from 1 July, 1998. This will witness the development of a Rockingham Kwinana/Peel Community based team and Mobile Day Hospital. This will significantly improve the services for older people who are contemplating suicide. This service will be comprehensive.

The Rockingham Kwinana Psychiatric Adult Service has prioritised therapeutic services as being in need of development. The Mental Health Division is presently planning the devolution of the Psychiatric Emergency Team which should enable a regional response to people presenting in emergency situations. This should significantly enhance the ability of people to be provided with a timely response.

The Rockingham Kwinana Division of General Practice has attended a number of initiatives to increase the assessment and intervention skills of General Practitioners in the area of suicide prevention. There is a working group in the Rockingham area which comprises a number of staff from relevant agencies and the Rockingham Kwinana Division of General Practitioners. This working group is specifically addressing the issue of improvement of services to people who are at risk of suicide.

- (4) A number of the new initiatives including increased service delivery in the Rockingham area, have been initiated within the last 12 months. These initiatives, particularly HDWA increases in clinical service and the Rockingham Kwinana Division of General Practice's involvement in the area of suicide prevention will be ongoing.

The South West Metropolitan Corridor is presently planning health services for the next three to five years. The report will be released in June, 1998. At this stage the growth funding available in the 1998/99 financial year through the Mental Health Division has yet to be allocated. The purchasing plan of the Mental Health Division will be developed in May, 1998 for the 1998/99 financial year. The Mental Health Division has commissioned an extensive planning project to address the mental health needs of Aboriginal people in the South West Metropolitan Corridor. This should be released in May, 1998.

#### CRIME RATES

2951. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Police:

In relation to the State's crime rate for the year 1995, the third full year of a Liberal Government -

- (a) what was the number of motor vehicles stolen;
- (b) what was the number of break and enter offences reported;
- (c) what was the number of assaults reported;
- (d) what was the number of assaults against police reported;
- (e) what was the number of stealing with violence (including armed robbery) reported;
- (f) what was the number of drug offences reported;
- (g) what was the number of damage offences reported; and
- (h) what was the total number of offences reported to Police?

Mr DAY replied:

The Commissioner of Police has provided the following information for the calendar year, 1995:

- (a) 17857
- (b) 61001
- (c) 12177
- (d) 938
- (e) 1412
- (f) 10325
- (g) 37909
- (h) 236857

#### CRIME RATES

2952. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Police:

In relation to the State's crime rate for the year 1996, the forth full year of a Liberal Government -

- (a) what was the number of motor vehicles stolen;
- (b) what was the number of break and enter offences reported;
- (c) what was the number of assaults reported;
- (d) what was the number of assaults against police reported;
- (e) what was the number of stealing with violence (including armed robbery) reported;
- (f) what was the number of drug offences reported;
- (g) what was the number of damage offences reported; and
- (h) what was the total number of offences reported to Police?

Mr DAY replied:

Figures provided are for a calendar year.

- (a) 14195
- (b) 56083
- (c) 13622
- (d) 1004
- (e) 1749
- (f) 13214
- (g) 39900
- (h) 233986

#### HEROIN OVERDOSES

2954. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister Family and Children's Services:

In the calendar year 1997 -

- (a) how many people died of a heroin overdose in each month; and
- (b) how many people were revived each month by ambulance workers through the use of NARCAN?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) The number of suspected heroin overdose related deaths in each month for 1997 is as follows. It is noted that these are not all confirmed by Coroner's determination.

January	2
February	7
March	11
April	9
May	5
June	9
July	9
August	6
September	7
October	6
November	2
December	10

- (b) Narcan was introduced at the end of July 1997. It is administered when the patient is unconscious with inadequate or no respiration. The number of people administered Narcan in each month for which it was available in 1997 were as follows:

August	32
September	22
October	30
November	20
December	35

#### DRUG STRATEGY - EFFECTIVENESS

2955. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the State Government's strategy -

- (a) what month was the strategy launched;

- (b) what was the total cost of the Drug Strategy pamphlet that was sent to every home in Western Australia in 1997; and
- (c) what criteria is being used to gauge the effectiveness of the pamphlet?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) June 1997.
- (b) \$270,000.
- (c) Feedback from the public which has been very positive. Additionally the *Drug Aware* parent booklet has been adopted by the Commonwealth and distributed nationally.

#### HEROIN OVERDOSES

2956. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the State Government's strategy -

- (a) how many people died of a heroin overdose in Western Australia in the following years -
  - (i) 1990;
  - (ii) 1991;
  - (iii) 1992;
  - (iv) 1993;
  - (v) 1994;
  - (vi) 1995;
  - (vii) 1996;
  - (viii) 1997?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- |     |        |      |                           |
|-----|--------|------|---------------------------|
| (a) | (i)    | 1990 | No information available. |
|     | (ii)   | 1991 | No information available. |
|     | (iii)  | 1992 | 26                        |
|     | (iv)   | 1993 | 28                        |
|     | (v)    | 1994 | 46                        |
|     | (vi)   | 1995 | 81                        |
|     | (vii)  | 1996 | 65                        |
|     | (viii) | 1997 | 82                        |

#### DRUG STRATEGY - FUNDING

2957. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the State Government's strategy -

- (a) how much money has been allocated in the 1997-98 State Budget to the fight against drugs;
- (b) how much money has been removed from the Alcohol and Drug Authority since this Government took office;
- (c) what was the budget allocation for the Alcohol and Drug Authority in the years -
  - (i) 1992-93;
  - (ii) 1993-94;
  - (iii) 1994-95;
  - (iv) 1995-96;
  - (v) 1996-97;
  - (vi) 1997-98?
- (d) what were the FTE levels for the Alcohol and Drug Authority in the years -
  - (i) 1992-93;
  - (ii) 1993-94;
  - (iii) 1994-95;
  - (iv) 1995-96;
  - (v) 1996-97;
  - (vi) 1997-98?
- (e) what is the allocation in the current budget for the Western Australian Drug Abuse Strategy office; and
- (f) how many FTE's are attached to this office?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) A total of \$24,176,900 is allocated as indicated below:

Alcohol and Drug Authority	\$8,816,900
Non-government services	5,803,000
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office/Task Force on Drug Abuse	4,652,000
Health Promotion Services (Health Department)	2,609,000
Police Service (Coordination and Projects)	616,000
Healthway (Alcohol and Drug Program)	1,200,000
Ministry of Justice (Substance Abuse Resource Unit)	480,000

Additional funding is also provided, particularly through the Health Department and the Police Service in dealing with the problems of alcohol and drug abuse.

- (b) \$2,198,407 was transferred from the Alcohol and Drug Authority to the Health Department for non-government organisation funding in 1993/94. A transfer of \$530,990 is being made in 1997/98 as responsibility for community support services is moved to the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office (\$306,990) and the Health Department (\$224,000).
- (c) 1992/93 - \$10,071,523  
 1993/94 - \$7,873,116  
 1994/95 - \$8,405,237  
 1995/96 - \$8,332,075  
 1996/97 - \$8,835,311  
 1997/98 - \$8,816,900 (\$8,285,910 following transfers)
- (d) 1992/93 - 163  
 1993/94 - 163  
 1994/95 - 148  
 1995/96 - 146  
 1996/97 - 146  
 1997/98 - 146 (113 following transfers and restructure)
- (e) \$4,652,000 (excluding transfers)  
 \$7,936,900 (with transfers: Alcohol and Drug Authority pending \$306,990; Health NGO services \$2,978,000).
- (f) 15 FTEs.

#### LOCAL DRUG ACTION GROUPS

2958. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the establishing of Local Drug Action Groups -:

- (a) what financial assistance will the "local drug action groups" receive each year;
- (b) are there any full time staff employed to promote the work of "local drug action groups"; and
- (c) If yes to (b) above, how many and where are they located?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Each Local Drug Action Group receives a \$1,000 seeding grant and has access to a project fund of \$80,000 with the maximum grant for projects being \$4,000.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) One full-time staff member is employed at the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office.

#### LOCAL DRUG ACTION GROUPS

2959. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the document headed "Local Drug Action Groups" recently distributed in Western Australia which contained "Examples of Actions Include"-

- (a) what is expected of the group in relation to dot point 5 "supporting the Police to identify street level illicit drug dealers";
- (b) does the Department have a capital works program to achieve Dot Point 9" encouraging alternative recreational activities for youth by, for example, supporting the availability of community meeting places";

- (c) what is the budget for the mentor program under dot point 10 "providing mentors for young people who are having problems";
- (d) in relation to dot point 13 "making a submission on a local liquor licensing application to the Liquor Licensing Tribunal" what training or advice will be given to these groups, so that lawful businesses are not damaged by vexatious applications or objections; and
- (e) in relation to dot point 14 "developing submissions for large local projects or services" are there not in every community numerous government funded groups doing this? If so, are these groups to be defunded?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Police participate in Local Drug Action Groups. Members of the group, like the general public, are encouraged to provide any information they can to assist the police with apprehending drug dealers.
- (b) No.
- (c) This is a suggested initiative for groups and refers to any activity that could be taken voluntarily by members of Local Drug Action Groups working in conjunction with local professional services.
- (d) All liquor licensing applications are advertised in order for the public to be able to make submissions. Local Drug Action Groups are encouraged to take an informed view about such applications in their communities. They are able to receive advice from the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office and/or the Health Promotion Services branch of the Health Department.
- (e) A number of community groups from sporting clubs to welfare associations make submissions for various types of government funding. Local Drug Action Groups can also make such applications. No groups are to be defunded as a result of the work of Local Drug Action Groups.

#### DRUG AWARE BUSINESS PACKAGE

2960. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the Drug Aware Business Package -

- (a) how many businesses received this package;
- (b) what was the cost to the Government for the production and distribution of this package;
- (c) was a private company involved in the development of this package, and if so -
  - (i) what was the name of the company, and
  - (ii) what fee was paid to this company; and
- (d) which company printed the material in the package and what was the cost of printing?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Local Drug Action Groups are responsible for distribution of the Drug Aware Business Pack. To date 150 have been distributed by groups in their local areas.
- (b) \$1,583.
- (c) No. The Willetton Local Drug Action Group developed this package with assistance from the WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office.
- (d) TAFE Publications. Cost as is stated in answer to part (b).

#### DRUG AWARE BUSINESS PACKAGE

2961. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

In relation to the Drug Aware Business Package -

- (a) did every Business Pack contain a Certificate;
- (b) what was the cost of the Certificate; and
- (c) what actions need to take place before a business can hang the Certificate on the wall?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Yes.
  - (b) \$285 for print run of 1000 copies.
  - (c) The pack includes a code of conduct. Businesses who agree to the code qualify for *Drug Aware* business status. The code of conduct consists of:
    - A pledge not to supply tobacco, alcohol, solvents, prescription drugs or analgesics in an irresponsible manner;
    - Product awareness and endeavouring to be educated in all matters pertaining to drug use in the local community;
    - Reporting any inappropriate drug use activity within the vicinity of the *Drug Aware* business;
    - Complying with all relevant legislation covering the sale of products sold by the business and ensuring all employees understand and comply with such legislation;
    - Accepting responsibility for the actions of employees;
    - Encouraging others to become involved in the *Drug Aware* Program; and understanding the long term negative consequences of drug abuse and endeavouring to prevent drug abuse in their local community.
- Once the businesses agree to abide by the code of conduct they receive a certificate of commendation signed by the Minister responsible for WA Drug Abuse Strategy, acknowledging the local business's commitment.

#### CRIME RATES

2962. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Police:

Since the Coalition Government took office has the crime rate in all the major areas of crime statistics shown that our crime problem is now worse?

Mr DAY replied:

Crime statistics for the period 1993/94 - 1996/97 reveal that the incidence of some crimes has decreased, such as sexual assault crimes (9.1%), motor vehicle theft (6.9%) and fraud (8.3%). While the overall number of crimes has increased by 17.3%, the Police Service recorded a 37.7% increase in the number of crimes which have been cleared.

#### MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT

2977. Mr RIEBELING to the Premier:

In relation to motor vehicle theft, is Western Australia ranked No 1 as having the worst crime rate for that crime in Australia as shown by the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission?

Mr COURT replied:

The statistics referred to in the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 1999 Review of State Relatives (Major Submission) were based upon 1995 figures. The statistics since 1995 show a significant improvement. In 1996, motor vehicle theft in Western Australia fell by 22% and was lower than the rate of theft in 1993. During this period, the average rate of motor vehicle theft in Australia increased by 4.8%. All categories of property crime in Western Australia decreased over this period, while the Australian average increased in all but one category. It should be noted that the rate of vehicle ownership in Western Australia is higher than any state or territory and is 13% higher than the Australian average.

#### CRIMES OF THEFT

2978. Mr RIEBELING to the Premier:

In relation to theft other than motor vehicle, is Western Australia ranked No 1 as having the worst crime rate in Australia as shown by the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission?

Mr COURT replied:

The statistics referred to in the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 1999 Review of State Relatives (Major Submission) were based upon 1995 figures. The statistics since 1995 show a significant improvement. In 1996 the rate of other theft decreased by 3.6% while the Australian average increased by 4.8%.



All categories of property crime in Western Australia decreased over this period, while the Australian average increased in all but one category. It should also be noted, that as public satisfaction and confidence in the police service increase, crime reporting rates increase also. However, according to 1996 data which was included in the *Report on Government Services 1998*, the Western Australia Police Service experienced the second highest level of public satisfaction, based on last contact with police, of any Australian state/territory.

#### SEXUAL ASSAULTS - NUMBER

2979. Mr RIEBELING to the Premier:

- (1) In relation to sexual assaults, is Western Australia now ranked No 1 as having the worst crime rate for that crime in Australia as shown by the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission?
- (2) If yes, was Western Australia ranked 3rd in 1993?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) The statistics referred to in the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 1999 Review of State Relatives (Major Submission) were based upon 1995 figures. The statistics since 1995 show a significant improvement. In 1996 Western Australia dropped to third place following a decline in the rate of sexual assault reports, against a national average which had risen by 6.8%.
- (2) Yes, as was the case in 1996.

#### UNLAWFUL ENTRY WITH INTENT

2980. Mr RIEBELING to the Premier:

In relation to unlawful entry with intent - other, is Western Australia ranked No 1 as having the worst crime rate for that crime in Australia as shown by the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission?

Mr COURT replied:

The statistics referred to in the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 1999 Review of State Relatives (Major Submission) were based upon 1995 figures. The statistics since 1995 show a significant improvement. According to 1996 data which was included in the *Report on Government Services 1998*, the rate of this crime in Western Australia decreased by 5.8% while the Australian average increased by 6.1%. Indeed all categories of property crime in WA decreased over this period, while the Australian average increased in all but one category.

#### UNLAWFUL ENTRY WITH INTENT

2981. Mr RIEBELING to the Premier:

In relation to unlawful entry with intent involving the taking of property, is Western Australia ranked No 1 as having the worst crime rate for that crime in Australia as shown by the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission?

Mr COURT replied:

The statistics referred to in the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 1999 Review of State Relatives (Major Submission) were based upon 1995 figures. The statistics since 1995 show a significant improvement. In 1996 the rate of this category of crime in Western Australia decreased by 11.3% against a national average increase of 1.5%.

#### ARMED ROBBERIES

2982. Mr RIEBELING to the Premier:

- (1) In relation to armed robbery, is Western Australia now ranked No 2 as having the second worst crime rate for that crime in Australia as shown by the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission?
- (2) If yes, was Western Australia ranked 5th in 1993?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) The statistics referred to in the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 1999 Review of State Relatives (Major Submission) were based upon 1995 figures. The statistics since 1995 show a significant improvement.

- (2) Yes. However, it is likely that this increase is due, at least in part, to the Coalition Government's crime prevention initiatives, such as the property engraving scheme, and the *Pawnbrokers and Secondhand Dealers Act 1994*, which have reduced the ability of burglars to convert stolen goods into cash. The corollary is that armed robbery has become a more attractive method by which criminals may obtain money. This is supported by figures included in the Western Australia Police Service *Annual Report 1996/97* which show that burglaries have been reduced by 3.7% since 1994/95. The Government will soon be introducing the Weapons Bill 1998, which will in part give police greater powers to deal with the problem of weapons (other than firearms) in the community.

#### DRIVING CAUSING DEATH

2983. Mr RIEBELING to the Premier:

In relation to driving causing death, is Western Australia ranked No 2 as having the second worst crime rate for that crime in Australia as shown by the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission?

Mr COURT replied:

The statistics referred to in the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 1999 Review of State Relatives (Major Submission) were based upon 1995 figures. The statistics since 1995 show a significant improvement. According to 1996 data which was included in the *Report on Government Services 1998*, the rate of this crime in Western Australia decreased by 28% while the Australian average increased by 5.5%.

#### MANSLAUGHTER

2984. Mr RIEBELING to the Premier:

In relation to manslaughter, is Western Australia ranked No 2 as having the second worst crime rate for that crime in Australia as shown by the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission?

Mr COURT replied:

The statistics referred to in the Government's submission to the Commonwealth Grants Commission 1999 Review of State Relatives (Major Submission) were based upon 1995 figures. The statistics since 1995 show a significant improvement. According to 1996 data which was included in the *Report on Government Services 1998*, Western Australia experienced the second lowest rate of manslaughter in Australia following a 75% decrease over 1995.

#### FIXED DEBT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIANS

2986. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of an article that appeared in *The West Australian* newspaper on 19 August 1997 which reported the level of fixed debt of Western Australians had risen by more than 2½ times as fast as that of other Australians?
- (2) Is that report being considered by the Government in relation to family policy?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) If so, what issues are being considered by the Government in relation to the report?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)-(3) No, but Family and Children's Services funds 52 financial counselling services to assist individuals and families make informed decisions about their financially related problems.
- (4) Not applicable.

#### DRUGS STRIKE FORCE TEAM

2988. Mr BROWN to the Premier:

- (1) Has the Premier and/or the State Government made any representations to the Federal Government about a drugs strike force team being placed in Western Australia?
- (2) Has the Government provided a written submission to the Federal Government in this regard?
- (3) When was that submission forwarded to the Federal Government?

- (4) What does the submission seek?
- (5) What response has been received from the Federal Government to the submission?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(5) At the Council of Australian Government's Meeting on 7 November in 1997 I urged the Commonwealth Government to ensure that adequate Australian Federal Police resources, including access to the proposed "strike force teams", be available to Western Australia. Following this the Commonwealth Minister for Justice reviewed the deployment of Australian Federal Police resources with regard to Western Australia and the Northern Territory. The Prime Minister announced on 16 March 1998 that three further teams will be established, one of which will be based in Perth.

#### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AGENCY - REPORT TO THE WOMEN'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

2990. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Further to Question on Notice No 2561 of 1997, can the Minister advise why the Minister and/or her departments and agencies have not referred the Federal Government's decision on the Affirmative Action Agency to the Women's Advisory Council for comment?
- (2) Is there any intention to provide a report to the Women's Advisory Council on the nature of the Federal Government policy decision?
- (3) Has the Women's Advisory Council expressed opposition or reservations about the Affirmative Action Agency or taken a decision that it does not want to be acquainted with information about that Agency?
- (4) If so, when?
- (5) Is the Women's Advisory Council still concerned about women gaining equitable access to senior positions in the public and private sectors?
- (6) If so, why has the Commonwealth's decision on the Affirmative Action Agency not been referred to the Council?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) The initiative to exclude from monitoring those agencies with a high history of compliance in equal opportunity for women was not seen as a negative move. On the contrary, this recognition of good performance allowed for the redirection of resources to those areas where improvement was required.
- (2)-(3) No.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5)-(6) Yes. In its program, the Women's Advisory Council (WAC) is monitoring representation of women on boards and committees and in senior positions. In its consultations the Women's Advisory Council encourages women to actively participate and pursue opportunities which meet their needs. Also see answer under (1).

#### MISSION AUSTRALIA REPORT ON CHILD POVERTY

2993. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of an article that appeared in *The West Australian* on 2 December 1997 concerning a report released by Mission Australia on child poverty?
- (2) Is the Minister aware the article maintained the report blamed rising poverty levels on factors such as the Federal Government's recent child care reforms, high unemployment, changing work patterns which had created a "working poor" of part-time and temporary workers and a growing inability of families to afford housing?
- (3) Has the Minister/Government examined the report and its findings?
- (4) Does the Government concur with the findings?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) Does the Minister/Government intend to discuss the report's finding with the Federal Government?

- (7) If not, why not?
- (8) If so, when?
- (9) Does the Government intend to make any representations to the Federal Government on changing any of its policies to alleviate child poverty?
- (10) If so, what policies will the State Government ask the Federal Government to change?

Mrs PARKER replied:

(1)-(2) Yes.

(3)-(10)

This government was the only government in Australia to respond to the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty. In doing so, it established a taskforce which has recently finalised a draft report. In addressing ways to alleviate poverty, the government is considering the recommendations of that report. In relation to the impact of the Commonwealth Government changes to the funding of the child care industry, I am informed of the industry concerns and specifically discussed these Western Australian issues with the Commonwealth Minister.

#### NURSES - CABINET BRIEFING PAPER

2994. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of an article that appeared in *The West Australian* on 4 December 1997 concerning a briefing paper to the State Cabinet prepared by a senior Health Department Executive Officer?
- (2) Did the paper say the Health Department's strategy was to rush senior nurses into a workplace agreement - away from the current Australian Nursing Federation pay claim of 15% over 2½ years for all nurses?
- (3) If not, what did the paper say in this regard?
- (4) Who prepared the briefing paper?
- (5) Was that person aware of the industrial relations policy and strategy being pursued by the Health Department?
- (6) If so, did the paper properly record the industrial relations strategy being pursued by the Health Department?
- (7) If not, in what way did the paper misreport that strategy?
- (8) Did the Minister have any discussions with senior management in the Health Department about its industrial relations/workplace agreement strategy?
- (9) If so, were those discussions held prior to the publication of the article in *The West Australian* on 4 December 1997?
- (10) On what date or dates were the discussions held?
- (11) Did the Minister receive one or more briefing papers on the Health Department's industrial relations strategy before 4 December 1997?
- (12) How many briefings or briefing papers did the Minister receive before that date?
- (13) In any of the briefing papers or briefings received by the Minister was the strategy to rush senior nurses into a workplace agreement discussed or raised?
- (14) Did the Minister understand that this was the Health Department's policy prior to the article appearing on 4 December 1997?
- (15) If not, what strategy did the Minister understand the Health Department was pursuing with respect to its workplace agreement proposals?
- (16) Did the Minister endorse the Health Department's strategy of trying to rush senior nurses into workplace agreements?
- (17) Did the Minister back the Health Department's proposal to try and have senior nurses enter into workplace agreements?

(18) Exactly what strategy had the Minister endorsed the Health Department pursuing?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3) The paper was a draft paper for discussion within the Industry, as such it covered a broad range of options. This included a summary of the industrial environment facing nursing staff at that time. In this context it was noted that the employers are currently negotiating with the ANF over a 15% wages claim with any settlement applying to all nurses at all levels. It was also recognised that if workplace agreements were to be offered to staff actual take up would be optional, ie acceptance was voluntary. Further, the Union could be a party to a workplace agreement.
- (4) The paper was a draft for discussion prepared in consultation with all employers in the Industry and as such incorporated broad ranging and diverse contributions from within and across the industry.
- (5) Yes. I believe all who contributed to the development of the draft discussion paper were and are aware of the IR strategy being followed within Health industry.
- (6) The draft discussion paper addressed a small sector of the Health Industry, therefore drew on those aspects of the industrial relations strategy being pursued at the time which were relevant.
- (7) Not applicable.
- (8) Routine discussions occur between senior management in the Health Department and myself about its industrial relations strategy throughout the year.
- (9) Naturally discussions on IR Strategy would have occurred before 4 December 1997.
- (10) Various.
- (11) A number of briefing papers on either general IR strategy or specific aspects of the IR strategy have been provided to me before and after 4 December 1997.
- (12) Many, on all kinds of topics.
- (13) No.
- (14) No, because there was no strategy to rush senior nurses into a workplace agreement. The paper referred to was a discussion paper in draft form and was going through normal consultative process within the industry at the time the article appeared in The West Australian.
- (15) I understood that the strategy was to provide all nurses with appropriate packages of salary and conditions. Packages that provided due recognition for efficiency changes and offered productivity increases that were available through Government Wages Policy.
- (16) There was no strategy to rush senior nurses into workplace agreements.
- (17) Workplace agreements are legitimate options available to all employers and employees through both state and federal industrial legislation.
- (18) The strategy is one which incorporates full exploration of options within the industry and can provide appropriate efficiency improvements and productivity sharing between employers and employees. As indicated above the paper referred to was a draft discussion paper and was being circulated within the Industry for comment and amendment prior to being put through the formal submission process.

#### FLEET WEST SALE

2997. Mr BROWN to the Premier:

- (1) Did the Premier issue a media release on 5 December 1997 concerning comments made by the Leader of the Opposition about the State's budgetary position?
- (2) In the media statement did the Premier say that the Government had sold Fleet West for \$86 million in the previous year?
- (3) On what date did the Government receive the \$86 million for Fleet West?

- (4) Did the Government use the funds from the sale of Fleet West to retire debt?
- (5) If so, was all of the amount used?
- (6) If not, what amounts were used for other purposes?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No. The \$86 million referred to FleetWest vehicle sales for the three month period ended 30 September 1996.
- (3) \$115.4 million was paid into the Consolidated Fund during 1996-97 from the sale of the fleet. The \$86 million comprised \$5.0 million received in July 1996, \$71.3 million in August 1996, \$10.2 million in September 1996, with the balance being spread over the remaining months of the year.
- (4)-(6) The \$115.4 million paid into the Consolidated Fund was used to finance new capital works. No central record is maintained of how fleet sales proceeds received by agencies outside the Consolidated Fund were applied.

#### YOUTH SUICIDES - MEASURES TO COMBAT

3001. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of an article that appeared in *The West Australian* on 17 December 1997 concerning suicide being the second highest killer of young men in Western Australia?
- (2) Was the Minister reported in the article as saying the Government had instituted measures to tackle youth suicide including -
  - (a) training school psychologists and youth workers;
  - (b) protocols for hospitals;
  - (c) extension of Samaritan Befrienders 008 Youth Line to country areas;
  - (d) expanded mental health services in city and country areas?
- (3) Can the Minister explain what training or additional training has been provided to school psychologists and youth workers to help deal with suicide prevention?
- (4) What is the nature of the training provided?
- (5) What is the cost of the training?
- (6) How much has the Government contributed to the cost of the training?
- (7) Has the Government provided any funds to the Samaritan Befrienders to enable the 008 Youth Line to be extended to country areas?
- (8) What amount has been provided?
- (9) When (what date) was the money provided?
- (10) Has the State Government made funds available to the Samaritan Befrienders in previous years?
- (11) How much was provided in -
  - (a) 1995-96 financial year;
  - (b) 1996-97 financial year;
  - (c) 1997-98 financial year?
- (12) What was the nature of the service(s) Samaritan Befrienders had to provide for those funds?
- (13) Can the Minister explain what he meant by expanded mental health services in the city or country areas?
- (14) What additional funds, beds and services are now being provided?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) No.
- (3)-(4) The Youth Suicide Advisory Committee (YSAC) provides education and training for a range of

professionals who work with youth including school psychologists and youth workers. Two day workshops cover early identification and referral of youth at risk of suicide and are run throughout the state. 16 courses were run during 1996/97. Supplementary training for key health and education staff is provided on crisis intervention, longer term management, the provision of support to colleagues and critical incident stress debriefing. Schools, other institutions and small or isolated communities are also helped to develop plans to manage the aftermath of a suicide to minimise the likelihood of further suicides.

- (5)-(6) The cost to government in 1996/97 for YSAC to provide education and training was \$88,700. Participants contributed \$13,750, some of which came from government agencies. Government agencies also cover incidental costs, such as travel and accommodation and time away from normal duties, for their staff who participate in training.
- (7) Yes.
- (8) \$31,725.
- (9) 1994/95 and 1996/97.
- (10) Yes.
- (11)
  - (a) \$49,940.
  - (b) \$38,400.
  - (c) \$63,600.
- (12) Extend the 008 youth line to country areas of the state; Develop a youth liaison service; and Co-ordinate the maintenance of networking arrangements to support isolated country workers. The additional funds provided in 1997/98 are on a one off basis to cover the costs of publishing information booklets.
- (13)-(14) The government has increased recurrent funding for mental health services by \$40 million over the three years 1996/97, 1997/98 and 1998/99 and allocated a further \$47 million over 5 years in capital works. Additional clinical services are being provided across the state. There has also been an expansion in support services provided by the non-government sector, the development of university posts to promote applied research and improve training of the mental health workforce, and other initiatives to overcome the shortage of psychiatrists and other professions within the workforce.

#### DEATH PENALTY - EFFECT OF REINTRODUCTION

3010. Mr BROWN to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware of an article that appeared in *The West Australian* newspaper on 29 December 1997 in which the Deputy Prime Minister, Tim Fischer, dismissed Pauline Hanson's proposal to reintroduce the death penalty?
- (2) Is the Premier aware Mr Fischer is reported as saying "when all else fails, politicians turn to capital punishment"?
- (3) Is the Premier aware the article also quoted Mr Fischer as saying that her referendum campaigns over capital punishment would bitterly divide the nation and each State?
- (4) Has the Premier communicated with or does the Premier propose to communicate with the Deputy Prime Minister about the views he has expressed on capital punishment?
- (5) If so, what was the nature of their communication?
- (6) In any communication did the Premier indicate his opposition or disagreement with the comments made?
- (7) If not, does the Premier intend to communicate with the Deputy Prime Minister on this matter?
- (8) If not, why not?
- (9) Is the Premier also aware of comments made in the same article by the President of the Australian Council of Civil Liberties, Mr Terry O'Gorman?
- (10) Is the Premier aware Mr O'Gorman referred to a recent study by the International Commission of Jurists showing that in the United States of America the increased use of capital punishment had coincided with the rise in the crime rate?
- (11) Does the Premier intend to ask the Attorney General to examine that report?

(12) If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

(1)-(12)

I am aware of the comments made by both Mr Fischer and Mr O'Gorman. There aren't any plans to conduct a referendum on capital punishment in Western Australia. A referendum would only be held if the Government was convinced there was sufficient public support for such an action.

#### PAYROLL TAX THRESHOLD

3011. Mr BROWN to the Premier:

- (1) Is the Premier aware of the Queensland Government's latest changes to payroll tax?
- (2) Has the Queensland Government lifted its exemption rate to \$850,000?
- (3) If not, what is the figure below which employers do not pay payroll tax?
- (4) Does the Western Australian Government intend to increase its payroll tax threshold to the Queensland level?
- (5) If so, when?
- (6) If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(3) I am advised that the annual wages exemption threshold for payroll tax purposes in Queensland is \$850,000.
- (4)-(6) Since coming to office, the Government has already increased the annual payroll tax exemption threshold in Western Australia substantially, from \$375,000 in 1993 to \$675,000 currently. This is the second highest of the States (excluding the ACT), behind Queensland. The high cost (estimated by Treasury to be around \$26 million per annum), and difficult budgetary circumstances facing the State, preclude a further increase in the exemption threshold to the same level as in Queensland, at least in the short term.

#### STATE FINANCE - EX GRATIA PAYMENTS

3016. Mr BROWN to the Premier:

- (1) Can the Premier advise how many ex-gratia payments were made by the Government in the -
  - (a) 1996-97;
  - (b) 1997-98 financial years?
- (2) What was the amount of each payment?
- (3) What was the reason for each payment?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(3) The information sought is not held centrally and is, in fact, spread across all agencies in the public sector. The statutory requirements governing act of grace payments are stringent and the member may wish to refer to Section 58B, Regulation 25 and Treasurer's Instruction 319 of the Financial Administration and Audit Act (1985) for further information. In broad terms, the relevant Minister can approve act of grace payments up to a maximum of \$2,000, and the Treasurer can approve payments of up to \$50,000, with payments in excess of \$50,000 also requiring the approval of the Governor. The request for information on every individual act of grace payment made during 1996-97 and 1997-98 would require a considerable amount of administrative effort to collate and, in the circumstances, I am not prepared to devote valuable resources to such a task. However, should the member require details of a specific act of grace payment or payments, I will arrange for that information to be made available.

#### ASIAN CURRENCY CRISIS - EFFECT ON WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ECONOMY

3017. Mr BROWN to the Premier:

- (1) Have any of the departments or agencies under the Minister's control assessed the degree to which the Asian currency crisis will affect the Western Australian economy?
- (2) If so, what is their latest assessment?



- (3) If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Treasury Department is continually monitoring the impact of the financial crisis in Asia. The latest assessment is contained in Chapter 2 of Budget Paper No.3 "1998/99 Economic and Fiscal Overview". In addition, in March 1998 the Treasury published a discussion paper titled "Economic Developments in East Asia - Implications for the Western Australian Economy". The analysis in that paper is still relevant.
- (3) Not applicable.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES - CONTRACTS

3024. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services; Seniors; Women's Interests:

- (1) In any of the departments or agencies under the Minister's control, are there any plans to contract out to the private sector any services or functions currently being carried out by the public sector workforce?
- (2) Have any plans been made to contract such work out over the course of 1998?
- (3) What work is planned to be contracted out?
- (4) Has any department or agency contracted any work out since 1 July 1997?
- (5) What work has been contracted out?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1)-(5) As part of normal business management, government departments and agencies continuously review opportunities to improve the efficiency of services and functions currently being carried out by the public sector workforce. This includes consideration of contracting out to the private sector. The Government's approach is that the decision to contract out services and functions is made at agency level to suit agency needs. Since July 1997 many agencies have contracted out work previously performed by the public sector workforce. This ranges from small and routine functions contracted out to release skilled public sector staff for higher value work in their agencies, to significant out sourcing projects where moving functions and staff to the private sector has resulted in better service and value for money to the community. Agencies normally disclose their key contracting processes as part of their annual reporting process.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES - CONTRACTS

3028. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Local Government; Disability Services:

- (1) In any of the departments or agencies under the Minister's control, are there any plans to contract out to the private sector any services or functions currently being carried out by the public sector workforce?
- (2) Have any plans been made to contract such work out over the course of 1998?
- (3) What work is planned to be contracted out?
- (4) Has any department or agency contracted any work out since 1 July 1997?
- (5) What work has been contracted out?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1)-(5) As part of normal business management, government departments and agencies continuously review opportunities to improve the efficiency of services and functions currently being carried out by the public sector workforce. This includes consideration of contracting out to the private sector. The Government's approach is that the decision to contract out services and functions is made at agency level to suit agency needs. Since July 1997 many agencies have contracted out work previously performed by the public sector workforce. This ranges from small and routine functions contracted out to release skilled public sector staff for higher value work in their agencies, to significant out sourcing projects where moving functions and staff to the private sector has resulted in better service and value for money to the community. Agencies normally disclose their key contracting processes as part of their annual reporting process.

## CAR IMMOBILISER SUBSIDY

3045. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Since the Government introduced the car immobiliser subsidy, how many people have applied for the subsidy?
- (2) How many people have been granted the subsidy?
- (3) At 1 January 1998, what is the Government's estimate of the number of registered road vehicles that do not have electronic locking and alarm systems or immobilisers?
- (4) What percentage of older car owners have taken the opportunity to apply and obtain the car immobiliser subsidy?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) 36,360 applications had been received for vehicle immobilisers at 31 March, 1998.
- (2) 32,885 applicants had been granted the subsidy at 31 March, 1998. The variance between the figures equals the number of applications which did not meet the eligibility criteria.
- (3)-(4) This information is unfortunately not easily available, and I am not prepared to authorise the significant level of resources required to obtain this information.

## GENDER BIAS TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

3050. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Women's Interests:

- (1) When does the Government plan to implement the recommendations of the Chief Justice's Gender Bias Task Force?
- (2) Has any gender bias training been carried out for Judges and Magistrates?
- (3) If not, does the Government intend to implement this recommendation?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) A Report on Implementation by Government of Recommendations contained in the Chief Justice's Taskforce Report on Gender Bias has been compiled by the Women's Policy Development Office in conjunction with the Ministry of Justice in April 1997.
- (2) Yes. Training of Judges and Magistrates is the responsibility of the Chief Justice.
- (3) Not applicable.

## SCHOOL DRUG EDUCATION PROJECT

3062. Ms McHALE to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

I refer to the Strategy Against Drug Abuse Action Plan *Together Against Drugs* and ask -

- (a) what funds have been committed for the School Drug Education Project;
- (b) how many teachers are anticipated to attend the training and professional development through the 1998-99 calendar years;
- (c) what special provisions have been made for country teachers to attend the training;
- (d) when does the Government anticipate that the drug education curriculum material will be finalised;
- (e) will any schools in the electorate of Thornlie be included in the piloting of the drug education curriculum material; and
- (f) when will the guide for policy development be ready?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) The 1997-98 allocation for the School Drug Education Project is \$1,463,000.
- (b) 170 teachers will be provided with training directly from the School Drug Education Project in each of the calendar years 1998 and 1999. Additionally, the School Drug Education Project is establishing regional

school drug education networks in the second half of 1998 and trained teachers will provide further professional development for other teachers in their local areas through these networks.

- (c) Teacher relief funds are included for all schools participating in training. Training is provided in country locations.
- (d) The pilot drug education curriculum materials are currently being piloted in 55 schools and will be developed over the remainder of 1998 to be available to all schools at the beginning of the 1999 school year.
- (e) Yes. Maddington Senior High School.
- (f) At the beginning of Term 3, 1998.

#### WATER CORPORATION LOAN REPAYMENT

3065. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:

- (1) Would the Premier explain why the substantial \$151 million loan repayment from the Water Corporation to the Consolidated Fund, as described in the December 1997 Monthly Summary of Consolidated Fund Transactions, was not included in the 1997-98 Budget estimates?
- (2) Did the Premier request that \$151 million be recouped from the Water Corporation in the 1997-98 financial year?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) The capital receipt of \$151 million received from the Water Corporation represented an accelerated repayment of principal on the Corporation's General Loan Fund debt which is serviced centrally from the Consolidated Fund. The capacity of the Corporation to make an accelerated principal repayment in 1997-98 was not known at the time of formulating the 1997-98 budget, which was tabled and approved before the commencement of the 1997-98 financial year.
- (2) No.

#### EXMOUTH RESORT AND CANAL DEVELOPMENT - 1995 MEETING

3079. Mr BROWN to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Further to question on notice No. 1687 of 1997, on what date did the 1995 meeting occur?
- (2) Did the Western Australian Tourism Commission, or any member of it, acquaint the Minister with what transpired at the meeting?
- (3) Did the Western Australian Tourism Commission, or any member of it, provide any report, information or advice, verbal or otherwise, to the Minister regarding the proposal by Trade Centre Pty Ltd during any time in 1995?
- (4) Did the Minister receive any information or have any involvement in any meetings or other discussions regarding the proposal by Trade Centre Pty Ltd in 1995?
- (5) If so, what was that advice or involvement?
- (6) In 1996, did the Minister -
  - (a) receive any advice;
  - (b) participate in any meetings;
  - (c) receive any information,
 on the proposal by Trade Centre Pty Ltd?
- (7) If so, what -
  - (a) advice;
  - (b) meetings;
  - (c) information,
 did the Minister attend/receive?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1) 1 March 1995.

- (2)-(3) Yes. A briefing note was sent by the Western Australian Tourism Commission to my office.
- (4) Not that I recall.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6)-(7) I had a number of meetings with the Directors of Trade Centre Pty Ltd during 1996 and was advised of their proposals. Officers of the Western Australian Tourism Commission provided me with regular briefings regarding the Gascoyne region which included references to the proposed Tantabiddy development. As well, I received specific advice regarding the processes required to progress the release of any land in the vicinity of Tantabiddy Creek.

#### EXMOUTH RESORT AND CANAL DEVELOPMENT - MINISTERIAL INFORMATION

3085. Mr BROWN to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Further to question on notice 1690 of 1997, had the Minister had any discussions with the Minister for Lands and/or LandCorp about the proposed West Coast development prior to visiting Exmouth on 6 October 1996?
- (2) If not, where did the Minister obtain the information he relayed to the Shire of Exmouth that he understood LandCorp to be concerned about the ability of Exmouth to sustain the two large scale developments simultaneously?
- (3) Was that information obtained from -
- (a) LandCorp;
  - (b) the Minister for Lands;
  - (c) other (please specify)?
- (4) If so, when?
- (5) Who obtained the information?
- (6) Who communicated the information to the Minister?
- (7) Did the Minister check, or have cause to be checked, whether the information provided to him was correct?
- (8) Did the Minister check, or have cause to be checked, with LandCorp whether his understanding of LandCorp's position was correct?
- (9) If so, what mechanisms did the Minister use for this purpose?
- (10) Exactly what information did the Minister have to support the statement he made at the time that he understood LandCorp's position to be one of concern about the ability of Exmouth to sustain two large scale developments simultaneously?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1) Yes. The answer given to part (8) of Question 1690 is incorrect. I met the Minister for Lands on 27 August 1996.
- (2) My assessment was based on my own judgement about the acceptability of development proposals at North West Cape.
- (3)-(6) Not applicable.
- (7)-(8) I am not aware of any information being provided to me (refer to (2) above).
- (10) See (2) above.

#### TANTABIDDY CREEK DEVELOPMENT

3087. Mr BROWN to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of a Western Australian Tourism Commission facsimile dated 23 July 1996 to one Eugene Stankevicius who advises the Minister and the Tourism Commission Chief Executive Officer to progress the release of the site of the Tantabiddy Creek Development?
- (2) Does the facsimile accurately record the Minister's position at the time?

- (3) If not, what instructions or advice had been provided by the Minister at the time in relation to this particular site?
- (4) Did the Minister request arrangements be made for a meeting with the Minister and three other Ministers about the project?
- (5) Did the Minister request such a meeting?
- (6) For what purpose was the meeting requested?
- (7) Did the meeting take place?
- (8) On what date did the meeting take place?
- (9) Who attended the meeting?
- (10) Were any decisions, understandings or arrangements made at the meeting?
- (11) What decisions, understandings or arrangements were made at the meeting?
- (12) What was the outcome of the meeting?
- (13) Did the Minister discuss the outcome of the meeting with the Premier?
- (14) Did the Minister discuss this project with the Premier -
  - (a) before;
  - (b) after;
  - (c) both before and after,the meeting?
- (15) On what dates did such discussion(s) occur?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1)-(2) Yes.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4)-(5) Yes.
- (6) To discuss the possible release of land to expressions of interest near Tantabiddy.
- (7) Yes.
- (8) 27 August 1996.
- (9) Hon Richard Lewis, Hon Graham Kierath and myself.
- (10) Not that I recall.
- (11)-(12) Not applicable.
- (13) Not that I recall.
- (14)-(15) Not applicable.

#### TANTABIDDY CREEK DEVELOPMENT

3089. Mr BROWN to the Parliamentary Secretary for the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Did the Minister attend the meeting with other Ministers on 27 August 1996 to discuss the Tantabiddy Creek Development?
- (2) What other Ministers attended the meeting?
- (3) Who else attended the meeting?
- (4) Were any agreements, arrangements or understandings reached at the meeting?
- (5) What was the nature of the agreements, arrangements or understandings reached at the meeting?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Richard Lewis, Minister for Planning.  
Graham Kierath, Minister for Lands.
- (3) Simon Proud.
- (4) Not that I recall.
- (5) Not applicable.

#### OFFICE OF SENIORS INTERESTS - TENDERS

3094. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Seniors:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of an article that appeared in *The West Australian* on 5 January 1998 concerning the Office of Seniors Interests calling for tenders to sponsor its key functions?
- (2) Have tenders been called for?
- (3) How many tenders have been called for?
- (4) What is the nature of each tender?
- (5) Have expressions of interest been called for?
- (6) What is the nature of each expression of interest?
- (7) When do tenders and expressions of interest close?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)-(7) A single Request for Proposal for the provision of sponsorship for the Office of Seniors Interests was called for by the Department of Contract and Management Services. The sponsorship package advertised for 1998 covers the following programs:

Seniors Card Recreation and Leisure Discount Directory  
Seniors Card  
Seniors News Bulletin/Newsletter  
Seniors Card Activity Days at shopping centres

The use of sponsorship will enable the Office of Seniors Interests to expand and promote its public awareness campaign towards positive and healthy ageing for seniors throughout Western Australia. Organisations are invited to participate as a major sponsor or sponsors to directly fund all or a specific program to promote and market the initiatives and activities of the Office of Seniors Interests to seniors throughout the State. The closing date for proposals was Thursday, 8 January 1998.

#### DELTA PROGRAM

3104. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

- (1) What stage has the Delta program reached?
- (2) What are the future steps of the Delta program?
- (3) Will the Minister provide a business plan for Delta's further implementation?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) The Delta program is an ongoing and continuous process of organisational improvement.
- (2) There are many projects which are currently being planned, or already in the implementation stage, as part of the Delta program.

Major projects include:

a new resource management information system;  
a new Emergency Call Taking, Dispatch and Communications Platform;  
the Year 2000 (Millennium Bug) project;

reformation of the Performance Management system;  
the new Traffic Enforcement Program;  
the Core Functions project; and  
implementation of the recommendations arising from the Investigative Practices Review.

- (3) See (2). A briefing can be arranged to inform the member of the implementation details of specific projects listed, if desired.

#### HIGH SPEED POLICE CHASES - DRIVER TRAINING

3105. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

Given the recent Coroner's findings on the deaths of two young people involved in a high speed police pursuit, will the Minister detail how the Police Service will improve the training of police drivers in line with the Coroner's suggestion?

Mr DAY replied:

Currently, sworn members successfully completing the Advance Car Course are issued with a Certificate of Proficiency. This certificate qualifies that member to participate in Priority 1 response which includes Pursuit. To qualify, police officers must maintain an overall course average of 80% and pass three of five critical skills areas.

The Police Driver Training Unit has researched and presented a model for a Graded Police Licensing System which is in the final stages of a feasibility study. When implemented, this system will prohibit untrained, unqualified drivers from engaging in driving tasks beyond their training. This system has also identified the need to requalify Priority 1 drivers on a regular basis to ensure that minimum skills levels are maintained. This proposal will see an officers Priority 1 driving classification revoked should they fail to meet the required standard. Further re-training will be offered.

A feasibility study is presently being undertaken by the Western Australia Police Service Human Resources Research and Evaluation Psychological Services Unit to ascertain the benefits of implementing psychological tests for members applying for Priority 1 Driver Training Courses. This will assist in identifying those officers who have the aptitude and ability to perform the high pressure role of Priority 1 response and pursuits.

#### SELECT COMMITTEE ON CHILD MIGRATION - 1996 REPORT

3111. Ms WARNOCK to the Premier:

- (1) Will the Government take action on the 1996 report of the Select Committee on Child Migration?  
(2) If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(2) The Select Committee on Child Migration visited the United Kingdom in 1996 to enquire into the issue of child migrants. The British House of Commons, Health Committee, has accepted a responsibility to enquire into the issue of child migration. They will be visiting both Australia and New Zealand in the near future, 17 June to 25 June, to participate in pre-arranged meetings with former child migrants and their representatives, Federal and State politicians and officials. Once this committee has completed its investigations and reported its findings the Government will be in a better position to decide on what further action will be taken. However, the Government is continuing to make information and counselling assistance available to individuals through the Family Information Service operated by the Department of Family and Children's Services.

#### LOCKRIDGE POLICE STATION UPGRADING

3134. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Does the Government intend to upgrade the Lockridge Police Station?  
(2) If so, when?  
(3) Have any concept plans been drawn up for a new police station in Lockridge?  
(4) If so, when?

- (5) If not, does the Government/Minister plan to have concept plans drawn up for a new police station in Lockridge?
- (6) Has any consideration been given to establishing a new police station outside of Lockridge to service Lockridge and the surrounds?
- (7) What consideration has been given?
- (8) Have any funds been allocated for this purpose including funds to -
  - (a) locate a suitable site;
  - (b) develop concept plans;
  - (c) other?
- (9) Have any sites been located for a police station to service Lockridge?
- (10) If so, what sites have been identified?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The Lockridge police station is proposed for replacement through the 1998/99 Capital Works Programme.
- (3) No.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5)-(6) Yes.
- (7) A feasibility study has been undertaken to consider site options.
- (8) (a)-(b) Yes.  
(c) Not applicable.
- (9)-(10) A number of potential sites are currently being investigated. Due to obvious commercial reasons, it is not possible to provide this information at this time.

#### HEALTH - COMMONWEALTH CONTRIBUTION

3138. Mr BROWN to the Premier:

- (1) Did the Premier issue a media statement on 21 November 1997 pointing out that in the past two financial years the Commonwealth contribution to health funding in Western Australia has declined in real terms?
- (2) In the same media statement did the Premier say in the 1995-96 financial year that the Federal Government contributed \$612m or 38 per cent of the State health budget, while in 1997-98 it allocated \$616m or 36 per cent of the total health expenditure in Western Australia?
- (3) Has the Government given any consideration to mounting a publicity campaign, including television advertisements, against the Federal Government's failure to allocate adequate funding for health care in a similar way to which the Government has allocated funds to the Fix The Roads Campaign?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(2) Yes.
- (3) No.
- (4) The Western Australian Government is presently working to negotiate a new Australian Health Care Agreement that would provide additional funding for public hospitals. So far, the Health Ministers in each State (except Queensland) and the Northern Territory have developed and presented publicly a joint position on this issue. Because of the strong level of media interest, there has not been a need for individual States to pay to mount their own publicity campaigns. Medicare funding has still not been satisfactorily resolved as far as Western Australia is concerned and the States are still considering their strategies for publicly promoting their position.



## GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES - NATIONAL POLICY BODIES

3142. Mr BROWN to the Premier; Treasurer; Minister for Public Sector Management; Federal Affairs:

- (1) How many national policy bodies does the Premier and each of the departments and agencies under the Premier's control participate on?
- (2) What is the name of each policy body?
- (3) Does each policy body meet on one or more occasions during the calendar year?
- (4) Has the Premier and/or any of the departments or agencies under the Premier's control made representations to that policy body and/or the Commonwealth or other State governments for the policy body to be abolished or changed in any way?
- (5) If so -
  - (a) what was the nature of the submission made;
  - (b) when was the submission made?

Mr COURT replied:

Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet

- (1)-(3) The names of the national bodies in which the Premier and his portfolio agencies participate, together with the approximate frequency with which they meet are listed below.

National Body	Frequency
Council of Australian Governments (COAG)	Annual
Treaties Council	Annual
Senior Officials - COAG	2 times a year
Senior Officials - Leaders' Forum	2 times a year
Standing Committee on Treaties (SCOT)	Bi-annual
Premiers' Conference (Financial)	Annual
Australian Loan Council	Annual
Ministerial Council For Financial Institutions	Annual
Review of Commonwealth State Service Provision	4 times a year
Protection and Support Services Working Group	4 times a year
Leaders' Forum	Bi-annual
Oceans Policy Working Group	As needs basis
Defence Consultative Group	Annual
Committee on Regulatory Reform	As needs basis
Regional Forest Agreement Steering Committee	As needs basis
Domestic Violence Taskforce	Up to 3 times a year
Commonwealth State Roles and Responsibilities for the Environment	As needs basis
State/Commonwealth High Level Group (HLG) Greenhouse	As needs basis
Gene Technology Working Group	As needs basis
Specific Treaty Consultations	As needs basis
- Convention on Biological Diversity	
- Plant Genetic Resources	
- Draft Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People	
- Government Procurement	
The Australian Decorations Advisory Committee (ADAC)	Meets at least twice each year (usually April and October)
The Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth/State Co-operation for the Protection Against Violence (SACPAV)	Meets twice each year (usually May and November)

There are also sub committees of this organisation that have Ministry representation:

The Dignitary Protection Forum and the North West Shelf Security Working Group (usually meet once each year).

- (4)-(5) Negotiations are typically held on whether bodies should be established and what work they should perform. The functions performed are monitored by the Committees on an ongoing basis.

Under Treasurer

- (1)-(2) The Premier participates in the Premiers' Conference, Leaders' Forum and the Council of Australian

Governments. The Under Treasurer participates in Heads of Treasuries meetings with counterparts from the Commonwealth and other States and Territories. Other officials participate in a number of working parties advising Heads of Treasuries on current issues.

- (3) Frequency of meetings is determined by the policy agenda.
- (4) No.
- (5) Not applicable.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES - NATIONAL POLICY BODIES

3147. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services; Seniors; Women's Interests:

- (1) How many national policy bodies does the Minister and each of the departments and agencies under the Minister's control participate on?
- (2) What is the name of each policy body?
- (3) Does each policy body meet on one or more occasions during the calendar year?
- (4) Has the Premier and/or any of the departments or agencies under the Minister's control made representations to that policy body and/or the Commonwealth or other State governments for the policy body to be abolished or changed in any way?
- (5) If so -
  - (a) what was the nature of the submission made;
  - (b) when was the submission made?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Family and Children's Services: 5.  
Office of Seniors Interests: 1  
Women's Policy Development Office: 2  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: 2
- (2) Family and Children's Services  
Community Services Ministers Council;  
Standing Committee of Community Services and Income Security Administrators;  
National Council for the Prevention of Child Abuse;  
Prime Minister's Youth Homelessness Task-force;  
SAAP Coordination and Development Committee.  
  
Office of Seniors Interests  
Healthy Ageing Task Force  
  
Women's Policy Development Office  
Commonwealth/State Ministers' Conference on the Status of Women;  
'Partnerships Against Domestic Violence' Taskforce.  
  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office  
Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy;  
National Drug Strategy Committee
- (3) Family and Children's Services: Yes.  
Office of Seniors Interests: Yes.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Yes.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Yes.
- (4) Family and Children's Services: No.  
Office of Seniors Interests: No.  
Women's Policy Development Office: No.  
  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: No.
- (5) Family and Children's Services: Not applicable.  
Office of Seniors Interests: Not applicable.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Not applicable.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES - NATIONAL POLICY BODIES

3157. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Police; Emergency Services:

- (1) How many national policy bodies does the Minister and each of the departments and agencies under the Minister's control participate on?
- (2) What is the name of each policy body?
- (3) Does each policy body meet on one or more occasions during the calendar year?
- (4) Has the Premier and/or any of the departments or agencies under the Minister's control made representations to that policy body and/or the Commonwealth or other State governments for the policy body to be abolished or changed in any way?
- (5) If so -
  - (a) what was the nature of the submission made;
  - (b) when was the submission made?

Mr DAY replied:

Fire and Emergency Services Authority

- (1) Nil.
- (2)-(5) Not applicable.

Western Australia Police Service

- (1) 8.
- (2) The Australasian Police Ministers' Council  
The Australasian Police Ministers' Council-Senior Officers' Group  
Inter-Governmental Committee of the National Crime Authority.  
Standing Committee on Organised Crime and Criminal Intelligence  
Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy  
Lead Ministers Meeting - National Anti-Crime Strategy.  
Australasia and South West Pacific Region Police Commissioners' Conference.  
Standing Advisory Committee on Commonwealth/State Co-operation for Protection Against Violence.
- (3) Yes.
- (4)-(5) The Commissioner of Police has advised that while not recommending that any of the national bodies on which the Western Australia Police Service are represented should be abolished, the Police Service has contributed to the regular review processes conducted by some of them.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES - PROGRAMS

3164. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Since 1 January 1996, has the Government proposed any changes to the supported accommodation assistance program, the home and community care program, and the crisis accommodation program?
- (2) What was or is the nature of the changes the Government would like to see made to each or any of these programs?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) The Home and Community Care Program is the responsibility of the Health Department and the Crisis Accommodation Program is the responsibility of Homeswest. The following initiatives have been introduced to the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program since 1 January 1996:

Service Agreements have been introduced which include service specifications with specified outcome objectives for each service.

Generic Service Specifications have been developed, and are currently being reviewed for the following service types:

Supported Accommodation Services for Families and Single People;  
Supported Accommodation Services for Young People;  
Domestic Violence Supported Accommodation Services;

Domestic Violence Outreach Services;  
Day Centres;  
Youth Support Services.

Service Specifications also expect services to use Case Management with clients wherever appropriate.

A booklet "Standards for the delivery of services in Western Australia" has been produced (in consultation with services) and forms part of the Service Agreement

National and State Strategic Plans have been developed for the Program.

A State Evaluation of the Program is currently underway which will feed into the National Program Evaluation.

(2) Not applicable.

#### PREMIER'S VISIT TO PORT HEDLAND

3171. Mr GRAHAM to the Premier:

(1) Did the Premier visit Port Hedland on 18 December 97?

(2) If yes to (1) above -

- (a) what was the purpose of the visit;
- (b) on what date was the local member advised of the visit;
- (c) on what date was the local council advised of the visit;
- (d) what functions did the Premier attend in Port Hedland?

Mr COURT replied:

(1) I visited Port Hedland on 18 December, 1997 whilst en route to Derby where I had an engagement to open the Western Metals export facility.

- (2) (a) Whilst in Port Hedland I opened the Southgate Business Centre.
- (b) The member for Pilbara was advised of the visit on 17 December, 1997.
- (c) The Port Hedland Council was advised of the visit on 17 December, 1997.
- (d) The opening of the Southgate Business Centre and a meeting with the Port Hedland Council.

#### PORT HEDLAND - CYCLONE HAZARDS

3172. Mr GRAHAM to the Premier:

(1) Has the Port Hedland Town Council provided the Premier with a briefing regarding the cyclone hazards associated with unsecured housing in Port Hedland?

(2) If no to (1) above -

- (a) will the Premier seek such a briefing;
- (b) if not, why not?

(3) If yes to (1) above -

- (a) what action has the Premier taken;
- (b) on what date was the action taken?

Mr COURT replied:

(1) The problems regarding the cyclone hazards associated with unsecured housing in Port Hedland were raised during discussions with the Port Hedland Council in December, 1997.

(2) Not applicable.

(3) Following my discussions with the Port Hedland Council on this issue a member of my staff raised the matter with the Minister for Local Government's office on 22 December, 1997.

#### PORT HEDLAND - RESIDENTS LIVING IN CARAVANS

3173. Mr GRAHAM to the Premier:

(1) Is the Premier aware of the problems associated with the large amount of residents living in caravans in the town of Port Hedland?

- (2) If yes to (1) above -
- (a) on what date did the Premier become aware of the problems;
  - (b) what action did the Premier take as a consequence of becoming aware of the problems;
  - (c) on what date did the Premier take action?
- (3) If no to (1) above, will the Premier make himself aware of the problems?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) The problems associated with a significant number of residents living in caravans in the town of Port Hedland were raised during discussions with the Port Hedland Council in December, 1997.
- (2)-(3) Following my discussions with the Port Hedland Council on this issue a member of my staff raised the matter with the Minister for Local Government's office on 22 December, 1997.

COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND  
APPLICATIONS

3177. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Resources Development; Energy; Education:

- (1) Has any organisation within the Minister's portfolio area made application to the Federal Government for grant funds made available under the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund?
- (2) If yes to (1) above -
- (a) for what purpose was the application made;
  - (b) which organisation made the application;
  - (c) how many applications were made;
  - (d) how much funding is each application seeking;
  - (e) what amount of state funding is committed to each application;
  - (f) which other State bodies are joint applicants;
  - (g) which other State bodies have an interest in each application;
  - (h) on what date was each application submitted;
  - (i) has the Minister sought discussion with the Federal Minister to support each application;
  - (j) which Federal Members of Parliament have supported each application;
  - (k) will the Minister make a copy of each application available?
- (3) If no to (1) above, why was no application made?

Mr BARNETT replied:

Department of Resources Development

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) There has been no situation arise where the Department has needed to apply for these funds.

Office of Energy

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

AlintaGas

AlintaGas has not made any application for grant funds made available under the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund. Application has not been made for any funds as the existing regional telecommunications infrastructure has been in place for some time and no significant new development has been required.

## Western Power

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Western Power is not aware of the existence or the purpose of the Fund. We would not expect that Western Power would qualify for funds to expand its own infrastructure.

## Education Department of Western Australia

- (1) Yes.
- (2)
  - (a) Development of a wide area network for the 6 campuses of the School of Isolated and Distance Education.
  - (b) Education Department of Western Australia.
  - (c) One.
  - (d) \$155,440
  - (e) \$76,960
  - (f) Nil.
  - (g) Department of Commerce and Trade.
  - (h) 30 September 1997.
  - (i) The Minister for Education has written to the Federal Minister for Communication, the Information Economy and the Arts in support of the WA application.
  - (j) Nil.
  - (k) Yes.
- (3) Not applicable.

## Department of Education Services

- (1) Yes. There were applications from the Esperance Community College Services Management Committee Inc, and from Murdoch University.
- (2) Esperance Community College Services Management Committee Inc
  - (a) To provide the technological infrastructure to support Stage One of the Esperance Community College development: a Flexible-delivery Learning Centre.
  - (b) The Esperance Community College Services Management Committee Inc.
  - (c) One.
  - (d) \$725,000
  - (e) In their proposal the applicants estimated the level of State commitment to be \$6.6 million.
  - (f) Education Department of WA, Curtin University of Technology, WA Department of Training and the Country High School Hostels Authority.
  - (g) Department of Commerce and Trade.
  - (h) 4 February 1998.
  - (i) The Minister for Education has written to the Federal Minister for Communication, the Information Economy and the Arts in support of the WA application.
  - (j) Not known.
  - (k) Yes.

## The Murdoch University proposal

- (a) Enhanced Rural Telecommunications: A Trial Of New Satellite Technology. (Incorporating a national trial of advanced digital reception equipment for isolated people suffering severe information deprivation). The aim of this project was to conduct a national trial of Digital Radio Broadcasting (DRB) for isolated closed user groups, such as the print handicapped.
- (b) Murdoch University.
- (c) Two. The first, last year, was deferred.
- (d) \$50,000 in the first year.
- (e) None.
- (f) None, but the study was to have a national focus.
- (g) Commerce and Trade.
- (h) 4 February 1998.
- (i) The Minister for Education has written to the Federal Minister for Communication, the Information Economy and the Arts in support of the WA application.
- (j) Not known.
- (k) Yes.
- (3) Not applicable

## Curriculum Council

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

COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND  
APPLICATIONS

3179. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for the Environment; Employment and Training:

- (1) Has any organisation within the Minister's Portfolio area made application to the Federal Government for grant funds made available under the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund?
- (2) If yes to (1) above -
  - (a) for what purpose was the application made;
  - (b) which organisation made the application;
  - (c) how many applications were made;
  - (d) how much funding is each application seeking;
  - (e) what amount of state funding is committed to each application;
  - (f) which other State bodies are joint applicants;
  - (g) which other State bodies have an interest in each application;
  - (h) on what date was each application submitted;
  - (i) has the Minister sought discussion with the Federal Minister to support each application;
  - (j) which Federal Members of Parliament have supported each application;
  - (k) will the Minister make a copy of each application available?
- (3) If no to (1) above, why was no application made?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

Perth Zoo

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Not applicable to this agency.

Kings Park and Botanic Garden

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Not applicable to this agency.

Department of Environmental Protection

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Not applicable to this agency.

Department of Conservation and Land Management

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Not applicable to this agency.

Western Australian Department of Training

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The Department is developing online strategies relevant to the delivery of vocational education and training in Western Australia consistent with the role of the Department as the strategic manager of the Western Australian VET system. Within this framework the Department will encourage autonomous TAFE colleges to seek Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Funds where appropriate.

Central Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The College is not aware of the details of the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund.

West Coast College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The College is not aware of the details of the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund.

South East Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No application was made as it was understood that the funds were only available for non-metropolitan regional projects.



South Metropolitan College of TAFE

- (1) No. It has assisted with two bids sponsored by other organisations for projects based in Rockingham and Mandurah.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) See (1) above.

Midland College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) An application is currently being considered by the College's Business Centre.

Central West College of TAFE

- (1) Yes.
- (2)
  - (a) To create a Virtual Learning Environment.
  - (b) Central West College of TAFE.
  - (c) One.
  - (d) \$615,235.
  - (e)-(f) Nil.
  - (g) The Western Australian Department of Training.
  - (h) 3 November 1997.
  - (i) No.
  - (j) Mr Wilson Tuckey MP, is on the Midwest Communications Working Group which supported the application.
  - (k) Yes.
- (3) Not applicable.

Great Southern Regional College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Great Southern Regional College supports the Great Southern Development Commission's bid for funds.

Hedland College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The College is not aware of the details of the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund.

Karratha College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The College is not aware of the details of the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund.

South West Regional College of TAFE

- (1) No.

- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The College is not aware of the details of the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund.

CY O'Connor College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The College is not aware of the details of the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund.

Kimberley College of TAFE

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The college has established an ad hoc committee which is considering a submission for June 1998.

#### COMMONWEALTH REGIONAL TELECOMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE FUND APPLICATIONS

3180. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Family and Children's Services; Seniors; Women's Interests:

- (1) Has any organisation within the Minister's portfolio area made application to the Federal Government for grant funds made available under the Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund?
- (2) If yes to (1) above -
  - (a) for what purpose was the application made;
  - (b) which organisation made the application;
  - (c) how many applications were made;
  - (d) how much funding is each application seeking;
  - (e) what amount of state funding is committed to each application;
  - (f) which other State bodies are joint applicants;
  - (g) which other State bodies have an interest in each application;
  - (h) on what date was each application submitted;
  - (i) has the Minister sought discussion with the Federal Minister to support each application;
  - (j) which Federal Members of Parliament have supported each application;
  - (k) will the Minister make a copy of each application available?
- (3) If no to (1) above, why was no application made?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Family and Children's Services: No.  
Office of Seniors Interests: No.  
Women's Policy Development Office: No.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: No.
- (2) Family and Children's Services: Not applicable.  
Office of Seniors Interests: Not applicable.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Not applicable.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.
- (3) Family and Children's Services: The department is assessing its communications needs in both rural and metropolitan regions. This may result in a bid for Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure funds. The department will liaise with the newly formed Office of Information and Communications within the Department of Commerce and Trade on any such bid.

Office of Seniors Interests: The Office is assessing its communications needs in both rural and metropolitan regions. This may result in a bid for Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure funds. The Office will liaise with the newly formed Office of Information and Communications within the Department of Commerce and Trade on any such bid.

Women's Policy Development Office: The Office is assessing its communications needs in both rural and metropolitan regions. This may result in a bid for Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure funds. The Office will liaise with the newly formed Office of Information and Communications within the Department of Commerce and Trade on any such bid.

WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: The Office is assessing its communications needs in both rural and metropolitan regions. This may result in a bid for Commonwealth Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure funds. The Office will liaise with the newly formed Office of Information and Communications within the Department of Commerce and Trade on any such bid.

#### EX-PREMIERS' BENEFITS

3213. Mr McGOWAN to the Premier:

- (1) Since February 1993 have the benefits payable or receivable by ex-Premiers (past or present) been changed?
- (2) If so, how?
- (3) Have travel, staff or office entitlements changed for ex-premiers (present or future)?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) By determination of the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal.
- (3) See (1).

#### CITY OF WANNEROO - ROYAL COMMISSION'S REPORT

3222. Mr McGOWAN to the to the Premier:

- (1) I refer to the Premier's Ministerial Statement accompanying the tabling of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into the City of Wanneroo on 11 November 1997 in which the Premier said that he had written to the Public Sector Standards Commissioner and the Chief Executive Officer of the Public Sector Management Office bringing to their attention the report's findings and ask have the -
  - (a) Public Sector Standards Commissioner;
  - (b) Chief Executive Officer of the Public Sector Management Office,
 responded to the Premier's letter?
- (2) If so, what were the recommendations of the -
  - (a) Public Sector Standards Commissioner;
  - (b) Chief Executive Officer of the Public Sector Management Office?
- (3) Will the Premier table these responses?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)
  - (a) No.
  - (b) Yes.
- (2)
  - (a) Not applicable.
  - (b) The Public Sector Management Office made no recommendations in relation to the Final Report of the Royal Commission into the City of Wanneroo as the matters raised in the report were more appropriately the responsibility of the Ministry of Justice.
- (3) Not applicable.

## CITY OF WANNEROO - ROYAL COMMISSION'S REPORT

3223. Mr McGOWAN to the Premier:

I refer to the Premier's Ministerial Statement accompanying the tabling of the Final Report of the Royal Commission into the City of Wanneroo on 11 November 1997 in which the Premier said that you had written to the Minister for Local Government to bring to his attention the findings of improper conduct against council officers named in the report and ask -

- (a) has the Minister responded to the Premier's letter;
- (b) if so, what were the Minister's recommendations; and
- (c) will the Premier table this response?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a)-(c) Following the release of the report of the Wanneroo Royal Commission and my letter of 11 November 1997, the Department of Local Government established a working party to consider possible policy and legislative responses to the report and its recommendations. The working party chaired by John Lynch, the Executive Director of the Department of Local Government and representatives from the Department, the WA Municipal Association (WAMA) and the Institute of Municipal Management (IMM), prepared a report on the implementation and the recommendations of the Royal Commission into the City of Wanneroo. The report was tabled in Parliament on 1 April 1998.

## ABORIGINAL LIAISON OFFICERS

3264. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Are there circumstances where Aboriginal Liaison Officers are used as de facto police officers even though they do not have the training or powers to operate as police officers?
- (2) If so, what are those circumstances and how frequently do those circumstances arise?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1)-(2) The role of Aboriginal Police Liaison Officers (APLOs) is predominantly one of liaison between police officers and Aboriginal people from within the community. However, there are times when APLOs are called upon to act in the duties of police officers, particularly when dealing with persons of Aboriginal descent. This does not occur frequently and is often unavoidable. APLOs are trained appropriately for their role in the Police Service and do possess limited powers to operate as police officers.

## GLOBAL DANCE FOUNDATION - UNDER TREASURER'S ADVICE

3276. Mr GRAHAM to the Premier:

- (1) Did the Premier receive advice from the under treasurer in relation to Global Dance funding?
- (2) If the answer to (1) is yes -
  - (a) what was the name of the under treasurer who gave the advice;
  - (b) on what date was the advice given to the Premier;
  - (c) what was the advice given;
  - (d) will the Premier provide a copy of the advice given?
- (3) If the answer to (1) is no, what was the Premier referring to in his speech of 11 March 1998 on Global Dance?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) I discussed the funding of the Global Dance Congress with the Acting Under Treasurer at the meeting held on 22 December 1994.
- (2)
  - (a) The Acting Under Treasurer at the time was Mr Ray Hughes.
  - (b)-(c) Formal advice on the funding arrangements for the World Dance Congress was provided by the Acting Under Treasurer on 1 June 1995. This advice was received at my office on 8 June 1995.
  - (d) This advice was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 18 March 1998.
- (3) Not applicable.

MRS MARY PRITCHETT

*Complaints to Family and Children's Services*

3295. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) In relation to the complaints made by Mary Pritchett of Joondalup when did the Department first receive a complaint from her in relation to her daughter?
- (2) What status did the complaint attract and what investigations were conducted?
- (3) (a) in July 1997 did Mrs Pritchett advise the Department that she considered her daughter was at risk; and  
(b) will the Minister attach a copy of the intake notes?
- (4) (a) on 18 August 1997 did an officer of the Joondalup office advise Mrs Pritchett that the case was closed; and  
(b) if so, why?
- (5) If no to (4)(a) above, what was the status of the case at that time?
- (6) How many case workers had involvement in this case and for how many years?
- (7) What supervisory checks were conducted of decisions to close the case?
- (8) On what dates was it decided to cease investigations of the child's circumstances?
- (9) What is the Department's policy with respect to the return of girls aged less than 16 in cases where they are living with men aged over 18 years?
- (10) What deletions were made from the closing assessment document dated 11 November 1997 before it was supplied to Mrs Pritchett, and why?
- (11) Was the same document supplied in full to the child?
- (12) Do you acknowledge that Mrs Pritchett's initial concerns now appear to have been justified?
- (13) Do you concede that the child was at risk?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) 21 November 1996.
- (2) Family Problem - Child Management. Investigation was not called for.
- (3) (a) Yes.  
(b) No.
- (4) (a) No.  
(b) Not applicable.
- (5) Allocated on 5/8/97 for investigation of a Child Concern Report.
- (6) (i) 21 November 1996 Duty Officer contact  
(ii) 8 February 1997 Crisis Care Unit contact  
(iii) 12 February 1997 Duty Officer contact  
(iv) 28 July 1997 Duty Officer contact  
(v) 4 August 1997 Duty Officer contact  
5 August 1997 Allocated to Case Worker and Co-Worker  
11 November 1997 Contact closed after 14 weeks
- (7) The Team Leader and the Senior Casework Supervisor provided supervisory checks.
- (8) 11 November 1997.
- (9) Current law does not stipulate a "legal age" for a child leaving home without parental consent. The Child Welfare Act guides Family and Children's Services' assessments and decisions in regard to 13-16 year old children who leave home. Each case is subject to individual assessment. There are two Administrative Instructions, No 446 Parent-Child Conflict - Policy Statement and No 447 Parent-Child Conflict - Case Practice, as well as a document "Responding to Parent-Adolescent Conflict" which guide and direct

practice. Sexual relationships involving persons under the age of consent are not condoned by Family and Children's Services. If parents believe that an offence has taken, or is taking place and they want further action taken, they should be referred to the police.

- (10) Third party information which would identify the persons providing the information without their consent.
- (11) No.
- (12) The assessing officers always accorded Mrs Pritchett an appropriate degree of justification based on the information available.
- (13) The department recognised there was a degree of risk associated with the young person's living arrangements, however, in the absence of corroborating substantiation from the young person concerned statutory intervention was not appropriate.

#### DIGITAL X-RAY MACHINES

3304. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many digital x-ray machines does the State public health system have?
- (2) Where is each machine located?
- (3) When will each hospital in the State have access to a digital x-ray machine?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) 51.
- (2)

Locations	Fixed	Mobile	CT
Fremantle Hospital	2	2	1
King Edward Memorial Hospital/Princess Margaret Hospital	3	2	1
Royal Perth Hospital	3	-	3
Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital	2	5	2
Armadale Kelmscott Memorial Hospital		1	
Osborne Park Hospital		1	
Rockingham/Kwinana District Hospital		1	
Swan District Hospital		1	
Albany Regional Hospital	1	1	
Broome District Hospital	1	1	
Bunbury Regional Hospital	1	1	
Carnarvon Regional Hospital	1	1	
Derby Regional Hospital		1	1
Geraldton Regional Hospital	1	1	
Kalgoorlie Regional Hospital	1	1	1
Narrogin Regional Hospital	1	1	
Nickol Bay Hospital	1	1	
Port Hedland Regional Hospital		1	1
- (3) There is no whole of State policy on this. It is up to each individual hospital to introduce this technology in line with its needs.

#### AUSTRALIND

##### *Timetable Changes*

3318. Mr BROWN to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of tourism industry representations being made to Westrail to alter the *Australind* timetable to facilitate higher numbers of day visitors to Bunbury?
- (2) Has the Minister and/or the Tourism Commission examined the requests of the industry?

- (3) Has the Minister and/or the Tourism Commission supported the industry in this call?
- (4) Has the Minister and/or the Tourism Commission made representations to the Minister for Transport and/or Westrail to alter the timetable to better facilitate day visitors to Bunbury?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) What further action does the Minister and/or the Tourism Commission intend to try to take and persuade the Minister for Transport and/or Westrail to change the *Australind* timetable to better facilitate tourism needs?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1)-(2) Yes.
- (3) Yes, the Western Australian Tourism Commission's South West Regional Office offered its assistance to the Bunbury Tourist Bureau who was endeavouring to have the timetable changed.
- (4) No not at this stage.
- (5) The Commission's South West Regional Office contacted the Bunbury Tourist Bureau and was advised that its local MLA Mr Ian Osborne was to take up the issue for the Bureau. The South West Regional Office then contacted Mr Osborne to offer its support.
- (6) The WATC is to facilitate a meeting with Westrail representatives and the Bunbury Tourist Bureau in order to consider changes to the timetable as per the Tourist Bureau's request. The WATC is hopeful a resolution to this issue will be achieved.

#### *AUSTRALIND*

#### *Timetable Changes*

3319. Mr BROWN to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of representations made by the tourism industry to change the *Australind* timetable to better facilitate day visits to Bunbury?
- (2) If not, has Westrail received any such representations?
- (3) Is any consideration being given to reviewing the *Australind* timetable to facilitate the needs of the tourism industry?
- (4) If not, why not?
- (5) Will the Minister be prepared to meet with representatives of the tourism industry to further explore the nature of the timetable changes that would accommodate the needs of the industry?
- (6) If not, why not?

Mr OMODEI replied:

The Minister for Transport has provided the following response -

The member has raised this matter with me previously and I wrote to him on 9 April 1998. A copy of the letter is tabled for the information of the member. [See paper No 1457.]

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

#### *Corporate Credit Card Allocation and Guidelines*

3347. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Resources Development; Energy; Education:

- (1) How many staff in the departments and agencies under the Minister's control have been allocated Corporate Credit Cards?
- (2) Is there a policy in place to guide staff in the use of these credit cards?
- (3) If yes to (2) above, where is this policy published?
- (4) If no to (2) above, why not?

Mr BARNETT replied:

Department of Resources Development

- (1) 22.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The Corporate Credit Card Policy is electronically available to all Department of Resources Development staff.
- (4) Not applicable.

Office of Energy

- (1) 26.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Office of Energy Supply Management Business Plan and Office of Energy Accounting Manual. Staff are also required to sign an Office of Energy WA Government Corporate Credit Card Agreement setting out conditions of use of the card before receiving the card.
- (4) Not applicable.

Western Power Corporation

- (1) 117. Of these, 105 are current and 12 have been cancelled.
- (2)-(3) A detailed policy statement is in place to guide staff in the use of Corporate Credit Cards and is an integral part of Western Power's Accounting Manual and contained within Volume 3, Section 9, Procedure 3 of that document.
- (4) Not applicable.

AlintaGas

- (1) 11.
- (2) There is no written policy, although a strong informal policy is in place. For example, all payments are monitored by the CEO's Executive Administrator.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Corporate credit cards are issued to members of the AlintaGas Executive and two other senior managers. A written policy has not been developed due to the small number of cards on issue and the controls which are in place.

Education Department of Western Australia:

- (1) 449 staff at the Education Department, including school administrators, have been issued Corporate Credit Cards as at end of February 1998.
- (2)-(3) Yes, all staff issued with a corporate card are provided with the Education Department of WA Corporate Credit Card User Manual.
- (4) Not applicable.

Department of Education Services:

- (1) Three.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Officers use of corporate credit cards is subject to the following published statements: the Financial Administration and Audit Act (Treasurer's Instruction No.321); and the Department of Education Services' A-Z, and Accounting Manuals.
- (4) Not applicable.



Curriculum Council:

- (1) Three.
- (2)-(4) A policy is currently being developed. Staff have been informed that the Corporate Credit Cards are to be used on official business only and that the guidelines set out for the use of the Corporate card, including Treasurer's Instruction No.321, are to be followed until an official Curriculum Council policy is determined.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Corporate Credit Card Allocation and Guidelines*

3350. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Family and Children's Services; Seniors; Women's Interests:

- (1) How many staff in the departments and agencies under the Minister's control have been allocated Corporate Credit Cards?
- (2) Is there a policy in place to guide staff in the use of these credit cards?
- (3) If yes to (2) above, where is this policy published?
- (4) If no to (2) above, why not?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Family and Children's Services: Eight.  
Office of Senior's Interests: Two.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Seven.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Nil.
- (2) Family and Children's Services: Yes.  
Office of Senior's Interests: Yes.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Yes.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.
- (3) Family and Children's Services: In the department's Best Practice Manual.  
Office of Senior's Interests: In the Accounting Manual.  
Women's Policy Development Office: In an internal policy document.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.
- (4) Family and Children's Services: Not applicable.  
Office of Senior's Interests: Not applicable.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Not applicable.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Corporate Credit Card Allocation and Guidelines*

3360. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Police; Emergency Services:

- (1) How many staff in the departments and agencies under the Minister's control have been allocated Corporate Credit Cards?
- (2) Is there a policy in place to guide staff in the use of these credit cards?
- (3) If yes to (2) above, where is this policy published?
- (4) If no to (2) above, why not?

Mr DAY replied:

Bush Fire Service

- (1) Bush Fire Service staff are not allocated Corporate Credit Cards.
- (2)-(4) Not applicable.

Fire & Rescue Service

- (1) 16 Staff.
- (2) Yes.

(3) In the Accounting Manual.

(4) Not applicable.

Western Australian State Emergency Service

(1) 28 Staff.

(2) Yes.

(3) In the Financial Management Manual.

(4) Not applicable.

Western Australia Police Service

(1) 95 staff.

(2) Yes.

(3) In Section 12 of the Police Service Financial Management Handbook.

(4) Not applicable.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Corporate Credit Card Monitoring*

3367. Mr RIPPER to the Premier; Treasurer; Minister for Public Sector Management; Federal Affairs:

In relation to use of Corporate Credit Cards in departments and agencies under the control of the Premier -

- (a) what type of monitoring mechanism is in place to ensure that policy regarding usage of these cards is being adhered to;
- (b) what system is used to verify transactions; and
- (c) is a register of issued and cancelled cards maintained in each department and agency?

Mr COURT replied:

Ministry of the Premier and Cabinet

- (a) The Ministry issues an agreement/acknowledgment to each cardholder which specifies policy regarding credit card use. Card use is the subject of both internal and external audit scrutiny and various Ministry internal control procedures.
- (b) Cardholders are required to certify that expenditure on each statement was incurred on official government business.
- (c) The Ministry maintains a register of issued and cancelled cards.

Under Treasurer

- (a) The service provider has controls in place that monitor transaction limits, any transgressions are reported to a designated officer within Treasury. All credit card accounts must be verified by an authorised officer (other than the holder of the card) in Treasury.
- (b) Each cardholder receives a statement of transactions which must be reconciled against receipt slips, any queries are dealt with directly by the cardholder and the institution concerned. Individual accounts are reconciled against a consolidated account by a separate section within Treasury. Treasury's Internal Audit section periodically reviews policy regarding usage of corporate credit cards.
- (c) Yes.

Anti-Corruption Commission

- (a) Corporate credit card accounts are monitored monthly by the Chief Executive Officer and the Administrative Officer.
- (b) Individuals hold their receipts and verify these against the transaction summary.

- (c) The Commission has a Corporate Credit Card register, which identifies the names of officers issued with credit cards, the officers' positions and the issue date, expiry date and date of cancellation of cards.

Governor's Establishment

- (a)-(b) The Agency procedures involve credit card transactions being reviewed by two (2) officers before authorising payment.
- (c) Yes.

Office of the Public Sector Standards Commissioner

- (a) Monitoring mechanisms as per attached procedures. [See paper No 1459.]
- (b) Each officer is responsible for keeping their own transaction dockets and reconciling them with their monthly statement. The incurring officer then checks and signs the transactions and statement. Finally the certifying officer signs to verify the authenticity of the transactions.
- (c) Yes.

Gold Corporation

- (a)-(b) An Accounts Assistant receives monthly credit card statements of account. She examines the accounts then sends them to individual cardholders, who must fill in a Business Expense Report, substantiating their expenses. The statements and substantiating documentation are returned to the Accounts Assistant, who refers them to the Group Accountant for authorisation. Signatories for payment are the Group Accountant and the Managing Director of Gold Corporation.
- (c) A register of issued and cancelled cards is maintained.

Office of the Auditor General

- (a) All monthly statements of expenditure received are subject to personal scrutiny by incurring and certifying officers on the nature of expenditure.
- (b) Limits have been placed on all cardholders and supporting documentation is required for all purchases, with specific approval required for any extraordinary/abnormal items.
- (c) Yes.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

*Corporate Credit Card Monitoring*

3371. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for the Environment; Employment and Training:

In relation to use of Corporate Credit Cards in departments and agencies under the control of the Minister -

- (a) what type of monitoring mechanism is in place to ensure that policy regarding usage of these cards is being adhered to;
- (b) what system is used to verify transactions; and
- (c) is a register of issued and cancelled cards maintained in each department and agency?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

Department of Conservation and Land Management.

- (a)-(b) Each cost centre manager is responsible for ensuring that policy regarding usage of the cards is being adhered to. This includes verification of transactions and ensuring cards are only used for official business. In addition, random checks are conducted by the Departments' Management Audit Branch to ensure compliance.
- (c) Yes.

Perth Zoo:

- (a)-(b) Each cost centre manager is responsible for ensuring that policy regarding usage of the cards is being adhered to. This includes verification of transactions and ensuring cards are only used for official business. In addition, random checks are conducted by the Departments' Management Audit Branch to ensure

compliance. Each cost centre manager is responsible for ensuring that policy regarding usage of the cards is being adhered to. This includes verification of transactions and ensuring cards are only used for official business.

(c) Yes.

Department of Environmental Protection:

(a)-(b) Each cost centre manager is responsible for ensuring that policy regarding usage of the cards is being adhered to. Each cardholder signs an agreement stipulating the conditions of use applicable to the card. This includes verification of transactions and ensuring cards are only used for official business. In addition, random checks are conducted by the Departments' Management Audit Branch to ensure compliance.

(c) Yes.

Kings Park and Botanic Garden:

(a)-(b) Each cost centre manager is responsible for ensuring that policy regarding usage of the cards is being adhered to. This includes verification of transactions and ensuring cards are only used for official business.

(c) Yes.

Department of Training:

Central Metropolitan College of TAFE

(a) The college/s internal audit plan includes an audit of use of corporate credit cards. The Office of the Auditor General also conducts random audits of corporate card use.

(b) Employees holding corporate credit cards must retain all documentation and check transactions on their statement each month. Signed statements are forwarded to the Finance Section each month to support the payment of the total invoice from the bank.

(c) Yes.

North Metropolitan College of TAFE

(a) The transactions are monitored by the Principal Accounting Officer for compliance with State Supply policies and financial limits. The reimbursement to card providers is certified by a finance officer, after reconciliation of the monthly account to vouchers/receipts incurred by other staff responsible for the expenditure.

(b) All transactions are verified to receipts for goods or services. Apart from minor expenditures by the Managing Director (when travelling on business) the three cards are only used to pay for apprentice travel (specifically airline tickets) to our campuses from remote locations, and this charge is verified by authorised enrolment forms and airline confirmation that the travel actually took place. The cards are not used for the purchase of general goods/services.

(c) Yes.

South East Metropolitan College of TAFE

(a) Monthly review by finance department.

(b) Users are required to verify monthly transaction list and forward to finance department.

(c) One college register is maintained.

South Metropolitan College of TAFE

(a) Independent verification by Director, Commercial Services and Director, Corporate Services.

(b) Monthly reconciliation of bank statements to transaction.

(c) Yes.

Midland College

(a) Reconciliation and normal purchasing and accounting procedures.

- (b) Strict processes of reconciliation for approved purchases. Nature of expenses checked vigorously and separate files maintained.
- (c) Yes, as only two cards are allocated in College, a register is maintained in Executive.

Central West College of TAFE

- (a) The college currently has no corporate credit card.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

Great Southern Regional College of TAFE

- (a) The college currently has no corporate credit card.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

Hedland College

- (a) Normal Purchasing procedures apply with regard to usage.
- (b) Normal purchasing/payment procedures are adhered for all transactions.
- (c) Yes.

Karratha College

- (a) The college currently has no corporate credit card.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

South West Regional College of TAFE

- (a) Transaction listings are received on a monthly basis by an employee other than the cardholder. Our policy includes a random audit of three business units monthly to check compliance.
- (b) Transactions reports are checked monthly to individual requisition forms.
- (c) A register of issued and cancelled cards is being implemented.

Kimberley College

- (a) Regular quality performance/compliance audits.
- (b) Reconciliation of travel bookings with entries on the statement prior to payment of accounts.
- (c) Yes.

Department of Training

- (a)-(b) Statements are independently checked.
- (c) A register of current cards is kept. As cards are cancelled they are removed from the register.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

*Corporate Credit Card Monitoring*

3372. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Family and Children's Services; Seniors; Women's Interests:

In relation to use of Corporate Credit Cards in departments and agencies under the control of the Minister -

- (a) what type of monitoring mechanism is in place to ensure that policy regarding usage of these cards is being adhered to;
- (b) what system is used to verify transactions; and
- (c) is a register of issued and cancelled cards maintained in each department and agency?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Family and Children's Services: Cardholder transactions are checked prior to monthly payment.  
Office of Senior's Interests: Review of compliance with procedures at time of payment of monthly account.

Women's Policy Development Office: Corporate Services staff monitor the usage of the cards monthly and report any variation from policy to the Manager, Corporate Services.

WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.

- (b) Family and Children's Services: Unit administrative staff ensure all transactions are adequately supported by suppliers vouchers/card dockets.

Office of Senior's Interests: Payments are authorised by officers responsible for credit cards.

Women's Policy Development Office: The cardholder verifies each purchase and submits receipts to finance staff who verify monthly statements against each receipt.

WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.

- (c) Family and Children's Services: Yes.  
Office of Senior's Interests: Yes.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Yes.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Corporate Credit Card Monitoring*

3377. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Health:

In relation to use of Corporate Credit Cards in departments and agencies under the control of the Minister -

- (a) what type of monitoring mechanism is in place to ensure that policy regarding usage of these cards is being adhered to;
- (b) what system is used to verify transactions; and
- (c) is a register of issued and cancelled cards maintained in each department and agency?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) Written reports are issued to every cardholder and the Corporate Credit Card Controller by the Credit Card supplier. The Internal Audit Branch also monitor card usage to ensure compliance with Departmental policies. The Department is exploring the use of a new reporting and monitoring tool that will be available for the Internal Audit Branch and the Credit Card Controller to examine in detail any transaction. Management and Audit controls are a requirement.
- (b) Every month the cardholder must attach all receipts to their statement and certify that these expenses were incurred on Departmental business. These statements are then forwarded to their immediate Supervisor who must counter sign the statement and verify that the expenditure was in accordance with Departmental policies and guidelines. The FAAA require reconciliation of receipts to statements and appropriate incurring and certification signatures.
- (c) Yes.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Corporate Credit Card Monitoring*

3382. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Police; Emergency Services:

In relation to use of Corporate Credit Cards in departments and agencies under the control of the Minister -

- (a) what type of monitoring mechanism is in place to ensure that policy regarding usage of these cards is being adhered to;
- (b) what system is used to verify transactions; and
- (c) is a register of issued and cancelled cards maintained in each department and agency?

Mr DAY replied:

Western Australia Police Service

- (a) The monitoring mechanism is as follows:

- (i) Each cardholder agrees to abide by the departmental policy pertaining to the usage and security of these cards.
  - (ii) Supervisors are responsible for ensuring cards are being used correctly and that proper security of the cards is being maintained.
  - (iii) The Accounting Services Branch monitors the usage of these cards to ensure that departmental policy is being adhered to.
- (b) The system to verify credit card transactions is as follows:
- (i) Monthly statements are sent by the Accounting Services Branch to each cardholder for validation;
  - (ii) The expenditure is incurred by the relevant officer in accordance with Treasurer's Instruction 305; and
  - (iii) The expenditure is certified by the Accounting Services Branch in accordance with Section 33 of the Financial Administration and Audit Act.
- (c) Yes.

Bush Fire Service: Bush Fire Service staff are not allocated Corporate Credit Cards.

#### Fire and Rescue Service

- (a) A policy and procedure is in place in accordance with Treasurer's Instructions. An agreement is signed by employees for the use of the card. Incurring and certifying officers are appointed to monitor this process. The cards are restricted to class of purchase (e.g. travel/fares).
- (b) Invoiced transactions are verified by cardholders and incurring officers prior to payment and audit procedures are in place for reviewing the use and control of cards.
- (c) Yes.

#### Western Australian State Emergency Service

- (a) A policy and procedure is in place in accordance with the Treasurer's Instructions. An agreement is signed by employees for the use of the card. Incurring and certifying officers are appointed to monitor this process.
- (b) Invoiced transactions are verified by cardholders, supervisors and incurring officers prior to payment and audit procedures are in place for reviewing the use and control of cards.
- (c) Yes.

### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

#### *Staff, Vehicles, Mobile Phones and Government Credit Cards*

3389. Mr RIPPER to the Premier; Treasurer; Minister for Public Sector Management; Federal Affairs:

With respect to the Premier's Office -

- (a) will the Premier indicate for each staff person working in the Premier's office as at 1 March 1998 the following details -
  - (i) name;
  - (ii) level; and
  - (iii) type of employment contract;
- (b) how many vehicles are attached to the office and what are the names of the staff to which they are allocated;
- (c) how many mobile phones are available at the Premier's office and to which staff are they allocated; and
- (d) how many Government credit cards have been authorised for use in the Premier's office and to which officers have they been allocated?

Mr COURT replied:

- (a) As at 1 March 1998 the following staff were employed:

(i)	(ii)	(iii)
Mr I Fletcher	Special 6	Fixed Term Contract (s74)
Mr J Gilleece	Class 2	Term of Government Contract
Mr W Marmion	Level 8	Permanent Public Servant
Mr B Cooper	Level 6	Term of Government Contract
Mr C Cahill	Level 8	Term of Government Contract

Mrs K Verboon	Level 8	Term of Government Contract
Ms B Hillman	Acting Level 7	Term of Government Contract
Mrs W Ireland	Level 8	Term of Government Contract
Mrs J Carroll	Level 6	Term of Government Contract
Mrs R Young	Level 5	Permanent Public Servant
Ms M Wild	Level 3	Permanent Public Servant
Ms B Leber	Acting Level 3	Permanent Public Servant
Ms K Gulberti	Acting Level 3	Permanent Public Servant
Ms V Burmaz	Acting Level 3	Permanent Public Servant
Mrs A Parry	Level 2	Fixed Term Contract
Ms N Scattergood	Acting Level 2	Permanent Public Servant
Ms M Rundle	Level 1	Term of Government Contract
Mr F Williams	Chauffeur	Ministerial Chauffeur's Agreement
+ Mr R Elliot	Consultant	Contract for Service

	(b) Vehicle	(c) Phone	(d) Credit Card
Mr I Fletcher	No	Yes (2)	Yes (2)
Mr J Gilleece	Yes	Yes	Yes (2)
Mr W Marmion	Yes	Yes	Yes (2)
Mr B Cooper	Yes	Yes	No
Mr C Cahill	Yes	Yes	Yes (2)
Mrs K Verboon	Yes	Yes	No
Ms B Hillman	Yes	Yes	No
Mrs W Ireland	Yes	Yes	Yes (2)
Mrs R Young	No	Yes (2)	Yes (2)
Mr F Williams	No	Yes	No
+ Mr R Elliot	No	Yes	No

#### SALE OF GOVERNMENT ASSETS OVER \$1 MILLION

3413. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Resources Development; Energy; Education:

Will the Minister provide the following details for all Government owned assets sold since January 1993 (excluding land and building sales undertaken in the ordinary course of business, for example land sales undertaken by the Department of Land Administration), in both the general government and government trading enterprise sector of their portfolio areas, which had a sale value of \$1 million or more -

- (a) name and nature of the asset;
- (b) date sold;
- (c) nature of sale and name of buyer;
- (d) proceeds received from the asset;
- (e) associated revenue from the sale, such as stamp duty;
- (f) the application of the funds received; and
- (g) any associated costs incurred in the sale process?

Mr BARNETT replied:

I am advised:

Department of Resources Development

- (a) Nil.
- (b)-(g) Not applicable.

Office of Energy

- (a) Nil.
- (b)-(g) Not applicable.

AlintaGas: AlintaGas commenced operations on 1 January 1995 following the disaggregation of SECWA into Western Power and AlintaGas and as such information on AlintaGas asset sales is only available from this date. Only two asset sales have been undertaken with a sales value exceeding \$1.0 million.

(1) Portion of Light Vehicle Fleet

- (a) Light motor vehicles;
- (b) Sold on 15 July 1997;
- (c) Motor vehicle sale and lease back. Vehicles purchased by Westfleet;
- (d) Proceeds totalled \$2.08 million;
- (e) There was no associated revenue;



- (f) The funds were applied to debt retirement; and
  - (g) Approximately \$50,000.
- (2) Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline
- (a) Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline (DBNGP) and associated assets;
  - (b) Sold on 25 March 1998;
  - (c) The Dampier to Bunbury Natural Gas Pipeline and associated assets were sold to Epic Energy;
  - (d) Proceeds received by AlintaGas totalled \$2,302,551,086.50;
  - (e) Associated revenue in respect of stamp duty paid directly to Government totalled approximately \$104.0 million;
  - (f) Of the sale proceeds received by AlintaGas \$1,023,742,000 was applied to the repayment of DBNGP related debt. On 26 March 1998 \$1,026,000,000 was paid to State Treasury and the remaining proceeds will be paid to State Treasury in accordance with the Gas Pipeline Sale Process Direction 1998, No 3, issued by the Minister for Energy on 25 March 1998;
  - (g) Costs incurred by AlintaGas to date in the sale process total approximately \$13.2 million.

Western Power Corporation: Western Power Corporation has sold the following assets since 1 January 1995:

- (1)
  - (a) Welshpool Office/Depot.
  - (b) 13 February 1997.
  - (c) Auction - Cabrita Pty Ltd.
  - (d) \$4 million.
  - (e) \$165,525 Stamp Duty.
  - (f) Part of normal operating cash flow.
  - (g) \$52,419.
- (2)
  - (a) Light Vehicle Fleet.
  - (b) July 1997.
  - (c) Sale and Leaseback Agreement - Matrix Financial Group WA Pty Ltd.
  - (d) \$6 million.
  - (e) Not applicable.
  - (f) Part of normal operating cash flow.
  - (g) \$60,000.
- (3)
  - (a) North Perth Works Depot.
  - (b) 5 September 1997.
  - (c) Private Treaty - Town of Vincent.
  - (d) \$1.675 million.
  - (e) Not applicable - purchaser exempt from Stamp Duty.
  - (f) Part of normal operating cash flow.
  - (g) \$56,965.

Curriculum Council:

(a)-(g) Nil.

Department of Education Services:

- (a)-(g) The Department of Education Services has not sold any Government owned assets since January 1993 with a sale value of \$1 million or more.

Education Department of Western Australia:

- (a)-(g) Not applicable. Education Department records show that since January 1993 no assets under its control valued at \$1 million or more were sold other than by the Department of Land Administration which acts as the agent for the Education Department in matters of land and improvements disposal.

#### SALE OF GOVERNMENT ASSETS OVER \$1 MILLION

3416. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Family and Children's Services; Seniors; Women's Interests:

Will the Minister provide the following details for all Government owned assets sold since January 1993 (excluding land and building sales undertaken in the ordinary course of business, for example land sales undertaken by the Department of Land Administration), in both the general government and government trading enterprise sector of their portfolio areas, which had a sale value of \$1 million or more -

- (a) name and nature of the asset;
- (b) date sold;
- (c) nature of sale and name of buyer;
- (d) proceeds received from the asset;

- (e) associated revenue from the sale, such as stamp duty;
- (f) the application of the funds received; and
- (g) any associated costs incurred in the sale process?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a)-(g) Family and Children's Services: Not applicable.
- Office of Senior's Interests: Not applicable.
- Women's Policy Development Office: Not applicable.
- Western Australian Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.

#### SALE OF GOVERNMENT ASSETS OVER \$1 MILLION

3417. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Labour Relations; Planning; Heritage:

Will the Minister provide the following details for all Government owned assets sold since January 1993 (excluding land and building sales undertaken in the ordinary course of business, for example land sales undertaken by the Department of Land Administration), in both the general government and government trading enterprise sector of their portfolio areas, which had a sale value of \$1 million or more -

- (a) name and nature of the asset;
- (b) date sold;
- (c) nature of sale and name of buyer;
- (d) proceeds received from the asset;
- (e) associated revenue from the sale, such as stamp duty;
- (f) the application of the funds received; and
- (g) any associated costs incurred in the sale process?

Mr KIERATH replied:

As at the end of April 1998, the only Government assets sold which had a sale value of \$1 million or more, within the portfolios of Labour Relations, Planning and Heritage are as follows:

#### **Subiaco Redevelopment Authority:**

- (a) Contract for the sale of undeveloped land, Lots 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5, collectively referred to as the Station Square Precinct.
- (b) Contract executed 19 March 1998.
- (c) Sale by Public Tender to Stockland Constructors Pty Ltd and Rockingham Park Pty Ltd.
- (d) After all the Lots settle, proceeds received will be \$10.65 million.
- (e) Nil.
- (f) Reduction in borrowings.
- (g) Commission payable on settlement.

#### **East Perth Redevelopment Authority:**

- (a)
  - i Lot 8 Arden Street - Group Residential Site;
  - ii Old Boans Warehouse, Brown Street;
  - iii Lot 217 Royal Street - Mixed use site;
  - iv Lot 34 Brown Street - Mixed use site;
  - v Lot 73, 75 and 76 Royal Street - Commercial site;
  - vi Lot 163 Brown Street - Multi residential.
- (b)
  - i June 1995;
  - ii February 1996
  - iii July 1996
  - iv January 1997
  - v April 1998
  - vi April 1998
- (c)
  - i Public Tender - Greendene Development Corp Pty Ltd;
  - ii Public Tender - Bellridge Nominees Pty Ltd, Schaffer Properties Pty Ltd; Crosscut Pty Ltd, Criterion Properties Pty Ltd;
  - iii Private Treaty - Superior Properties Limited and Citi Fidelity Nominee Pty Ltd;
  - iv Public Tender - Stellenbush Pty Ltd;
  - v Public Tender - Bellridge Nominees Pty Ltd;
  - vi Public Tender - Bellridge Nominees Pty Ltd.

- (d)
  - i \$1.3m
  - ii \$1.4m
  - iii \$1.125m
  - iv \$1.8m
  - v \$5.025m
  - vi \$1.25m
- (e) i-vi Not applicable.
- (f) i-vi The Authority is self funding, proceeds go towards continuing operations.
- (g) i-vi Associated costs on average amount to 2.2% of sales revenue.

#### Ministry for Planning

- (a)-(d) The Western Australian Planning Commission has provided the attached schedule. [See paper No 1461.]
- (e) The amount of stamp duty paid by purchasers is not maintained by the Ministry for Planning but would have been paid at the prescribed ad valorem rate to the State Revenue Department.
- (f) All sale proceeds are required to be paid into the Metropolitan Region Improvement Fund and may only be utilised for the purposes of implementing the Metropolitan Region Scheme.
- (g) The sale of surplus property involves expenditure on sales commissions; and as required expenditure on heritage, aboriginal heritage and ethnographic assessments, geotechnical and planning studies under pre sale due diligence considerations.

#### SALE OF GOVERNMENT ASSETS OVER \$1 MILLION

3425. Dr GALLOP to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

Will the Minister provide the following details for all Government owned assets sold since January 1993 (excluding land and building sales undertaken in the ordinary course of business, for example land sales undertaken by the Department of Land Administration), in both the general government and government trading enterprise sector of their portfolio areas, which had a sale value of \$1 million or more -

- (a) name and nature of the asset;
- (b) date sold;
- (c) nature of sale and name of buyer;
- (d) proceeds received from the asset;
- (e) associated revenue from the sale, such as stamp duty;
- (f) the application of the funds received; and
- (g) any associated costs incurred in the sale process?

Mr BARNETT replied:

The Department of Minerals and Energy has not sold any assets with a value of \$1 million or more since January 1993.

#### WOMEN'S HEALTH

3433. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Health:

In relation to the Government's two year plan for women has the Government -

- (a) developed indicators for outcomes in women's health which meet the needs of consumers, governments and service providers;
- (b) ensured that the objectives of the State and National Women's Health Policy are implemented throughout the mainstream health system;
- (c) implemented an accreditation program for nurses providing cervical screening services;
- (d) improved access to women's health services for women from linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- (e) developed language specific information resources which can be used in non-English speaking communities to increase awareness about significant health conditions;
- (f) extended implementation of the Health Department policy on use of interpreters for all health services providers state-wide, and continued to facilitate the provision of the health interpreters course through Technical and Further Education (TAFE);

- (g) implemented a program to reduce the incidence and associated psychosocial harm of female genital mutilation;
- (h) implemented nutritional strategies and programs for Aboriginal women to reduce the number of low birth weight babies and the incidence of diabetes and other diseases associated with nutritional deficiencies;
- (i) evaluated the aboriginal Health Workers Accredited Course training in maternal and child health to improve competencies; and
- (j) purchased culturally sensitive cervical screening services for Aboriginal women from appropriate Aboriginal health and medical services throughout the State?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) Yes, improved performance indicators, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for women's health were implemented in July 1997 in consultation with women's health providers.
- (b) Yes, women's health providers maintain regular contact with 'mainstream' health care providers and facilitated occasional education workshops and seminars on women's health issues which are prioritised in the National Women's Health Policy.
- (c) Yes, the first group of nurses participating in the cervical cancer screening accreditation program have been accredited.
- (d) Yes, women's health services specifically target women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- (e) Yes, the translation of information resources into identified community languages is part of the core business of the Multicultural Access Unit. A number of information resources dealing with mental health issues have recently been translated into 15 different languages and distributed to appropriate communities and health providers.
- (f) Yes, all health services are required to adhere to the Language Services in Health Care Policy Guidelines (August 1997). The Health Interpreters Certificate Course coordinated by the Multicultural Access Unit, Translating and Interpreting Service and TAFE has recently been expanded to include a separate Mental Health Certificate Course.
- (g) Yes, the Western Australian Female Genital Mutilation Plan has been developed and funding for community projects has been distributed.
- (h) Yes, the Office of Aboriginal Health has released an Aboriginal Food and Nutrition Policy for Western Australia (May 1998). The implementation of programs which support the policy are currently being developed.
- (i) There are currently two levels of training for Aboriginal Health Workers in maternal and child health: an Advanced Certificate and Diploma. A review of training programs for Aboriginal Health Workers is planned in line with new requirements for the Family Futures Program which is currently in development.
- (j) Yes, Aboriginal-specific cervical cancer screening services are currently provided in Kalgoorlie, Wiluna, Roebourne and through the Perth Medical Service. In addition, outreach services are being piloted in the Kimberley.

#### BUNBURY POWER STATION FEASIBILITY STUDY

3434. Mr THOMAS to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Was a feasibility study carried out into the extension of the life of the Bunbury Power Station?
- (2) If yes, what was the name of the company that carried out the study?
- (3) Was the consultancy for the study put out to tender?
- (4) If yes to (3) above, what were the names of the companies that made submissions for this tender?
- (5) What was the total cost of the study?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) A study was carried out to examine the alternative strategies and future options in relation to the future role of Bunbury Power Station.

- (2) Pacific Power International.
- (3) No.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) \$141 962

COLLIE POWER STATION

*Cost of Construction*

3437. Mr THOMAS to the to the Minister for Energy:

In respect to the construction of the new Collie Power Station -

- (a) will the Minister confirm that he announced in February 1997 that the cost of construction of this power station was \$575 million;
- (b) can the Minister confirm that according to the 1997-98 Budget papers the expected cost is now \$831 million; and
- (c) if yes to the above can the Minister explain this extraordinary blow-out in costs?

Mr BARNETT replied:

I am advised that:

- (a) The base contract price for Collie Power Station is \$575 million. This is the price as at October 1993.
- (b) The higher capital expenditure figure as reported in the 1997-98 State Budget Papers includes several other items. These are:  
  
Project management charges and Western Power's own works \$43.3 million  
(For such things as water supply infrastructure)  
  
Contract escalation (due to CPI related increases) \$84.7 million  
  
Capitalised interest \$138.9 million  
  
Foreign exchange gain (\$10.8) million  
  
The \$831.1 million is the current whole of project cost while the \$575 million is the original base contract price.
- (c) Not applicable.

MR KEVIN PAYNE

*Redundancy Package*

3458. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Can the Attorney-General confirm that Kevin Payne has been offered a redundancy package with a confidentiality clause?
- (2) If so, has he signed the offer?
- (3) If not, and he does not continue as Director of Offender Management at the end of his special leave, will he be offered a redundancy package with a confidentiality clause?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(3) Although the matter has been the subject of discussion with Mr Payne no formal redundancy package has been offered.

JUVENILE JUSTICE

*Six Cautions Policy*

3480. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Further to question on notice No 2845 of 1998, can the Minister advise when Training Officers from the

Community Services Command (Juvenile Justice Unit) first recommended that about six cautions be issued before consideration is given to referring a young person to a Juvenile Justice team or to the formal judicial system.

(2) Is it true that the recommended six cautions arrangement was introduced in the last 3 years?

(3) If not, when was it introduced?

Mr DAY replied:

(1) I am advised that this position was first recommended by a Juvenile Justice Unit training officer in late 1995.

(2) The Western Australia Police Service does not have a policy which restricts the amount of cautions which may be issued prior to consideration being given to referring a young person to a Juvenile Justice Team or the formal Judicial system.

(3) Not applicable.

#### MENTAL HEALTH FUNDING

3485. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Health:

(1) Is the Minister aware of correspondence from Wesley Mission Perth to various Members of Parliament concerning the possibility of there being a \$5.2m shortfall in funding for Western Australian mental health services from June 1998?

(2) Is the Minister aware that Wesley Mission Perth has advised the anticipated shortfall is made up of monies provided through the National Mental Health Strategy?

(3) Has any decision been made to remove and/or not provide the level of funds previously provided under the National Mental Health Strategy?

(4) What funds will be removed or not provided?

(5) Is the Minister aware that Wesley Mission understands several programs are at risk of losing their funding including Early Episode Psychosis; Post Natal Depression; Vocational Training and others?

(6) Is the Minister aware if the -

- (a) Commonwealth Government; and
- (b) State Government;

will provide funds for these programs?

(7) When is it anticipated that the funds for the 1998-99 financial year will be provided?

Mr PRINCE replied:

(1)-(2) Yes.

(3) No.

(4) Not applicable.

(5) Yes.

(6) (a)-(b) The National Mental Health Strategy funding is Commonwealth funding provided to WA under the Health Care Agreement. The Commonwealth has allocated funds which will enable the continuation of those programs which have not been concluded in the next financial year.

(7) It is anticipated that the renewed Commonwealth funds will become available in July.

#### JUVENILE CRIME

##### *Restitution*

3497. Mr PENDAL to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Justice:

(1) I refer to the serious problem of crime in the suburbs (especially home invasions) and ask, how many juveniles have appeared in the Children's Court in the past year in relation to home burglary charges?

- (2) Of that number, how many have been ordered by the courts to pay restitution, as provided in the Children's Court statute, where they have received a non-custodial sentence?

Mrs van de KLASHORST replied:

The Minister for Justice has provided the following reply:

- (1) Between 1 April 1997 and 31 March 1998, 470 juveniles appeared in the Perth Children's Court in relation to home burglary charges.
- (2) Of that number 9 have been ordered to pay restitution or compensation where they have received a non custodial sentence.

## CRIME

### *Use of Patrol Cars and Police Personnel*

3499. Mr PENDAL to the Minister for Police:

- (1) I refer to the fight against crime in the suburbs and ask, at any given time of the night, for example 8.30 pm each day, what number of -
- (a) patrol cars;
- (b) police personnel,
- are on active duty in the southern suburbs from South Perth, to Cannington, to Fremantle?
- (2) Of these numbers, how many patrol cars and personnel are on active duty in the suburbs of South Perth, Como, Kensington, Manning, Karawara and Waterford?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) (a) Vehicles - 8.30pm
- | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 19  | 19   | 19  | 26   | 27  | 27  | 23  |
- (b) Personnel - 8.30pm
- | Mon | Tues | Wed | Thur | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|-----|------|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|
| 47  | 47   | 47  | 57   | 59  | 59  | 52  |

Additionally, the suburbs are regularly patrolled by vehicles from the Independent Patrol Group, Division 79, Vehicle Crime Unit and Traffic Operations Support.

- (2) Police patrols are not restricted to operating within specific suburbs. All of these vehicles and personnel are available to attend any of the nominated suburbs depending upon operational requirements.

## GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

### *Access to AlintaGas and Western Power Customer Information*

3512. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Do any government agencies have access to customer details of Western Power or AlintaGas customers?
- (2) If yes, which agencies and under what circumstances can they access these details?

Mr BARNETT replied:

Western Power

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Western Power takes requests from agencies such as ASIO, Australian Taxation Office and the Police Department on their merits.

AlintaGas

- (1) Yes.
- (2) AlintaGas takes requests from agencies such as ASIO, Australian Taxation Office and the Police Department, by written request with information returned in writing.

## WESTERN POWER TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS

3513. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the Western Power advertisements appearing on television?
- (2) How much has Western Power spent on television advertisements in the 1997-98 financial year?
- (3) How much does Western Power expect to spend on television advertisements in the 1997-98 financial year?
- (4) Does Western Power advertise on television to -
  - (a) increase its customer base;
  - (b) encourage customers to use electricity rather than gas;
  - (c) for other reasons (please specify)?
- (5) Can the Minister explain what value for money Western Power receives for the advertisements?
- (6) What real competitors does Western Power have in the metropolitan area?
- (7) Does Western Power seek to encourage its customers to use electricity rather than power provided by other sources?
- (8) If so, is power provided by Western Power less expensive than any other competitors?
- (9) If so, why doesn't Western Power inform people of the tariff differentials rather than embark on glossy advertising?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)-(3) Western Power's Total Marketing Budget for 97/98 for print and tv advertising plus marketing sponsorships and brochures including safety awareness campaigns is \$1.4 million.
- (4) (a)-(b) Yes.
  - (c) Yes. As a commercial organisation operating in an increasingly deregulated and competitive energy market, it is important for Western Power to position itself in the marketplace as the energy provider of choice and promote its services and products such as SmartPower.
- (5) Market research has found previous campaigns to be cost effective by increasing customer awareness of specific products, opportunities and perceptions of the level of Western Power's customer service.
- (6) Western Power is competing with other suppliers for commercial and industrial customers. Approximately 35 per cent of the State's electricity is supplied by organisations other than Western Power. The residential market is keenly contested with gas suppliers such as AlintaGas and Kleenheat.
- (7) Western Power encourages its customers to use the most effective and efficient energy sources available to them.
- (8) Western Power is not aware in detail of the prices charged by competitors. Normally they are commercially confidential. Western Power believes its prices are competitive.
- (9) Western Power does inform customers about tariffs.

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION UNIT'S TRAINING SERVICES

3523. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Women's Interests:

- (1) Does the Domestic Violence Prevention Unit provide training services about a victim's legal rights and responsibilities?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Strategy 1.6 of the Action Plan on Family and Domestic Violence assigns responsibility for specific training programs to the relevant individual agency.



UNIFORM ELECTRICITY TARIFF

*Country Residential Consumers*

3531. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Energy:

- (1) Has the regional uniform electricity tariff for residential consumers in regional Western Australia changed since 29 November 1996?
- (2) If the answer to (1) above is yes -
  - (a) in what way has the tariff changed;
  - (b) in what way did the change benefit residential consumers in regional Western Australia; and
  - (c) what was the dollar value of the change to Government?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes, as part of a general increase across the State.
- (2)
  - (a) Domestic tariffs for all Western Power's residential customers increased by 3.75% on 1 July 1997 to 12.75 cents per kWh.
  - (b) The change maintained uniformity of residential tariffs across the State. The cost of supply to regional customers not supplied from the interconnected system continued to be greater than the revenue collected from them through tariffs.
  - (c) The increase in regional residential tariffs helped to offset losses in regional power supply. Together with the additional revenue from residential customers supplied from the interconnected system, this assisted Western Power's profits. The consequent increases in tax equivalent payments to the State is estimated at \$6.5 million per annum from the tariff increases to all residential customers including those supplied from the interconnected system. Detailed figures are not available for the regional component of this but they comprise around one-tenth of this total.

ROEBOURNE POWER SUPPLY

3550. Mr RIEBELING to the Minister for Energy:

In relation to the power supply to the Roebourne community -

- (a) is the Minister aware that in the past week the people of Roebourne have on three occasions had to endure power outages;
- (b) is the Minister aware that one of the power outages lasted in excess of three hours;
- (c) is the Minister also aware that the last power outage which lasted some three hours was not picked up by the Western Power office but was only relayed to the office via complaints by residents;
- (d) is the Minister aware that numerous street lights are out in the town and remain in that state due to a lack of maintenance being carried out in Roebourne;
- (e) how often is Roebourne checked for problems and how many staff are occupied in the area of maintenance for Roebourne both in physical checks and in maintenance of equipment to service the town;
- (f) is it true that each night when the power supply changes from one source to another that for a short period of time the power stops to Roebourne and all electrical equipment has to be reset; and
- (g) when will the Minister take firm action to make sure that the residents of Roebourne receive a service that is equal to other parts of Western Australia?

Mr BARNETT replied:

I am advised that:

- (a) There have been no power outages reported in the town of Roebourne since 31 March 1998. The last two power outages that affected more than one customer in the town occurred on 31 March and 24 March 1998.

- (b) The power outage on 31 March was reported at 8:15pm. The fault was located and supply restored to approximately 75% of customers affected by 10:30pm, with full restoration at 11:30pm. According to witnesses, the power outage was caused by an act of vandalism.
- (c) Western Power relies on customers to report supply outages. To this end, a 24 hour fault reporting service is provided in Roebourne Shire. The number for the fault reporting service is 131351.
- (d) No street light faults have been reported in Roebourne since 25 March 1998. Western Power relies on customers to report faulty streetlights. Once reported, lights are repaired within 5 working days. The last Roebourne street light fault was reported on 25 March 1998 and repaired on 30 March 1998. The main cause of street light faults in Roebourne is vandalism. Western Power has established a free-call number (1800622008) for reporting streetlight faults.
- (e) Key substation facilities in Roebourne are subject to detailed formal inspection every two months. A detailed inspection of all distribution structures in the town was conducted by independent asset inspectors in the second half of 1997. This data is being used to plan preventative maintenance in the 1998 winter months. Informal inspections are conducted following storms or reported supply interruptions. Western Power has 19 local staff focused on the operation, maintenance and development of Roebourne's power supply network. Local contract services are also used regularly to provide improved services.
- (f) No, the town of Roebourne is always supplied from the North West Interconnected System (NWIS), as are the towns of Karratha and Port Hedland.
- (g) The service provided in Roebourne is equal to that provided in other parts of Western Australia. No complaints have been received from residents in the town of Roebourne. Western Power regularly conducts key customer and stakeholder interviews across the Pilbara to review satisfaction with the range and quality of services offered, and improve these where required. Customers are encouraged to contact the manager of the Pilbara Power Division in Port Hedland if they have any concerns about the level of service provided.

#### ATTENTION DEFICIT HYPERACTIVITY DISORDER

3551. Mr RIPPER to the Minister Health:

- (1) Is the Government planning to implement the recommendations of the Technical Working Party Report on Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder?
- (2) If so, when?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1)-(3) The report of the Technical Working Party on Attention Deficit Disorder to the Cabinet Sub Committee received last year has 21 recommendations. The Health Department has expressed concern over aspects of the report and recommendations concerning the prescribing of stimulant medication to children and the level of diagnosis of Attention Deficit Disorder in Western Australia. The departments concerns encompass:

The level of diagnosis of Attention Deficit Disorder is higher in Western Australia than anywhere else in Australia.

The subsequent prescribing of stimulant medication to children is also higher than anywhere else in Australia.

There appears to be a pattern emerging in the metropolitan area relating to the prescribing of stimulant medication to children.

There is limited research on the long term effects of stimulant medication on Children.

I have asked the Chief Psychiatrist and General Manager of the Mental Health Division, Professor George Lipton, to further investigate these concerns. Professor Lipton will be providing advice to me in September from a national and international panel of Child Psychiatrists with the most current expertise in diagnosis and treatment of Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder. The Government will then be in a much more informed position to make decisions about the treatment of Children in Western Australia and the implementation of the report of the Technical Working Party on Attention Deficit Disorder.

## POLICE OFFICERS' OVERTIME PAYMENTS

3570. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

What was the quantum of overtime payments made to police officers for each of the following periods -

- (a) 1995-96;
- (b) 1996-97; and
- (c) 1997 to date?

Mr DAY replied:

Overtime payments data is not maintained by category of employee. Total agency overtime payments for the periods are:

- (a) \$9,268,249
- (b) \$9,573,509
- (c) \$8,337,920 (as at pay dated May 14, 1998)

## GUN BUYBACK, COMMONWEALTH FUNDING

3571. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

Does the 1997-98 Police budget allocation of \$399m include the \$5m gun buy-back Commonwealth Funding or is the \$5m Commonwealth funding additional to the stated budget of \$399m?

Mr DAY replied:

The 1997/98 Western Australia Police Service budget allocation of \$399 million includes \$5 million for the Commonwealth gun buyback scheme.

## FIREARMS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

3572. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

- (1) On what date was the Firearms Advisory Committee established?
- (2) Who are the members of the Committee?
- (3) How many times has the Committee met?
- (4) Has the issue of accommodating the concerns of people who collect antique firearms been discussed by the Committee?
- (5) If so, what action if any has been recommended by the Committee?
- (6) If not, have you referred the matter to the Committee?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) The establishment of the Firearms Advisory Committee was approved by Cabinet on 8 January, 1998.

- (2)
 

MEMBERS	
Rose Moroz	Chair
Graeme King	Representative of primary producers
Doug Barnes	Representative of the firearms trade
Noni Walker	Representative of the community
Graham Jacobs	Representative of the health profession
Lesley Goudie	Representative of firearms users
Supt. Steve Robbins	Representative of the Commissioner of the Western Australia Police Service

In accordance with the Act, Deputy Members have been appointed for the relevant positions. The Deputy Member may attend any meeting in lieu of the respective full member and for this purpose will assume all powers, duties and entitlements of the full member.

## DEPUTY MEMBERS

Barbara Morrell	Representative of primary producers
Ian Alexander	Representative of the firearms trade
Jillian Mercer	Representative of the community
David Mildenhall	Representative of the health profession
Lambert Jackson	Representative of firearms users

- (3) In February, the members and deputy members of the committee met informally to acquaint themselves with the Minister, other members and the role and operations of the committee. The committee has met once on a formal basis.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) No formal recommendation has yet been received by the Minister.
- (6) Not applicable.

#### ROCKINGHAM YOUTH SERVICES

3578. Mr McGOWAN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Is there an investigation or inquiry currently being carried out by the Department into Rockingham Youth Services?
- (2) If so, when did it commence?
- (3) What allegations of impropriety against Rockingham Youth Services have been made?
- (4) Who is carrying out this inquiry?
- (5) Has there been a recent audit of Rockingham Youth Services, and if not, why not?
- (6) If such an inquiry has handed down its report, what was the outcome?
- (7) Are these results available to the public?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) It is a requirement of the Service Agreement signed by service providers and Family and Children's Services that all funded services are subject to regular detailed review. The purpose of these reviews is to verify that the service is being provided in accordance with the Service Agreement and to assist the service provider to meet the service objectives, outputs and outcomes. Such a review is currently being undertaken with the two services operated by the Rockingham Youth Services Inc that are funded by Family and Children's Services.
- (2) The Chairperson of the Board of Management plus the other Board Members were informed that a review would be undertaken at a meeting with Margaret James, Zone Manager, on 17 December 1997. This was confirmed in writing in a letter of 23 December 1997. The review commenced in January 1998.
- (3) There have been no allegations of impropriety made against Rockingham Youth Service.
- (4) The review is being conducted by Mr Gary Bryant, Community Development and Funding Officer and Mr John de Jongh, Senior Casework Supervisor, both from the Rockingham Office of Family and Children's Services.
- (5) The Rockingham Youth Services Inc has submitted its audited financial statements for the 1996/97 financial year to the Department and these have been reviewed to ensure that all funds have been expended in accordance with the two service agreements. The agency was informed that the audit review was satisfactory in a letter dated 4 February 1998.
- (6) The review report is currently being finalised.
- (7) The outcome of the review will be communicated to the Rockingham Youth Service Inc in the near future.

#### POLICE SERVICE'S INVESTIGATION OF MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

3585. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Did the police task force investigating matters concerning the Ministry of Justice in 1994 or 1995 take a statement from Mr Colin Whittaker?
- (2) What was the nature of the statement taken from Mr Whittaker?
- (3) Did the Police Service make a copy of that statement available to the Ministry of Justice?
- (4) If so, why?

- (5) Is it common practice for the Police Service to provide written statements to other departments and agencies?
- (6) Was the request made to the Police Service by the Ministry of Justice to obtain a copy of that statement?
- (7) If not, what arrangements were in place at the time which resulted in the Ministry of Justice obtaining a copy of the statement?
- (8) Who in the Police Service authorised a copy of the statement being provided to the Ministry of Justice?
- (9) Did the Police Service liaise with the Director of Public Prosecutions in relation to the transfer of the statement from the Police Service to the Ministry of Justice?
- (10) If so, did such liaison take place before or after the statement was transferred from the Police Service to the Ministry of Justice?
- (11) Was the transfer of the statement from the Police Service to the Ministry of Justice authorised by the Police Service?
- (12) If not, what investigations have been made as to how the statement was transferred from the Police Service to the Ministry of Justice?
- (13) When were such investigations conducted?
- (14) What was the result of those investigations?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The statement was taken in relation to an investigation conducted by Mr Whittaker into the roof extrication of a prisoner.
- (3) Yes.
- (4) The statement was made available as evidence in an official inquiry, conducted under Section 9 of the Prisons Act. This inquiry was an internal investigation carried out within the Ministry of Justice.
- (5) No.
- (6) Yes.
- (7) Not applicable.
- (8) Detective Inspector Jock McNaughton (no longer a member of the WAPS).
- (9)-(10) Detective Inspector McNaughton does not recall these specific details relating to the transfer of the statement.
- (11) See (8).
- (12)-(14) Not applicable.

# MINISTRY OF JUSTICE

## *Code of Conduct*

3589. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Has the Ministry of Justice -
  - (a) developed;
  - (b) implemented,a Code of Conduct?
- (2) Have any divisions of the Ministry of Justice -
  - (a) developed;
  - (b) implemented,a Code of Conduct?

- (3) If so, which divisions have -  
 (a) developed;  
 (b) implemented,  
 a Code of Conduct?
- (4) Which divisions have not -  
 (a) implemented;  
 (b) developed,  
 a Code of Conduct?
- (5) Has the Ministry of Justice -  
 (a) proposed;  
 (b) approved,  
 to develop an "umbrella" Code of Conduct for the implementation in all divisions of the ministry?
- (6) If so, will that Code of Conduct be -  
 (a) developed;  
 (b) implemented,  
 by the 30 June 1998?
- (7) Is the Minister aware if the Courts Division of the Ministry of Justice intend to develop a Code of Conduct pursuant to the "Guidelines for developing Codes of Conduct" issued by the Public Standards Commission in June 1996?
- (8) Have workplace committees been created in the various work areas of the courts division of the Ministry of Justice to consult with staff about issues relating to the Codes of Conduct which affect their work?
- (9) If not, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) (a)-(b) No, not as yet. See (2), (3), (5) and (6).
- (2) (a)-(b) Yes.
- (3) (a) The Office of the Public Advocate, the Public Trustee and Offender Management Division have all developed Codes of Conduct and the Courts Services Division's Customer Service Charter contains professional standards expected of staff. Codes of Conduct are also being developed in the Parliamentary Counsel's Office, Policy and Legislation Division, the Registrar General's Office, the Crown Solicitor's Office, Aboriginal Policy and Services Division and Corporate Services Division.
- (b) The Office of the Public Advocates' and the Public Trustee's Codes of Conduct and the Courts Services Customer Service Charter have been implemented and the Offender Management Code of Conduct is about to be implemented.
- (4) (a)-(b) See 3(a).
- (5) (a)-(b) Yes.
- (6) (a)-(b) No. A target date of August 1998 has been set.
- (7) See (9).
- (8) No.
- (9) The Courts Services Division does not need to take further action on a Code of Conduct as its Customer Service Charter sets out professional standards expected of staff and the Division's staff will also be bound by the Ministry wide statement of values and principles being developed elsewhere. The Office of the Commissioner for Public Sector Standards is aware of this situation.

#### STRATA TITLE ACT

3592. Mr BROWN to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Has the Minister received complaints about the inability of the Strata Title Act 1985 to be enforced?

- (2) If so, what action does the Minister intend to take in this regard?

Mr PRINCE replied:

The Attorney General has provided the following reply:

- (1) No. However, if the question relates to the enforcement of orders made by the Strata Titles Referee, concern has at times been expressed to the Referee about the complexity of enforcing Referee's orders, as the beneficiary of the order has to commence a private prosecution in the Court of Petty Sessions. If there is a conviction, then the beneficiary of the original order may then apply to the Referee for a further order that the act required to be done, be done at the applicant's cost by a person appointed by the Referee. The applicant may at that time, also apply to the Referee for an order that the defaulting party reimburse the applicant for costs incurred in the carrying out of the order. Thus one can see that this procedure is lengthy and convoluted. It can (and has) given rise to the Court of Petty Sessions awarding costs against the complainant being the beneficiary of the Referee's order. This can occur if the complainant fails to prove his or her case beyond reasonable doubt.
- (2) I propose to refer the question of enforcement of the Referee's orders to the Community Titles Advisory Committee at DOLA, requesting it to review the matter with a view to, and recommending, a more satisfactory method, of enforcing the Referee's orders.

#### POVERTY TASK FORCE'S RECOMMENDATIONS

3595. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Did the Poverty Task Force make a number of recommendations to the Government?
- (2) What recommendations did the Task Force make?
- (3) What action has the Government taken to implement the recommendations?
- (4) Has the Government rejected any of the recommendations?
- (5) What recommendations has the Government rejected?
- (6) What recommendations has the Government yet to implement?
- (7) What is the time frame for such recommendations to be implemented?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)-(7) The Poverty Taskforce report includes 60 recommendations aimed at strengthening Western Australian responses to people living in relative poverty and identifying medium to long term strategies which will break the cycle of poverty. The report will be released once Cabinet has considered its response to the recommendations.

#### ZERA MEDICAL CLINIC BURGLARY

3598. Ms ANWYL to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the break-in which occurred at the Zera Medical Clinic in Midland where confidential medical records relating to terminations of pregnancy were stolen and released publicly and ask -

- (a) does Government policy support this action?
- (b) what actions has the Minister taken to protect the interests of other women whose medical records may be stolen and made public; and
- (c) does the Minister consider that a special criminal offence should be created to deter this type of action as it relates to women who have undergone terminations of pregnancy?

Mr DAY replied:

- (a) The Government does not condone breaking the law to commit burglary.
- (b) Frequent patrols of the clinic are conducted by the Midland Police. The clinic has an approved alarm system which is directly linked to a security company.

- (c) No. An appropriate penalty (14 years imprisonment upon indictment) is provided within Section 401 (1) of the Criminal Code.

#### BEST START PROJECTS

3602. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) What are the locations of each of the Best Start Projects in Aboriginal Communities?
- (2) For each location -
- (a) what is the staffing level;
- (b) what is the annual cost?
- (3) How many people from each of the following suburbs have accessed the project -
- (a) Midland;
- (b) Midvale;
- (c) Koongamia;
- (d) Middle Swan?

Mrs PARKER replied:

(1)-(2)	Locations	Staffing	Annual Cost
	Oombulgurri (Wyndham)	1 x Coordinator (.5 FTE)	\$45 300
	Wangkajungka (Fitzroy Crossing)	1 x Coordinator (.3 FTE)	\$25 000
	Tjalka Boorda (Hedland)	2 x Activity Leaders (.07 FTE each)	\$27 600
	Tjalka Wara (Hedland)	2 x Activity Leaders (.07 FTE each)	\$22 600
	Roebourne	1 x Coordinator (.5 FTE)	\$54 500
	Jigalong (Newman)	2 x Activity Leaders (.31 FTE each)	
	Mungullah (Carnarvon)	1 x Coordinator (.04 FTE)	\$40 500
		1 x Coordinator (1 FTE)	\$65 000
		1 x Playgroup Leader (.2 FTE)	
	Ullala Station (Wiluna)	1 x Playgroup Leader (.2 FTE)	\$45 000
	Laverton	1 x Coordinator (.5 FTE)	\$64 300
		1 x Activity Leader (.5 FTE)	
	Ninga Mia (Kalgoorlie)	1 x Coordinator (.5 FTE)	\$63 300
		1 x Activity Leader (.5 FTE)	
	Yuat Coolangah Katijin (Moora)	1 x Coordinator (1 FTE)	\$64 700
	Narrogin	1 x Coordinator (1 FTE)	\$69 000
	Mandurah	1 x Coordinator (1 FTE)	\$36 250
	Pinjarra	1 x Coordinator (.5 FTE)	\$36 250
	Midland	2 x Coordinators (1.7 FTE)	\$72 500
	Gosnells	1 x Coordinator (1 FTE)	\$84 000
		1 x Activity Leader (.6 FTE)	

Staffing is provided from within the annual budget figures.

- (3) There are 50 families accessing the Best Start project from the general Midland area. Specifically, the numbers are as follows:
- (a) Midland 15 families
- (b) Midvale 20 families
- (c) Koongamia 5 families
- (d) Middle Swan 10 families

#### WEST STATE SUPER

3617. Mr PENDAL to the Treasurer:

- (1) I refer to the compulsory superannuation entitlements deposited with West State Super by members of the State Public Service, how does the interest rate of West State Super compare to privately operated funds?
- (2) Are State employed members of the fund allowed to roll over their money into better performing private sector funds?



- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Why is the 'insurance' compulsory on West State Super?
- (5) How high are the premiums in the West State Super fund in comparison to other funds?
- (6) Is it compulsory that State employees' superannuation contributions have to be deposited to West State Super?
- (7) If so, why?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) Interest is credited to West State Super member accounts at the defined rate of CPI (Perth index) plus 2% per annum. Private superannuation funds generally provide market-linked rates of return where the interest rate credited to member accounts depends on the investment performance of the fund. In times of low inflation, market-linked returns are generally higher than those available in West State Super, but any comparison must take account of the fact that the return in West State Super is Government guaranteed.
- (2) No.
- (3) Because of the unfunded nature of West State Super. An estimated 70% of employer contributions are not made until the benefit becomes payable to the member.
- (4) Automatic insurance cover is generally held to be a desirable aspect of employer-sponsored superannuation as it ensures that employees receive financial assistance if they are forced to cease work due to permanent disability and also provides financially for their dependants in the event of their death.
- (5) Insurance premiums are determined based on actuarial advice and are competitive and fair relevant to the membership profile of West State Super and the high level of cover provided.
- (6) Yes. However, some statutory authorities have approval to establish separate superannuation arrangements for their employees.
- (7) Because of the unfunded nature of West State Super. However, I should point out that as announced in the Budget, the Government has taken steps to concurrently fund its obligation for West State Super from 1998/99 onwards.

#### SOUTH PERTH BUS ROUTES

3621. Mr PENDAL to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:

- (1) What are the specific reasons for the placement of each bus route in the electorate of South Perth?
- (2) What regular work is carried out by the operators to monitor changes in people's travel patterns and demands on each route?
- (3) What specific information does each bus operator have to justify the operating hours and frequency of each particular route?
- (4) What is the level of awareness in the community about the nearest and most convenient public transport option to their place of residence?
- (5) What is the level of awareness in the community about the operating hours and frequency of their nearest public transport option?
- (6) What percentage of households have a copy of the timetable for their nearest public transport option?
- (7) What specific action has the Minister taken to increase awareness of the origin, destination and route of the nearest public transport route for each household?
- (8) What action has the Minister taken to increase the awareness in the general community (as opposed to those already using public transport) of services provided by the 13 22 13 Transport Information Service?

Mr OMODEI replied:

The Minister for Transport has provided the following response:

- (1) Bus routes in South Perth have been established and modified over a considerable period of time, with most

created during the period when the Metropolitan Transport Trust controlled public transport bus services. Most routes are therefore established based on surveyed and analysed travel patterns established over time. Other general planning considerations and reasons behind the routes in this area are similar to those in any urban area:

the desire for public transport buses to travel along key transport spines within an area;

aim to provide public transport access within 500 metres for residents;

aim for equal catchment areas on either side of the route;

special consideration given on a case-by-case basis to specific locations such as aged persons homes;

recognition of demographics and land use (eg, high density housing, commercial areas, community facilities, etc);

suitability of prospective routes dependent on condition of roads, particularly where traffic management features inhibit bus movement.

Discounting the numerous bus services which travel on the Kwinana Freeway, the bus routes which provide specific service to South Perth are:

Route 33 - links Karawara and Kensington to Perth via suburban and major roads.

Route 70 - runs from Curtin University through Kensington into the City (limited stops) and onto Cottesloe (all stops).

Route 76 - runs from Curtin University through Kensington into the City (limited stops).

Route 106 - trunk service between Perth and Fremantle along Canning Highway.

Route 342 - cross suburban service linking Rivervale and Belmont areas with Curtin University serving Victoria Park and Kensington en route.

Route 344 - longer version of Route 342 extending to Karawara.

Route 180 - Cannington Interchange to Karawara via Bentley including deviation to Bentley Hospital.

Route 181 - as per Route 180 without deviation.

Route 538 - Booragoon to Curtin via Canning Bridge and Manning Road.

Route 102 - Como to Perth to Fremantle.

Route 103 - Salter Point to Perth via Canning Highway and onto Fremantle via Stirling Highway.

Route 104 - Salter Point to Perth via Coode Street (Per 102) then onto Fremantle (after hours version of combined 102 and 103).

Route 109 - Curtin University to Perth via Karawara, Como and South Perth then continues to Redcliffe.

Route 110 - Manning to Perth via Labouchere Road continuing to Carlisle and Cloverdale.

- (2) Transperth conducts half yearly surveys of passengers to determine satisfaction levels with services and to promote comment and feedback on possible changes to services. Additionally, Transperth and its contracted operators conduct area specific surveys if significant changes in services are planned or if there is a perception that demand in an area is changing.
- (3) Transperth determines the operating hours and frequencies of routes, not the service operators. Transperth relies in part on information from operators on which to base decisions. However, other sources of information for making decisions on changing routes or frequencies include:

the ticketing system;

reports from Transperth performance evaluation staff;

surveys;

written and verbal feedback from the community;

feedback from Local Government and State Government representatives.

- (4)-(6) There is no specific statistical information on either the community's overall awareness of their public transport options or the extent of households maintaining timetables for relevant public transport services. Considering the size of its market, Transport has tended to concentrate upon obtaining such information through focus groups and telephone polls. Since mid 1997, however, Transport has been very pro-active when new services have been introduced by conducting extensive media advertising in the relevant local area and letterbox drops providing information on the new public transport service within the route catchment area. Transport is currently conducting additional research on the public transport information requirements of the public and the best means of delivering information.
- (7) Transport has taken a number of positive steps towards increasing the level of awareness of public transport options. The Transperth Information telephone service provides rapid and customer specific information on public transport options, handling between 2 500 and 3 000 inquiries per day. The launch in February of this year of the Transperth Online Journey Planner on the Internet, has provided a substantial boost to many members of the community in accessing information.
- This site received 6 925 inquiries in March, only its second month of operation. Transport is also continuing to investigate improved methods of educating the public on public transport opportunities and influencing community travel behaviour toward greater use of public transport.
- A pilot project was conducted in South Perth from July to December 1997, using a target group of 385 households and was targeted at increasing the community's awareness of public transport, cycling and walking alternatives.
- The results of this pilot project will assist in identifying the best methods of providing information and influencing behaviour in the wider community. The results of the South Perth Travelsmart project were included in submissions to the Select Committee on Air Quality.
- (8) The Transperth telephone information service which provides public transport options to callers, telephone number 13 22 13, is included in all Transperth advertising which regularly appears in the print media. This telephone service has been available for many years.

#### LOCAL GOVERNMENT

##### *Speed Monitoring and Fines Collection*

3622. Mr PENDAL to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Is the Government intending to introduce legislation to allow local government authorities to use radar equipment to monitor vehicle speeds?
- (2) If so, would such a change also allow local government authorities to issue infringement notices and collect fines from those found to be speeding above the limit?
- (3) If such legislation is under consideration, when is it likely to be introduced into Parliament?
- (4) Would passing jurisdiction of speed monitoring and fine collections to local government authorities do away with the present role of the police force in this regard?

Mr DAY replied:

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

#### ROYAL FLYING DOCTOR SERVICE

3623. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:

Can the Minister advise in respect of each of the last five years -

- (a) what was the financial contribution to the Royal Flying Doctor Service by -
  - (i) the State and
  - (ii) Federal Governments, and
- (b) the total operating budget of the RFDS for each of those years?

Mr PRINCE replied:

(a)-(b)

		Operation (\$000.0)		
		State	Federal	Budget
1993/94	Flight Nurse	317.0 5 791.7	5 472.0	
	Total	6 108.7	5 472.0	12 855.6
1994/95	Flight Nurse	317.0 5 902.6	5 554.0	
	Total	6 219.6	5 554.0	13 101.9
1995/96	Flight Nurse	314.5 6 234.5	5 766.0	
	Total	6 549.0	5 766.0	13 860.8
1996/97	Flight Nurse Extra service 95/96 Extra service 96/97 Sale of Land	314.5 266.9 110.4 140.0 6 126.0	5 798.0	
	Total	6 957.8	5 798.0	15 969.0
1997/98	Flight Nurse	314.5 6 171.5	6 171.0	
	Total	6 486.0	6 171.0	16 297.2

#### WA INC LOSSES

3624. Mr GRILL to the Premier:

In reference to *The West Australian* of Saturday 21 February 1998 where in an article entitled "State to mop up WA Inc" the Premier is reported to have said that at last count, the WA Inc losses totalled \$1,515 billion of which \$925 billion related to Rothwells, will the Premier advise as to how these figures were arrived?

Mr COURT replied:

These figures were arrived in response to Parliamentary Question 1297, Hon. D.L. Smith to the Premier, notice dated 20 September, 1994. The public were given notice by Premier's Office press release 96/15 of 5 February, 1995. The figures were arrived in consultation with Treasury, the SGIC, the GESB and BankWest.

#### FREMANTLE HOSPITAL'S LOW ACTIVITY DAYS

3628. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many low activity days were there at Fremantle Hospital in -
  - (a) 1997
  - (b) so far in 1998?
- (2) What is the low activity day policy at this hospital for outpatient clinics and operating theatres?
- (3) What are -
  - (a) the savings; and
  - (b) the costs,
 of low activity days on an annual basis?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Nil.

- (2) No policy exists.
- (3) Not applicable.

#### PRINCESS MARGARET HOSPITAL'S OUTPATIENT CLINICS

3632. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Health:

What is the average waiting time for an appointment for an initial consultation at the following outpatient clinics at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children -

- (a) orthopaedic clinic;
- (b) psychiatry clinic;
- (c) ophthalmology clinic;
- (d) cardiology clinic;
- (e) urology clinic; and
- (f) ear nose and throat clinic?

Mr PRINCE replied:

The average waiting time for a routine appointment for an initial consultation in the outpatient clinics is as follows:

- (a) Orthopaedic clinic 2 months
- (b) Psychiatry clinic 4-6 weeks (these patients are prioritised before an appointment is made).
- (c) Ophthalmology clinic 4 months
- (d) Cardiology clinic 6 weeks
- (e) Urology clinic 6 weeks
- (f) Ear nose and throat clinic 8 months

Depending on the patient e.g. emergency or country patient then the above waiting period would be reduced.

#### PUBLIC SERVANTS, NON-PERMANENT

3638. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) In each of the last five years -
  - (a) what percentage of public sector employees were non-permanent;
  - (b) what percentage of those employees were women; and
  - (c) at what public sector levels were those employees designated?
- (2) What are the figures for the current year?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1) (a)
 

1993	19%
1994	15%
1995	19%
1996	24%
1997	28%

Description: Number of non permanent employees as a percentage of all employees. Source: EEO Yearly Reports

- (b)
 

1993	66%
1994	73%
1995	72%
1996	69%
1997	70%

Description: Number of non permanent women as a percentage of non permanent employees. Source: EEO Yearly Reports

- (c) Information related to classification levels of public sector employees is not collected. Although salary information is collected, no valid data is available for cross tabulation by sex and / or permanency prior to 30 June 1997.

\$10,000 to \$19,999	3%
\$20,000 to \$29,999	49%
\$30,000 to \$39,999	32%
\$40,000 to \$49,999	10%
\$50,000 to \$59,999	3%
\$60,000 to \$69,999	1%
\$70,000 to \$79,999	0%

\$80,000 to \$89,999	0%
\$90,000 to \$99,999	0%
\$100,000 to	1%
More than \$200,000	0%

Description: Number of non permanent women by salary as a percentage of non permanent women.  
Source: HR MOIR Anonymous Individual Employee Records: 30/6/97

- (2) This information is only collected at the end of the financial year. Therefore, this data is not available for the 1997/98 year.

#### PUBLIC SECTOR MANAGEMENT ACT

3639. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Public Sector Management:

- (1) Does the Government intend repealing section 64(4) and (5) of the Public Sector Management Act 1994 in accordance with the recommendations of the Fielding Review?
- (2) If yes, when?
- (3) If no, why not?

Mr COURT replied:

- (1)-(3) All the recommendations of the Fielding Review are currently under consideration by Government.

#### COOLOONGUP PRIMARY SCHOOL

3649. Mr McGOWAN to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the car parking problems existing at Cooloongup Primary School Rockingham?
- (2) If so, what actions does the Government propose to take in this matter?
- (3) Does the Government acknowledge that the situation is dangerous for children?
- (4) Will the Government assist with funding of an additional car park behind the pre-primary?
- (5) Considering the fact that 4 year olds are to be admitted in 1999 and hence the parking situation will get worse, does the Government intend to take some action at that point in time?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1)-(5) Yes, the Minister has been made aware of the parking situation at Cooloongup Primary School following the member's letter on the subject dated 28 April. Minor works funds are made available to schools to provide improvements such as additional parking facilities. Additionally, the Education Department sets aside a budget allocation each year to enable some provisions to be made where necessary for parents to set-down and pick-up their children adjacent to schools. In most cases, this work is undertaken on a shared-cost basis with the relevant Local Government Authority. I have been advised that the Education Department has initiated discussions with the school community and the City of Rockingham regarding the parking situation at Cooloongup Primary School with an aim to improving parking and safety at the school.

#### AMANDA YOUNG'S DEATH

3651. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Health:

On 11 March 1998 you advised the Parliament that a number of internal inquiries had been conducted into the death of Amanda Young in October 1997 by the Chief Medical Officer of the Department of Health -

- (a) will the Minister advise when these inquiries were made and what was the outcome of these inquiries; and
- (b) will the Minister table copies of those reports and, if not, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) Following an internal investigation by the Chief Medical Officer, on the circumstances surrounding the death of Amanda Young, a request was forwarded to a Perth specialist physician, by HDWA on 28 March 1998, for a full medical investigation, recommendations and report into this matter. To date, the report has not been received by the Department.

- (b) As there is a possibility in the future of legal action, I will assess the appropriateness of tabling the report once I receive it having regard to legal advice.

POLICE DEPARTMENT'S ETHICS AND INTEGRITY REPORT

3660. Mr McGOWAN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Has the Police Department produced a document known as the Ethics and Integrity Report (or something similar)?
- (2) What is the substance of this document?
- (3) What impact will it have on police officers' activities?
- (4) Will it have an impact financially on police officers?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) The only document produced recently by the Western Australia Police Service fitting the question is the Ethical Guidelines booklet.
- (2) The document describes the code of conduct required by police officers on and off duty and clearly describes the standards of ethics, integrity and professional conduct expected.
- (3) The document gives clear guidelines as to the ethical standards expected of police officers.
- (4) No.

POLICE COMMISSIONER ROBERT FALCONER'S LEGAL COSTS

3661. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) What was the cost of having Mr J Gilmour, QC and Mr N.K. Stewart appearing for Police Commissioner Robert Falconer in the Supreme Court of Western Australia in the case relating to the Anti-Corruption Commission on Wednesday, 22 April 1998?
- (2) Will the Minister provide a breakdown of all other legal costs relating to this matter?

Mr PRINCE replied:

The Attorney General has provided the following reply:

- (1)-(2) The Police Commissioner, Mr Robert Falconer, was represented by solicitors and counsel from the Crown Solicitor's Office. Mr J. Gilmour QC and Mr N.K. Stewart appeared on behalf of the Anti-Corruption Commission. As the Anti-Corruption Commission is within the Hon Premier's ministerial portfolio, the member may wish to redirect this aspect of the question to the Hon Premier.

POLICE SERVICE VEHICLES

3662. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

What are the terms and conditions for use of Western Australia Police Service vehicles and the Executive Vehicle Scheme?

Mr DAY replied:

The terms and conditions for use of Western Australia Police Service (WAPS) vehicles are detailed in the Commissioners Orders and Procedures (COPs) Manual under the following headings:

Use and Security of Police Vehicles  
Parking of Police Vehicles  
Vehicle Commuting Policy

The terms and conditions of vehicle usage by members of the Executive Vehicle Scheme (EVS) are stipulated in the current Western Australian Government Motor Vehicle Fleet Policy. [See paper No 1463.]

SEXUAL ASSAULTS

3666. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Police:

How many sexual assault cases have been reported during -

- (a) 1994;
- (b) 1995;
- (c) 1996;
- (d) 1997, for the post code areas of -
  - (i) Dianella;
  - (ii) Maylands;
  - (iii) Bedford;
  - (iv) Bayswater;
  - (v) Morley; and
  - (vi) Inglewood?

Mr DAY replied:

The Police Service does not record offences by postcode. The information below is therefore that for the corresponding localities/suburbs. The number of sexual assault cases reported during the fiscal year 1993/94, 1994/95, 1995/96 and 1996/97 for the following localities are -

	LOCALITY	1993/94	1994/95	1995/96	1996/97
(i)	Dianella	4	9	9	7
(ii)	Maylands	17	27	28	34
(iii)	Bedford	6	1	1	1
(iv)	Bayswater	29	6	13	29
(v)	Morley	52	29	22	10
(vi)	Inglewood	2	8	12	4

Over this period, the incidence of sexual assault in Western Australia decreased by 10.2%.

#### "PRACTITIONER" DEFINITION

3676. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Does the Minister for Health intend to deem that the Hospitals Act definition of 'practitioner' also include midwives?
- (2) If so, when?
- (3) If not, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) The term "practitioner" is not applicable to the issue of whether it is appropriate to allow private midwives to have clinical privileges in public hospitals. At present, consideration is being given to employing private mid-wives as casual employees of the relevant hospital for the purposes of conducting the confinement of patients in a hospital or birth centre.

#### DEPUTY PREMIER'S TRAVEL ITINERARIES

3680. Mr CARPENTER to the Deputy Premier:

- (1) Will the Deputy Premier table the itineraries for his trips to -
  - (a) United Kingdom and Germany from 19 May to 31 May, 1997;
  - (b) The Philippines from 6 July to 13 July, 1997;
  - (c) Indonesia from 3 August to 7 August, 1997; and
  - (d) China from 20 September to 1 October, 1997?
- (2) If not why not?



Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) Yes. [See paper No 1458.]
- (2) Not applicable.

#### MINISTER FOR PRIMARY INDUSTRY'S TRAVEL ITINERARIES

3681. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister for Primary Industry:

- (1) Will the Minister table the itineraries for his trips to -
  - (a) Korea, Japan, Taiwan and Hong Kong from 11 April to 27 April 1997; and
  - (b) South Africa, Namibia and Mauritius from 11 June to 9 July, 1997?
- (2) If not why not?

Mr HOUSE replied:

- (1)-(2) Yes. [See paper No 1460.]

#### MINISTER FOR PLANNING'S TRAVEL ITINERARIES

3682. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister for Planning:

- (1) Will the Minister table his itinerary for his visit to:
  - (a) China and Vietnam from 19 April to 30 April, 1997; and
  - (b) Sydney from 17 July to 20 July, 1997?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) Yes. [See paper No 1462.]
- (2) Not applicable

#### MINISTER FOR POLICE'S CAIRNS ITINERARY

3685. Mr CARPENTER to the Minister for Police:

- (1) Will the Minister table his itinerary for his trip to Cairns from 30 July to 1 August, 1997?
- (2) If not, why not?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) Yes. I attended the Ministerial Council Drug Strategy Meeting. Itinerary below.

Wednesday 30 July	Depart Perth for Cairns Accommodation: Pacific International Hotel The Esplanade, Cairns
Thursday 31 July	Ministerial Council on Drug Strategy Meeting Pacific International Hotel, Esplanade, Cairns
Friday 1 August	Depart Cairns for Perth

- (2) Not applicable.

#### STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES

3702. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

What are the criteria for the allocation of teacher assisted time to students with learning difficulties in primary schools?

Mr BARNETT replied:

Schools are staffed to the K-12 teacher staffing formula on the basis of student enrolments. The formula takes into consideration a range of student and school factors. Principals deploy staff resources to meet the needs of all students including students with learning difficulties. On request from schools, districts provide additional support to assist students with learning difficulties.

## EDUCATION DEPARTMENT'S CURRICULUM MATTERS STAFF

3703. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many people in the Education Department were responsible for working on curriculum matters before the State Government restructured the head office of the Department?
- (2) How many people will be responsible for working on the curriculum in the head office of the Department when the restructure is complete?
- (3) What is the number of people responsible for administering these systems for staffing State schools?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) In 1997 there were 98.5 officers in the Curriculum Directorate in the Central Office of the Education Department.
- (2) In 1998, after the restructure, there are 71.8 officers in the Curriculum Directorate.
- (3) Primary and Specialist Staffing Branch has a total of eight Personnel Consultants who are responsible for the staffing of pre-schools, primary schools, the primary components of district high schools and the School of Isolated and Distance Education, and all education support and English as a Second Language facilities. An additional 0.5 consultant is responsible for the placement of school psychologists. Secondary and Selection Personnel Directorate has 5.4 personnel consultants responsible for the staffing of secondary schools and two consultants responsible for the placement of school administrators.

## BALLAJURA SCHOOLS' PRE-PRIMARY WAITING LISTS

3704. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

- (1) What is the waiting list for 4 year olds, or kindergarten places, in schools in the Ballajura electorate?
- (2) What is the waiting list for 5 year olds, or pre-primary places, in schools in the Ballajura electorate?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) In the Ballajura area there are nine children on school waiting lists for kindergarten (four year old) places. However, the member will be aware that the Government does not guarantee universal access for four year olds at this stage.
- (2) I have been advised that, in the Ballajura area there were eight children on school waiting lists for pre-primary (five year old) places at the beginning of the school year. The parents of these children were directed to the Swan District Education Office for assistance with finding an alternative pre-primary placement for their children. As a result, there are currently no five year old children in the Ballajura electorate who have not been placed in pre-primary programs. There are, however, several schools with vacancies currently for five year olds in this area.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

3705. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of concerns expressed by the Western Australian Physical Education Teachers Association and sporting groups that the Government's Draft Curriculum Framework recommends a minimum time allocation for the health and physical education learning area in years 3 to 10 of only 120 minutes per week?
- (2) If yes, what action has the Minister taken in response to these concerns?
- (3) Does the Minister support an increase in the time allocated to physical education?
- (4) If not, why not?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes. The Minister is aware of the concerns raised by the Western Australian Physical Education Teachers Association (WAPETA) and sporting groups with regard to the time allocations referred to in the guidelines section of the draft *Curriculum Provision* document.
- (2) The *Curriculum Provision* document was disseminated to all government schools for consultation in 1997.

The comments were provided by schools, organisations such as WAPETA and other sporting organisations. Based on this feedback, and to avoid misunderstanding, it has been recommended that the reference to the notional allocation of time be removed as this had been provided for illustrative purposes only.

- (3) With an outcome based approach to education, it is appropriate that schools make their own decisions relating to time allocation to learning area outcomes. However, the Minister is supportive of physical education receiving a high priority in the allocation of time and resources, particularly in the primary schooling years.
- (4) Not applicable.

#### FEES AND CHARGES, INCREASES

3714. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Family and Children's Services; Seniors; Women's Interests:

In relation to all the portfolio areas for which the Minister has responsibility -

- (a) what fees and charges have been increased in the context of the 1998/99 Budget and the announcements made immediately prior to the Budget;
- (b) what is the rate of increase for each of these in dollar and percentage terms;
- (c) what is the estimated total additional revenue each of these increases is expected to raise;
- (d) are there any other increases in fees and charges proposed for the financial year 1998/99; and
- (e) if so, what are the details of these other increases?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (a) Family and Children's Services: None.  
Office of Seniors Interests: None.  
Women's Policy Development Office: None.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: None.
- (b) Family and Children's Services: Not applicable.  
Office of Seniors Interests: Not applicable.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Not applicable.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: No.
- (c) Family and Children's Services: Not applicable.  
Office of Seniors Interests: Not applicable.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Not applicable.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.
- (d) Family and Children's Services: No.  
Office of Seniors Interests: No.  
Women's Policy Development Office: No.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: No.
- (e) Family and Children's Services: Not applicable.  
Office of Seniors Interests: Not applicable.  
Women's Policy Development Office: Not applicable.  
WA Drug Abuse Strategy Office: Not applicable.

#### EVENTSCORP FUNDING

3731. Dr CONSTABLE to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) To which events did EventsCorp lend its support in each of the last five years?
- (2) What was the extent of and what were the types of support provided by EventsCorp to the events referred to in question (1) above?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1)-(2) The information requested was provided in answers to Legislative Assembly Questions on Notice Nos 632 and 1025 dated 8 and 30 April, 1997.

#### EVENTS FUNDING BY GOVERNMENT

3732. Dr CONSTABLE to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

How much money has the Government contributed to each of the following events in each year of operation -

- (a) Hopman Cup;
- (b) Rally Australia; and
- (c) Heineken Golf Classic?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

The information requested was provided in answers to Legislative Assembly Questions on Notice Nos 632 and 1025 dated 8 and 30 April, 1997.

#### REPORT ON RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT IN WA

3735. Mr MASTERS to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) What was the cost of printing the report entitled "A report on Research and Development in Western Australia"?
- (2) How many copies were produced?
- (3) In general terms, to whom will the copies be distributed?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) \$18 300.
- (2) 3 500.
- (3) All State Libraries, University Libraries, people on Technology and Industry Advisory Council Mailing List, numbers of the R&D community, overseas visitors with an interest in R&D, potential investors in R&D.

#### GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3737. Mr MASTERS to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Commerce and Trade; Regional Development; Small Business:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Deputy Premier's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?
- (2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr COWAN replied:

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

#### GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3739. Mr MASTERS to the Minister for Primary Industry; Fisheries:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?
- (2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr HOUSE replied:

#### AGRICULTURE WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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

#### FISHERIES WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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

#### GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3742. Mr MASTERS to the Minister for Labour Relations; Planning; Heritage:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?

- (2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1) No.  
(2) Not applicable

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3745. Mr MASTERS to the Minister for Local Government; Disability Services:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?  
(2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr OMODEI replied:

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

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3747. Mr MASTERS to the Minister representing the Minister for Finance:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?  
(2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr COURT replied:

The Minister for Finance has provided the following response:

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

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3748. Mr MASTERS to the Minister for Works; Services; Multicultural and Ethnic Affairs; Youth:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?  
(2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr BOARD replied:

I have been advised:

- (1) Nil.  
(2) Not applicable.

GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3749. Mr MASTERS to the Minister representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?  
(2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr COWAN replied:

The Minister for Racing and Gaming has provided the following response:

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

## GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3750. Mr MASTERS to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?
- (2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr BARNETT replied:

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

## GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3752. Mr MASTERS to the Minister representing the Minister for the Arts:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?
- (2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

The Minister for the Arts has provided the following reply:

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

## GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3754. Mr MASTERS to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Attorney General's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?
- (2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr PRINCE replied:

The Attorney General has provided the following reply:

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

## GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3756. Mr MASTERS to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Justice:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?
- (2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mrs van de KLASHORST replied:

The Minister for Justice has provided the following reply:

- (1)-(2) I refer the member to my answer to Question On Notice 3754.

## GOVERNMENT VEHICLES WITH PERSONALISED NUMBER PLATES

3757. Mr MASTERS to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

- (1) Have any of the Government agencies or departments within the Minister's portfolio responsibilities purchased personalised number plates for any of the motor vehicles within their car or truck fleets?
- (2) If yes, how many personalised plates have been purchased in each of the past three years and at what cost?

Mr MARSHALL replied:

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

KEMERTON SILICON SMELTER

*Jarrah Logs*

3761. Mr MASTERS to the Minister for the Environment:

When will the report by Simcoa on the environmental impact of jarrah log extraction from native forests for conversion into charcoal for use at the Kemerton silicon smelter -

- (a) be presented to the EPA; and
- (b) made available to the public?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (a) Simcoa's 1997 Annual and 1995-1997 Triennial Environmental Reports were forwarded to the Department of Environmental Protection, via the Department of Resources Development, on 7 April 1998. These report on the environmental impacts of jarrah log extraction.
- (b) The above reports are available through the Department of Environmental Protection's library.

BASSENDAN CSBP/TONKIN PARK INDUSTRIAL SITE

3766. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for the Environment:

In regard to the Bassendean CSBP/Tonkin Park industrial site -

- (1) What volumes of each grade of waste are still on site?
- (2) Is the waste covered?
- (3) Is the waste enveloped?
- (4) What environment impact is the waste having to -
  - (a) the ground water quality underlying;
  - (b) air quality surrounding; and
  - (c) soil quality?
- (5) Is there any evidence of the waste moving by plume formation towards the Swan River?
- (6) Has any acid effect been seen near the Swan River?
- (7) What testing has been done in the drains and ground water leading to the Swan River from the side?
- (8) What are the results of that testing?
- (9) Does any work order exist on the site?
- (10) If not, when will an order to clean up the site be issued?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1) Soil at the Bassendean CSBP/Tonkin Park industrial site is contaminated as a result of past activities which have occurred at the site since 1910. Presently approximately 200 000 cubic metres (m3) of waste remain at the site (approximately 100 000 m3 of above ground stockpile and approximately 100 000 m3 below ground level). The waste is variable ranging from Class 2 to Class 4.
- (2)-(3) No.
- (4) (a) Ground water beneath the site is contaminated as a result of the soil contamination which has occurred since 1910.
- (b) The site is stable and there is no evidence to date to suggest that dust is being generated which is adversely affecting the air quality.

- (c) The surrounding clean soil is unlikely to be affected.
- (5) There is evidence that ground water contamination from industrial activity extends to the south of the Tonkin industrial park.
- (6) No.
- (7) The Town of Bassendean monitored drains in the area between 1994 and 1996 with the assistance of the Swan River Trust. The Water and Rivers Commission commissioned a study in 1997 by Murdoch University to investigate ground water contamination in the area.
- (8) A draft report by Murdoch University indicates that ground water contamination extends to the south of Tonkin industrial park. Monitoring of drains downstream of Tonkin industrial park indicates contamination by heavy metals and acidity. There are several possible sources in the general area which could contribute to the contamination. These have not been positively identified, although Tonkin industrial park is a likely contributor.
- (9) There are Ministerial Conditions in place which require the removal of all waste from the site prior to any development of the site.
- (10) The proponent has submitted a request for a proposed change to the Ministerial Conditions that would allow containment of the waste on-site. This proposal is presently undergoing formal assessment by the Environmental Protection Authority under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act.

#### BUSHLAND AND WETLAND CONSERVATION

3767. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the widespread community support for the statutory protection of regionally significant bushland and wetland?
- (2) Is the Minister aware of the thousands of voluntary hours contributed by the community to protect and manage bushland on the Swan Coastal Plain?
- (3) Is the Government committed to the implementation of a comprehensive regional conservation reserve system for bushland and wetlands?
- (4) Can the Minister give an assurance that Bushplan will be released for public comment before June 1998?
- (5) If not, why not?
- (6) If no to (4), when will Bushplan be released?
- (7) Why has the release of Bushplan for public comment been delayed?
- (8) Can the Minister give an assurance that Bushplan will be implemented through appropriate interim measures immediately upon release?
- (9) If not, why not?

Mrs EDWARDES replied:

- (1)-(3) Yes.
- (4) No. Perth's Bushplan is at an advanced stage and is in the process of being finalised by the Western Australian Planning Commission, Environmental Protection, Authority, National Parks and Nature Conservation Authority and the Water and Rivers Commission.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) Perth's Bushplan is expected to be released later this year.
- (7) Perth's Bushplan, as would be expected, raises a series of policy and resource issues that have had to be addressed and completion of updated detailed mapping has taken longer than anticipated.
- (8) Existing mechanisms in government will be employed to provide for interim measures upon the release of Perth's Bushplan.
- (9) Not applicable.



CLEAVERVILLE AND FORTY MILE BEACH CARAVAN ACCESS

3770. Mr McGOWAN to the Minister for the Environment:

- (1) Is the Government aware that Cleaverville Beach and Forty Mile Beach near Karratha are popular locations for caravaners?
- (2) Is caravaner access to these areas now being hindered by either State or local government?
- (3) If so, how is it being hindered?
- (4) What charges are now being applied?
- (5) Is it intended for these charges to continue?
- (6) Under what regulations or Acts are the caravaners being removed?
- (7) Under what regulations or Acts are the charges being imposed?
- (8) Has the situation changed recently and under what Act?
- (9) Which other beaches or former camping areas have now had their entry rules for caravaners changed or charges imposed?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1)-(9) In response to this question please see Parliamentary Question 3771 dated May 19 1998 in the Legislative Assembly.

CLEAVERVILLE AND FORTY MILE BEACH CARAVAN ACCESS

3771. Mr McGOWAN to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is the Government aware that Cleaverville Beach and Forty Mile Beach near Karratha are popular locations for caravaners?
- (2) Is caravaner access to these areas now being hindered by either State or Local Government?
- (3) If so, how is it being hindered?
- (4) What charges are now being applied?
- (5) Is it intended for these charges to continue?
- (6) Under what regulations or Acts are the caravaners being removed?
- (7) Under what regulations or Acts are the charges being imposed?
- (8) Has the situation changed recently and under what Act?
- (9) Which other beaches or former camping areas have now had their entry rules for caravaners changed or charges imposed?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1) Yes. The Department of Local Government has discussed this matter with the Shire of Roebourne.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) The Shire of Roebourne is applying the Caravan Park and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997 which prohibit camping on land that is not a caravan park or camping ground.
- (4) The Shire advises that no charges are being applied.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Act 1995 and the Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds Regulations 1997.
- (7) Not applicable.
- (8) Under the Health Act (Caravan Parks and Camping Grounds) Regulations 1974, camping was restricted to caravan parks and camping grounds. A person could only camp on other land with the permission of the

owner or occupier of that land. Similar restrictions are included in the new caravan legislation which came into operation on 1 July 1997.

- (9) The Department of Local Government is aware that the Shire of Gingin may be enforcing the legislation in respect of illegal camping on beaches within its districts.

#### JOONDALUP HOSPITAL

##### *Beds for Mentally Ill Patients*

3772. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many public patient beds were available for those experiencing mental illness when Joondalup Hospital came into operation?
- (2) How many public patient beds are now available for those with mental illness?
- (3) If the number has changed, why has this happened?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) The Health Department purchases the equivalent of 15 beds at 100% occupancy for public patients.
- (2) This level is still available.
- (3) The contracted level has not changed.

#### EMERGENCY WARNING DEVICE OFFENCES

3776. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Minister for Police:

- (1) For each week from 1 January 1998 to 7 May 1998, what was the number of charges that have been laid for the offence of "Excessive use of emergency warning device"?
- (2) In what location was each offence committed?

Mr DAY replied:

The Western Australia Police Service is unable to provide a number of charges for each week since January 1, 1998 as records are received on a monthly basis. The following figures refer to Traffic Infringements issued for the offence.

- (1) The offence comes under regulation 1614 of the Road Traffic Code for sounding horn unnecessarily. The figures for 1998, thus far, are as follows:

January 1998	2
February 1998	3
March 1998	1
April 1998	4
May 1998	Not completed

- (2) The offence is broken down into 3 categories:

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
<b>Accidents</b>	0	0	0	0	not completed
<b>Metropolitan</b>	1	3	1	4	not completed
<b>Country</b>	1	0	0	0	not completed

#### MOTOR VEHICLE CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION OFFENCES

3777. Mr MARLBOROUGH to the Minister for Police:

- (1) For each week from 1 January 1998 to 7 May 1998, what was the number of charges that have been laid for the offence of "Fail to affix current C/R label?"
- (2) In what location was each offence committed?

Mr DAY replied:

The Western Australia Police Service is unable to provide a number of charges for each week since January 1, 1998 as records are received on a monthly basis. The following figures refer to Traffic Infringements issued for each offence.

- (1) The offence comes under regulation 27(3) of the Road Traffic Act for Owner fail to affix or keep affixed registration label. The figures for 1998, thus far, are as follows:

January 1998	169
February 1998	183
March 1998	150
April 1998	99
May 1998	Not completed

- (2) The offence is broken down into 3 categories:

	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>
<b>Accidents</b>	0	0	0	1	not completed
<b>Metropolitan</b>	146	166	132	82	not completed
<b>Country</b>	23	17	18	16	not completed

#### SMALL BUSINESS

##### *Unfair Dismissal Laws Exemptions*

3785. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Labour Relations:

- (1) Has the Minister/State Government advised the Prime Minister that it will exempt small business with less than 15 employees from the State's unfair dismissal laws?
- (2) Has the Minister/State Government advised the Prime Minister that it will exempt small business employing 15 or less employees from the unfair dismissal laws once changes to the Federal unfair dismissal laws are passed through the Federal Parliament?
- (3) Has the Minister/State Government advised the Prime Minister that it supports his request for unfair dismissal laws not to apply to small business with less than 15 employees?
- (4) Does the Government intend to introduce legislation to exempt small business with less than 15 employees from the unfair dismissal provisions?
- (5) If so, will the exemption apply to all employees of businesses with less than 15 employees including employees engaged under Workplace Agreements?

Mr KIERATH replied:

- (1)-(2) No.
- (3) The Prime Minister has been advised that his proposal is consistent with this Government's objectives of increasing harmonisation of Federal and State industrial laws and removing the impediments to employment and economic growth, particularly in the area of small business.
- (4)-(5) The Government is yet to determine its final position on this matter.

#### MURDOCH UNIVERSITY, CO-OPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTRE

3786. Mr BROWN to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of any commitment or undertaking to support the establishment of a co-operative research centre in Tourism at Murdoch University?
- (2) If so, what is the nature of the commitment or undertaking that has been given?
- (3) On what date was the commitment or undertaking given?
- (4) If funds are to be provided to support the establishment of a co-operative research centre, will such funds be provided through the Tourism Commission or another department or agency?

- (5) If funds are provided by another department or agency, what department or agency will be providing such funds?
- (6) Have any discussions taken place within Government on the provision of funds for this purpose?
- (7) Has the Minister and/or the Tourism Commission had any discussions with any other departments about the provision of such funds?
- (8) If so, which departments?
- (9) Have any discussions taken place or decisions been made on the amount of funds that will be made available?
- (10) If so, what amount of funds are being considered or discussed?
- (11) Does the Minister/Government still support the establishment of a co-operative research centre in Tourism at Murdoch University?
- (12) Does the Government remain committed to providing funds to support the establishment of such a co-operative research centre?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) There is an agreement between Murdoch University and the Cooperative Research Centre for Tourism (at James Cook University).
- (3) Not known.
- (4) No, however the Western Australian Tourism Commission may be approached on a project-by-project basis.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6)-(7) Yes.
- (8) Treasury Department
- (9) Yes.
- (10) Nil.
- (11) The Government supports the establishment of a CRC but has no preferences concerning particular universities.
- (12) No, other than examining individual projects on a case-by-case basis at this stage.

#### POLICE OFFICERS' LANGUAGE QUALIFICATIONS

3795. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Police:

- (1) How many police officers have -
  - (a) LOTE level qualifications;
  - (b) NAATI level qualifications; or
  - (c) other language qualifications or experience?
- (2) How many police officers have qualifications in the languages of -
  - (a) Indonesian/Malay;
  - (b) Cantonese;
  - (c) Mandarin; or
  - (d) Japanese?
- (3) Has the recruitment policy for Police Service -
  - (a) encouraged people with languages other than English into the service;

- (b) identified such language skills in the recruitment process; and
- (c) established administrative arrangements that enable officers with such language skills to be utilised by the service?
- (4) Has the Police Service carried out an analysis or review of the savings made by using multi-lingual police officers, as opposed to the costs of employing outside translators?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) (a)-(c) Though there are no records of officers possessing formal language qualifications (including LOTE and NATTI), over 250 officers speaking 46 different languages are recorded as being experienced in LOTE.
- (2) Though no officers are recorded as possessing qualifications in languages other than English -
  - (a) Four are recorded as (possessing the ability to speak and/or read) Indonesian and four with the same skills in Malay.
  - (b) Two officers are recorded as (possessing the ability to speak and/or read) Cantonese.
  - (c) Nil.
  - (d) Seven are shown as (possessing the ability to speak and/or read) Japanese.
- (3) (a) The Western Australia Police Service does encourage applicants from ethnic backgrounds.
- (b) Yes. Linguistic ability is recognised as an attribute which enhances an applicant's competitiveness.
- (c) Yes. The Police Service has compiled a register of those people who can speak a language other than English and is able to call upon officers when required.
- (4) No. Officers experienced in LOTE may use their skills in the course of their duty. However, the use of qualified interpreters or translators is necessary in those instances where there is a need to independently and/or judicially interact with the public. Interpreters and translators are independent, professionally trained and accredited.

#### MINDARIE/TAMALA PARK LAND

##### *Local Government Share*

3799. Dr GALLOP to the Minister for Local Government:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the claim by the Towns of Vincent, Cambridge and Victoria Park that they ought to have been given a share of the Mindarie/Tamala Park land as part of the restructuring of the City of Perth in 1993?
- (2) Will the Minister ensure that their right to a share of this land is guaranteed as part of the process by which the City of Wanneroo will be divided?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) If yes, what share will be granted to the three towns?

Mr OMODEI replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) With the abolition of the City of Wanneroo on July 1 1998 there will be a need to determine what happens with its interests in Tamala Park. Governors Orders will determine this matter but it is not intended to review the interest currently held by Perth City Council.
- (3) The restructure of the City of Perth created the three new Towns of Vincent, Victoria Park and Cambridge. Under the City of Perth Restructuring Act and Governors Orders all PCC interests in land and buildings in the Towns were transferred to the Towns. Tamala Park is not within the boundaries of any of the Towns so the PCC interest was unaffected. This was also consistent with the recommendations of the Carr Fardon Report. The City of Perth underwrote the establishment of the Towns and bore all costs associated with the restructure. The Towns do not have any claim to a share of other PCC assets including Tamala Park.
- (4) Not applicable.

## BIRTHING SERVICES IN THE GOLDFIELDS

3800. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Women's Interests:

In relation to the Government's two-year plan for women (1996-98) -

- (a) has the Health Department implemented the recommendations of the Nganganawilli Health Service review to improve the birthing services available to Aboriginal women in the Goldfields region;
- (b) if not, why not;
- (c) if yes, which of the recommendations has been implemented; and
- (d) with what results?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) Implementation has commenced on some recommendations.
- (b) Not applicable.
- (c) Recommendation related to:
  - (i) Access to pregnancy related services
  - (ii) Provision of information to women during pregnancy
  - (iii) Availability of Aboriginal Health Workers to provide support to pregnant women
- (d) Ngunytju Tjitji Pirni project and Bega Garnbirringu have demonstrated gains in pregnancy outcomes and primary health outputs.

## MATERNITY SERVICES STRATEGIC PLAN

3803. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Health:

In relation to the Government's two-year plan for women (1996-1998) -

- (1) Has the Government implemented commitments made in response to the recommendations of the Select Committee on Intervention in Childbirth by initiating a five year Strategic Plan for Maternity Services?
- (2) If yes, when was the plan released?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Has the Government developed information resources to ensure women can make better informed birthing choices?
- (5) If yes, where is the information available?
- (6) If not, why not?
- (7) If not, when will the promised information resources be made available?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Yes. The current Metropolitan Strategic Planning process is currently considering options for the provision of maternity services.
- (2) A discussion paper which outlines options for the metropolitan area is currently being considered by Cabinet. Subject to Cabinet's approval, the discussion paper will be released for public consultation.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) Yes, the Health Department is in the process of developing a 'Good Birth Guide' which will inform women about birthing services and models of care available within Western Australia.
- (5) It is anticipated the 'Good Birth Guide' will be distributed in September 1998.
- (6)-(7) Not applicable.

## RURAL FEMALE GENERAL PRACTITIONER SERVICES

3804. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister Health:

In relation to the Government's two-year plan for women (1996-1998) -

- (1) When will Government's promise to support and develop the Female General Practitioner Services run by the Western Australian Centre for Rural and Remote Medicine, which provides female general practitioner services to rural and remote women, be fulfilled?

- (2) If the Government has no intention of supporting and developing the services, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) The promise is being fulfilled.  
(2) Not applicable.

# SMALL CLAIMS TRIBUNAL

## *Hearings in Remote Areas*

3812. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

- (1) Does the Small Claims Tribunal have the power to hear cases in remote and regional areas?  
(2) If the answer to (1) is no -  
(a) why not; and  
(b) what action is the Attorney General prepared to take to require visits to remote and regional areas?  
(3) If the answer to (1) is yes -  
(a) which towns have had cases heard in them since 14 December 1996;  
(b) on what date did the tribunal sit in each town;  
(c) how many outstanding claims are there in each town; and  
(d) how long has each outstanding claim been on the waiting list in each town?

Mr PRINCE replied:

The Attorney General has provided the following reply:

- (1) Yes.  
(2) (a)-(b) Not applicable.  
(3) 

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Albany	19/03/97	4	3x2 months
	20/03/97		1x1 month
	11/08/97		
	12/08/97		
	12/11/97		
	13/11/97		
	18/02/98		
	19/02/98		
Broome	28/04/97	Nil	
	30/03/98		
Bunbury	16/12/96	5	3x10 days
	19/02/97		2x1 month
	20/02/97		
	17/03/97		
	26/03/97		
	26/05/97		
	09/07/97		
	10/07/97		
	28/07/97		
	29/07/97		
	08/09/97		
	09/09/97		
	08/10/97		
	06/11/97		
	03/12/97		
	15/12/97		
	04/02/98		
	23/03/98		
	24/03/98		

Busselton	07/02/97	Nil	
	17/03/97		
	10/07/97		
	08/09/97		
	29/10/97		
	06/02/98		
	23/03/98		
	10/06/98		
Carnarvon	16/07/97	Nil	
	17/07/97		
Collie	26/05/97	Nil	
	29/07/97		
	28/10/97		
Esperance	18/02/98	Nil	
Geraldton	01/05/97	7	1x6 months
	02/05/97		1x4 months
	25/09/97		2x2 months
			2x1 month
			1x10 days
Kalgoorlie	07/04/97	Nil	
	08/04/97		
	27/10/97		
	28/10/97		
	16/02/98		
	17/02/98		
	10/06/98		
Karratha	30/04/97	Nil	
	01/04/98		
	02/04/98		
Katanning	13/10/97	Nil	
Mandurah	28/04/98	Nil	
Manjimup	28/07/97		
	09/09/97		
	24/11/97		
Merredin	17/09/97	Nil	
Narrogin	31/01/97	2	2x2 months
	14/10/97		
Norseman	19/02/98	Nil	
Northam	26/02/97	Nil	
	07/05/97		
	17/09/97		
	19/01/98		
	28/04/98		
Port Hedland	29/04/97	4	2x1 month
	30/04/97		2x2 weeks
	31/03/98		

## GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

*Staff*

3823. Mr GRAHAM to the Deputy Premier; Minister for Commerce and Trade; Regional Development; Small Business:

What are -

(a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Deputy Premier's control located in the following towns -

- (i) Port Hedland;
- (ii) South Hedland;
- (iii) Tom Price;
- (iv) Paraburdoo;
- (v) Telfer;
- (vi) Marble Bar;
- (vii) Nullagine;
- (viii) Karratha;
- (ix) Halls Creek;
- (x) Wiluna;
- (xi) Dampier;
- (xii) Roebourne; and
- (xiii) Wickham;

(b) the classifications of those staff;



- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Deputy Premier's control?

Mr COWAN replied:

Kimberley Development Commission

- (a) Nil.  
(b) Not applicable.  
(c) Nil.

Pilbara Development Commission

- (a) Port Hedland 5 FTE (2 vacancies)  
Karratha 5 FTE (1 vacancy)
- (b) Staff classifications in Port Hedland -
- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| Director   | Level 9 |
| Coordinator Strategic Infrastructure Planning (vacant) | Level 7 |
| Senior Project Officer (vacant)                        | Level 5 |
| Finance & Administration Manager                       | Level 5 |
| Personal Assistant                                     | Level 2 |
- Staff classifications in Karratha -
- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| Assistant Director                                     | Level 8 |
| Coordinator Community Planning & Facilitation (vacant) | Level 6 |
| Project Officer  | Level 4 |
| Executive Officer                                      | Level 4 |
| Project Assistant                                      | Level 2 |
- Contract staff in Karratha -
- |   |         |
|---|---------|
| Coastal Facilitator                     | Level 5 |
| Aboriginal Economic Development Officer | Level 4 |

- (c) The programs currently being funded in the towns listed above are -

Business and Industry Development  
Infrastructure and Service Identification and Coordination  
Regional Promotion and Information Services

Small Business Development Corporation

- (a) Nil.  
(b) Not applicable.  
(c) The Small Business Development Corporation does not fund specific programs in these towns, although it provides support to the Business Enterprise Centres located in Karratha and Port Hedland. An annual grant of \$60 000 is provided to each centre along with information, marketing and other support services as part of its ongoing commitment to the Business Enterprise Network throughout Western Australia.

Department of Commerce and Trade

- (a) The Department of Commerce and Trade has one staff member located in Halls Creek.  
(b) Level 4.  
(c) The Department of Commerce and Trade funds programs which are available statewide, including specific programs for small communities. If the member would like specific information about access to any of these programs by a particular organisation or individual located in the towns specified, this can be provided by the Department.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

*Staff*

3828. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Labour Relations; Planning; Heritage:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the following towns -

- (i) Port Hedland;
  - (ii) South Hedland;
  - (iii) Tom Price;
  - (iv) Paraburdoo;
  - (v) Telfer;
  - (vi) Marble Bar;
  - (vii) Nullagine;
  - (viii) Karratha;
  - (ix) Halls Creek;
  - (x) Wiluna;
  - (xi) Dampier;
  - (xii) Roebourne; and
  - (xiii) Wickham;
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
  - (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Minister's control?

Mr KIERATH replied:

#### Labour Relations

##### Department of Productivity and Labour Relations

- (a) (i)-(vii) None.  
(viii) One Regional Industrial Inspector.  
(ix)-(xiii) None.
- (b) Level 4.
- (c) The Department of Productivity and Labour Relations provides public awareness and employment entitlement protection services in the Pilbara, under the Fair Workplaces Program.

##### Commissioner of Workplace Agreements

- (a) None.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

##### WorkSafe Western Australia

- (a) (i)-(vii) None.  
(viii) One Inspector and one Administrative Support Officer.  
(ix)-(xiii) None.
- (b) Inspector - Level 5  
Administrative Support Officer - Level 1
- (c) The department's Regulatory Services Program.

##### WorkCover WA

- (a) None.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

##### Department of the Registrar, Western Australian Industrial Relations Commission

- (a) (i)-(vii) None.  
(viii) One Deputy Registrar and one officer  
(ix)-(xiii) None.
- (b) Level 6 and Level 2.
- (c) None.

##### Planning

##### Ministry for Planning

- (a) (i)-(vii) None.

- (viii) Senior Project Officer.
- (ix)-(xiii) None.

(b) Level 5.

(c) In Port Hedland and South Hedland - \$10,000 for Port Hedland Area Planning Study.

In Karratha and Dampier - \$10,000 for Karratha Area Development Strategy as part of Strategic Industrial Land Use Planning in the Regions.

In Roebourne and Wickham - \$32,000 for Structure Planning in Roebourne and Wickham as part of Pilbara Structure Planning.

East Perth Redevelopment Authority

- (a) None.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

Subiaco Redevelopment Authority

- (a) None.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

Heritage

Heritage Council of Western Australia

- (a) None.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Staff*

3831. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Local Government; Disability Services:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the following towns -
  - (i) Port Hedland;
  - (ii) South Hedland;
  - (iii) Tom Price;
  - (iv) Paraburdoo;
  - (v) Telfer;
  - (vi) Marble Bar;
  - (vii) Nullagine;
  - (viii) Karratha;
  - (ix) Halls Creek;
  - (x) Wiluna;
  - (xi) Dampier;
  - (xii) Roebourne; and
  - (xiii) Wickham;
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Minister's control?

Mr OMODEI replied:

With respect to the Department of Local Government

- (a) None.
- (b)-(c) Not applicable.

With respect to the Disability Services Commission

- (a)
  - (i) 0
  - (ii) 2
  - (iii)-(vii) 0

- |  |             |  |   |
|--|-------------|--|---|
|  | (viii)      |  | 1 |
|  | (ix)-(xiii) |  | 0 |
- (b) (ii) South Hedland 1 Level 6 Public Service Award  
1 Level 4/5 Public Service Award  
(viii) Wickham 1 Level 5 Public Service Award
- (c) Local Area Coordination.  
Post School Options.  
Specialist Country Services.

## GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

*Staff*

3832. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister for Health:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the following towns -
- |        |                |
|--------|----------------|
| (i)    | Port Hedland;  |
| (ii)   | South Hedland; |
| (iii)  | Tom Price;     |
| (iv)   | Paraburdoo;    |
| (v)    | Telfer;        |
| (vi)   | Marble Bar;    |
| (vii)  | Nullagine;     |
| (viii) | Karratha;      |
| (ix)   | Halls Creek;   |
| (x)    | Wiluna;        |
| (xi)   | Dampier;       |
| (xii)  | Roebourne; and |
| (xiii) | Wickham;       |
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Minister's control?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) (i)-(ii) Hedland (Port and South) - servicing some Pilbara wide functions.
- |  |           |       |
|--|-----------|-------|
|  | LHMWU     | 76.6  |
|  | ANF       | 115.0 |
|  | HSOA      | 77.3  |
|  | HGWA      | 18.2  |
|  | Med Pract | 14.6  |
- (iii)
- |  |                  |       |
|--|------------------|-------|
|  | Nursing          | 11.67 |
|  | Administration   | 3.33  |
|  | Medical Support  | 1.93  |
|  | Hotel            | 7.34  |
|  | Community Health | 2.32  |
- (iv)
- |  |                  |       |
|--|------------------|-------|
|  | Nursing          | 10.87 |
|  | Administration   | 1.16  |
|  | Medical Support  | 0.05  |
|  | Hotel            | 4.94  |
|  | Maintenance      | 0.72  |
|  | Community Health | 1.00  |
- (v) No longer staffed by EPHS staff
- (vi)
- |  |       |     |
|--|-------|-----|
|  | ANF   | 1.0 |
|  | LHMWU | 0.4 |
- (vii) ANF 1.0
- (viii)
- |  |                 |       |
|--|-----------------|-------|
|  | Nursing         | 39.78 |
|  | Administration  | 17.61 |
|  | Medical Support | 12.49 |
|  | Hotel           | 17.21 |

	Maintenance	4.37	
	Community Health	7.80	
(ix)	29.00		
(x)	None.		
(xi)	Not applicable.		
(xii)	Nursing	11.79	
	Administration	2.06	
	Hotel	7.02	
	Maintenance	2.96	
	Community Health	3.37	
(xiii)	Nursing	13.93	
	Administration	1.10	
	Hotel	5.35	
	Maintenance	2.14	
	Community Health	0.08	
(b)	Nursing, Administration, Hotel Services, Maintenance and Community Health, Halls Creek Registered Nurses, Administration, Enrolled Nurses, Hotel Services, Aboriginal Health Workers, Medical Officers		
(c)			
Town	Organisation	Program	97/98 (\$)
Port Hedland	Wirraka Maya Aboriginal Medical Service	Family Futures Program	98424
	Wirraka Maya Aboriginal Medical Service	Sexual Health Program	20000
	Pundulmurra College	Aboriginal Environmental Health Worker Training	34500
South Hedland;	Nil		
Tom Price	Nil		
Paraburdoo	Nil		
Telfer	Nil		
Marble Bar	Nil		
Nullagine	Irrungadji Group Association	Aboriginal Environmental health Worker	34500
Karratha	Nil		
Halls Creek	Yura Yungi Aboriginal Medical Service	Sexual Health Program	10000
Wiluna	Ngangganawilli Aboriginal Health Service	Primary Health Services	463000
	Ngangganawilli Aboriginal Health Service	Nutrition and hygiene program	16000
	Ngangganawilli Aboriginal Health Service	PATS Administration for Wiluna	45000
	Ngangganawilli Aboriginal Health Service	Diabetes Education Program	20000
	Ngangganawilli Aboriginal Health Service	Minor Capital Works	50000
Dampier	Nil		
Roebourne	Mawarnkarra Health Service	First Aid Training Program	3800
	Mawarnkarra Health Service	Health Promotion Programs	86058
	Mawarnkarra Health Service	Alcohol and Drug Rehabilitation	135000
Wickham	Nil		

## GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

*Staff*

3833. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister representing the Minister for Finance:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the following towns -

- (i) Port Hedland;
  - (ii) South Hedland;
  - (iii) Tom Price;
  - (iv) Paraburdoo;
  - (v) Telfer;
  - (vi) Marble Bar;
  - (vii) Nullagine;
  - (viii) Karratha;
  - (ix) Halls Creek;
  - (x) Wiluna;
  - (xi) Dampier;
  - (xii) Roebourne; and
  - (xiii) Wickham;
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Minister's control?

Mr COURT replied:

The Minister for Finance has provided the following response:

- (a)-(c) There are no departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the towns listed.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Staff*

3836. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister representing the Minister for Mines:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the following towns -
- (i) Port Hedland;
  - (ii) South Hedland;
  - (iii) Tom Price;
  - (iv) Paraburdoo;
  - (v) Telfer;
  - (vi) Marble Bar;
  - (vii) Nullagine;
  - (viii) Karratha;
  - (ix) Halls Creek;
  - (x) Wiluna;
  - (xi) Dampier;
  - (xii) Roebourne; and
  - (xiii) Wickham;
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Minister's control?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (a) Of the towns listed the Department of Minerals and Energy has staff located at Karratha and Marble Bar.
- (b) Classifications of staff at Karratha are:
- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| Level 8 | 1 |
| Level 7 | 2 |
| Level 5 | 4 |
| Level 3 | 1 |
| Level 2 | 1 |
| Level 1 | 1 |
- Classifications of staff at Marble Bar are:
- |                      |       |
|----------------------|-------|
| Level 5              | 1     |
| Level 1              | 2 and |
| One gardener/cleaner |       |
- (c) The Department of Minerals and Energy has no programs of work that are specific to any of the towns listed. However, the Geological Survey has the following regional programs:

PILBARA: A major program of geological mapping in the Pilbara region with staff carrying out field work over the entire region from Karratha to Telfer. This program started in 1994 and will continue to beyond 2000.

EAST KIMBERLEY: A program of geological field mapping has recently been carried out in the Kimberley with part of the work based around Halls Creek. A program of geological mapping is planned in the Halls Creek area.

NORTHERN GOLDFIELDS: A program of geological and geochemical mapping has been carried out in the Wiluna region. A major geological mapping program is currently in progress further to the northeast and is due to be completed in 2001.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Staff*

3840. Mr GRAHAM to the Minister representing the Attorney General:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Attorney General's control located in the following towns -
  - (i) Port Hedland;
  - (ii) South Hedland;
  - (iii) Tom Price;
  - (iv) Paraburdoo;
  - (v) Telfer;
  - (vi) Marble Bar;
  - (vii) Nullagine;
  - (viii) Karratha;
  - (ix) Halls Creek;
  - (x) Wiluna;
  - (xi) Dampier;
  - (xii) Roebourne; and
  - (xiii) Wickham;
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Attorney General's control?

Mr PRINCE replied:

The Attorney General has provided the following reply:

- (a) Ministry of Justice

- (i) 17
- (ii-vii) Nil.
- (viii) 5
- (ix)-(xi) Nil.
- (xii) 71
- (xiii) Nil.

Legal Aid WA

- (i) Nil.
- (ii) 6
- (iii)-(xiii) Nil.

All Other Agencies

- (i)-(xiii) Nil.

- (b) Ministry of Justice

Port Hedland:           5 x Level 1  
                               3 x Level 2  
                               1 x Level 2/4  
                               3 x Level 3  
                               1 x Level 4  
                               3 x Level 5  
                               1 x Level 7

Karratha: 2 x Level 1  
1 x Level 2  
2 x Level 5

Roebourne: 3 x Level 1  
3 x Level 1  
1 x Level 2/4  
1 x Level 5  
1 x Level 6  
1 x Level 8

Prison Officers:  
8 x Industrial Officers  
36 x Prison Officers  
7 x Prison Officer First Class  
10 x Senior Officers

#### Legal Aid WA

South Hedland: 2 x Level 1  
1 x Level 2  
2 x Level 4  
1 x Level 9

#### (c) Ministry of Justice

- (i) 4 - Anger Management Program, Substance Abuse Program, Psychological and Psychiatric Services, Domestic Violence Program (part funding)
- (ii) 1 - Youth Involvement Council
- (iii-vii) Nil.
- (viii) 3 - Anger Management Program, Substance Abuse Program, Psychological and Psychiatric Services
- (ix) 1 - Halls Creek Youth Program
- (x) 1 - Substance Abuse Program
- (xi) Nil.
- (xii) 7 - Anger Management Program, Substance Abuse Program, Psychological and Psychiatric Services, Education and Vocational Training Program, Alcohol Awareness Program, Skills Training for Aggression Control, Aboriginal Visitors Scheme
- (xiii) Nil.

#### Legal Aid WA

(i-xiii) Legal aid assistance.

#### All Other Agencies

(i-xiii) Nil.

### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

#### *Staff*

3841. Mr GRAHAM to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the following towns -
  - (i) Port Hedland;
  - (ii) South Hedland;
  - (iii) Tom Price;
  - (iv) Paraburdoo;
  - (v) Telfer;
  - (vi) Marble Bar;
  - (vii) Nullagine;



- (viii) Karratha;
  - (ix) Halls Creek;
  - (x) Wiluna;
  - (xi) Dampier;
  - (xii) Roebourne; and
  - (xiii) Wickham;
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Minister's control?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (a)-(c) The Western Australian Tourism Commission does not have any staff located in the towns listed.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Staff*

3842. Mr GRAHAM to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Justice:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the following towns -
- (i) Port Hedland;
  - (ii) South Hedland;
  - (iii) Tom Price;
  - (iv) Paraburdoo;
  - (v) Telfer;
  - (vi) Marble Bar;
  - (vii) Nullagine;
  - (viii) Karratha;
  - (ix) Halls Creek;
  - (x) Wiluna;
  - (xi) Dampier;
  - (xii) Roebourne; and
  - (xiii) Wickham;
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Minister's control?

Mrs van de KLASHORST replied:

The Minister for Justice has provided the following reply:

- (a)-(c) I refer the member to my answer to Question on Notice 3840.

#### GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

##### *Staff*

3843. Mr GRAHAM to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

What are -

- (a) the numbers of departmental staff in departments under the Minister's control located in the following towns -
- (i) Port Hedland;
  - (ii) South Hedland;
  - (iii) Tom Price;
  - (iv) Paraburdoo;
  - (v) Telfer;
  - (vi) Marble Bar;
  - (vii) Nullagine;
  - (viii) Karratha;
  - (ix) Halls Creek;
  - (x) Wiluna;
  - (xi) Dampier;

- (xii) Roebourne; and
- (xiii) Wickham;
- (b) the classifications of those staff;
- (c) the programs currently being funded in the towns listed in (a), in the departments under the Minister's control?

Mr MARSHALL replied:

- (a) Of the towns listed the Ministry of Sport and Recreation has staff located at Karratha.
- (b) Classifications of staff are:
 

Level 5	1
Level 1	.5FTE
- (c)
 

(i)	Nil	
(ii)	Facilities;	\$310 650
(iii)	Facilities;	\$6 500
(iv)-(vii)	Nil.	
(viii)	Facilities;	\$9 240
(ix)	Nil.	
(x)	Facilities;	\$200 000
(xi)-(xii)	Nil.	

In addition, funding is provided from the Country Package grants program for sporting groups. This varies in regard to the type of projects and the amount throughout the year. Funding is on an application basis. The Ministry also provides a range of services, and is able to provide other assistance through such sponsorship programs as the Ansett Country Sport Development Program, the Healthway QUIT Sport Scholarship Program, and the Alcoa Coach-in-Residence Program.

WOODS, MS NATALIE

3844. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Police:

I refer to the statement provided by Natalie Woods to WPC Properjohn on 28 April 1992 -

- (a) what records were made of that statement and the interview with WPC Properjohn; and
- (b) will the Minister now table those documents and records?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) A hand written statement was obtained from Natalie Woods by WPC Properjohn on April 28, 1992. This statement was then forwarded to Detective Steven Potter for perusal on 29 April 1992. The hand written statement was then typed and perused by Ms Woods to confirm the accuracy of the statement. The statement is now filed with the Western Australia Police Service.
- (2) No.

WOODS, MS NATALIE

3845. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Police:

On 29 April 1992, Natalie Woods was interviewed by Detective Steven Potter -

- (a) what records were made of this interview with Detective Potter; and
- (b) will the Minister now table those documents and records?

Mr DAY replied:

- (a) A copy of the typed statement from Detective Sergeant Steven Potter is now filed with the Western Australia Police Service.
- (b) No.

MITCHELL, MR JOHN

3847. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Works:

- (1) Has the Department of Contract and Management Services employed a person by the name of John Mitchell?

- (2) If so, what is his official position?
- (3) What is his classification rate and salary?
- (4) In employing Mr Mitchell, did the Department ascertain if he had previously worked for the State Government?
- (5) If so -
  - (a) what departments or agencies had he previously worked for; and
  - (b) what was his position or positions in those departments or agencies?
- (6) Does the position he is employed in have a duty statement or job description?
- (7) What previous experience does he have to qualify for the position in the Department of Contract and Management Services?

Mr BOARD replied:

I am advised that -

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Director Business Services.
- (3) Level 9 \$82,128 per annum.
- (4) Yes.
- (5)
 

(a)	(b)
Corrective Services Department	Manager – Secondary Industry
Corrective Services Department	Director Prison Operations
Ministry of Justice	Executive Director Corporate Services
Central Great Southern Health and Aged Care Service	General Manager
- (6) Yes.
- (7) A properly constituted selection panel and process in accordance with the Public Sector Management Act assessed each candidate against the selection criteria for the position, finding that Mr Mitchell was the most suitable applicant.

#### DEPARTMENT OF CONTRACT AND MANAGEMENT SERVICES

##### *Secondment of Senior Staff*

3848. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Works:

- (1) How many senior staff (above level 6) employed in the Department of Contract and Management Services are currently on secondment or otherwise to other departments and agencies?
- (2) What departments and agencies are such officers working in at the present time?

Mr BOARD replied:

I am advised that:

- (1) Seven.
- (2)
  - Fire and Rescue
  - Education
  - Subiaco Redevelopment Authority
  - Tourism
  - Rottneest Island
  - Premier and Cabinet
  - Curtin University

#### BUNBURY ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE'S OPERATIONAL COSTS

3854. Mr BROWN to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Has the State Government received any representations from the Bunbury Entertainment Centre to provide an operational subsidy or grant to enable the Centre to meet operational costs?

- (2) Have any funds been set aside in the 1998-99 budget to assist with operational costs?
- (3) If not, why not?
- (4) Is the Minister aware if the Entertainment Centre provides a major entertainment venue for the South West and caters for the needs of people who live outside the City of Bunbury?
- (5) Does the Government provide any assistance to other entertainment/theatrical centres?
- (6) What level of operational assistance is provided to such centres?
- (7) In any Government funding provided to such centres is there a component which can be used to assist with operational expenses?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1)-(7) This is a matter for the Minister for the Arts.

#### EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

##### *Applicants for Promotion*

3857. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of suggestions that teachers and administrators seeking promotion pay substantial sums of money to outside consultants to assist in preparation of their applications?
- (2) Does the Minister condone this practice?
- (3) If not what is the Minister doing to ensure that applicants for promotion in the Education Department are assessed on the basis of their own rather than on the basis of others efforts?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) I am aware that a number of consultants offer such services to teachers and administrators.
- (2)-(3) The practice is acceptable on the following basis:

Panel judgments are based on the quality of an applicant's past experience and achievement - not on how well they have written their application. Selection panels are extensively trained to look beyond any particular style of a written application in order to assess the quality of the applicant's past experiences which relate directly to the selection criteria for a position.

The written application is one part of the selection process. Referee contact, interview, at times job-related exercises and line manager contact are used to provide panels with evidence on which they will base their decision.

The selection process is under constant scrutiny and modification. This year the referee process has changed from being validation of an applicant's claims in their written application to comment on their first-hand knowledge of the applicant in relation to the selection criteria on which the selection panel will make its judgments.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that applicants who have engaged professional writers are not advantaged.

The Minister is not in a position to prevent teachers seeking assistance in the preparation of applications.

#### CARNARVON STUDENT WELFARE OFFICER

3869. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Was a student welfare officer employed on a full time basis for any part of 1997 to deal with truancy problems in Carnarvon?
- (2) Why is a full time student welfare officer no longer located in Carnarvon?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes. A 1.0 FTE School Welfare Officer (SWO) was appointed in Carnarvon for 1997 as a temporary position. One of the major roles was to deal with chronic truants.

- (2) The Mid West Education Centre staffing profile that was established at the end of 1997 for 1998 was based on:
- (i) minimum allocation requirements directed by Central Office; and
  - (ii) the requirements of schools in the Mid West District Office services.

It was decided by the District Management Council and the District Director that an additional Student Welfare Officer would not be specifically appointed to Carnarvon for 1998, however, the district profile includes 1.0 FTE Student Welfare Officer to service the Mid West Education District which includes Carnarvon.

#### CARNARVON, TRUANCY

##### *Bestar Program, Munga Village*

3871. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:

- (1) Is funding for the Bestar program based at Munga Village in Carnarvon and aimed at getting chronic truants back to school finishing in September?
- (2) If yes, for what reasons?
- (3) What action will the Minister take to ensure resumption of funding for this program?

Mrs PARKER replied:

- (1) Mungallah village is the base of one of 16 Best Start Projects operating in Western Australia. Best Start is not aimed at truants but targets Aboriginal families in selected communities with children under school age.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) Funding of the Best Start Programme at Mungallah has not ceased and there are no plans for it to cease.

#### TEACHERS, COUNTRY

##### *Professional Development Courses*

3872. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that it recently cost Exmouth District High School \$5 000 or 25 per cent of its professional development budget for the year to send five teachers to Karratha for a three day course?
- (2) What action is the Minister taking to ensure that country teachers have the same access to professional development opportunities as their city colleagues?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1) Yes, the Minister is aware that Exmouth District High School recently spent around \$5,000 on a professional development course, however, this figure represents closer to 19 per cent of the school's professional development budget. The professional development of staff is a school managed activity and reflects the priorities of the school. The Principal is responsible for the allocation of professional development resources according to the development priorities set by the school.
- (2) In the case of this activity, the staff attended a seminar by Lane Clark, Canadian Education Consultant and international expert on technology in the classroom. This topic is an educational priority and the Centre for Excellence in Teaching, who organised Ms Clark's visit, specifically arranged for regional visits to ensure country teachers had access to Ms Clark's expertise. The School Grant has a component to support the professional development of staff. This component is enhanced for country schools by a multiplier to allow for costs associated with isolation.

#### HOME BURGLARIES AND CAR THEFTS

3873. Mrs ROBERTS to the Minister for Police:

- (1) What was the clearance rate for home burglaries during 1997?
- (2) What was the clearance rate for car theft during 1997?

Mr DAY replied:

- (1) Between 1 January 1997 and 31 December 1997 - clearance rate - 11.9%. It should be noted that from 1994/95 - 1996/97, the incidence of home burglaries fell by 3.7%.
- (2) Between 1 January 1997 and 31 December 1997 - clearance rate - 16.6%. It should be noted that from 1994/95 - 1996/97, the incidence of car theft fell by 17.5%.

#### AGRICULTURAL PROMOTION IN EXMOUTH

3886. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

- (1) What activities are being undertaken by the Department of Commerce and Trade to promote agriculture in Exmouth and surrounds?
- (2) What funding has been allocated for this purpose?

Mr COWAN replied:

- (1) The Department of Commerce & Trade has not undertaken any specific activities to promote agriculture in Exmouth and the surrounds. However, the department was involved with other agencies, including the Gascoyne Development Commission, in the development of the Gascoyne-Murchison Rangelands Management Strategy. The Gascoyne Development Commission monitors the economic development in the region and this includes its agricultural and pastoral needs. The Department of Commerce & Trade is currently preparing agricultural investment briefs for opportunities in regional areas on a general basis.
- (2) No funding has been specifically provided for this purpose.

#### LOGGING TRUCKS ON SOUTH WEST ROADS

3892. Mr BROWN to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism:

- (1) Is the Minister aware of the expected significant increase in woodchip exports from the South West in the next two to three years?
- (2) Has the Minister and/or the Western Australian Tourism Commission (WATC) considered the impact on tourism of a significant increase in logging trucks on South West roads?
- (3) Does the Minister and/or WATC intend to examine the likely impact of this development?
- (4) If not, why not?
- (5) Has the Government / WATC reached the view that such an increase in logging trucks will not have a detrimental impact on tourism?
- (6) If so, on what basis has that view been reached?

Mr BRADSHAW replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2)-(3) Any significant increase in road use by trucks will be monitored jointly by the Western Australian Tourism Commission, Main Roads WA and other affected organisations.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) Not at this stage.
- (6) Not applicable.

#### INTERNET ACCESS FOR COUNTRY BUSINESSES

3901. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Commerce and Trade:

What action has the Government taken to assist businesses outside of regional townsites to gain access to the Internet without the cost of STD timed calls?

Mr COWAN replied:

The State Government is committed to improving telecommunications infrastructure to regional Western Australia, which will facilitate affordable and convenient access to a full range of telecommunications services, including the

intranet, throughout the State. The Western Australian Government has previously recommended to the Commonwealth Government that all remote area residents have an untimed local call option which provides them with access to a minimum range of essential services. This is the position of the State Government's submission to the federal inquiry into whether the standard telephone service should be upgraded. The State Government supports 51 Telecentres in rural and remote areas through the provision of a Telecentre Support Unit and direct funding. Several of these Telecentres provide local call access to the Internet either directly as Internet Service Providers (ISPs) or as points of presence for commercial ISPs.

The State Government has successfully supported several applications from regional Western Australia to the Commonwealth Government's Regional Telecommunications Infrastructure Fund (RTIF), which seek funding to improve Internet access for rural and remote communities. Examples of communities which have received funding for Internet related projects include Broome, Geraldton, Southern Province and Eastern Central Province. Funding for the establishment of new Telecentres has also been provided. Fundamental to these projects is the establishment of an infrastructure to provide local call access to rural Western Australia.

The State is also participating in a national RTIF funded project by Farmwide (National Farmers Federation) to establish Internet access points into small rural communities and to trial satellite-delivered Internet access to remote areas.

The Office of Information and Communications (OIC) has been established within the Department of Commerce & Trade to coordinate the development of policies and strategies in information technology and telecommunications and to facilitate the implementation of these strategies across Government. The OIC is developing a Statewide Telecommunications Framework, which will identify the rural and remote areas most requiring telecommunications upgrades and the strategies required to fill the gaps.

#### GOVERNMENT INSURANCE FUND'S LOSS

3904. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister representing the Minister for Finance:

- (1) Did the Government Insurance fund within the State Government Insurance Commission register an accumulated loss of \$14.9 million for the 1996-97 financial year?
- (2) Was the premium revenue for the Government Insurance Fund in 1996-97 \$43 million?
- (3) What are the causes of the operating loss in the 1996-97 year?
- (4) How much of both the annual operating loss and the accumulated losses is attributed to blow out in employers indemnity insurance claimed by employees of the Government?
- (5) Was the actuarial assessed net claims liability as at 30 June 1997 \$95.6 million?
- (6) What is the anticipated outcome in each of the above for the 1997-98 financial year?

Mr COURT replied:

The Minister for Finance has provided the following response:

- (1) As reported in note 26 to the Insurance Commission's 1997 financial statements the Accumulated Losses of the Government Insurance Fund (Funded scheme) were \$14.9 million. As reported in note 21, the Unfunded scheme's unfunded net claims liability was \$89.0 million. A description of the Government Insurance Fund's Funded and Unfunded schemes is set out in note 1(d) to the Insurance Commission's 1997 financial statements.
- (2) From the source described in (1) above, the premium revenue for the Funded scheme was \$42.9 million and \$44.9 million for the Unfunded scheme.
- (3) The Operating Loss of the Government Insurance Fund in 1996/97 was \$3.3 million. The Operating Loss of the Unfunded scheme was \$0.7 million. The main cause for the losses were a blow out in claim payments for Workers' Compensation.
- (4) Operating Loss 1996/97: Most of the abovementioned losses are attributable to a "blow out" in claims expense for Workers' Compensation.

Accumulated Losses 30 June 1997: Most of the accumulated loss in Government Insurance Fund (Funded scheme) is attributable to Investment Losses/property write downs brought to account in 1989/90, 1990/91 and 1991/92.

- (5) The actuarially assessed net claims liability for the Workers' Compensation class was:

Government Insurance Fund (Unfunded Scheme):	\$95.6 million
Government Insurance Fund (Funded Scheme):	\$35.3 million

- (6) The Government Insurance Fund (both Funded and Unfunded) is expected to have an operating loss of \$33.5 million for the 1997/98 financial year. The Insurance Commission of Western Australia has a right of indemnity from the Treasury for this amount.

#### TOBACCO RELATED HEALTH COSTS

3906. Dr EDWARDS to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What are the estimated costs to the State's health system to provide services to patients suffering from illness caused by tobacco use?
- (2) Is the Minister aware that the Federal Minister for Health, Dr Wooldridge, has stated that the Federal Government would help any State Government that wanted to sue tobacco companies for tobacco related health costs?
- (3) Following the High Court decision that leaves the States unable to collect the tobacco franchise fee and given the high cost to the State of providing health services to patients with tobacco caused illness, has the Government sought or received legal advice on the feasibility of US style litigation by the Government against the tobacco industry?
- (4) If so, what does the Government propose to do in this matter?
- (5) If no, what other consideration has been given to litigation?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) \$36 million per annum; \$21 per head of population.
- (2) Yes. The Federal Minister for Health, Michael Wooldridge stated he would 'support' any State that wanted to sue the tobacco industry to recoup health care costs for illnesses caused by tobacco. No formal offer of funding support for litigation has been made to date.
- (3) Yes. It should be noted that the Commonwealth now collects and passes on to States and Territories tax revenue from tobacco. The projected revenue from tobacco taxes in 1997/98 for Western Australia is \$290 million\* (\$24m from the Tobacco Franchise Fee collected by WA in July 1997, and \$266m safety-net revenue collected by the Commonwealth on behalf of WA), which is well in excess of the health care costs attributed to tobacco use in this State.
- (4) The feasibility of litigation against tobacco companies for tobacco related health costs has been and continues to be the subject of consideration. It would be inappropriate to reveal whether the State intends to commence such proceedings.
- (5) Not applicable.

\*Reported in the 1998/99 Budget Papers.

#### KING EDWARD MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, PSYCHIATRIST'S POSITION

3908. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Health:

In relation to the Government's two year plan for women (1996-1998) -

- (a) has the Government established a psychiatrist position at King Edward Memorial Hospital;
- (b) if yes, when did this position commence;
- (c) who has been appointed; and
- (d) if not, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) A psychiatrist position has been established at King Edward Memorial Hospital under the Directorate of Psychological Medicine



- (b) The position commenced as a part time role in July 1996 and has been full time since January 1997.
- (c) Dr Jon Rampono has been appointed to the position.
- (d) Not applicable.

#### ALTERNATIVE BIRTHING SERVICES PROGRAM

3910. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Health:

In relation to the Government's two year plan for women (1996-1998) -

- (a) has the Health Department progressed appropriate recommendations of the State Evaluation of the Alternative Birthing Services Program;
- (b) if yes, what progression has been made; and
- (c) if not, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) The State continues to support midwife-based birthing services including family birth centres, the Community-Based Midwifery Homebirthing Program and Birthplace Support Group. All of these services are based on midwife or shared care models where pregnancy and childbirth are recognised in the majority of cases as normal life events requiring minimum intervention. The Health Department has also made a formal submission to the Commonwealth for Medicare rebates to be provided for women who choose to be cared for by a midwife in private practice.
- (c) Not applicable.

#### CERVICAL CYTOLOGY REGISTER

3911. Ms WARNOCK to the Minister for Health:

In relation to the Government's two year plan for women (1996-1998) -

- (a) has the Health Department implemented a Cervical Cytology Register (CCR);
- (b) if yes, when was the Register implemented;
- (c) if not, why not;
- (d) has the Health Department implemented a reminder system with regular statistical reports in relation to a Cervical Cytology Register (CCR);
- (e) if yes, when did the reminder system commence operation;
- (f) has it proven successful;
- (g) how many statistical reports have been prepared;
- (h) are they available to the public;
- (i) if not, why not; and
- (j) if the -
  - (i) reminder system; and
  - (ii) statistical reporting system,has not been implemented, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) First data received in July 1992 from some laboratories. All laboratories providing data by the end of 1994.

- (c) Not applicable.
- (d) Yes, a reminder system has been implemented for women and doctors for women who are overdue for a Pap smear or follow-up treatment. A statistical report on the 1996 data was distributed to all general practitioners, Health Department regions and other relevant health providers. A report on the 1997 data will be produced and distributed later this year.
- (e) Reminder letters routinely sent since July 1997.
- (f) Too early to confirm success. Review of the data is planned for the 1998/99 financial year.
- (g) One, which reported on 1996 data.
- (h) Yes. However, the content is targeted to health professionals.
- (i)-(j) Not applicable.

#### BIRTH DEFECTS REGISTRY

3912. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:

In reference to the Birth Defects Registry of Western Australia -

- (a) when births of the congenitally blind were being reported, what data collection problems resulted in the numbers being so low compared with data from The Association for the Blind;
- (b) has the Registry attempted to verify its data against the Association for the Blind information and against the information of similar organisations;
- (c) if so, what was the outcome of these attempts;
- (d) if not, why not;
- (e) when the Registry was advised of the Association for the Blind data and the discrepancy, it ceased reporting on the congenitally blind. Assuming there is a problem with collection of this data, has a better method of collection or verification been since devised;
- (f) if so, what;
- (g) are there any other birth defects which the Registry does not include in its Annual Reports;
- (h) if so, what are they and why are they not included;
- (i) what are the data collection or reporting problems associated with these conditions;
- (j) which of the relevant charitable, self help and related organisations have been approached for practical assistance;
- (k) what was their response;
- (l) the Registry exists to record data for education, to assist research and eventually to act as a tool in reducing the incidence of birth defects. What effect will the exclusion of data on the congenitally blind have on the level of research into the causes of this birth defect;
- (m) is Registry data used to notify Western Australian statistics to the National Perinatal Statistics Unit (NPSU) on behalf of the Health Department of Western Australia;
- (n) if so, is the NPSU being given incomplete data from Western Australia;
- (o) what effect will this have on the NPSU database;
- (p) will the Registry now be able to check its current and historical data against information from the Association for the Blind and other bodies involved with the children with birth defects;
- (q) if so, will this be completed for the 1998 report due out in October;
- (r) if not, why not;
- (s) does the Registry currently include those born without eyes (Anophthalmia);
- (t) will the 1998 Report include this condition separately;

- (u) will this condition be included under the category of "congenitally blind"; and
- (v) if not, why not?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (a) There are several possible reasons for this including differences in diagnosis, under-ascertainment, and notification of an eye defect, but not whether the child was blind as a result of the eye defect.
- (b) The Registry has, on several occasions, sought to obtain notifications from the Association for the Blind, in relation to children in WA with congenital causes of blindness.
- (c) No notifications have been forthcoming from the Association.
- (d) Reasons not known.
- (e) This is not the case. Congenital blindness is no longer reported in the Annual Report of the Birth Defects Registry because, on advice from the Registry's adviser in ophthalmology, it was considered better to record underlying eye defects, not their effects. This is the same with other birth defects – it is recorded that a child has spina bifida, but not that he/she is unable to walk. The Birth Defects Registry has always been just that - a register of birth defects. Special studies are undertaken from time to time to collect additional information on disability resulting from birth defects, but no attempt is made to collect that information routinely or continuously. This would require vastly more resources than are currently available to run the Registry.
- (f) See (b) above.
- (g) There is a large number of individual birth defects for which data are not routinely included in the Annual Reports.
- (h) There are hundreds. The reasons for not reporting on them in the Annual Report include that they are individually rare (raising concerns about confidentiality) and that the Report is meant as an overview, not an exhaustive annual document. All birth defects, however, are recorded on the Registry, even if they are not reported in the Annual Report. As stated in the Report, the data for all major categories of defects, as well as the more common or important individual defects, are reported.
- (i) There are not necessarily any data collection or reporting problems.
- (j)-(k) King Edward Memorial Hospital has a parent representative on its Advisory Committee, and several lay support groups for families of children with particular birth defects have contact with the Registry, and request data or support research conducted by or through the Registry
- (l) The data on conditions which may result in congenital blindness are not excluded from the Registry.
- (m) Yes. However, I would like to add that the Registry is operated by King Edward Memorial Hospital and not the HDWA as suggested by the Member for Fremantle.
- (n) Non-personally identified data relating to birth defects diagnosed prenatally and up to 28 days of age are forwarded to NPSU from the WA Birth Defects Registry. Birth defects diagnosed after this time (the WA registry records birth defects diagnosed up to the age of 6 years) would not be included on the NPSU database, and nor are they requested by NPSU. NPSU also chooses not to include many of the birth defects included on the WA Birth Defects Registry.
- (o) NPSU aims to have data from all states on this limited time period. It is King Edward Memorial Hospital's understanding that data from WA are of a similar high standard to data received from other states.
- (p) King Edward Memorial Hospital is always willing to consider including other sources of data (hence repeated efforts to obtain data from the Association for the Blind).
- (q)-(r) This would depend on those other sources providing the data in time for inclusion
- (s) Yes.
- (t) It could.
- (u) No.
- (v) See (e) above.

## SCHOOL STAFF CUTS

3915. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

How many Government schools have suffered staffing cuts since the beginning of the school year as a result of the application of the Government's new staffing formula arrangements?

Mr BARNETT replied:

It is not possible to provide this information without making separate calculations for each of the nearly 800 Government schools and I am not prepared to allocate the substantial resources for this task. The majority of staffing reductions in 1998 from 1997 levels are likely to be the result of reduced student enrolments, not the introduction of the new staffing formula. In many such cases, the staffing reductions are less than would have been the case under the old formula. Not all schools had their levels reduced. It should be remembered that many schools have had their staffing allocations increased under the new formula. I would also remind the member that a cap of 8 per cent was imposed on both staff increases and reductions. This was to prevent excessive staff reductions from occurring.

## HIGH SCHOOL ENROLMENT INCREASES

3916. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:

- (1) How many additional students are expected to enrol at Government high schools in Western Australia as a result of the Federal Government's common youth allowance?
- (2) What is the expected cost of these additional enrolments in financial years 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01?
- (3) In each of these financial years how much additional funding will Western Australia receive from the Federal Government to provide for the additional enrolments?

Mr BARNETT replied:

- (1)-(2) The original estimate was 3,200 students, but there are now many exemptions in the Legislation. These make it difficult to predict how many young people will be exempted and how many will return to schools.
- (3) There are no state-specific allocations of funds for the additional enrolments. The Commonwealth Government has allocated \$24 million over the three financial years. It is not yet known what WA's share of this money will be.

## MAMMOGRAPHY CLINICS

3920. Dr CONSTABLE to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Where are all the publicly funded mammography clinics located in Western Australia?
- (2) When was each clinic established, including mobile clinics?
- (3) How many mammograms have been carried out at each clinic in each year since establishment?
- (4) What was the total cost of these services and each year since the establishment of this service?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Cannington, Midland, Mirrabooka, Perth City, Joondalup, Fremantle, and four mobile services which cover the rural areas of the State and some locations in the outer metropolitan area ( Rockingham, Kwinana, Armadale.)
- (2)

Cannington	1989	
South West Mobile	1990	
Northern Regions Mobile	1991	
South Eastern Mobile	1991	
Mirrabooka	1993	
Midland	1994	
Fremantle	1994	
Perth City	1995	
Joondalup	1995	
Outer Metropolitan	1995	(this service also used as support for the other mobiles in rural areas).

(3)		1994	1995	1996	1997
	Cannington	6597	7039	8740	8153
	South West Mobile	4516	6370	5884	7036
	Northern Regions Mobile	3000	3895	4334	3307
	South Eastern Mobile	4778	4965	5629	4914
	Mirraboooka	8067	6829	8271	7473
	Midland	-979	4578	3867	5354
	Fremantle	-163	5416	5825	7583
	Perth City		4360	4221	6275
	Joondalup		2138	5508	5311
	Outer Metropolitan		2978	2469	3438

(figures prior to 1994 are not readily available due to a change in the computer system.)

(4)	1992/93	\$3,574,900
	1993/94	\$3,712,600
	1994/95	\$5,813,264
	1995/96	\$6,015,790
	1996/97	\$6,126,500.

#### ASBESTOS DISEASE RESEARCH FOUNDATION

3938. Mr BROWN to the Minister for Health:

- (1) Is the Minister aware that the Hon. Peter Reith, MHR, Federal Minister for Industrial Relations, announced the establishment of a National Asbestos Disease Research Foundation (NADRF) in 1996?
- (2) Is the Minister aware if Mr Reith promised that the Commonwealth would commit funds to asbestos disease research through the foundation?
- (3) Is the Minister aware of how much Mr Reith said would be committed to research funding?
- (4) If so, how much was it?
- (5) Did the State Government have any discussions with the Commonwealth Government on the NADRF?
- (6) Did the State Government make any financial contribution to the Foundation?
- (7) Is the Minister aware if the Commonwealth Government made any funds available to the Foundation?
- (8) If so, how much was made available?
- (9) Is the Minister aware if the Foundation is -
  - (a) active; and
  - (b) functional?
- (10) Has the State Government taken any active role to -
  - (a) promote the Foundation;
  - (b) participate in the Foundation; and
  - (c) advocate the Foundation cease to exist?
- (11) Is the Foundation now defunct?
- (12) If so, for what reason?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I am aware that Hon Mr Peter Reith launched the NADRF in 1996 but I am not aware that he committed funds for research through the Foundation.
- (3)-(12) I have asked my colleague the Minister for Industrial Relations to provide you with a suitable response.

#### PEEL HEALTH SERVICE'S COSTS

3977. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What is the total cost in the 1998-99 financial year, both recurrent and capital, of the Peel Health Service?
- (2) What was the cost to the State in 1997-98 of providing the Peel Health Service?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) The Health Department of WA has not yet allocated budgets for 1998-99.
- (2) Peel Health Services estimated net expenditure in 1997-98 is \$12,657,200 (excludes patient and other revenue). This includes all costs associated with Mandurah Hospital's operations up until 31st August 1997. There was an additional \$84,309 in capital expenditure.

#### SOUTH WEST HEALTH CAMPUS AND BUNBURY REGIONAL HOSPITAL, COSTS

3978. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What will be the cost for 1998-99 of providing the South West Health Campus at Bunbury (including part year at the Bunbury Regional Hospital site)?
- (2) What was the cost in 1997-98 of the Bunbury Regional Hospital?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) The budget for the South West Health Campus is yet to be finalised however, it will be equivalent to the 1997/98 budget and additional funding for new and expanded services will be available through re-configuration of services from Teaching Hospitals to South West Campus.
- (2) In 1997/98 the budget for Bunbury Regional Hospital as at 9/6/98 is \$18,567,800.

#### JOONDALUP HEALTH CAMPUS EXPENDITURE

3979. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:

- (1) What additional funds will be expended on the Joondalup Health Campus in 1998-99 compared with 1997-98?
- (2) What is the total state expenditure at Joondalup Health Campus in 1998-99?

Mr PRINCE replied:

- (1) \$15.3 million.
- (2) \$40.7 million.

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### SMOKING BAN

**1197. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Labour Relations:**

Does the Minister support Cabinet's decision to water down his ban on smoking in enclosed workplaces?

**Mr KIERATH replied:**

I support any moves that improve the health and welfare of working men and women in this State.

#### MEMBER FOR FREMANTLE - LETTER TO *THE GERALDTON GUARDIAN*

**1198. Mr BLOFFWITCH to the Minister for Health:**

- (1) Is the Minister aware of a letter to the Editor of *The Geraldton Guardian* written by the member for Fremantle headed "Political games risking health"?
- (2) Will the Minister respond to the claims of the member for Fremantle that, by not signing the Medicare agreement, the Minister is losing \$69m for the State?

Mr McGinty: I have never written a letter to the Editor of *The Geraldton Guardian*.

**Mr PRINCE replied:**

- (1)-(2) I heard the member for Fremantle say that he had never written a letter to the Editor of *The Geraldton Guardian*, in which case somebody is taking his name in vain.

Mr McGinty: It might be accurate, but I didn't write it.

Mr PRINCE: It was published on Friday, 22 May 1998. In the letter - I have a copy of it, which I shall table - the member says that by refusing to sign the Medicare agreement, I am "denying WA a share of the federal "once-off" allocation of \$69 million." I will make a couple of points about that. First, we all know that the public hospital system is under significant pressure. In the course of the current Medicare agreement, which expires at the end of this month having been in place for five years, the Commonwealth has not pulled its weight in funding public hospitals. Between 1993-94 and 1997-98, the Commonwealth contribution to public hospital funding in this State has increased by only 9 per cent. In the same five years, the Western Australian Government has increased expenditure on public hospitals by 25 per cent. Indeed, in the 1998-99 Budget, the Government has increased funding by a further \$90m for the Health portfolio.

Mr McGinty: This isn't from me; it's from the Leader of the Opposition!

Mr PRINCE: The joint bid by the States - I mean joint because I, as the Minister for Health in this State, and all other state Health Ministers, including Dr Andrew Refshauge from New South Wales, the only Labor Minister - has been united in saying to the Commonwealth that it must meet its obligation; that is, it is obliged under the Medicare agreement to fund a specific amount of money when there is a drop in private health cover. That has happened three times and three times the Commonwealth has said no, irrespective of who has been in power in Canberra. The Commonwealth has the responsibility -

Mr Ripper: Will you argue with John Howard when he comes here later this week?

Mr PRINCE: If I get the opportunity, yes.

Mr Ripper: You'll take on John Howard?

Mr PRINCE: If I get the opportunity, yes. Others have, and I have taken on the federal Health Minister and everybody else, and it has been very well documented, particularly in the eastern states media. The member for Fremantle does not seem to appreciate that the funding offer of the Commonwealth for the next five years would reduce the amount coming to our public hospitals by \$149m. That is the most generous estimate of what would happen. I repeat: Our funding will go down by \$149m. It is said that \$120m is available to share around the States for long waiting lists. If we received a share of that equally, we would get \$12m. We cannot possibly accept \$12m for a cut of \$149m. That is crazy. Secondly, I think the letter is misconceived, it is wrong, and it should not have been published. Finally, it is astonishing to see that there is a leadership challenge in the Opposition, because the letter is signed "Jim McGinty, leader, WA Opposition".

#### MINISTER FOR LABOUR RELATIONS - BREACH OF CABINET SOLIDARITY

##### **1199. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:**

- (1) When will the Premier discipline the Minister for Labour Relations for consistently breaching the principle of Cabinet solidarity on the issue of passive smoking?
- (2) Does the Premier's weakness on this matter mean Ministers in this Government are now free to criticise their Cabinet colleagues and the decisions made by Cabinet, with impunity?

##### **Mr COURT replied:**

Cabinet has been discussing the smoking issue over the past couple of weeks and yesterday agreed that it would like to see a deferral of the occupational health and safety regulations for six months and amendments to the Health Act that would enable exemptions to be put in place for smoking in public places. Cabinet's approach is very proactive and will allow for the most advanced regulations to control smoking in the workplace.

The Government's preferred position is for smoking to be completely banned in the workplace. However, practical reasons do not allow that to be achieved immediately. Does the Leader of the Opposition, who is vocal on this issue, support a complete ban?

Dr Gallop: We would like to see the total package. We will not commit to anything. We will not let the Premier off the hook because of his bad government.

Mr COURT: The Minister for Labour Relations made his preferred position very clear. He accepted that we must try to achieve what is possible and that is why he supports the Government's going down a path that will result in a considerable improvement in the situation. We have been informed today that the Labor Party does not have a position on this issue.

## MINISTERS OF THE CROWN

*Criticism of Cabinet Decisions***1200. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:**

Do Ministers have the right to criticise Cabinet decisions with impunity?

**Mr COURT replied:**

Ministers of this Government speak openly on issues. Ministers have reluctantly accepted a number of decisions. One of the hardest decisions the Government has addressed is the question of a gold royalty. The Government believed it was inappropriate for a concession to continue because its retention would have led to an increase in taxes, and that would hit families hard. Individual Ministers might not support the decision but, at the end of the day, Cabinet agreed to a position and a consensus was reached. Unlike the members opposite, this Government accepts the convention of collective responsibility.

## NEW LIVING PROGRAM

**1201. Mrs HOLMES to the Minister for Housing:**

The Saturday, 30 May edition of *The West Australian* contained an article by Liz Tickner, which reported the member for Thornlie's concerns about the New Living contracts at Coolbellup and Langford. Will the Minister please clarify the position?

**Dr HAMES replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question. I have some excellent news about the Government's New Living program. I have given approval for the signing of contracts for the suburbs of Balga, Girrawheen, Koondoola, Westminster and Armadale, which are managed by McCusker/Satterley, and Karawara, which is managed by the Fini group. Negotiations have already taken place and the work will proceed as quickly as possible. The news is not as good for the suburbs of Coolbellup and Langford. The negotiations with the preferred tenderer, the BGC Group of Companies, have broken down and unfortunately the Government has received a letter from that group saying it is no longer proceeding with the contract.

I can assure the member, however, that the Government is strongly committed to the New Living programs in those two areas, and it will proceed as quickly as possible to go to contract with new tenderers. It will try to fast track as much as is practicable to get the contracts for those two suburbs up and running as quickly as it can.

## PASSIVE SMOKING

**1202. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the Minister's claim reported in *The West Australian* this morning that the evidence on the dangers of passive smoking is not conclusive, and ask -

- (1) Did the Minister make that comment in his capacity as Minister for Health or as de facto spokesman for the tobacco industry?
- (2) What evidence does the Minister have to suggest that passive smoking is not dangerous and will he table that evidence?
- (3) If passive smoking is not dangerous, as the Minister suggests, why has the Government moved to limit smoking in some enclosed workplaces?

**Mr PRINCE replied:**

- (1)-(3) The evidence, as I understand it, and I paraphrase Hon Ian Taylor, chairman of the passive smoking task force, is that there are very strong connections between passive smoking and a number of ailments. One example is sudden infant death syndrome. There is a definite connection, particularly with regard to children. The causality is difficult to establish, but there is certainly a connection between the number of smoking parents whose children die of SIDS as opposed to the number of children who die of SIDS from non-smoking parents. A significant amount of other evidence shows there is significant harm and danger from sidestream or environmental tobacco smoke. The comment was made in relation to whether a person could successfully sue. As far as I am aware, there has been no conclusive evidence in any case to that effect.

Mr McGinty: That is quite different from what you said. You said the scientific work in this area was inconclusive.



Mr PRINCE: I will quote from an interview with Ian Taylor in the media this morning -

... the people who are most at risk in relation to passive smoking are undoubtedly children. Now, what this change will mean is that virtually every single place where children have access to those indoor public areas, there will be no smoking. In relation to bars and nightclubs, one of the decisions that I made is that if you're gonna make changes to laws, make changes that people will find to be acceptable. In other words, don't put a law in place ... which people will ignore.

Mr Kobelke: It is a different matter altogether from the question.

Mr PRINCE: No, it is not. Cabinet has decided, after very careful consideration, to implement the recommendations of the chairman of the passive smoking task force. That spent a long time looking at all the evidence and different views of the evidence. I give the chairman of that task force full marks for presenting a series of recommendations, some of which were his where there were divergent views from groups on the task force. Those recommendations have been looked at very hard, and the Government has decided to implement them.

I have been told by the media that the Opposition will block any change to the implementation date of the occupational safety and health regulations from 1 August to 1 January. Is the Opposition planning to go against one of its former leaders and a former Minister for Health who I say, unreservedly, did an excellent job in chairing this task force? The Government accepts his recommendations.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! Has the Minister finished his answer?

Mr PRINCE: Not quite.

The SPEAKER: Perhaps the Minister will stop asking questions and will conclude his answer.

Mr PRINCE: That is prime political opportunism if I ever saw it.

#### PASSIVE SMOKING

##### **1203. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:**

Is passive smoking dangerous to the health of employees and patrons of entertainment venues?

**Mr PRINCE replied:**

Yes it is. There is no doubt that it is, but to my knowledge a successful case has not been made and the task force looked into this.

Dr Edwards: Disgraceful.

Mr PRINCE: Yes it is, and that is why the Government is moving to ban smoking in all public places. The occupational safety and health regulations deal only with the employer-employee relationship; they do not deal with patrons. The Government proposes to bring in regulations -

Dr Gallop: Where is your legislation? Show us the colour of your money!

Mr PRINCE: As soon as they are drafted the Opposition will get them.

Dr Gallop: They are not even drafted yet.

Mr PRINCE: Has the Leader of the Opposition not read Ian Taylor's recommendations? He should at least read what Taylor has written.

Dr Gallop: We have read them all right.

Mr PRINCE: In reading that report the Leader of the Opposition will find a recommendation to ban all smoking in all enclosed public places everywhere in the State, with a few exceptions where ventilation has to be required. That is a huge step forward compared with the present situation in this State or anywhere else in Australia.

#### CRAYFISHING CHANGES

##### **1204. Mr NICHOLLS to the Minister for Fisheries:**

- (1) Does the Government have any intention of altering either the crayfishing season or the number of craypots that each licensed fisherman has?

- (2) If so, when will the changes take effect?
- (3) Has the industry been consulted?

**Mr HOUSE replied:**

- (1)-(3) Every year consultative meetings are held with the rock lobster fishermen around Western Australia. That practice has been followed for some time. A peak industry body known as the rock lobster industry advisory committee was set down in legislation by this Parliament. That group consults with the professional fishermen and their associations. Those consultations have been taking place for some time and will continue over the next few weeks. The group usually makes a recommendation to me as soon as those meetings are concluded and I expect that to happen this year. I will then be in a position to make a decision about the future of the start of the season in mid-September. There has been some debate in the rock lobster industry about the length of the season. Scientific advice indicates an opportunity to take more product from the ocean this year and the issue is how to do that. The industry has been affected by the currency crisis in Asia, which is the prime market. The crisis has depressed the price of rock lobster. It does not make sense to take a lot of product and get less for it. These issues are being debated by the professional fishermen. When they have finished the debate they will advise me and I will make a decision about it.

#### PASSIVE SMOKING

**1205. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Labour Relations:**

- (1) Does the Minister accept that there is sound scientific evidence that passive smoking is a danger to health?
- (2) Does he judge that the decisions made by Cabinet about passive smoking provide full protection to the workers in the workplace from the dangers posed by passive smoking?

**Mr KIERATH replied:**

- (1) Yes.
- (2) I support any measure that improves the health of working men and women in Western Australia.

#### CURRAMBINE COMMUNITY CENTRE

**1206. Mr BAKER to the Minister for Family and Children's Services:**

I have been approached by the executive of the Currambine Community Association seeking the Western Australian Government's assistance in establishing a community centre in Currambine. What is the nature and extent of assistance that the Western Australian Government can provide to satisfy the needs of the community group?

**Mrs PARKER replied:**

I thank the member for the question and for some notice of it. Family and Children's Services will provide up to \$500 000 for the construction of a purpose built centre at Currambine subject to a matching commitment from the City of Wanneroo. That commitment from the local government authority is required for this project to proceed. However, I am pleased to inform the member for Joondalup that last night I ticked off some early correspondence on the matter. I look forward to continuing discussions with the City of Wanneroo to ensure that the centre becomes a reality.

#### CHALLENGE TO DEPUTY LIBERAL LEADER'S POSITION

**1207. Mr RIPPER to the Minister for Education:**

- (1) Is the Minister aware that yesterday a member of his staff advised journalists that the Minister's position as deputy Liberal leader may be challenged by the Minister for Fair Trading at today's Liberal Party room meeting?
- (2) Did the Minister instruct any of his staff to advise the media that his job was under threat?
- (3) Is that a normal function of ministerial staff?

Mr House: Are you sure about your job?

Mr RIPPER: I am pretty confident.

- (4) Given that the Premier has this morning endorsed the Minister as his deputy, will the Minister now instruct his staff to cease speculating on Liberal Party leadership and deputy leadership intrigue?

**Mr BARNETT replied:**

(1)-(4) I am trying to find the link to the Education portfolio in that question. A lot of speculation about leadership within the Liberal Party has come from the media; indeed the *Sunday Times* has been prominent. A number of journalists have been telephoning my office. I have not spoken to those journalists in recent times.

Dr Gallop: But you have in the past.

Mr BARNETT: I have spoken to them very rarely.

Dr Gallop: It is always the fine points, the things on the margin, that matter.

Mr BARNETT: I am thinking very carefully.

Mr Ripper: We advise you to.

Mr BARNETT: A journalist from the *Sunday Times* telephoned me at home three or four weeks ago. From recollection, that is the only journalist to whom I have spoken regarding the issue. Following that conversation, the journalist decided not to write an article. I have not spoken to journalists in recent days.

Mr Ripper: Have your staff spoken to journalists?

Mr BARNETT: My staff must respond when they receive telephone calls from journalists. However, I chose not to respond.

Mr Ripper: Will you instruct them not to speak to journalists?

Mr BARNETT: I do not give my staff instructions.

Mr Brown: Let us hear it for responsible government. This is not a bad Cabinet; anyone can say anything.

Mr Barnett: They all know exactly what to do.

**BUSHRANGERS CADET UNIT**

**1208. Mrs HODSON-THOMAS to the Minister for Youth:**

In my electorate of Carine, a local high school, Duncraig Senior High School, is very keen to become involved in Bushrangers. Can the Minister expand on this new type of cadet unit?

**Mr BOARD replied:**

I thank the member for Carine for the question as it gives me the opportunity to inform the House of an exciting new seventh stream to the cadet program in Western Australia. Last Sunday, the Minister for the Environment and I had the opportunity to launch Bushranger cadets, a name which was picked by young people. One can see it is already catching on. It has great marketing potential. It is a name that young people picked as a way to become involved in the environment. The environmental cadets are linked with the Department of Conservation and Land Management and are involved in CALM environmental issues. Duncraig Senior High School, John Septimus Roe Anglican Community School and John Forrest Senior High School are currently involved and a number of other schools want to become involved with the program. It will be one of the more successful programs in the cadet movement. We are approaching 55 cadet programs under the new youth training scheme. An arrangement exists with the Federal Government to help fund and bring together the existing state and federal cadet programs. This will result in one managed cadet program in Western Australia. The program is growing significantly. I commend the new environmental cadet program to the House. Many young people in members' electorates will become involved in this. Young people will become involved in the environment, while at the same time they will learn leadership, communication and life skills they will keep for the rest of their lives.

**MINISTER FOR FAIR TRADING**

*Administration of Portfolios*

**1209. Ms MacTIERNAN to the Minister for Fair Trading:**

(1) Does the Minister's manoeuvring against the Minister for Education explain the Minister's legendary inactivity in the administration of his portfolios? Given that the Minister this morning has endorsed the Minister for Education as his deputy, will he now put his ambitions on hold and devote his full attention to the pressing matters contained in his portfolios?

- (2) Does he intend to resign from Cabinet and return to the backbench where he can devote his time to pursuing his leadership ambitions?

The SPEAKER: Order! Before I give the Minister the call I remind members that questions must relate to the Minister's portfolio. This question bears only a very thin relationship.

**Mr SHAVE replied:**

- (1) The member for Armadale has my absolute undertaking that I will devote my time to my portfolio.  
 (2) As with the Minister for Labour Relations, and sadly for the member, I will be here for a while.

Mr Thomas interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order! I formally call the member for Cockburn to order for the first time.

#### BOTANICAL GARDENS

**1210. Mr NICHOLLS to the Minister for the Environment:**

- (1) How many botanical gardens exist in Western Australia?  
 (2) How many are privately owned?  
 (3) Does the Government provide funding in any form for the establishment and ongoing maintenance of any of these botanical gardens, and if so, through which department?

**Mrs EDWARDES replied:**

- (1)-(3) Only one botanical garden meets international scientific criteria, and that is the Kings Park and Botanic Gardens. Although other display gardens use the name, such as Araluen Botanic Park, it does not have sufficient scientific accreditation to warrant the international status of a botanic garden. No privately owned gardens are funded by the Government. The only botanic garden that is funded by the Government is the Kings Park and Botanic Gardens.

#### HEALTH FUNDING FROM THE COMMONWEALTH

**1211. Mr McGINTY to the Minister for Health:**

Has the Minister been given any indication that the Federal Government might announce a boost in non-Medicare funding to the States before the coming federal election? If so, what amount can Western Australia expect and to what purpose will the money be used?

**Mr PRINCE replied:**

I assume from the member's question that he is asking about funding not covered by the Medicare agreement at the moment, but which may be covered by other health care programs, or is totally out of a health agreement.

Mr McGinty: The Premier was quoted in the newspaper a week or so ago commenting about it.

Mr PRINCE: In the context of the negotiations which have been going on for a long time, we have talked about that which is the hospital funding and then broadbanding of all other specific purpose grants, which run to \$103m a year for this State. There have been some increases and decreases. Outside of that I have no indication of any suggestion that there might be an increase in funding to this State which might find its way into Health from the Commonwealth, but there should be.

#### BUNBURY HIGHWAY

**1212. Mr BARRON-SULLIVAN to the Minister representing the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to recent reports that the schedule for upgrading the Bunbury highway - that is, the portion of Old Coast Road between Bunbury and Lake Clifton - has been put back to 2004. Will work on upgrading the Bunbury highway be undertaken during the current term of the Government?

**Mr OMODEI replied:**

The Minister for Transport has provided the following response: The road to Bunbury is a very high priority in the Main Roads works program. I am sure the people of Bunbury will be interested to know that in the five years up to 1992-93, \$27m was spent on this road, yet the coalition Government has spent \$47m in the five years up to 1997-98. The Government has also committed a further \$54m to this road in Main Roads' 10 year program.

As the member for Mitchell will appreciate, the Government has placed significant emphasis on improving the road network in country Western Australia. Funds for main and local roads have been substantially increased over the past five years. I am pleased that the dual carriageway on the Clifton and Preston sections of the highway between Bunbury and Mandurah will be completed by the year 2000.

#### PASSIVE SMOKING

##### **1213. Mr KOBELKE to the Minister for Labour Relations:**

My question relates to the Government's fiasco regarding passive smoking. Given that in answering questions today the Minister was unwilling to support Cabinet's decision, and given his answer regarding health implications which implicitly indicated that he accepts that his regulations would protect workers more strongly than would those adopted by Cabinet, will the Minister vote to uphold his regulations if given the opportunity to do so in this place?

##### **Mr KIERATH replied:**

Wait and see.

#### SCHOOLS

##### *Teacher Dissatisfaction with Funding*

##### **1214. Mrs van de KLASHORST to the Minister for Education:**

Some notice of this question has been given. Having almost finished visiting all my 27 Swan Hills schools, during which I met many teachers, I was disturbed to read media reports recently which claimed that nearly 82 per cent of teachers in WA are dissatisfied with the level of state government funding to the education system. Could the Minister comment? I did not find this claim to be the case when moving around schools.

The SPEAKER: Order! I remind members that short questions are the order of the day.

##### **Mr BARNETT replied:**

The survey results referred to by the member for Swan Hills were released by Hon Helen Hodgson. Comment was made by the honourable member in a media release that from a survey of 500 teachers, 77.5 per cent felt that government funding for government schools was inadequate. However, the member failed to mention that although a survey form may have been sent to 500 teachers, only 50 or fewer teachers responded. It was a classic case of lies, damned lies and statistics. I have no doubt that many teachers would argue that an ever increasing amount should be spent on public education. For the record, in 1993-94, government spending on public education was \$1 067m, and the equivalent figure in the Budget for the coming year is \$1 416m. That is an increase over the five years in nominal terms of \$349m, or 33 per cent.

#### DISABILITY SERVICES COMMISSION

##### **1215. Dr GALLOP to the Premier:**

I was going to ask the Minister for Disability Services this question; he was here a moment ago. Will the Premier guarantee that the Disability Services Commission will remain an autonomous institution, and that its chief executive officer will still report directly to a Minister?

##### **Mr COURT replied:**

I was asked this question a week or so ago.

Dr Gallop: I was going to ask the Minister for Disability Services but he shot through.

Mr COURT: We have every intention of keeping Disability Services as a separate organisation, and it will be directly responsible to the Minister.

Dr Gallop: As part of a bigger agency!

Mr COURT: Of course it can be part of a bigger agency. Yes, it will remain separate and report directly to the Minister. The current arrangement with Mr Bob Fisher as the Chief Executive Officer of Disability Services and Family and Children's Services is working extremely well. I spoke to some people today who were initially concerned about the arrangement, but who now realise that the Government is meeting its commitment to ensure that Disability Services runs as a separate organisation.