

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON
ESTIMATES AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS**

2017–18 BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARINGS



**TRANSCRIPT OF EVIDENCE
TAKEN AT PERTH
TUESDAY, 17 OCTOBER 2017**

**SESSION FIVE
DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT, SPORT AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES**

Members

**Hon Alanna Clohesy (Chair)
Hon Tjorn Sibma (Deputy Chair)
Hon Diane Evers
Hon Aaron Stonehouse
Hon Colin Tincknell**

Hearing commenced at 6.30 pm

Hon SUE ELLERY

Minister representing the Minister for Local Government; Heritage; Culture and the Arts, and the Minister for Sport and Recreation, examined:

Mr DUNCAN ORD

Director General, examined:

Ms SHANAeya SHERDIWALA

Director, and Portfolio Chief Financial Officer, examined:

Mr PETER MINCHIN

Director, Liquor Control and Arbitration, examined:

Ms JENNIFER LAW

Director, Local Government Regulation and Support, examined:

Mr GRAHAM BRIMAGE

Interim Executive Director, Sport and Recreation, examined:

Mr DAMIAN ROSIELLE

Chief Finance Officer, Sport and Recreation, examined:

Mr RONNIE HURST

Project Director, Perth Stadium, examined:

Ms ANNA WYATT

Director, Aboriginal History and Culture (WA), examined:

Mrs KIM ELLWOOD

Acting Executive Director, Office of Multicultural Interests, examined:

The CHAIR: This is the 2017–18 budget estimates hearing with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. On behalf of the Legislative Council Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, I would like to welcome you to today's hearing. Can the witnesses confirm they have read, understood and signed a document headed "Information for Witnesses"?

The WITNESSES: Yes.

The CHAIR: It is essential that all your testimony before the committee is complete and truthful to the best of your knowledge. This hearing is being recorded by Hansard and a transcript of your evidence will be provided to you. It is also being broadcast live on the Parliament's website. The hearing is being held in public, although there is discretion available to the committee to hear evidence in private. If, for some reason, you wish to make a confidential statement during today's proceedings, you should request that the evidence be taken in closed session before answering the

question. Agencies and departments have an important role and duty in assisting the committee to scrutinise the budget papers, and the committee values your assistance with this.

Would the minister like to make a brief opening statement?

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I call the minister's attention to page 376 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, which is a continuation of the table concerning outcomes and key efficiency indicators. I draw the minister's attention to the third outcome referred to on that page, which is "Government records and the State archives are appropriately managed and accessible". I just have some questions in respect of percentage of compliance first of all. I am just trying to get a sense of what that figure of 90 per cent as an estimated actual 2016–17 and the targeted figure for 2017–18 means. Does this mean that 90 per cent of agencies contacted complied fully with their obligations or some other measure? It is a bit opaque to me.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will provide you with some information and then I might ask the director general. Compliance data is compiled from self-evaluation ratings provided by each agency and that is assessed by the State Records Office. To the extent that you are getting something that is independently and scientifically sound, I am not sure that is the case, but I will ask the director general to perhaps see whether he can add some more about what they measure exactly.

Mr ORD: Under the State Records Act, there is a requirement for record keeping plans. The record keeping plans are developed by agencies and submitted to the State Records Commission for approval. In the record keeping plans, the agencies define how they are managing government information and that it relates to the compliance with requirements for the act. The percentage, as the minister has indicated, relates to the reporting on the record keeping plans by the agencies themselves. In terms of whether the agencies assess themselves, every single piece of government information and the degree to which it is consistently held, there is not a methodology to define that and every moment-of-time information that has been placed within the government records system. There are a large amount of ephemeral records and so on that take some time to get transmitted into formal common record-keeping systems and so on.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Thank you for that answer. I suspected it might involve some measure of self-evaluation. I suppose my question to follow that is in two parts. Presumably, that self-evaluation is consistent across all agencies. It is presumably distributed every financial year for reporting purposes. Would it be possible to table a copy of that document at another time? That would be useful just so I know what agencies are assessing themselves against.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Are you asking whether there is kind of a standard tool that they use to do that assessment?

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Yes.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, there is not a standard tool. I will just check whether we are able to provide you with any more information.

Mr ORD: Yes, I would be more than happy to table the standards that are applied, how they are applied by each agency and how they report back to the records commission.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We will take that on notice.

[Supplementary Information No E1.]

The CHAIR: That is the standards and how they report back to the records commission.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Is there any scope or does it happen as a practice that there is any proactive auditing of a department or an agency's compliance with their record keeping obligations? Does that happen as a standard practice?

[6.40 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised that it is a requirement of the CEOs that they manage the self-assessment. There is not, if you like, a program of proactive-initiated assessment, but CEOs are required and are held to account to their respective DGs and are required to self-assess.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Is there any legislative or statute limitation on the capacity of archivists to initiate those kinds of targeted audits if they were funded appropriately?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised, honourable member, that there is scope within the act for investigations to be conducted from time to time. If something is brought to their attention that requires investigation, they are able to do that. There might be particular inquiries. A government might hold a particular inquiry that seeks information and they can act on a request from government in respect of particular lines of inquiry.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Can I ask to be recorded on a request for, say, a history of when an initiation of that type took place in the Western Australian jurisdiction? I do not expect that answer now but at some other time.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If we are able to provide something that does not require someone to write an essay on the history of investigations into state records, I will happily give the commitment that I will provide it. If we are able to in a way that does not use up too much resources, I will.

[*Supplementary Information No E2.*]

Hon DIANE EVERS: I have a few simple questions on sport. I refer to a question that I put on notice about KidSport; I do not know whether the minister has a copy of that. I think it was the only question on notice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Can I wait until someone has a copy of that here? I think we have it in front of us.

Hon DIANE EVERS: We notice that on the department's website it says now that uniform and equipment costs are no longer considered to be a part of that grant. Given the high cost of uniform and equipment, even in kids sport, it will probably mean that some kids will be included from sport because their families cannot cover that. Knowing that we want children to participate in sport, I wonder whether there is any chance that that might be reversed at some time?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, I am advised that what the money is used for now is joining fees, club fees and any other costs of participation. On behalf of the minister, I am not advised whether it is being reviewed or a review is being considered. That is a question better put directly to the minister, which you can do through other means.

Hon DIANE EVERS: My next question is on the community sporting and recreation facilities fund on page 393, near the top of the list. Again, given how important and how beneficial physical activity is I wonder why this fund has been reduced.

Hon SUE ELLERY: The honourable member will be aware that we have had to go through budgets line by line in respect of budget repair and identify where it is possible to make savings. This is still an important commitment. There is still the capacity for communities to leverage funds available in the budget now. It was one of the measures that we had to put in place to address the state of the finances.

Hon DIANE EVERS: One final question on sports, again, on my prior question, the sports financial grants, where you were able to list what the current year's funding will cover. One of the items listed in there is the "Local Projects Local Jobs Program". I am interested to know what they are and if it has to be placed on notice, I am quite happy for that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are many. I think there are around 200.

Hon DIANE EVERS: Even in the sports?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think that is the case. A significant number of them are local sports club related. I am happy to take it on notice and give you a list of them.

Hon DIANE EVERS: I am quite happy if you want to give me a list of the major ones of over \$10 000 or \$20 000.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Okay, we will do that.

The CHAIR: Member did you want to nominate a figure—\$10 000 or \$20 000?

Hon DIANE EVERS: Yes, \$10 000.

[Supplementary Information No E3.]

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: I refer to the \$10.2 million for library materials for the public and state reference library on page 388 budget of budget paper No 2, volume 2. Of the \$9 207 000 budget estimate for library materials, what type of materials will be purchased?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask the director general to provide you with an answer to that.

Mr ORD: The library materials consist of books that are purchased for state library systems. Books are essentially purchased for metropolitan libraries and regional libraries. There are also digital learning materials. The balance between books and electronic library materials has been shifting slowly over time. A slightly increased amount of purchasing of e-material is pretty well based on the demand for services and the partnership between local government and the state government. A steering group oversights the purchase of these materials on a rolling basis and the library network, which is now about 80 per cent funded by local government, works with the State Library on priorities for the purchasing of those materials, so it does cover both e-books and journals and hardcover books.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: I refer to page 375 of budget paper No 2, volume 2. At number 10 in spending on public library services, expense service, the 2017–18 budget estimate of \$14 748 000 is declining every year over the next three forward estimates by \$336 000. What library services will be rationalised to absorb the expense declines over the three-year forward estimates?

The CHAIR: Was that public library services you are asking about? What was the line item?

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: What library services will be rationalised?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is item 10 on that expense list.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Sorry; item 10 on page 375.

[6.50 pm]

Mr ORD: They are very minor changes; they are simply not growing. Some of those areas are to do with indexation or non-indexation costs, so essentially it flatlines.

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: Once again, I am happy to get the answer to my last question on notice.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Are you going to ask the same question?

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: I was just doing this for the benefit of Hansard. Can the minister please supply a detailed listing of the various office locations used by the department, including information on whether these premises are publicly or privately owned, and any rental figures for their use?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, we can. I will take that on notice and provide you with that information.

[Supplementary Information No E4.]

Hon COLIN TINCKNELL: The second part of the question is: can the minister advise on the likelihood of any contracts that will be exempted from the public listing on Tenders WA to be entered into by the department in the next 12 months? I refer to the contracts that, for various reasons, are listed by the Department of Finance and are not required to be advertised or listed publicly but must be recorded on each agency's exemption register and must receive and approve a request for exemption. How much will these contracts cost approximately and what service or goods will be provided?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I have indicated where the member has asked this question in other sessions today. I am not in a position to answer that question. I ask that you try to address it to Treasury when they appear before you but I suspect it is a question to be put to the Department of Finance.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I refer to line item 2 "Promotion and Support of Multiculturalism" on page 375 under "Service Summary". The desired outcome on page 374 states —

Western Australia was recognised as a vibrant and effective multicultural society.

The service is "Promotion and Support of Multiculturalism". I am trying to understand the department's view of multiculturalism and whether it has a more tangible target. Is that some kind of quota—something that is quantifiable? Looking at the key effectiveness indicators, it states —

Percentage of organisations and individuals who report that the Office of Multicultural Interests had a positive impact on the promotion and support of multiculturalism

My question is in two parts. Generally, what is the department's view of multiculturalism and what is it trying to achieve? In their view, what does multiculturalism look like? Second, the budget target is only 80 per cent so presumably two out of every 10 recipients of a grant do not think the department is promoting multiculturalism. What is the department doing to address that? Also, we seem to be slipping. We have only two years to look at but in 2015–16, the actual is 84 per cent; in 2016–17, the actual is 83 per cent and the target is 80 per cent. We have only two years to look at. Why are the targets so low and why are we reaching only 84 per cent at the most?

Hon SUE ELLERY: In terms of the first part of the question—what is the vision or strategic definition of "multiculturalism"?—I will get the director general to make some comments. In the first instance, I would draw the honourable member's attention to annual reports and strategic plans of the respective agencies because they are often useful documents rather than budgets to give you a sense of the policy direction and priorities of the respective agencies that you are interested in. They are much better documents to look at if you want to understand vision and policy objectives than the budget. I am sure that the director general will be able to make some comments about what those documents say about policy with respect to multiculturalism. I will get the director general to make some comments about the targets. When you are measuring things like a social benefit, it is actually hard to find some sort of numerical target that gives you a sense of whether you are achieving a social benefit or not. Those are harder things to measure than how many widgets you produce out of a factory, for example. I will ask the director general to make some comments on both of those.

Mr ORD: Firstly, the Office of Multicultural Interests is essentially a coordinating agency, so many of the outcomes are delivered through a range of other portfolios. Broadly, all of government has a strong interest in engagement with our diverse communities. The Office of Multicultural Interests acts as a coordinating entity around engagement, particularly with communities of interest in the multicultural communities themselves, and helps to help their engagement with other agencies. A lot of the work is administrative by nature. It does have a small number of programs—as you can see, it is quite a modest budget—particularly around community languages and the like. But primarily its work is as a coordinating agency. The promotion of multicultural values in Western Australia are very strong and have been for some time. The community has huge expectations that their voice is heard. Clearly, even within our own very diverse communities, there are a lot of subgroups within that itself that align back to the cultural diversity in other countries where people have come from more recently. Their views around how the Office of Multicultural Interests represents their views and access to government can at times be less favourable so we assess broadly across our stakeholders by way of surveys and so on whether people are supportive of the activities we are undertaking and we attempt to get to a reasonably high benchmark of satisfaction. Clearly, a role of the coordinating agency will be that the key stakeholders are actually satisfied with the services we are doing to help represent their interests in government. We are falling a bit short on the targets we think would be benchmarked across Australia but we continue to work on that. Recently we have re-established the Multicultural Communities Council and they are tasked with developing a broader multicultural policy framework for government.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: The funding fluctuates somewhat. I am wondering if you can speak to that. These are grants, if I understand correctly. The average price for each project is targeted at \$117 200. Part of that answer, I imagine, may mention this. Under “Explanation of Significant Movements” on page 379, there is mention of the Local Projects Local Jobs and Chinese New Year programs. I am wondering what those are, how much was spent on those programs and what services were delivered or what economic or social good was gained from those?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can answer part of that. There was a one-off Chinese New Year payment of \$1 million from the previous government. That would explain part of the fluctuation in funding year by year. What was the question with respect to Local Projects Local Jobs?

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: I did not have a question about that. I was wondering if you could explain why it fluctuates. It fluctuates only a little bit but it does fluctuate. Are you pre-empting more grants being delivered in later years through the forward estimates?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It might be accounted for through that one-off \$1 million.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: So the funding has been downgraded and it has slowly been ramped up over the forward estimates?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It was artificially high as a result of that one-off \$1 million payment. Can we refer that to Ms Ellwood from the Office of Multicultural Interests?

Mrs ELLWOOD: The adjustment is purely based on the Chinese New Year. Our grants are going out to our community grants program, which are remaining the same and have not been adjusted.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Moving along to page 371 and planning for the AGWA rooftop space in 2018, I notice that it will be converted to a cultural and commercial venue with a sculpture as its centrepiece. What is the amount allocated for the new sculpture?

[7.00 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: Just give me the dot point where it refers to it.

Mr ORD: Here it is. Dot point 3.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thanks. This was an election commitment to provide funding to develop the Art Gallery rooftop as a regular cultural and commercial venue. The Art Gallery is completing the business case for the redevelopment in this financial year. That will determine the details of how to modernise the rooftop and activate existing spaces. The redevelopment is expected to be completed by 2020 when the gallery will celebrate its 125th anniversary, and the new Museum is scheduled to open at that time as well.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: Is there a price tag on the sculpture centrepiece, though, at this point?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The total appropriation is an additional \$7.5 million. I will just check if we know anything about the sculpture costs. I do not think I am in a position to give you an exact amount of money, but the whole redevelopment is being funded in conjunction with the Art Gallery of Western Australia Foundation, which is made up of private donors to a fund. The anticipation at this point is that the cost of the sculpture will come from the foundation, but I cannot give you an actual amount at this point.

Hon AARON STONEHOUSE: In reference to, again, page 371 and the decline in Lotterywest revenue for recurrently funded arts and cultural organisations, why is Lotterywest's revenue in decline? Do you have data there on the number of ticket sales and what was the amount of the decline in 2016–17, and is it expected to be higher in 2017–18?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are a couple of, honourable member, drivers of why lottery sales fluctuate. One of those is the general state of the economy and whether people have money to spend. When lottery sales drop, there is obviously less money to allocate to the respective organisations and sectors of our community that rely on that money. I am advised that lottery sales in 2016–17 approximately—if you really needed something more specific I could take it on notice, dropped by about 12 per cent. The department in 2016–17 was able to use unspent moneys from previous years to absorb that particular shortfall, but it is a case that they fluctuate according to whether people think they have enough money to buy their lotto tickets.

The CHAIR: I will double-check, but I am fairly sure that Lotterywest reports separately under the FMA, so any detailed questions about Lotterywest would need to go to Lotterywest.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I have a couple of questions regarding, firstly, the machinery-of-government changes that have been mentioned and the combination of three ministries, or ministers, being responsible for one department. I can understand a minister being responsible for two departments. I am just wondering how, in fact, that works in practice where you have a Minister for Local Government; Culture and the Arts, a Minister for Sports and Recreation and a Minister for Racing and Gaming; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests responsible for one department and how internally you manage your function, director general, of being able to work out who is issuing instructions to you at any given time and whether you follow those instructions in preference to another minister's instructions. How does it operate and also how does that translate into some kind of a saving?

Hon SUE ELLERY: In the first instance, I will make some general comments. It is not the first time that it has been done. I am casting my mind back to when we were in government last time. I had responsibility for one part of one agency which also reported to other ministers on other portfolio areas. That was back in 2007–08. That is my recollection. It is certainly the case in other jurisdictions that this model applies and applies most successfully. Essentially, it comes down to, in part, the professionalism of the public servant, and I am absolutely confident that Mr Ord is perfectly capable of understanding that when he is given a request from a minister in respect of that bit of the agency

that that minister is responsible for, that he carries it out according to the request of the minister or provides advice if it is not possible or advice on alternatives depending on what the particular part of the agency is. I have absolute confidence in Mr Ord and various other DGs to be able to do that.

Mr Ord might like to add something himself, but it is not the first time this has been done. It is not the first jurisdiction in which this has been done. It operates successfully elsewhere. In respect to savings generated by MOG, we have had discussions in other agency hearings before estimates already to the extent that many of the savings that will be generated are as a result of bringing together the kind of back-of-house operations and those savings will be realised over time, but that is initially where the first tranche, if you like, of savings will be generated. But I will ask the director general if he would like to make additional comments.

Mr ORD: Yes. Thank you, minister. The department operates under the Public Sector Management Act, and, as you would be aware, there is sort of separation of powers between ministers and public sector administration related to that. How we effect the relationship with the ministers is through a communications agreement, which is required through the Public Sector Management Act, which defines the relationship, reporting lines, and processes that enables me to ensure that the appropriation Parliament gives, for instance, for sport and recreation is spent on sport and recreation and that we report on the operations of that part of the department to the minister and we are accountable to the minister on that part of our activities. That is all defined through the communications agreement. Along with that, as part of best practice, the Public Sector Commission has promoted for many years letters of expectation. So, the ministers essentially provide letters of expectation that define their priorities and we respond to that partly through the CEO performance agreement, which says, "This is what you have asked us to do. This is how you are going to do it." I am held accountable against the CEO performance agreement, which again is independently audited by the Public Sector Commissioner.

In many ways, as the minister has indicated, whether it was one portfolio with one minister or multiple portfolios with multiple ministers or multiple parts of the single agency, multiple ministers, those things can be bigger and smaller, and they have existed in the past with agencies with multiple ministers in previous governments. There is a clear line of accountability, which I think is probably the basis of your question, that ensures the appropriation we are discussing tonight, where they are in divisions, they are carefully accounted for for activities within those divisions and they do not bleed across to other parts of the portfolio.

[7.10 pm]

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I am sure it has been done before; whether it has been done successfully before is another matter. I suppose that will remain to be seen. We have also had combinations of departments into one. We have had a Ministry of Justice, a Department of Justice involving various elements that will have to be pulled apart later for a variety of reasons. On that subject, for example, turning to, say, page 142 of budget paper No 3, a list of election commitments is lumped under the heading of "Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries". Which minister is responsible for those? Those are the responsibility of the department, but which particular minister do you report to in respect of those; and, are there not cases also where you are reporting effectively to two ministers over certain things? One of the alleged benefits of this is that there is to be a breaking down of the silos between departments. How is that worked out?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There are two and a bit pages of those particular election commitments. I am happy, if the member wants to, to go through them one by one right now and identify under "Regional Exhibition Touring Boost" who is the minister with responsibility for operationalising that.

I am happy to go through that one by one. I do not think that is a particularly efficient use of the committee's time. If the member would like me to give him a list for each of the election commitments, of which there are many, listed on pages 142, 143 and 144, and which ministers have responsibility for operationalising them, I am happy to take that on notice.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I am asking more about the process rather than the particular list, because at the moment in this particular budget paper there is simply a list of election commitments under the department but we have just heard that there are lines of reporting to different ministers. How is that worked out within the department?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure what else about the process the member needs to understand or he is seeking information on. The director general just outlined that there are communications agreements in place, resource agreements in place and letters of expectation in place. What is it in particular about the implementation of these election commitments that the member needs information on?

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Are there some that fall within, for example—I am just using the election commitments as an example. Are there not some that fall within the responsibility of two ministers? How is that worked out?

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I gave the member a list of them, with the identification of the ministers that were responsible, he would be able to see that. Otherwise, I can go through one by one now—over two and a half pages—and do that, but I am not sure that is a particularly efficient use of the committee's time.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I am sure that it is not, but for someone casually reading the papers, it is the only way that a member of the public —

Hon SUE ELLERY: Is there anyone who casually reads budget papers—budget paper No 3 in particular?

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Let me put it another way. I thought that the budget papers were meant to be part of the so-called transparency of government to the public, but the minister is telling me that cannot be done because of this particular arrangement.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is not what I am telling the honourable member at all.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I have to ask and the minister has to go through and isolate these things separately.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Budget paper No 3, as the member would be well aware, is the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*. It is an oversight document for the budget, and line item by line item in each of the other two budget papers it sets out specifically under each portfolio what the respective commitments are. I would be happy to provide the member with more information on this but he would need to specify what he is looking for.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Let us get back down to part of the proposition I put. Do some of these things that are done within the department overlap the responsibilities of two or more ministers?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will take that on notice and provide an answer to that.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Surely, one of the points of this exercise is to break down the barriers between different parts of governments so that they could all work together as one happy whole. There are three ministers with distinct lines of communication and responsibility. I am interested in how it works mechanically. Can you provide information in due course about that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will provide the information in due course.

The CHAIR: That is E5. I am not really clear about the information that will be provided in due course, but I am sure it is recorded in *Hansard*.

Hon SUE ELLERY: For the purposes of *Hansard*, I understand that the member is asking for me to identify whether, in respect of the election commitments identified on pages 142, 143, 144 of budget paper No 3, which, if any of those, responsibility lies with more than one minister.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: No; what I want to know is more about the mechanics of how this department operates with lines of responsibility to three ministers where there is the potential for any particular element to fall under the responsibility, technically, of more than one minister. It is a process issue for me.

Hon SUE ELLERY: With due respect, Madam Chair, I am not going to take that on notice because it has been answered. There are communication agreements, resource agreements and letters of expectation. That is the way it is managed.

The CHAIR: I am going to cancel E5 as a question on notice. I also point out to the honourable member that the question has been asked four times, that I have heard, and answered four times. I also point out that we have limited time.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Thank you. I know that I have asked the question several times and I have had several answers, but I do not have any information yet; that is what I was hoping to extract.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is the member's judgement.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Let us get back to the things on page 142, for example. It lists, as the minister says, a raft of election commitments.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Fabulous, aren't they?

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: It also lists Local Projects, Local Jobs. The minister has already told us that Local Projects, Local Jobs were election commitments made by the Australian Labor Party for which no critical eye by a minister of the state has turned —

The CHAIR: Let me note there, honourable member, that was information provided to a previous hearing.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: By this minister.

The CHAIR: Not in this hearing.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: That is true, but perhaps the minister can confirm if I am getting it wrong, just to save time. These election commitments under so-called Local Projects, Local Jobs were election commitments made by the Australian Labor Party; that the Premier has assigned some of these commitments to some departments and others to other departments, to execute; and that there has been no vetting of any of the commitments to determine whether they are a worthwhile use of public funds. There is no need for any of that because they were election commitments; am I right there?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not accepting your description at all of how I have described Local Projects, Local Jobs.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Tell us then, please.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am happy to provide an explanation of it. Local Projects, Local Jobs is a series of election commitments made by candidates on the Australian Labor Party, WA branch, that candidates made prior to the election. We do not second-guess our election commitments. We made the commitment; we are in the process of delivering those commitments. Overall, responsibility—if you like, central responsibility—for Local Projects, Local Jobs rests with the

Premier. However, there are different categories of commitments made under Local Projects, Local Jobs that operationally have been delegated to respective agencies. For example, in my agency, the Department of Education, a whole range relate to schools, so the Department of Education had responsibility for rolling out, for example, the metropolitan ones of those. I am sure in this agency as well—I know in this agency as well—most of them were in respect to sports—that this agency has responsibility for rolling out about 200 of those Local Projects, Local Jobs. We made the commitment. We are honouring the commitment. We did not make a commitment to conduct a review, if elected, that we might do this. We made a commitment to do this, and that is what we are doing.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Thank you for that. What is the difference between the Local Projects, Local Jobs election commitment and the rest the election commitments that are listed on those pages in budget paper No 3? What makes them Local Projects, Local Jobs that are subject to the process, if you can call it that, that the minister has named and the others that are listed here separately? Is there any difference in treatment; and why and how?

[7.20 pm]

Hon SUE ELLERY: No, there is no difference in treatment. You are quite right to identify that we made an enormous amount of commitments to the people of Western Australia. You are quite right if you are identifying that it is a big job to deliver all those election commitments; it certainly is. We are getting on with it. You would recall, I am sure, from your own experience of campaigning, that you make election commitments in a range of different ways. You might do it by portfolio. You might have a whole range of law and order commitments that you make. Some of them are policies that would apply statewide that have legislative requirements. You might make some that are specific and local. You might make some about specific police stations. You might make a whole range of small and local commitments. The fact is that they are all election commitments. This government is determined to deliver on them and that is what we are doing.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Well, get back to it. Why is one category of election commitments—something like 200 of them—under Local Projects, Local Jobs and the rest of them are separately named and identified and costed?

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is no critical difference between them other than a whole range of commitments were made in respect of a very local projects made by local candidates who were connected to their local communities and identified what those local communities wanted. Under that umbrella, if you like, of Local Projects, Local Jobs, they could be across a range of measures. It could be a sporting organisation or play equipment for a local playgroup. It could be a whole range of things that local candidates were able to identify and call for in the election commitment. Then there are other election commitments that are portfolio related and, perhaps, were driven by the respective shadows. There are a whole range of election commitments—a fabulous number of them and a fabulous range of commitments. We are enjoying delivering them.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: All right. So, Local Projects, Local Jobs is a pork barrel for the candidates.

Hon SUE ELLERY: No. That is your expression, member, it is not mine.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: The others are more run for the shadow ministers in the opposition at the time.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I get that you do not like it.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I am just trying to clarify how it works.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I get that you do not like that our candidates who became members are delivering on their election commitments, but it is your language to call it pork-barrelling. Commitments were made; we are delivering on them. We are getting on with the job.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: You keep telling me that.

Hon SUE ELLERY: You do not appear to be listening.

The CHAIR: Member, order!

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: I will move on from that.

The CHAIR: This is your last question for this round. You have exceeded your limit, but I am being flexible and understanding tonight.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Always generous. Thank you.

The CHAIR: That is recorded in *Hansard*.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Are there any funds remaining that are still capable of being drawn down on for local projects local jobs that have not been the subject of a commitment yet but are able to be committed by a candidate or a member of Parliament now?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Do you mean to make any commitment that was not made? I do not think that there is a specific fund that is available for that. Because you are asking about the whole program, which is beyond the agencies that I am representing here tonight, there are other opportunities for you to ask questions. You might like to direct a question on notice to the Premier. What you are asking is about the overall program, which is beyond my capacity that I am in right now tonight in respect of these agencies.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Thank you.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: If I could take you, minister, to page 370 and the first dot point under “Significant issues impacting the agency”, “Working Together with Local Government”. The end of that dot point refers to the government’s commitment to stop puppy farming. I wondered if we could ask you for an update on the progress of that undertaking.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think I can.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: The sentence that I am asking about states, “Work is also progressing on the government’s commitment to stop puppy farming.”

Hon SUE ELLERY: I might ask Ms Jenny Law, who has responsibility for establishing the task force and various other structural elements of that commitment, to provide a response.

Ms LAW: We have established a small team to progress in this particular election commitment. We held some key stakeholder group meetings in late July. A number of key stakeholders are included in that group: DPIRD, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Dogs’ Refuge Home, Saving the Animals from Euthanasia, Dogs West, the Pet Industry Association, the Local Government Association, the Local Government Rangers Association and a number of other agencies. We are now working on a discussion paper to be released later this year for community consultation. An implementation group of key stakeholders will be meeting in early November to provide some advice on implementation of this initiative.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Do you know when the discussion paper will be available?

Ms LAW: No. I am afraid I cannot give an answer at this stage.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Can you tell us how it will be made available? Will it be on a website somewhere?

Ms LAW: At the moment, the implementation working group is meeting to discuss how that paper is going to be implemented and what the process for public comment is going to be. That meeting is in mid-November.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: My next two questions relate to the rest of that dot point, minister. In relation to the comment about the review of the Local Government Act and specifically about the commitment to modernise local government in Western Australia, can you tell us about the progress of the review—particularly in the light of that commitment to modernise?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I think I can.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Just while you are looking for the reference, can I also tell you that I am equally interested in the reference to standards of governance, performance and accountability? In a sense, that is four areas.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I start with the first bit of the question in respect to the local government act review, it is certainly long overdue. It is anticipated that it will be able to empower local governments to be much more agile, smarter and more inclusive. It is going to be conducted in two phases. The first one will look at ways to modernise local government by making more information, for example, available online and ensuring that local governments meet community expectations with respect to standards, ethics, and performance. Phase 2 is intended to better position local governments to deliver for the community and look at ways and reforms that they can increase participation and build public confidence in local government elections, increase community participation in local government decision-making, and improve financial management through sensible approaches to rating. Both phases of the review are going to look at ways to reduce red tape. The phase 1 consultation paper will be available for public comment in November of this year. The review of the act delivers on an election commitment and reflects the commitment of the McGowan government to work in partnership with local governments to deliver better services for all Western Australians.

The second part of your question was, I think, in respect to —

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Accountability.

Hon SUE ELLERY: In part it is the same, but I might ask —

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: “the standards of governance, performance and accountability.” That is the specific quote.

Hon SUE ELLERY: There is a range of things that have been put in place. If I touch on, for example, transparency, accountability and gifts as one way that that would be addressed, we are relying on the review of the act to do that as well. Two of the guiding principles of the review are transparency and accountability: transparency, by providing easy access to meaningful, timely and accurate information; and accountability, by strengthening integrity and governance mechanisms. Essentially, much of what I said earlier in respect to the review of the act. There are a range of other measures in place. Some of them will be around auditing measures that the government announced on 24 August. In fact, those measures were passed.

I will get the director general perhaps to add some comments to that.

[7.30 pm]

Mr ORD: A major part of the transparency and accountability are the provisions passed recently to bring the auditing of local government under the Office of the Auditor General. For this financial year, the oversight of audit of local government will be undertaken by the Office of the Auditor General.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: I remember that legislation coming into this place. Have all the transition provisions been going smoothly so far?

Mr ORD: Yes.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Thank you. Just one follow-up to that. Did you mention disclosure of gifts and funding?

Hon SUE ELLERY: It was a heading of the one of the measures that I provided an answer to and is one of the things I imagine will be further examined in the review of the act.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Is that in the first tranche of changes or the second?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised, in the first.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: Thank you. If we can skip ahead to page 392 under “Income Statement”, I am interested in the “Royalties for Regions Fund” counting about six or eight lines from the bottom, and the “Country Local Government Fund”. What that shows is that in 2017–18, there is a bit over \$3.1 million. Is the minister able to tell us what programs have been delivered in 2016–17 to support and build capacity, particularly in regional local governments?

Hon SUE ELLERY: What I might do is ask Ms Law to make some comment on that. If there was more detail that the member was looking for, we might take that on notice, but I will ask Ms Law to make some initial comments.

Ms LAW: Thank you. In 2015–16 there were a number of programs delivered. We had a very comprehensive elected member training program that was delivered to 79 local governments—a better practice review program that looks at process and procedure within local governments. We also had an asset management program that was assisting local government to undertake condition reporting on their assets. We contributed to amalgamation to support the Town of Narrogin and the Shire of Narrogin, and one of the regional collaborative groups to allow the groups of council in the goldfields–Esperance area to implement asset management and also to supply or assist local governments to undertake some workforce planning. There was also a number of development workshops carried out in the community service and the local youth areas.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: That was 2015–16 —

Ms LAW: Sorry—2015–16, yes.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: — when it was nearly \$1.6 million, and then in 2016–17?

Ms LAW: A continuation of all those programs in the elected member and in the asset space that I referred to.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: I think I heard that you already had a question on the Art Gallery rooftop. You have already addressed that, have you not?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: I will come to item 35 on page 369, the Library Board of Western Australia, fifth item down, \$32.5 million. Can you give us an idea about what are some of the programs that are delivered under that funding that benefits WA families?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Yes, I am sure I can. I have got some information on supporting the library network and the State Library, but I might need to rely on the director general to provide a bit more information.

Mr ORD: Thank you minister. The State Library services include, obviously, the management of the State Library facility in the city, that includes the Battye Library, the State Reference Library and the

full suite of services that are provided, which includes online services to the community. It is essentially a knowledge centre where people access a range of government information and can undertake research. It also has a children's library facility. The library runs the interlibrary loans service and, as I explained in the previous question, they manage the appropriation for the book stock for the state and state's investment in library materials that are then distributed throughout the state system. As I said, they run the interlibrary loan system, where books are moved around based on people requesting a particular book at their local library. They also essentially act as a peak body, the library board itself approves new libraries, maintains the standards for library services in the state and they have recently won a major international award for the Better Beginnings program, which is an early childhood literacy program.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: That is a program that is delivered through local libraries?

Mr ORD: Most of the services the State Library operates extend to services in local, remote and regional Western Australia as well, because it does operate as a network. As I said, essentially local government now is funding libraries to about 80 per cent; the state about 20 per cent. It was the reverse 30 years ago. Local government is a big investor in library services, but the State Library provides an expertise that the whole network utilises. Programs such as Better Beginnings is run in partnership with local and remote and regional library services and provides, essentially, for every child born in the state an opportunity for that family to get appropriate early reading materials. There is a large corporate investment from Rio Tinto in that, as well as some royalties for regions funds and money from the state government. As I said, it recently won a major award in library services in the USA as a best practice worldwide. It is a great credit to our library that that was achieved.

Hon Dr SALLY TALBOT: That is great.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Can I just draw your attention, minister, to that magnificent sporting facility at Burswood—the State Tennis Centre. First, I refer to the \$2.5 million that is allocated for court replacement.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Are you looking at a particular page, member?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Page 370, the last point under "Spending Changes", where \$2.5 million has been allocated for court replacement. Can you please explain this to me, because the courts are knackered, so I assume that that is just to replace the existing courts? Is that correct?

Hon SUE ELLERY: The \$2.5 million was previously allocated to the PTA to address the replacement of those six courts that were removed as a result of the development of the Perth Stadium—the station precinct. That \$2.5 million has been transferred to this department to now resolve the issue.

[7.40 pm]

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is not to replace the existing tennis courts; that is those ones from the PTA that were lost because of the new train station.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Correct.

Hon PETER COLLIER: On that, this is not within the budget papers, but it is a part of this whole concept. There is enormous concern out there in the tennis community, in particular, that the government has an intention to move that tennis centre. Are you familiar with that, minister?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not, but I might see if I can get some advice. There is no plan by government to move them on. They might have a view themselves about where they want to be in the future, but there is no plan, no intention by government to move them on.

Hon PETER COLLIER: An unambiguous response is just what I like to hear. I know where I would like to put them.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Where would you like to put them?

Hon PETER COLLIER: I would like to put them in Kings Park to be perfectly honest, where they should have been in the first place. I think most of the tennis fraternity would like that as well. I was going to say that if you are going to spend \$2.5 million to replace those six courts and there is some legitimacy to those rumours that they were going to move the tennis centre, that would be folly to actually do that. That is great. You have just made a lot of people in the tennis world happy, but you would make them a lot happier if you do something to the tennis centre. I have to say, it has just about had its—it was a great project from Richard Court, but I always disagreed with him. I always thought it should be at Kings Park. I am glad they have it, but it has reached its use-by date. One way or another, whoever is in charge in eight, 10 years' time—you guys or our mob—we are going to have to do something about it.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am planning on still being sitting here.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I beg your pardon.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am planning on still sitting here on this side.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Look at the size of that pig that just flew past.

Hon SUE ELLERY: That is my plan.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Okay, dream on.

Let us have a look at budget paper No 2 page 371 with regard to the declining funding from Lotterywest revenue. There is reference there to a number of programs that will be affected as a result of that. Have we got any idea at this stage what programs will be affected by that reduction in funding from Lotterywest?

Hon SUE ELLERY: Initially, member, I advise you that Lotteries provides five per cent to arts and five per cent to sports, so it will be a slightly different answer depending on which agency you want to ask about.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Just generally.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Lotteries advice is that they think that significant revenue reduction was probably a one-off. They anticipate revenue increasing, and so we anticipate meeting what is in the budget over the forward years. If that does not happen, then, like anything in government, we will manage accordingly. It might be that conversations are had. It might that other decisions are made about reallocations. But on the advice available right now, Lotteries seems to think that the hit they took was a kind of trough and not an ongoing trend.

Hon PETER COLLIER: When you ban Lottoland, see Lotterywest money.

Okey-doke. On questions on notice, the actual ministers have stated that there are a number of fellowships that have been put on hold. Will those fellowships be reinstated when the circumstances shift or change?

Hon SUE ELLERY: As a precautionary measure, we put them on hold. If we are able to reinstate them, we will.

Hon PETER COLLIER: A couple more. The Perth Theatre Trust—there has been a decline in funding in the out years for this, why is that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am advised there has not been a decision by government to reduce funding to the Perth Theatre Trust. You would be aware there is a range of savings measures in place, including, for example, the agency expenditure review under the previous government and others, which have meant we have adjusted the allocations. It is not a policy decision to reduce our support to the Perth Theatre Trust.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Okay, how many FTEs are in the theatre trust?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I might get the director general if he is able to. So, how many FTE associated with the Perth Theatre Trust?

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, employed by the Perth Theatre Trust.

Hon SUE ELLERY: We think it is about 60 FTE. If you wanted a precise number, I would take it on notice.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I would be interested, because there has been an adjustment with regard to the leave liability in the budget papers.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I will ask the director general to make some comment on that.

Mr ORD: Thank you. The Perth Theatre Trust—the management of the venues was previously outsourced to a company called Ogden IFC. The previous government, at the end of the contract, decided to bring the operations back into government more because of the performance of the venues; it was not up to the standard that it was expecting. As a consequence, staff were brought back onto the state government pay roll. That happened three years ago. They have accrued leave liabilities and there has to be a provision to meet those leave liabilities. It had not been adjusted in the last budget period, so it was adjusted in this budget period.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is quite a bit. That is why it is for this budget.

Mr ORD: That is right. Although people are on contract, they do accrue long-service provisions and so on after a period of time. We have reached the point now at which we have to take up those provisions and hence we gained an appropriation to meet that.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Two quick ones.

The CHAIR: I just want to check whether you wanted that information on notice.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, there is just the one on FTEs. I would not mind the FTE question for the Perth Theatre Trust.

The CHAIR: The number of FTE for the Perth Theatre Trust.

[Supplementary Information No E5.]

Hon PETER COLLIER: One quick one—I think it might be quick; we will see how we go—on the response on page 370 —

A strong partnership between the State Government and local governments is essential for appropriate and sustainable services to be delivered to local communities.

What is the government's attitude or opinion with regard to the current situation with the Perth Lord Mayor? If the appeal is successful, what will the government do? If the appeal is unsuccessful, what will the government do?

The CHAIR: Just note, member, that this is the budget estimates hearing —

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is a dot point.

The CHAIR: It is a dot point. It is a question of policy. Where it impacts on the budget, I will ask the minister to answer.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think you would appreciate as the representative minister, I really should not editorialise.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Okay. I thought I would give it a go.

Hon SUE ELLERY: However, I will say, these are serious matters and it is of concern to the government that the resolution of the matters relating to the Lord Mayor of the City of Perth has taken too long. I know that the minister is concerned as well. He has the capacity to act in respect to a whole council, but not the capacity to act in respect to individual councillors. I know that he finds that a matter of some concern. More than that, I really think I could not say in my representative capacity. You would have other opportunities to direct a question on the views on the minister in respect to what we might or might not do depending on what might or might not come out of the next round of decision-making.

[7.50 pm]

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I want to speak briefly to the Perth Stadium project as it appears in a number of references throughout these budget papers. I am more concerned about the status of the tripartite agreement between the state government, the football commission and the AFL, and in particular I am looking for an update as to the closest estimation of when a deal might be finalised and any advice about financial implications should the AFL decide to continue scheduling fixtures at Domain Stadium.

Hon SUE ELLERY: If I make some general comments first and then I will ask the director general, who might refer it on. In a general sense we expect the AFL will be playing football at the new stadium next year and I look forward to the Eagles beginning well, maintaining well in the middle and getting into the finals and the grand final at the end, and a grand final at the stadium would be fantastic. Other than that, I will ask the director general to make some comments. Some of the elements that you have asked for I think he will be able to provide an answer to. Some are really speculative and I do not think they help anyone, given we are engaged in negotiations.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Perhaps then if it assists with the transmission of useful information, could I get a sense of what the financial implications would be for the state government if hypothetically the AFL decided not to be a party to that agreement and continued to schedule its fixtures for the 2018 season at Domain Stadium?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I am not sure that I can even provide an answer to that. I will ask the director general to make some comments and he might refer some of it on, but some of that is hypothetical and I am just not sure that that is useful or, frankly, prudent.

Mr ORD: Thank you, minister. The stadium has VenuesWest as the key government agency. It is not covered under this appropriation; it is a separate appropriation. However, we do have the project director present. As the minister has indicated, given that negotiations are afoot and it is expected those negotiations will be successful, it is likely that the second part of the question is speculative, but I ask Mr Ronnie Hurst to add any further clarification.

Mr HURST: We are in ongoing negotiations with the AFL and the WA Football Commission as we speak. I think we have been saying for some time now that the finalisation of that deal is imminent. I say that with some trepidation, because we have been saying that for some time, but it really is imminent. It is now starting to hurt West Coast and Fremantle Football Club because they cannot sign up their members for next year. The pressure in many ways is changing, because the clubs are now on to the football commission to sign the deal. It is very soon to be finalised. In terms of your

question around scheduling games next season at Domain Stadium, Gillon McLachlan, the CEO of the AFL, has come out and openly said that they will be playing games at Perth Stadium in March 2018, so I do not see that transpiring. Therefore, the financial implications become a non-event in terms of whether or not they will be staying at Domain Stadium. I hope that answers your question.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: It was the answer I expected. I am glad that it is really, truly imminent now. Along with most Western Australian taxpayers we are looking forward to that. If I may, just a very quick follow-up question and it relates to a statement of cash flows on page 391. It is the second paragraph and it relates to the transfer of Perth Stadium to VenuesWest. Can I ask whether that in fact has happened between the publication of this budget and today; and, if not, when is it likely to occur and what will trigger that?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can refer that to Mr Hurst as well.

Mr HURST: No, that has not happened as yet. The stadium has not been completed in its construction, which is due early next year. Then, the asset will transfer to VenuesWest and you will therefore see it all appearing in VenuesWest as of 2018–19 going forward.

The CHAIR: In my neglectful chairing I missed Hon Darren West, who now has the call.

Hon DARREN WEST: Thank you, Madam Chair, and you are not neglectful at all! I have a culture and arts question first. I refer to the spending changes on page 70 of budget paper No 2 for the regional exhibition touring boost. How is this government ensuring increased access to arts and culture to people who live outside the metropolitan area?

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is an election commitment of some \$8 million. The funding scope, program objectives and identified key delivery partners have been drafted. This note says that funding activity will start by 30 September this year, so I might ask the director general whether he can add anything to that.

Mr ORD: Yes, the regional touring boost is intended to provide for the expansion of the visual arts touring Western Australia. The program is going to be delivered in partnership with Art on the Move, which is a nationally recognised and in fact very proudly Western Australian national leading organisation of visual arts touring. They are developing a program of activities that they are submitting back to the department. We are also working in partnership with an outstanding regional visual arts project called Desert River Sea. Again, Desert River Sea has been developed over the last three years with significant funding, around \$1.6 million, from Rio Tinto and it has engaged all the Aboriginal arts centres across the Kimberley. The program has allowed them to identify their artistic history, if you like, of these arts centres, the connection of their artwork to country and to stories, and there is major commission of work from major artists from the Kimberley. That has been compiled into a major regional art exhibition that will tour not only regionally, and I suspect Australia-wide, but also to the Art Gallery of Western Australia in Perth. I think it will be one of the major exhibitions that Australia will see, given the prominence of it. That program will kick the program off and, as I said, Art on the Move will follow on with the program of major regional artists and major artists from Perth to tour into our A-grade and lesser calibre galleries that are now in a range of towns. Collie has an outstanding gallery as do Albany, Kalgoorlie in the arts centre and so on. It is a very exciting new initiative.

Hon DARREN WEST: The other question I have of a regional nature is also on page 370 of budget paper No 2 under “Spending Changes” about the regional museums grant. What is the government doing to increase the promotion and attraction of visitors to regional museums and collections?

Hon SUE ELLERY: I can make some comments and then if something is to be added, the director general might choose to do that. We made a commitment to promote regional museums and the

WA Museum will be responsible for the grant scheme to the value of \$250 000 per year over three years. The collection sector working group for the state, which has brought together the state's collecting institutions and representatives of industry peak bodies and others, is mapping out the strategic priorities. As part of that process there has been extensive consultation with museums, galleries libraries and archives, and the clear priority areas that they are working on is the digitisation and discoverability of collections, skills acquisition and development, and audience development. I am conscious that there is about one minute left, so the director general might want to quickly add something to that.

Mr ORD: There are three regional state museums. The vast bulk of museums in regional Western Australia are essentially local and community. This program is intended to give them the support to give them capacity building. They are generally run through volunteer networks or through local government and the Western Australian Museum has outstanding expertise in curatorial practice and exhibition practice. This grant will assist in bringing all the small museums into more of a network approach so we can truly leverage off some of the amazing museums that we have that are representative of the great cultural diversity of the state. A museum like Broome museum is quite remarkable when you consider their history of industry. There is a history of the only town that was not subject to the White Australia policy. Museums like that have struggled with their resourcing, but are really important institutions.

Hon DARREN WEST: Thanks, Chair. It has been a long day, you have done a great job, thank you.

The CHAIR: On behalf of the committee, I thank you for your attendance today. The committee will forward the transcript of evidence, which includes the questions you have taken on notice highlighted on the transcript, within seven days of the hearing. Responses to these questions are requested within 10 working days of receipt of the questions. Should you be unable to meet this due date, please advise the committee in writing as soon as possible before the due date. The advice is to include specific reasons as to why the due date cannot be met. If members have any unasked questions, I ask them to submit these via the new electronic lodgement system on the POWAnet site by 12 noon on Monday, 23 October 2017. Once again, I thank you for your attendance.

Hearing concluded at 8.02 pm
