



# ***FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE***

**Members present:**

Mr SW Davies MP (Chair)  
Mrs EA Cunningham MP  
Mr CW Pitt MP (via videoconference)  
Mr MA Stewart MP

**Staff present:**

Ms D Jeffrey (Research Director)  
Dr M Lilith (Principal Research Officer)  
Ms J Fidler (Executive Assistant)

## **PUBLIC DEPARTMENTAL BRIEFING—INQUIRY INTO THE APPROPRIATION BILL (NO. 2) 2014 AND THE APPROPRIATION (PARLIAMENT) BILL (NO. 2) 2014**

### **TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS**

**TUESDAY, 30 SEPTEMBER 2014**

**Brisbane**

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**Committee met at 9.31 am**

**BEAVERS, Mr Alex, Deputy Under Treasurer, Queensland Treasury and Trade**

**MOLLOY, Mr Dennis, Assistant Under Treasurer, Fiscal Strategy Division, Queensland Treasury and Trade**

**CHAIR:** Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I declare the public departmental briefing of the Finance and Administration Committee inquiry into the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2014 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2014 open. I am Steve Davies, the chair of the committee and the member for Capalaba. Other members of the committee are Mr Curtis Pitt MP, deputy chair and member for Mulgrave, via videoconference; Mrs Liz Cunningham MP, member for Gladstone; and Mr Mark Stewart MP, member for Sunnybank. Dr Bruce Flegg may be turning up—he is an apology at this stage—and Mrs Cunningham has to leave at about 10 to 10. There are things going on today.

**Mr Beavers:** I understand.

**CHAIR:** We have apologies from Mr Reg Gulley MP, member for Murrumba, and Mrs Freya Ostapovitch MP, member for Stretton. They are on vacation. The purpose of this hearing is to receive information from the department about the bills, which were referred to the committee on 10 September 2014. This hearing is a formal proceeding of the parliament and is subject to the Legislative Assembly's standing rules and orders. The committee will not require evidence to be given under oath, but I remind you that intentionally misleading the committee is a serious offence. Thank you for your attendance here today. The committee appreciates your assistance. You have previously been provided with a copy of instructions for witnesses, so I will take those as read. Hansard will record the proceedings and you will be provided with a transcript.

I remind all those in attendance at the hearing today that these proceedings are similar to parliament to the extent that the public cannot participate in the proceedings. In this regard, I remind members of the public that under the standing orders the public may be admitted to or excluded from the hearing at the discretion of the committee. I remind committee members that officers are here to provide factual or technical information. They are not here to give opinions about the merits or otherwise of policy behind the bills or alternative approaches. Any questions about government or opposition policy that the bills seek to implement should be directed to the responsible minister or shadow minister and left for debate on the floor of the House. I also request that mobile phones be turned off or switched to silent mode and that no calls be taken inside the hearing room. I invite the officers to make a brief opening statement.

**Mr Molloy:** I have a fairly brief opening statement. Thanks for the opportunity to be here today to discuss Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2014 and Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2014 which, as you are aware, provide for supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred in 2013-14. As you may recall from last year, unforeseen expenditure is expenditure from the Consolidated Fund above the amount approved via appropriation bills which are introduced annually with the budget. Under the Financial Accountability Act 2009, unforeseen expenditure may be authorised by the Governor in Council on the recommendation of the Treasurer and must also be formally appropriated by parliament as supplementary appropriation. The way in which parliamentary approval is sought changed last year with the introduction of a separate bill for supplementary appropriation. Prior to this, from the 2009-10 budget to the 2012-13 budget, the bills for supplementary appropriation were combined with the appropriation bills for the subsequent budget. For example, supplementary appropriation for 2007-08 was included in the annual appropriation bills for the 2009-10 budget, almost a year after the end of the financial year to which they related. To ensure timely consideration of supplementary appropriation, parliamentary approval is now sought as soon as possible after the end of the financial year. This timing also allows the introduction of the bills for supplementary appropriation to be aligned with the tabling of the Consolidated Fund financial report, which includes explanations that support parliament's

Public Departmental Briefing—Inquiry into the Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2014 and the Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2014

consideration and debate of the bills. To this end, on 10 September 2014 the Treasurer tabled the *Consolidated Fund financial report 2013-14* and introduced Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2014 and Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2014 to parliament.

The Appropriation Bill (No. 2) 2014 seeks parliamentary approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by nine departments in the 2013-14 year of \$442 million. This is made up of \$265 million for Queensland Treasury and Trade; \$90 million for the Department of Science, Information Technology, Innovation and the Arts; \$61 million for the Public Safety Business Agency, which was formerly the department of community safety; \$13.7 million for the Queensland Police Service; \$4.1 million for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet; \$3.6 million for the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; \$2.2 million for the Department of Transport and Main Roads; \$1.7 million for the Public Service Commission; and an amount of \$13,000 for the Office of the Governor. As you can see, over half of the 2013-14 supplementary appropriation is for Queensland Treasury and Trade. This is all under the administered items heading and primarily relates to Treasury's whole-of-government financial management role. For the other departments, the *Consolidated Fund financial report 2013-14* provides explanations for appropriation variations. With regard to unforeseen expenditure, explanations include additional expenditure to support those affected by natural disasters and drought, the One Stop Shop, funding for Smart Service Queensland, new generation rolling stock project funding, as well as the government's wireless network and planning for the 2014 G20 event.

The Appropriation (Parliament) Bill (No. 2) 2014 seeks parliamentary approval of supplementary appropriation for unforeseen expenditure incurred by the Legislative Assembly and Parliamentary Service in the 2013-14 financial year of \$5.6 million. This partly relates to determinations by the Queensland Independent Remuneration Tribunal. Together the bills—that is, adding those two bills together—seek supplementary appropriation totalling \$447.6 million for 2013-14. By financial year, total unforeseen expenditure sought in prior years was \$327.489 million in 1999-2000, \$295.912 million in 2000-01, \$375.91 million in 2001-02, \$1.530 billion in 2002-03, \$2.376 billion in 2003-04, \$77.538 million in 2004-05, \$1.874 billion in 2005-06, \$3.990 billion in 2006-07, \$2.152 billion in 2007-08, \$2.957 billion in 2008-09, \$1.054 billion in 2009-10, \$9.305 billion in 2010-11, \$2.826 billion in 2011-12 and in 2012-13 \$63.45 million. While higher than the \$63.4 million in 2012-13, unforeseen expenditure in 2013-14 is much lower than in previous years back to 2004-05 on both the total and as a percentage of appropriation. Overall total appropriations in 2013-14 were less than the total amount approved in the 2013-14 budget.

Just following some of the feedback last year on this bill, I would also make it clear that there were no additional administrative costs in implementing either of these bills as they seek approval for expenditure that had already been incurred in the 2013-14 financial year. That was an issue that the committee sought clarification on last time, so I just make that clear here. I think it is, from memory, also in the explanatory notes.

**CHAIR:** Thank you. Mr Beavers, do you want to make a statement?

**Mr Beavers:** No.

**CHAIR:** Considering Mrs Cunningham has to leave, I think we will give her first cab off the rank.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** Thanks very much. I think in part you have answered part of my query, and I acknowledge that the unforeseen expenditure this year and last year is much less than in previous years. That being said, there are two departments that have significant requests—that is, the Public Safety Business Agency of \$61 million and the department of science and information technology of \$84.4 million. You did touch on some of that, Mr Molloy, but can you clarify in more detail the need for that request for unforeseen expenditure please?

**Mr Molloy:** So that was the Public Safety Business Agency?

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** Yes, and the department of science and information technology. Those two have by far and away the highest request.

**Mr Beavers:** Apart from Treasury, yes.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** Yes.

**Mr Beavers:** Dennis, I might take DSITIA. The largest issue in relation to that, Mrs Cunningham, is the Government Wireless Network. That was a policy and procurement issue that was resolved by government during the 2013-14 financial year and Treasury had the money set aside for that project and then when the procurement process was completed Treasury then handed the money over to DSITIA being the implementation agency for the Government Wireless

Network. So sometimes you have projects where Treasury when particularly Projects Queensland will do the procurement and once that procurement is completed it then needs an agency to see through implementation and management of the contract. So the primary reason in relation to DSITIA relates to the Government Wireless Network. But they did also receive some funding for the government's One Stop Shop program and Smart Service Queensland.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** How much was the wireless network?

**Mr Beavers:** I do not have that in front of me. I think it is roughly about \$50 million, but I would have to check that for you, Mrs Cunningham. That is my recollection.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** And the Public Safety Business Agency?

**Mr Molloy:** Yes. Turning to the Public Safety Business Agency, there we see there is unforeseen expenditure in departmental services of \$61 million. That is largely due to the timing of salary and other creditor payments, recognising that here we are talking about cash so the actual appropriation on a cash basis. So you can get timing differences where salaries will push into a particular financial year. That is what is happening here, so it is a timing difference on the timing of salary and other creditor payments which actually pushed in, remembering that this is a new agency that was created. That impact was partly offset by some re-cash flowing of funding for a human resources and payroll system replacement project and the Regional College of Disaster Management. So there were some offsets going the other way, but the principal reason there, as I said, is just the timing of salary and other creditor payments which ended up being different to what the original assessment of the appropriation was.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** Queensland Police Service expenditure: how much of that would be expenditure for the G20?

**Mr Molloy:** We do not have for these explanations—because there are so many explanations that fit in for each department; there are hundreds of things that are going on—with us today the individual amounts, but we can certainly take that on notice and provide that where you identify a specific amount.

**Mrs CUNNINGHAM:** Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Curtis, do you have a question?

**Mr PITT:** Good morning to you, Mr Beavers and Mr Molloy. I have tried to keep track with all the numbers getting read out earlier this morning by the Assistant Under Treasurer—and by the way you can take this on notice if need be. I am looking for Treasury to provide a table by department of all significant lapses in departmental services, lapses in equity adjustments and lapses in administered items split separately by dollar amount and an explanation for the 2013-14 year. I understand that there are many adjustments for each department, but I am seeking explanations for significant or major variations. There is \$2.35 billion in lapsed appropriation in 2013-14 with little explanation. This lapsed appropriation is higher than any year from 2007-08 to 2011-12, noting that there was also a significant lapsed appropriation in 2012-13 of \$4.4 billion for which no detailed explanation, including significant variations, was ever provided. Is it possible to get that breakdown by department of all significant lapses in departmental services?

**Mr Molloy:** Thanks for that question. The objective of introducing the Appropriation Bill as soon as possible after the end of the financial year and aligning its introduction with the tabling of the CFFR is to enable a timely consideration of the unforeseen expenditure and provide an additional context for the bill. The CFFR provides explanations for variations to appropriation for each agency, including unforeseen expenditure, which is useful for the consideration of the bill. So the CFFR was tabled at the same time as the bill was introduced.

Appropriation amounts for each agency as provided in the statement of appropriations in the CFFR are calculated on a net basis. This is underpinning the total appropriation amounts and often there are hundreds of adjustments for each agency which are required for various reasons. So there is a netting out that needs to occur there. There is a very large number for each agency of adjustments, as I said, running to the hundreds generally for each individual agency. Each agency provides detailed explanations of appropriation movements for transfers between agencies, transfers between headings, lapses and unforeseen expenditure across departmental services, equity adjustments and administered items. These are published as explanatory notes to the statement of appropriations in the CFFR. The key reasons that are provided in the CFFR and the main explanations are developed and agreed with the Auditor-General so that they are the principal reason for the adjustments.

Our difficulty is, because there are so many adjustments, that it is a task which becomes quite unmanageable. So we would suggest that the best way to approach this is if you can identify very specific items that are of a concern. That then allows us to marshal our efforts and resources to respond to those. A request that is as broad as the one that you have made is something that we find very difficult to deliver on.

*Subcommittee formed at 9.48 am*

**Mr PITT:** I guess that is why I have been talking about significant or major variations, but also I understand that I would be prepared, if you wished, to take the question on notice. If it is agreeable with the chair, I may provide to the secretariat a question, if the gentlemen are willing to take it on notice, which may be a bit more specific in terms of some of the variations that we are referring to.

**Mr Beavers:** Mr Pitt, we did anticipate that this might come up this year. I know that it came up last year as well and we sought clarification from the government for its position on this issue. The government's broad position is that the detail contained in the Consolidated Fund financial report has been signed off by the Auditor-General and represents the best explanations that can be provided given the context of the complexities that Dennis outlined earlier. Nonetheless, as Mr Molloy said, if there are specific questions relating to a portfolio we would be happy to take those on notice, but the government's position remains that the explanations provided in the Consolidated Fund financial report and signed off by the Auditor-General are the appropriate levels of information to provide.

**Mr PITT:** As I alluded to, you talk of the Consolidated Fund financial report. Page 17 details, at Queensland Health, \$538 million in lapsed appropriation. So all I am looking for is a breakdown by dollar value of significant lapses in appropriation. Given the size of this underspend on budgeted health services for the year, I would not have thought that that was an unreasonable request. So are you saying that that information will not be provided even if it is asked on notice?

**Mr Beavers:** I would have to look at the nature of the request, Mr Pitt, and take some further guidance. I would make the point that this is not obviously the only opportunity for committees or parliament to examine budgets and have a look at estimates and ask questions of individual ministers about their own budget performance in a particular year. So I am not saying no; I am just saying that we would have to have a look at the question and see what is achievable in that context.

**Mr Molloy:** Mr Pitt, I would also note there for that Queensland Health discussion that there is a reasonable level of detail in terms of identifying specific projects and the lapses in equity adjustments, which are on page 17. It does go through to identify some specific projects. So there is a level of detail that is provided there.

**CHAIR:** I am just trying to get the document right. This is in the *Consolidated Fund financial report 2013-14*?

**Mr Molloy:** That is correct—page 17.

**Mr PITT:** And I did acknowledge that some explanations are provided at page 17. As I said, I was looking for a breakdown by dollar value of significant lapses in appropriation. If it is agreeable with the chair, I am happy to put those questions together and if I am able to present those to the department on notice, if you are willing to accept those questions, I will leave that up to you as to how you respond.

**Mr Beavers:** Thank you very much.

**CHAIR:** Mr Pitt, what you are saying is that you will identify some of the significant lapses that you are talking about? You will be quite specific on that? Is that right?

**Mr PITT:** Chair, I will do my very best with the detail that has been provided in the consolidated report to ask the questions that may be answered by the Treasury officials before us today.

**CHAIR:** Fantastic. Thank you, Curtis.

**Mr PITT:** Thanks, chair.

**CHAIR:** Mr Stewart, do you have a question?

**Mr STEWART:** Just before when you were mentioning the explanations, does Queensland Treasury and Trade provide guidance to the departments on what sort of explanation they need to provide for the report?

**Mr Beavers:** Yes, although it is largely a matter for negotiation between the departments and their auditors. It is very much the agencies come up with the explanations. We look at them. It is quite a complex system of appropriations that we have, because it allows you to transfer unused appropriation between headings. It does add a great deal of complexity to the task. It is something that we might look to change in the future when the opportunity arises to have a look at this system of appropriation, but the bulk of the work is undertaken at the departmental level between the departments and then signed off by the QAO field auditors in those departments.

**CHAIR:** I have a question. Some of the common factors that were identified as major factors leading to lapsed appropriation include the timing of grant payments to recipients, the timing of departmental programs. Could the department please outline the reasons for the delays caused in the timing of grant payments and whether the process for these could have been managed in a different way to avoid delays? Obviously, it happens, but is there some way to negate that?

**Mr Molloy:** I think there are probably so many specific circumstances that lead to that that it is difficult to generalise. Often those delays in grant payments are not necessarily because of any issues within the bureaucracy. There are processes that would need to be complied with for people to make grants. They need to be assessed and then it is quite possible that things then need to be clarified. So you can get very good reasons for why grants are delayed.

**CHAIR:** Generally they are just held over to the following year?

**Mr Molloy:** That generally would be the case where you have a timing issue. The lapses that are identified and the definition that is used for the purpose of the CFFR, it is a lapse in that funding was not appropriated for that year. It does not mean that that money has all lapsed and has come back to the budget in the sense that many of them will be deferred until the following year because there have been timing delays.

**Mr Beavers:** So despite the fact that we use that term 'lapse' it is correct in a technical sense but for the overwhelming bulk of grant programs where there has been an underspend, we would then let that money be carried over by that department into the next year so that it could meet all of those grant obligations. As Dennis was saying, it is a difficult one for government, because you want to get grant money out the door but at the same time you do not want to get it out the door so quickly that you have not had the opportunity to meet basic probity grant application requirements. Quite often it is as much, as Dennis was saying, on the end of the grant applicants as much as it is the bureaucracy. So just trying to get those things all lined up can be quite difficult for grants.

**CHAIR:** Excellent. Mr Pitt, do you have another question?

**Mr PITT:** I refer to page 14 of the Consolidated Fund financial report, which states that lapses in administered items of \$142.5 million for the Department of Energy and Water Supply primarily reflect a reduction in the funding required to maintain the government's uniform electricity tariff policy and a return of unutilised funding for the Seqwater rebate program. Can the department advise what the lapse was for the uniform tariff policy and the return of this unutilised funding for the Seqwater rebate listed separately? Again, I am happy to take this question on notice, but it is something that I am seeking more explanation of.

**Mr Beavers:** Mr Pitt, that is a question that we would prefer to take on notice. The calculation of the uniform electricity tariff and the CSOs and so forth are quite a complicated matter. We would appreciate an opportunity if we can go and get the explanation and return it to the committee.

**CHAIR:** Sure.

**Mr PITT:** No problems. That is fine.

**Mr Molloy:** One thing, though, that I would just add to that is that, obviously, when you do the initial calculation of the CSO at the time of a budget when you are doing the appropriation you are making an estimate. This is a complex calculation. You are making an estimate based on a full range of factors. It is not surprising that inevitably some of those factors will turn out to be different. That does not suggest that there is a change in policy; it is just a change between the estimate and the actual because the parameters can change. But as Alex said, we will be able to provide some more detail.

**Mr PITT:** When was the last time prior to 2012-13 that the lapsed appropriation was at or above the 2013-14 amount of \$2.35 billion?

**Mr Molloy:** I think it is fair to say that we do not have those figures at our fingertips, but we can clarify that.

**Mr PITT:** Okay.

**CHAIR:** Mr Stewart, do you have another question?

**Mr STEWART:** Yes. When the committee examined the Appropriation Bill (No.2) 2013 in October 2013 the question was asked about the Commission of Audit report and comments regarding effective control of the overall level of expenditure by departments and departments having discretion to vary expenditure according to their collection of controlled revenue which is deemed appropriation and, therefore, not subject to the discretionary approval of the parliament. QTT advised the committee that it was looking at the issue and examining what other states do. Could you please provide an update to the committee on this particular project?

**Mr Beavers:** In response to that Commission of Audit recommendation, Treasury has been doing some internal work about how a different appropriation system might work in the future, and that would include the potential for returning controlled revenue to the consolidated fund and then reappropriating it out to departments. There are debates about the policy merits of doing that. On the one hand, a lot of the controlled revenue is actually linked to the activity of the department, and it does make sense from an economic perspective to have those cost structures and the activity of the departments linked where you have fee-for-service arrangements. There is debate about the merits of doing that. But in regard to all of these appropriation issues, while we see that there are changes that could and perhaps should be made in relation to Queensland's appropriation system, the reality is that it is heavily linked to the future of our financial management systems in government and in particular the system that we built when accrual accounting was introduced called the Tridata system. One of the issues for government in making big changes to our appropriation system going forward will be how much do we need to spend on a new financial management system for government to give effect to those changes. We know we have a good system in place now in terms of the Tridata system, but to fundamentally change the system we need to purchase a new one. That will be a public policy question for government about how much it wants to invest in a new IT system in order to make those fundamental changes to the appropriation system.

In some respects they are linked. We are looking at the future of the Tridata system now from an IT life cycle perspective and at that juncture if we could bring the two issues together about the public policy changes you might want to make to the appropriation system and the investment that would be required in terms of IT systems to make it happen. That is how we see those two issues coming together over the next 12 to 18 months.

**Mr Molloy:** I would just add to Alex's response that one of the very complex issues is what level of appropriation detail you should have in the appropriation bills, for example. Different jurisdictions do it in different ways. I do not think there is any way that is necessarily the gold standard. You need to consider a lot of issues as to what are the merits of appropriating to a greater level of detail. To what extent does that impede flexibility and flexibility in terms of administration? Even just working through those issues even before you get to the systems type issues is a very complex thing, and you need to make sure that it is going to work, because ultimately if the appropriation arrangements go wrong there are obviously a lot of consequences from that. It is something that requires a lot of consideration in a lot of areas, and we are starting that.

**Mr Beavers:** The final thing I might add, Mr Stewart, is that we are fortunate in some respects in that both the Commonwealth and New South Wales are investing a significant amount of time and money in this issue and in developing new and more modern systems to deliver these things. We are hopeful of being able to learn from the fact that they are ahead of us in that space, so we can pick up on any learnings that they might be able to give us.

**Mr STEWART:** Do you have a ballpark figure on what this sort of computer system would cost to introduce?

**Mr Beavers:** Based on the experience in other jurisdictions, I would say in the many tens of millions.

**CHAIR:** Could you please outline what the requirements are when departments prepare explanations contained in the notes to the Consolidated Fund financial report? We note that sometimes departments are not addressing specifically the unforeseen expenditures. Obviously there is some detail there, but some others just say that it is unforeseen. Is there some sort of requirement on the departments to report on that? I suppose we are looking for your guidance as far as what needs to be reported and what does not.

**Mr Beavers:** I think what we are trying to do is within a reasonable amount of space with a reasonable level of detail try and hit the high points of what are primarily the reason for these changes of appropriation, both across headings and on a net basis. In some agencies it will be quite

simple. I have not turned to it, but it does not surprise me, for example, that the explanation for an entity like DATSIMA is quite simple when you consider the size of the agency and the nature of the programs that it is running compared to an entity such as Housing and Public Works, which is an incredibly complex department. But beyond that we are trying to strike that balance between some level of detail, but also readability and accessibility for people who are trying to use the information. I do not know if that has answered the question.

**CHAIR:** An agency that has a whole lot of little variances, they just sort of wrap it up.

**Mr Molloy:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** Then you have the big agencies like Queensland Health which might have a one item for \$1 billion, for example. I am just throwing a number out here.

**Mr Molloy:** I think certainly in terms of our processes and also the involvement of the Auditor-General, you want to make sure that the explanations are the major things. If there are other big things and you are just talking about a little thing, obviously that is not what this whole thing is about. It is about making sure that the major ones are described. But there will be occasions where you ask, 'Where did this variation come from?' and there will be hundreds of little things. How do you really characterise that? To pick one of those out in isolation actually can be quite misleading, because it then leads to an overemphasis on that as though that is the explanation, whereas in fact it is only a minute amount of the explanation. I think our overriding principle is to make sure that the main items are identified.

**CHAIR:** Do you provide some guidance or are there thresholds?

**Mr Beavers:** We do have the opportunity to see drafts of some of this information. Some of the information that we do receive in initial drafts is quite complex and unwieldy, so what we try and do is work with the auditors and the department to try and put it in a format that people such as the committee might be able to understand so they can access the information. One of the challenges here is that the appropriation is a net concept, so it is possible to have a hundred pluses and a hundred minuses and at the end of the day somebody has to exercise some judgement about what is the best explanation that we can provide to the committee based on all of the information that is in front of you.

**Mr Molloy:** What is material for a small agency may not be material for a big agency, so you have those various judgements of materiality that need to be made.

**CHAIR:** You are working with the agencies to provide that sort of advice to them?

**Mr Molloy:** That is right.

**Mr PITT:** I understand the readability avenue. This bill and your presentation have been all about transparency, according to the Treasurer in both last year's second reading speech as well as this year's. Given that information might well have been given to you in a raw or draft form, you should be able to have that information provided to the committee in the interests of transparency if those questions are asked and we are able to identify the appropriate questions?

**Mr Beavers:** In fairness, in relation to all budget documentation we see drafts of everything and we might see 10 drafts of documents or we might see 20 drafts of documents. I just think to ask for preliminary drafts that might be at a low officer level or do not necessarily have any sanctions or—

**Mr PITT:** No, Mr Beavers, I am not asking for preliminary drafts. What I am asking for is that we are able to ask some specific questions which are not all detailed and you can answer for us today. A lot of work will have been done by those agencies, and perhaps quite correctly in some cases you deem that other explanations may be required in the consolidated reports. I guess I am saying that it should not be too onerous a task if we are able to come back to you and ask some of those questions—

**Mr Beavers:** I guess it depends on the nature those questions. I would just emphasise to the committee that when I talked about making modifications and so forth, it was genuinely in the interests of readability. With all due respect to the accountants amongst us, what some people view as being readable and easy to understand to someone in that profession might not be as easy for the public to understand. So it is those sorts of judgements that we make.

**Mr Molloy:** I think it also goes to the point that more data is not necessarily more information. You can ultimately have a phone book, but does that really help to explain the material reasons for the variations? If anything, it can lead to greater confusion and an undue emphasis on things which are not the key reasons for the explanation for the variance.

**Mr PITT:** At page 17 of the Consolidated Fund financial report it states that lower departmental services were occasionally 'offset by additional funding for the Strong Choices and Best Place to do Business advertising campaigns.' Can I just ask if the department can advise how much additional funding was provided for these campaigns?

**Mr Beavers:** I am pretty confident, Mr Pitt, that the Treasurer has answered that in a number of forums, including in the estimate committee and in questions on notice.

**Mr PITT:** I am just asking you as it relates to the document, which is an accompanying document to these bills, what that might mean.

**Mr Beavers:** I do not have that answer with me today. I do not want to quote those figures off the top of my head. I would prefer to go back and check those, but we will come back to you with an answer that is consistent with the information that the Treasurer has previously provided on those issues.

**CHAIR:** Do you have any more questions, Mr Pitt?

**Mr PITT:** I am not having much luck today, Chair, but I will give it a crack. Can Treasury provide what the lower equity adjustments are by value for the Moreton Bay Rail Link, also for the Centenary Motorway and the Gold Coast Rapid Transit, if they are able to be listed separately as referred to on page 9 of the report? Again I am happy for you to take that on notice.

**Mr Beavers:** Mr Pitt, we are happy to have a look at that and we will take that on notice. That is just a level of detail that we do not have with us today.

**CHAIR:** Curtis, I am happy for you to put these bigger macros, the overspends or underspends that you are talking about, in a written form. Are you happy to take those questions on notice?

**Mr Beavers:** Certainly.

**Mr PITT:** As long as there is general agreement, Chair. If I do not ask them now, they may not be included in the questions. I just want to be clear.

**Mr Beavers:** As we said in our statements earlier, if there is a particular issue that you want further detail on like that Moreton Bay equity adjustment, we are very happy to go back and do the investigations. But we just do not have all the information for all the departments with us at hand, and we would like to have the opportunity to get that for you.

**CHAIR:** As long as they are specific, you are happy to answer those questions?

**Mr Beavers:** That is correct.

**CHAIR:** The time allocated for this public departmental briefing has expired and there being no further questions, we will now conclude this public departmental briefing. If members require any further information, we will contact you. Thank you for your attendance today.

**Mr Beavers:** Thanks to the committee.

**CHAIR:** The committee appreciates your assistance, and I declare the briefing closed. It is the wish of the committee that the evidence given here before it today be authorised for publication pursuant to section 52(a) of the Parliament of Queensland Act 2001. If there are no objections, that is so authorised.

**Subcommittee adjourned at 10.14 am**